Poverty is about more than just income. Louisville's child poverty rate ranks 7th out of 17 peer cities.

Source: Greater Louisville Project Data from American Community Survey Table B17001, 2016

Multidimensional poverty is a broader concept that includes financial and non-financial, interconnected deprivations. Reducing the impact of multidimensional poverty on children requires addressing the many different obstacles their families face.

In the 2015 Competitive City Update, *Louisville: A Focus on Poverty*, we examined the impact of multidimensional poverty on our community. In this report, we look at barriers that keep families and children in the cycle of poverty.

**Poverty Persists Through Generations**

More than 1 in 5 children in Louisville live in poverty.

These 38,000 children would fill...

1. KFC Yum! Centers
2. Slugger Fields
3. Louisville City soccer stadiums

Alleviating the impacts of childhood poverty would increase a child's income by an average of $9,300 annually throughout adulthood. That's an extra $178.85/week.

This additional income for the current generation of children growing up in poverty would unlock to more than $200 million in economic activity in our community each year.

Families in poverty often struggle with:

- Transportation
- Housing stability
- School attendance
- Food access

Louisville households in poverty with children...

- have a median household income of $11,000
- AND
- have at least one person working but still do not earn enough to escape poverty.

**POVERTY PERSISTS THROUGH GENERATIONS**

**MORE THAN 1 IN 5 CHILDREN IN LOUISVILLE LIVE IN POVERTY**

**2016 Multidimensional Poverty Index**

- 14%
- 15%
- 16%
- 17%
- 18%
- 18%
- 21%
- 21%
- 22%
- 24%
- 24%
- 25%
- 25%
- 25%
- 27%
- 29%
- 35%

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POVERTY IS EXPERIENCED IN MULTIPLE FORMS

A household in poverty is under the constant stress of a multitude of barriers, each one compounding on the others, making poverty difficult to escape. Eliminating a single barrier does not address the challenges that remain in other aspects of life. Coordinated interventions are necessary across the Deep Drivers of Change to combat systemic poverty.

Unemployment and underemployment are detrimental to mental health, social inclusion, and household stability.

For most families in poverty, a job is not enough. Louisville ranks 14th out of our 17 peer cities in median household income among families in poverty.

In Louisville, 17.4% of households in poverty with children have someone actively looking for work.

Workers in poverty are 4x as likely to rely on public transportation, creating additional barriers to when and where they can live, work, and shop.

In Louisville, 35% of children in poverty do not have anyone at home who has completed high school.

Educational disparities have multidimensional ramifications, affecting parents’ earning potential, job stability, and ability to support their children’s education.

One of the best predictors of economic and educational success for children is THE EDUCATION LEVEL OF THEIR PARENTS.

Children in households that experience food insecurity

- Children in poverty: 44%
- Children out of poverty: 17%

Louisville ranks 11th of 17 in the life expectancy gap between high-income and low-income residents. The gap is 7 years for women and 11 years for men.

Children in poverty households where no one has a high school degree or equivalent

- St. Louis: 11%
- Cincinnati: 11%
- Grand Rapids: 13%
- Memphis: 19%
- Knoxville: 16%
- Tulsa: 16%
- Oklahoma City: 17%
- Kansas City: 17%
- Birmingham: 17%
- Louisville: 14%
- Charleston: 19%
- Columbus: 22%
- Greensboro: 23%
- Nashville: 24%
- Greenville: 24%
- Oklahoma City: 24%
- Omaha: 24%
- Indianapolis: 25%

Source: Greater Louisville Project Analysis of American Community Survey Microdata Data via IPUMS, 2015

In households where no one has a high school degree or equivalent, the highest rate of Louisvillians in the bottom income quartile smoke. 35% of Louisville residents are exposed to secondhand smoke and the health conditions that come with it.

Children growing up in these households are more likely to be exposed to secondhand smoke and the health conditions that come with it.

62% of poor children in Louisville live in families that spent over 50% of their income on housing costs.

26% of children in poverty have moved homes in the past year compared with only 13% of non-poor children.

18% of children in poverty do not have anyone at home who has completed high school.

Children in poverty are 2X as likely to live in a home without someone who holds an associate degree or higher.

Educational disparities have multidimensional ramifications, affecting parents’ earning potential, job stability, and ability to support their children’s education.

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For most families in poverty, a job is not enough. Louisville ranks 14th out of our 17 peer cities in median household income among families in poverty.

Unemployment and underemployment are detrimental to mental health, social inclusion, and household stability.
Advancing a competitive city requires including all residents in our progress.

The data show that Louisville has made great strides to reduce child poverty since our child poverty rate peaked at 28% in 2011. Now is the time to build on that progress. By changing the life trajectory of young people growing up in poverty, Louisville is poised to move into the top tier of our peer cities for generations to come. Understanding that the barriers keeping households in poverty do not exist in isolation, our hope is the data in this report provide a basis for coordinated interventions to address and alleviate the daily stresses that impoverished families experience.

Ending generational poverty in Louisville will require approaches that extend across traditional silos to address the negative impacts that can affect households across the Deep Drivers of Change: Education, Jobs, Health, and Quality of Place. Instead of paying the price to deal with the ramifications of poverty tomorrow, Louisville has the opportunity to invest today in brighter futures for our families and a more competitive city.

Visit www.GreaterLouisvilleProject.org to download a digital version of this report and to access an appendix containing a detailed list of source data.

The Greater Louisville Project’s purpose is to provide research and data that catalyze civic action. We focus on four Deep Drivers and track our progress against our peer cities over time. By using that data to engage community leaders in conversations and planning, we hope to create a more competitive city that benefits our community.


The report was prepared by the Greater Louisville Project team: Ben Reno-Weber, Kelsie Smithson, and Nate Kratzer with special assistance provided by Trisha Finnegan, Megan Webb, and Harrison Kirby.