

# Cradle to Prison Pipeline Virginia



Children's Defense Fund

2007

## Poverty

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

- In Virginia, among all children, **1 in 8** (13.3 percent or 238,312) was poor.
  - For **Black** children **2 in 7** (28.0 percent or 111,288) were poor.
  - For **Latino** children **1 in 7** (14.9 percent or 20,748) was poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 13** (8.0 percent or 88,670) was poor.
  - For **Asian** children **1 in 10** (10.0 percent or 7,739) was poor.
- In Virginia, a **baby is born poor every 34 minutes**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **hour**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **6 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 **166,000 children (8.6%)** were **uninsured** in Virginia.
- In 2004, **8,587 babies (8.3%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Virginia. This included:
  - 12.8% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 6.4% of Latino babies; and,
  - 7.0% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **18.3%** of two-year-olds in Virginia **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, **7.8% of 3-year-olds** and **24.2% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Virginia.
- In 2005, **13,696 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Virginia. Of these:
  - 51.4% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 12.4% were Latino; and,
  - 35.5% 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 **7,046 children in foster care** in Virginia.
- In 2004, there were **6,959 victims of child maltreatment** in Virginia.

## 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 Virginia:
  - 85% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 74% of Latino; and,
  - 55% 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 Virginia:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 15.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 4.8 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 5.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 4.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 2.8 suspensions.
- In Virginia, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Buckingham (36 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - Accomack (32 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Petersburg City (30 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Virginia, **7.8% 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 Virginia, there were **32,980 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **2,376 youth in residential placement in Virginia** in 2003:
  - 1,443 (60.7%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 126 (5.3%) were Latino; and,
  - 771 (32.4%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **405 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Virginia.
- Virginia spends **2.4 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, **76 children and teenagers** in Virginia **died of firearm injuries**, including: **50 homicides**, 21 suicides, and 5 unintentional and undetermined shootings.