

Children and Poverty in Vermont

A Vermont KIDS COUNT publication of the
Vermont Children's Forum



Vermont Children's Forum

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*We must move children to the centre of the world's agenda. We must rewrite strategies to reduce poverty so that investments in children are given priority...
Any country, any society, which does not care for its children is no nation at all.*

— NELSON MANDELA

Introduction

Short on cash, out of gas, car needs repairs, kids are sick, boss takes no excuses, more month than money and too many mouths to feed, not enough to get by, pay the bills you can and hope the rent doesn't go up again. A lot of wishes, few dreams, and too much hopelessness. This is the situation in which too many of our children grow up.

Ten years ago, the Vermont Children's Forum issued its first report on child poverty. Now, in a new century, as a weak economy, state budget crises, and a growing federal deficit threaten programs for children and families — children and youth are even more at risk of poverty.

The 2003 Childhood Poverty report has a new urgency.

The experience of Vermont children living in economically struggling families — whether measured by the official federal poverty level or by how much month is left after the money runs out — is more common and devastating than most Vermonters may realize.

The signs are everywhere:

Child poverty may be on the rise in Vermont:

- Emergency Food Shelf use has more than doubled in less than a decade. Half of the people benefitting are kids.
- 19% of Vermont's children lived in food insecure families in 2001.
- Over 40 percent of tenants paid more than 30% of their income in rent.
- 27% of Vermont's working families had low-wage jobs in 1997-99 compared to 16% in 1988-90.
- Heating fuel, housing, and health care costs are all rising, while job growth has been greatest in service industries, of which retail pays the lowest weekly wages.

There are so many Vermonters who are living in poverty or just kind of teetering on the brink. When you're going from paycheck to paycheck, anything can happen to disrupt whatever financial stability you have, and you're extremely vulnerable.

— Mary Carlson,
Food & Nutrition Programs,
Vt. Office of Economic
Opportunity

Extent of the Problem

One family I visited had so few resources that the mother was adding water to Shake & Bake mix and feeding it to her kids...

— Early Childhood Program Director

Only about a quarter of Vermont's population is made up of children under the age of 18 — yet a greater proportion of children live under the poverty level than do any other age group. And the younger the person, the more likely he or she is to be living in poverty. In 2000, 13.4 percent of children under age five were poor, compared to 11.4 percent of all children under 18.

Poverty rates during the 1990s

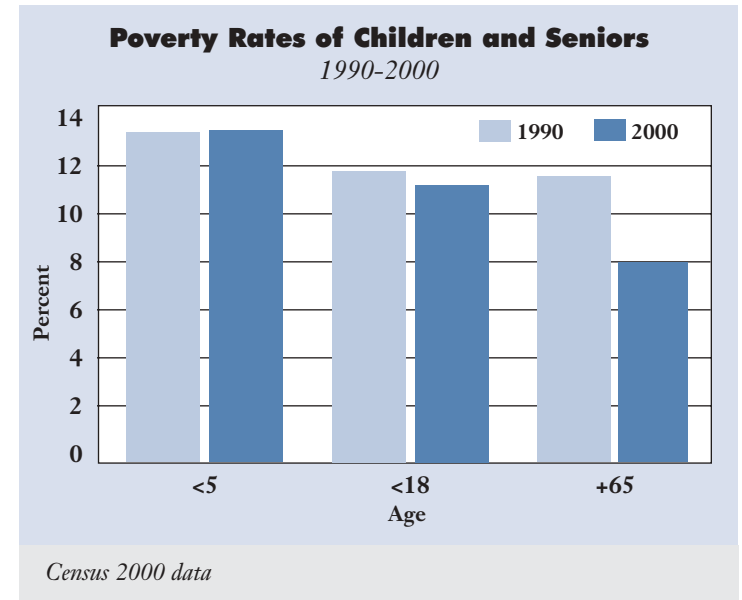
Children were not always Vermont's poorest population group. In 1990, the oldest and youngest Vermonters had nearly the same poverty rates, of 11.6% and 11.9%, for seniors aged 65 and older and children under age 18, respectively.

