

# Cradle to Prison Pipeline Florida



Children's Defense Fund

2007

## Poverty

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

- In Florida, among all children, **1 in 6** (17.9 percent or 713,162) was poor.
  - For **Black** children **1 in 3** (33.1 percent or 278,997) was poor.
  - For **Latino** children **2 in 9** (22.3 percent or 201,727) were poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 10** (10.2 percent or 209,829) was poor.
  - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **1 in 5** (20.0 percent or 2,703) was poor.
  - For **Asian** children **1 in 9** (11.2 percent or 9,632) was poor.
- In Florida, a **baby is born poor every 12 minutes**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **29 minutes**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **46 minutes**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **38 minutes**.
  - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **2 days**.
  - An **Asian** children were poor; a baby is born poor every **16 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 **717,000 children (16.7%)** were **uninsured** in Florida.
- In 2004, **18,633 babies (8.5%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Florida. This included:
  - 13.1% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 7.0% of Latino babies; and,
  - 7.3% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **21.8%** of two-year-olds in Florida **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, **8.7% of 3-year-olds** and **15.5% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Florida.
- In 2005, **35,530 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Florida. Of these:
  - 49.8% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 31.7% were Latino; and,
  - 33.5% 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 **30,677 children in foster care** in Florida.

- In 2004, there were **129,914 victims of child maltreatment** in Florida.

### 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 Florida:
  - 87% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 75% of Latino; and,
  - 61% 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 Florida:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 16.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 6.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 6.8 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 6.1 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 3.1 suspensions.
- In Florida, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Jefferson Country School District (31 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - Martin Country School District (26 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Lake County School District (22 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Florida, **12.0% 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 Florida, there were **120,082 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **8,208 youth in residential placement in Florida** in 2003:
  - 3,888 (47.4%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 669 (8.2%) were Latino; and,
  - 3,600 (43.9%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **1,455 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Florida.
- Florida spends **3.1 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, **111 children and teenagers** in Florida **died of firearm injuries**, including: **76 homicides**, 30 suicides, and 5 unintentional shootings.
- In 2005, **30.0%** of Florida's high school students were **involved in a physical fight**.
- In 2005, **7.9%** of Florida's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property**.
- **15.2%** of Florida's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.