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# Solving the Puzzle of U.S. Government Statistics

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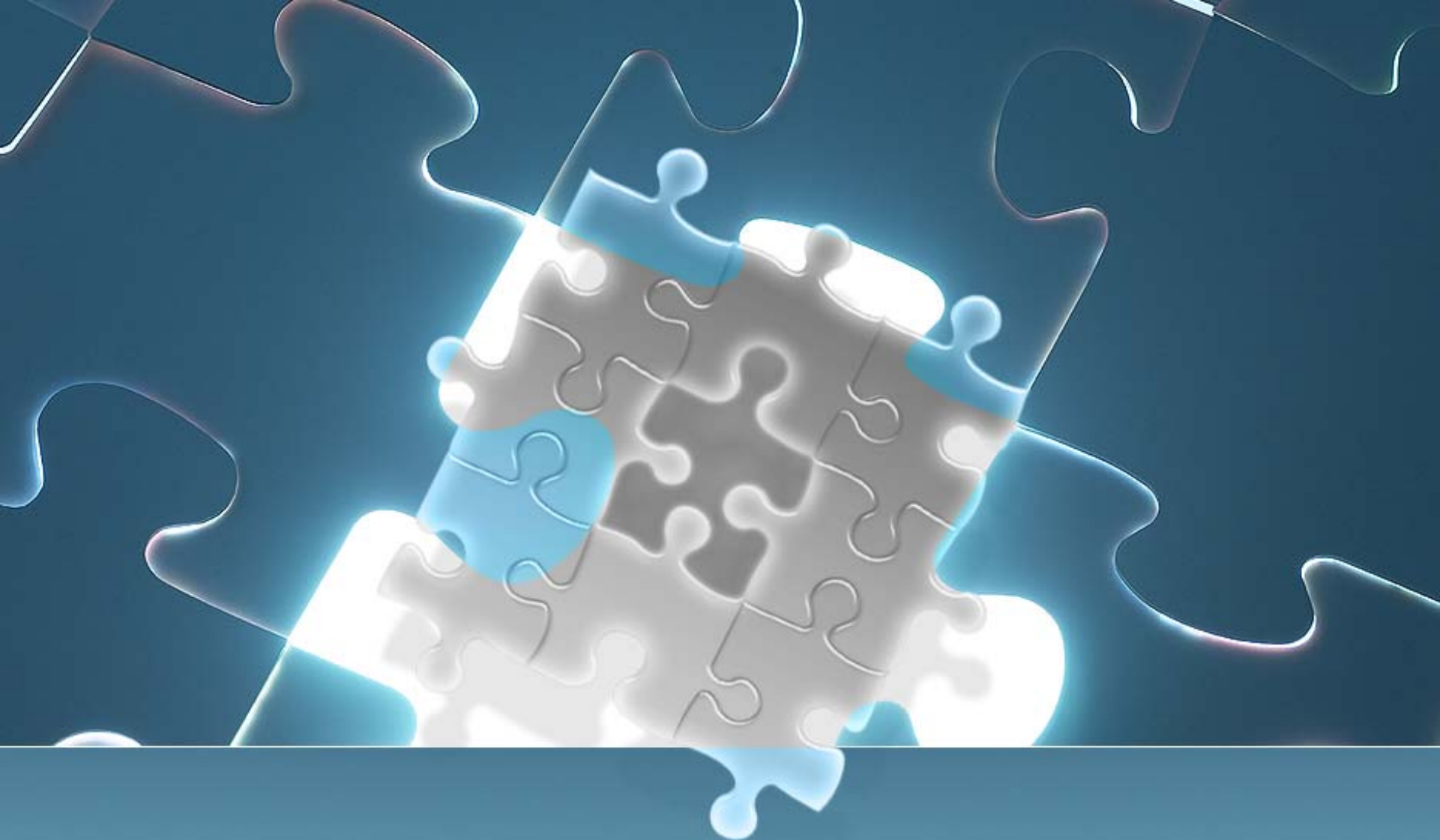
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# **Solving the Puzzle of U.S. Government Statistics**

Doug Way

Grand Valley State University Libraries



# Why Open the Box?

- Federal Government is one of the largest **producers** and **compilers** of statistics in the world
- The Federal Government is also often the ***only*** source of statistics on a topic
- The Federal Government makes its statistics freely available to the public  
*(most of the time...)*



# Before You Dump out the Pieces

- Three things to think about before you begin looking for government-produced statistics
  1. What kind of information am I looking for?
    - economic, demographic, education, health, etc.
    - When using government information you want to think agency, not subject
      - Often multiple agencies produce statistics on a topic



# Before You Dump out the Pieces

## Poverty in the United States



# Before You Dump out the Pieces

## Poverty in the United States

U.S. Census Bureau

**Poverty** powered by Google

[Poverty Main](#) [Overview](#) [Publications](#) [Definitions](#) [Thresholds](#) [Microdata Access](#) [Related Sites](#) [FAQ](#)

