



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ

CHILDREN IN POVERTY

Love In the Name of Christ ■ www.loveinc.org

In the United States, over one-third of the people living in poverty are children.¹ Across our country, boys and girls are experiencing pain, frustration, and unmet needs because they are poor. Consider the eight-year-old girl who can't concentrate in class on Monday because she hasn't eaten all weekend. Or the two-year-old toddler who quakes and cries through the night because there's no heat in the apartment. Or the six-year-old asthmatic boy who suffers without relief of medication because his family can't afford health insurance. How are these children to make sense of the world around them? Poverty has deprived them of both material resources and opportunity while leaving them virtually devoid of hope for a brighter future.

Consider these facts:

- In 2008, over 14 million children—19 percent of all children in this country—were living below the poverty line.²
- In 2007, the number of families with children who lived in extreme poverty—those living with an annual income below \$10,600 for a family of four—rose to nearly 5.8 million, an increase of nearly 25 percent since 2000.³
- The face of childhood poverty is multiethnic. Thirty-four percent of poor children in the U.S. are white (4.5 million), 32 percent are Hispanic (4.3 million), and 29 percent are black (3.9 million).⁴
- The rate of poverty is higher for minority children. In 2006, 33 percent of black and 27 percent of Hispanic children lived in poverty, compared with 14 percent of white children.⁵
- Home situation is a contributing factor of childhood poverty. Forty-two percent of children in families headed by single women were poor in 2006. That is more than five times higher than the percentage of children living in families with married parents who were impoverished.⁶
- Children who are poor are more likely to have low birth weight, die in infancy, and suffer poor health and illnesses severe enough to require hospitalization.⁷
- Nearly 12.5 million American children experienced food insecurity in 2007, meaning their households were uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet the needs of all their members because of insufficient resources.⁸
- Even mild undernutrition experienced by young children during critical periods of growth may lead to reductions in physical growth and affect brain development.⁹
- Children in poverty are twice as likely to repeat a grade and over three-times as likely to drop out of school at ages 16 to 24.¹⁰
- Approximately 1.5 million children are homeless in the United States every year—that's one in fifty children.¹¹
- More than eight million American children have no health insurance coverage.¹²

About Love In the Name of Christ

For more than 30 years, Love INC has been mobilizing the Church to transform lives and communities In the Name of Christ. Love INC has over 140 affiliates in 30 states, representing a network of more than 9,000 churches, 6,000 community-based organizations, and 300,000 volunteers meeting more than one million needs each year.

To find out how you can make a difference in the lives of people in need, visit www.loveinc.org.

Children in Poverty: A Fact Sheet

Reference

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