

FAMILIES OF THE RECESSION: UNEMPLOYED PARENTS & THEIR CHILDREN

STATE-BY-STATE



FIRST FOCUS

MAKING CHILDREN & FAMILIES THE PRIORITY

More than one in ten American children has an unemployed parent as a result of the Great Recession. These children are more likely to experience homelessness, suffer from child abuse, fail to complete high school or college, and live in poverty as adults than are other children.

THE NUMBERS: CHILDREN & YOUTH IMPACTED BY UNEMPLOYMENT

The Great Recession has dramatically increased the number of children with an unemployed parent, as well as the number of youth themselves who are unemployed.

Greatly Increasing the Number of Children with an Unemployed Parent

In December 2007, the month in which the nation technically entered into recession, the unemployment rate was 4.9 percent and an estimated 3.8 million children had an unemployed parent. As of November 2010, the unemployment rate is 9.8 percent, leaving 7.7 million children under the age of 18 with a parent looking for work¹. About three in ten (29 percent) of unemployed individuals are parents.

Rising Youth Unemployment

In December 2007, 2.6 million youth between the ages of 16 and 24 were unemployed (that is, they were actively looking for a job and could not find one). The latest figures from 2010 show that 3.9 million youth are unemployed² – an increase of 1.3 million youth, or about 50 percent.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS: HOW UNEMPLOYMENT IMPACTS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Child Poverty

Census data from 2009 has shown that more than one in five US children live in poverty. Children forced into poverty by a recession are three times more likely to be poor as adults than their more affluent peers.³ In short, the conditions of today will give rise to the next generation of poor Americans.

Homelessness

Since the recession began, 19 states collectively report a 49% increase in homeless children and evidence suggests that the spike in homelessness stems largely from job losses that have fueled the continued foreclosure crisis.⁴ The impact of homelessness on child well-being is severe.

Child Abuse

Although the relationship between child abuse and poverty is complex, the stress that results from poverty and unemployment can create an environment where abuse is more likely.

CONCLUSION:

While addressing the economic causes and consequences of the downturn, we must recognize the impact the economy is having on our young people. America's children are the only future we have.

Together, we can provide them with the opportunity to prosper.

National Numbers

- As of November 2010, more than 1 out of 10 American children, 7.7 million, has an unemployed parent.
- The Great Recession has doubled the number of children with an unemployed parent.
- Nearly one third (29 percent) of America's unemployed workers are parents.

State Numbers

- 27 states and DC have a rate of at least 1 in 10 children with an unemployed parent.
- Nevada has the highest rate at 16 percent.
- North Dakota has the lowest rate at 5 percent.
- California has the highest number with 1.5 million children (13 percent) affected.



