

## CHILDREN IN POVERTY

In 2010, more than 16 million children under 18 years of age lived in households with incomes below 100 percent of the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty threshold (\$22,314 for a family of four in 2010). This represents 22.0 percent of all children in the United States and reflects an increase since 2009, when 20.7 percent of U.S. children lived in poverty.<sup>1</sup> Poverty affects many aspects of a child's life, including living conditions, nutrition, and access to health care. A number of factors affect poverty status, and significant racial/ethnic disparities exist. In 2010, nearly 40 percent of non-Hispanic Black children lived in households with incomes below 100 percent of the poverty threshold, as

did approximately 35 percent of non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native and Hispanic children, compared to 12.4 percent of non-Hispanic White children.

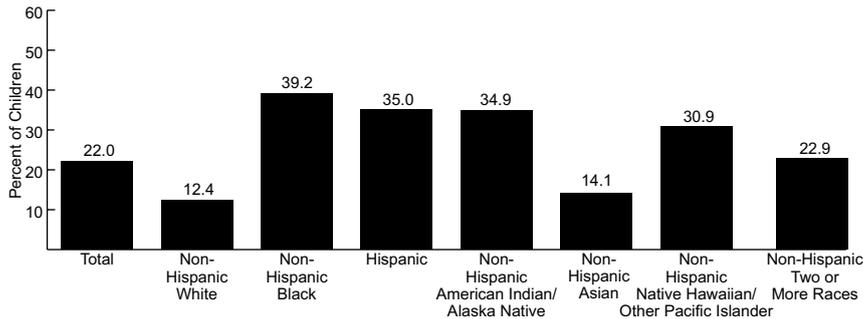
Single-parent families are particularly vulnerable to poverty. In 2010, 46.9 percent of children living in a female-headed household experienced poverty, as did 28.1 percent of children living in a male-headed household. Only 11.6 percent of children living in married-couple families lived in poverty (data not shown). The proportion of children living in poverty varies by age and family type. In 2010, nearly 60 percent of children under 5 years of age living in female-headed households lived in poverty

(with incomes below 100 percent of the poverty threshold), while the same was true of 41.4 percent of children aged 6–17 years.

A number of Federal programs work to protect the health and well-being of children living in low-income families. One of these is the National School Lunch Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. The program provides nutritionally-balanced low-cost or free lunches to children based on household poverty level. In 2010, the program served free lunch to 17.5 million children and reduced-price lunch to another 3.0 million children. This represents 65.3 percent of all lunches served in participating schools.<sup>2</sup>

### Children Under Age 18 Living in Households with Incomes Below 100 Percent of the Poverty Threshold,\* by Race/Ethnicity, 2010

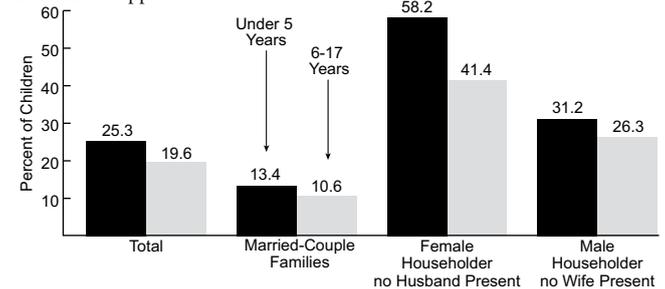
Source (I.3): U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement



\*The U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds to determine who is in poverty; the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$22,314 in 2010.

### Children Under Age 18 Living in Families\* with Incomes Below 100 Percent of the Poverty Threshold,\*\* by Age and Family Type, 2010

Source (I.3): U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement



\*Includes only children who are related to the head of household by birth, marriage, or adoption.  
\*\*The U.S. Census Bureau poverty threshold for a family of four was \$22,314 in 2010.