The booming economy of the 1990s improved the economic standing for both groups, but to much different degrees. Surprisingly, the poverty status of the youngest Vermonters — children under age five — remained about the same by the end of the decade. The poverty rate for seniors had fallen to 8% by 2000 (a thirty percent drop), but overall child poverty had only declined to 11.2% (a five percent drop).

Poverty rates by race*

Poverty rates are even higher for non-white Vermont children. The estimated child poverty rate for African American children under age 18 was 21.6% in 2000; the rate for non-white Hispanic children was 21.1%, and the rate for Native American children was 26.3%.

*(Note: Because the actual numbers of minority children in Vermont are so small, these poverty rates are less reliable than rates based on larger populations.)



Rural poverty

Vermont's rural places are those that retain the best elements of our Green Mountain State — its beauty, independence, and strong family ties. But rural places also may be home to isolation, fewer jobs, and limited affordable and quality child care, social services and medical care.

Although no child is immune from it, children in the most rural areas are more likely to live in poverty than children in more populated areas.

As the most rural region of the state, the Northeast Kingdom also consistently has had the highest rates of child poverty, unemployment, and low-wage jobs.

Unfortunately, children and families in this region continue to face these conditions, as reported in the state's early 2003 revenue report and projections:

"...Despite the best efforts of State economic development and other policy initiatives over the past 12 years, nothing has effectively narrowed the pronounced divergence in regional unemployment rates and economic performance in Vermont.

The Northeast Kingdom Counties – especially Essex and Orleans – remain comparatively disadvantaged, with unemployment rates that are persistently double or more than those... [counties with the] lowest [unemployment rates]."

— Economist Thomas Kavet¹

Families living in other rural areas, including Orange, Franklin, and Lamoille Counties also may experience similar economic struggles.

For every talent that poverty has stimulated, it has blighted a hundred.

— John W. Gardner

2000 Child Poverty
Numbers of Children and Rates of Poverty

	Children under age 5	Children ages <18
Addison	229 (11.3%)	970 (11.1%)
Bennington	365 (18.5%)	1,237 (14.2%)
Caledonia	330 (20.5%)	1,300 (17.6%)
Chittenden	846 (10.1%)	2,842 (8.4%)
Essex/Orleans	392 (23.0%)	1,518 (18.8%)
Franklin/G.I.	468 (13.2%)	1,536 (10.8%)
Lamoille	153 (11.7%)	634 (11.4%)
Orange	178 (11.4%)	840 (11.8%)
Rutland	556 (17.6%)	2,006 (13.9%)
Washington	341 (11.1%)	1,322 (9.8%)
Windham	351 (15.3%)	1,300 (12.6%)
Windsor	267 (9.7%)	1,090 (8.3%)
Vermont	4,476 (13.4%)	16,595 (11.4%)

2000 Census, compiled by the Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger

Poverty is perhaps the single most powerful factor that can negatively influence brain development.

— National Center for Children in Poverty

**Behind the numbers:
Exceptions that defy stereotypes**

There are exceptions to the pattern of rural child poverty, and places of significant economic struggle in the midst of apparent prosperity.

In urban Chittenden County, which had the lowest child poverty rates (8.4%), nearly 20% of children in Burlington and Winooski lived in poor families. In Rutland County, the 2000 child poverty rate was 13.9 percent, but towns such as Fair Haven and Rutland City had rates of 20 percent or more.

Some areas, such as Bennington County, defy stereotypes. Although it is home to one of the nation’s most expensive private colleges, the town of Bennington had a 20.1% child poverty rate.

A child living near the Canadian border, in Swanton, has more in common with a child in Montpelier than it would appear. Both towns had a child poverty rate of 12.9% in 2000, nearly twice the poverty rate of Northfield, Fairfax, or Jericho.

