

“Among our tasks as witnesses to the love of Christ is that of giving a voice to the cry of the poor.” (Pope Francis, *Address to the Archbishop of Canterbury*, 6/14/13)



Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

“A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.”
 --“Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching”
 U.S. Catholic Bishops, 2005

Poverty Statistics

Federal Poverty Thresholds (2018)

- Family of 1: \$13,064/yr
- Family of 2: \$17,308/yr (1 adult, 1 child)
- Family of 3: \$20,231/yr (1 adult, 2 children)
- Family of 4: \$25,465/yr (2 adults, 2 children)

(U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2018* (Publication No. P60-266). Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2019/demo/p60-266.html>)

More than half of all Americans (51.4%) will live in poverty before the age of 65.

(Bread for the World. (2019, Feb 23). Who Experiences Hunger. Retrieved from bread.org/who-experiences-hunger)

53.5% of low-income children and 32% of poor children are in households with at least one parent working full time, year round. (Koball & Jiang, 2018)

Americans living below the poverty threshold (11.8%)



American children living below the poverty threshold (16.2%)



American children in working families whose income cannot cover their basic needs (41%)



In most areas, twice the poverty line is required to cover the basic necessities of housing, food, transportation, child care, health care, payroll and income taxes, clothing and school supplies.

(Koball, H., Jiang, Y. (2018, January). Basic Facts about Low-Income Children: Children under 18 Years, 2016. Retrieved from nccp.org/publications/pub_1194.html)

The Unattainability of Housing

U.S. National Averages

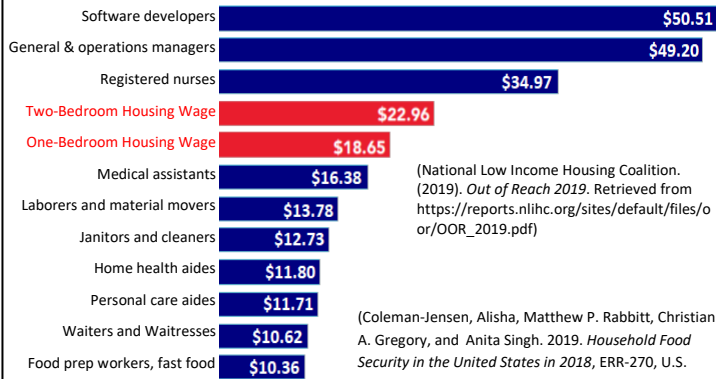
Federal Minimum Wage	\$7.25
2-Bedroom Housing Wage*	\$22.96
1-Bedroom Housing Wage*	\$18.65

*The full-time hourly wage a household must earn to afford a decent rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent (FMR) while spending no more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

3.2
 Number of Full-Time Jobs at Minimum Wage to afford a 2-Bedroom Rental Home at FMR

2.6
 Number of Full-Time Jobs at Minimum Wage to afford a 1-Bedroom Rental Home at FMR

Housing Wage and Median Wages for Occupations with Highest Projected Growth



(National Low Income Housing Coalition. (2019). *Out of Reach 2019*. Retrieved from https://reports.nlihc.org/sites/default/files/or/OOR_2019.pdf)

(Coleman-Jensen, Alisha, Matthew P. Rabbitt, Christian A. Gregory, and Anita Singh. 2019. *Household Food Security in the United States in 2018*, ERR-270, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service)

Poverty Myth vs. Fact

Myth

People in poverty don't want to work. They are lazy, unmotivated, and not smart.

A major cause of poverty is alcoholism and drug addiction.

Welfare moms are rewarded for having babies.

We've made welfare too easy and too comfortable. If we stopped coddling them, they wouldn't stay in the system.

There is too much obesity in America—especially among the poor—to believe that we really have issues with hunger and food insecurity.

They can't be that poor when they can afford to buy big-screen TVs and new cell phones; pay for service such as manicures/pedicures, tattoos, and piercings; or when they spend a lot of their money on cigarettes and booze or to gamble.

Fact

Two-thirds of people in poverty work an average of 1.7 jobs. The jobs demand hard physical labor and break down their bodies faster.

Drug addiction impacts all social classes, and alcohol abuse occurs far more often among wealthy people than among the poor.

In 23 states, welfare families receive no additional cash when a new baby is born. In the remaining states, they receive \$60/mo. The average welfare family has 1.9 children, compared to 1.86 for non-welfare recipients.

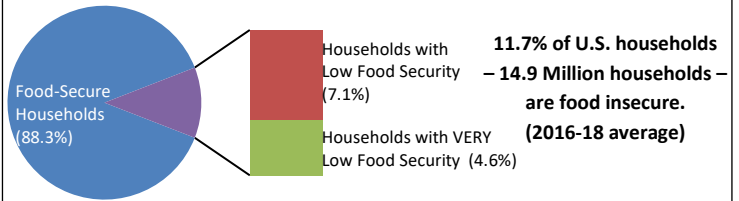
In the last 40 years, a family of three's welfare check has increased by only \$70/mo, while rent has increased by \$355. More than 50% of welfare recipients stop receiving benefits after 1 year, 70% within 2, and 85% within 4.

