



SINGLE MOTHER POVERTY IN THE UNITED STATES IN 2010

September 15, 2011 – Over one quarter of U.S. children under age 18 reside with only one of their parents, and as many as half of U.S. children may reside in a single parent family at some point in their childhood. The vast majority - over 85% - of single parents are single mothers.

Poverty is widespread and severe in single mother families. According to the recently released [Census Bureau data on poverty in 2010](#), people in single mother families had a poverty rate of 42.2% and an extreme poverty rate of 21.6%.

Legal Momentum President Elizabeth Grayer says that the Census data on poverty should be a call to action for Congress and the Administration to reform the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Ninety percent of TANF recipients are women.

"The Census data highlight the serious hardship facing many American families in the current economic crisis. The data indicate increased poverty and a continuing gender poverty gap in the United States – facts that underscore the need for a social safety net that is accessible and adequate. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), the national welfare program for families with children, is neither. TANF's sub-poverty benefit levels ensure continued hardship for poor families. Barriers prevent eligible families from accessing benefits and TANF work rules block parents from participating in education and training programs that offer a permanent escape from welfare and poverty. The ever-increasing plague of poverty in America warrants an equally strong response. Even in the press of the appropriations cycle, and the convening of the Deficit Commission, Congress and the Administration should not delay making sorely needed improvements to the TANF program."

For the full report on single mother poverty in 2010, click on the link below.

[Single Mother Poverty in the United States in 2010](#)

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