

# POVERTY IN AMERICA, 2015: A CATHOLIC RESPONSE

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# POPE FRANCIS ON POVERTY





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“God’s heart has a special place for the poor, so much so that he himself ‘became poor’ (2 *Cor* 8:9). The entire history of our redemption is marked by the presence of the poor. . . .

- *Evangelii Gaudium*, 197.



# POPE FRANCIS ON POVERTY

“Our commitment does not consist exclusively in activities or programmes of promotion and assistance; what the Holy Spirit mobilizes is not an unruly activism, but above all an attentiveness which considers the other “in a certain sense as one with ourselves”. This loving attentiveness is the beginning of a true concern for their person which inspires me effectively to seek their good. . . . and this is what makes the authentic option for the poor differ from any other ideology, from any attempt to exploit the poor for one’s own personal or political interest. . . . Without the preferential option for the poor, “the proclamation of the Gospel, which is itself the prime form of charity, risks being misunderstood or submerged by the ocean of words which daily engulfs us in today’s society of mass communications.”

*Evangelii Gaudium*, 199



# CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: POVERTY

*“At the beginning of the New Millennium, the poverty of billions of men and women is ‘the one issue that most challenges our human and Christian consciences.’ Poverty poses a dramatic problem of justice; in its various forms and with its various effects, it is characterized by an unequal growth that does not recognize the ‘equal right of all people to take their seat “at the table of the common banquet.”””*

*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 449, quoting John Paul II, Message for the 2000 World Youth Day of Peace, 14, and John Paul II Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 33.*



# CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: POVERTY

“The Church’s love for the poor . . . is a part of her constant tradition.” This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor. Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to “be able to give to those in need.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2444, quoting *Centesimus Annus*, 57 and *Eph* 4:28.



# CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: POVERTY

“St. John Chrysostom vigorously recalls this: “Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs.”

“The demands of justice must be satisfied first of all; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity.”

“When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2446, with quotations from St. John Chrysostom, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, and St. Gregory the Great



# HEADLINES

- Median Household Income is Up and Poverty is Down By Significant Amounts
- Government Programs Succeed in Raising Many Families Out of Poverty
- Many Families Rely on Programs to Stay Out of Poverty
- Children and Young Women Still Have Highest Poverty Rates by Age and Gender
- Child Poverty Did not Change by Supplemental Poverty Measure





# WHAT ARE THE SURVEYS?

## Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC)

- Survey of 95k households
- Controlled to independent national population estimates of age, sex, and race for March 2016
- Conducted every month
- Primary source of poverty data for the US Government
- Used for the Office of Management and Budget policy calculations
- Has most detailed questions



# WHAT ARE THE SURVEYS?

## American Community Survey (ACS)

- Part of the 2020 census program
- Asks respondents about income in a rolling 12 month period
- Respondents over different months are describing income over different periods of time
- Supplementary poverty data



