



This research was funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. We thank them for their support but acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of MassBudget alone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Foundation.

FACTS AT A GLANCE

September 20, 2012

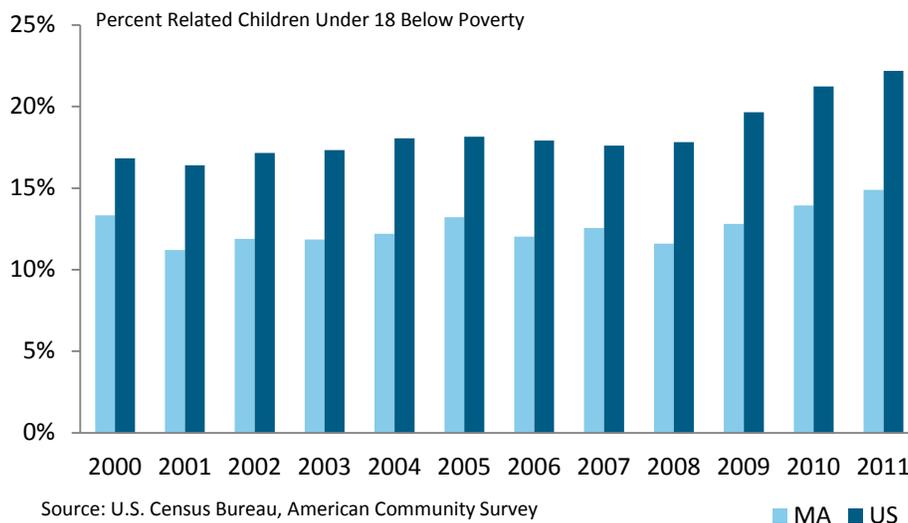
Child Poverty in Massachusetts Unchanged, and Almost Every Child Has Health Insurance

Children in Massachusetts fare better than in much of the rest of the nation, as child poverty in the Commonwealth remains unchanged and health insurance coverage is widespread, according to data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau with its American Community Survey (ACS):

- Slightly more than one out of every seven children (14.9 percent) in Massachusetts lives in poverty, not statistically different from the child poverty rate in 2010;
- Nationally, more than one out of every five children (22.2 percent) is poor, an increase of one percentage point since 2010 and a statistically significant change;
- Fewer than two percent of children in Massachusetts are uninsured, compared to one in thirteen children (7.5 percent) nationwide.

The annual American Community Survey estimates that there are more than 206,000 children in Massachusetts living in poverty (an annual income of approximately \$22,800 for a family of four). The poverty rate for children in Massachusetts has stabilized, although child poverty has increased since before the most recent recession in 2007, when child poverty in Massachusetts was at 12.6 percent.

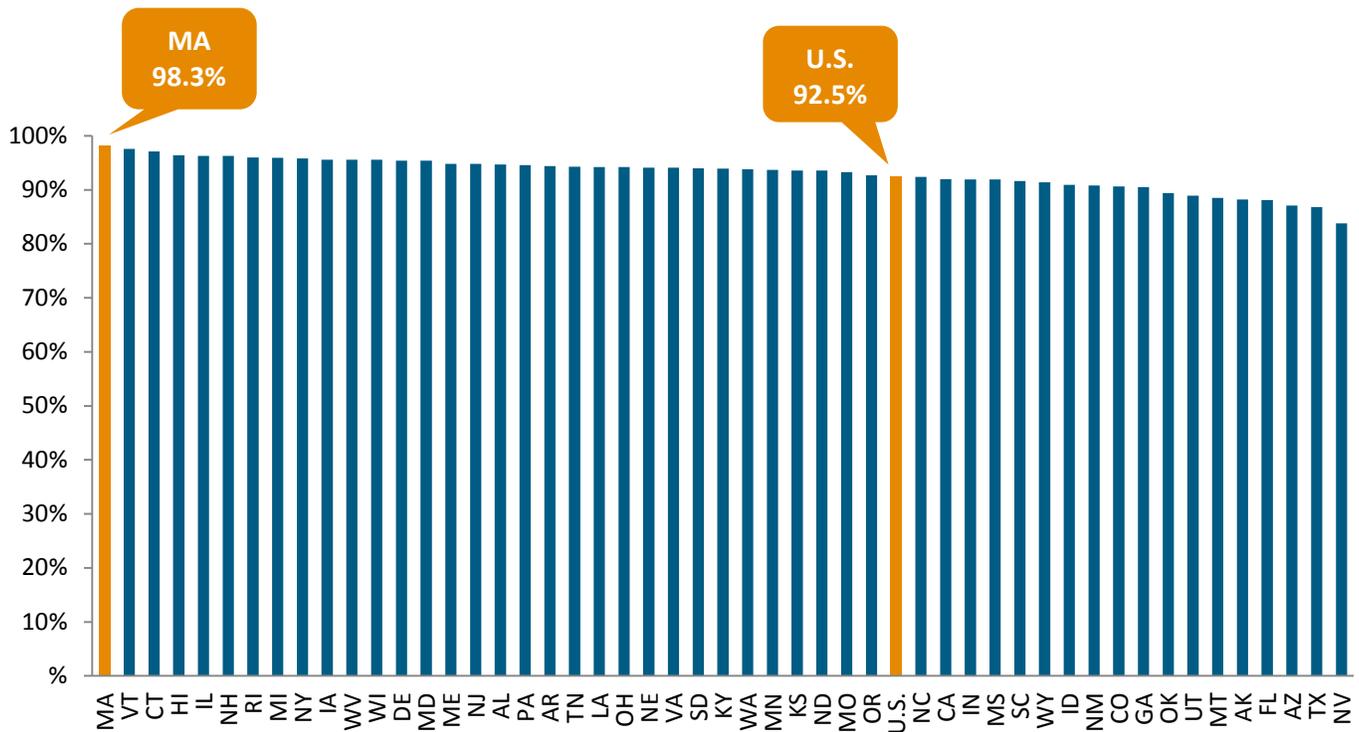
Child Poverty Continues to Grow



The national child poverty rate has also increased since 2007, from 17.6 percent. The Census Bureau estimates that there are more than 16 million children nationwide living in poverty. Surprisingly, during the last economic recovery, child poverty in the United States did not decline overall. This trend continues, as the recent slow recovery is not yet pulling children out of poverty.

Once again, Massachusetts leads the nation in the percent of children with health care coverage, with almost every single child in Massachusetts covered by health insurance. In 2011, 98.3 percent of children had health insurance, essentially the same as in 2010. Nationally, 92.5 percent of children were covered by health insurance in 2011.

Massachusetts Still Leads the Way in Health Care Coverage for Children



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2011

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

These numbers may differ slightly from figures released last week by the Census Bureau with the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is the official source for national level poverty and income data, but the ACS is based on a larger sample and provides better information for comparing one state to another, and for providing more detailed information on the status of children.

Because these data come from surveys of a random sample of households, one cannot be certain that the estimate produced by the particular sample included in the survey reflects the actual rate for the entire population. When comparing two measures—for instance, the poverty rate in two different years or health insurance coverage for two different states—it is important to consider how this sampling variability may affect the comparison. If we can determine that the difference that appears between the

two samples would occur due to sampling variability fewer than 10 times out of 100, then we can say that we have a 90 percent level of confidence that the difference between the two measures reflects a true difference, and is not simply a result of random variation. In other words, the chance that the difference between the two estimates is simply the result of random chance is less than 10 percent. The 90 percent confidence level is typically used when analyzing ACS data, and that is the measure we use here when defining a difference as significant. For more on calculating levels of confidence and testing for significance, see Appendix 4 in the ACS [user guide](#).