

1 in 5 children live in poverty: A new report examines effect of poverty on children

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While most children are looking forward to getting gifts during the upcoming holiday season, it is worth noting that one in five children live in poverty. Poverty is a major risk factor for children's development and deep poverty is linked to a range of physical-biological, cognitive-academic, and social-emotional problems. These problems persist into adulthood. Poverty also contributes to a growing health and academic achievement gap, declining college attendance and graduation rates, and an increasing workforce skills gap.

A new Social Policy Report from SRCD on Children, Families and Poverty: Definitions, Trends, Emerging Science and Implications for Policy provides an overview of the research evidence on the development of children who live in poverty. According to the report:

- Poverty's impact on children's education achievements and health results in lower economic productivity in adulthood and higher health care costs.
- [Chronic stress](#) associated with living in poverty changes children's responses to everyday challenges in their schools and communities.
- Substandard housing and the physical and social hazards in many poor neighborhoods are detrimental to children's development.

The report also looks at research on U.S. programs and policies related to poverty. According to the report:

- Besides temporary upturns in the economy, it is a collection of public policies that has helped lower child poverty rates.
- Programs that work directly to improve young children's development through high-quality early care and education show positive effects, though often only in the short term.
- Programs that provide cash to families for their economic needs and children's well-being (if they fulfill such requirements as children's school attendance) are showing some positive effects.

Provided by Society for Research in Child Development

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