

FACTS AND FIGURES

As of 2008 there were 73.9 million children in the United States.

67% lived with two married adults.

21% spoke a language other than English at home.

18% live in poverty.

72% of children in poverty live in food insecure homes, or are hungry.

During the current recession, it is estimated that 22.5% of all children are going hungry for some time each week.

Even mild under nutrition experienced by young children impacts their behavior, their school performance, and their overall cognitive development.

11% of all children have no health insurance.

77% of children received the recommended vaccines for childhood diseases.

25% of children have untreated dental cavities.

7.3% of children with limitation of activity due to chronic health conditions.

5.1% of children who missed 11 or more days of school in 12 months due to illness or injury.

1 out of 3 children is considered obese or overweight.

43% of households with children had one or more of the three critical housing problems (physical inadequacy, crowding or cost burdens).

55% of children ages 3-5 were read to on a daily basis by a family member.

9% of children have asthma.

14% of children have a special health care need lasting more than 12 months, requiring prescription medication, and limiting normal functional and developmental activity.

Chronic conditions include:

- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Cerebral palsy

Sickle cell anemia
Cystic fibrosis
Cancer
AID
Epilepsy
Spina bifida
Congenital heart problems

Disabilities in children include:

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
Autism
Blindness and other Visual Impairments
Cerebral Palsy
Deafness and Hearing Loss
Developmental Delay
Down Syndrome
Emotional Disturbance
Epilepsy
Intellectual Disability (formerly Mental Retardation)
Learning Disabilities
Rare Disorders
Severe or Multiple Disabilities
Speech and Language Impairments
Traumatic Brain Injury (5.3 million people are living with TBI, children are the most at risk for these injuries)

In families with a child with chronic challenges, more family dysfunction is experienced; there are more school absences as well as employment absenteeism and loss, less participation in community activities, and more difficulty with childcare. According to the National Survey of Children's Health, parental concern about emotional, behavioral and learning difficulties experienced by their children is more than double the actual diagnosis by a professional of those difficulties. There are many reasons for this, not least being lack of access to professional care or attention.

Rand Corporation estimates that between 180,000 and 350,000 veterans who have suffered head trauma, which may lead to brain injury. Thus in addition to the over 30,000 veterans returning with disabling wounds, these individuals' injuries may not become evident for years. Of concern for our project is the enormous impact on the children in these military families of both the visible and invisible wounds which will impact their lives.

Why list these facts? The kids and the families dealing with these challenges have a lot in common, and the first step in helping is to reach out to others.