

# Early childhood population profile

This fact sheet is one in a series of six that make up Minnesota's Statewide School Readiness Report Card. The report card is developed to monitor the state's progress toward the goal that all children are ready for kindergarten by the year 2020. The report card includes indicators of progress for both systems and child outcomes. Together, the fact sheets provide a comprehensive picture of Minnesota children under age six. Trends are examined in the early childhood population, early care and education, health and development, and family support. Data are reported for the most recent year available. Disparities based on race/ethnicity are noted when data are available. This first fact sheet provides the demographic context.

## Children under age six

About 420,000 children under age 6 live in Minnesota, including about 55 percent living in the Twin Cities 7-county region. Children under age six are the most racially and ethnically diverse and constitute the poorest segment of the Minnesota population.

### *Race, ethnicity, and country of origin*

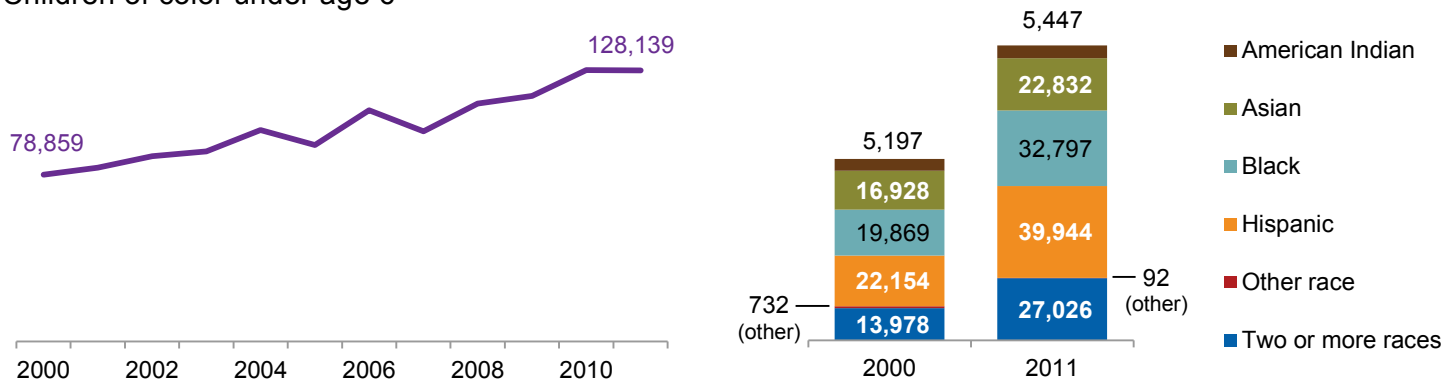
Understanding the cultural and ethnic heritage of our population of young children can help shape and target resources most equitably and effectively, and provide services in a culturally-responsive way.

### **Minnesota is becoming more diverse, especially our children.**

Children of color now make up about 30 percent of children under age six, an increase of 10 percentage points over the past decade. The Hispanic population under age six increased by 80 percent during that period to nearly 40,000 children. Blacks, including African-Americans and African immigrants, comprise the next largest group, with nearly 33,000 children. In total, Minnesota has 66,500 children of color under age six who have at least one foreign-born parent or are foreign born themselves. Of these children 16,000 are black and 21,000 are Asian. About 13,000 Asian children (regardless of nativity) identify as Southeast Asian. Of the nearly 40,000 Hispanic children under 6 (of any race), 60 percent have at least one foreign-born parent or are foreign born themselves.



## Children of color under age 6



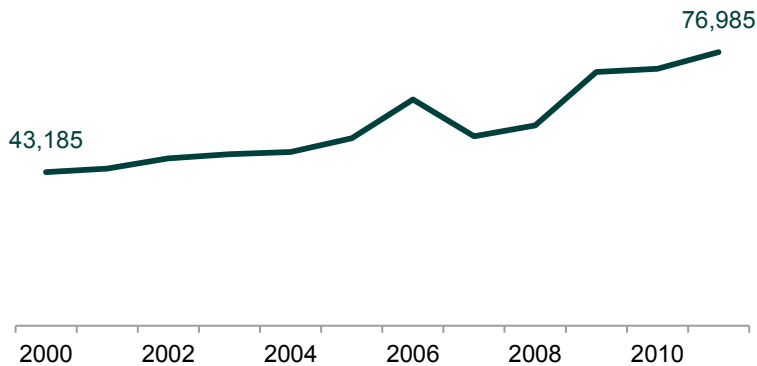
## Children under age six in poverty

Experiencing poverty, especially early in life, is associated with a host of negative academic, social, and health outcomes for children, including higher rates of chronic disease and shorter life expectancy.

