



## Johnson County Poverty and Early Childhood (Age 0-5)

Nearly 5,000 of Johnson County's 38,000 poor are children age 5 and under, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau. These children live in households with income below the federal poverty level. The poverty threshold for a family of 2 is currently \$15,930; for a family of 3, the poverty threshold is \$20,090.

Studies have shown that children living in poverty have less development in areas of the brain tied to learning and educational functioning, compared to more affluent peers. As a result, there is a gap in academic achievement based on the income of a child's family. However, targeted interventions in the early years of a poor child's life can significantly improve academic outcomes. These interventions might be economic, such as the income-boosting Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); or environmental, such as parents intentionally talking, reading, and playing with their children every day.

### Key Facts on Poverty<sup>i</sup>

- The poverty rate for early childhood, defined as age 5 and under, is almost 10%, compared to a 6.5% poverty rate for the total population.
- Children 5 and under in female headed households have a poverty rate of 38%, compared to 27% for male headed households and less than 4% for married households.
- 1 in 2 poor families with children include at least one child age 5 and under.
- While White children represent the largest share of poor children age 5 and under, the poverty rates for African-American and Hispanic children are more than five times higher than the poverty rate for White children.
- Nearly 1 in 4 of all births in Johnson County occur to a woman below 200% of the federal poverty level.

### Key Facts on Early Childhood Education

- More than 70% of Johnson County births occur to women in the work force. This suggests that many children will need childcare at some point before they reach school age.
- In Johnson County, there are 4 Early Head Start slots available per 100 children birth through age 3 living in families with incomes below the poverty threshold.<sup>ii</sup>
- There are 20 Head Start enrollment slots available per 100 children 3-4 years of age living in families with income below the poverty threshold.
- 50% of public elementary schools in Johnson County offer pre-kindergarten five days a week.<sup>iii</sup>

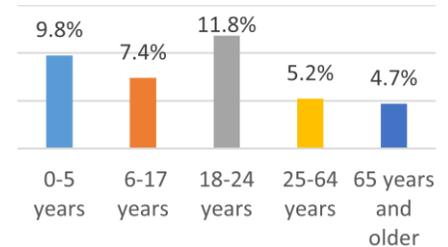
<sup>i</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, America Community Survey 2009-2013 5-year estimate

<sup>ii</sup> Kansas Head Start Association, 2013

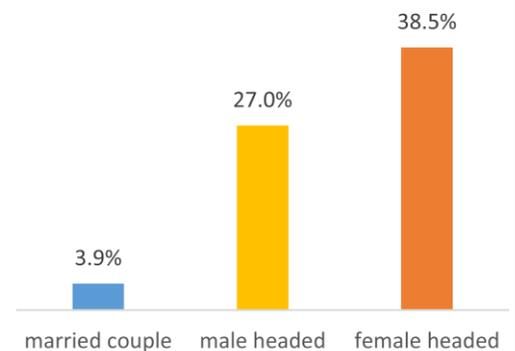
<sup>iii</sup> Kansas State Department of Education, 2014

## Poverty Statistics for Children Age 0-5 Years

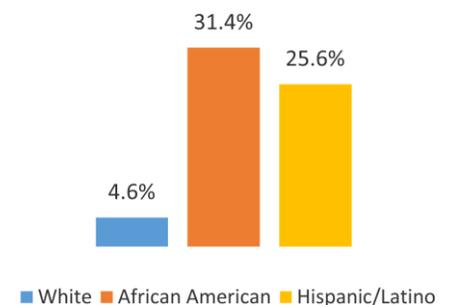
### Poverty Rate by Age



### Child Poverty Rate by Family Type



### Child Poverty Rate by Race



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