

Almost 1 in 13 children in the United States—5.8 million—lives in extreme poverty. A family of four is extremely poor in 2008 if their household income is below \$10,600, or half of the official poverty line. Young children are more likely than school-age children to live in extreme poverty.

## Extreme Poverty Among Children: 2007

	Number in Extreme Poverty			Percent in Extreme Poverty		
	Under age 18	Under age 6	Ages 6-17	Under age 18	Under age 6	Ages 6-17
Alabama	124,561	49,125	75,436	11.3%	13.6%	10.1%
Alaska	7,851	2,849	5,002	4.4	4.7	4.3
Arizona	152,505	62,627	89,878	9.3	10.8	8.5
Arkansas	68,749	26,249	42,500	10.0	11.4	9.3
California	611,166	226,858	384,308	6.6	7.3	6.3
Colorado	89,519	34,731	54,788	7.6	8.5	7.2
Connecticut	42,695	16,409	26,286	5.3	6.6	4.7
Delaware	13,095	6,307	6,788	6.5	9.1	5.2
District of Columbia	13,570	5,709	7,861	12.0	13.5	11.2
Florida	276,783	116,018	160,765	7.0	8.8	6.1
Georgia	225,591	91,191	134,400	9.1	10.7	8.2
Hawaii	13,181	4,981	8,200	4.7	4.9	4.5
Idaho	24,241	9,095	15,146	6.0	6.6	5.8
Illinois	237,261	89,009	148,252	7.5	8.5	7.0
Indiana	129,755	53,767	75,988	8.4	10.5	7.3
Iowa	40,368	17,378	22,990	5.8	7.6	4.9
Kansas	42,816	17,769	25,047	6.3	7.8	5.5
Kentucky	106,618	44,766	61,852	10.9	13.7	9.4
Louisiana	124,373	49,697	74,676	11.7	14.1	10.6
Maine	17,779	6,660	11,119	6.5	8.1	5.8
Maryland	67,101	26,164	40,937	5.0	5.9	4.6
Massachusetts	86,554	31,645	54,909	6.1	7.1	5.7
Michigan	229,186	86,829	142,357	9.5	11.6	8.6
Minnesota	62,080	25,551	36,529	5.0	6.2	4.4
Mississippi	107,094	42,197	64,897	14.2	16.7	13.0
Missouri	114,660	49,206	65,454	8.2	10.8	6.9
Montana	15,422	6,579	8,843	7.1	9.4	6.0
Nebraska	30,498	12,952	17,546	7.0	8.6	6.1
Nevada	41,019	15,384	25,635	6.3	6.8	6.0
New Hampshire	11,715	4,334	7,381	4.0	4.9	3.6
New Jersey	110,410	42,397	68,013	5.4	6.5	4.9
New Mexico	54,113	22,083	32,030	11.1	13.5	9.9
New York	398,964	148,434	250,530	9.2	10.5	8.5
North Carolina	183,076	74,379	108,697	8.4	10.1	7.5
North Dakota	8,895	3,865	5,030	6.3	8.1	5.4
Ohio	244,966	99,280	145,686	9.1	11.4	7.9
Oklahoma	88,407	38,097	50,310	10.0	12.5	8.7
Oregon	60,920	21,515	39,405	7.2	7.8	6.9
Pennsylvania	209,545	82,521	127,024	7.6	9.6	6.8
Rhode Island	17,697	6,706	10,991	7.6	9.0	7.0
South Carolina	103,398	44,423	58,975	9.9	12.9	8.4
South Dakota	16,166	7,473	8,693	8.4	11.4	6.8
Tennessee	148,229	61,609	86,620	10.3	13.1	8.9
Texas	644,798	267,726	377,072	9.9	11.6	9.0
Utah	28,176	11,076	17,100	3.5	3.8	3.3
Vermont	5,888	2,406	3,482	4.6	6.3	3.9
Virginia	97,487	38,622	58,865	5.4	6.5	4.9
Washington	104,261	40,675	63,586	6.9	8.2	6.3
West Virginia	40,505	16,743	23,762	10.7	13.9	9.2
Wisconsin	75,959	29,904	46,055	5.9	7.1	5.2
Wyoming	6,314	2,811	3,503	5.1	6.8	4.3
United States	5,775,980	2,294,781	3,481,199	7.9	9.5	7.2

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2007 American Community Survey, Table B17024. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

More than half of all poor children in the United States live in eight states: California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, Georgia and Michigan.

