

# Minding the Gap

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*An Assessment of Racial Disparity  
in Metropolitan Chicago*

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## Executive Summary

The Human Relations Foundation/Jane Addams Policy Initiative

in collaboration with

The Center for Urban Research and Learning, Loyola University Chicago

November, 2003



10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 1700  
Chicago, IL 60606

# *Closing the Gap to Create a Just & Equal Society*

“The good must be extended to all society before it can be held secure by any one person or class; unless all (people) and all classes contribute to a good, we cannot even be sure that it is worth having.”

Miss Jane Addams, Founder, Hull House

“It is critical that we establish a floor under which no Chicagoan will fall,”

Clarence N. Wood, President & CEO, Jane Addams Hull House Association

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# Preface

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In 1889, Miss Jane Addams moved into a dilapidated mansion on the west side of Chicago. Surrounded by abject poverty and deplorable living conditions, she and her colleagues started a social reform movement that changed the lives of the city's dispossessed.

The reformers at Hull House helped in efforts to change public policy that resulted in the abolition of child labor, regulation of working conditions, creation of factory laws, juvenile law reform, organization of labor unions, the development of uniform housing codes and a host of other reforms.

In her work, Miss Jane Addams "articulated the failed dreams of democracy, racial equality and economic viability reflected in the lives of blacks, the poor, immigrants, women and delinquents."<sup>1</sup>

In 1989, one hundred years after Miss Addams moved into Hull House, The Chicago Community Trust released a report that also sought to articulate the failures of democracy and ongoing inequality, *Race, Ethnic and Religious Tensions in Metropolitan Chicago*.

This report found continued segregation where racism infected every issue of "legitimate community concern."

Bad schools and bad housing, particularly if segregated, increase the actual costs, increase employment costs, make Chicago employers uncompetitive and adversely affect central area property values and discourage new business location in Chicago. But the costs are more profound. As isolation overtakes more communities, Chicago itself becomes isolated, black and Hispanic and poor, thus becoming more isolated and poorer. The psychic costs of all of this are devastating to whites and minorities.<sup>2</sup>

A series of recommendations was outlined for various public sectors. One recommendation was the creation of the Human Relations Foundation, charged with implementing, in partnership with other agencies and institutions, these policy pledges to ameliorate racism.

For the past 14 years, the Human Relations Foundation, (originally a supporting organization of The Chicago Community Trust, now a program of the Jane Addams Hull House Association), has continued the mission outlined in the Task Force report.

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Jo Deegan. *Race, Hull House, and the University of Chicago: A New Conscience Against Ancient Evils* (Connecticut: Praeger Publishers), p. 4

<sup>2</sup> A Report on Race, Ethnic & Religious Tensions (The Chicago Community Trust Human Relations Task Force, 1989), p.26

The work of the Foundation has been done in tandem with the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations, which, based on recommendations in the Task Force Report, was reinvigorated with the support of then newly elected Mayor Richard M. Daley.

This public/private partnership has positively impacted human relations in Chicago by ensuring ongoing research and public education about the issues, convening dialogue opportunities, facilitating community grassroots efforts and implementing community action processes that ameliorate tensions.

In 2000, this partnership released *Human Relations in Metropolitan Chicago*. This report found a city where:

expressions of animosity are now frequently couched in terms of class, religion or immigration instead of race. The decrease in direct, public displays of racism has led many people to believe that racism is no longer a problem and where it is, they have no personal responsibility for its existence...While contemporary racism is more subtle, racial disparities continue and, make no mistake, there are pockets of unrelenting racism and other forms of bigotry. Gaps in income, wealth, education, health and general quality of life persist and not just by happenstance. These disparities can no longer be attributed to legal structures denying access to minority groups but rather a tacit process of exclusion that maintains segregation, isolation and inequity.<sup>3</sup>

These aforementioned gaps in quality of life and the exclusionary processes that maintain inequity are the foundation for the research in this project.

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<sup>3</sup> Human Relations in Metropolitan Chicago, 2000 (The Human Relations Foundation of Chicago, 2000), pp. 4-5.

## Introduction

During the 1990s, the United States experienced unprecedented economic growth. The quality of life improved for all; however, it did not improve equally. While progress was made for some, many were left behind surviving on the fringes. Disparity based on race and economics remains pervasive.

*Minding the Gap: An Assessment of Racial Disparity in Metropolitan Chicago* examines seven quality of life measurements: income, wealth & employment, education, housing, transportation, health, the lives of children and the criminal justice system. By examining these seven systems, this report creates a unique context for understanding both the complexity of these individual systems and the relationships between them.

Comparisons are made between whites, African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and Native Americans, where data was available. Further comparisons are made between the city and the suburbs.

Statistics, analyses and findings presented in this report are intended to provide useful information for quantifying and defining the racial and economic gaps in metropolitan Chicago. The goal of this effort is not only to educate the public about these gaps, but also to serve as a catalyst for public and social policy discussion throughout the region by initiating a community engagement process.

