



LITERACY AND POVERTY

The relationship between level of education and poverty is clear. The National Institute for Literacy estimates that about 43% of adults with very low literacy skills live in poverty. About 70% of adult welfare recipients have lower level literacy skill on the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL).

About 47% of adult welfare recipients have not graduated from high school.

Individuals ages 25 to 34 who dropped out of high school are more than three times as likely to receive public assistance as high school graduates who did not go on to college.

According to one study of welfare recipients without high school diplomas, when recipients increase their basic skills, they tend to make substantial improvements in employment, earnings and self-sufficiency. In a study of mothers receiving welfare, each additional year of schooling led to approximately a 7% wage increase.

SOURCE: *U.S. Adult Literacy Programs, Making a Difference.* ProLiteracy America.

POVERTY IN FLORIDA

The overall poverty rate for persons in Florida as measured in the 2000 census was 2 million persons or 12.5%. This rate is slightly lower than in 1990 when 12.7% of the state's residents lived in poverty.

Poverty rates varied greatly by age and by family composition. While nearly one out of every five children in Florida lived in poverty in 1999 (17.6%), less than 1 in 10 of Florida's 65 and older population had income below the federal poverty threshold (9.15%).

Close to 400,000 Florida families lived below the federal poverty threshold (383,131 families; 9% of all families in the state). This rate is unchanged since the 1990 census when 9% of all families were living below poverty.

The poverty rate for families headed by females with no husband present was nearly three times as high as the rate for all families (25.3% compared to 9%) and five times as high as the rate for married couple families (4.9%).

Nearly half of all female headed families with children under five lived below the poverty level. The poverty rate for these families was 44.6%. The number of female-headed families with children under five living in poverty totaled 75,752 in the 2000 Census.

POVERTY RATES IN FLORIDA FROM CENSUS 2000						Female Headed Family with	
County	Median Income in Household	All Persons	Persons Under 5	Persons 5 to 17	Persons 65 and older	Children Under 5	Children Under 18
Alachua	31,426	22.80%	22.70%	18.90%	9.70%	54.27%	40.17%
Baker	40,035	14.70%	15.80%	25.80%	8.60%	53.62%	45.30%
Bay	36,092	13.00%	22.60%	17.60%	11.00%	51.32%	39.55%
Bradford	33,140	14.60%	14.70%	20.80%	17.60%	49.41%	38.65%
Brevard	40,099	9.50%	15.70%	12.80%	6.50%	47.82%	31.24%
Broward	41,691	11.50%	15.80%	15.60%	10.00%	38.16%	28.39%
Calhoun	26,575	20.00%	30.20%	21.50%	20.40%	58.33%	49.74%
Charlotte	36,379	8.20%	17.40%	12.10%	5.00%	51.32%	25.47%
Citrus	31,001	11.70%	19.80%	18.50%	7.00%	50.70%	36.20%
Clay	48,854	6.80%	10.50%	8.90%	7.40%	32.60%	22.60%

