



Step by Step

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TOWARD MISSOURI'S FUTURE

This newsletter is published as part of the Missouri Youth Database Project. To receive free newsletters or to send material for the *Etc.* page, contact: *Step by Step*, 606 Clark Hall, UMC, Columbia, MO 65211.

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Children in Poverty

The nation is entering the 21st century riding on an unprecedented wave of prosperity. Yet, in the midst of these good times, children remain the largest single group of Americans living in poverty.

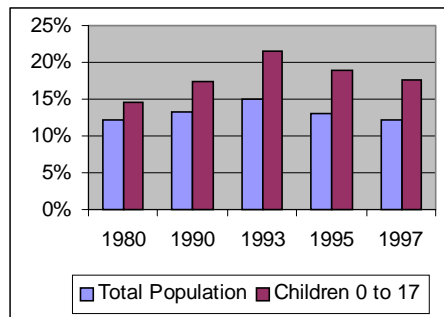
For at least the past two decades, the poverty rates of children have been much higher than for the population overall. The percent of the total population below poverty, after climbing to a high of 15.5 percent in 1993, once again in 1997 returned to the low of 12.2 percent posted in 1980. At the same time the percent of children living in poverty was 14.6 percent in 1980 and reached a high of 21.6 percent in 1993. And, while declining steadily since, continues to be considerably higher than that of the population as a whole in 1997 with an estimated 17.7 percent of children living in poverty.

The federal poverty level in 1997 was \$16,276 for a family of four consisting of two adults and two children. As the accompanying maps on page 2 illustrate, the poverty rate among children varies greatly across the state. The highest concentrations of poverty continue to be in the southeastern part of the state and St. Louis City, while the lowest rates are concentrated in suburban areas. In 1997, poverty rates among children ranged from a low of 6.4 percent in St. Charles County outside St. Louis to a high of 38.4 percent in St. Louis City.

It is interesting to note that many of the counties with the highest pockets of poverty tended to show the greatest improvement between 1995 and 1997. This is a marked turnaround from the 1993 to 1995 period. However, this should be interpreted with caution. As the accompanying table shows, there is considerable latitude in the confidence levels the Census Bureau has provided. For instance, St. Louis City could actually have a poverty rate anywhere between 29.4 percent to 47.4 percent - a difference of 18 percentage points.

Although there are many factors that contribute to low income of families, there is a relation between poverty rates and what is happening in the general economy. In 1992, there was a significant recession which was reflected in the 1993 rate among Missouri children. By 1995, economic growth had returned.

Percent of Children and Total Population Below Poverty, 1980-97



Year	1980	1990	1993	1995	1997
Total Pop.	12.2%	13.3%	15.5%	13.0%	12.2%
Children	14.6%	17.4%	21.6%	18.9%	17.7%



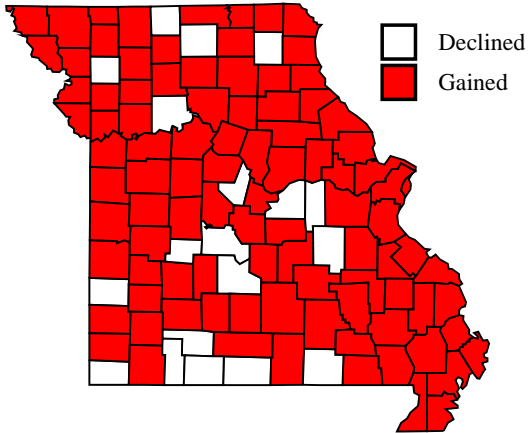
Inside:

*Child
Advocacy
Day will be
celebrated on
January 30,
2001*

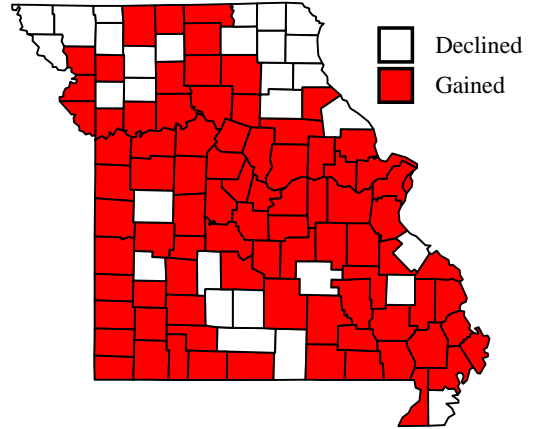
Figures 1-4.

