

# POVERTY & FAMILY SUPPORTS

## National Snapshot: Poverty Among Women & Families, 2013

September 2014

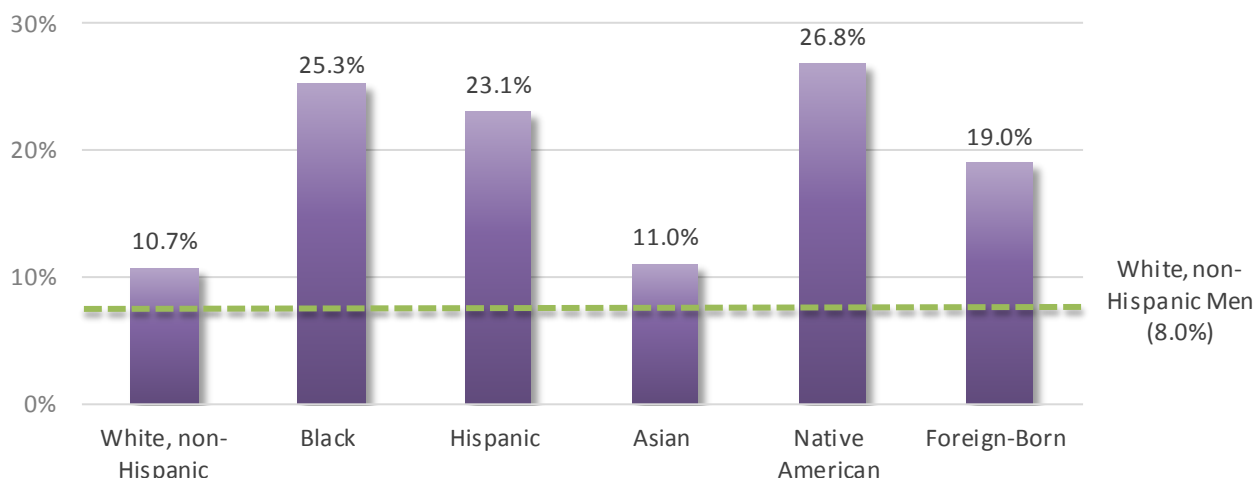
Katherine Gallagher Robbins and Anne Morrison

*The poverty rates for women remained at historically high levels in 2013, according to U.S. Census Bureau data released in September 2014. Women's poverty rates were once again substantially above the poverty rates for men. More than one in seven women – nearly 18 million – and about one in five children – nearly 14.7 million – lived in poverty in 2013. More than half of all poor children lived in families headed by women.*

### Adult Women, 2013

- More than one in seven women, nearly 18 million, lived in poverty in 2013. About 43 percent of these women (7.8 million) lived in extreme poverty, defined as income at or below 50 percent of the federal poverty level. More than 1 in 16 women lived in extreme poverty in 2013.
- The poverty rate for women (14.5 percent) was 3.5 percentage points higher than it was for men (11.0 percent). The extreme poverty rate for women (6.3 percent) was 1.5 percentage points higher than it was for men (4.8 percent).
- Women in all racial and ethnic groups experienced higher poverty rates than white, non-Hispanic men. Poverty rates were particularly high, at about one in four, among black (25.3 percent), Hispanic (23.1 percent), and Native American (26.8 percent) women. Rates for foreign-born women (19.0 percent), white, non-Hispanic women (10.7 percent), and Asian women (11.0 percent) were also considerably higher than the rate for white, non-Hispanic men (8.0 percent). Poverty rates for all groups of adult women were also higher than for their male counterparts (see summary table).

### Poverty Rates for Women, 2013



Source: Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

## What Does the Federal Poverty Rate Measure?

The official poverty rate reported by the Census Bureau measures the percentage of the U.S. population with total income below the federal poverty threshold for their family size (e.g., \$23,624 in 2013 for a family of four with two children). "Income" is calculated before taxes and includes only cash income, such as:

- Earnings
- Pension income
- Investment income
- Social Security

- Unemployment benefits
- Child support payments

A number of other federal and state benefits that help support low-income families are not counted as income under the official poverty measure. These include:

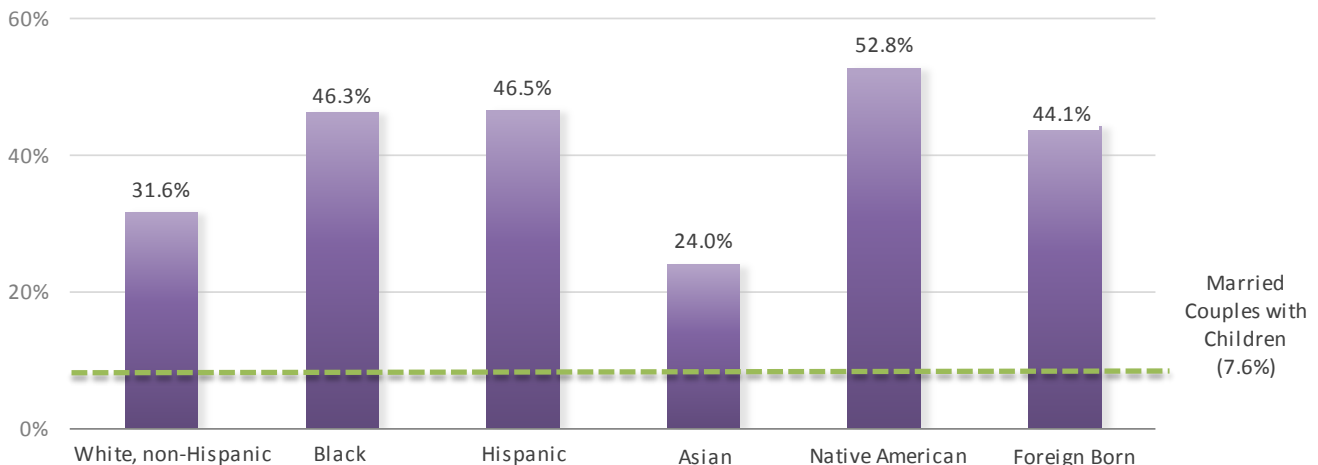
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (formerly known as Food Stamps)
- Tax benefits (e.g., Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit)
- Housing subsidies

## Single Mothers and Children, 2013

- Nearly 14.7 million children lived in poverty in 2013, close to half of whom (44.2 percent) lived in extreme poverty.
- One in five (19.9 percent) children were poor. Poverty rates were particularly high, at more than one in three, for black (38.3 percent) and Native American (34.9 percent) children, and about three in ten for Hispanic (30.4 percent) and foreign-born (28.4 percent) children. The poverty rate was 10.1 percent for Asian children and 10.7 percent for white, non-Hispanic children.
- The poverty rate for female-headed families with children was 39.6 percent, compared to 19.7 percent for male-headed families with children, and 7.6 percent for families with children headed by a married couple.

- About half of black female-headed families with children (46.3 percent), Hispanic female-headed families with children (46.5 percent), foreign-born female-headed families with children (44.1 percent), and Native American female-headed families with children (52.8 percent) were poor. The poverty rate was 31.6 percent for white, non-Hispanic female-headed families with children and 24.0 percent for Asian female-headed families with children.
- Nearly six in ten of all poor children (58.8 percent) lived in families headed by women.
- Nearly 522,000 single women with children (12.0 percent) who worked full time, year round in 2013 lived in poverty.

## Poverty Rates for Single Mother Families with Children, 2013



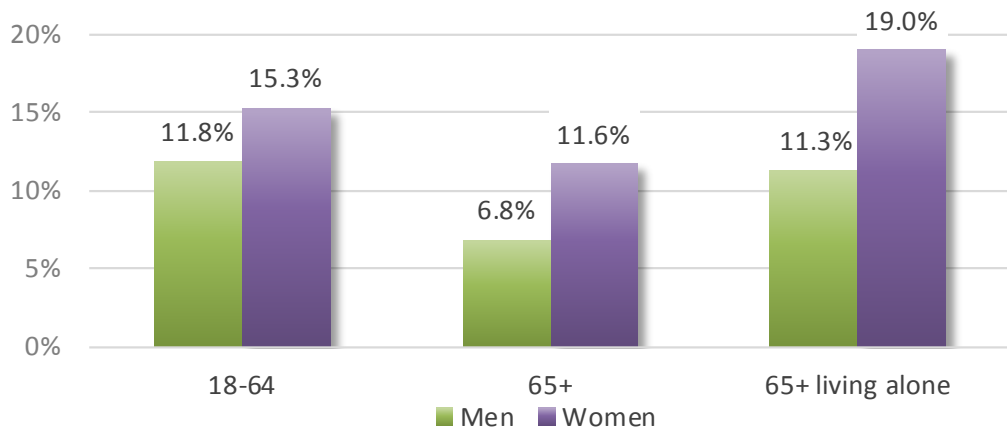
Source: Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

### Women 65 and Older, 2013

- Among people 65 and older, more than twice as many women (nearly 2.9 million) as men (over 1.3 million) lived in poverty in 2013.
- The poverty rate for women 65 and older was 11.6 percent, 4.8 percentage points higher than the poverty rate for men 65 and older (6.8 percent).
- Nearly one in five (19.0 percent) women 65 and older living alone lived in poverty, compared to 11.3 percent for men 65 and older living alone.