As one of the oldest social service agencies in the city of Chicago, Jane Addams Hull House Association is uniquely positioned to manage such a community engagement process. In fact, this work is a continuation of the legacy of our founder, Miss Jane Addams, who was committed to not only serving marginalized communities but also working to end their marginalization.

### Research Methodology

The information in this report was gathered from existing data sources. Most of the data was taken from the U.S. Census and focuses on changes occurring between 1990 and 2000. Despite legitimate questions about who is counted and how the data is reported, the Census provides the most complete source of information.

The researchers did not evaluate the methodologies or procedures used in the cited studies. The data as presented rely on the primary researcher's approach and techniques. It is neither endorsement nor approval of these methodologies.

The interpretation of this data is far more difficult than its presentation. While we identified many different variables and covered a wide variety of factors, the nuances of different situations, unidentified variables and the use of secondary data make it impossible to use this report as authoritative documentation of any single issue. Instead, it is a snapshot across the region of existing conditions.

### **Community Engagement Process**

There are no recommendations in this report. Action recommendations will be developed in a community engagement process, involving community leaders, individuals and families. It is not sufficient for policy makers, academicians, civic, non-profit and philanthropic leaders to make pronouncements about the complex problems we face. The people who are dealing with those problems on a daily basis must be heard as well. Only then can we create effective, sustainable solutions to the complex problems that lie at the center of these gaps

### **Regional Demographics**

To place the gaps outlined in this report in the proper context, one must begin with an understanding of the region's population.

Illinois has a population of just over 12.4 million. More than half of the residents live in the Chicago metropolitan area. In Chicago, the total population in 2000 was 2,895,964. Of that number, African Americans represent 36%, whites account for 31%, Latinos are 26% and Asian Americans are 4.3%. The median household income is \$38,625 and 19.6% live below the poverty level.

In the six county metropolitan area, the total population was 8,091,720. Fifty-seven percent of the metropolitan area is white. African Americans are 19%, Latinos represent 17% of the population and Asian Americans are 4.5%. The median household income is \$51,046 and 7.8% of the population lives below the poverty level.

## Key Findings<sup>4</sup>

### Income, Employment and Wealth

#### Income

Economic expansion between 1990 and 2000 improved the life of all families, regardless of race, ethnicity or geography. There were significant increases in income and the unemployment rate fell. The gap in income, however, did not decrease during this time period. Whites earned more than twice as much as both African Americans and Latinos. Recent information indicates that the current economy is widening the gap.

Geography played a significant role in the income gap. The city of Chicago and Cook County have a disproportionate number of residents below the poverty level, while the collar counties have more wealthy households.

In January 2003, the Federal Reserve System released a study illustrating the loss of ground economically for African Americans and other racial minorities. In 2001, the median income for all families within the United States was \$39,900. The median income for African American households is only about 60% of the typical white household income.

- African Americans in the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) had the largest increase in per capita income, 66% over the last decade. In 1999 the average per capita income for whites was \$29,043, compared to \$15,272 for African Americans, \$24,594 for Asian Americans, \$12,680 for Latinos and \$16,489 for Native Americans. (*Chicago Metropolis 2020*).
- For every dollar earned by a low-income household (20th percentile or lower) in the Chicago region during 2000, a high-income household (80th percentile or higher) earned \$3.86. Nationally, this ratio was \$1 to \$3.75. (*Chicago Metropolis 2020*).
- This racial/ethnic gap in income is most significant in the low and middle-income ranges. According to the Illinois Department of Labor, when the upper levels of income are removed, the racial gap in income widens. Latino and African American men make less than half of their Asian American and white counterparts.
- There was a significant increase in the number of people making more than \$50,000 by all races/ethnicities in all locations. The number of persons of color making more than \$50,000 increased between 1990 and 2000. For Latinos this represents a percentage change from 17.8% to 39.7% and for African Americans from 16% to 32.1%. However, this significant increase diminishes

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<sup>4</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the source for these findings is the U.S. Census 1990 and U.S. Census 2000.

when compared to the 58% of whites and the 61% of Asian Americans who had household incomes over \$50,000 in 2000.

- The majority of the wealthiest African American households are located in DuPage County, where over 5,100 households made more than \$50,000 in 2000. The wealthiest African Americans are located in McHenry County, where 65% of African Americans make more than \$50,000. However, there are only 479 African American households located in McHenry County.
- Latinos who make more than \$50,000 are spread throughout the collar counties, representing 55.74% of DuPage County, 44.31% of Kane County, 45.04% of Lake County, 50.44% of McHenry County, and 55.36% of Will County.

## Employment

- Communities of color experience unemployment rates almost twice that of whites. While the unemployment rates decreased for all races from 1990 to 2000, the gap between unemployment for whites and persons of color did not decrease. In Chicago, unemployment is more significantly disproportionate by race, with an average unemployment rate of 11.5% for persons of color compared to a 3.3% unemployment rate for whites. (*Illinois Department of Labor*).
- The number of jobs increased in the Chicago area by 470,369 from 1991 to 2001. The most significant increases occurred in Lake (48.8%) and Will (52.9%) counties, while the city of Chicago experienced a loss in the total number of jobs over that same period. (*Illinois Department of Employment Security*).

