

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Massachusetts



Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

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

- In Massachusetts, among all children, **1 in 7** (13.6 percent or 194,294) **was poor**.
 - For **Black** children **3 in 10** (30.4 percent or 33,783) were poor.
 - For **Latino** children **2 in 5** (39.2 percent or 65,631) were poor.
 - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 13** (7.7 percent or 81,013) was poor.
 - For **Asian** children **1 in 6** (15.8 percent or 10,645) was poor.
- In Massachusetts, a **baby is born poor** every **45 minutes**.
 - A **Black** baby is born poor every **4 hours**.
 - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **2 hours**.
 - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **2 hours**.
 - An **Asian** baby is born poor every **day**.

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 **99,000 children (6.4%)** were **uninsured** in Massachusetts.
- In 2004, **6,117 babies (7.8%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Massachusetts. This included:
 - 11.8% of Black, non-Latino babies;
 - 8.6% of Latino babies; and,
 - 7.2% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **9.3%** of two-year-olds in Massachusetts **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, **17.3% of 3-year-olds** and **23.4% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Massachusetts.
- In 2005, **12,846 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Massachusetts. Of these:
 - 21.0% were Black, non-Latino;
 - 38.2% were Latino; and,
 - 34.8% 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 **12,608 children in foster care** in Massachusetts.
- In 2004, there were **36,201 victims of child maltreatment** in Massachusetts.

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 Massachusetts:
 - 80% of Black, non-Latino;
 - 89% of Latino; and,
 - 49% 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 Massachusetts:
 - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 9.3 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 7.2 suspensions.
 - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 4.3 suspensions.
 - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 4.8 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 2.7 suspensions.
- In Massachusetts, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
 - Lynn (16 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
 - Brockton (15 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
 - Randolph (13 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Massachusetts, **6.6% 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 Massachusetts, there were **14,841 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **1,302 youth in residential placement in Massachusetts** in 2003:
 - 396 (30.4%) were Black, non-Latino;
 - 336 (25.8%) were Latino; and,
 - 513 (39.4%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **195 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Massachusetts.
- Massachusetts spends **5.0 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, **32 children and teenagers** in Massachusetts **died of firearm injuries**, including: **26 homicides** and 6 suicides.
- In 2005, **28.6%** of Massachusetts's high school students were **involved in a physical fight**.
- In 2005, **5.4%** of Massachusetts's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property**.
- **15.2%** of Massachusetts's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.