CHILDREN IN THE USA: SOME HARD FACTS

CHILD POVERTY

• Almost half of young children in the United States live in poverty or near poverty.¹
• The USA ranks 35 of 40 developed nations in rate of child poverty.²
• Poverty has a profound effect on specific circumstances, such as birth weight, infant mortality, language development, chronic illness, environmental exposure, nutrition, and injury.³
• Nearly 1 child in 5 – or 12.8 million children – was poor in 2017.
• 70% of poor children are children of color.
• 3 million US children live in families surviving on $2 per day per person.

CHILD HEALTH

• A baby is born without health insurance every minute.
• Over 2.5 million school-aged children are uninsured

CHILD WELFARE

• A child is confirmed abused or neglected every 47 seconds in the USA.
• The average stay in foster care is 19 months.
• Over 20,000 children “aged out” of foster care without a permanent family.

EDUCATION

• Less than half of poor children are ready for school at age 5.
• 67% of public school 8th graders cannot read at grade level.
• A public school student is suspended every 2 seconds.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

• 2,363 children are arrested each day in the USA – one every 37 seconds.
• About 76,000 children are placed in the adult criminal justice system each year
• 48,043 American children were incarcerated on an average night in 2015

GUN VIOLENCE

• 3,410 children and teens were killed with a gun in 2017
• American civilians own more than 393 million guns
• A child or teen dies from guns every 2 hours and 34 minutes.

¹ “Poverty and Child Health in the United States,” American Academy of Pediatrics, 2018: pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/137/4/e20160339.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ All other statistics from Children Defense fund: childrensdefense.org/policy/policy-priorities/.