

# Cradle to Prison Pipeline Connecticut



Children's Defense Fund

2007

## Poverty

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

- In Connecticut, among all children, **1 in 9** (11.6 percent or 94,909) **was poor**.
  - For **Black** children **2 in 7** (28.6 percent or 26,951) were poor.
  - For **Latino** children **3 in 10** (29.4 percent or 36,003) were poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 23** (4.4 percent or 24,710) was poor.
  - For **Asian** children **1 in 10** (10.5 percent or 2,664) was poor.
- In Connecticut, a **baby is born poor every 2 hours**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **4 hours**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **6 hours**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **7 hours**.
  - An **Asian** baby is born poor every **2 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 **70,000 children (7.9%)** were **uninsured** in Connecticut.
- In 2004, **3,273 babies (7.8%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Connecticut. This included:
  - 12.7% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 8.5% of Latino babies; and,
  - 6.7% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **18.5%** of two-year-olds in Connecticut **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, **13.4% of 3-year-olds** and **29.0% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Connecticut.
- In 2005, **7,126 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Connecticut. Of these:
  - 37.5% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 36.0% were Latino; and,
  - 24.3% 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 **6,742 children in foster care** in Connecticut.
- In 2004, there were **13,285 victims of child maltreatment** in Connecticut.

## 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 Connecticut:
  - 88% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 85% of Latino; and,
  - 53% 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 Connecticut:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 19.1 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 14.5 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 4.0 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 3.4 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 2.5 suspensions.
- In Connecticut, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - New London (34 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - New Britain School District (27 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Middletown School District (26 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Connecticut, **7.4% 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 Connecticut, there were **20,811 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **627 youth in residential placement in Connecticut** in 2003:
  - 246 (39.2%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 129 (20.6%) were Latino; and,
  - 222 (35.4%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **452 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Connecticut.
- Connecticut spends **2.5 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, **11 children and teenagers** in Connecticut **died of firearm injuries**, including: **9 homicides** and 2 suicides.
- In 2005, **32.7%** of Connecticut's high school students were **involved in a physical fight**.
- In 2005, **9.1%** of Connecticut's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property**.
- **16.3%** of Connecticut's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.