



## CHILD/YOUTH POVERTY

### Overview

Though Massachusetts surveys as recently as 2008 note a decrease in the poverty rate, MetroWest towns easily demonstrate how large the disparity between wealthy and poor can be. This report details how parental employment, education level, marital status, nativity and presence influence the poverty of children and youth and the characteristics that these populations share.

### **2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book, Annie E. Casey Foundation**

- **Geography:** State
- **Year:** 2008
- **Website:** <http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/KIDSCOUNT.aspx>

### Key Findings:

- Child poverty improves since 2000.
- Massachusetts' child poverty rate was 12 percent in 2008—an improvement from both the 2007 rate of 13 percent and the 2000 rate of 14 percent. (A family of two adults and two children were considered poor if their income in 2008 fell below \$21,834.)

### **Child Poverty in Massachusetts: a Tale of Two States, Massachusetts Citizens for Children and Massachusetts Kids Count**

- **Geography:** State
- **Year:** September, 2008
- **Website:** [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)

### Key Findings:

- Massachusetts is one of the wealthiest states in the nation. In 2006, MA had one of the highest median incomes for families with children- \$76,200 - compared with \$54,500 nationally, ranking it 4th highest in the country on this measure. When looking at children of all incomes, MA now ranks either 2nd, 3rd, or 4th best nationwide on a variety of child wellbeing indicators including infant mortality, child deaths, high school dropouts, teens out of school and not working, teen deaths, and births to teens.
- MA is also a state where children struggle, indicated by a child poverty rate that has hovered around 13% for a decade.
- 1 in 8 MA children (178,000) lives at or below 100% of the official Federal Poverty Level (income of \$21,200 or less annually); 1 in 4 children (371,000) lives at or below 200% of the FPL (income of \$42,200 or less annually); 1 in 3 children (477,000) lives at or below 250% of the FPL.
- The percentage of children in poverty, living in families whose income is at 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL), (\$21,200 annual income for a family of 4 in 2008), increased from 12% in 2003, to 13% in 2004, and to 14% in 2005, before falling back to 12% in 2006.
- MA children of color are more likely to grow up in families with low incomes. A higher proportion of African American and Latino children under 18 live in families who are poor (29% and 36% respectively) compared to White children (7%).
- A higher proportion of African American and Latino children under 18 live in families who are poor (29% and 36% respectively) than White children (7%).
- A higher proportion of African American and Latino children under 18 live in low-income families (53% and 69% respectively) than White children (18%).

- 15% of MA children of immigrant parents are poor compared with 12% of U.S.-born parents. And, nearly 40% of MA children of immigrant parents are low-income, compared with 25% of children with native-born parents.
- On any day, more than 50,000 school-aged children and youth and 50,000 younger children are homeless in the Bay State. Some of these children live with their families in public shelters, while thousands more live with friends and relatives or in other makeshift arrangements.

### **Massachusetts Demographics of Low-Income Children, National Center for Children in Poverty**

- **Geography:** State
- **Year:** 2008
- **Website:** [http://nccp.org/profiles/state\\_profile.php?state=MA&id=6](http://nccp.org/profiles/state_profile.php?state=MA&id=6)

#### **Key findings:**

- In Massachusetts, there are 841,172 families, with 1,442,005 children.
- **Low-Income Children:**
  - 30% (426,269) of children live in low-income families (National: 41%), defined as income below 200% of the federal poverty level.
- **Parental Employment:**
  - 37% (157,665) of children in low-income families have at least 1 parent who is employed full-time, year-round.
  - 33% (141,919) of children in low-income families have at least 1 parent who is employed either part-year or part-time.
  - 30% (126,685) of children in low-income families do not have an employed parent
- **Parental Education:**
  - 82% (63,660) of children whose parents do not have a high school degree live in low-income families.
  - 58% (159,921) of children whose parents have a high school degree, but no college education, live in low-income families.
  - 19% (202,689) of children whose parents have some college or more live in low-income families.
- **Parental Marital Status:**
  - 67% (283,755) of children in low-income families live with a single parent.
  - 14% (138,279) of children in above low-income families live with a single parent.
- **Child's Race/Ethnicity:**
  - 20% (207,214) of white children live in low-income families.
  - 62% (71,856) of black children live in low-income families.
  - 71% (119,987) of Hispanic children live in low-income families.
- **Child's Age:**
  - 28% (129,983) of children, under age 6, live in low-income families.
  - 30% (296,286) of children, age 6 or older, live in low-income families.
- **Type of Residential Area:**
  - 47% (113,931) of children in urban areas live in low-income families.
  - 25% (244,663) of children in suburban areas live in low-income families.
  - 34% (13,083)\* of children in rural areas live in low-income families.
- **Parental Nativity:**
  - 44% (89,947) of children of immigrant parents live in low-income families.
  - 27% (315,323) of children of native-born parents live in low-income families.
- **Parental Presence:**
  - 3% (14,745)\* of low-income children live in families with no parent present.
  - 1% (10,175)\* of above low-income children live in families with no parent present.