POVERTY RATES IN FLORIDA FROM CENSUS 2000						Female Headed Family with	
County	Median Income in Household	All Persons	Persons Under 5	Persons 5 to 17	Persons 65 and older	Children Under 5	Children Under 18
Collier	48,289	10.30%	18.40%	16.60%	4.30%	40.10%	26.30%
Columbia	30,881	15.00%	19.40%	17.00%	13.60%	45.00%	33.70%
DeSoto	30,714	23.60%	36.50%	31.20%	7.30%	54.50%	49.00%
Dixie	26,082	19.10%	18.70%	25.80%	16.10%	43.60%	46.60%
Duval	40,703	11.90%	18.10%	16.30%	11.60%	43.60%	31.70%
Escambia	35,234	15.40%	27.10%	23.00%	9.60%	57.10%	43.20%
Flagler	40,214	8.70%	19.60%	15.10%	4.40%	53.00%	33.60%
Franklin	26,756	17.70%	29.20%	21.00%	13.90%	66.30%	38.00%
Gadsden	31,248	19.90%	33.30%	26.80%	16.90%	53.40%	43.30%
Gilchrist	30,328	14.10%	14.50%	19.10%	12.90%	56.80%	42.10%
Glades	30,774	15.20%	19.70%	19.60%	11.20%	60.60%	50.40%
Gulf	30,276	16.70%	21.20%	21.30%	14.10%	61.40%	50.00%
Hamilton	25,638	26.00%	39.60%	34.80%	16.10%	71.30%	56.50%
Hardee	30,183	24.60%	34.90%	29.70%	16.10%	47.50%	42.70%
Hendry	33,592	24.10%	35.00%	29.50%	15.00%	48.20%	44.30%
Hernando	32,572	10.30%	18.80%	15.60%	6.20%	48.30%	32.40%
Highlands	30,160	15.20%	29.20%	25.20%	7.40%	61.50%	45.80%
Hillsborough	40,663	12.50%	19.20%	17.10%	10.00%	43.50%	31.90%
Holmes	27,923	19.10%	26.20%	25.80%	17.90%	72.20%	48.20%
Indian River	39,635	9.30%	17.30%	13.30%	5.70%	39.50%	28.10%
Jackson	29,744	17.20%	29.10%	22.00%	21.00%	55.60%	39.30%
Jefferson	32,998	17.10%	25.00%	21.30%	17.00%	49.00%	39.70%
Lafayette	30,651	17.50%	30.60%	23.40%	17.30%	66.70%	48.30%
Lake	36,903	9.60%	16.80%	16.10%	6.30%	49.90%	36.90%
Lee	40,319	9.70%	17.60%	15.10%	5.60%	41.00%	29.90%
Leon	37,517	18.20%	19.30%	15.90%	8.20%	45.60%	33.00%
Levy	26,959	18.60%	28.10%	26.60%	12.90%	51.50%	46.10%
Liberty	28,840	19.90%	21.60%	27.40%	24.30%	57.70%	50.40%
Madison	26,533	23.10%	34.00%	29.00%	22.50%	64.60%	54.00%
Manatee	38,673	10.10%	17.90%	15.20%	6.20%	40.20%	29.90%
Marion	31,944	13.10%	22.20%	20.20%	7.40%	51.00%	36.40%
Martin	43,083	8.80%	17.00%	13.40%	5.20%	43.30%	25.80%
Miami-Dade	35,966	18.00%	23.20%	23.20%	18.90%	46.70%	37.30%
Monroe	42,283	10.20%	12.70%	12.10%	8.80%	36.80%	25.40%
Nassau	46,022	9.10%	10.90%	11.70%	8.90%	29.80%	27.60%
Okaloosa	41,474	8.80%	15.10%	12.30%	6.50%	46.40%	33.10%
Okeechobee	30,456	16.00%	23.90%	20.40%	10.30%	46.30%	35.80%
Orange	41,311	12.10%	17.90%	16.40%	9.30%	42.40%	30.30%
Osceola	38,214	11.50%	16.50%	14.80%	8.60%	37.60%	30.40%
Palm Beach	45,062	9.90%	15.80%	14.20%	6.60%	39.70%	28.70%
Pasco	32,969	10.70%	16.50%	15.60%	7.70%	48.00%	32.00%

POVERTY RATES IN FLORIDA FROM CENSUS 2000						Female Headed Family with	
County	Median Income in Household	All Persons	Persons Under 5	Persons 5 to 17	Persons 65 and older	Children Under 5	Children Under 18
Pinellas	37,111	10.00%	15.70%	13.90%	8.20%	39.30%	26.60%
Polk	36,036	12.90%	21.30%	19.00%	8.10%	49.30%	37.00%
Putnam	28,180	20.90%	34.50%	29.50%	13.10%	65.00%	52.60%
St. Johns	50,099	8.00%	10.60%	9.60%	6.20%	34.00%	26.70%
St. Lucie	36,363	13.40%	21.00%	21.20%	7.70%	54.20%	40.00%
Santa Rosa	41,881	9.80%	13.60%	13.30%	7.50%	55.30%	37.80%
Sarasota	41,957	7.80%	15.80%	12.30%	4.50%	43.50%	27.50%
Seminole	49,326	7.40%	10.00%	8.70%	6.60%	34.20%	21.70%
Sumter	32,073	13.70%	27.60%	25.90%	7.70%	50.90%	43.00%
Suwannee	29,963	18.50%	23.50%	22.10%	12.40%	47.60%	41.10%
Taylor	30,032	18.00%	24.00%	22.10%	17.90%	50.00%	48.30%
Union	34,563	14.00%	16.60%	14.70%	16.20%	40.20%	35.80%
Volusia	35,219	11.60%	17.70%	16.60%	7.10%	46.30%	33.00%
Wakulla	37,149	11.30%	21.90%	13.50%	15.10%	53.80%	31.10%
Walton	32,407	14.40%	28.80%	18.50%	10.90%	59.60%	47.40%
Washington	27,922	19.20%	32.80%	25.30%	19.40%	59.10%	51.40%
Florida	38,819	12.50%	18.80%	17.20%	9.10%	44.60%	32.80%

COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST AND LOWEST POVERTY RATES FOR SELECTED VARIABLES						
Rank	All Persons		Persons Under 5		Persons 65 & Older	
1	Hamilton	26.0%	Hamilton	39.6%	Liberty	24.3%
2	Hardee	24.6%	DeSoto	36.5%	Madison	22.5%
3	Hendry	24.1%	Hendry	35.0%	Jackson	21.0%
4	DeSoto	23.6%	Hardee	34.9%	Calhoun	20.4%
5	Madison	23.1%	Putnam	34.5%	Washington	19.4%
63	Charlotte	8.2%	Monroe	12.7%	Martin	5.2%
64	St. Johns	8.0%	Nassau	10.9%	Charlotte	5.0%
65	Sarasota	7.8%	St. Johns	10.6%	Sarasota	4.5%
66	Seminole	7.4%	Clay	10.5%	Flagler	4.4%
67	Clay	6.8%	Seminole	10.0%	Collier	4.3%
Rank	All Families		Female Headed Families		Female Headed Families w/ Children Under 5	
1	Hamilton	21.7%	Hamilton	46.0%	Holmes	72.2%
2	Madison	18.9%	Liberty	44.8%	Hamilton	71.3%
3	Hardee	17.0%	Washington	43.0%	Lafayette	66.7%
4	Hendry	16.9%	Glades	42.8%	Franklin	66.3%
5	Liberty	16.8%	Madison	42.7%	Putnam	65.0%
63	Charlotte	5.3%	Sarasota	19.4%	Monroe	36.8%
64	Seminole	5.1%	Pinellas	19.4%	Seminole	34.2%
65	St. Johns	5.1%	Charlotte	17.8%	St. Johns	34.0%
66	Clay	5.1%	Clay	17.7%	Clay	32.6%
67	Sarasota	5.1%	Seminole	16.1%	Nassau	29.8%

POVERTY STATUS FOR PERSONS IN 1999 BY RACE AND AGE				
Income below poverty level	TOTAL	White Alone	Black Alone	All other races
Under 5 years	173,427	80,197	69,548	23,682
5 years	35,320	15,866	14,971	4,483
6 to 11 years	222,734	104,025	92,748	25,961
12 to 17 years	196,516	95,011	76,466	25,039
18 to 64 years	1,077,991	670,254	276,298	131,439
65 to 74 years	117,108	86,595	23,527	6,986
75 years and over	129,533	107,955	17,554	4,024
ALL AGES	1,952,629	1,159,903	571,112	221,614
Poverty Rates	TOTAL	White Alone	Black Alone	All other races
Under 5 years	18.8%	12.7%	37.1%	22.7%
5 years	18.3%	12.0%	36.8%	22.2%
6 to 11 years	17.9%	12.1%	34.7%	22.0%
12 to 17 years	16.3%	11.3%	30.3%	21.5%
18 to 64 years	11.6%	9.2%	21.4%	17.2%
65 to 74 years	8.1%	6.6%	23.6%	17.6%
75 years and over	10.2%	9.1%	28.0%	19.1%
ALL AGES	12.5%	9.5%	25.9%	18.7%