## Measurements of Wealth

It is important to consider not only a household's income, but also its net wealth. Wealth can be defined as the total amount of a household's checking and savings accounts, retirement accounts, stocks, bonds, homes and other real estate, minus all outstanding debts.

- A recent study by the Woodstock Institute found that lending in middle- and upper-income census tracts grew by 11.8% and 13.5% respectively from 1996 to 1998, five and six times faster than the 2.3% increase in low- and moderate-income tracts.
- A recent ACORN study indicates that African Americans and Latinos in the metropolitan area were more likely to be denied mortgages, including those backed by the government. In 2001, one in three African Americans and one in six Latinos who applied for conventional mortgages were denied. African Americans were five times more likely to be denied conventional mortgages than whites. Latinos were 2 ½ times more likely to be denied conventional mortgages than whites.
- Most sub-prime borrowers are low-income African Americans. In 1998, only 10% of the refinance loans in the metropolitan area were in African American neighborhoods, but they accounted for 41% of *all* sub-prime refinancing. (*U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*).

## Education

Between 1990 and 2000, the overall gaps in educational achievement throughout Illinois lessened. Significant racial and economic disparity in educational performance and success remains. Dropout rates, expulsion rates and poor standardized test scores continue to impact communities of color negatively. Students of color are disproportionately represented in special education programs, while underrepresented in gifted education programs.

Some examples of the improvements in educational achievement include:

- The average educational level of adults over 25 improved across all races. The number of adults who had completed grade school and the number who finished high school rose in all communities. The most significant gains included a more than 4.5% increase in grade school graduation rates of both Latinos and African Americans.
- There was a 68% increase in the number of African Americans who graduated eighth grade and a 21% increase in high school graduation rates. Plus there was an increase of 23% in the number of African Americans obtaining bachelors degrees and a 23% increase in graduate degrees.
- The overall number of minorities in higher education has increased. From 1995 to 2000 there was an increase from 26.1% to 30.3% in the enrollment of students of color in Illinois colleges and universities. (*Illinois Board of Higher Education*).
- During the past decade, there were significant statewide increases in pre-primary schooling/pre-school enrollment and attendance; these increases were particularly high in communities of color. These increases are significant because researchers have linked early childhood education with long-term academic success. African American enrollment has increased by 139%, Asian American by 143%, Hispanic by 351%, Native American by 145%, and white by 61.4%.

Despite these gains, gaps remain:

- In all counties and in the city of Chicago, Latinos had the lowest eighth grade and high school graduation rates. Thirty-four percent of Latinos in the city and 31% in the collar counties have less than an eighth grade education, and an additional 19.7% of Latinos in the city and 18% of Latinos in the collar counties have less than a high school degree.
- In 2000-2001, 38% of the students who dropped out of high school in Illinois were African Americans (13,121 students). By comparison, 21% of dropouts were Latino (7,222 students), .2% were Native American (68 students), 38.3% were white (13,022 students), and 1.7% were Asian American (575 students). More than 34,000 public high school students in the region leave school each year without graduating. (*Illinois Department of Labor*).
- According to research done by the University of Chicago Consortium of School Research, the annual regional dropout rate was 7.3% in the 1998-99 school year, down from 8% in 1997-98, while the annual rate for Chicago Public Schools was nearly twice that high, at 14%.

The dropout rate is a significant predictor of quality of life. Elementary school dropouts make up 7% of the total U.S. adult population, yet they comprise 13% of local and county jail inmates and 14% of state prison inmates. (*U.S. Department of Justice*).

- Students of color are less likely than white students to meet or exceed state standards on either the Illinois State Achievement Tests (ISAT) or the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). Most significant are the differences in the PSAE, where the average African American student scored 31.8 on reading and 19.2 on math, compared to a 66.1 in reading and 62.8 in math for white students. (*Illinois Department of Labor*).
- Students in districts with higher median household incomes consistently scored better on standardized tests. These districts are disproportionately located in white suburban communities. Public elementary school and high school IGAP scores are lowest in the city of Chicago, followed by other school districts with median household incomes below \$35,000.

## Property Taxes

Property taxes play a large role in the division/provision of educational services. In 2002, Illinois spent an average of \$7,926 per pupil in operating expenses, but within the state there were large variations. In the Chicago area, the dollar amount spent per student ranged from the highest in Lake Forest's Roundout School District 72, which spends \$18,225 per student, to the lowest in Harvey Chicago Public School District 152, which spends \$6,678 per pupil. By comparison, the Roundout district raises 87.5% of its funding from local property taxes, compared to 15.6% for the Harvey district. The city of Chicago School District spends more than the state average, with average operating expenses per pupil at \$8,379 in 2002. (*Illinois State Board of Education*).

