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Incarceration
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The life expectancy for African-American males is 70.7 years, the lowest of any group. 
Source: Lewis and Burd-Sharps, 2010.
A Statistical Profile of the Educational and Life Status of Black Males

Marian Wright Edelman, President of the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF), refers to the “toxic cocktail of poverty, illiteracy, racial disparities, violence, massive incarceration and family breakdown that is sentencing millions of children to dead end and hopeless lives and threatens to undermine the past half century of racial and social progress.” These ingredients ultimately combine to produce striking gaps in educational success, life expectancy and other important outcomes.

This brief statistical profile provides a snapshot of the rugged terrain many Black boys traverse during the course of their lives. Beginning at birth, the data describe the individual, family, school and community factors that impact a child’s development, and suggest important transition points where opportunities to develop human capital are gained or lost.*

According to Kurt Landgraf, President & CEO of ETS, improving the conditions in which children are nurtured, grow up, attend school, and live can provide “A Stronger Start” for educational success. The upcoming symposium, co-sponsored by ETS and the Children’s Defense Fund, will help lay the groundwork of replacing the cradle to prison pipeline with a pipeline to college, work and a productive life.

The symposium will explore the:

• Connections between early brain development and later achievement in young Black boys

• Advantages of a well-designed pre-K–third-grade continuum

• Promising policy initiatives that address the holistic needs of Black boys in their early years

*While the focus is on Black males and the data are disaggregated when appropriate and available, for some variables the data are presented for both males and females.
**Infant Mortality**
The infant mortality rate for Blacks is 13.2 percent, compared with 5.6 percent for Whites.

**Low Birth Weight**
The percentage of low birth weight Black babies is near 14 percent, almost twice the rate for Whites.
Source: 2010 Kids Count Data Book.

*The percentage of low birth weight Black babies is almost twice that of White babies.*

**Single-Parent Families**

Nearly three-fourths of Black children are born out of wedlock.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>65.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>51.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
<td><strong>39.7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Center for Health Statistics.

*Nearly three-quarters of Black children are born out of wedlock.*

**Foster Care**
Black children account for only 15 percent of the U.S. child population, but make up 30 percent of children in foster care. Black children also stay in foster care longer than children of other races.


**Parent Education**

13 percent of Black children (ages 6 to 18) have a mother with less than a high school education, compared to 5 percent of White children. 17 percent of Black children have a mother with at least a bachelor’s degree, compared with 36 percent of White children.


**Parent Employment**

38 percent of Black children live in a household where neither parent has full-time, year-round employment, compared to 19 percent of White children.


**Insurance Coverage**

12 percent of Black children compared to 7 percent of White children are uninsured.


**Disadvantaged Neighborhoods**

More than three-fourths of Black children born between 1985 and 2000 grew up in “high disadvantage” neighborhoods, characterized by high levels of unemployment, welfare, poverty, single-parent families, segregation and density of children under age 18. Five percent of that cohort of White children grew up in such neighborhoods.

Source: Patrick Sharkey, Neighborhoods and the Black-White Mobility Gap, Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009 (derived from Figure 2).

*More than three-fourths of Black children grew up in ‘high disadvantage’ neighborhoods.*
Poverty

The poverty rate for Black children is 36 percent, compared to 12 percent for White children.


18 percent of Black children live in “extreme poverty,” compared to 5 percent of White children. This group is defined as having a family income below 50 percent of the poverty line. A person living in a family of four at this level of poverty is in a household where the daily income is below $33.


“Poverty rate for Black children is three times higher than the rate for White children.”

Hunger

35 percent of Black children were in “food insecure” households in 2009, compared to 17 percent of White children.


“Hunger: 35 percent of Black children were in ‘food insecure’ households in 2009.”

Early Cognitive Development

At 24 months, Black babies scored significantly lower than White babies on the cognitive assessment administered as part of ECLS.


