

New American Community Survey Data Released

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According to the American Community Survey data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau, poverty remained unchanged and incomes stagnant in Utah last year, showing the continuing pain of the recession and underscoring the need for Utah to do more to help struggling people and give them the tools to lift themselves out of poverty.

The number of Utah children living in poverty in 2012 remained higher than before the recession at 15.1%. The change was not statistically significant from the 15.9% in 2011. The median annual income in Utah showed no significant change between 2011 and 2012, also there was no significant change in the percent of uninsured Utahns.

Help for struggling families from the state and federal government has been found to have long-term payoffs for kids, including better school performance, higher earnings as adults, and better health outcomes. A balanced approach that includes new revenue will allow Utah to invest in services that are crucial to the almost 135,000 children living in poverty and already struggling to get by.

Additional data in the 2012 American Community Survey Release includes:

- Poverty rates vary widely by race.
 - Poverty rates for whites is lowest at 11%
 - Poverty rates for Black or African American is 19%
 - Poverty rates for Asians is 21%
 - Poverty rates for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders is 24%
 - Poverty rates for American Indian and Alaskan Natives is 28%
 - Poverty rates for Hispanics is highest at 29%

- 15% of the Utahns living in poverty over the age of 25 have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Uninsured rates for Utah's Hispanic children is much higher at 26% than the general child population's rate of 10%

It is clear that while the recession ended in 2009, Utah's most vulnerable populations are not enjoying the effects of the economic recovery. "Cutting important investments in education and infrastructure is not the way to boost our economy and lift people out of poverty. Utah needs to take a balanced approach that includes new revenues so we can invest in our state's economy and provide help for those who need it most," said Terry Haven, Deputy Director for Voices for Utah Children.