

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Texas



Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

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

- In Texas, among all children, **1 in 4** (24.9 percent or 1,548,069) was poor.
 - For **Black** children **1 in 3** (34.4 percent or 257,075) was poor.
 - For **Latino** children **3 in 8** (36.1 percent or 989,521) were poor.
 - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 10** (10.5 percent or 255,307) was poor.
 - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **1 in 4** (25.5 percent or 6,840) was poor.
 - For **Asian** children **1 in 8** (13.0 percent or 23,378) was poor.
- In Texas, a **baby is born poor every 5 minutes**.
 - A **Black** baby is born poor every **32 minutes**.
 - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **7 minutes**.
 - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **33 minutes**.
 - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **20 hours**.
 - An **Asian** baby is born poor every **9 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 **1,346,000 children (20.2%)** were **uninsured** in Texas.
- In 2004, **30,621 babies (8.0%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Texas. This included:
 - 13.9% of Black, non-Latino babies;
 - 7.2% of Latino babies; and,
 - 7.4% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **23.2%** of two-year-olds in Texas **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, **13.3% of 3-year-olds** and **60.2% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Texas.
- In 2005, **67,327 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Texas. Of these:
 - 18.9% were Black, non-Latino;
 - 66.8% were Latino; and,
 - 33.8% 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 **22,191 children in foster care** in Texas.

- In 2004, there were **50,891 victims of child maltreatment** in Texas.

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 Texas:
 - 85% of Black, non-Latino;
 - 81% of Latino; and,
 - 56% 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 Texas:
 - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 10.1 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 5.1 suspensions.
 - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 2.8 suspensions.
 - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 2.7 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 1.8 suspensions.
- In Texas, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
 - Pasadena School District (47 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
 - Galveston School District (33 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
 - Desoto School District (29 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Texas, **12.6% 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 Texas, there were **173,568 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **7,662 youth in residential placement in Texas** in 2003:
 - 2,418 (31.6%) were Black, non-Latino;
 - 3,177 (41.5%) were Latino; and,
 - 2,043 (26.7%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **3,420 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Texas.
- Texas spends **2.3 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, **236 children and teenagers** in Texas **died of firearm injuries**, including: **144 homicides**, 79 suicides, and 13 unintentional and undetermined shootings.
- In 2005, **34.2%** of Texas's high school students were **involved in a physical fight**.
- In 2005, **9.3%** of Texas's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property**.
- **19.3%** of Texas's high school students **carried a weapon 2 or more times** in the preceding month.