### Nearly one in five children under age six lives in poverty.

Nearly 77,000 children in Minnesota (about 18 percent) live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level, up from 43,000 (11 percent) in 2000. Children of color are more than three times as likely to live in poverty as their white counterparts (36 percent and 10 percent, respectively). Statewide, 61 percent of children in poverty are of color. The 2013 federal poverty level is \$23,550 for a family of four. An additional 67,000 children live at or below 185 percent of the poverty level -- an amount commonly used to partially base income eligibility guidelines for government programs. In fact, seven out of 10 black children in Minnesota live at or below 185 percent of poverty; one in four white (non-Hispanic) children are in this group. More details on child poverty are in Fact Sheet Six.

## Children under age six living in families in poverty



## *Children living in distressed neighborhoods*

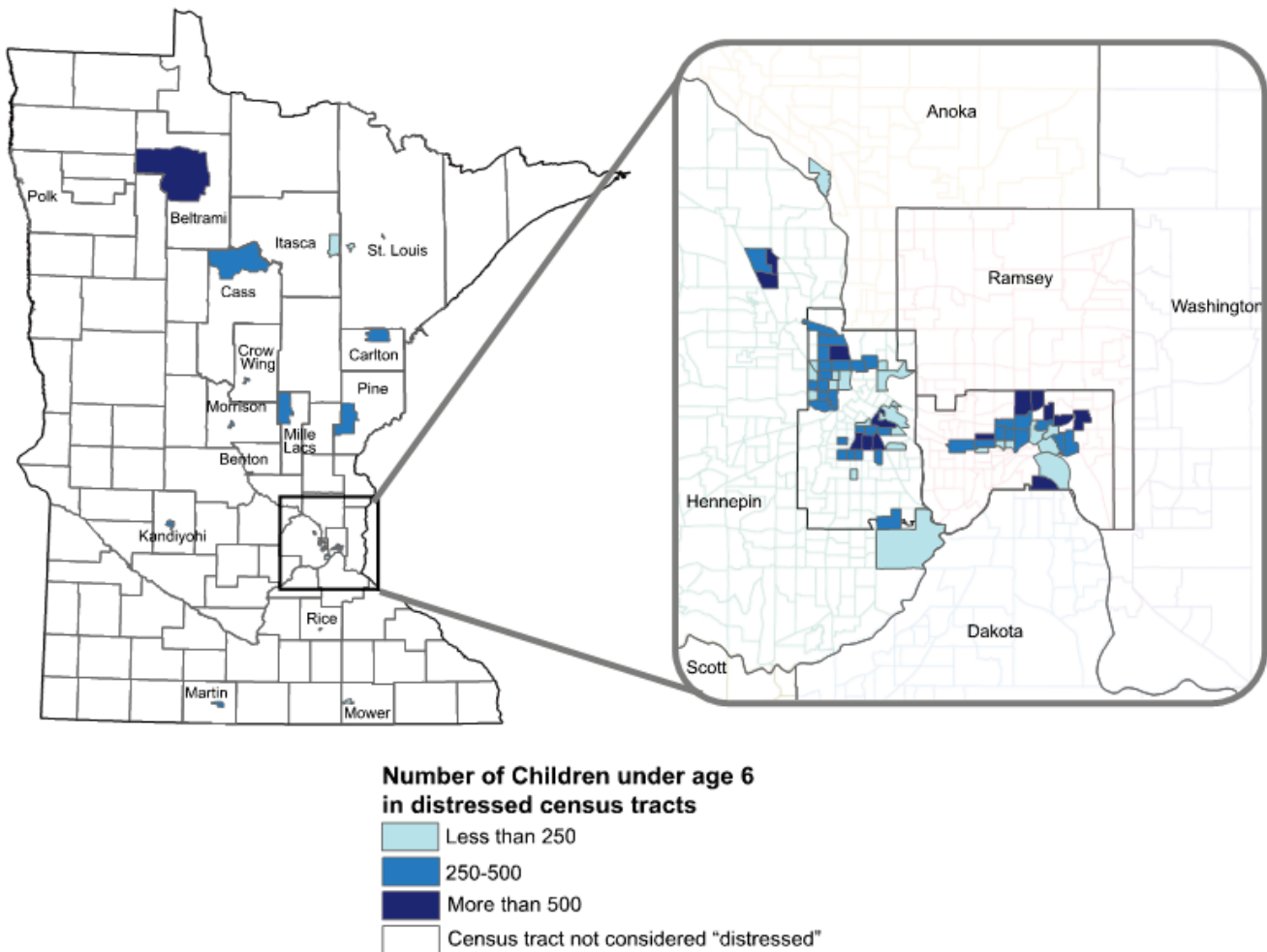
Children under age six living in distressed neighborhoods – those with high poverty rates, high unemployment among males, low-education levels of residents, and high percentage of single-parent families – are especially vulnerable because they often lack access to educational opportunities and positive role models that support strong child development and stable families.