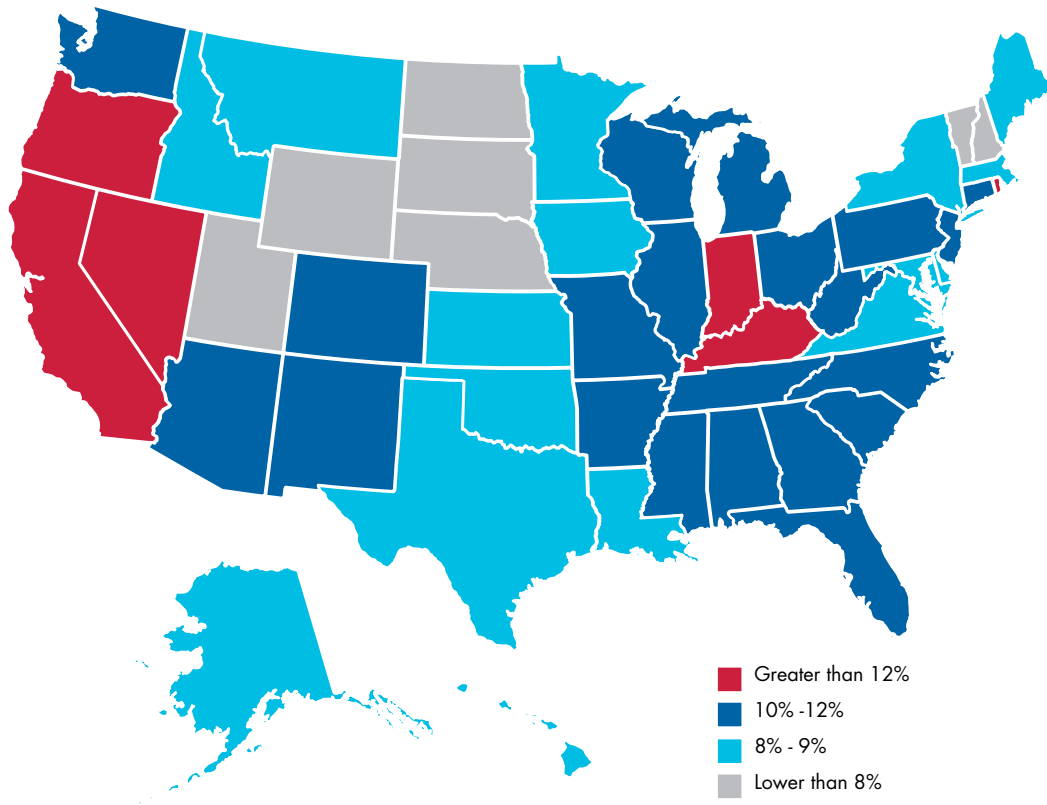
Estimates of Children with Unemployed Parents in 2010, by State

State	Unemployment Rate (Jan. - Sept. 2010)	Number of Children w/ Unemployed Parents	Percentage of Children w/ Unemployed Parents
Alabama	10.2%	123,000	12%
Alaska	8.2%	14,300	8%
Arizona	9.7%	189,100	11%
Arkansas	7.8%	63,500	10%
California	12.5%	1,154,800	13%
Colorado	8.1%	130,800	11%
Connecticut	9.2%	80,000	10%
Delaware	8.8%	18,900	9%
District of Columbia	10.5%	16,000	15%
Florida	11.9%	424,200	11%
Georgia	10.3%	275,500	11%
Hawaii	6.6%	24,400	9%
Idaho	9.1%	37,800	9%
Illinois	10.8%	379,600	12%
Indiana	10.1%	210,700	14%
Iowa	6.8%	52,700	8%
Kansas	6.7%	54,600	8%
Kentucky	10.5%	125,900	13%
Louisiana	7.3%	82,000	8%
Maine	8.1%	21,600	8%
Maryland	7.5%	102,400	8%
Massachusetts	9.1%	125,300	9%
Michigan	13.7%	281,800	12%
Minnesota	7.2%	111,700	9%
Mississippi	10.9%	80,100	11%
Missouri	9.4%	158,100	12%
Montana	7.3%	16,100	8%
Nebraska	4.9%	30,300	7%
Nevada	14.0%	104,000	16%
New Hampshire	6.4%	19,400	7%
New Jersey	9.8%	195,200	10%
New Mexico	8.5%	48,900	10%
New York	8.5%	389,800	9%
North Carolina	10.4%	246,100	11%
North Dakota	3.9%	7,100	5%
Ohio	10.7%	276,700	11%
Oklahoma	6.9%	82,000	9%
Oregon	10.7%	108,600	13%
Pennsylvania	9.1%	265,300	10%
Rhode Island	12.2%	29,400	13%
South Carolina	11.4%	109,700	10%
South Dakota	4.6%	10,700	6%
Tennessee	10.2%	163,300	12%
Texas	8.3%	585,100	9%
Utah	7.4%	62,900	7%
Vermont	6.3%	7,900	7%
Virginia	7.1%	154,000	8%
Washington	9.3%	156,600	10%
West Virginia	9.3%	35,500	10%
Wisconsin	8.4%	129,500	10%
Wyoming	7.1%	9,000	7%