Tax capacity by municipalities is a measure of equity, because it indicates whether communities in the Chicago region have a sufficient revenue base to fund basic public services like education. The level of funding for schools and the amount spent per pupil directly correlates to a community's tax capacity. Across the region, there is an uneven distribution of capacity.

According to research conducted by Chicago Metropolis 2020, the average tax capacity per household in the Chicago region was \$747 in 1998. Robbins had the least tax capacity per household in the region (\$107) and Oak Brook had the highest at \$6,954.

## Housing

The location, availability, quality and price of housing are important indicators of racial and ethnic gaps, particularly as housing is linked to a variety of other systems, life conditions and opportunities, (i.e., education, transportation, safety, wealth-building).

## Homeownership Rates<sup>5</sup>

- Homeownership rates grew significantly during the 1990s—from 61.0% in 1990 to 64.6% in 2000—reflecting an increase of 290,000 owners in the metropolitan region. People of color made up 60% of the net increase in the number of owners. The growth rates of homeowners of color dramatically outpaced that of white owners in Chicago, in its satellite cities, and in the suburbs. The absolute number of white owners declined in Chicago and Cook County overall, and increased fastest in outlying areas of Will and McHenry counties.
- Nearly four out of five homes bought between 1993 and 1999 were located in the suburbs. Suburban home purchases accounted for 70% of the increase in African American home ownership and close to 80% of the increase in Asian American home ownership. Overall, Asian Americans and whites were more likely to purchase homes in the suburbs than African Americans and Latinos. More than 80% of Asian Americans and whites purchased homes in the suburbs, compared to 56% of African Americans and Latinos.

## Housing Values

- Homes owned by African Americans and Latinos are on average worth less than the homes of whites and Asian Americans. The homes of whites and Asian Americans are valued 40% higher than the homes of African Americans and Latinos, yet their mortgage payments are only 29% higher. (*Metropolitan Chicago Information Center*).
- Sixty-six percent of African Americans disproportionately live in housing built before 1940, while a majority of Asian Americans, Hispanics, and whites report living in housing built after 1940. Older housing stock often translates into higher upkeep and repair costs, safety problems, health problems and devaluation. (*Metropolitan Chicago Information Center*).

## Residential Segregation & Suburban Growth<sup>6</sup>

Racial segregation in Chicago remains high but declined marginally for African Americans and Latinos, while dropping significantly between Asian Americans and whites. Asian Americans are adopting settlement patterns similar to whites, and areas attracting Asian Americans are also showing substantial white growth. African Americans across all income levels were the most segregated racial group during the 1990s.

- African Americans, while increasing in the suburbs at a slower pace than Latinos and Asian Americans, are approaching 1 in 10 suburban residents. African American/white segregation has seen slight improvement but is still dramatically higher than that of other racial/ethnic groups. Chicago ranks as the fourth most segregated large metropolitan area for African Americans.
- African American suburbanites are concentrated in the inner, south and western suburbs in communities such as Harvey, Maywood, Dolton, and Riverdale, (these same areas have shown marked white declines). In addition, significant

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<sup>5</sup> This research was conducted by the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

<sup>6</sup> This research was conducted by the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

numbers of African Americans live in far northern suburbs like Waukegan and Zion, as well as some parts of DuPage and northern Will counties.

- Most Asian American suburbanites live in northern Cook County communities such as Skokie, Morton Grove, and Lincolnwood; in northwest Cook County in Schaumburg and Palatine; in DuPage County, especially Naperville; and throughout parts of central Lake County.
- In 1990, Latinos made up 1 out of 20 suburban residents. By 2000, they made up 1 in 10 residents. Yet the largest increases in overall segregation are for suburban Latinos, with levels beginning to approach that found in the city of Chicago. For example, whites make up 74% of the total suburban population, yet the average Latino suburbanite lives in a neighborhood that is just 55% white, a decrease from 72% white in 1990.
- Half of all whites in the metropolitan region still live in Cook County, including such towns as Tinley Park, which is over 90% white. The areas with the highest concentration of whites are in McHenry and Will counties. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of whites increased most dramatically in Lake, McHenry, and Will counties, while the percentage of whites dropped significantly in most Cook and DuPage census tracts, especially those in the south and west suburbs.

### Homelessness

- More than 150,000 people are homeless in the Chicago metropolitan area each year. The number of rental units decreased by nearly 50,000 between 1990 and 2000, even though the population increased by nearly 8%. In addition, there is a deficit of 153,000 housing units that are affordable to families earning less than \$20,000 per year. (*City of Chicago Department of Human Services*).
- Although African Americans make up less than one in five persons in the region, they account for more than one half of the homeless. (*Regional Roundtable on Homelessness*).

### Transportation

Significant gaps among racial and ethnic groups can be seen in transportation services. African Americans are less likely to own automobiles than Asian Americans, Latinos, and whites. Not surprisingly, therefore, African Americans are more likely to use public transit to commute to work. Transportation issues play a major role in the “spatial mismatch” between places of residence and employment.

