

## Media Relations

September 20, 2013

### **Carsey Institute at UNH: N.H. Has Largest Increase in Child Poverty in Nation**

State's Child Poverty Rate Increased by More Than 75 Percent Since 2007

DURHAM, N.H. – The state of New Hampshire experienced the largest increase in child poverty of any state in the country from 2011 to 2012, according to new research from the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire.

After having the lowest child poverty in the nation for more than a decade, New Hampshire no longer holds this distinction with a 2012 child poverty rate of 15.6 percent, an increase of 3.6 percentage points from 2011 when the child poverty rate was 12 percent. This represents a more than a 30 percent increase in just one year and more than a 75 percent increase between 2007 and 2012.

Nationally, the high child poverty rate persisted in 2012 at 22.6 percent, not statistically different from 2011. Today 16.4 million children live in poverty; 6 million of them are under age six. In 2007, before the toll of the Great Recession, 13.1 million children (18.0 percent) were living in poverty nationally.

“These new estimates suggest that child poverty plateaued in the aftermath of the Great Recession but has not yet begun to fall as we enter the fourth year of ‘recovery.’ While modest improvements are evident in some places, increases in others raise concerns about the well-being of America’s children,” the Carsey researchers said.

“In this context, it is imperative to consider the role of the safety net in protecting America’s most vulnerable populations. Programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families provide critical support for poor children,” they said.

The research was conducted by Beth Mattingly, director of research on vulnerable families at the Carsey Institute and research assistant professor of sociology at UNH; Jessica Carson, vulnerable families research scientist at the Carsey Institute; and Andrew Schaefer, a doctoral student in sociology and a research assistant at the Carsey Institute.

Between 2011 and 2012, child poverty increased slightly in the Northeast and West, but declined slightly in the Midwest. There was no significant change in the South, the region with the highest child poverty in 2012 (25.0 percent). Nearly 30 percent (29.7 percent) of children in central cities and 26.2 percent of children in rural places lived in poverty in 2012, significantly higher than the 17.2 percent in suburban areas.

This analysis is based on estimates from the 2007, 2011, and 2012 American Community Survey. Child poverty is measured as the share of children under age 18 who live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level. The federal poverty definition consists of a series of thresholds based on family size and composition. In 2012, the poverty line for a family of four (two adults, two children) was \$23,283.

The complete Carsey Institute report about this research is available at <http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publication/867>.

The Carsey Institute conducts policy research on vulnerable children, youth, and families and on sustainable community development. The institute gives policy makers and practitioners the timely, independent resources

they need to effect change in their communities. For more information about the Carsey Institute, go to [www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu](http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu).

The [University of New Hampshire](http://www.unh.edu), founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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