**Child Poverty Rates
for Counties and Selected Towns**

Towns and cities	% of Children in Poverty under age 18
Addison County	11.1
Brighton	28.7
Bennington County	14.2
Bennington	20.1
Caledonia County	17.6
Barton	21.7
Lyndon	15.8
St. Johnsbury	22.6
Chittenden County	8.4
Burlington	19.4
Jericho	6.2
Winooski	19.8
Essex/Orleans Counties	18.8
Fairfax	6.7
Newport City	25.4
Franklin/G.I Counties	10.8
Richford	30.6
St. Albans City	9.2
Swanton	12.8
Lamoille County	11.4
Morristown	11.1
Stowe	6.8
Wolcott	24.8
Orange County	11.8
Randolph	7.7
Rutland County	13.9
Rutland City	19.5
West Rutland	17.7
Washington County	9.8
Barre City	16.2
Montpelier	12.9
Northfield	6.4
Windham County	12.6
Brattleboro	18.0
Windsor County	8.3
Springfield	10.3

Census 2000 (Note: Rates based on small populations may be less reliable than rates based on large populations.)

What is “Poverty”?

Most people do not think of themselves as “poor,” even when their income is below the poverty line. In a recent national poll, most people identified themselves as “middle class.” More than a third of those earning only \$15,000 called themselves “middle-class,” as did almost half of those with incomes between \$35,000 and \$49,000. The largest percentage of people who considered themselves middle-class (71%) were those with incomes above \$75,000.² In reality, socioeconomic class has less to do with family wealth or poverty than with perception and the values assigned to different perceived classes.

Official poverty level

“Poverty” is generally understood to mean that a family income is not enough to cover basic living costs and needs. The official poverty threshold, first established in 1964, is based on 1950’s family budget research that found families spent about one-third of their resources on food. The federal government still calculates the basic living standard by multiplying the cost of an economy food budget by three, adjusting for size of household and annual changes in cost of living.

Poverty Incomes

\$13,000 Minimum wage

\$17,960 Official poverty level

\$23,348 Food Stamps

\$33,226 Low-cost School Meals

**2001 Poverty levels and benefit program eligibility levels are for a family of four.*

Beyond the official poverty level

Many researchers and policy analysts believe that the poverty standard is outdated. Food no longer takes up such a large proportion of a family budget, as costs have risen for health insurance, housing, heating fuel, child care, and other expenses.

One alternative measure for the extent of poverty is the number of children and families eligible for federal food, health insurance, and income support programs. These programs set higher income eligibility levels than simply the poverty level: Food Stamps and no-cost School Meals (130% of poverty, depending on assets and other conditions) and reduced-price School Meals (up to 185% of poverty).

The impact of child poverty

It doesn’t take long before even a young child knows that he is different because of his family’s income. Other kids see it in his clothes, the lunches he eats at school, his family’s car, the condition of his home, the part of town he lives in. They might also see it in the way some teachers and other adults may relate to him. He can also figure it out from the stress he feels when his parents talk about bills, groceries, and toys or other things the kids want.

Poverty affects nearly every aspect of a child’s life, and through all the stages of their lives, if they remain in poverty. The earlier a child is affected by poverty, the more severe the effects.

For the purposes of this report, we have outlined some of the more significant impacts of child poverty on nutrition, child health, education, and housing. To put it all in a larger perspective, we then look at the economic circumstances of working poor families.

I used to think I was poor. Then they told me I wasn’t poor, I was needy. Then they told me it was self-defeating to think of myself as needy, I was deprived. Then they told me deprived was a bad image, I was underprivileged. Then they told me underprivileged was overused, I was disadvantaged. I still don’t have a dime. But I sure have a great vocabulary.

— Jules Feiffer,
Editorial Cartoonist, Writer

Families' Basic Needs

The Vermont Basic Needs Budget is provided annually to the Legislature to estimate the cost of basic living expenses for individuals and families.

In the 2001 Basic Needs Budget, a low-cost food budget represented no more than 17.7% of the entire monthly budget — about half of the 33% used in the federal poverty measure.³

Other costs take up a large piece of basic budgets. For example, without job-based health insurance, a working family might have to pay up to about 20% of its budget on health care expenses.

In 2000, only 39% of jobs in Vermont paid enough to meet basic needs.⁴

Where the Money Goes

(For two working adults with two children, from the 2001 Basic Needs Budget)



Note: the cost breakdowns vary depending on size of family, number of working parents, and whether health insurance is employer-based. The budget breakdown above is based on the 2001 Fiscal Year Basic Needs Budget, average of rural and urban family of two working parents and two children. Monthly budget totals is \$4,109.

