

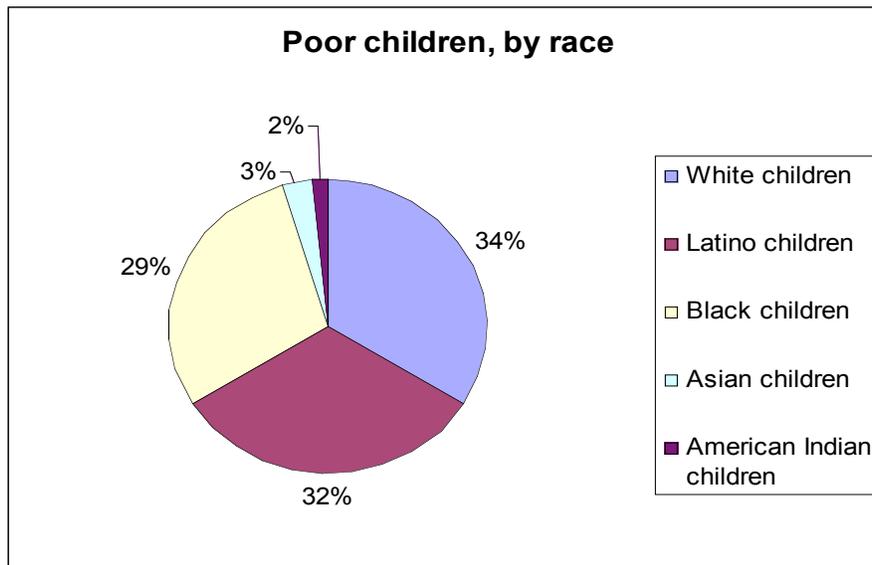
For Immediate Release
November 20, 2007
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Poverty by the Numbers:
**BY RACE, WHITE CHILDREN MAKE UP THE
BIGGEST PERCENTAGE OF AMERICA'S POOR**

New York City – A fact sheet released today by the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) shows that, contrary to some common stereotypes about America's poor, at least one-third of the 13 million children living in poverty are white.

“Poverty affects children of all colors, contrary to stereotypes. The notion held by many Americans that poverty is not a white problem is simply false,” says Jane Knitzer, EdD, director of NCCP, a research center at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. “The sooner all Americans realize these facts about poverty, the better chance we have of eradicating it.”

The NCCP fact sheet shows that among America's poor children, 4.2 million are white, 4 million are Latino, 3.6 million are African American, 400,000 are Asian, and 200,000 are American Indian.



While the figures indicate that indeed more white children are poor, they also show, however, that higher percentages of minorities live in poor families:

NCCP, Poverty, add one

- 10% of white children (4.2 million). In the 10 most populated states, rates of child poverty among white children range from 7% in Texas to 12% in Michigan.
- 27% of Latino children (4 million). In the 10 most populated states, rates of child poverty among Latino children range from 19% in Florida to 35% in Pennsylvania.
- 33% of black children (3.6 million). In the 10 most populated states, rates of child poverty among black children range from 29% in California and Florida to 47% in Ohio.
- 12% of Asian children (400,000) and 40% of American Indian (200,000)
Comparable state comparisons are not possible due to small sample sizes.

Nancy K. Cauthen, PhD, deputy director of NCCP, adds that America has 1.2 million more poor children today than in 2000. “It’s troubling that the trend has been upward, but child poverty is not intractable. Effective public policies can make a difference.”

One of the things NCCP recommends, says Cauthen, are strategies that help parents succeed in the labor force, which will in turn, help their children. “Low earning workers need higher wages but policies such as earned income tax credits and child care assistance are critical to supporting income growth for low-wage workers. These workers also need access to benefits that higher-wage earners take for granted, such as health insurance and paid sick leave.”

Dr. Knitzer says she would also like to see more policies that target families with infants and toddlers, such as Early Head Start, which have been shown to improve children's cognitive development and their behavior. “Starting early and continuing investments in high quality early learning through the preschool years, and indeed, into the early school years, are critical to America's future productivity,” she says. “High-quality early childhood experiences can go a long way toward closing the achievement gap between poor children and their more well-off peers.”

For the complete fact sheet “Who are America’s Poor Children? The Official Story,” access: http://www.nccp.org/publications/fact_sheets.html.

The National Center for Children in Poverty is the nation's leading public policy center dedicated to promoting the economic security, health, and well-being of America's low-income families and children. Part of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, NCCP uses research to inform policy and practice with the goal of ensuring positive outcomes for the next generation.