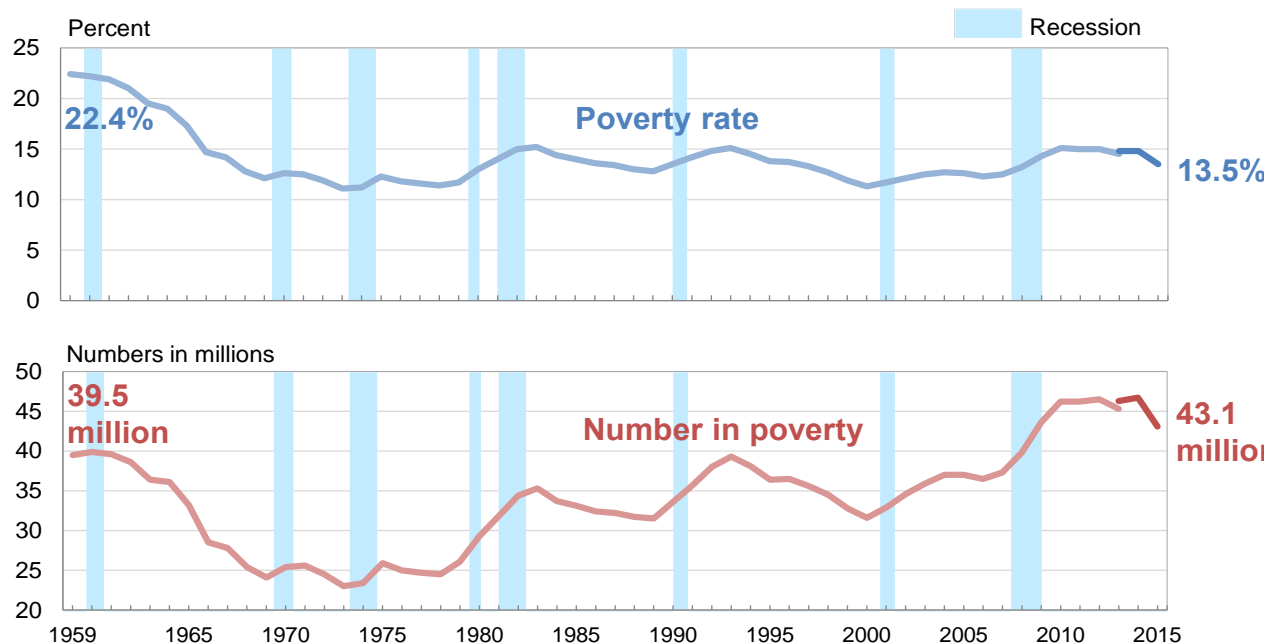
# POVERTY THRESHOLD FOR 2015 CPS

Size of Family Unit	Weighted Average Poverty Thresholds	No Children	One Child	Two	Three	Four
1	\$12,082					
2 (hh<65)	\$15,952	\$15,871	\$16,337			
2 (hh>65)	\$14,342	\$14,326	\$16,275			
3	\$18,871	\$18,540	\$19,078	\$19,096		
4	\$24,257	\$24,447	\$24,847	\$24,036	\$24,120	
5	\$28,741	\$29,482	\$29,911	\$28,995	\$28,286	\$27,853



# POVERTY RATE FOR 2015

## Poverty Rate and Number in Poverty: 1959 to 2015



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
census.gov

Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1960 to 2016 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.





# CHANGES IN THE POVERTY RATE

## The Poverty Rate is Down

- 13.5% in 2015, down 1.2% from 2014
- 43.1 M in poverty, down 3.5M from 2014
- Children: 19.7%, down from 21.1% in 2014



# POVERTY RATE FOR FAMILIES

- Poverty rate for families was 10.4% or 8.6M families, down from 11.6% and 9.5M in 2014.
- For married couple families, the poverty rate was 5.4%, representing 3.2M families, down from 6.2%, or 3.7M families in 2014.
- For families with a female householder, the poverty rate was 28.2%, representing 4.4 M families, down from 30.6%, and 4.8M families in 2014.
- Families with a male householder had a poverty rate of 14.9%, representing 939k families, which was not statistically different from 2014.