- According to a 1999 MCIC poll, cutbacks in Chicago Transportation Authority (CTA) service in the late 1990s affected a greater percentage of African Americans and Latinos than whites and Asian Americans.
- According to a study by the Center for Neighborhood Technology, Chicago Transit Authority bus service in 1995 provided less frequent service to predominantly Latino neighborhoods.
- Suburban sprawl and traffic congestion impacts all residents, but they particularly affect African Americans and Latinos. Between 1990 and 2000,

suburbs with the largest number and highest percentage of African American and Latino residents experienced a greater percentage increase in the average commuting times than suburbs with the largest numbers and highest percentages of whites and Asian Americans. (*Civil Rights Project at Harvard University*).

- South suburbs with large African American populations experienced some of the most dramatic increases in commute times. As “collar” suburbs, these communities are relatively close to the central city. However, many jobs have moved to the northwest suburbs, increasing commute times.

For example, the south suburbs of Burnham (53% African American), Dolton (82% African American), Riverdale (85% African American), and South Holland (50% African American) all experienced increases of seven or more minutes in their average commute times between 1990 and 2000, compared to a three-minute average increase region-wide. (*Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission*).

## Health

According to the constitution of the World Health Organization, “health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity.” Disparities in health associated with race plague not only the city of Chicago, but also the nation as a whole. The truly frustrating reality is that many of these disparities can be prevented through regular screenings, access to medical care and education.

### Disease & Mortality Rates

The leading causes of death are uniform across all racial/ethnic groups. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for all racial groups, followed by cancer. Still, there is a gap between the rates at which different racial groups suffer and die from health problems. For instance, black respondents have a cancer mortality rate well over twice that of their white and Hispanic counterparts.

### Asthma

Asthma is a serious concern in the State of Illinois, specifically in the city of Chicago. The asthma death rate for African Americans in Illinois is currently more than four times the national average of 1.6 per 100,000 and is the highest in the country.

- Of the 115 Chicagoans who died of asthma in 2000, 78 were African American, 23 were white, and 12 were Hispanic (two were simply accounted for as “minority children”). (*Chicago Tribune*).
- A survey of Chicago residents indicates that among school-age children, Puerto Ricans have the highest asthma prevalence rate in Chicago, at 24.4%, compared to African Americans at 16.8%, whites at 12.9% and Mexicans at 9.2%. (*American Lung Association of Metropolitan Chicago*).

- Asthma is the leading cause of hospitalization for children in Illinois.

### **Cancer**

- From 1990-1996 in the state of Illinois, African American males had the highest cancer incidence rates among all racial/ethnic groups. In Chicago African Americans constitute 34.7% of all cancer incidences. (*Illinois Department of Health*).
- In 1980, African American and white women in Chicago died from breast cancer at close to the same rates: 15.2 and 14.9 per 100,000, respectively. By 1997, however, the death rate for white women had fallen dramatically, to 10.3, while the rate for African American women climbed to 20.5. (*Chicago Reporter*).

### **Childhood Accident Rates**

Childhood accident rates disproportionately affect minority children. Between 1994 and 1996, 9 out of every 10 Chicago children who died in accidents were minorities. By 1999, this rate had declined slightly, with minority children constituting approximately 85% of all deaths caused by accidents. (*Chicago Reporter*).

### **Diabetes**

Diabetes is the seventh overall leading cause of death in Chicago. This ranking might in fact be higher, since diabetes is often not noted as a cause of death and complications from the disease are listed as the cause of mortality.

- In the State of Illinois, the diabetes mortality rate for African Americans is far higher than for any other group. In 1999, there were 45 deaths per 100,000 due to diabetes for African Americans, compared to a rate of 22.9 per 100,000 for whites, and a combined rate of 18.6 for all other racial categories. (*Chicago Department of Health*).
- Type II diabetes is often linked to obesity. A larger percentage of African Americans in Illinois are obese (64%) compared to Latinos (58%) and whites (55%). These obesity rates are higher than the national average for African Americans and whites.

### **Heart Disease**

- Heart disease has remained the leading cause of death in Chicago for the past ten years. Among African Americans, the 1997 rate of 230 per 100,000 was nearly 60% greater than the white rate of 144.7 per 100,000 and more than 138% higher than the Latino rate of 96.4. A higher percentage of the deaths of whites in Chicago are due to heart disease, than it is for Asians, African Americans, or a combined variable of all other races. (*Illinois Department of Health*).

## HIV/AIDS

- Fifty percent of all persons in Illinois living with AIDS are African Americans who account for only 15.1% of the population. Latinos account for 13.4% of cases, and non-Hispanic whites, who comprise 67.8% of the Illinois population, account for 34.8% of all cases. Latinos account for 15% of newly diagnosed HIV and AIDS cases. (*Centers for Disease Control*).
- According to the city of Chicago's Office of HIV/AIDS Surveillance, the AIDS rate among all Chicago women nearly tripled in the last decade, with women of color accounting for 85% of all female AIDS cases. Eight out of 10 of those women were African American.

