

Child Poverty Increasing¹

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When we think of poor children, the images of starving children across the world may come to mind. However, the numbers of children living in poverty right here in the U.S. might surprise you. According to a recent study by the National Center for Children in Poverty, in 2004, 13.5 million children, or 18% of all children in the U.S., lived in poverty. Between 2000 and 2004, the number of children in poverty increased by more than 10% (Douglas-Hall & Koball, 2006).

Looking at regional differences across the country, the Midwest experienced the biggest increases in child poverty, adding over half a million children to the poverty rolls of the region and driving the upsurge in the nation's child poverty rates. This region's upswing came mostly among children whose parents were employed, and those who did not have a college education. One possible reason is that well paid manufacturing jobs in the region have been replaced with service jobs with lower earnings and fewer benefits. The South has the largest number of children living in poverty, almost 5.5 million (Douglas-Hall & Koball, 2006).

As a country, we have a history of programs to assist poor children. The National Center for Children in Poverty advocates policies that promote jobs with livable wages and better benefits, offer state and federal programs that give families some financial support, and strengthen regional economies: policies designed to build a safety net for poor children and their families.

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To listen to the radio broadcast:

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/526.mp3

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/526.wav

Resources

Douglas-Hall, A., & Koball, D. (2006). *The new poor: Regional trends in child poverty since 2000*. National Center for Children in Poverty. New York: Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. Retrieved September 18, 2006, from http://www.nccp.org/media/npr06_text.pdf.