



Comparing the Official and Supplemental Poverty Measures: Five Observations

Kristin Anderson Moore, Senior Scholar

1 The supplemental measure acknowledges that poor children receive a number of benefits that reduce their experience of poverty, which reduces the percentage of American children living in poverty.

| | <u>Official</u> | <u>Supplemental</u> |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|
| Children in families in deep poverty <50% FPL | 10% | 5% |

Still, 1 in 20 children are in deep poverty (below 50% of the poverty line).

2 The inclusion of a host of benefits and costs, ranging from medical coverage to Food Stamps to child care to school lunch, makes an important but fairly modest difference:

| | <u>Official</u> | <u>Supplemental</u> |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|
| Children living in poor families <100% FPL | 22.5% | 18.2% |

3 By either measure, children were the age group most likely to be poor in the United States in 2010. The proportion has been increasing over the past several years.

| | <u>Official</u> | <u>Supplemental</u> |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Children living in poverty in the U.S. | A little more than 1 in 5 | A little less than 1 in 5 |

4 Poverty affects children's outcomes.

Research clearly shows children in poverty have:

- Poorer educational outcomes
- Poorer health
- Less positive social and emotional development
- More problem behaviors

5 New measure means fewer children in affluent families in the U.S. than before.

| | <u>Official</u> | <u>Supplemental</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Children living in families >400% FPL | 27% | 11% |