Rural Children – Rural Communities

Dr. William O’Hare
wohare.consultant@aecf.org
The Carsey Institute and the Annie E. Casey Foundation
Why Should We Care About Rural Children?

- 11.4 million children growing up in rural America
- 2.5 million poor children in rural America
- Child poverty rate in rural America is 22%
NOTE - Data presented here are from 2008 so they do not reflect the worsening economic recession in 2009 and early 2010

--------------------------

URBAN = CITIES AND SUBURBS

RURAL = OUTSIDE METRO AREAS
Child Poverty Rate 1990 to 2008

Poverty Threshold is $22,025 a year for a family of four in 2008
Percent Of Children in Deep Poverty (Income Less Than 50% of Poverty Line), 2008

Under $11,013 a year for a family for four
Percent Of Children in Low-Income Families (Income Less Than 200% of Poverty Line), 2008

Income Under $44,100 a year for a family of four
Percent Of Children in Families Below 185% of Poverty Line, 2008

Income Under $40,746 a year for a family of four
Poverty Rate for Children Under Age 5

- **URBAN**: NORTHEAST (17), MIDWEST (20), SOUTH (23), WEST (19)
- **RURAL**: NORTHEAST (22), MIDWEST (23), SOUTH (32), WEST (24)
Poverty Rate by Race for Rural Children Under Age 5

- White: 21%
- Black: 54%
- American Indian: 42%
- Latino: 37%
- Asian: 13%
Protective factors do not work as well for children in rural America…

- Family Structure (Marriage)
- Work
- Education
Poverty Rate for Children Under Age 5

Married Couples | Father Only | Mother Only
---|---|---
9 | 25 | 51
13 | 30 | 62
Poverty Rate of Adults by Employment

- **URBAN**
- **RURAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worked Full Time</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked Part Time</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Work</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Poverty Rate by Education for All Adults
Age 25-44

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year college degree or higher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

- Rural children have higher poverty rates than urban children.
- The poverty rate gap between rural and urban children is growing.
- More rural than urban counties are persistently poor.
- Child poverty rates for racial minorities in rural America are especially high.
- While marriage, education, and employment are generally protective against poverty, rural children who benefit from each are still more likely to be poor than urban children.