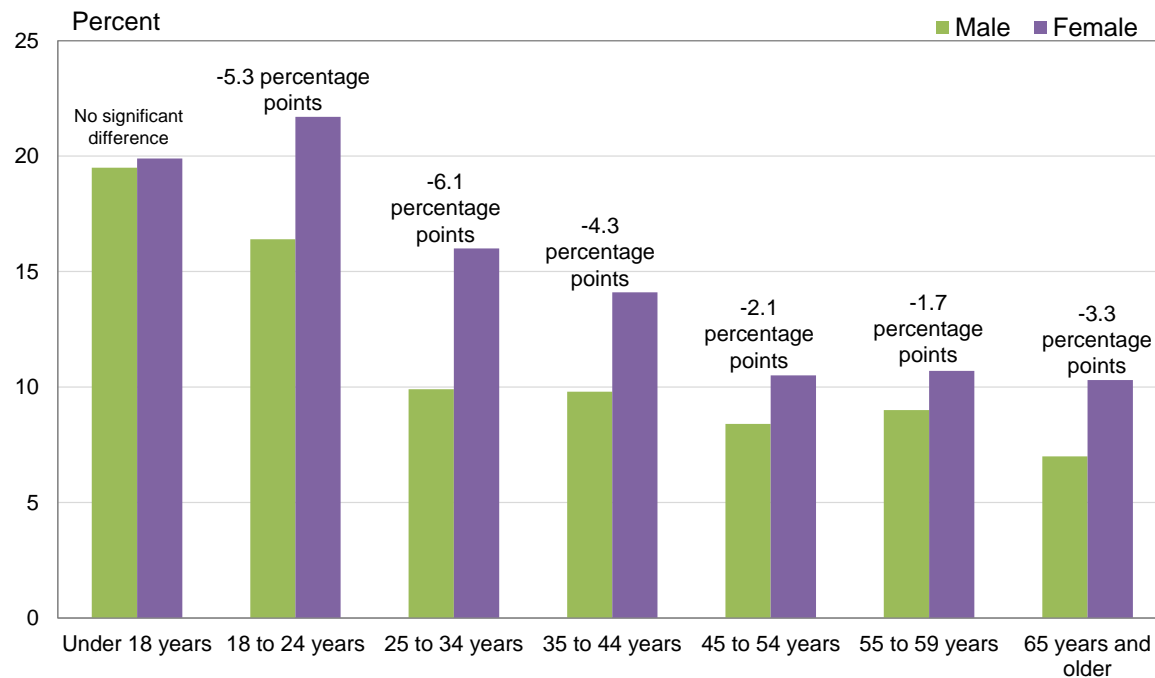
# POVERTY RATE FOR CHILDREN BASED ON FAMILY COMPOSITION

- Poverty Rate for children related to the householder is 19.2%, representing 14 M children, which is down from 20.7% and 15 M in 2014
- For children in married couple families, the poverty rate is 9.8%, representing 4.8 M, down from 10.6% and 5.2 M in 2014
- For related children and families with a female householder, the poverty rate for children is 42.6%, representing 7.9M children, down from 46.5% and 8.5M in 2014.



# FEMINIZATION OF POVERTY

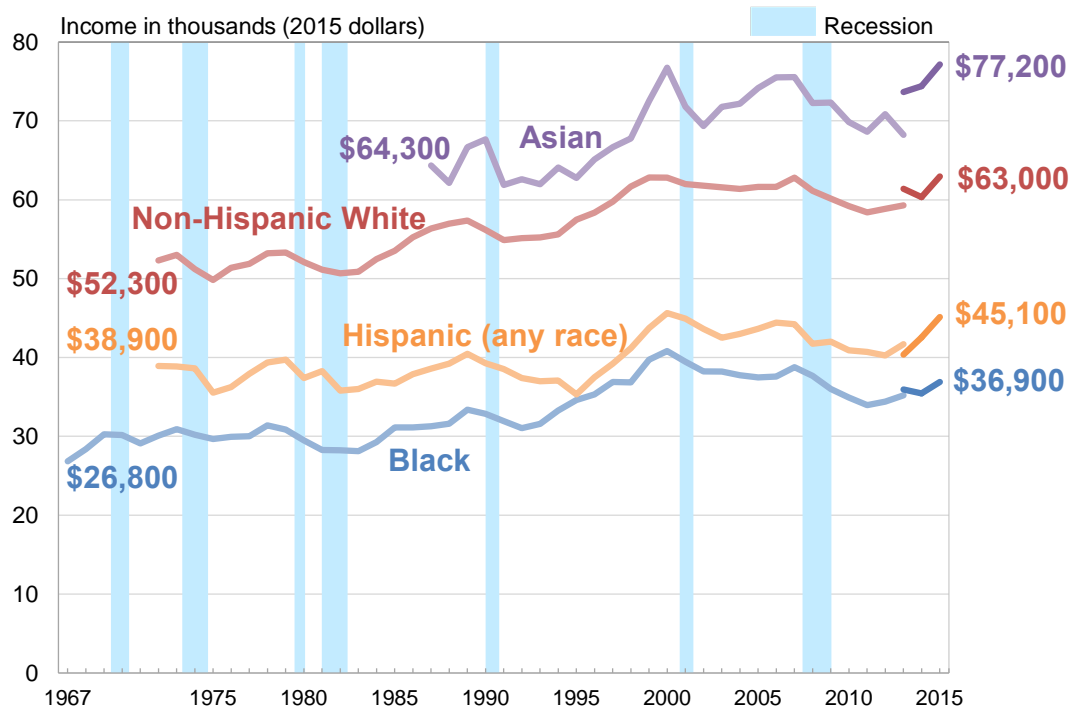
## Poverty Rates by Age and Sex: 2015





# RACIAL DISPARITIES IN INCOME

## Real Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin of Householder: 1967 to 2015



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
census.gov

Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions. Income rounded to nearest \$100.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2016 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.



