

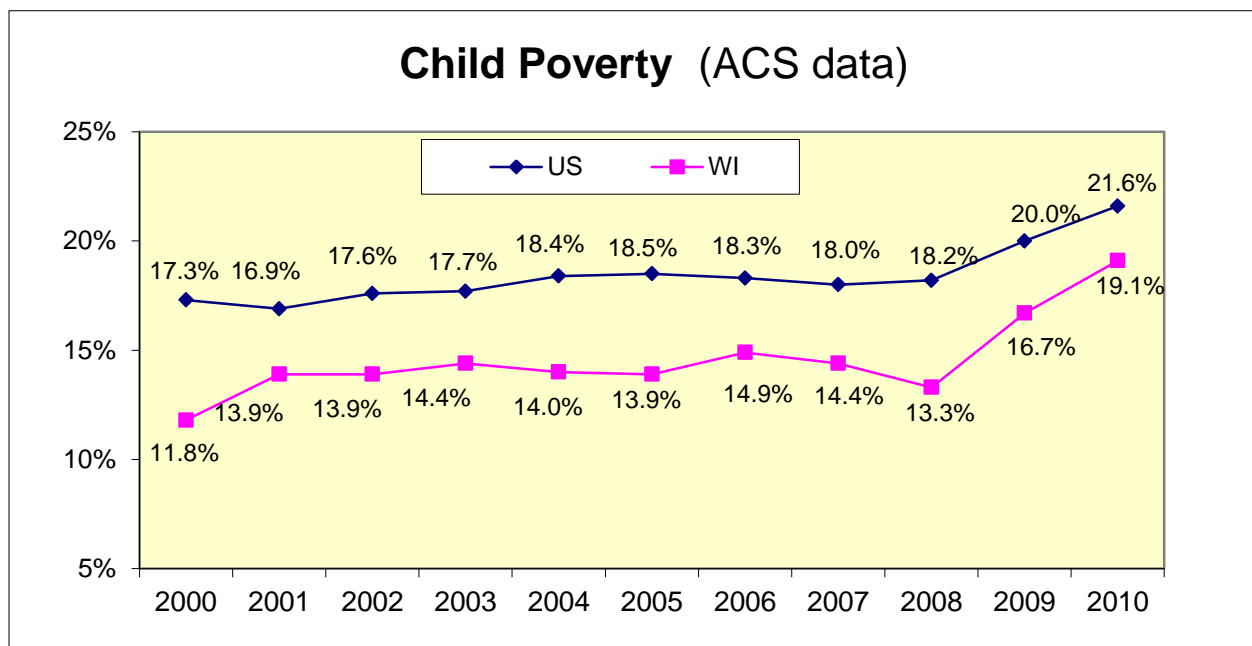
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Child Poverty Rose Dramatically in Wisconsin Last Year

New Census Bureau Data Show State Families Experiencing Serious Economic Strain

Madison – Wisconsin’s child poverty rate increased dramatically last year, from 16.7% in 2009 to 19.1% in 2010, according to data from the American Community Survey (ACS) released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. A quarter of a million (249,826) Wisconsin children were living below the poverty line last year, about 36,000 more than in 2009. In 2007, before the recession, Wisconsin’s child poverty rate was 14.4%. Wisconsin’s child poverty rate remains below the national rate of 21.6%, but child poverty is growing considerably faster in Wisconsin than in the nation as a whole. The ACS data released today is considered more reliable than data released last week from the Current Population Survey, which uses a much smaller sample of the population.