## Infant Mortality

- Looking at changes between 1990 and 2000, infant mortality rates (IMR) for all races are currently at an all time low. While infant mortality rates for the state of Illinois have decreased overall during this period, rates remain much higher for the African American population than for whites. (*Illinois Department of Public Health*).

## Lead Poisoning

- Chicago has one of the highest lead poisoning rates in the country. Non-Latino African American children have the highest rates of lead poisoning and the lowest rates of lead exposure testing. Neighborhoods with the highest rates are generally in the west and south areas of the city, where the housing stock is older and often poorly maintained. (*City of Chicago, Office of the Mayor*).

## Low Birth Weights

- In Illinois, African Americans are the most likely to have low birth weight infants (14%), followed by whites (7%) and Latinos (6%). In Chicago in 1997, African American babies were more than twice as likely to be low birth weight (15%) than were births to whites (7.1%) and Latinos (6.9%). (*Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*).
- Among Latino subgroups, Puerto Rican women were more likely to deliver very low birth weight babies (2%) than Mexican women (1.2%). (*Chicago Department of Health*).

## Mental Health

According to the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, the prevalence of mental disorders in the general population is the same for all racial and ethnic groups in the United States. People who are in "high need subgroups," such as the homeless, incarcerated or institutionalized have higher rates of mental disorders.

The Surgeon General's report found that the true disparity in mental health is accessibility to resources. According to the Surgeon General's report:

- Minorities have less access to, and availability of, mental health services.

- Minorities are less likely to receive needed mental health services.
- Minorities in treatment often receive a poorer quality of mental health care.
- Minorities are underrepresented in mental health research.

As a result of this disparity, the Surgeon General has reported, “racial and ethnic minorities collectively experience a greater disability burden from mental illness than do whites. This higher level of burden stems from minorities receiving less care and poorer quality of care, rather than from their illnesses being inherently more severe or prevalent in the community.”

### **Sexually Transmitted Diseases**

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) continue to be a very serious problem in Chicago, disproportionately affecting communities of color.

- African American women experience the highest rates of Chlamydia (1,129 per 100,000) and African American men experience the highest rate of gonorrhea (1,143 per 100,000). (*City of Chicago, Office of the Mayor*).
- Although primary and secondary syphilis rates have been declining in Chicago, the current syphilis rate is still 4.5 times higher than the national rate of 2.7 per 100,000—leaving Chicago with the second largest number of syphilis cases in the United States.

Fifty percent of the nation's syphilis cases are concentrated in only 28 counties. Cook County is one of these 28 counties. (*Chicago Department of Public Health*).

- In Chicago in 2000, 80% of all newly reported syphilis cases occurred among African-Americans. Syphilis has been found primarily in neighborhoods with high poverty rates on the south and west sides of the city.

Recently, however, several new trends in the demographics of syphilis have been identified in Chicago. According to the CDC “an increasing number of cases are being reported among white males, among men who have sex with men and in neighborhoods along the north lakefront.”

### **Teenage Pregnancy**

- Young mothers, especially those under age 15, have higher rates of premature labor, spontaneous abortion, stillbirth, neonatal mortality and low birth weight infants. For the infant who survives, the higher risk of death, particularly Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), persists throughout early childhood. Thus, maternal age is important. (*John Hopkins School of Public Health*).
- Teenage motherhood is more prevalent among African American mothers in Chicago, than other racial groups. Of the 51,117 live births in Chicago in 1997, 26.9% of African American births, 16.9% of Latino births and 5.4% of white births were to teenage mothers. (*City of Chicago Department of Health*).

## Tuberculosis

- As overall case rates have declined in the city since 1993, the pool of disease has become concentrated in some specific areas of Chicago. TB disproportionately affects communities of color. Case rates for African Americans continue to be well over four times those of whites and nearly double the rates among Hispanics. The current TB rate for African Americans in Chicago is 19.6, 3.5 times the overall national rate, and continues to exceed the national rate for African Americans of 15.1 per 100,000. (*Chicago Department of Public Health*).

## Preventative Measures

### Access to Health Care

- According to the Chicago Plan for Public Health System Improvement, African Americans in Chicago are the least likely of all racial groups to seek regular medical care at a doctor's office (29%) and the most likely to seek care from a health center (19%), a hospital clinic (16%) or hospital emergency room (10%). In contrast, whites are most likely to seek care from a doctor's office (63%).
- In Illinois, Latinos have the highest rate of non-elderly uninsured, (29%), followed by African Americans at (24%), Asian/Pacific Islander/Native American, (17%) and whites (10%). (*Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*).
- The rate of white, Latino and Asian/Native American non-elderly uninsured in Illinois is below the national rate of uninsured (11%, 34%, and 21% respectively). Conversely, the rate for African Americans in Illinois is higher than the national rate for African Americans, at 20%. (*Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*).

## Nutrition

Disease is often associated with access, or lack thereof, to healthful foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, and over-consumption of non-healthy foods, specifically processed and refined foods. In considering the health conditions of people, the proximity of persons to grocery stores that carry fresh produce is a concern.