At about age 4, 28 percent of Black children were proficient at letter recognition and 55 percent were proficient at number and shape recognition. The percentages for White students were 37 and 73, respectively.


“Early Cognitive Development: At about age 4, 28 percent of Black children were proficient at letter recognition.”

Early Care and Education Programs

Nearly two-thirds of Black 2-year-olds were in regular non-parental care, compared to about half of White children. Black children were much more likely to be in day care of low quality — for example, 61 percent were in low-quality home-based care compared to 20 percent of White children.


“The poverty rate for Black children is three times higher than the rate for White children.”

“Young Black children were more likely to be in low-quality day care.”

Teenage Births

Black teens were about 2.4 times more likely than White teens to have a baby. The rates are 63.7 per 1,000 Black girls ages 15 to 19, compared to 26.6 per 1,000 White girls of the same age.

Source: Lewis and Burd-Sharps, 2010.

“Teenage Births: Black teens were about twice as likely as White teens to have a baby.”

Achievement in School

At grade 8, only 8 percent of Black males attending large city schools are “proficient” in reading. For White students, nationally, 33 percent are proficient. In math, the respective percentages are 10 and 44.

At grade 4, only 11 percent of Black males attending large city schools are “proficient” in reading. For White students, nationally, 38 percent are proficient. In math, the respective percentages are 14 and 53.

Source: Sharon Lewis et al., A Call for Change: The Social and Educational Factors Contributing to the Outcomes of Black Males in Urban Schools, Council of the Great City Schools, October 2010.

“Achievement in School: At grade 8, only 8 percent of Black males attending large city schools are “proficient” in reading.”

“Black babies scored significantly lower than White babies on the cognitive assessment.”
Teacher Quality

Black students are more likely than White students to have lower-quality teachers. In high schools with 50 percent or more Black enrollment, 25 percent of the teachers have neither a college major nor standard certification in the subject that is their main teaching assignment (math). The percentage for schools with White enrollment of 50 percent or more is 8 percent.


“Black students are more likely to have lower-quality teachers.”

School Segregation

39 percent of Black students attend an intensely segregated school (the school is 90 to 100 percent minority).

The average Black student attends a school where the percentage of low-income students is 59 percent. The comparable percentage for the average White student is 32 percent.


“39 percent of Black students attend an intensely segregated school.”

High School Dropout Rate

Using a measure developed by the U.S. Department of Education (averaged freshman graduation rate), the high school graduation rate for Black students is 62 percent, compared to 81 percent for White students.


In many large urban districts, more than half of Black males drop out of high school.


“High school graduation rate for Black students is 62 percent, compared to 81 percent for White students.”

Grade Retention

25 percent of Black males repeated a grade in school, compared to 11 percent of White males. Note that this does not include those who dropped out.


“25 percent of Black males repeated a grade in school.”

Educational Attainment

18 percent of Black males over the age of 25 have attained a bachelor’s degree or more, compared to 34 percent of White males. At the other end of the attainment spectrum, 39 percent of Blacks in that age group have no more than a high school education, compared to 32 percent of Whites.


“18 percent of Black males over the age of 25 have attained a bachelor’s degree or more.”

Employment

In February 2011, the unemployment rate for Black males age 20 and over was nearly twice that of White males (17.5 percent versus 9.1 percent).


“Black males are nearly twice as likely to be unemployed as White males.”

School Suspension and Expulsion

50 percent of Black males in grades 6 to 12 have been suspended, compared to 21 percent of White males. 17 percent of Black males have been expelled, compared to 1 percent of White males.


“50 percent of Black males have been suspended from school.”
- **Income and Wealth**

  Black men earn about two-thirds of what White men earn. The 2009 median earnings for Black men was $26,644 compared to $40,157 for White men.

  Source: Lewis and Burd-Sharps, 2010.

  Differences in wealth are even larger. The wealth gap between Black and White Americans increased fourfold between 1984 and 2007, from $20,000 to $95,000.


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  ![Life Expectancy Table](image)

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