



CALIFORNIA'S CHILDREN

July 2003

➤ **Hispanics comprise the largest group of California's children.**

California has over nine million children under age 18. Of these, 43 percent are Hispanic, 38 percent are white, 12 percent are Asian, 6 percent are African American, and just over 1 percent are Native American. Among adults, whites are the largest group at 51 percent; Hispanics are the second largest at 29 percent.

➤ **Almost half of the state's children have a foreign-born parent.**

Although only 8 percent of children are themselves foreign-born, 49 percent have at least one parent who was born outside of the United States—almost three times higher than in the rest of the nation. Most of these children are Hispanic (65 percent) or Asian (21 percent).

➤ **Thirty percent of children are not living with both parents.**

Most of these children (72 percent) live with their mother. However, a substantial share live with their father (17 percent) or another relative (10 percent). Very few are in households with no relative (1 percent). Among African American children, more than half do not live with both parents.

➤ **Many children live in families with low education levels.**

Almost 40 percent of children live in families where the adult with the highest level of education did not attend college. Seventeen percent are in families where the most educated adult did not finish high school, compared to 10 percent in the rest of the nation.

➤ **The income gap for families with children has grown.**

Between 1979 and 2001, income for high-income families grew 22 percent, from \$100,850 to \$122,700 (inflation-adjusted 2001 dollars). Over the same period, income in low-income families fell 11 percent, from \$14,450 to \$12,900. Median income fell 8 percent, from \$46,750 to \$43,150 (see figure).

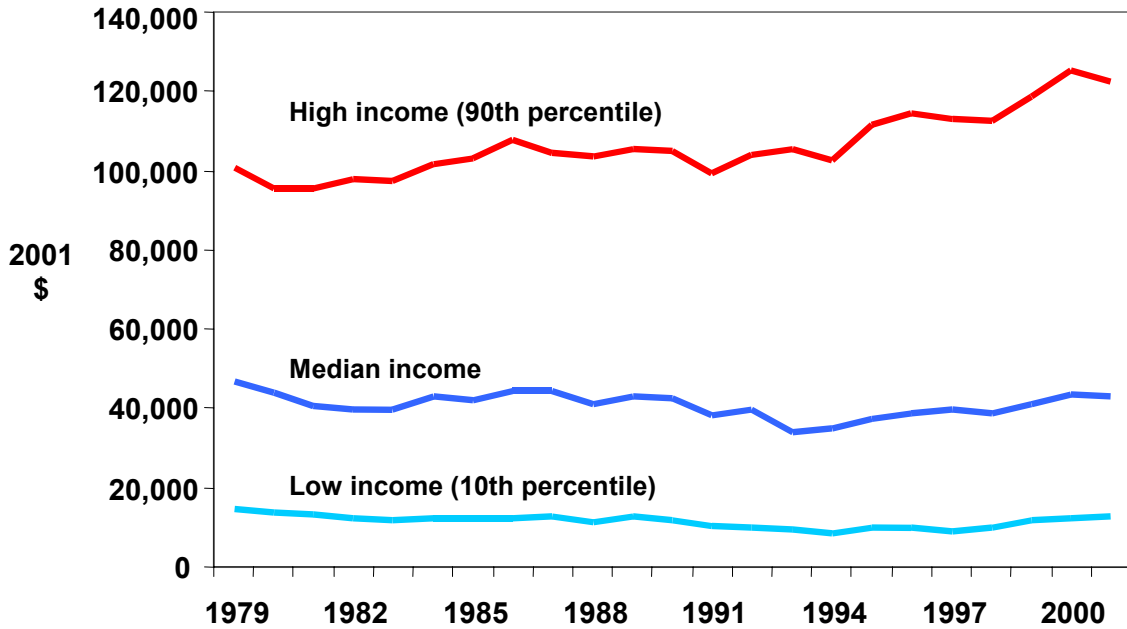
➤ **Although the child poverty rate has declined, it remains high.**

The child poverty rate fell substantially from a high of 28 percent in 1994 to 16 percent in 2001. Nevertheless, it remained well above the 1969 rate of 11 percent. Of poor children, 45 percent live with both parents, 44 percent live in a family where at least one member works full-time, and only 26 percent receive public assistance.

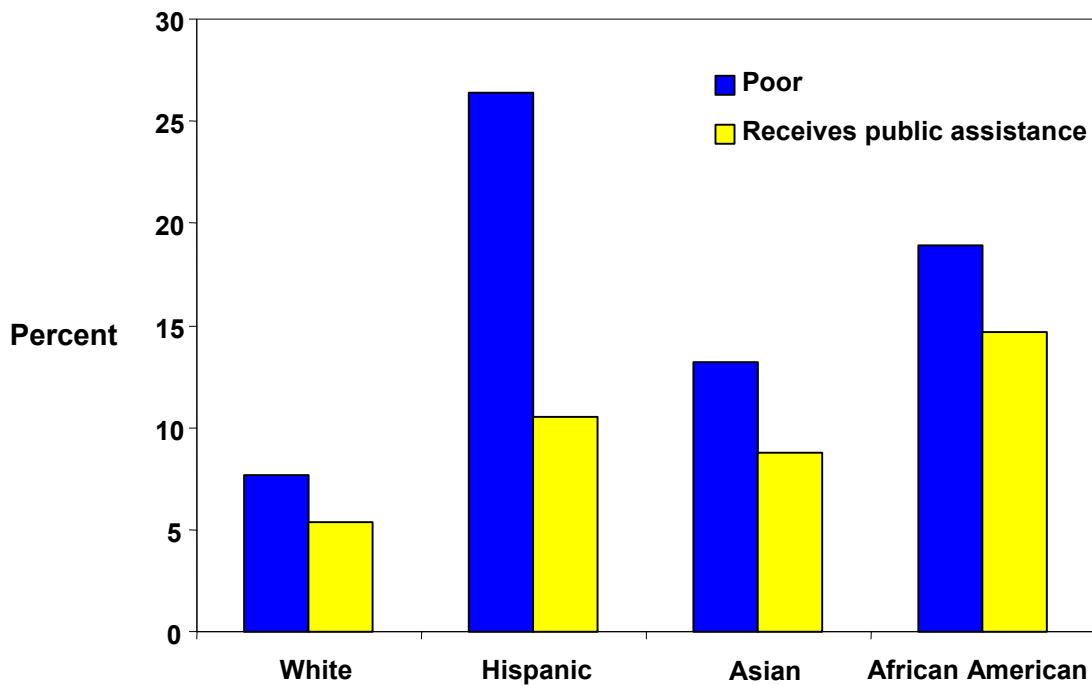
➤ **Child poverty varies substantially across California's counties.**

At the time of the 2000 Census, the child poverty rate in California was 19 percent. The rate was highest in Tulare County at 33 percent and almost as high in Alpine, Fresno, and Modoc Counties. Los Angeles, the largest county, had a child poverty rate of 25 percent. In contrast, fewer than 10 percent of children were poor in El Dorado, Marin, Placer, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Sonoma Counties.

Income Trends for California Families with Children, 1979-2001



Poverty and Public Assistance for Children in California, 2001



Source: PPIC calculations based on Census 2000 and the March Current Population Survey.