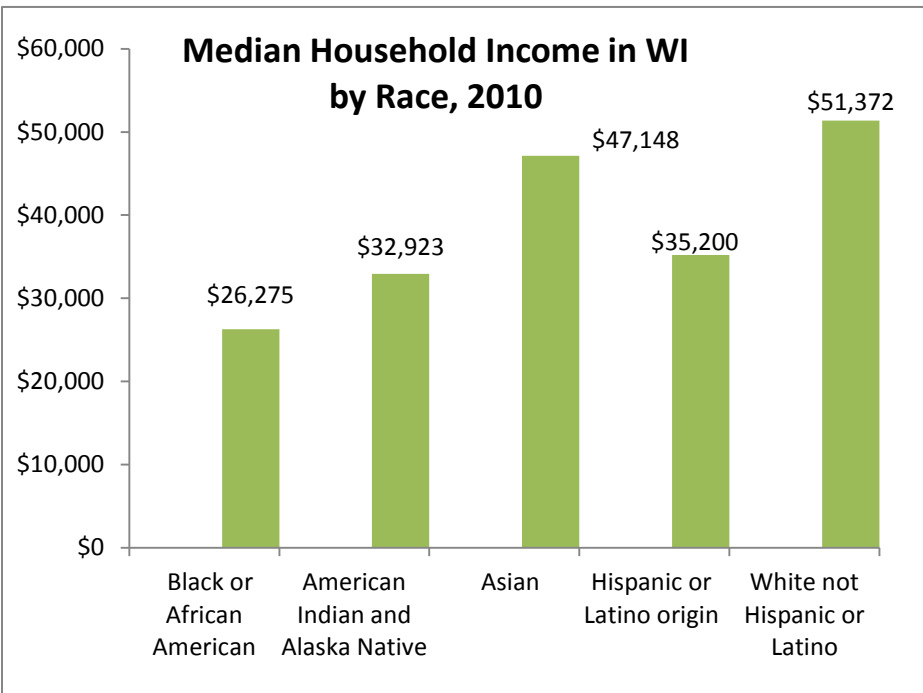
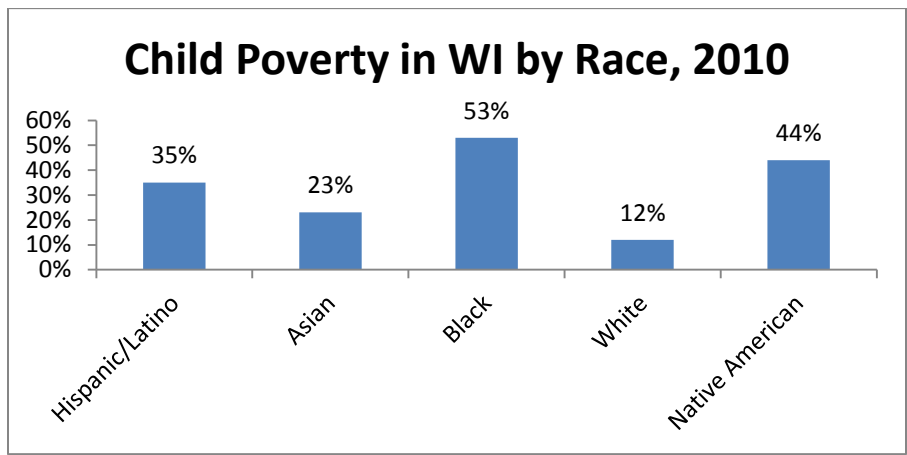
Wisconsin’s overall poverty rate also increased significantly last year. The state’s poverty rate rose from 12.4% in 2009 to 13.2% in 2010. Wisconsin’s pre-recession poverty rate in 2007 was 10.8%. Between 2007 and 2010, the number of Wisconsinites living in poverty increased by about 143,000.

“The impact of the recession on Wisconsin’s children and families has been severe,” said Ken Taylor, executive director of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. “This is no time to sit back and just hope conditions improve. Communities, employers, and state and local elected officials need to step up and take the necessary actions to help families get by during

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these difficult times. That requires lawmakers to invest in kids and families even if it means they can't be as aggressive on budget deficits as they would like. Reducing poverty and creating jobs are critically important for economic recovery and long-term deficit reduction.”

