Cradle to Prison Pipeline
West Virginia

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

- In West Virginia, among all children, 1 in 4 (25.6 percent or 95,381) was poor.
  - For Black children 1 in 2 (47.8 percent or 5,640) was poor.
  - For White, non-Latino children 1 in 4 (24.6 percent or 85,059) was poor.

- In West Virginia, a baby is born poor every 2 hours.
  - A Black baby is born poor every day.
  - A White, non-Latino baby is born poor every 2 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 35,000 children (8.7%) were uninsured in West Virginia.

- In 2004, 1,937 babies (9.3%) were born at low birthweight in West Virginia. This included:
  - 14.3% of Black, non-Latino babies and
  - 9.1% of White, non-Latino babies.

- 32.5% of two-year-olds in West 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, 22.0% of 3-year-olds and 64.6% of 4-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded preschool programs in West Virginia.

- In 2005, 7,610 children were enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start in West Virginia. Of these:
  - 8.5% were Black, non-Latino;
  - .9% were Latino; and,
  - 86.0% 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 4,069 children in foster care in West Virginia.

- In 2004, there were 8,446 victims of child maltreatment in West 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 West Virginia:
• 85% of Black, non-Latino and
  74% 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 West Virginia:
  • For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 13.1 suspensions.
  • For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 8.8 suspensions.
  • For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 8.1 suspensions.
  • For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 20.1 suspensions.
  • For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there was 1.0 suspension.

• In West Virginia, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  • Raleigh County School District (22 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled) and
  • Kanawha County School District (22 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).

• In West Virginia, **9.0% 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 West Virginia, there were **3,033 juvenile arrests** in 2005.

• Of the estimated **498 youth in residential placement in West Virginia** in 2003:
  • 75 (15.1%) were Black, non-Latino and
  • 399 (80.1%) were White, non-Latino.

• There were **25 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in West Virginia.

• West Virginia spends **4.4 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, **12 children and teenagers** in West Virginia **died of firearm injuries**, including: **4 homicides** and 8 suicides.

• In 2005, **29.1%** of West Virginia’s high school students were **involved in a physical fight**.

• In 2005, **8.0%** of West Virginia’s high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property**.

• **22.3%** of West Virginia’s high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.

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