

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESS RELEASE

**Children Hanging in the Balance,
Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Toledo in Top Five Cities in America with the Highest Rates of Child
Poverty**

Columbus, OH – As another year draws to a close, our personal thoughts turn to the future. Unfortunately, the future looks bleak for too many of Ohio’s children. Last week, we learned that more than 30% of our 3rd graders risk not meeting the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. In some city schools, nearly all third-graders are at risk of being held back. We call on educators, school administrators, policymakers, and elected officials to look beyond the scores to solve the problem.

Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio conducted analyses of the American Community Survey (ACS) 2012 one-year estimates released by the U.S. Census earlier this year. These analyses revealed alarming findings for children in Ohio’s major cities. Among the 76 cities (“places” as defined by the U.S. Census) with total populations of 250,000 or more, three Ohio cities rank in the top five for the percent of children who are poor:

1. Detroit - 59.4%
2. **Cincinnati- 53.1%**
3. **Cleveland- 52.6%**
4. Miami - 48.0%
5. **Toledo- 46.0%**

“When three of the top five American cities with the highest rates of child poverty are in Ohio, it is clear that children are not a priority here,” says Renuka Mayadev, Executive Director of the Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio. “Significant numbers of our children do not meet state academic standards because their basic needs are not being met. More than half the children in Cincinnati, Cleveland and Dayton are considered poor, and Youngstown’s child poverty rate is a staggering 63.5%.”

The U.S. Census Bureau recently released the 2012 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) which provides the latest county-level data on household income and child poverty. For the seventh consecutive year Ohio’s child poverty rate (23.6%) exceeded the national rate (22.6%), although this gap narrowed slightly compared to the previous year. The poverty threshold is household income below \$23,492 for a family of four.

Highlights from the 2012 SAIPE data revealed:

- An estimated 617,006 Ohio children (23.6%) are considered poor.
- Poverty is especially high among children age 0-4. In Ohio, 28.3% of children in this age group are living in poverty, compared to 25.6% nationally.
- 15 of Ohio's 88 counties have child poverty rates of 30% or higher.
- The five counties with the highest rates of child poverty are: Jackson (35.2%), Vinton (34.9%), Pike (34.4%), Scioto (33.6%), and Adams (33.5%), all of which are Appalachian counties.
- Delaware County has the lowest rate of child poverty at 5.9%.
- Median household income in Ohio is \$46,873 and remains below the 2008 level.

For more information, visit www.cdfohio.org. To view complete rankings of child poverty rates and median household income by county, visit the KIDS COUNT® Data Center at www.datacenter.kidscount.org.

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The Children's Defense Fund Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

KIDS COUNT®, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. By providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks of child well-being, KIDS COUNT seeks to enrich local, state and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children.