# REGIONAL DISPARITIES IN CPS, BUT CHANGES IN DATA

## CPS:

- Median Household income fell from \$45,534 in 2014 to \$44,657 in 2015 in non-metro areas
- Poverty Rate rose, though not in statistically significant manner, from 16.5% in 2014 to 16.7% in 2015
- CPS was in the process of changing the definition of metro and non-metro areas, and [discounted these data](#).

## ACS:

- Non-metro income up from \$42,751 to \$44,212, up 3.4% as compared to 3.6% for metro areas.
- Non-metro poverty down from 18.1% to 17.2%, a 0.9% drop, compared to 0.8% drop in metro areas



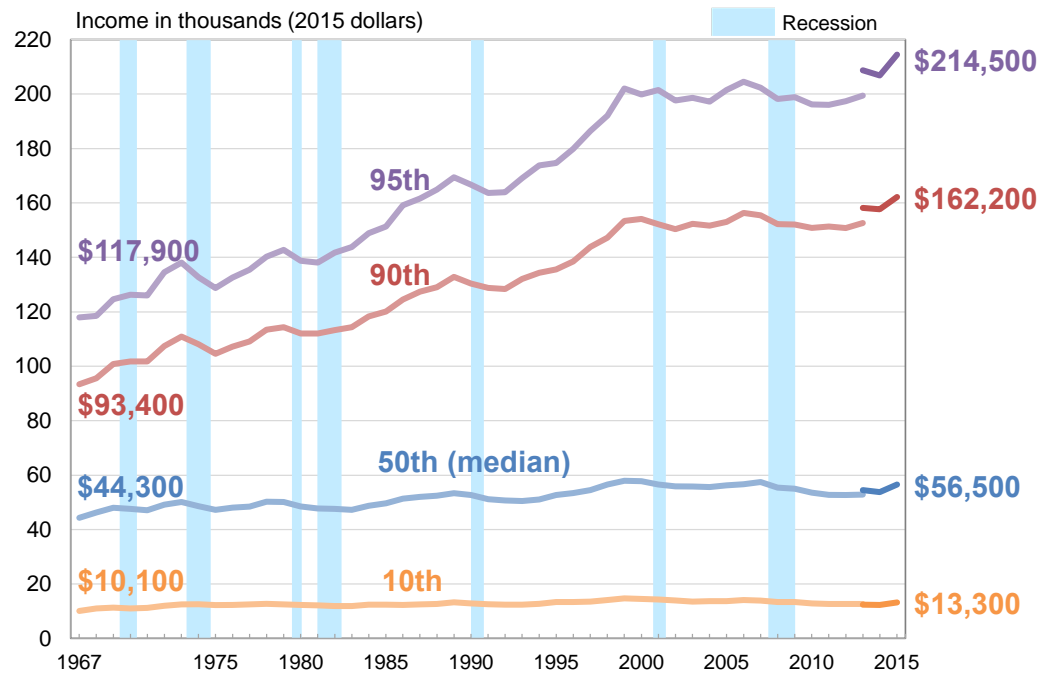
# DEEP POVERTY

- 19.4M were in deep poverty in 2015
- Deep Poverty Rate was 6.1%, which accounted for 45.1% of all people in poverty
- 6.5M Children in deep poverty, representing 33.6% of all persons in families living in deep poverty
- To leave deep poverty, families needed \$10,118, roughly the same in 2015 as 2014.



# HOUSEHOLD INCOME CHANGES

## Real Household Income at Selected Percentiles: 1967 to 2015



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
census.gov

Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions. Income rounded to nearest \$100.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2016 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.