THE IMPACT OF CHILD POVERTY: Food Security

Many kids come to school hungry every Monday morning, having gone through the weekend with sparse meals that supply little in the way of nourishment. Approximately 19% of Vermont children lived in “food insecure” homes in 2001 — homes where consistent, nutritious meals are not available — parents may go without food so that their children have something to eat.⁵

The consequences of inadequate nutrition

Lack of regular, good quality food can contribute to cognitive delays, lack of energy, difficulty paying attention in school, and behavior problems.

Emergency food need increases

One of the most obvious signs that more children are affected by poverty is the increased use of emergency services such as food shelves. More and more households using emergency food services had an adult in the work force: 46% in 2003 compared to 39% in 2001. In 2003, nearly half of households using emergency food shelves were families with children — an 11% increase from 2001. The average number of children using food shelves monthly was 9,451, up 8.2% from 2001, and a 33% increase from 1992.⁶

The problem is likely even greater than those figures would suggest, because food shelves often limit household use to once a month. Actual emergency food shelf need may be as great as nearly three times the average number, or over 27,000 children.⁷

Food Stamp and Reach-Up enrollments

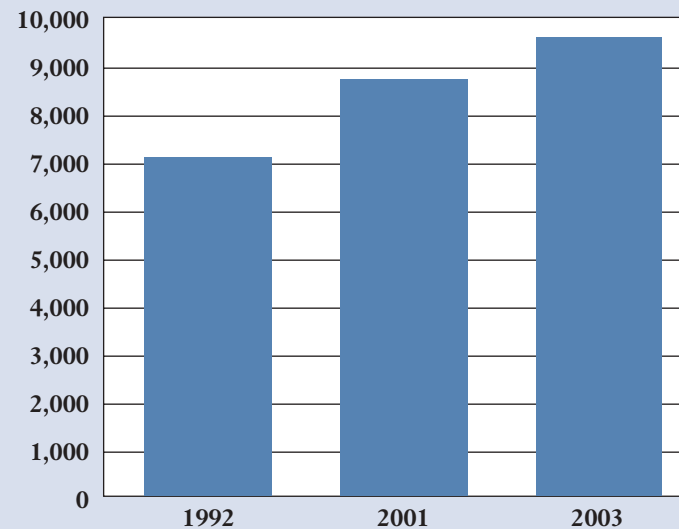
During the 1990s, while emergency food services doubled in usage, fewer children and families were enrolled in Food Stamps and Reach-Up. In a pattern that reflected a nationwide trend, Vermont caseloads declined, in part as a result of welfare reform and an lowered unemployment. In the early 1990s,

11.4% of children benefited from welfare; by the 1999-2001 period, only 6.8% of Vermont children were enrolled.⁸ *(Reach-Up was then known as ANFC or Aid to Needy Families with Children.)

Likewise, the percent of children receiving Food Stamp benefits also dropped between the beginning and end of 1990s, from 14.6% to 11.2%.⁹ Nearly 20 percent of Vermont children were potentially eligible in 1999-2001. Many people are still eligible for these benefits, but some do not apply due to frustration with the application process, fear of stigma, or lack of knowledge about eligibility.

Children Served Monthly at Food Shelves

Average numbers served



We're seeing folks who are “officially” poor, plus folks under 130% of poverty [eligible for Food Stamps], and folks who have lost jobs to plant closings [Bombardier, in Barre] and downsizing. In other words, poor, never poor, and working poor.

— David Lester,
Central Vermont
Community Action Council,
January 2003.

Myths About Poverty

Myth: *Parents get most of the government benefits such as Reach-Up (TANF).*

Fact: The opposite is true: 68% of beneficiaries of Reach-Up were children. (2001-2003)¹⁰

Myth: *Poverty in rural areas looks much like that found in urban areas.*

Fact: While poverty exists in both urban and rural areas, the characteristics of those living in poverty in these two places are distinctly different. In Vermont, rural poor are more likely to be living in two-adult households. Poor rural children's parents are more likely to be under-employed and earn lower wages than the parents of poor urban children. and are more likely to be working.¹¹

The Food Stamp income eligibility level is less than 130% of poverty, but other factors, such as family assets, are considered in determining eligibility.

