

CBS REPORTS



children of the recession



Kids' Health Initiative Starts In Detroit

Motor City Is The Hub for Problems Affecting Poor Children

DETROIT, April 24, 2009



Signs of poverty and children in need are everywhere in Detroit (AP Photo/Carlos Osorio)

(CBS) A white paper-titled “The Recession Generation: Detroit’s Children at the Center of the Nation’s Economic Crisis”--from [The Children’s Health Fund](#) highlights the adverse impact the recession is having on children, especially in the fabled and fading Motor City, Detroit.

Driven by the collapse of the domestic automobile industry, Detroit’s poverty rate of is 33.8 percent, the highest in the U.S. In addition, almost half of Detroit’s children are categorized as “poor.” Dr. Irwin Redlener, founder of the Children's Health Fund along with recording artist Paul Simon, estimated that the number of children in poverty could rise from 12.5 million prior to the recession to about 17 million by the end of 2009.

As a result of the severe recession and ongoing job layoffs in the auto industry, children in Detroit lack proper medical care and nutrition. According the white paper, nearly 4 out of 10 children are under-immunized, and Detroit’s pediatric asthma hospitalization rate is triple that of the state of Michigan as a whole.

Recession-driven issues such as poor medical care and diets are also impacting performance in schools. Six out of 10 Detroit school children are behind in reading by the seventh grade, the white paper said, and the city has the worst graduation rate in the

nation of large cities - only 37.5 percent are graduating. Nationally, 75 percent of high school students graduate.

The Children's Health Fund offers a series of recommendations, including targeting federal bailout funds for strengthening safety net programs for children, enhanced Medicaid reimbursement rates for physicians working in distressed areas, health insurance reform and funding for improved educational environments, such as a lower student-teacher ratio and more school-based physical activities.

The white paper will be available on Monday.

The Children's Health Fund has a fleet of 37 mobile medical clinics, and has deployed five to the Detroit area this week. **CBS News weekend news anchor Jeff Glor** and **correspondent Seth Doane** are in Detroit this weekend and will be reporting on the scene for the *Saturday Early Show* and *Evening News*.

For continuing coverage of the impact of the recession on the youth of America, check out our special section, [CBS Reports: Children of the Recession](#).