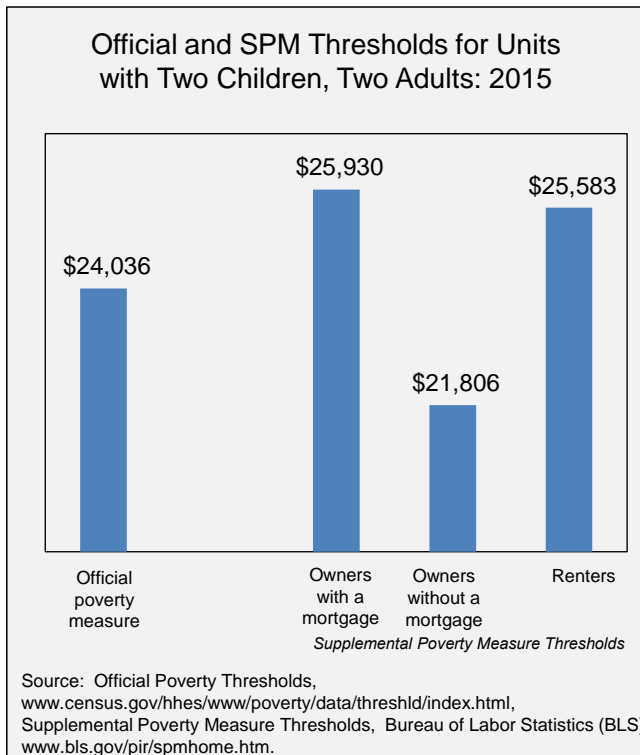
# IN 2015, INCOME SHOWED PERCENTAGE GROWTH AT BOTTOM OF INCOME SPECTRUM

- Income in 2015 grew by 7.9% in real (inflation-adjusted) terms for households at the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Grew by 5.2% for households at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Grew by 2.9% at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile
  