School meals feed more than hungry bellies

Research has found that increasing National School Breakfast Program participation is associated with a reduction in child hunger and improved nutrition, school attendance, emotional functioning, and math grades.

— America's Second Harvest¹²

Schools that offer Federal School Breakfast and Lunch programs can make the difference between surviving and thriving. In Vermont, about 28% of all school-age children were eligible for free and reduced-cost school meals. Ninety-four percent of schools offered school lunches and about one-quarter of students at these schools were enrolled in the program. A smaller percentage of schools — 81% — offered subsidized school breakfast; 10,000 students received these meals.

Hunger in the summer

When school lets out, it also ends a crucial source of weekday meals for low-income kids. Children who rely on school lunch and breakfast for the most nutritious meals of the day have few options during the summer. Their families can take them to emergency food shelves or community kitchens or, if they're lucky, they may be among the few children who have access to Summer Meals Programs. In 2002, only 3,812 children participated in these subsidized meals programs, out of 31,541 eligible.¹³

Vermont Children Enrolled in Food and Income Benefit Programs, 2001

	School Lunch*	Food Stamps**	Reach-Up (TANF)**
Addison	22.1	6.8	3.5
Bennington	25.3	13.5	9.0
Caledonia	38.4	13.0	6.9
Chittenden	16.4	7.9	5.2
Essex/Orleans	47.5	16.4	12.5
Franklin/GI	29.6	10.1	6.0
Lamoille	20.7	8.6	4.3
Orange	28.8	8.6	5.0
Rutland	27.8	13.2	4.4
Washington	22.3	9.1	4.6
Windham	29.5	10.9	6.6
Windsor	24.8	9.2	5.2
Vermont	25.5	10.3	6.1

**Vermont Department of Education and **Department of Prevention, Assistance, Transition and Health Access, 2003.*

THE IMPACT OF CHILD POVERTY: Children's Health

Any one of the conditions of poverty — poor prenatal care, lack of quality child care, limited access to health care, inadequate nutrition, substandard housing, and family stress — can compromise child health. Combined, they can place poor children at risk of long-term medical problems.

Poor children are more likely to experience:

- Premature birth, low birthweight and developmental and cognitive delays.
- Anemia related to poor diet.
- Depression and anxiety related to the stress of economic struggles.
- Asthma and other problems related to substandard housing.

Family stress and mental health

When parents are overwhelmed by stress, they are less able to have the patience to listen sensitively and be supportive when disciplining their children. In any family, this kind of stress can affect how well conflict is handled. Children who experience inconsistent and harsh parenting are more likely to have more emotional and behavioral problems and lower self-esteem than children whose family life is less stressful.¹⁴ In some situations, the enormous stress related to poverty can be a factor. “At the extremes of harsh discipline, parental stress may trigger or exacerbate physical abuse or neglect” according to child poverty researcher Arloc Sherman.

Research has found that parents who had two or fewer people to call for help in an emotional or financial crisis were more likely to abuse their children. “Conversely, parents may be protected from the stresses of poverty if they feel they can count on help from friends, relatives, publicly run family support programs, or other sources.”¹⁵

Children's health insurance

The average employer-provided family health insurance policy in 2000 cost \$6,357, \$1,327 of which (21%) was contributed by the employee.¹⁶ Families unable to afford the cost of private insurance or whose jobs do not offer it are less likely to seek health care.

Vermont's Medicaid/Dr. Dynasaur program offers many low- and moderate-income families the only affordable access to child health insurance. It provides subsidized insurance for families with incomes of up to 300% of the poverty line; families pay graduated premiums based on income.