In many low-income communities, there is limited access to grocery stores. One example of this is the Austin neighborhood. With 114,000 residents (73% African American, 19% white, and 6% Latino) this community has only one full-service grocery store and several smaller grocery and convenience stores. Studies show that residents of Austin spent approximately \$134 million on groceries in 2001, only \$34 million of which was spent in their own neighborhood. This lack of convenient, healthy food, has led to the implementation of farmers' markets and gardens in the Austin neighborhood. (*Washington Post*).

## Health & Welfare of Children

The quality of life for our children is an important determinant not just as a societal definition, but also as a determinant for the quality of life of families.

- Between 1985 and 1995, the child poverty rate decreased for all racial groups in the state of Illinois. Still, large gaps remained between white children and African American and Hispanic children. In 1995, the child poverty rate for African Americans and Hispanics remained higher than for whites: 50% of African American children and 32% of Latino children lived in poverty. (*Chapin Hall, State of the Child*).
- Poverty increased for the following groups in the following counties: African American children in DuPage County (13.2% to 15%); Asian American children in Cook (10.9% to 11.09%) and DuPage (3.5% to 4.22%); Hispanic children in DuPage (8.9% to 9.9%), Lake (2.1% to 13.7%), and Will (9.5% to 10.3%); and white children in DuPage (2.5% to 2.79%). (*Chapin Hall, State of the Child*).
- As a result of welfare reform, the duration of time that children spend on welfare decreased by about 50% from 1990 to 1998 for all races and ethnicities. Nonetheless, African American children stay on welfare longer than their white and Hispanic counterparts. (*Chapin Hall, State of the Child*).
- In 1998, in the city of Chicago, 95% of the children in the foster care system were African American, 6% were Hispanic and 3% were white. In suburban Cook County, 83% of the children were African American, 12% were white and 4% were Latino. In the collar counties, 58% were African American, 31% were white and 8% were Latino. (*Chicago Reporter*).
- A study in 2000 found that childcare facilities in 21 Chicago community areas with large African American and Latino populations served only 8% to 37% of those children needing care. (*Illinois Facilities Fund*).

## Crime, Law Enforcement and the Justice System

The largest racial and ethnic gap occurs in the areas of crime, law enforcement, and the justice system. The data in this research project suggest that this is also the fastest growing gap. African Americans are most likely to be the victims of crime and are impacted by the justice system in disproportionate numbers.

With the 1996 Illinois Controlled Substances Act being rigorously enforced in the city of Chicago, the gaps in arrests, drug crimes, juvenile transfers and convictions have increased. The enforcement of this law has long-term consequences, impacting a person's ability to obtain higher education, apply for a job, secure a line of credit, vote and purchase a home.

The rise in numbers of arrest when juxtaposed against the decline in the rate of crime creates a context for the debate about whether it is the crime committed or the way that laws are enforced that is the critical issue.

## Crime and Victimization Rates

- From 1990 to 2000, the city of Chicago experienced a 40.8% decrease in the number of violent crimes and a 25.8% decrease in property crimes. This decrease in crime occurred across the metropolitan region and the state. (*U.S. Department of Justice*).
- At the same time, increases in non-index crime were seen in the Harrison and Austin districts with over 60% increases in both communities. Citywide, the largest increase was seen in police districts that are majority African American. (*Chicago Reporter*).
- African American men are most likely to be crime victims in Cook County. African Americans are most frequently the victims of both violent crimes (61%) and property crimes (42%). African American men are the most likely to be the victims of homicide. Latinos had the second highest rate of victimization for violent crimes (21%), while whites had the second highest rate of victimization for property crimes (38%). (*Chicago Police Department*).

## Arrest Rates

- Chicago's racial gap widened in both drug arrests and non-drug arrests between 1998 and 2000. Drug arrests of African Americans and Latinos increased while drug arrests of whites declined. Non-drug arrests fell for each racial group, but African Americans and Latinos accounted for a higher percentage of the arrests in 2000 than they did in 1998.
- The number of drug arrests in Illinois has increased dramatically over the last two decades, from 27,608 in 1980 to 106,609 in 1999. Cook County's 68,180 drug arrests in 1999 accounted for 64% of all drug arrests statewide, while Cook County represents only 43% of the state's total population. (*Chicago Reporter*).
- Within Cook County these arrests are disproportionately African American men. Four out of every five individuals arrested on drug related charges in Chicago in 2000 were African American. African Americans also made up an even greater share of those charged with drug offenses by prosecutors and those sentenced to prison in Cook County. (*Chicago Reporter*).
- African Americans are less likely to use drugs than whites or Latinos. There is no evidence that suggests that the gap in drug arrests relates to a gap in drug usage. Whites are 125% more likely to use marijuana, 181% more likely to use cocaine, 413% more likely to use inhalants, 516% more likely to use LSD, and are also more likely than African Americans or Latinos to abuse alcohol, prescription drugs, PCP, and hallucinogens. (*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*).
- African Americans convicted of drug possession or drug delivery were more likely than whites or Latinos to be sentenced to prison and less likely to get probation in Cook County between 1995 and 2000. (*Chicago Reporter*).
- More than half the city's drug arrests occurred in six districts, clustered together across the city's south and west sides. In the seven police districts where whites outnumber African Americans and Latinos, there were 4,243 drug arrests, or 12% of the citywide total. Of those drug arrestees, 63% were African Americans. (*Chicago Reporter*).