- State minimum wage and employment increases likely factors

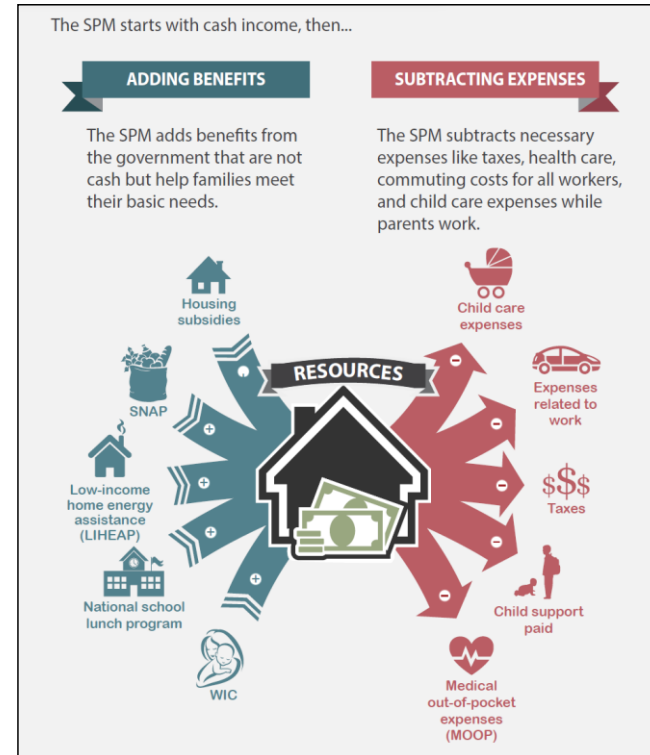


# SUPPLEMENTAL POVERTY MEASURE

## Supplemental Poverty Measure Thresholds and Resources

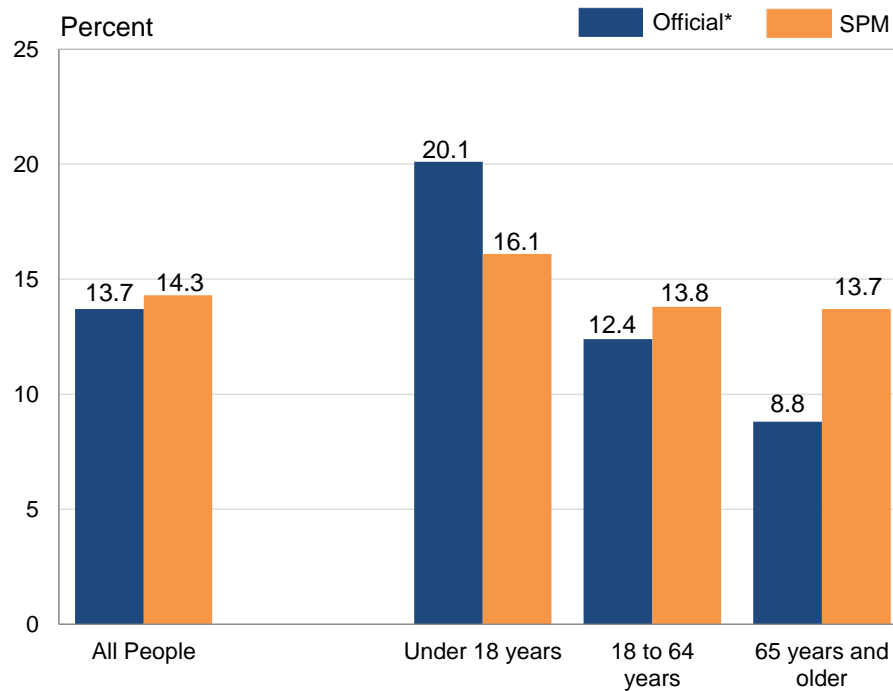


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# CHILD POVERTY LESS UNDER SPM

## Comparison of SPM and Official Poverty Estimates: 2015



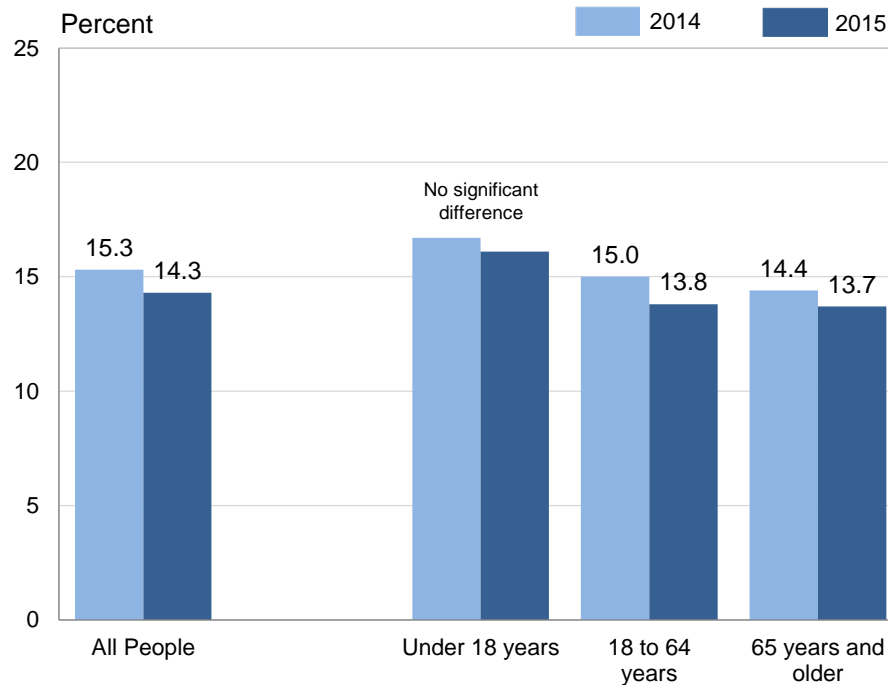
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
census.gov

\*Includes unrelated individuals under age 15.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2016  
Annual Social and Economic Supplement.