**Eight in 100 children under age six live in distressed neighborhoods; most are in the Twin Cities metro area.**

Overall 32,918 children under age six live in severely distressed neighborhoods, including 24,897 children in the Twin Cities metro area (11 out of 100) compared with 8,021 children in Greater Minnesota (4 out of 100).

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Children under age six who live in “severely distressed” localities



Note: “Severely distressed” localities are defined as census tracts that have at least three of the four following characteristics: 1. High poverty rate; 2. High percentage of single-parent families; 3. High percentage of high school dropouts; and, 4. High percentage of working-age males not in the labor force. “High” is defined as more than one standard deviation above the mean.

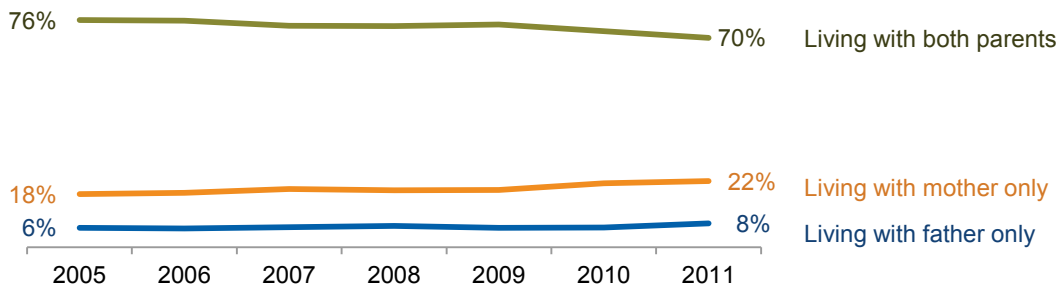
## Family household type and employment status

Young children's living situations are impacted by family income, family stress, and availability of caregivers. Employment data of the parents affects both the financial stability of the family and the potential need for child care.

### Number of children under age six in single-parent households has increased.

During the past decade in Minnesota, the percentage of children under age six in single-parent households has steadily grown to 30 percent. One contributing factor is the declining marriage rate for new mothers. About one-third of births were to unmarried women in 2010, compared with a quarter in 2000.

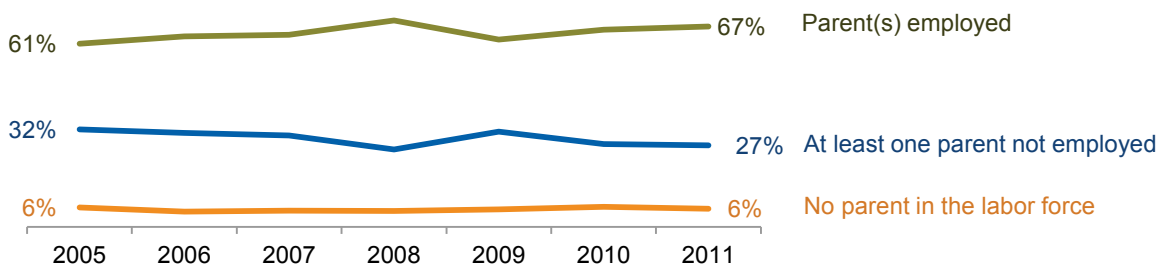
#### Household types for children under age 6



### Most children under age six have at least one parent who is employed.

For two-thirds of young children, each parent in the household is employed, up slightly since 2005. The percentage of children with no employed parent has remained steady at 6 percent.