The increase in poverty is consistent with ACS data on household income. Statewide, median household income in Wisconsin slipped from \$50,973 (adjusted for inflation) in 2009 to \$49,001 in 2010, continuing a downward trend that has seen median household income in Wisconsin decline by 7.8% since 2007 (again adjusted for inflation). Racial and ethnic disparities with regard to income and poverty remain a huge issue in Wisconsin. The 2010 poverty rate among Wisconsin residents identifying themselves as Black or African American was 38.5%, compared to 10.5% among White Wisconsinites. Black/African American households in the state earned \$26,275 in 2010, just over half the \$51,027 earned by White households. The Black child poverty rate (53% in 2010) was more than four times the rate for White children.



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The recession has also had an impact on health insurance coverage in Wisconsin. While BadgerCare Plus has allowed Wisconsin to fare better than most states in covering its population, the loss of jobs has resulted in a larger percentage of uninsured people than in recent years. According to the Census Bureau, 9.4% of Wisconsin residents lacked health insurance in 2010, up from 8.8% in 2008, the first year the ACS asked respondents about their health insurance status. 5.0% of Wisconsin children lacked health insurance coverage in 2010. The increase from 4.8% in 2008 is not considered statistically significant.

“BadgerCare Plus has filled an important gap for thousands of Wisconsin families whose jobs have been affected by the recession, allowing us to continue covering 95% of the state’s children in spite of the loss of so many jobs,” Taylor said. “Our state’s commitment to covering all kids has served as a model for the entire nation, but we are in danger of losing a lot of ground. It’s crucial that we sustain that commitment as the economy recovers. This would be a very bad time for the state to use tougher eligibility and enrollment policies as a cost-saving strategy.”

WCCF recommends these measures in response to high poverty rates and the continued erosion of employer-sponsored health insurance:

- Focus much more on job creation than on deficit reduction, and make that focus primarily on GOOD jobs that offer health benefits. The best way to reduce budget deficits is to get everybody back to work at decent-paying, family-supporting jobs.
- Bolster the types of benefits and supports that both help families weather the storm AND pump money into the economy, such as nutrition assistance program, extended unemployment benefits, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and health care.
- Ensure that corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share of taxes by closing loopholes and ending unnecessary tax breaks that don’t create jobs.
- Give businesses access to a well-trained workforce by providing schools and colleges the resources they need to prepare students for employment. And provide students with the financial aid they need in order to succeed in their educational efforts.

(Key county data to follow on next two pages)

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Selected county level data is included in the tables below. A wealth of additional ACS data on poverty, income, and health insurance coverage is available via the on the Census Bureau website at <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>.

