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New Census data: Young-adult health coverage up in Ohio, child poverty rates hold steady at shockingly high rate in cities

Health insurance coverage for young adults aged 18 to 25 has increased 5.6 percent since 2009 in Ohio, according to data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. Ohio joins 36 other states in reducing the number of uninsured young adults. The new release confirmed findings from a different set of data made public last week.

“Although many Affordable Care Act provisions will not take effect until 2014, we are seeing some initial benefits, including a solid increase in health insurance coverage for Ohio’s young adults,” said Hannah Halbert, a Policy Matters researcher who analyzed today’s Census release. “Ohio can build on this and insure more families by accepting federal funding and expanding Medicaid eligibility.”

Ohioans, particularly children, are still feeling the pain of the 2007 recession, however. Poverty has mostly held steady in Ohio’s major cities, but rates remain shockingly high. Poverty rates ranged from 12.8 percent in Parma to 37.5 percent in Canton. Child poverty ranged from 19.3 percent in Parma to 57.6 percent in Canton.

Three cities saw a statistically significant increase in the overall poverty rate: Parma, 4.4 percent, Toledo, 4.3 percent, and Canton, 7.4 percent. The city of Toledo was the only major Ohio city to see statistically significant increases in both poverty and child poverty rates between 2010 and 2011. The Toledo metro area had the 8th highest metro poverty rate in the nation, 20.2 percent.

Table 1			
Poverty rates for children hold steady, remain high (2010-2011)			
City	Poverty rate 2011 (%)	Poverty rate 2010 (%)	Change (%)
Akron	45.5	44.9	0.6
Canton	57.6	50.7	6.9
Cincinnati	45.3	48.0	-2.7
Cleveland	53.9	52.6	1.3
Columbus	33.4	30.9	2.5
Dayton	52.1	54.8	-2.7
Lorain	49.9	52.1	-2.2
Parma	19.3	14.0	5.3
Toledo	43.7	35.8	7.9*
Youngstown	52.6	54.7	-2.1

Source: Policy Matters Ohio analysis of American Community Survey 2007-2011. (*) Denotes a statistically significant change.

African Americans and Latinos have been hit particularly hard by the recession, with 34.9 percent of black Ohioans and 30 percent of Latinos here living in poverty. Just fewer than 13 percent of non-Hispanic whites lived in poverty in 2011. Median incomes for both groups were also substantially less than for non-Hispanic white Ohioans, African Americans earned \$8,685 less, and Latinos earned \$9,078 less in 2011.

Overall, median income across the state is down from 2010, with Ohioans at the middle earning \$526 less than they did a year ago. Ohio joined 17 other states in showing a statistically significant drop in median income, and it had the smallest decrease.

“Today’s numbers are the result of a cuts-only approach to state budget management; too many children in poverty and a slower recovery,” Halbert said.

Today’s release by the U.S. Census is from the American Community Survey, which includes data from communities with more than 65,000 residents. Nationally, the ACS sample size includes more three million addresses, substantially larger than the Current Population Survey data released last week.

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*Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research institute
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