**[Overview](#)**  
Basic facts about poverty and how it is measured

**[What's New](#)**  
View the most recent reports, briefs, and data on poverty for the past 12 months

**[Publications](#)**  
View reports and briefs (short reports) on poverty

**[Definitions](#)**  
Find definitions to poverty-related terms

**[Poverty Thresholds](#)**  
Dollar amounts the Census Bureau uses to determine poverty status

**[Poverty Data Sources](#)**  
Description of poverty estimates from different

**Current Poverty Data**

- [Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2005](#)
- [Detailed Poverty Tables: 2005](#)
- [Historical Tables](#) (poverty over time)
- [Income, Earnings, and Poverty from the 2005 American Community Survey \(ACS-02\)](#)
- [Detailed Tables](#) from the American Community Survey
- [Areas with Concentrated Poverty: 1999](#) [PDF]

**Find Poverty Data by:**

**[Microdata Access](#)**  
Obtain data files to create your own tabulations

**[Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates](#)**  
Annual Estimates for State, Counties and School Districts

**[History of the Poverty Measure](#)**  
Documentation about how the official poverty measure was developed

**[Poverty Measurement Studies and Alternative Measures](#)**  
Research about how alternative methods of measuring poverty affect poverty data

**[Links to Related Sites](#)**  
Find other agencies or organizations that provide poverty data and information

**[Frequently Asked Questions](#)**  
Answers from the Census Bureau's Question and

# Before You Dump out the Pieces

## Poverty in the United States

The screenshot shows the CDC National Center for Health Statistics website. The main content area features a report titled "Health, United States, 2005" with a sub-section on "Poverty Status". A table lists various health topics, and a caption describes "Table 2. Persons and families below poverty level, According to selected characteristics, race, and Hispanic origin: United States, selected years 1973-2003". A sidebar on the left contains navigation links, and a search bar is located at the top right.

U.S. Census Bureau

CDC Home Search Health Topics A-Z

**cdc** National Center for Health Statistics ... Monitoring the Nation's Health

**Health, United States, 2005**  
with Chartbook on Trends in the Health of Americans  
With Special Feature on Adults 55-64 Years  
[NCHS Home](#) | [Health, United States, Home](#)  
[CDC/NCHS Privacy Policy Notice](#) | [Accessibility](#)  
[Search NCHS](#) | [NCHS Definitions](#) | [Contact us](#)

**Poverty Status**

<a href="#">Population</a>	<a href="#">Inpatient care</a>
<a href="#">Health status, risk factors, and chronic disease</a>	<a href="#">Health care coverage and Federal Programs</a>
<a href="#">Ambulatory Care</a>	

**Table 2.** Persons and families below poverty level, According to selected characteristics, race, and Hispanic origin: United States, selected years 1973-2003  
[View/download PDF](#)

**Figure 4.** Poverty by age: United States, 1966-2003  
[View/download PDF](#)

Search This Site

FAQ

... your own tabulations

[Poverty Estimates](#)  
... by State, Counties and School District

[Measure](#)  
... with the official poverty threshold

[Studies and Reports](#)  
... alternative methods of estimating poverty data

... organizations that provide information on poverty

[Questions and Answers](#)  
... Bureau's Question and Answer page

# Before You Dump out the Pieces

## Poverty in the United States

U.S. Census Bureau

CDC Home Search Health Topics A-Z

Search This Site



U.S. Department of Labor  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

www.bls.gov

Advanced Search | A-Z Index

BLS Home | Programs & Surveys | Get Detailed Statistics | Glossary | What's New | Find It! In DOL

The **Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)** program produces monthly and annual employment, unemployment, and labor force data for Census regions and divisions, States, counties, metropolitan areas, and many cities, by place of residence.

- General Overview
- Economic News Releases
- Special Notices
- Get Detailed LAUS Statistics
- Tables and Maps Created by BLS
- Publications and Other Documentation
- Related Links
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Contact Us

GENERAL OVERVIEW:

[Overview](#)

ECONOMIC NEWS RELEASES:

[Current](#)

- Regional and State Employment and Unemployment ([HTML](#))([PDF](#))
- Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment ([HTML](#))([PDF](#))
- Subscribe to the [BLS News Service](#)-- receive BLS economic news releases by e-mail.

### People Are Asking...

- Where can I get more information on the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on Local Area Unemployment Statistics?
- What changes were made to State and local area labor force estimates?
- Where can I find information on metropolitan areas, including recent changes?
- What areas have the highest or lowest unemployment rates?
- How can I apply for unemployment insurance?
- Where can I find out if my unemployment insurance benefits will be extended?
- Since you do not have the data I need, where can I get them?