# CHILD POVERTY DID NOT CHANGE FROM 2014-2015 UNDER SPM

## Comparison of SPM Poverty Estimates: 2014 and 2015



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
census.gov

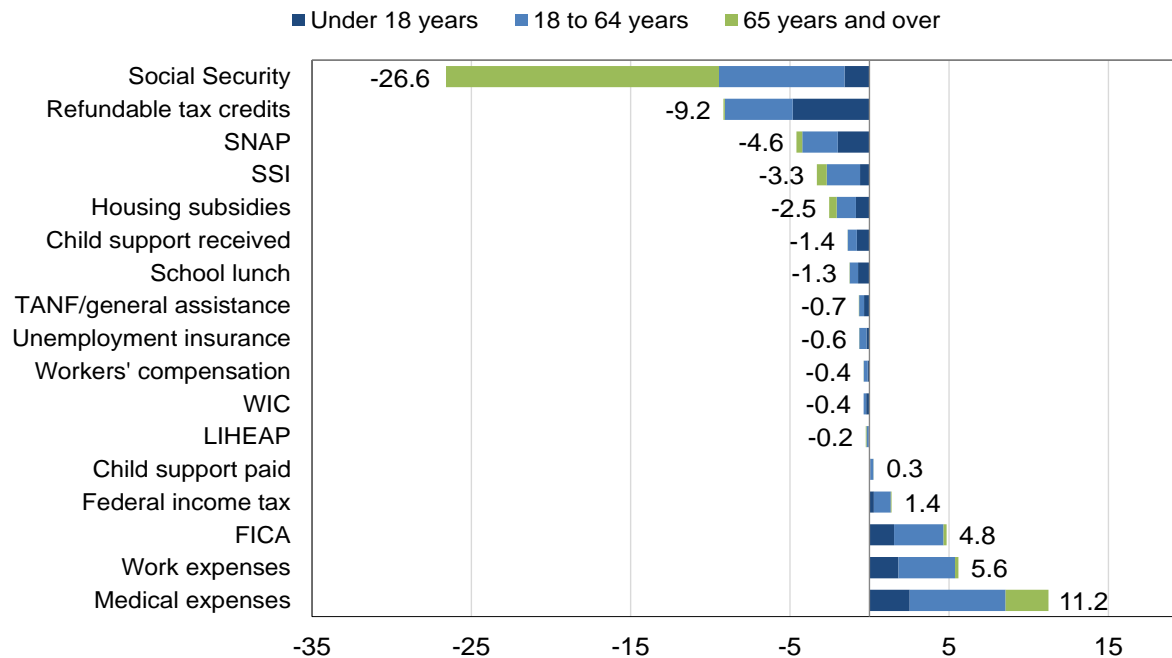
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2015 and 2016 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.



# EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

## PROGRAMS

### Change in Number of People in Poverty After Including Each Element: 2015 (In millions)



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
census.gov

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2016 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.



# POVERTYUSA.ORG



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## THE STATE OF POVERTY

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- [Poverty USA Tour](#)
- [Poverty Facts](#)
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### Poverty Map

This map can help bring to life the statistics and scope of Poverty USA. Use the **National Overview** to compare poverty levels of states. Use the **County Level View** for detailed info at a local level. The County Level View also shows places of hope where people are making a difference with the help of CCHD grants.

**National Overview**
**County Level View**

[PRINT THE MAP](#)
[+](#)

**CLICK ON A STATE FOR:**

State's poverty ranking	Senior poverty rate
Overall poverty rate	Young Adult poverty rate
Deep poverty rate	Disabled poverty rate
Child poverty rate	Poverty by gender

Map data sources: Current Population Survey (CPS), 2014 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

**POVERTY RATE**

Below 11%
11-13%
13-15%
15-17%
Above 17%

Switch views to see: Poverty rate info by county, throughout the US.

Info on CCHD-funded organizations that are helping to fight domestic poverty.







Catholic  
Charities  
USA®

*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*

Founded in 1910

## 2015 Data

- 8,264,464 people served in 2015
- 91,678 people achieved employment, job placement, and other improvements in their employability
- 75,195 people stably housed in 31,907 permanent, affordable homes



# St. Margaret's Shelter

## Focuses on Homeless Women and their Children

- Mission- Promote positive life changes for homeless women and their children in a supportive, short-term housing environment



# History

Opened by Catholic Charities in 1961 as a “halfway house for homeless, destitute women”

The 1980’s- St. Margaret’s was a residence for developmentally impaired adult women

1992- St. Margaret’s began offering emergency shelter to homeless women and children

2000- Shelter 2000 Capital campaign funded a new building and tripled the size of the shelter



# What They Provide

18 Units up to 3-5 family members

Individualized case management

Leadership development

Donation and Distribution Center



# Services Offered to Moms and Children

Life skills classes

Homework club

Parenting assistance

Wellness program





# Community Partnerships

Spokane Community Warehouse

Aftercare Services

Good Grounding

Rapid Re-housing

Walnut Corners Apartments

Sharon Lord Apartments

Homeless Families Coordinated Assessment

Diversion



## 2013

- Income Growth: 21%
- Permanent Housing Discharge: 76%

## 2014

- Income Growth: 35%
- Permanent Housing Discharge: 77%

## 2015

- Income Growth: 34%
- Permanent Housing Discharge: 71%\*



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