Change in Percent of Children in Poverty

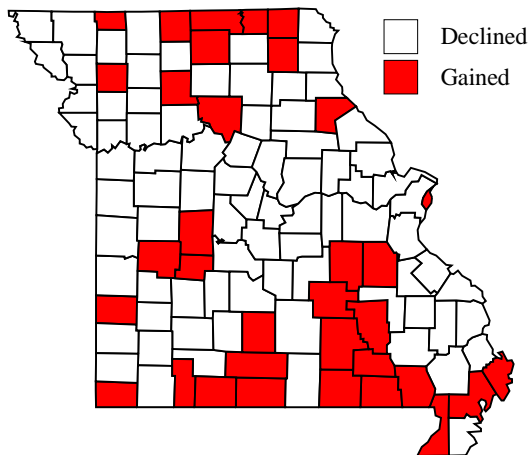
1980-90



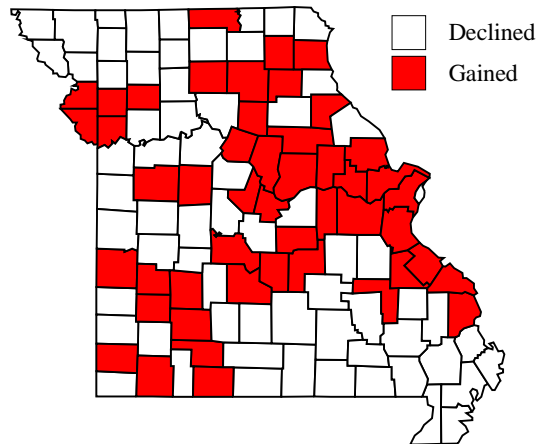
1990-93



1993-95



1995-97



Source: USDC, Bureau of the Census

Table 1: Estimated Number of Children Under Age 18 in Poverty in 1997

County	Estimated Number	Confidence Level	Estimated Percent	Confidence Level
-Adair County	899	691 to 1,107	18.2	14.0 to 22.4
-Andrew County	501	369 to 633	11.6	8.6 to 14.7
-Atchison County	241	179 to 302	15.0	11.2 to 18.9
-Audrain County	1,144	872 to 1,416	18.1	13.8 to 22.4
-Barry County	2,118	1,602 to 2,635	24.1	18.2 to 30.0
-Barton County	653	497 to 808	19.6	14.9 to 24.2
-Bates County	860	661 to 1,059	20.2	15.5 to 24.8
-Benton County	1,020	777 to 1,263	27.8	21.2 to 34.4
-Bollinger County	733	563 to 904	23.0	17.7 to 28.4
-Boone County	4,343	3,362 to 5,323	14.3	11.1 to 17.6
-Buchanan County	4,289	3,320 to 5,257	19.8	15.4 to 24.3
-Butler County	3,056	2,359 to 3,754	29.0	22.4 to 35.6
-Caldwell County	434	328 to 540	17.9	13.5 to 22.3
-Callaway County	1,476	1,143 to 1,810	14.7	11.4 to 18.0
-Camden County	1,586	1,197 to 1,974	21.6	16.3 to 26.9
-Cape Girardeau County	2,585	2,003 to 3,167	16.1	12.5 to 19.7
-Carroll County	574	440 to 708	20.8	16.0 to 25.7
-Carter County	662	497 to 826	36.3	27.3 to 45.3
-Cass County	2,392	1,834 to 2,951	10.1	7.8 to 12.5
-Cedar County	873	671 to 1,076	27.4	21.0 to 33.8
-Chariton County	389	297 to 480	16.9	12.9 to 21.0
-Christian County	1,952	1,480 to 2,424	13.8	10.4 to 17.1
-Clark County	400	304 to 495	19.4	14.8 to 24.0
-Clay County	3,764	2,866 to 4,661	8.3	6.3 to 10.2
-Clinton County	662	501 to 823	12.2	9.2 to 15.1
-Cole County	1,906	1,456 to 2,356	10.8	8.3 to 13.4
-Cooper County	586	450 to 722	15.0	11.5 to 18.5
-Crawford County	1,446	1,101 to 1,791	23.3	17.7 to 28.8
-Dade County	448	342 to 554	22.4	17.1 to 27.7
-Dallas County	972	745 to 1,198	22.6	17.3 to 27.8
-Daviss County	511	383 to 640	22.9	17.2 to 28.7
-DeKalb County	398	297 to 499	17.0	12.7 to 21.3
-Dent County	1,024	779 to 1,269	27.0	20.5 to 33.4
-Douglas County	1,033	784 to 1,283	30.8	23.3 to 38.2
-Dunklin County	3,054	2,330 to 3,779	33.8	25.8 to 41.9
-Franklin County	3,154	2,431 to 3,877	11.8	9.1 to 14.6
-Gasconade County	576	441 to 712	15.3	11.7 to 18.9
-Gentry County	293	219 to 367	16.5	12.3 to 20.6
-Greene County	9,731	7,525 to 11,938	18.5	14.3 to 22.7
-Grundy County	512	391 to 632	20.9	15.9 to 25.8
-Harrison County	462	353 to 570	23.0	17.6 to 28.4
-Henry County	1,141	879 to 1,403	21.3	16.4 to 26.2
-Hickory County	557	419 to 695	32.1	24.2 to 40.1
-Holt County	277	210 to 344	18.9	14.3 to 23.5
-Howard County	473	361 to 584	18.7	14.3 to 23.1
-Howell County	2,740	2,097 to 3,383	28.6	21.9 to 35.3
-Iron County	897	685 to 1,109	30.2	23.1 to 37.4