#### Employment rate of parents with children under age six



## Profiles of mothers with children under age six

### *Education rates of new mothers*

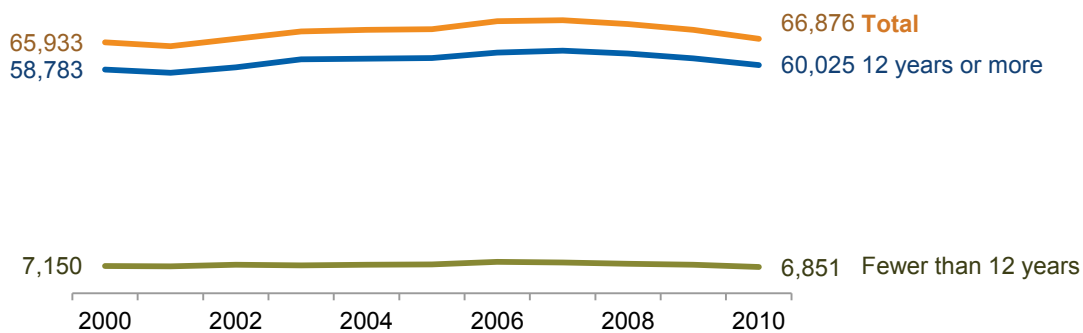
High levels of maternal education are associated with better childhood health, better school performance, and higher likelihood of high school completion. Higher education levels among parents contribute to more supportive early home learning environments and a higher likelihood of subsequent school involvement.

### **Mothers of newborns have large educational disparities by race.**

While 90 percent of babies are born to mothers who have at least 12 years of education, wide gaps remain between white mothers and mothers of color. New Hispanic mothers are the least likely to have 12 or more years' education (53 percent).

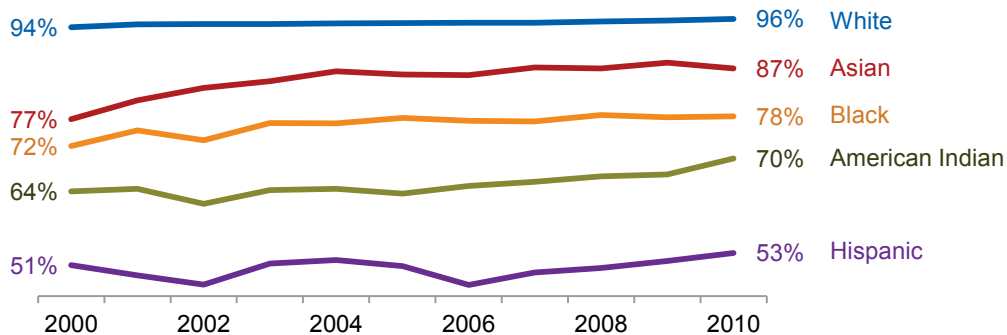
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#### Babies born to mothers with 12 years or more of education




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#### Babies born to mothers with 12 or more years of education by race/ethnicity



Note: All races shown here non-Hispanic.

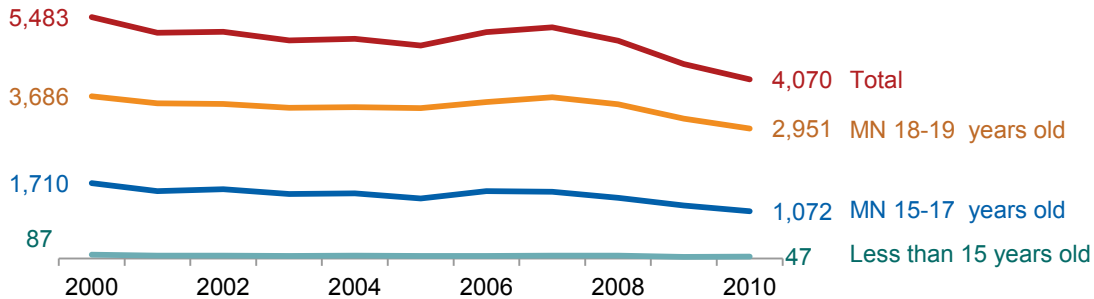
## *Births to teenage mothers*

Children born to teenage mothers are more likely to live in poverty, have low birth weight children, and experience poor health and behavioral problems, compared to children born to adult women. Teen mothers often lack financial resources, parenting skills and social support.

### **Fewer teens are having babies.**

Following the national trend, teen births have significantly declined in Minnesota since 2007. Between 2000 and 2010, births to Minnesota teens age 15 through 17 fell 37 percent, the largest percentage decrease; while teens age 18 and 19 fell 20 percent, but had the largest decrease in number of births, with 735 fewer children born to that age group.