### **Largest Number of Poor Children: Top 10 States in 2007**

	<b>Number of poor children</b>
California	1,591,295
Texas	1,512,819
New York	844,424
Florida	678,038
Illinois	525,294
Ohio	500,745
Georgia	490,381
Michigan	468,400
Pennsylvania	446,832
North Carolina	426,047

### **Highest Child Poverty Rates: Top 10 States (plus the District of Columbia) in 2007**

	<b>Percent of children who are poor</b>
Mississippi	29.3%
Louisiana	26.8
Arkansas	25.8
New Mexico	25.5
Alabama	24.3
Kentucky	23.9
Texas	23.2
Tennessee	23.0
West Virginia	22.8
District of Columbia	22.7
Oklahoma	22.5

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2007 American Community Survey, Table B17001. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

There are more poor White, non-Hispanic children than Black children. However, Hispanic and Black children are about three times as likely to live in poverty than White, non-Hispanic children. Children who live in inner cities, rural areas, in the South or in female-headed families are more likely to be poor. Children under age six are more likely to be poor than school-age children. Poverty and race are the primary factors underpinning the pipeline to prison. In fact, Black juveniles are about four times as likely as their White peers to end up being incarcerated.

## Poor Children in America: A Portrait

	Number Poor (thousands) 2007	Percent Poor	
		2007	1973
<i>All persons younger than 18</i>	13,324	18.0%	14.4%
White <sup>1</sup>	8,771	15.0	n/a
Black <sup>1</sup>	4,178	33.7	n/a
Asian and Pacific Islander <sup>1</sup>	431	11.9	n/a
Hispanic (may be any race) <sup>2</sup>	4,482	28.6	n/a
Non-Hispanic White <sup>2</sup>	4,255	10.1	n/a
South	5,728	20.8	19.7
All other regions	7,596	16.4	11.6
Central city	5,961	24.9	20.4
Suburb	4,797	12.5	7.8
Rural (nonmetropolitan)	2,566	22.3	16.6
<i>Related to head of household</i>	12,843	17.6	14.2
White <sup>1</sup>	8,388	14.5	9.7
Black <sup>1</sup>	4,121	33.6	40.6
Asian and Pacific Islander <sup>1</sup>	404	11.3	n/a
Hispanic (may be any race) <sup>2</sup>	4,360	28.2	27.8
Non-Hispanic White <sup>2</sup>	4,005	9.7	n/a
In female-headed family	7,567	42.9	52.1
All other family types	5,276	9.5	7.6
Any family member works	9,096	13.3	n/a
Full-time year round	4,405	7.6	n/a
Head of family works	7,269	12.2	8.7
Full-time year round	3,152	7.2	4.1
Under age 6	5,101	20.8	15.7
Ages 6-17	7,701	15.9	13.6
<i>Comparison: Adults 18-64</i>	20,396	10.9	8.3
Seniors 65+	3,556	9.7	16.3

<sup>1</sup>Starting with poverty data for 2002, the Census Bureau permits persons to choose more than one race; racial groups shown here may overlap.

<sup>2</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. White non-Hispanic means White alone (no other race) and not of Hispanic origin

n/a — Not available

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, 2008 Annual Social and Economic Supplement and 1974 March Supplement. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

The number of poor children was at its lowest in 1973. Since 2000, both the number and the rate have risen. There are now 13.3 million poor children in the United States, an increase of 500,000 between 2006 and 2007. These numbers are expected to increase as families face the full impact of the recession.

