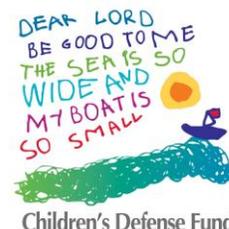


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The Indefensible and Unjust State of America's Children Demands Action to End Child Poverty NOW!

Washington, D.C. – It is a national disgrace that children are the poorest Americans. The Children's Defense Fund's *The State of America's Children*® 2017 details the immoral and preventable poverty, homelessness, hunger, health problems, poor education and violence plaguing children who are America's responsibility and future. The most recent data suggest:

- **Child Population:** The U.S. has 73.6 million children. Children of color, who are disproportionately poor, will be a majority of our children by 2020.
- **Child Poverty:** Nearly 1 in 5 children are poor—more than 13.2 million. Nearly 70 percent of poor children are non-White.
- **Income and Wealth Inequality:** Unjust income and wealth inequality is soaring. Since the end of the Great Recession, income of the top 1 percent has grown 27 percent compared with 8 percent for the bottom 99 percent. White families' average wealth is seven times greater than Black families' and five times greater than Hispanic families'.
- **Housing and Homelessness:** More than 1.2 million public school children are homeless, excluding younger children and youths not enrolled in school
- **Child Hunger and Nutrition:** Nearly 1 in 5 children—14.8 million—live in food-insecure households.
- **Child Health:** Despite progress 3.9 million children lack health coverage and Congressional inaction in funding the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) places nearly 9 million at risk of losing coverage.
- **Early Childhood:** Only 5 percent of eligible infants and toddlers are in Early Head Start and 54 percent of eligible 3- and 4-year-olds are in Head Start.
- **Education:** The majority of all public school fourth and eighth graders cannot read at grade level. More than 75 percent of Black, Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native children cannot read at grade level.
- **Child Welfare:** Every 47 seconds a child is abused or neglected, and the number of children in foster care is increasing rapidly as the opioid crisis spins out of control.
- **Juvenile Justice:** Every day 2,805 children are arrested—one every 31 seconds.
- **Gun Violence:** Eight children and teens are killed with guns daily. Gun violence is the leading cause of death for Black children and teens.

The report addresses the dire needs facing children in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands even before the hurricanes; offers a portrait of immigrant children; and describes how America ranks among rich countries for investing in children. Despite our great wealth, the U.S. lags behind other industrialized nations in investing in our children and consistently ranks among the worst on key child outcomes. We should be ashamed.

“This is one of the scariest times America's children have faced in the struggle to level the playing field as the last 50 years of progress in child health coverage, nutrition, and education are under assault,” said Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund. “We should be building on what we know works and moving forward, not backwards, to improve the odds for children who need our protection. We urge the American public to stand up and stop this war on children now.”

Download *The State of America's Children*® 2017 and a volume of one-page factsheets summarizing children's status in individual states, the District of Columbia and nationwide [here](#).

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The Children's Defense Fund's Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start*, and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.