## **Incarceration Rates**

The Illinois Department of Corrections is a \$1.2 billion state agency. In 2003, it is responsible for the supervision and care of over 33,000 adults and juveniles on parole and 45,000 in custody. Of this group, 94% are male, 63% are African American, 36% are white, and 11% are Latino. Cook County is the committing county for 59% of all state prisoners. The collar counties represent 11% of inmates, and the remaining sections of the state comprise 31%. The average prisoner is 33 years old, has been sentenced to 4.2 years in prison and serves 1.3 years.

- In Cook County in 2000, about one in five African American men in their twenties were either in jail, prison, or on parole, compared to 1 in 104 white men and 1 in 26 Latino men. (*Chicago Reporter*).
- Since 1995, the area that encompasses the 60624 zip code area (framed by Roosevelt Road and Kedzie, Chicago and Kenton avenues, and includes the West Garfield Park community area and portions of East Garfield Park, North Lawndale and Humboldt Park), has been home to more ex-drug offenders than any other area in Chicago. A total of 4,065 ex-drug offenders were paroled to the area between 1995 and 2001—an average of 1 of every 11 residents, according to census figures. The area is nearly 99% African American. (*Chicago Reporter*).

## **Juvenile Justice System**

In Illinois, a juvenile is defined as an individual between the ages of 5 and 16 years old. In 2000, there were 604,255 juveniles in Chicago and 1,090,956 in suburban Cook and the collar counties. These children represent 17.47% of the total population. Chicago youth are 41% African American, 3% Asian American, 30% Latino, and 26% white. Comparatively, suburban youth are 11% African American, 4% Asian American, 15% Latino, and 70% white. Data pertaining to juvenile court filings and adjudication are not reported by race in most circumstances, and therefore the gap is not always presented in terms of race. However, because the racial disparity exists between the city and suburban communities, the racial gap can be implied.

- Statewide, African American juveniles accounted for more violent crime and drug arrests in 1999 (18,906 of the 37,964 juvenile arrests) than white or Latino juveniles, while white juveniles accounted for the most arrests for property index crimes (11,024 or almost 50% of all property index arrests). (*Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission*).
- Studies have indicated that white youths from 12 to 17 are three times more likely to have sold drugs than African American youth in the State of Illinois. Correspondingly, white youth use cocaine and heroin seven to eight times more often than African American youth. Despite this higher drug use and sales by white Illinois teens, African American youth make up 15.3% of Illinois's youth population, 59% of youth arrested for drug crimes, 85.5% of youth automatically transferred to adult court, 88% of youth imprisoned for drug crimes, and 91% of youth admitted to state prison. (*Building Blocks for Youth*).

## Racial Profiling

No governmental entity is required to maintain racial or ethnic data on incidents of racial profiling or on reports of police brutality. Despite increasing attention to these issues in the last decade, no organization is responsible for collecting this information. (This year in Illinois, two bills were passed that called for videotaped interrogations and data collection for traffic stops. These should begin to assess the extent of the gaps in racial profiling and police brutality). Therefore, the extent and nature of the problem is unknown. However, a University of Illinois study completed in 1998 indicated that in Cook County, 61.4% of motorists stopped by the Drug Investigation Unit were African American, clearly disproportionate to the African American population of 23.8% in Cook County.

National studies done by the U.S. Department of Justice show similar patterns of racial gaps in police stops:

- Among drivers stopped for speeding, African American (75.7%) and Hispanics (79.4%) were more likely than whites (66.6%) to be ticketed. The average number of stops was greater for young African American males (2.7) and young Hispanic males (1.8).
- Police were more likely to conduct a search of the vehicle and/or driver in traffic stops involving African American male drivers (15.9%) or Hispanic male drivers (14.2%), compared to white male drivers (7.9%).

## Hate Crime

- Hate crimes were reported in all 25 Chicago police districts with the greatest number occurring in Chicago Lawn (25 incidents), East Chicago (18 incidents), and Rogers Park (15 incidents). East Chicago is mostly Latino, and Rogers Park and Chicago Lawn are multi-ethnic and multi-racial neighborhoods. (*Chicago Police Department*).
- From 1989 to 2000, hate crimes overall decreased for the city of Chicago. However, Chicago Lawn, a neighborhood that is half African American and one-third Latino, remained in the lead with the highest number of hate crimes for both 1989 and 2000. This neighborhood actually experienced an increase from 15 reported hate crimes in 1989 to 25 in 2000. (*Chicago Police Department*).
- Of racially motivated hate crimes in 2001, 85% occurred against persons of color, with 72% of all hate crimes motivated by anti-African American sentiments. (*Chicago Police Department*).