Nutritious food is expensive. Cheap food is full of carbs and refined sugar. Many poor people live in food deserts, forced to buy food at higher prices at their neighborhood convenience stores.

People in poverty rent-to-own items like big-screen TVs and lose them when money runs out. Having items valued by society, even briefly, brings the respect they are often denied. Likewise, manicures and tattoos catch the attention of a society that usually ignores them.

(Beegle, D. M. (2017). *Participant Guide for the Beegle Poverty Awareness Training: If Not Me, Then Who? Empowering Our Neighbors*. Tigard, OR: Communication Across Barriers. p. 10-12)

U.S. Households by Food Security Status



Who Receives Welfare & Food Stamps?

Welfare (TANF) – FY 2018

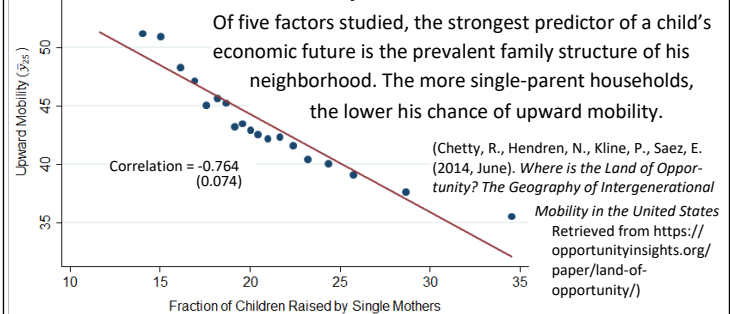
- 1M families
- Avg number of children in household: 1.8
- 51% have only 1 child
- Less than 8% have more than 3 children
- Adult Recipients: 86% Female; 14% Male
- 37.8% Hispanic, 28.9% Black, 27.2% White
- 27% of adult recipients are employed

Food Stamps (SNAP) – FY 2018

- 39.7M participants, 44% children
- All at or below 130% of the FPL
- 81% of households include a child, elderly individual or individual with a disability.
- Households with children: 54% have earned income, 10% receive cash welfare.
- Avg benefit: \$120 per person per month; roughly \$1.33 per person per meal

(U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services Office of Family Assistance. (2019). Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients, FY 2018. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fofa/fofa18_characteristics_web_508_2.pdf; US Dept of Agriculture Food & Nutrition Service Ofc of Policy Support. *Characteristics of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2018*, by K. Cronquist. Alexandria VA, 2019.)

Poverty Predictor





Poverty Rates in the Archdiocese of St. Louis

County	# in Poverty	Poverty Rate
Franklin County	10,999	10.8%
Jefferson County	22,663	10.3%
Lincoln County	6,915	12.6%
Perry County	1,535	8.2%
Saint Charles County	21,444	5.6%
Saint Francois County	9,656	16.3%
Saint Louis City	73,172	24.2%
Saint Louis County	94,394	9.7%
Ste. Genevieve County	2,571	14.6%
Warren County	4,486	13.3%
Washington County	4,767	20.1%

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, data.census.gov)

Child Poverty in "Affluent" St. Louis County

Municipality	Child Poverty	Municipality	Child Poverty
Ladue	1.2%	Pine Lawn	50.1%
Des Peres	2.9%	Bel-Ridge	44.8%
Kirkwood	3.2%	Pagedale	41.4%
Frontenac	3.6%	Bellefontaine Nbrs	40.1%
Creve Coeur	3.7%	Jennings	39.9%
Chesterfield	4.2%	Vinita Park	37.4%

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, factfinder.census.gov)

A Truer Measure of Poverty

38.9% of St. Louis City children live in poverty.

But that statistic uses the federal poverty threshold, which for a family of 3 (1 adult, 2 children) is set at \$20,231/year. What does it really take for a St. Louis family of 3 to cover their basic necessities?

Annual Expenses	1 Adult, 2 Children
Food	\$6,826
Child Care	\$8,360
Medical	\$6,697
Housing	\$11,088
Transportation	\$10,608
Other	\$5,070
Required annual income after taxes	\$48,649
Annual taxes	\$9,410
Required annual income before taxes	\$58,059

(Living Wage Calculator, livingwage.mit.edu)