- In the period of 1999-2001, 37.2% of kids in Vermont benefited from Dr. Dynasaur.¹⁷
- Even though enrollment in the program increased steadily from 1999 to 2001, an estimated 11.5% of children under 200% of poverty were without health insurance.¹⁸ Children whose families had incomes somewhat above poverty (151%-200%) were more likely to be without insurance.¹⁹

Insuring parents helps children

During 1999-2001, 13% of Vermont parents were uninsured. Children whose parents have insurance are more likely to be taken to the doctor's office before an illness turns into an emergency. Research in New Mexico found that “if children have health insurance but their parents do not, they are less likely to receive [preventive] care than are children in families in which both children and adults are insured.”²⁰

Delaying or forgoing visits to the pediatrician can hurt kids. No matter what their health status, children are always growing and changing; developmental delays, allergies; illnesses and other medical conditions need to be diagnosed and treated as soon as possible to allow each child to reach his or her maximum potential.

— Key Health Facts²¹

THE IMPACT OF CHILD POVERTY: Housing

Vermont ranks second only to Maine as the state with the highest percentage of vacation homes. New Hampshire ranks third.

...Windham County — with its many ski areas and its proximity to the urban centers—has the most vacation homes.

— Barre Montpelier
Times Argus,
August 10, 2002

Priced Out Of Town?

When an area becomes desirable to higher-income people seeking less expensive homes or second homes, the increased demand can push up housing costs and leave many low-income and middle-income families with less access to affordable homes.

Good, safe housing is essential to children’s well-being, but it can be elusive in Vermont, especially for low-income families but also increasingly for middle-income families. Vermont ranks third lowest nationally for rental housing vacancies, and has ranked as one of the least affordable combined nonmetropolitan areas in recent years.²²

What it costs for decent housing

In 1999, 37.5% of Vermont renter households paid over 30% of their income on gross rent (rent and utilities except telephone). By 2001, 43% of renter households paid more than 30% of their monthly income on gross rent.²³ (Thirty percent of income is used as a rough estimate of affordable gross rent.)

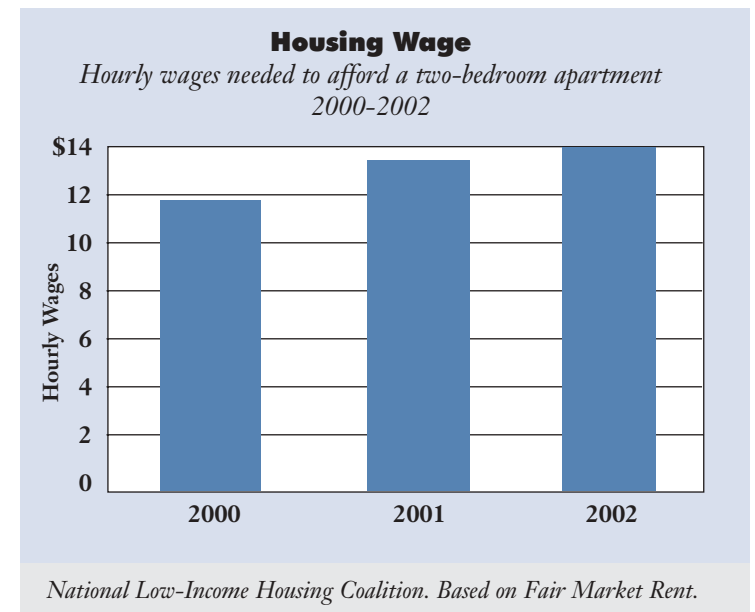
Fair Market Rent was \$619 a month in 2000 and rose to \$687 a month in 2001. During that period, the corresponding “housing wage” (full-time wage needed to afford Fair Market Rent) rose by over 10 percent, from \$11.91 an hour to \$13.21 an hour — twice the state minimum wage of \$6.25 an hour. About two-thirds of Vermont’s jobs paid less per hour than the housing wage in 2001.²⁴

The impact of poor housing: Safety concerns

Housing shortages can also result in families renting substandard and possibly, unsafe housing. Of Vermont’s 33,000 low-income rental households, about 27% live in substandard units. With housing stock ranked second oldest in the nation, Vermont homes and apartments have a greater likelihood of lead exposure, poor insulation, and need for repairs. Older or substandard dwellings also pose a greater risk for fire. In fact, “Vermont has one of the highest fire death rates in the nation...” with the majority of fire-related deaths occur in residences, half in rental apartments.²⁵

