Cradle to Prison Pipeline Oklahoma

Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

Poverty is the largest driving force of the Cradle to Prison Pipeline crisis.

- In Oklahoma, among all children, **2 in 9** (23.0 percent or 192,417) **were poor**.
  - For **Black** children **4 in 9** (46.6 percent or 34,800) were poor.
  - For **Latino** children **3 in 8** (35.9 percent or 29,509) were poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 6** (17.6 percent or 94,111) was poor.
  - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **2 in 7** (26.8 percent or 20,510) were poor.
  - For **Asian** children **1 in 9** (11.5 percent or 1,422) was poor.

- In Oklahoma, a **baby is born poor** every **40 minutes**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **4 hours**.
  - A **Latino** a baby is born poor every **3 hours**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **hour**.
  - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **9 hours**.
  - An **Asian** baby is born poor every **3 days**.

Health Care

Disadvantages in health care increase the risk that poor children and particularly poor children of color will be trapped in the pipeline.

- In 2005, an estimated **142,000 children (15.7%)** were **uninsured** in Oklahoma.

- In 2004, **4,117 babies (8.0%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Oklahoma. This included:
  - 13.0% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 6.6% of Latino babies; and,
  - 7.8% of White, non-Latino babies.

- **27.7%** of two-year-olds in Oklahoma **did not receive** all recommended **immunizations** in 2005.

Early Childhood

Children who do not participate in high-quality early education have higher rates of juvenile delinquency, arrests, and juvenile court petitions.

- In the 2004-2005 school year, **16.7% of 3-year-olds** and **92.4% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in **Oklahoma**.

- In 2005, **13,915 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in **Oklahoma**. Of these:
  - 17.7% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 13.1% were Latino; and,
  - 44.6% were White, non-Latino.

Child Welfare

Children in foster care or with a history of abuse and neglect are at higher risk of being trapped in the pipeline.

- In 2003, there were **9,194 children in foster care** in Oklahoma.

- In 2004, there were **12,483 victims of child maltreatment** in Oklahoma.

Education

Educational disadvantages make it more likely that children will enter the juvenile justice system.

- In 2005, **a disproportionate number** of Black and Latino **fourth graders could not read at grade level.** In Oklahoma:
  - 90% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 83% of Latino; and,
  - 70% of White, non-Latino fourth graders could not read at grade level.
- **Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely than their peers to drop out of school altogether.** In Oklahoma:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 15.5 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 5.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 4.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 4.2 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 2.7 suspensions.
- In Oklahoma, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Tulsa (31 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - Putnam City Schools (22 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Millwood Public School (16 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Oklahoma, **10.0% of youth ages 16 to 19 were neither enrolled in school nor high school graduates**.

Juvenile Justice System and Incarceration

Children of color are disproportionately represented in both the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

- In Oklahoma, there were **19,813 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **1,059 youth in residential placement in Oklahoma** in 2003:
  - 285 (26.9%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 69 (6.5%) were Latino; and,
  - 540 (51.0%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **89 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Oklahoma**.**
- Oklahoma spends **1.4 times as much per prisoner as per public school pupil.**

Community Violence

Between 1979 and 2004, gunfire killed 101,413 children and teens in America, destroying countless families and communities.

- In 2004, **29 children and teenagers** in Oklahoma **died of firearm injuries,** including: **13 homicides**, 13 suicides, and 3 unintentional shootings.
- In 2005, **31.1%** of Oklahoma's high school students were **involved in a physical fight.**
- In 2005, **6.0%** of Oklahoma's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.**
- **18.9%** of Oklahoma's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.