



# HENNEPIN COUNTY CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

## Hennepin County Children's Mental Health Dashboard Economic well-being of County youth

Economic well-being has important connections to children's mental health. Children growing up in poverty experience higher levels of stress, trauma, and stigma. They also may be more likely to experience poor nutrition and unsafe living environments. These challenges increase the risk of a variety of both physical and mental health issues, with the higher risk persisting into adulthood. There are dramatic disparities in childhood poverty by race/ethnicity, which contributes to health inequities throughout the lifespan.



In 2020, 1 in 9 children, or

# 11%

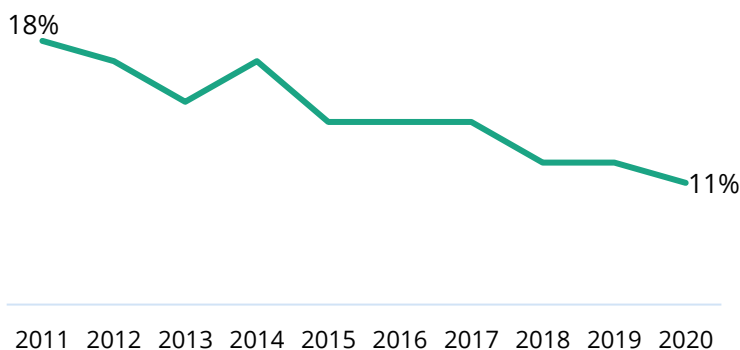
of all County children, lived in poverty.<sup>1</sup>

This equates to

# 143,131

children

Prior to COVID-19 the poverty rate had been declining<sup>1</sup>



### Current context

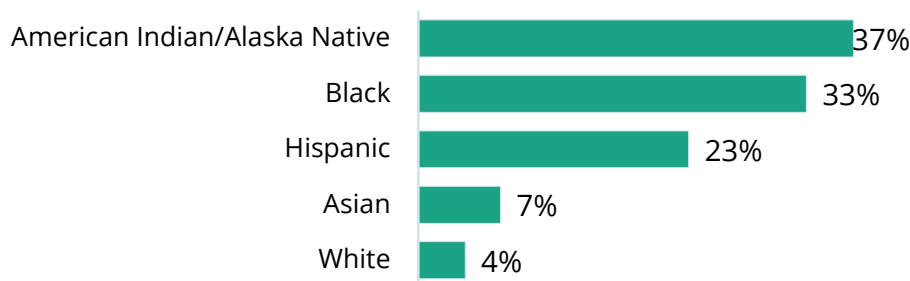


Our dashboard relies on U.S. Census Bureau data, which was released most recently for 2020. Newer data suggests that poverty has increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A 2021 Child Trends report<sup>2</sup> reported increases in child poverty of about 2 percentage points, with higher increases for Latino and Black children and for children in female headed families. We will continue to monitor trends, but expect to see increased poverty, along with widened differences by race/ethnicity.

<sup>1</sup> 2020 [Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates](#), accessed through [County Health Rankings and Roadmaps](#) (2022). Poverty thresholds for this calculation vary by family size. For a family of four, the poverty threshold for 2020 was \$26,246.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/child-poverty-increased-nationally-during-covid-especially-among-latino-and-black-children>

## There are dramatic disparities in childhood poverty based on race/ethnicity



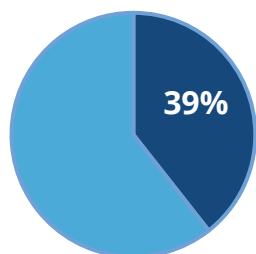
Children who are Black or American Indian/ Alaska Native are

**8-9 x**

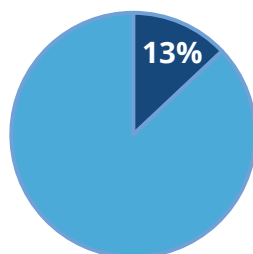
more likely than White children to live in poverty

### Other core indicators

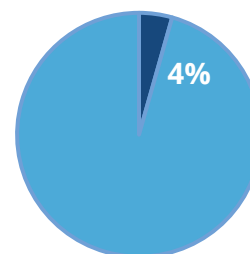
Children enrolled in public schools that are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (2019-20)<sup>3</sup>



Households spending 50% of their income on housing (2016-20)<sup>4</sup>



Percentage of 9<sup>th</sup> grade youth reporting housing challenges in the past 12 months (2019)<sup>5</sup>



### Learn more

**National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). A roadmap to reducing child poverty. Washington DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25246>.**

This report “reviews the research on linkages between child poverty and child well-being and analyzes the poverty-reducing effects of major assistance programs directed at children and families. The report provides policy and program recommendations for reducing the number of children living in poverty in the United States by half within 10 years.”

**Bartlett, J.D. & Stratford, B. (2021). A national agenda for children’s mental health. Child Trends.**

This document lays out a series of principles and recommendations for enhancing children’s mental health, with a particular focus on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. They propose five core strategies, including reducing family poverty.

<sup>3</sup> 2019-20 National Center for Education Statistics, accessed through [County Health Rankings and Roadmaps](#) (2022)

<sup>4</sup> 2016-20 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, accessed through [County Health Rankings and Roadmaps](#) (2022)

<sup>5</sup> 2019 Minnesota Student Survey (obtained from the [MN Department of Education](#)); N=8,206. The full question asked students whether they “have stayed in a shelter, somewhere not intended as a place to live, or someone else’s home because they had no other place to stay.”

## Reflection questions

What are the best ways that we can support families experiencing, to reduce economic stress and promote equitable access to mental health supports?

What promising initiatives are underway locally to reduce childhood poverty or promote economic equity? How can we support these efforts?

How can we best engage the community in prioritizing potential policy or service approaches that we could promote or pilot locally?



For more information on Children's Mental Health contact, the [Hennepin County Children's Mental Health Collaborative](#).