

THE STATE OF INEQUITY: DREAMS DEFERRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHILDREN AT RISK presents the State of Inequity: Dreams Deferred, a report analyzing disparities in access to good health, basic needs, quality education and school discipline. This executive summary provides a snapshot of areas for further study and opportunities for improvement so that every child in Texas has a clear path to achieving their dreams.

ACCESS TO GOOD HEALTH

Texas ranks in the 22nd percentile of states regarding access to and quality of care for Black and Latinx populations, according to the Commonwealth Fund. Families and children of color are more likely to suffer worse outcomes than white families, according to the study. While rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation are increasing for people of all races and ethnicities, there are notable differences across races. Black youth have had the highest average percent increase over time for suicide. The State of Inequity: Dreams Deferred” examines inequities in the following areas:

Immunizations | Maternal Mortality | Mental Health | Healthcare in the Borderlands

ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS

We know that children cannot learn or thrive when basic needs, such as food and shelter, are not met. In Texas, the likelihood of children lacking basic needs varies based on location, socioeconomic status, and the color of their skin. In Harris County for example, 25% of Black children and 18% of Hispanic children experience hunger, compared to 7% of white children. Additionally, lack of rest is a major barrier to a family’s success in life. For children of color, barriers to rest may include neighborhood and environmental factors like light and noise pollution, crime and sense of safety, access to green spaces and grocery stores, or even the adverse effects of structures or processes that disadvantage non-white families. Our report identifies the following disparities in the acquisition of basic needs:

Sleep | Food | Shelter | School Nutrition

ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

Receiving quality child care and education from birth to high school is a major determinant in a child’s success. Roughly 1-in-10 Texas children (0-5) with working parents live in a child care desert. Working parents who struggle to obtain quality care for their young children are limited in how they can provide for them. For many school age Texas kids, major hurdles and inequalities inside and outside the classroom keep them from gaining the knowledge and skills they need to meet life’s challenges. This report delves into the following factors that affect access to quality education:

Necessity for Equitable Access | Lack of Access to Early Childhood Education | Inequities in K-12



Scan for the full report!

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ACCESS TO FAIR JUSTICE

Research shows that even one out of school suspension increases the likelihood that students will be held back in school, will not graduate on time, and will have future contact with the justice system. In Texas, Black girls experience the greatest gender disparity in discipline across racial groups. They are suspended at higher rates than their Black male counterparts through both one or more out-of-school (34% compared to 29%) and in-school suspensions (25% vs. 21%). Finally, The State of Inequity: Dreams Deferred will look at how children of color in Texas experience unfair justice in the following ways:

School to Prison Pipeline | Disparities in School Discipline | Discrimination Based on Appearance

RECOMMENDATIONS

Re-Establish the Office of Minority Health Statistics and Engagement

Pass a Texas Crown Act

Measure Disparities in Education, Health, and Human Services

Define, Categorize and Report Chronic Absenteeism

Increase Access to Quality Early Childhood Education

Encourage Use of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds to Increase Equitable Access to Mental Health Services



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