

# FactSheet



## Economic Security

Living in poverty, even for a short period of time, has life-long consequences for a child. Childhood poverty increases the risk of having poor health, dropping out of school, becoming a teen parent, and living in poverty as an adult<sup>1</sup>. In addition, children in poverty are more likely to be involved in child welfare and juvenile justice systems<sup>2</sup>. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, in the United States, children born to parents in poverty are very likely to stay in poverty as adults. On the other end of the economic scale, children of parents in the wealthiest income brackets are just as likely to stay there showing the lack of economic mobility in the United States today<sup>3</sup>.

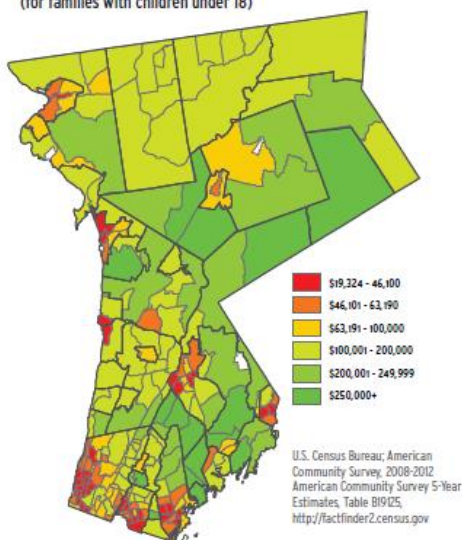
The unusual harsh and volatile economic climate has made the issue of economic security more prominent and the task of safeguarding our children's well-being that much more urgent. Past experience tells us families, and children in particular, are affected for many years when their economic circumstances are reduced during a recession.



In order to more effectively combat poverty, many states have moved to set poverty-reduction goals and establish commissions to help them understand the causes and impacts of poverty specific to their state. New York State has yet to adopt either. Investing in strategies that keep children and families above poverty during a fiscal crisis is difficult, but bold steps now will pay dividends in future productivity and vitality.

### Key Facts

Median Incomes by Census Tract  
(for families with children under 18)



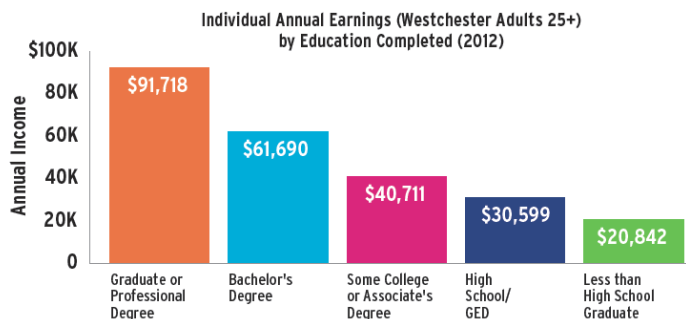
LOW	HIGH
\$19,324	\$250,000+

- 1 in 4 children in Westchester live in families at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, which is \$47,700 for a family of four<sup>4</sup>.
- In 2012, roughly 17% of children under the age of 5 were living in poverty in Westchester<sup>5</sup>.
- Between 2008 and 2012, the percentage of children relying on Food Stamps in Westchester rose from 9% to nearly 15%<sup>6</sup>.
- The estimated income needed to rent a two bedroom apartment in Westchester is \$58,000<sup>7</sup>.



## Key Facts

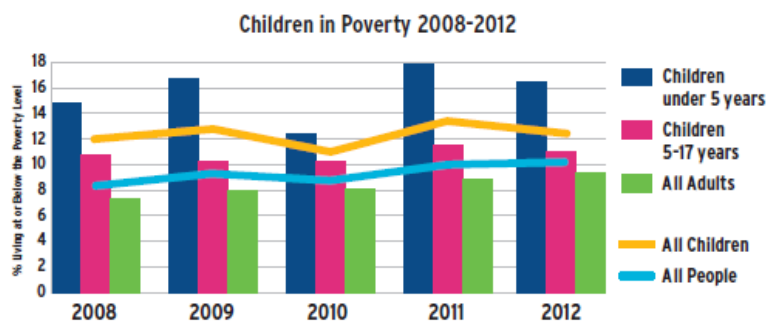
- Large-scale studies show that the health and welfare of children are linked to the education level of their parents – with parent education often being a stronger predictor of child well-being than family income, single parenthood or family size<sup>8</sup>.



U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B20004. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

## We Can Do Better

- Invest in proven strategies that help families such as high quality children's health coverage, living wage jobs, job training for low-income adults, summer youth employment opportunities, quality education at all levels, and an increased Earned Income Tax Credit.
- Support reauthorization of the Federal Workforce Investment Act which will among other improvements, streamline some requirements, strengthen connection between adult education and the workforce and require that at least 75 percent of funding be spent on out-of-school young people.
- Comply with the federal housing settlement and remove the block on federal Community Development Block Grant funding to Westchester County and improve living conditions for children.
- Raise the minimum wage above scheduled increases to better align with the cost of living in Westchester.



**Younger children are more likely to be poor.**

POPULATION	2012
Children under 5 years	16.40%
Children 5-17 years	11.00%
All Adults (18 years and over)	9.30%
All Children	12.70%
All People (Children and Adults)	10.10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table DP03. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

## Sources:

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- Zill, N. (1996) Parental schooling and children's health. *Public Health Reports*, 111(1), 34.

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