

One million more children living in poverty since 2009, new census data released today shows

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Between 2009 and 2010, one million more children in America joined the ranks of those living in poverty, bringing the total to an estimated 15.7 million poor children in 2010, an increase of 2.6 million since the recession began in 2007, according to researchers from the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire.

Furthermore, the authors estimate that nearly 1 in 4 [young children](#) -- those under age 6 -- now live in poverty. "It is important to understand young child poverty specifically, as children who are poor before age 6 have been shown to experience educational deficits, and [health problems](#) , with effects that span the life course," the researchers said.

To evaluate the number of children now living in poverty, researchers focused on two time periods -- change since 2007, as the nation entered the recession, and change since 2009, as the [recession](#) was ending. They also looked at young children -- children under 6 years old -- living in poverty as well as national poverty rates for all children under 18.

Nationally, the number of all children living in poverty increased from 14.7 million in 2009 to 15.7 million in 2010. In 2007, 13.1 million children were living in poverty nationally.

Since 2007, 38 states have seen a significant increase in child poverty. [Mississippi](#) has the highest percentage of children living in poverty at

32.5 percent, followed by the District of Columbia (30.4 percent) and [New Mexico](#) (30 percent). New Hampshire has the lowest percentage of children living in poverty (10 percent), followed by [Connecticut](#) (12.8 percent) and Alaska (12.9 percent).

Overall, the South has the highest rates of child poverty at an estimated 24.2 percent, and the Northeast has the lowest rates at an estimated 17.8 percent. In addition, 28.7 percent of children in [urban areas](#) and 25.4 percent of children in rural places now live in poverty, significantly higher than the 16.1 percent in suburban areas.

Nationally, the number of young children, those under 6 years old, living in poverty increased from 5.7 million in 2009 to 5.9 million in 2010, with 24.8 percent of young children now poor. In the South, 27.9 percent of young children live in poverty, followed by 24.1 percent in the Midwest, 23.4 percent in the West, and 20.6 percent in the Northeast.

Young children living in the rural South have been the hardest hit, with more than 1 in 3 of the region's rural young children now living in poverty. "Rural poverty is particularly striking in this region, where nearly 36 percent of [children](#) under age 6 were poor," the researchers said.

The research was conducted by Jessica Bean, vulnerable families research associate at the Carsey Institute; Beth Mattingly, director of research on vulnerable families at the Carsey Institute and research assistant professor of sociology at UNH; and Andrew Schaefer, a doctoral student in sociology at UNH and research assistant at the Carsey Institute.

More information: www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/Carsey/pressroom/2011/01/20110120-Child-Poverty-in-the-South-2010
[ch/search.php?id=173](http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/Carsey/pressroom/2011/01/20110120-Child-Poverty-in-the-South-2010)

Provided by University of New Hampshire

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