



children's defense fund

unleashing the joy in growing up

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Federal Data Shows Child Poverty Rate More than Doubled in America Last Year, Children's Defense Fund Calls on State and Federal Lawmakers to Act

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Washington, DC—Children's Defense Fund is calling on state and federal lawmakers to act aggressively in support of young people as new data released by the U.S. Census Bureau shows child poverty is getting worse in America.

The U.S. Census Bureau found the Supplemental Poverty Measure [SPM] for child poverty doubled from 5.2% nationwide in 2021 to 12.4% in 2022, due in large part to the expiration of the expanded Child Tax Credit at the end of 2021. Roughly 8,983,000 children are now living in poverty in the United States.

The U.S. Census Bureau releases two poverty measures every year. The official poverty measure defines poverty by comparing pretax money income to a poverty threshold adjusted by family size, number of children, and age of householder. The Supplemental Poverty Measure, which is widely considered to be the more comprehensive measurement tool, includes consideration of income, payroll taxes, tax credits, SNAP benefits, and housing subsidies. It also deducts the necessary expenses families must pay including child support paid, childcare, and medical expenses.

Children's Defense Fund believes this staggering reality impacting America's young people is directly attributable to the economic hardship that so many families with children, especially Black and Brown families, continue to face as well as the expiration of the expanded Child Tax Credit.

Children's Defense Fund has repeatedly called on federal lawmakers to restore the monthly, refundable Child Tax Credit passed in 2021 as part of the American Rescue Plan Act.

"The 2021 expanded Child Tax Credit supported families with monthly checks of up to \$300 per child to cover basic necessities," said Children's Defense Fund President and CEO Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson. "The expanded CTC illustrated the power of a fair tax code by driving historic reductions in child poverty and food insecurity."

This was the first time the overall SPM rate increased for children since 2017.

"The increase was largely the result of the end of stimulus payments and tax credits in effect during the COVID-19 pandemic that had lowered the [overall] SPM rate to its lowest level ever in 2021," U.S. Census Bureau SPM Experts Kalee Burns and John Creamer wrote. "The changes had a particularly pronounced impact on the poverty rates of children."

Children's Defense Fund firmly believes allowing any of the nation's young people to live in poverty is a policy choice.

Policy experts at Children's Defense Fund are available today to speak with journalists about this new data and what it means for the nation's children and youth.

On September 20, Children's Defense Fund will also join the U.S. Child Poverty Action Group and First Focus on Children to further publicize the significance of this data on the social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. All three organizations will bring attention to the issue by using the hashtag #EndChildPoverty.

Instagram- @childdefender1973

TikTok-@childrensdefensefund

X/Twitter-@ChildDefender

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About Children's Defense Fund

Celebrating 50 years in 2023, Children's Defense Fund envisions a nation where marginalized children flourish, leaders prioritize their well-being, and communities wield the power to ensure they thrive. The only national, multi-issue advocacy organization working at the intersection of child well-being and racial justice, CDF advances the well-being of America's most diverse generation, the 74 million children and youth under the age of 18 and 30 million young adults under the age of 25. CDF's grassroots movements in marginalized communities build power for child-centered public policy, informed by racial equity and the lived experience of children and youth. Its renowned CDF Freedom Schools® program is conducted in nearly 100 cities across 30 states and territories. Learn more at www.childrensdefense.org.