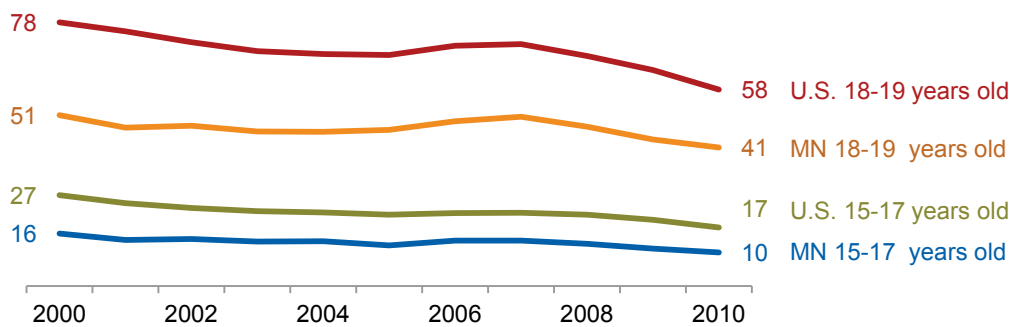
Births to Minnesota teens by age



### **Minnesota's teen birth rate is falling, but more slowly than the national rate.**

Historically, teens in Minnesota have had a lower teen birth rate than the U.S. as a whole, but that is changing. While Minnesota's teen birth rate has gone down, the drop has been even greater in other states, narrowing the gap between Minnesota and the nation as a whole.

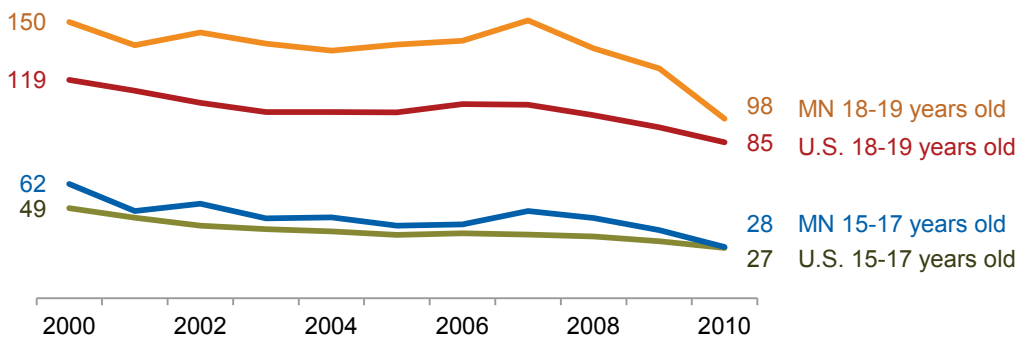
Births to Minnesota and U.S. teens (rate per 1,000)



**All races have seen a decline in teen birth rates. Black teens have the steepest decline.**

Births to teens (15 to 19 years old) declined by 25 percent from 2000 to 2010. Every racial group had lower teen birth rates during this time. Black teens in Minnesota historically have had a higher birth rate compared to Minnesota teens overall and to black teens in the U.S. However, the decline in Minnesota's black teen birth rate (-42 percent) is steeper than the decline for Minnesota teen birth rate overall (-25 percent). The steep decline in black teen births is also causing the Minnesota teen birth rate to more closely mirror the national average.

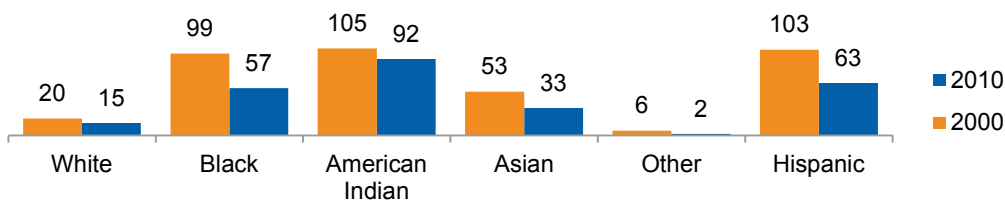
Births to black teens in Minnesota and U.S. (rate per 1,000)



**Despite declines, birth rates for teens of color are high.**

Despite these declines, birth rates for teens of color are much higher than for non-Hispanic white teens. For example, black teens have a birth rate nearly four times the rate of non-Hispanic white teens, and American Indian teens' birth rate is six times higher. In fact, while teens of color make up 22 percent of the teen population, nearly half of all teen births are to teens of color.

Births to teens 15-19 in Minnesota and U.S. (rate per 1,000), 2000 and 2010



*Note: All races shown here are non-Hispanic.*

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## Wilder Research

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3. Early care and education services and systems
4. Early childhood educational preparation
5. Health services, systems, and healthy development
6. Supported families
7. Sources of data

#### For more information

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