

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Alaska



Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

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

- In Alaska, among all children, **1 in 7** (14.5 percent or 26,623) **was poor**.
 - For **Black** children **3 in 10** (29.8 percent or 2,447) were poor.
 - For **Latino** children **1 in 5** (18.5 percent or 2,178) was poor
 - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 12** (8.3 percent or 8,575) was poor.
 - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **3 in 10** (30.1 percent or 9,769) were poor.
- In Alaska, a **baby is born poor every 7 hours**.
 - A **Black** baby is born poor every **week**.
 - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **3 days**.
 - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **day**.
 - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **14 hours**.

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 **20,000 children (10.0%)** were **uninsured** in Alaska.
- In 2004, **618 babies (6.0%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Alaska. This included:
 - 5.4% of Latino babies and
 - 5.1% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **31.9%** of two-year-olds in Alaska **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, **15.0% of 3-year-olds** and **23.5% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Alaska.
- In 2005, **1,725 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Alaska. Of these:
 - 3.5% were Black, non-Latino;
 - 3.6% were Latino; and,
 - 18.2% 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 **2,040 children in foster care** in Alaska.

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 Alaska:
 - 76% of Black, non-Latino;
 - 81% of Latino; and,
 - 64% 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 Alaska:
 - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 9.2 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 6.1 suspensions.
 - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 4.2 suspensions.
 - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 8.1 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 5.6 suspensions.
- In Alaska, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
 - Anchorage School District (8 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled) and
 - Fairbanks North Star Boro School District (6 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Alaska, **8.9% 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 Alaska, there were **4,532 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **336 youth in residential placement in Alaska** in 2003, 102 (30.4%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **37 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Alaska.
- Alaska spends **3.7 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, **22 children and teenagers** in Alaska **died of firearm injuries**, including: **7 homicides** and 15 suicides.