



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ

CHILDREN IN POVERTY

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

One in four Americans is a child, but more than one in three Americans is a child in poverty. 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:

- Between 2007 and 2009, child poverty grew from 13.4 million to 15.5 million—almost 21 percent of all children in this country.
- In 2008, the number of children living in families in extreme poverty—those living with an annual income below \$10,977 for a family of four—was 5.6 million, an increase of 1.6 million children since 2000.
- Children in black and Hispanic-headed homes are twice as likely to be in poverty as children in white or other minority-headed homes.
- Home situation is a contributing factor of childhood poverty. Children in families headed by single women were more than four times higher than the rate for married-couple families in 2009—44 percent.
- 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.
- 7.5 million American children had no health insurance coverage in 2009.
- After hovering between 8 and 9.5 percent for nearly a decade, food insecurity—lacking consistent access to enough food—jumped to 11 percent in 2008 among children, affecting 39.5 million households with children, more than one of every three households.
- Even mild undernutrition experienced by young children during critical periods of growth may lead to reductions in physical growth and affect brain development.
- Poverty and failure in education go hand in hand. Children in poverty are twice as likely to repeat a grade as those out of it, and households where no one has a high school diploma are nearly seven times as likely to be food insecure as those with at least one adult who has a bachelor's degree.
- Approximately 1.5 million children are homeless in the United States every year—that's one in 50 children.

Sources: [U.S. Census Bureau](#), [Children's Defense Fund](#), [National Center for Children in Poverty](#), [America's Second Harvest](#), [The National Center on Family Homelessness](#)

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 155 affiliates in 30 states, representing a network of more than 9,000 churches, 7,000 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.