

Safeguards for Youth

Data Focus: Programs for Families in Poverty



Supporting Families Through Economic Hardship

Safety net programs such as tax credits and supplemental nutrition help mitigate economic hardships for families and safeguard children. Children who face economic hardship, or who experience deep and prolonged poverty, are at greater risk for poor emotional and physical health than children in more economically secure households.

**Poverty Reducing Effects of the Social Safety Net in California
According to the California Poverty Measure: 2014-2016**

California	Percentage Points
Safety Net Program	Child Poverty
CalFresh	4.0
CalWORKS	2.3
Earned Income Tax Credit; Child Tax Credit	6.1
Free or Reduced Price School Meals; WIC	2.0
Housing Subsidies	1.5
Supplemental Security Income	0.9
All Safety Net Programs	14.1

Based on the California Poverty Measure, social safety net programs reduced child poverty by an estimated 14 percentage points in 2014-2016. Estimates show how each program contributed to reducing poverty. The Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit had a particularly strong effect, reducing poverty by six percentage points. Also impactful was CalFresh, known federally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which reduced poverty by four percentage points.

The effects of poverty extend beyond individuals. The estimated total annual cost of child poverty in the U.S. is more than a trillion dollars, due in part to loss of economic productivity and increased health costs. For every dollar spent on poverty reduction strategies, the U.S. could save an estimated \$7 related to the economic costs of poverty.

Explore the Latest Data on Programs for Families in Poverty

Social Safety Net

[Poverty-Reducing Effects of the Social Safety Net – California Poverty Measure](#)

[Children Participating in CalWORKs](#)

[CalFresh \(Food Stamp\) Participation](#)

[Student Eligibility to Receive Free or Reduced Price School Meals](#)

[Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\) Participation](#)

About Safeguards for Youth

Safeguards for Youth is a compilation of the latest data on promoting California children's health and well-being. The data describe protective factors and supportive services, both of which are critical to building a solid foundation for life and addressing the effects of childhood adversity. Protective factors highlight the importance of preventive health care, a strong start in education, and a nurturing school community. Supportive services address adverse experiences such as health challenges, abuse, and family poverty. These data stress the urgency for advocacy and policy change to safeguard California's future generations.

Learn more at: kidsdata.org/Safeguards