



Hawai'i KIDS COUNT

E-Bulletin

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Center on the Family | University of Hawai'i at Mānoa-CTAHR

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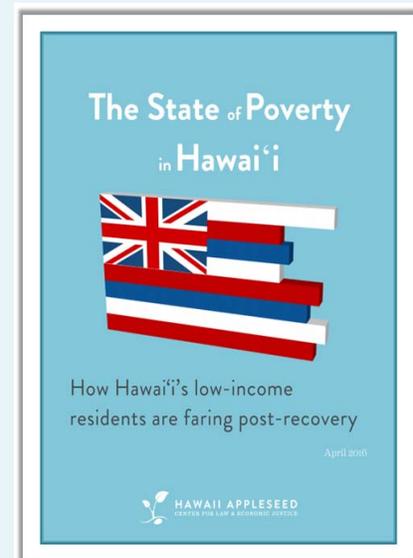
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REPORTS FROM HAWAII APPLESEED ON FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

The Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice recently released two important reports that examine poverty and family financial strain in Hawai'i.

The first report, *The State of Poverty in Hawai'i*, highlights the harsh economic reality that too many families in Hawai'i face. For example:

- Hawai'i residents have the lowest wages in the country when adjusted for the cost of living. Honolulu's average private sector wage of \$25.10 drops to \$14.66 when adjusted for cost of living, about a third less than the national average of \$22.39;
- The largest item in a family's budget is housing, and Hawai'i families face some of the heaviest housing cost burdens. The share of children in low-income households with a high housing cost burden is 65%, and 31% of children live in overcrowded households (i.e., more than 1 person per room).



Hawai'i Appleseed examines some of the challenges families experience to make the ends meet in a telephone survey completed by QMark Research.

The survey, *Financial Struggles Facing Working Families in Hawai'i*, revealed that:

- Nearly half of respondents (48%) described their personal financial situation as living *paycheck-to-paycheck*;
- A quarter of respondents have at some point in the past five years worried about how they would pay that month's rent or mortgage;
- Seventeen percent have worried about being able to provide basics, such as food; and,
- Almost all of the respondents (95%) identified the high cost of housing as a very serious problem in Hawai'i.

These reports show that many of our residents are struggling day-to-day to support their families. Hawai'i has the second worst taxes on low-income residents in the nation. However, policies such as improving low-

income household renters tax credit, raising the minimum wage, and adopting a state earned income tax will help alleviate the struggles that many face.

The State of Poverty in Hawai'i may be read at [http://hiappleseed.org/sites/default/files/State%20of%20Poverty%20\[FINAL\].pdf](http://hiappleseed.org/sites/default/files/State%20of%20Poverty%20[FINAL].pdf)

and *The Financial Struggles Facing Working Families in Hawai'i* may be viewed at [http://www.qmarkresearch.com/EITC-APPLESEED-CUSTOM-MAR16\[1\].pdf](http://www.qmarkresearch.com/EITC-APPLESEED-CUSTOM-MAR16[1].pdf)

2016 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The 2016 session of the Hawai'i State Legislature ended on May 5th. One of the biggest legislative wins this session was additional funding for Preschool Open Doors, Hawai'i's preschool subsidy program. The \$10 million in funding, an increase from \$6 million, is expected to help up to 1,800 at-risk children access early education programs.

Unfortunately, several measures that would have helped children and families did not survive this year's session. Proposed legislation to implement a state earned income tax credit did not move forward. This is a huge loss for low-income families with children. Research documents the benefits of the credit on life-long health, education and employment outcomes for children.³

Legislation was also proposed for a paid family leave program in Hawai'i. While the measures did not survive, progress was made in this policy area with the passage of SR57, which establishes a paid family leave task force to examine the benefits and costs of a potential paid family leave program in Hawai'i.

³ (n.d.). Retrieved from http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/publications/brochures/56ec9_EITC.pdf.



YOUNG CHILD RISK CALCULATOR

Child advocates have another tool to help them gather state specific data on the percentage and number of at-risk young children.

The National Center for Children in Poverty's (NCCP) online Young Child Risk Calculator allows users to examine state data on this population by income and risk factory category. The risk factors used in the calculator are known to increase a young child's chance of poor health, school and developmental outcomes. Some of the risk factors measured include large family size (four or more children), low parental education (no high school degree), and parental unemployment. Children who experience three or more risks are exceptionally vulnerable.

The calculator provides users with valuable data that can be used to compare how children are doing nationally as well as in their state. For example:

- In the U.S., 11% of children under the age of three live in deep poverty, compared to 8% in Hawai'i;
- The percentage of children under the age of three that are experiencing one to two risk factors is slightly

Choose a state

National

Choose an age range

Under age 3
 3 through 5
 Under age 6
 6 through 8
 Under age 9

Choose an income level

Deep Poverty (<50% FPT)
 Poverty (<100% FPT)
 Low-Income (<200% FPT)

Choose risk factors

Households without English speakers ?
 Large family ?
 Low parental education ?
 Residential mobility ?
 Unmarried parent ?
 Teen mother ?
 Unemployed parent(s) ?

[Select all] [Select none]

CALCULATE

higher in Hawai'i (46%) than it is in the U.S. (44%);

- However, the share of children in this age group experiencing three or more risk factors, is higher in the U.S. (17%) and lower in Hawai'i (12%).

*Young Children in Deep Poverty*⁴, a fact sheet from NCCP, recommends that families in deep poverty be simultaneously connected with multiple programs, such as WIC (a supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), home visiting programs, Early Head Start, education and job programs for parents, as well as high quality early care and education for preschoolers. Coordinated services also help families cope with spells of severe economic hardships.

You may use the Young Child Risk Calculator to generate data at <http://www.nccp.org/tools/risk/>.

⁴ Retrieved from http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_1133.pdf

CHILDCARE AND PARENTING SUPPORT STATEWIDE SURVEY

Our April E-Bulletin highlighted the Early Childhood Action Strategy collaborative's Childcare and Parenting Support Survey. Unfortunately, the survey link was not active at the time of our distribution, and we apologize.

The Early Childhood Action Strategy collaborative has commissioned a market research survey to identify childcare and parenting support needs statewide. The research aims to inform policies and programming related to infant and toddler care, family childcare, preschools, and parenting support services. By increasing access to childcare and parenting support programs, more children will have early learning opportunities in group settings, families will be able to secure employment or attend school, and families will feel confident in their parenting skills.



Electronic surveys will be conducted in the spring and summer of 2016, followed by focus interviews in the fall 2016, if needed. The Early Childhood Action Strategy collaborative encourages that the link to the survey be shared with employees, friends, families and others who might be interested in providing feedback. Survey results will be completely confidential. Findings are expected to be shared in January 2017.

To access the survey, visit <http://web.smsHawaii.com/keiki05/login.html>.

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CENTER ON THE FAMILY

2515 Campus Road, Miller Hall 103, Honolulu, HI 96822

Phone: (808) 956-4132 | Fax: (808) 956-4147 | Email: cof@ctahr.hawaii.edu

Facebook Page URL: www.facebook.com/HawaiiKidsCount

Twitter Page URL: www.twitter.com/hikidscount

