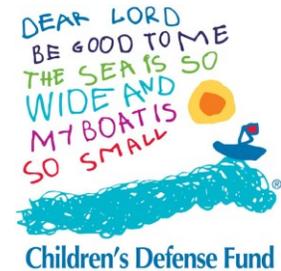


# Children's Defense Fund Cradle to Prison Pipeline<sup>®</sup> Factsheet Texas



October 2011

The Children's Defense Fund Cradle to Prison Pipeline<sup>®</sup> Campaign is a national and community crusade to engage families, youths, communities and policy makers in the development of healthy, safe and educated children. Poverty, racial disparities and a culture of punishment rather than prevention and early intervention are key forces driving children into the pipeline.

## Poverty

Poor children lag behind their peers in many ways beyond income. They are less healthy, trail in emotional and intellectual development, and do not perform as well in school. The challenges that poor children face accumulate and interact, casting long shadows throughout their lives. A 2007 study estimated that each year we keep children in poverty costs our nation half a trillion dollars in lost productivity, poorer health and increased crime.

In 2010, among all of Texas' children, almost 1 in 4 (25.8 percent or 1,751,189) was poor.

For White, non-Hispanic children, almost 1 in 10 (10.7 percent or 243,805) was poor.

For Hispanic children, 1 in 3 (35.6 percent or 1,175,886) was poor.

For Black children, nearly 1 in 3 (33.5 percent or 279,857) was poor.

In Texas, a baby is born poor every 5 minutes.

Every 7 minutes a Hispanic baby was born poor

Every 31 minutes a Black baby was born poor

Every 34 minutes a White non-Hispanic baby was born poor

## Health Care

The United States is the wealthiest nation in the world, yet children's health status in our country is among the worst in the industrialized world.

In 2009, an estimated 1,392,000 children (19.2 percent) were uninsured in Texas.

In 2008, 34,194 babies (8.4 percent) were born at low birthweight in Texas. This included:

7.6 percent of Hispanic babies.

7.7 percent of White, non-Hispanic babies.

14.0 percent of Black, non-Hispanic babies.

26.1 percent of two-year-olds in Texas did not receive all recommended immunizations in 2009.

## Early Childhood Education

Studies reveal that those enrolled in high quality early childhood education programs are more likely to complete higher levels of education, have higher earnings, be in better health and be in stable relationships, and are less likely to commit a crime or be incarcerated. Yet many children are not enrolled in these programs.

During the 2010-2011 school year in Texas, there were:

92,740 children attending Early Head Start or Head Start.

123,400 children participating in the Child Care Development Fund program.

## Education

Attainment of a high school diploma is the single most effective preventive strategy against adult poverty. Yet a large portion of students do not graduate on time with a regular diploma.

In 2009, a disproportionate number of Black fourth graders could not read or do math at grade level. In Texas:

57 percent of White 4<sup>th</sup> graders could not read at grade level.

80 percent of Hispanic 4<sup>th</sup> graders could not read at grade level.

82 percent of Black 4<sup>th</sup> graders could not read at grade level.

39 percent of White 4<sup>th</sup> graders could not do math at grade level.  
74 percent of Black 4<sup>h</sup> graders could not do math at grade level.  
77 percent of Hispanic 4<sup>h</sup> graders could not do math at grade level.

Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely than their peers to drop out of school altogether.  
In 2006 in Texas:

For every 100 Asian/Pacific Islander students in public schools, there were 1.6 suspensions.  
For every 100 White students in public schools, there were 2.9 suspensions.  
For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students in public schools, there were 3.1 suspensions.  
For every 100 Hispanic students in public schools, there were 5.7 suspensions.  
For every 100 Black students in public schools, there were 12.7 suspensions.

In 2009 in Texas, 7.3 percent of youths ages 16 to 19 were neither enrolled in school nor had earned a high school credential.

### **Child Welfare**

Children left with no permanent family connections or connection with a caring adult often have no one to whom they can turn for social, emotional or financial support and face numerous barriers as they struggle to become self-sufficient adults.

In 2009, there were 66,359 victims of child maltreatment in Texas.

In 2009, there were 26,686 children in foster care in Texas.

### **Juvenile Justice System and Incarceration**

The United States spends nearly two and a half times as much per prisoner as per public school pupil. Texas spends \$17,140 per prisoner but only \$7,850 per pupil. Unless we focus our efforts on early intervention and prevention, rather than punishment, we are robbing thousands of youths each year of their futures and our country of vital human resources.

In Texas, there were 145,129 juvenile arrests in 2010.

Of the 7,035 youths in residential placement in Texas in 2007:

1,497 (21 percent) were White.  
2,535 (36 percent) were Black.  
2,955 (42 percent) were Hispanic.

There were 156 youths under age 18 incarcerated in adult prisons in Texas in 2009.

Texas spends 2.18 times as much per prisoner as per public school student.

### **Community Violence**

The eight children and teens killed by gun violence each day in our nation is the equivalent of one Northern Illinois University shooting every 15 hours or one Virginia Tech shooting every four days. Yet, unfortunately, it takes tragic events like these to remind us that gun violence in America has reached an epidemic level.

In 2007, 250 children and teens in Texas died of firearm injuries.

In 2009, 33.3 percent of Texas's high school students were involved in a physical fight at least one time in the previous 12 months.

In 2009, 13.2 percent of Texas's high school students were involved in a physical fight on school property at least one time in the previous 12 months.

In 2009, 7.2 percent of Texas's high school students were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property at least one time during the previous 12 months.

In 2009, 18.2 percent of Texas's high school students carried a weapon at least one day in the preceding 30 days.

In 2009, 6.4 percent of Texas's high school students carried a weapon on school property at least one day in the preceding 30 days.

**At crucial points in these children's development, from birth through adulthood, more risks and disadvantages accumulate and converge to make a successful transition to productive adulthood significantly less likely and involvement in the criminal justice system more likely.**

We have no time to waste. It is time to step up and take action. Together we can and will make a difference.

**For more information on the *Cradle to Prison Pipeline*,  
please visit [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org) or contact us at 800-CDF-1200 (800-233-1200).**