

# Poverty - Children

## DESCRIPTION

Children are more vulnerable to the consequences of living in poverty, such as environmental lead exposure, vision and hearing problems, and mental health issues.<sup>1</sup> About one in four youth under 18 in Ramsey County (24 percent), and 23 percent of children under five live below the poverty line. This is higher than both the state and national average.<sup>2</sup>

## HOW ARE WE DOING

In 2016 in the U.S., 21.2 percent of children under 18 were living below the poverty threshold compared to Minnesota at 13.9 percent and Ramsey County at 23.7 percent poverty in that age group.<sup>2</sup> Child poverty in Ramsey County has decreased slightly over the past five years yet remains the highest in the 7-county metro area. Child poverty is not equally distributed across Ramsey County cities. In 2016, Lauderdale had the highest percentage of children living in poverty (31.2 percent) which may be due to the large number of married student housing that lies within the borders of this small city. Saint Paul has the second highest child poverty rate (30.5 percent) with more children living in areas of concentrated poverty than other areas of the county. For young children (under five), Saint Paul has the highest percentage living in poverty (29.2 percent), with Falcon Heights closely following (26.9 percent). The northern suburbs of Ramsey County have less poverty than the suburbs that lie closer to the urban areas of Saint Paul and Minneapolis.<sup>2</sup>

## BENCHMARK INDICATOR

Healthy People 2020<sup>2</sup>: Reduce the proportion of children aged 0-17 years living in poverty.

U.S. Target: Zero percent.

## DISPARITIES

Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of poverty when living in areas of concentrated poverty where 40 percent or more of residents live below 185 percent of the federal poverty threshold.<sup>1</sup> In the past 15 years, areas of concentrated poverty have increased across the Twin Cities. Characteristics of poverty areas in the metro show that they are more likely to be home to immigrants and refugees, people of color and people without a high school diploma or GED. Children growing up in these areas have many assets like cultural vibrancy and being multilingual.<sup>3</sup> However, research also demonstrates that concentrated poverty can have negative effects on children's physical and mental health, as well as cognitive abilities making them more likely to remain in poverty as they grow up.<sup>4</sup>

## RISK FACTORS

Children in Minnesota are more likely to live in poverty if they: are under the age of six; are children of color; have immigrant parents; live in a single parent household; live in rental property; or have parents without a high school degree.<sup>5</sup>

## WHAT RAMSEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

Ramsey County provides financial assistance to families living in poverty through its Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), Diversionary Work Program, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Families may also receive Emergency (continued on back)

## Information to note

- About one in four children in Ramsey County live in poverty.
- The Ramsey County city with the highest child poverty rate was Lauderdale, where 31.2% of children lived in poverty in 2016.

## Community voice

*"Low income-single parent minority family."*  
- Native American/Ojibwe Female, age 15-19

Many youth respondents stated that poverty and low-income living negatively affected their personal health and the health of their family.

<sup>1</sup> Minnesota Department of Health. [https://apps.health.state.mn.us/mndata/poverty\\_basic](https://apps.health.state.mn.us/mndata/poverty_basic). Accessed February 2018.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census American Community Survey 2012-2016. Web Site. [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_16\\_5YR\\_S1701&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S1701&prodType=table). February 2018.

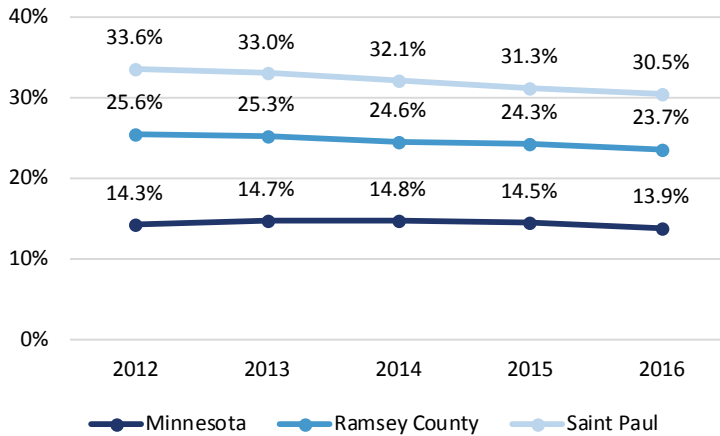
<sup>3</sup> Minnesota State Demographic Center. The Economic Status of Minnesotans: A Chartbook with data for 17 cultural groups. January 2016. <https://mn.gov/bms-stat/assets/the-economic-status-of-minnesotans-chartbook-msdc-jan2016-post.pdf>. Accessed February 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Metropolitan Council. <https://metro council.org/getattachment/f51199b2-1a77-4c4e-97a8-d9d47b75cd4f/>. Accessed February 2018.

