

# Wisconsin Health Facts: Poverty and Health, 2006

Results from the Wisconsin Family Health Survey

February 2008

Poverty status is a way of determining which people do not have enough income to meet their basic needs, such as food, housing, clothing and transportation.

The Federal Poverty Line (FPL) is based on the number of people in a household and their annual money income in the previous year. For example, if you lived in a household of four, you were considered poor in 2006 if your total household income for 2005 was less than \$19,350.

Some government programs use a percentage of the FPL for eligibility determination. BadgerCare, for example, used 200% FPL as an eligibility threshold. For a household of four, 200% FPL was \$38,700.

Household Size	Federal Poverty Line
1	\$9,570
2	\$12,830
3	\$16,090
4	\$19,350
5	\$22,610
6	\$25,870

Source: *Federal Register*, Vol. 70, No. 33, February 18, 2005.

## Definitions for a household of four

### Poor:

Less than 100% FPL = Less than \$19,350 per year

### Near-poor:

100%-199% FPL = \$19,350-\$38,699 per year

## Poverty in Wisconsin

In 2006, about 9 percent of Wisconsin's residents lived in households with annual incomes below the Federal Poverty Line. This was a total of **478,000 poor people** in Wisconsin. Another 890,000 residents (16%) were **near-poor**, with annual incomes between 100% and 199% FPL.

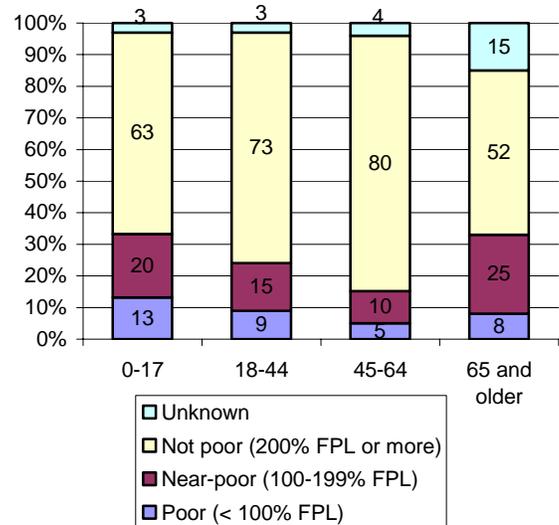
Some population groups are more likely to be poor than others. A larger percentage of children live in poor households than adults or the elderly. In 2006, 13 percent of children were living in households that had incomes below 100% FPL (Figure 1).

Wisconsin's minority race and ethnic groups have higher poverty rates than the majority white non-Hispanic population. The percentage in poverty among African-Americans (41%) and Hispanics (43%) was over eight times the percentage among whites (Figure 2).

Employed adults have lower poverty rates than adults who are not in the labor force. Overall, 4 percent of employed adults, ages 18-64, were poor in 2006, while 18 percent of adults 18-64 not in the labor force were poor.

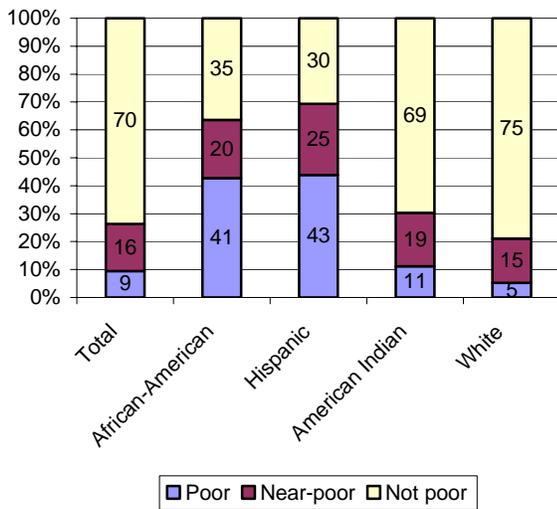
People with less education tend to have higher poverty rates. Among adults 25 years and older who had not completed high school, 25 percent were poor. Only 2 percent of adults who had completed a college degree were poor.

Figure 1. Poverty Status by Age, Wisconsin 2006



Source: 2006 Family Health Survey, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services.

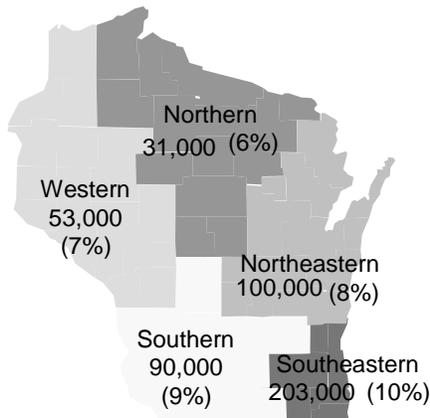
**Figure 2. Poverty Status by Race and Ethnicity, Wisconsin 2006**



Source: 2006 Family Health Survey, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services.

The Southeastern Region had a higher percentage of poor people than the other Regions (Figure 3), mainly reflecting high poverty rates in the City of Milwaukee. Overall, 23 percent of Milwaukee residents were poor in 2006. Thirty-six percent of Milwaukee children were poor and 30 percent were near-poor.

**Figure 3. Number (and Percent) in Poverty in the DHFS Regions, 2006**



Source: 2006 Family Health Survey, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services.

Over one-third of Wisconsin's poor children lived in the City of Milwaukee. Milwaukee ranked fourth highest among U.S. cities on the child poverty rate (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey).

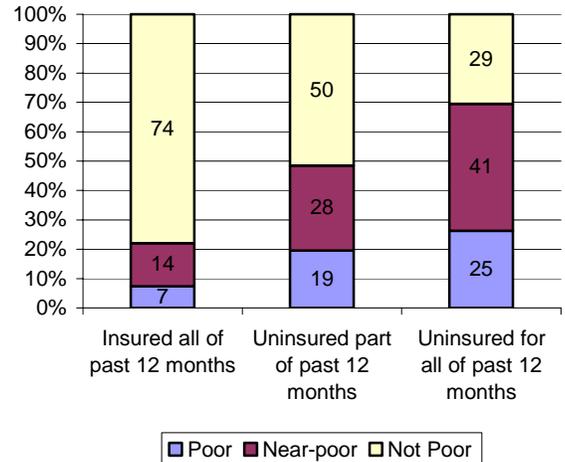
## Poverty and Health in Wisconsin

Poor health and less access to health care are both more common among poor and near-poor people than among higher-income people.

About 11 percent of Wisconsin residents were in fair or poor health in 2006. Among poor residents, however, 26 percent were in fair or poor health, compared to 7 percent among higher-income people.

Poverty rates were much higher among people without health insurance. The percent in poverty was 19 percent among those uninsured during part of the past 12 months, 25 percent among those uninsured for all of the past 12 months, and just 7 percent among those who were insured all of the past 12 months (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Poverty Status by Health Insurance Coverage, Wisconsin 2006**



Source: 2006 Family Health Survey, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services.

Several Wisconsin programs have targeted health care for poor people, such as Medicaid, BadgerCare, lead screening and lead poisoning prevention programs, and Family Care. Starting in February 2008, all Wisconsin children are eligible for health care coverage under BadgerCare Plus, regardless of family income.

*Prepared in the Bureau of Health Information and Policy, Division of Public Health, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services. February 2008. The Family Health Survey is a statewide random-sample telephone survey. More information is available on the Department of Health and Family Services Web site:*

<http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/stats/familyhealthsurvey.htm>