Homelessness

For kids whose families have run out of money and/or housing options, the short-term result is sometimes “couch-surfing” as one advocate calls it — staying with relatives or friends. Unfortunately, for some families, this short-term solution can become a way of life for a while. In its annual count of homeless shelters in December, 2002, the state Office of Economic Opportunity found that 43 of the 54 families with children in homeless shelters were single-parent families headed by mothers. More than one-third of people had stayed for a month or more at the shelter.



Children in Working Poor Families

*You've got students, you've got people who are entry level, folks who are not working full-time, who are supplementing someone else's income. . . So, it's not necessarily fair to assume that if someone's making a low wage... they're trying to survive on that one wage.*²⁶

— Christopher Barbieri, Former President, Vt. Chamber of Commerce

Many parents have to work full-time at such low-wage, entry-level jobs to support their children. According to the 2003 Vt. Job Gap Study Update, most of full-time, low-wage jobs are held by adults. “Sixty-one percent of all year round full-time workers in Vermont who earned less than \$15,000 (\$7.20/hr.) in 1999 were over 29 years old (and 59% were women).”²⁷

More household heads are in low-wage jobs

In the years 1988-1990, only 16% of Vermont working families heads earned low-hourly wages. By the years 1997-1999, 27% had low hourly earnings in compared to 24% nationally.²⁸ More than one-third of two-parent families with two children didn't make enough to meet basic needs in 2000.²⁹

Fewer well-paying jobs are available

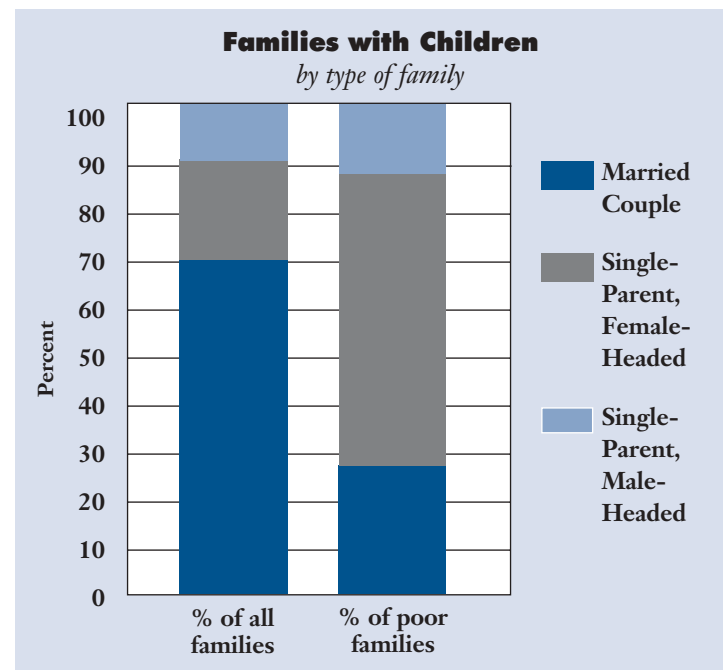
Many manufacturing industries that paid skilled workers a good wage have moved out of state or overseas. At one time, it was possible for a high school graduate to go on to a well-paying manufacturing job. By learning the ropes and gaining skills over time, his or her future could be secure, just as it was for their parents before them. That is now the exception to the rule. Between 1982 and 2000 in Vermont, manufacturing grew by only one percent, the service industry climbed by 93%, and retail job openings increased by 59%.³⁰ Most working parents with low hourly earnings had jobs in the service industry, which

paid an average of \$490 per week, compared to \$715 a week for manufacturing work. Twenty-three percent had retail jobs, which offered an average of \$304 a week.³¹

Most poor families are headed by women

A disproportionate percent of Vermont's poor children live in families headed by single mothers. While female-headed households accounted for only one in five of families with children under age 18, they made up over three out of five poor families with children.³²

- And this is true despite the fact that over 83 percent of women with children age six and older were in the work force in 2000.³⁴



*Vermont was one of eight states whose working families paid 'the heaviest price for unequal pay to working women, losing an average of roughly \$5,000 in family income each year.' This holds true 'even after accounting for differences in education, age, location and the number of hours worked.'*³³

— AFL-CIO, Equal Pay for Working Families

Life is a pill which none of us can bear to swallow without gilding; yet for the poor we delight in stripping it still barer, and are not ashamed to shew even visible displeasure, if ever the bitter taste is taken from their mouths.