<sup>5</sup> National Center for Children in Poverty. [http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub\\_1073.html](http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_1073.html). Accessed February 2018.

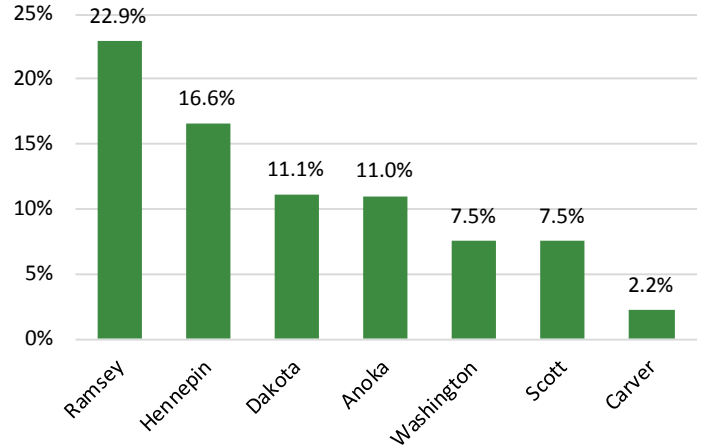
Assistance to help with utility shut-off or to prevent eviction. Most families receiving MFIP are referred to Ramsey County Workforce Solutions for help finding employment.

### Children Under 18 Living in Poverty during Past 12 Months



Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates.<sup>6</sup>

### Children Under Five Living in Poverty, Metro Counties, 2016



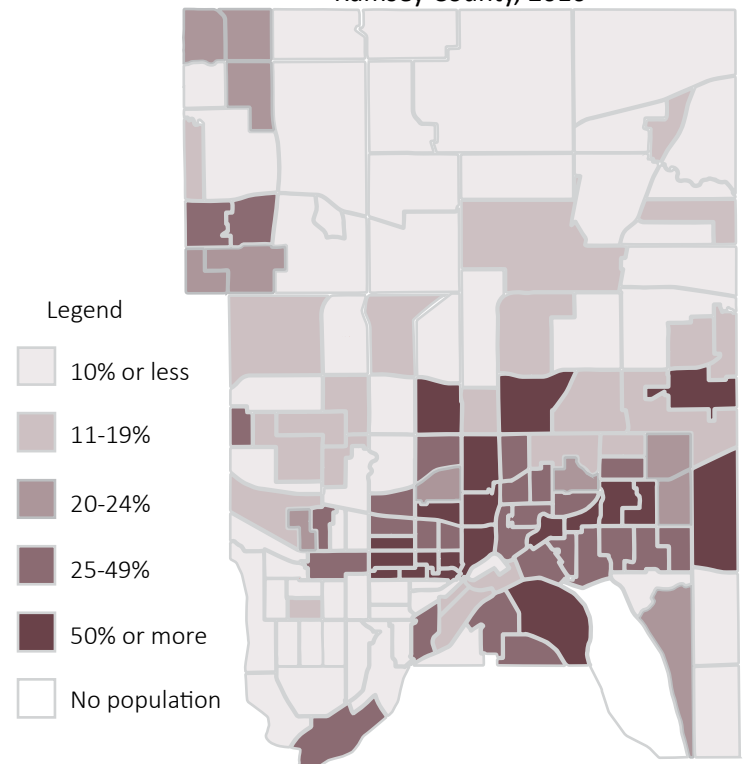
Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2012-2016.<sup>6</sup>

### Children Living in Poverty by City, Ramsey County, 2016

	Children Under 18	Children Under 5
Arden Hills	2.9%	0.0%
Falcon Heights	13.8%	26.9%
Gem Lake	0.0%	0.0%
Lauderdale	31.2%	14.0%
Little Canada	11.4%	4.5%
Maplewood	15.9%	12.0%
Mounds View	18.4%	12.0%
New Brighton	20.9%	20.7%
North Oaks	0.0%	0.0%
North St. Paul	20.8%	22.8%
Roseville	17.6%	18.7%
St. Anthony	20.7%	12.2%
Saint Paul	30.5%	29.2%
Shoreview	4.5%	4.5%
Vadnais Heights	9.5%	14.3%
White Bear Twship	5.7%	3.1%
White Bear Lake	8.2%	7.5%

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2012-2016.<sup>6</sup>

### Children Living in Poverty by Census Tract, Ramsey County, 2016



Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2012-2016.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census American Community Survey. [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_16\\_5YR\\_S1701&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S1701&prodType=table). Accessed February 2018.