POVERTY STATUS FOR PERSONS IN 1999 BY AGE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN			
Income below poverty level	TOTAL	Hispanic Origin	Not Hispanic Origin
Under 5 years	173,427	42,774	130,653
5 years	35,320	8,317	27,003
6 to 11 years	222,734	51,691	171,043
12 to 17 years	196,516	48,225	148,291
18 to 64 years	1,077,991	268,931	809,060
65 to 74 years	117,108	28,743	88,365
75 years and over	129,533	24,294	105,239
ALL AGES	1,952,629	472,975	1,479,654
Poverty Rates	TOTAL	Hispanic Origin	Not Hispanic Origin
Under 5 years	18.8%	22.9%	17.8%
5 years	18.3%	22.4%	17.3%
6 to 11 years	17.9%	22.2%	16.9%
12 to 17 years	16.3%	21.5%	15.1%
18 to 64 years	11.6%	16.0%	10.6%
65 to 74 years	8.1%	17.8%	6.9%
75 years and over	10.2%	22.2%	9.0%
ALL AGES	12.5%	18.0%	11.4%

SOURCE: U.S. Census 2000.

POVERTY IN FLORIDA	Poverty Rate		Numbers Living in Poverty		Percent Change
	1990	2000	1990	2000	
All persons	12.7%	12.5%	1,604,186	1,952,629	21.7%
Persons under 5	20.3%	18.8%	167,953	173,427	3.3%
Persons 5-17	17.5%	17.2%	343,642	454,570	32.3%
Persons 65 and older	10.8%	9.1%	247,426	246,641	-0.3%
All families	9.0%	9.0%	319,978	383,131	19.7%
All Families with Children under 18	14.7%	14.2%	229,558	281,303	22.5%
Married Couple Families	5.1%	4.9%	146,151	160,336	9.7%
Female Headed Families, No Husband Present	28.4%	25.3%	151,639	187,257	23.5%
Female Headed Families w/ Children under 5	53.9%	44.6%	68,852	75,752	10.0%
Female Headed Families w/ Children under 18	38.6%	32.8%	133,078	164,596	23.7%

CHILDREN IN POVERTY

America's children are almost twice as likely to live in poverty as Americans in any other age group. Since it peaked in 1993, the child poverty rate has been reduced by more than one quarter. However, the decline stalled in 2001. With the recent economic downturn, there is a risk the United States will again experience sharp increases in child poverty similar to those that accompanied the recessions of the early 1980's and 1990's. The United States' child poverty rate is substantially higher than that of most major Western industrialized nations.

In 2000, the child poverty rate was highest for African-American (30%) and Latino (29%) children. The rate for white children was 9%. Immigrant children are twice as likely to be poor as native-born children. One out of every five children under age 18 in the United States was estimated to have at least one foreign-born parent.

SOURCE: National Center for Children in Poverty.

Children whose parents lack a high school diploma are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than are children whose parents are high school graduates. These children live in poverty seven and a half times more often than children whose parents have more than a high school education.

SOURCE: *Key Facts About the Children: A Report on the Status of Florida's Children.*

CHILD POVERTY IN FLORIDA

A child in Florida is born into poverty every 15 minutes.

SOURCE: Children in Florida 2003 – Children's Defense Fund.

Every \$1 invested in quality early childhood care and education saves as much as \$7 by increasing the likelihood that children will be literate, employed, and less likely to be school dropouts, dependent on welfare, or arrested.

Every year a child spends growing up in poverty will cost an estimated \$11,800 in lost future productivity over his or her working life.

Almost 44% (43.9%) of Florida's students in Public School were eligible for free or reduced price meals in the 1998-1999 school year. That represents 1,025,470 students.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey, 1998-1999, Local Education Agency Universe Survey, 1998-1999.

Children in families with incomes below the poverty line were less likely to be read to every day than were children in families with incomes at or above the poverty line. Forty-eight percent of children in families in poverty were read to every day in 2001, compared with 61% of children in families at or above the poverty line.

SOURCE: *America's Smallest School: The Family.* Educational Testing Service.

- ☞ Florida ranks 35th among states in the percent of children who are poor.
- ☞ Nearly 1 in 5 children are poor in Florida.
- ☞ The percent of children under age 18 who are poor is 17.6%.
- ☞ The number of children under age 18 who are poor is 627,997.
- ☞ 151,666 adults and children receive assistance from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families .
- ☞ The maximum monthly TANF cash assistance for a family of three is \$303.