- Poverty rates were particularly high for black (20.4 percent), Native American (20.8 percent), Hispanic (23.0 percent), and foreign-born (17.2 percent) women 65 and older. Poverty rates for other groups were lower at 9.3 percent for white, non-Hispanic, and 12.8 percent for Asian women 65 and older. Poverty rates for almost all groups of women 65 and older were higher than those of their male counterparts (see summary table).

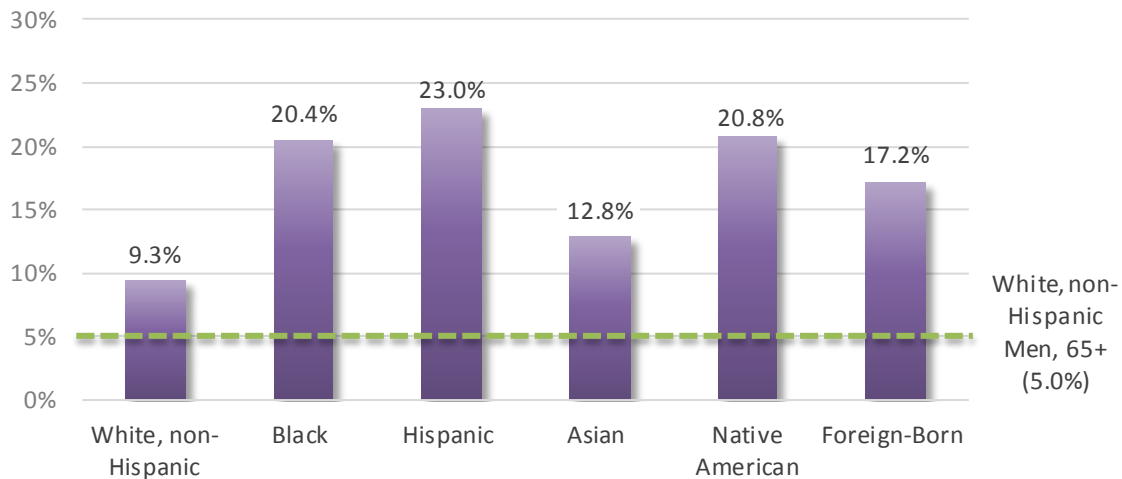
### Poverty Rates for Adults by Gender and Age, 2013



Source: Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

[www.nwlc.org](http://www.nwlc.org) 

### Poverty Rates for Women 65 and Older, 2013



Source: Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, American Community Survey

[www.nwlc.org](http://www.nwlc.org) 

SOURCE NOTE: All data are from the 2013 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

SUMMARY TABLE: POVERTY RATES AMONG WOMEN, MEN, AND CHILDREN - 2013

Group	Number in Poverty, 2013 (in millions)	Poverty Rate, 2013
<b>Adult Women 18+</b>	17.96	14.5%
White, non-Hispanic	8.62	10.7%
Black	4.08	25.3%
Hispanic	4.17	23.1%
Asian	0.78	11.0%
Native American	0.34	26.8%
Foreign Born	3.78	19.0%
<b>Adult Men 18+</b>	12.70	11.0%
White, non-Hispanic	6.09	8.0%
Black	2.72	20.3%
Hispanic	3.16	17.3%
Asian	0.63	10.0%
Native American	0.23	21.3%
Foreign Born	2.85	15.5%
<b>Female-Headed Households with children</b>	3.94	39.6%
White, non-Hispanic	1.34	31.6%
Black	1.36	46.3%
Hispanic	1.11	46.5%
Asian	0.07	24.0%
Native American	0.08	52.8%
Foreign Born	0.77	44.1%
<b>Children</b>	14.66	19.9%
White, non-Hispanic	4.09	10.7%
Black	4.24	38.3%
Hispanic	5.42	30.4%
Asian	0.37	10.1%
Native American	0.34	34.9%
Foreign Born	0.77	28.4%
<b>Older Women 65+</b>	2.88	11.6%
White, non-Hispanic	1.79	9.3%
Black	0.48	20.4%
Hispanic	0.45	23.0%
Asian	0.13	12.8%
Native American	0.02	20.8%
Foreign Born	0.55	17.2%
Living Alone	1.66	19.0%
<b>Older Men 65+</b>	1.35	6.8%
White, non-Hispanic	0.78	5.0%
Black	0.22	13.3%
Hispanic	0.23	15.7%
Asian	0.13	14.6%
Native American	0.02	18.1%
Foreign Born	0.34	15.0%
Living Alone	0.42	11.3%

Source: Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement. Some figures may differ from published Census estimates due to rounding. Poverty rates for Native Americans 65 and older are from the American Community Survey, 2013