## Child Poverty: 1959–2007

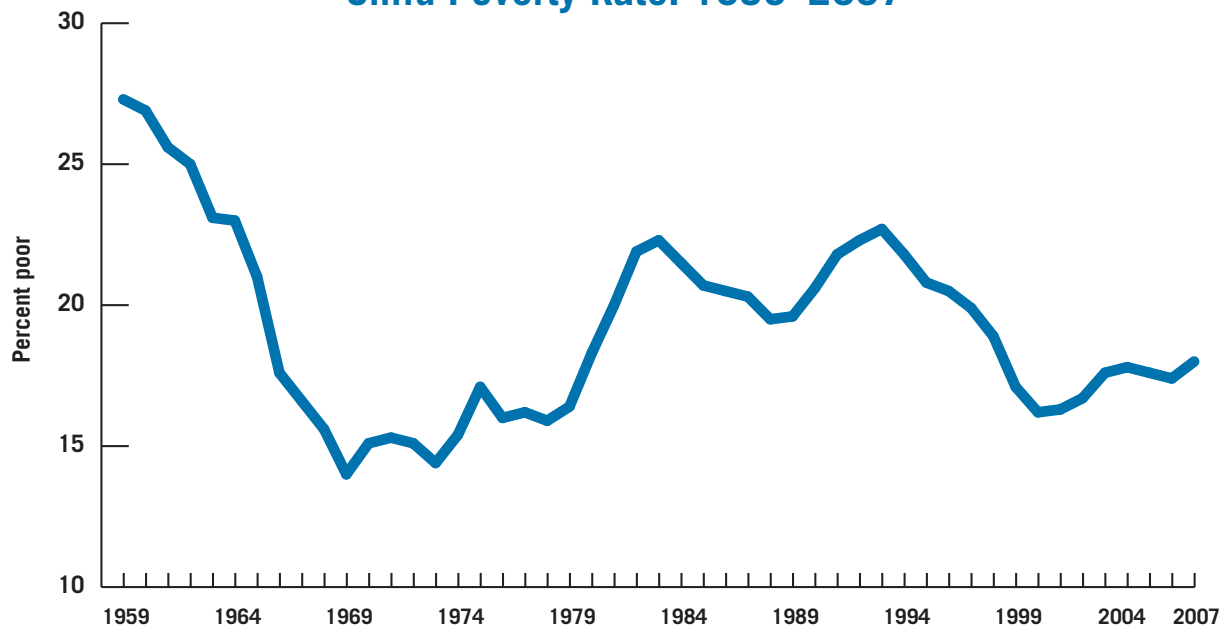
Year	Number of children under 18 who are poor	Child poverty rate	Number of children* under 6 who are poor	Poverty rate for children* under 6
1959	17,552,000	27.3%	n/a	n/a
1960	17,634,000	26.9	n/a	n/a
1961	16,909,000	25.6	n/a	n/a
1962	16,963,000	25.0	n/a	n/a
1963	16,005,000	23.1	n/a	n/a
1964	16,051,000	23.0	n/a	n/a
1965	14,676,000	21.0	n/a	n/a
1966	12,389,000	17.6	n/a	n/a
1967	11,656,000	16.6	n/a	n/a
1968	10,954,000	15.6	n/a	n/a
1969	9,691,000	14.0	3,298,000	15.3%
1970	10,440,000	15.1	3,561,000	16.6
1971	10,551,000	15.3	3,499,000	16.9
1972	10,284,000	15.1	3,276,000	16.1
1973	9,642,000	14.4	3,097,000	15.7
1974	10,156,000	15.4	3,294,000	16.9
1975	11,104,000	17.1	3,460,000	18.2
1976	10,273,000	16.0	3,270,000	17.7
1977	10,288,000	16.2	3,326,000	18.1
1978	9,931,000	15.9	3,184,000	17.2
1979	10,377,000	16.4	3,415,000	17.8
1980	11,543,000	18.3	4,030,000	20.5
1981	12,505,000	20.0	4,422,000	22.0
1982	13,647,000	21.9	4,821,000	23.3
1983	13,911,000	22.3	5,122,000	24.6
1984	13,420,000	21.5	4,938,000	23.4
1985	13,010,000	20.7	4,832,000	22.6
1986	12,876,000	20.5	4,619,000	21.6
1987	12,843,000	20.3	4,852,000	22.4
1988	12,455,000	19.5	5,032,000	22.6
1989	12,590,000	19.6	5,071,000	22.5
1990	13,431,000	20.6	5,198,000	23.0
1991	14,341,000	21.8	5,483,000	24.0
1992	15,294,000	22.3	5,781,000	25.0
1993	15,727,000	22.7	6,097,000	25.6
1994	15,289,000	21.8	5,878,000	24.5
1995	14,665,000	20.8	5,670,000	23.7
1996	14,463,000	20.5	5,333,000	22.7
1997	14,113,000	19.9	5,049,000	21.6
1998	13,467,000	18.9	4,775,000	20.6
1999	12,280,000	17.1	4,162,000	18.4
2000	11,587,000	16.2	4,066,000	17.8
2001	11,733,000	16.3	4,188,000	18.2
2002	12,133,000	16.7	4,296,000	18.5
2003	12,866,000	17.6	4,654,000	19.8
2004	13,041,000	17.8	4,747,000	20.0
2005	12,896,000	17.6	4,784,000	20.0
2006	12,827,000	17.4	4,830,000	20.0
2007	13,324,000	18.0	5,101,000	20.8

\*Related children in families

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

The child poverty rate dropped substantially in the 1960s, then rose significantly in the early 1980s. Great strides were made in decreasing child poverty in the late 1990s, owing in part to the strong economy. However, the child poverty rate is higher in 2007 than at the beginning of the decade. Child poverty is closely tied to the overall health of the economy, rising in periods of recession.

### Child Poverty Rate: 1959–2007



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.