

## Thirteen Ways of Looking at Poverty

Urban Institute

### Abstract

This factsheet presents a quick overview of recent cross-cutting Urban Institute research on poverty, including 13 key points on poverty's effects on immigration, health care, children, infants with depressed mothers, employment, assets, and neighborhoods. One in an occasional series of "Thirteen Ways" factsheets.

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1. In 2009, 43.6 million people (one in seven Americans) were poor. [www.urban.org/poverty/whoispoor.cfm](http://www.urban.org/poverty/whoispoor.cfm)
2. Eleven percent of infants living in poverty have a mother suffering from severe depression. [www.urban.org/publications/412199.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412199.html)
3. Child poverty rates jumped from 19% to 20.7% in 2009; one-percentage point increase in child poverty could cost the economy an extra \$28 billion a year in the future. [www.urban.org/publications/412219.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412219.html)
4. The labor market in the U.S. today is worse than it has been since the 1930s; continued long-term unemployment means more people become impoverished. [www.urban.org/publications/412067.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412067.html)
5. The probability of experiencing a substantial income drop is at a 10-year peak for low-income families. [www.urban.org/toolkit/fivequestions/nichols2010.cfm](http://www.urban.org/toolkit/fivequestions/nichols2010.cfm)
6. The number of neighborhoods with very high poverty rates—above 30 or 40 percent—is higher today than in 2000, a reversal of the downward trend in geographically concentrated poverty between 1990 and 2000. [www.urban.org/publications/901285.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/901285.html)
7. One in five low-income families—those below twice the poverty line--has zero or negative net worth, excluding home equity. [www.urban.org/publications/1001374.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/1001374.html)
8. Fourteen percent of fourth-graders in high-poverty schools scored at or above proficiency in reading in 2009. [www.urban.org/publications/1001469.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/1001469.html)
9. Unemployment lasting six months or longer was the highest in 2009 of any year since 1946. [www.urban.org/publications/412072.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412072.html)
10. Fewer poor families receive assistance today than when Temporary Assistance for Needy Families began in 1996. [www.urban.org/publications/412047.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412047.html)
11. Children of immigrants are more likely to be poor and low-income than children with native-born parents. [www.urban.org/publications/412270.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412270.html)
12. Under the Affordable Care Act, there would be 13.7 million low-income uninsured people; without reform, 33.1 million. [www.urban.org/publications/412280.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412280.html)
13. Lower-income households experience significantly greater instability in their monthly incomes than higher-income ones. [www.urban.org/publications/412290.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412290.html)

For more Urban Institute research on poverty, go to [www.urban.org/poverty/index.cfm](http://www.urban.org/poverty/index.cfm)

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