STATE STRATEGIES TO END CHILD POVERTY AS A BARRIER TO EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

CSG Policy Webinar Series

PRESENTED BY CSG’s STATE PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY INITIATIVE
State Strategies to End Child Poverty as a Barrier to Education Success

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Presented to Council of State Governments

February 20, 2014
Discussion topics

• Quick overview of Child Trends
• Child poverty by the numbers
• How poverty harms children
• What we know about poverty and educational outcomes
• Policy considerations
About Child Trends

Child Trends is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center that improves the lives and prospects of children and youth by conducting high-quality research and sharing the resulting knowledge with practitioners and policymakers.

We . . .

1. take a whole child approach
2. study children in the real world
3. want children to flourish
4. value objectivity and rigor
5. pursue knowledge development and knowledge transfer

childtrends.org
Poverty remains high among children (17 and under)

Percentage of Children Living Below Poverty Thresholds, Selected Years, 1959-2012

Children are more often poor than adults

Younger children are more often poor

Percentage of All Children Living in Poverty, by Age Group, 2000-2010

Poverty varies by race/ethnicity

Percentage of Children who are Poor by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2012

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. CPS Table Creator (online tool), available at:

Note: Estimates reflect the new OMB race definitions, and include only those who are
Highest state-level poverty rates are found in the South

States with the Ten Highest Poverty Rates in 2010

- Georgia, 17.9
- Texas, 17.9
- West Virginia, 18.1
- South Carolina, 18.2
- Louisiana, 18.7
- Arkansas, 18.8
- Kentucky, 19
- Alabama, 19
- District of Columbia, 19.2
- New Mexico, 20.4
- Mississippi, 22.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, September 2011.
5 ways poverty harms children

1. *Poverty harms the brain and other body systems*

   - Poverty can negatively affect how the body and mind develop and alter the fundamental architecture of the brain.
   - Children who experience poverty have an increased likelihood, extending into adulthood, for numerous chronic illnesses and for a shortened life expectancy.
5 ways poverty harms children

2. Poverty leads to poor physical, emotional, and behavioral health.

- Growing up poor increases the likelihood that children will have poor health, including poor emotional and behavioral health.
- Poor children are more likely to lack "food security," as well as have diets deficient in important nutrients.
- Rates of several chronic health conditions, such as asthma, are higher among poor children.
- Poor children are less likely to receive preventive medical and dental care.
5 ways poverty harms children

3. Poor children are more likely to live in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty, which is associated with numerous social ills, including:

• Exposure to environmental toxins and crime and violence

• Schools in districts with fewer resources, with facilities that are grossly inadequate, and with school leadership that is more transient.
5 ways poverty harms children

4. Poverty can harm children through the negative effects it has on their families and the home environment.

• Poor parents report higher stress, aggravation, and depressive symptoms than higher-income parents.
• Parents with scarce economic resources face difficulty planning, preparing, and providing for their families material needs.
• Poor families have fewer books and other educational resources at home, and children are less likely to experience family outings, activities, and learning enrichment.
5 ways poverty harms children

5. Poverty creates and widens early achievement gaps.

• Children growing up in poverty, when compared with their economically more secure peers, fall behind early.

• Poor children lag behind their peers at entry to kindergarten, in reading ability at the end of third grade, and in school attendance in eighth grade.

• Poor children are more likely to drop out of school, or fail to obtain post-secondary education.
Policy considerations

• Programs that increased family income found improvements in children's social and academic outcomes.

• Integrated student supports models that target academic and non-academic supports are promising approaches for improving educational outcomes.

• High-quality early childhood education has been proven to improve outcomes for at-risk children.
The value of family support

• The family is the child’s first developmental context: material, social, and emotional

• Poverty, low parental education, and stress can compromise the quality of family relationships and the child’s involvement in experiences that enrich development

• Family support programs can increase family engagement and parents’ knowledge of child development; provide job training and work supports; help parents access health and nutrition services or treatment for substance abuse; and reduce stress
Policy choices for family support

• Voluntary, evidence-based home visiting for new and expectant mothers at risk for negative child outcomes
• Parent education and parent-child interaction programs that are linguistically and culturally sensitive
• Access to child care assistance, with provisions for quality and continuity of care
• Enrollment in programs that promote family economic stability and parents’ participation in education or training
• Prevention programs and services for children at risk for maltreatment and their families
• Access to health care and education programs for children cared for by grandparents and other relatives
Accountability systems

• Evaluate the quality of learning environments, caregiver/child interaction, and teaching strategies
  • Collect data for children and families
  • Assess program elements and the workforce
• Consider longitudinal, linked data systems between programs and state agencies that can be disaggregated by risk factors
• Early warning systems can allow timely intervention
• Professional development for data users (teachers, front line workers, and administrators)
Thank you!

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Visit us at: childtrends.org
State Strategies to End Child Poverty as a Barrier to Educational Success

CSG Webinar

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February 20, 2014
Poverty Rate of People 65 Years and Over

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Poverty Tables, "Table 3. Poverty Status of People, by Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1959 to 2012."

Notes: Only includes noninstitutionalized civilians ages 16 and up who are heads of household or the spouses of heads. Never-married mothers are female heads of household at least 16 years of age who are never married and have at least one never-married child under age 18 in the family. Never-married mothers who are not heads of households, for example those in subfamilies, are excluded from this analysis. Single mothers include all women who are never-married, separated, divorced, or widowed and have at least one never-married child under age 18 in the family.
Poverty Rates for All Children, Black Children, and Female-Headed Households with Children, 1975-2011

What Accounts for Success?

The Three Norms
• Complete high school
• Work full time
• Wait until age 21 and marry before children

Income Class, by Adherence to Social Norms, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norms</th>
<th>Poor (&lt; 100% poverty level)</th>
<th>Middle class and above (&gt; 300% poverty level)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 Norms</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Norms</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Norms</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ calculations based on the U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey.
Senate Majority Leader John Unger
West Virginia