Table 1: Estimated Number of Children Under Age 18 in Poverty in 1997

County	Estimated Number	Confidence Level	Estimated Percent	Confidence Level
-Jackson County	31,412	24,311 to 38,512	18.4	14.2 to 22.5
-Jasper County	5,326	4,124 to 6,528	20.5	15.8 to 25.1
-Jefferson County	6,450	4,971 to 7,930	11.0	8.5 to 13.5
-Johnson County	1,837	1,419 to 2,254	15.1	11.7 to 18.6
-Knox County	287	212 to 362	26.7	19.7 to 33.7
-Laclede County	1,836	1,410 to 2,262	21.7	16.7 to 26.8
-Lafayette County	1,317	1,011 to 1,623	14.9	11.5 to 18.4
-Lawrence County	1,843	1,411 to 2,275	20.2	15.5 to 25.0
-Lewis County	454	347 to 561	18.5	14.2 to 22.9
-Lincoln County	1,561	1,204 to 1,919	14.1	10.9 to 17.3
-Linn County	683	524 to 842	19.1	14.7 to 23.6
-Livingston County	631	485 to 778	17.8	13.7 to 21.9
-McDonald County	1,603	1,224 to 1,982	28.1	21.5 to 34.8
-Macon County	663	509 to 816	16.9	13.0 to 20.8
-Madison County	759	582 to 935	25.1	19.3 to 31.0
-Maries County	447	342 to 552	20.1	15.4 to 24.8
-Marion County	1,457	1,116 to 1,797	18.6	14.2 to 22.9
-Mercer County	178	133 to 222	18.6	14.0 to 23.3
-Miller County	1,316	1,006 to 1,627	21.3	16.3 to 26.4
-Mississippi County	1,515	1,150 to 1,881	37.6	28.5 to 46.7
-Moniteau County	495	376 to 614	13.0	9.9 to 16.1
-Monroe County	397	299 to 494	15.4	11.6 to 19.2
-Montgomery County	594	457 to 732	18.1	13.9 to 22.3
-Morgan County	1,091	827 to 1,355	25.0	19.0 to 31.1
-New Madrid County	1,900	1,456 to 2,344	30.7	23.6 to 37.9
-Newton County	2,424	1,866 to 2,983	18.2	14.0 to 22.4
-Nodaway County	586	434 to 738	12.3	9.1 to 15.5
-Oregon County	873	657 to 1,089	34.6	26.1 to 43.2
-Osage County	351	265 to 437	9.8	7.4 to 12.2
-Ozark County	783	573 to 993	33.3	24.3 to 42.2
-Pemiscot County	2,654	2,014 to 3,294	37.6	28.5 to 46.6
-Perry County	617	471 to 764	12.1	9.2 to 15.0
-Pettis County	1,952	1,508 to 2,396	19.7	15.2 to 24.2
-Phelps County	2,047	1,581 to 2,512	22.1	17.1 to 27.1
-Pike County	822	625 to 1,019	18.2	13.8 to 22.5
-Platte County	1,247	936 to 1,558	6.8	5.1 to 8.5
-Polk County	1,456	1,111 to 1,802	22.6	17.2 to 27.9
-Pulaski County	1,945	1,490 to 2,401	16.6	12.7 to 20.5
-Putnam County	298	225 to 372	26.0	19.6 to 32.4
-Ralls County	374	249 to 499	15.3	10.2 to 20.3
-Randolph County	1,264	965 to 1,563	20.9	15.9 to 25.8
-Ray County	905	675 to 1,136	13.1	9.7 to 16.4
-Reynolds County	583	436 to 730	33.3	24.9 to 41.7