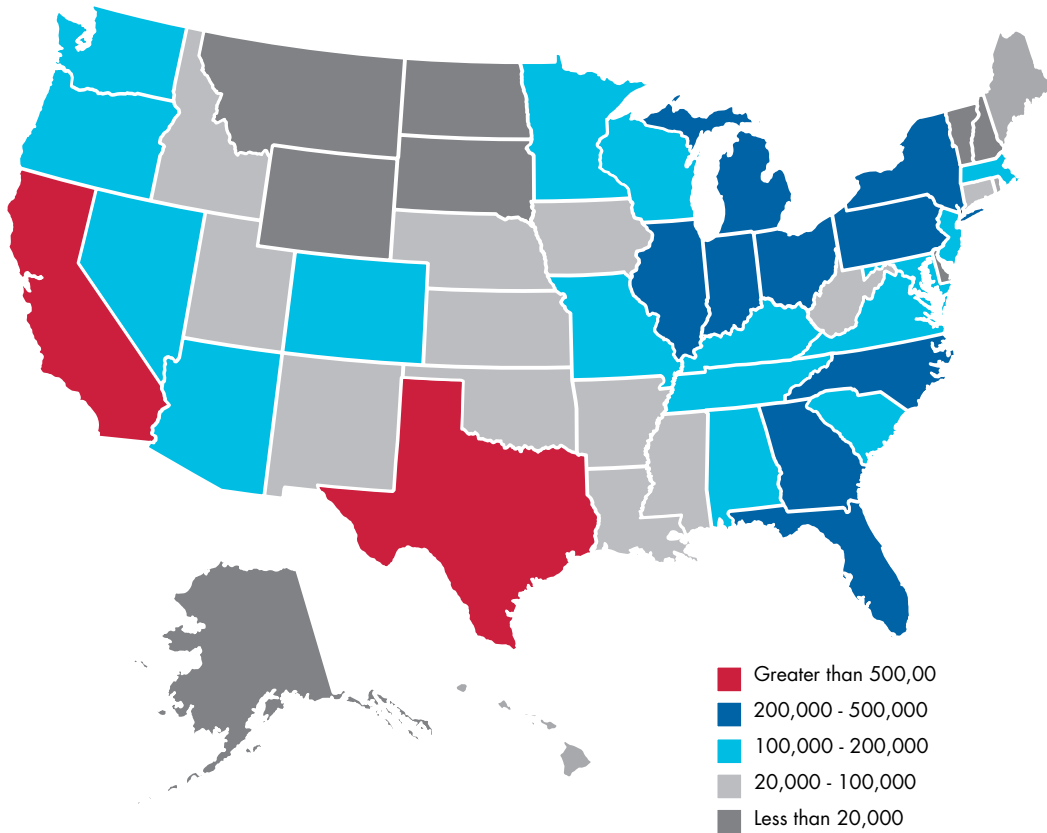
Notes and Sources: Unemployment rates are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment (LAU) data base, not seasonally adjusted, (accessed 11/18/2010). Count and percentage of children with unemployed parents based on tabulations of Current Population Survey data, January -September 2010.



Map 1: Percentage of Children with an Unemployed Parent, 2010



Map 2: Number of Children with an Unemployed Parent, 2010





ENDNOTES:

1 These figures are based on monthly unemployment statistics and annual data on family status of unemployed men and women (see the June 2010 First Focus Campaign for Children “Families of the Recession” report for a complete methodological explanation).

2 Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of December 3, 2010.

3 Michael Linden, “Turning Point: The Long Term Effects of Recession-Induced Child Poverty.” Washington, DC: First Focus, 2009. Available on-line at www.firstfocus.net/Download/TurningPoint.pdf.

4 Phillip Lovell and Barbara Duffield, “Creating Jobs and Supporting Homeless Students.” Washington, DC: First Focus Campaign for Children and National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, 2010.



First Focus would like to thank **Julia Isaacs**, Child and Family Policy Fellow at the Brookings Institution and a First Focus Fellow for invaluable assistance with this brief. She can be reached at Jisaacs@brookings.edu.

First Focus is a bipartisan children’s advocacy organization committed to making children and families a priority in federal budget and policy decisions.
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