— Samuel Johnson

- The median household income of a single mother was \$19,973 and \$28,817 for a single father, according to the 2000 Census.
- On average, women earn only three-fourths of what men earn.³⁵ And the job choices traditionally available to low-skilled women often pay less than those traditionally held by low-skilled men.

Sample Occupational Wages 2001		
	Hourly Wages	Annual Wages
Cashier	\$7.28	\$15,150
Child Care Worker	\$7.68	\$15,960
Food counter Work	\$7.70	\$16,020
Hwy Maint. Worker	\$12.67	\$26,360
Janitor & Cleaner	\$9.28	\$19,300
Maid/Housekeeping	\$8.00	\$16,630
Retail Salesperson	\$9.09	18,900
School Busdriver	\$10.91	\$22,690
Secretary	\$11.25	\$23,400
Security Gaurd	\$8.81	\$18,320
Teacher Asst.	n/a	\$18,570
Truck Driver-Hvy,TT	\$13.45	\$27,980

Occupational Employment Statistics Survey, October 2003, Vt. Department of Employment and Training

The American Dream:

The rules have changed

As Americans, we expect to take part in the American dream — that its opportunities are open to everyone. The “Dream” has four components, according to author Jennifer Hochschild:³⁶

- The belief that everyone can participate equally and can always start over.
- The belief that it is reasonable to anticipate success.
- The belief that success is a result of individual characteristics and that actions are under one's control.
- The belief that success is associated with virtue and merit.

The corollary to these beliefs is that if you want to succeed in the American Dream, you have to simply “play by the rules.” That is, by working hard and paying your dues, you can achieve financial security; can afford a home, pay your bills, and have enough income to raise your children.

Poverty and The American Dream:

The rules have changed. Many of the opportunities that used to make the “American Dream” possible for many families with children no longer exist our society. In addition to the loss of higher paying jobs:

- It takes more than a high school degree to get a good job today.
- Insurance benefits are more expensive, and sometimes do not come with jobs.
- Because most mothers must work outside the home, families now must pay for child care, a major budget expense. And most wages cannot keep up with increases in housing and other living expenses.

Endnotes

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- ⁶ Reports on 2003 and 2001 Surveys of Emergency Food Shelves and Community Kitchens. Vt. Office of Economic Opportunity. PATH.
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- ¹¹ Rural Poverty: Myths and Realities. Julie N. Zimmerman. Iowa State University College of Agriculture.
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- ²⁴ Between a Rock and a Hard Place. 2002
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Associated Press article, *Barre-Montpelier Times Argus*. May 30, 2002.
- ²⁷ The Vt. Job Gap Study. Phase 8. 2003 Update.
- ²⁸ Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. *The Poverty Despite Work Handbook*. Third Ed. August. 2001.
- ²⁹ Vermont Job Gap Study: Phase 7. 2002 Update.
- ³⁰ *The Poverty Despite Work Handbook*.
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- ³² Census 2000.
- ³³ AFL-CIO. Equal Pay for Working Families: National and State Data. 1999. <http://www.aflcio.org/women/exec99.htm>
- ³⁴ Ibid.
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For more poverty data:

The most accurate poverty data currently available are from the decennial Census. Census 2000 data are used here for comparison purposes with 1990. For years between decennial Census surveys, other Census poverty estimates are available. For states such as Vermont, with small populations, a good choice is the U.S. Census' Small Areas Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) website.

www.census.gov/hhes/
www/saipe/

In addition, by 2008, the Census' American Community Survey may be able to offer more accurate updates as well.

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