-Ripley County	1,421	1,074 to 1,768	36.6	27.7 to 45.5
-St. Charles County	5,215	3,937 to 6,494	6.4	4.8 to 7.9
-St. Clair County	599	456 to 742	27.8	21.1 to 34.4
-Ste. Genevieve County	625	476 to 774	12.8	9.8 to 15.9
-St. Francois County	3,274	2,522 to 4,025	23.0	17.7 to 28.3

ETC.

"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." - Frederick Douglass

The conference of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children will be held on January 22-26, 2001 in San Diego, CA. For more information, call 312-554-0166 (phone) or see www.apsac.org (website).

Missouri's Annual Child Advocacy Day will be held on January 30, 2001, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Participants meet in Capitol Rotunda in Jefferson City, MO. For more information, contact Francey Ericson, 913-342-1110, x178 (phone) or fericson@hafs.org (e-mail).

The conference of the Alliance of Work/Life Professionals will be held on February 7-9, 2001 in Orlando, FL. For more information, call 800-874-9383 (phone) or see www.awlp.org (website).

The National School Supply and Equipment Association Conference will be held on February 7-9, 2001 in Dallas, TX. For more information, call 800-395-5550 (phone) or see www.nssea.org (website).

The conference of the Child Welfare League of America will be held on March 7-9, 2001 in Washington, DC. For more information, call 202-638-2952 or see www.cwla.org (website).

The National Association of the Child Care Resource and Referral

Agencies Conference will be held in Washington, DC on March 7-10, 2001. For more information, call 202-393-5501 (phone) or see www.naccrra.org (website).

The Conference on the Young Years, sponsored by the Early Childhood Section of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will be held on March 9-10, 2001 at Tan-Tar-A Resort, Osage Beach, MO. For more information, call 573-751-2095.

The conference of the Missouri Association for Elementary and Secondary Principals will be held on March 11-13, 2001 at Osage Beach, MO. For more information, see <http://www.mcsa.org/maesp/confernc.htm> (website).

The conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development will be held on March 17-19, 2001, in Boston, MA. For more information, see <http://www.ascd.org/trainingopportunities/conferences/2001ac/2001ac.html> (website).