Missouri Medicaid Enrollment



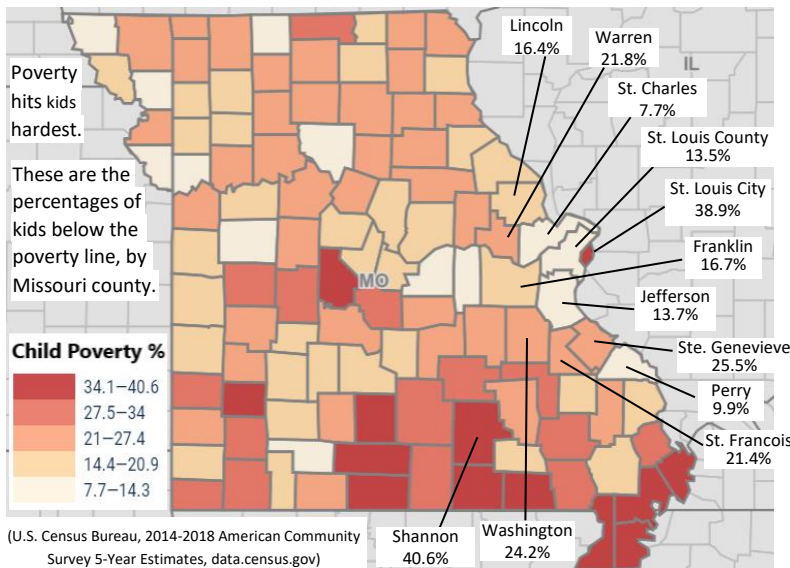
Children (64%)
 People with Disabilities (16%)
 Seniors (8%)
 Pregnant Women & Custodial Parents with Income <= 22% FPL (annual income <= \$4,693 for family of 3) (12%)

(Missouri Foundation for Health (2019). Missouri Medicaid Basics, Spring 2019. Retrieved from miffh.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2018-Missouri-Medicaid-Basics-web.pdf)

Missouri Recipients of Welfare & Food Stamps

Welfare (TANF) – FY 2018	Food Stamps (SNAP) – FY 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9,953 families Avg # of children in household: 1.8 51.1% have only 1 child; Less than 7% have more than 3 children Adult Recipients: 92.2% Female; 7.8% Male 48.0% White, 36.4% Black, 13.4% Hispanic 19.4% of adult recipients are employed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 704K participants 45.3% children, 43.7% non-elderly adults, 11.0% elderly 331K households participating Avg benefit: \$118.57 per person per month; roughly \$1.32 per person per meal <p>(U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services Office of Family Assistance, (2019). U.S. Dept of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service Office of Policy Support (2019).)</p>

Child Poverty Rates in Missouri by County



Where You End Up Depends Upon Where You Start

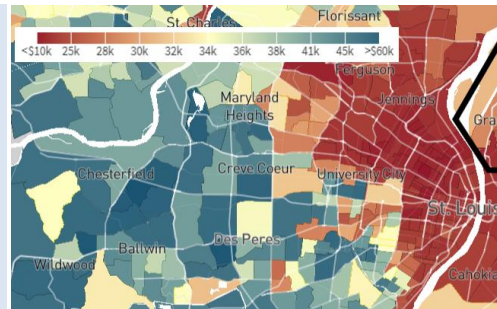
Commuting Zone	Absolute Mobility
Polk, MO	50.6
Kirkville, MO	47.2
Joplin, MO	43.1
Columbia, MO	42.8
Springfield, MO	41.9
Kansas City, MO	40.1
St. Louis, MO	38.4

A child's economic future is intrinsically tied to where he or she grows up. For a low-income child (defined as a child whose family is at the 25th percentile of income distribution), absolute mobility measures the child's expected income rank at age 30. Absolute mobility varies greatly based on location. For example, a low-income child growing up in the St. Louis metro area will likely be at the 38th percentile of income distribution at age 30, while that same child would have been at the 47th percentile had he/she grown up in Kirkville instead.

(Chetty, Hendren, Kline, & Saez, 2014. Geography of Mobility: Commuting Zone Intergenerational Mobility Statistics. Online Data Table 5: Intergenerational Mobility Statistics by Commuting Zone. Retrieved from https://opportunityinsights.org/data/?geographic_level=0&topic=0&paper_id=592#resource-listing; Stahly, E. Intergenerational Poverty in Missouri: Describing and Estimating the Scope of Cyclical Poverty. Show-Me Institute.)

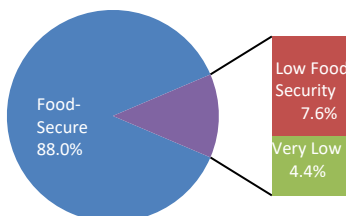
The Opportunity Atlas maps a low-income child's outcome in life based on the neighborhood where he or she grew up. Future income and the likelihood of graduation, incarceration, marriage, and employment are all linked to where the child was raised. On average, a low-income child who grew up in Fenton will, as an adult, have a household income triple that of a child who grew up in The Ville.

(Opportunity Insights, U.S. Census Bureau, https://opportunityatlas.org)



Missouri Households by Food Security Status

> 299,000 Food-Insecure Households in Missouri (2016-18 average)



Coleman-Jensen, Rabbitt, Gregory, & Singh, 2019.

Lack of Affordable Housing

St. Louis Metro	
Minimum Wage	\$8.60
2-Bedroom Housing Wage*	\$17.77

*The full-time hourly wage a household must earn to afford a decent rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent (FMR) while spending no more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

83 Work Hours per Week at Minimum Wage to afford a 2-Bedroom Rental Home at FMR	2.1 Number of Full-Time Jobs at Minimum Wage to afford a 2-Bedroom Rental Home at FMR
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(National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2019)