



END CHILD POVERTY U.S. CAMPAIGN

Child poverty is a solvable problem when there is the political will to address it.

All children deserve the chance to reach their full potential. Yet as we approach the third decade of the twenty-first century, the inequality gap in our nation continues to grow with children at the forefront. Children are one-quarter of our population but all of our future - so when all children succeed, we all benefit.

- **Children disproportionately experience poverty in the United States.** Children experience poverty at a rate that is 62 percent higher than adults.¹ While they make up 23 percent of the U.S. population, they account for 32 percent of the population living in poverty. When combined with children in families living just above the poverty line, 40 percent of children younger than 18 are poor or low-income.
- **Poverty affects children of all races, ethnicities and geographic areas.** Yet due to our nation's legacy of racism and discrimination, historically marginalized populations, including racial and ethnic minorities, indigenous nations, immigrants, and communities residing in territories continue to experience significantly higher rates of child poverty. Anti-poverty policies therefore must be equity-focused and effective in addressing chronic poverty and its root causes.
- **Poverty damages childhoods and our economy.** Science demonstrates that kids benefit from resources and opportunities provided at an early age that positively impact their lives and their long-term economic contributions, regardless of their family's socioeconomic status. When we don't give children a healthy start in life and sustain them through their physical and intellectual growing years, they are more likely to have poor developmental outcomes, increasing the likelihood that they will become poor adults. Supporting households, especially households of color, with children in building assets and developing savings for higher education, homeownership, retirement and other assets can be critical for breaking the cycle of generational poverty and building generational wealth. In addition to the human toll poverty takes on children's lives, child poverty also negatively impacts our national economic security and prosperity, costing our nation over \$1 trillion a year.



- **Child poverty is solvable when there is the political will to address it.** Domestic and international anti-poverty initiatives demonstrate that we can successfully reduce child poverty. For example, the United Kingdom cut child poverty in half between 2000 and 2010ⁱⁱ through a national commitment and coordinated strategy to drastically reduce child poverty. The federal government should learn from effective policies and practices practiced abroad and in our nation to establish a bold target to cut child poverty in half within a decade and eliminate it within 20 years. An effective national strategy to meet this target must include cross-sector policies that include marginalized populations and communities in their design and implementation.

Taking Action to Cut Child Poverty in Half Within a Decade

Child poverty rates remain stubbornly high in the U.S. In 2017, 17.5 percent of children (12.8 million) were living below the poverty line (\$24,858 for a family of four with two children).

While there are some dedicated lawmakers, media outlets, and advocates fighting for children, there is no long-term national strategy, or even a national dialogue, to address child poverty in the U.S. and the negative outcomes associated with it.

We know it does not have to be this way. When countries prioritize their children, it results in lower child poverty rates and improved economic outcomes.

End Child Poverty U.S. is a national campaign led by the U.S. Child Poverty Action Group, a partnership of leading anti-poverty organizations. Our goal is to create a national target to cut child poverty in half within a decade, creating a mechanism to hold the government accountable to making child poverty reduction a priority.

Yet we know we can't do it alone. It is only through collective action that we can make progress. *End Child Poverty U.S.* is designed as a platform to elevate the voices of those working around the country to address child poverty.

First Focus

Center for Native American Youth

Child Welfare League of America

National Black Child Development Institute

National Center for Children in Poverty

National Diaper Bank Network

National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives



National WIC Association
Partnership for America's Children
Prosperity Now
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Save the Children Action Network
Share our Strength
UnidosUS

For more information, visit www.childpovertyusa.org.

ⁱ U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplements, Current Population Reports, *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2017*, <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2018/demo/p60-263.html>.

ⁱⁱ Natalie Branosky and Jane Mansour, *A Look Back at the Child Poverty Target: Transferable Themes for the United States*, First Focus, April 2015, <https://firstfocus.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/A-Look-Back-at-the-UK-Child-Poverty-Target-Transferable-Themes-for-the-United-States.pdf>.