The XXXVIII Committee on Family Research Seminar will be held in Newark, DE on March 28-31, 2001. For more information, contact Barbara H. Settles, Committee on Family Research, settlesb@udel.edu (e-mail), 302-368-0263 (phone), or 302-368-5763 (fax).

The Association for Childhood Education's Annual International Conference and Exhibit, "2001 Education Odyssey," will be held on April 3-6, 2001 at the Royal York

Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. For more information, see <http://www.acei.org> (website).

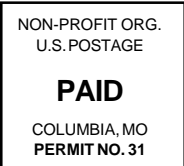
A national conference entitled "The Impact of Welfare Reform on Infants and Toddlers, their Families, and their Communities" will be held at the Crowne Plaza Washington-National Airport in Washington, DC on April 5-6, 2001. The focus of the conference will be the impact of welfare reform on early childhood development, with particular emphasis on the results of a three-year Early Head Start study and urban/rural differences. For more information, contact Jackie Scott: Scottjac@missouri.edu (e-mail), 573-884-8951 (phone), 573-884-0598 (fax), or see <http://MUCenter.missouri.edu> (website).

The Children's Defense Fund's Annual Conference, "Leave No Child Behind: Transforming the World for Children," will be held on April 18-21, 2001, at the Hilton Washington and Towers, Washington, DC. For more information, call 800-CDF-1200.

The annual conference of the Midwest Association for the Education of Young Children will be held on April 19-21, 2001 in Des Moines, IA. For more information, see <http://www.mwaeyc.org/2001.html> (website).

The annual conference of the National School-Age Care Alliance will be held on April 19-21, 2001 in Indianapolis, IN. For more information, contact: 617-298-5012 (phone) or www.nsaca.org (website).

The American Montessori Society will hold its annual conference on April 19-22, 2001 in Chicago, IL. For more information, call 713-465-7670 (phone) or see



To download poverty data and to see an explanation of "confidence level" see:<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/estimatetoc.html>

Table 1: Estimated Number of Children Under Age 18 in Poverty in 1997

County	Estimated Number	Confidence Level	Estimated Percent	Confidence Level
-St. Louis County	27,597	21,049 to 34,145	11.2	8.5 to 13.8
-Saline County	1,017	783 to 1,251	17.7	13.7 to 21.8
-Schuyler County	261	197 to 326	22.2	16.8 to 27.7
-Scotland County	316	236 to 395	24.5	18.3 to 30.6
-Scott County	2,951	2,277 to 3,626	25.0	19.3 to 30.8
-Shannon County	842	629 to 1,054	37.0	27.7 to 46.4
-Shelby County	342	261 to 423	18.9	14.4 to 23.4
-Stoddard County	1,836	1,419 to 2,254	24.5	18.9 to 30.1
-Stone County	1,370	1,026 to 1,714	23.0	17.2 to 28.7
-Sullivan County	406	307 to 505	24.2	18.3 to 30.1
-Taney County	1,687	1,258 to 2,116	22.2	16.5 to 27.8
-Texas County	1,750	1,317 to 2,183	28.8	21.7 to 36.0
-Vernon County	1,186	913 to 1,458	22.4	17.3 to 27.6
-Warren County	822	621 to 1,022	11.6	8.8 to 14.5
-Washington County	2,099	1,582 to 2,616	30.4	22.9 to 37.9
-Wayne County	1,190	900 to 1,480	37.9	28.7 to 47.2
-Webster County	1,861	1,394 to 2,327	21.7	16.3 to 27.1
-Worth County	148	111 to 184	25.5	19.2 to 31.8
-Wright County	1,553	1,175 to 1,930	27.1	20.5 to 33.7
-St. Louis City	35,090	26,878 to 43,301	38.4	29.4 to 47.4
Missouri	252,485	227,332 to 277,638	17.7	15.9 to 19.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Poverty and Income Estimates Program
 Data released: November 22, 2000