Table 1: Wisconsin, Before and After Recession

County	Child Poverty			Poverty			Median Household Income (2010 \$s)		
	2007	2010	Change	2007	2010	Change	2007	2010	Change
Brown	15.5%	13.7%	-1.8	10.6%	9.8%	-0.8	\$54,951	\$50,743	(\$4,208)
Dane	10.8%	11.9%	1.1	10.9%	12.2%	1.3	\$63,759	\$58,661	(\$5,098)
Dodge	14.0%	11.4%	-2.6	8.7%	7.9%	-0.8	\$53,828	\$50,797	(\$3,031)
Eau Claire	8.4%	19.2%	10.8*	13.2%	18.0%	4.8*	\$45,097	\$42,807	(\$2,290)
Fond du Lac	6.6%	18.8%	12.2*	8.5%	12.5%	4.0*	\$52,526	\$49,718	(\$2,808)
Jefferson	3.7%	20.2%	16.5*	6.3%	12.0%	5.7*	\$57,757	\$49,611	(\$8,146)
Kenosha	13.1%	19.8%	6.7*	12.2%	13.3%	1.1	\$55,851	\$51,887	(\$3,964)
La Crosse	16.3%	6.3%	-10.0*	14.1%	12.7%	-1.4	\$51,046	\$47,085	(\$3,961)
Manitowoc	14.3%	19.7%	5.4	9.0%	12.0%	3.0	\$49,876	\$47,298	(\$2,578)
Marathon	10.7%	21.6%	10.9*	7.2%	12.2%	5.0*	\$56,008	\$49,356	(\$6,652)
Milwaukee	25.9%	34.0%	8.1*	17.8%	21.5%	3.7*	\$44,907	\$40,509	(\$4,398)
Outagamie	6.9%	13.9%	7.0*	6.7%	9.4%	2.7*	\$60,068	\$54,498	(\$5,570)
Ozaukee	5.7%	4.9%	0.8	5.1%	6.0%	0.9	\$78,361	\$72,213	(\$6,148)
Portage	11.8%	10.1%	1.7	12.9%	10.7%	-2.2	\$51,215	\$48,620	(\$2,595)
Racine	12.0%	20.1%	8.1*	8.0%	14.7%	6.7*	\$54,209	\$51,377	(\$2,832)
Rock	15.9%	20.8%	4.9	10.7%	14.1%	3.4*	\$51,063	\$46,758	(\$4,305)
St. Croix	6.0%	11.7%	5.7	5.8%	7.9%	2.1	\$68,849	\$62,386	(\$6,463)
Sheboygan	13.5%	14.9%	1.4	8.3%	9.4%	1.1	\$54,936	\$49,440	(\$5,496)
Walworth	10.1%	17.0%	6.9*	9.5%	12.8%	3.3*	\$56,905	\$53,388	(\$3,517)
Washington	7.5%	11.0%	3.5	5.2%	5.9%	0.7	\$68,528	\$60,446	(\$8,082)
Waukesha	3.9%	8.7%	4.8*	4.0%	6.3%	2.3*	\$76,202	\$70,815	(\$5,387)
Winnebago	11.5%	12.3%	0.8	9.5%	12.3%	2.8*	\$53,079	\$48,177	(\$4,902)
Wood	13.2%	19.9%	6.7	8.8%	11.6%	2.8	\$52,952	\$43,319	(\$9,633)
Wisconsin	14.4%	19.1%	4.7*	10.8%	13.2%	2.4*	\$53,155	\$49,001	(\$4,154)

* The change is statistically significant.

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Table 2: Wisconsin in 2010

County	Residents Without Insurance	Kids Without Insurance	Renters Spending <30% of Income on Rent & Utilities
Brown	8.3%	2.6%	39.1%
Dane	7.4%	3.1%	52.9%
Dodge	5.9%	1.3%	43.9%
Eau Claire	7.8%	4.7%	54.1%
Fond du Lac	8.4%	4.1%	43.0%
Jefferson	9.5%	3.2%	51.0%
Kenosha	12.5%	8.6%	49.1%
La Crosse	8.1%	2.7%	57.6%
Manitowoc	7.3%	3.9%	41.2%
Marathon	8.8%	3.6%	42.2%
Milwaukee	13.1%	5.9%	55.0%
Outagamie	8.4%	5.2%	42.2%
Ozaukee	4.3%	1.4%	45.0%
Portage	8.7%	3.2%	49.6%
Racine	8.6%	3.5%	52.3%
Rock	12.5%	7.7%	55.1%
St. Croix	8.8%	4.4%	53.7%
Sheboygan	7.7%	3.7%	37.3%
Walworth	13.2%	7.7%	48.5%
Washington	7.6%	4.2%	43.6%
Waukesha	4.9%	1.4%	46.6%
Winnebago	8.8%	2.1%	42.1%
Wood	5.6%	2.5%	51.7%
Wisconsin	9.4%	5.0%	49.4%

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In addition to WCCF staff, several of our associates around the state connected to our Vision 2020 anti-poverty campaign are available for comment on the new ACS data related to poverty, income, and health insurance:

Outagamie	Lee Allinger	Superintendent, Appleton Area School District	920-832-6126
	Nicole Harrison	CAP Services	920-229-0480
LaCrosse	Randy Nelson	Superintendent of Schools	608-789-7628
Marathon	Joanne Kelly	United Way of Marathon County	715-848-2927
Milwaukee	Deborah Blanks	Social Development Commission (Dale Shuster - Media Manager)	414-906-2702
Rock	Steve Kincade	State Line United Way	608-365-4451
Waushara	Jan Novak	Waushara Co. Dept. Human Services	920-787-6600

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