Send us your question

### Regional Resources

Pick a state from the list

- About NCHS
- NCHS en Español
- FASTSTATS A to Z
- Help
- Events
- Surveys and Data Collection Systems
- NHANES
- NHCS
- NHIS
- NIS
- LSOAs
- NSFG
- SLAITS
- Vital Statistics
- Initiatives
- Aging
- Disease Classification
- Healthy People
- Injury
- Research and Development
- Research Data Center
- Press Room
- News Releases
- Publications and Information Products



### Population

[Health status, risk factors and chronic disease](#)

[Ambulatory Care](#)

Table 2. Persons and families selected characteristics selected years 1973-2000  
[View/download PDF](#)

Figure 4. Poverty by age  
[View/download PDF](#)



# Before You Dump out the Pieces

Institute of Education Sciences U.S. Department of Education

**ies** NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

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Publications & Products Surveys & Programs Data Tools Tables & Figures Fast Facts School, College, & Library Search Annual Reports What's New? Kids Site

Publications Last 90 Days | Data Products Last 6 Months | Subject Index A-Z | Survey & Program Areas | Data Licenses

**Title:** **School and Parent Interaction by Household Language and Poverty Status: 2002-03**

**Description:** Language minority parents may face a number of challenges when trying to communicate or become involved with their child's school. This Issue Brief describes school-to-home communication practices and opportunities for parent involvement at school as reported by parents of U.S. school-age students from primarily English- and primarily Spanish-speaking households during the 2002–03 school year. Data are drawn from the Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey of the 2003 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), which included English and Spanish language surveys of parents' perceptions of school communication practices and opportunities for parent involvement. Among the findings: A greater percentage of students in English-speaking households than in Spanish-speaking households had parents who reported receiving personal notes or e-mails about the student; receiving newsletters, memos, or notices addressed to all parents; opportunities to attend general meetings; opportunities to attend school events; and chances to volunteer. Differences were still apparent after taking poverty status into account.

**Online Availability:**

- [Download, view and print the report as a pdf file.](#) (178KB)
- [Download, view and print the standard errors as a pdf file.](#) (68KB)

[Need Help Viewing PDF files?](#)

**Cover Date:** September 2006

**Web Release:** September 27, 2006

**Print Release:** Currently only available online, print version forthcoming.

**Publication #:** NCES 2006086

Figure 4. Poverty by age  
View/download PDF

- Regional and State Employment and Unemployment (HTML)(PDF)
- Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment (HTML)(PDF)
- Subscribe to the **BLS News Service**-- receive BLS economic news releases by e-mail.

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**People Are Asking...**

- [Where can I get more information on the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on Local Area Unemployment Statistics?](#)
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- [Where can I find out if my unemployment insurance benefits will be extended?](#)
- [Where do you not have the data I need where can I get them?](#)

[Send us your question](#)

**Regional Resources**

Pick a state from the list

# Before You Dump out the Pieces

**USDA** United States Department of Agriculture  
**Food and Nutrition Service**

Home | About FNS | Newsroom | Help | Contact Us | En Español

You are here: Home > School Meals > National School Lunch Program

## National School Lunch Program

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946.

- **Program Fact Sheet**
- **Program History**
- **Program Eligibility**
  - Free and Reduced Price Application Materials
  - Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs)
  - Reimbursement Rates (NAPs)
- **School Food Safety**
  - Food Safety
  - Food Safety Resources
- **Guidance Materials**
  - Nutrient Analysis Protocols: How to Analyze Menus for USDA's School Meals Programs
  - The Road to SMI Success: A Guide for School Foodservice Directors-Provides guidance on successfully implementing SMI
  - Menu Planning
  - Child Nutrition Labeling

**Hurricane Katrina Relief**

- **Second Extension of Waivers Due to Emergency Conditions Caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita**
- **Extension of School Meals Related Provisions**
- **Extension of 30 Day Limit for Initial Carry-over of Previous Year's Eligibility**
- **Verification Procedures & Hurricane Katrina**
- **Emergency Feeding of School Children**

**See Also**

- **What's New**
- **Guidance Materials**
- **Regulations**

Web Release: September 27, 2006  
 Print Release: Currently only available online, print version forthcoming.  
 Publication #: NCS 2006086

Figure 4. Poverty by age  
[View/download PDF](#)

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- Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment ([HTML](#))([PDF](#))
- Subscribe to the **BLS News Service**-- receive BLS economic news releases by e-mail.

### Regional Resources

Pick a state from the list



# Before You Dump out the Pieces

- Three things to think about...
  2. What format might I find this information in?
    - Will it be online? Often pre-1990s information cannot be found online.
      - Not always the case
      - <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1790.htm>



# Before You Dump out the Pieces

- Three things to think about...
  3. What level of geography am I looking for information on?
    - State, metropolitan area, city, place, etc.



# Looking for Corner Pieces

- Top Statistical Resources
  - Statistical Abstract of the United States
    - ***THE*** first place go for statistical information
    - Statistics from government and private sources
    - Almost every edition is available online
      - <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS2878>
      - Paper is easier to use
  - Related Publications
    - State and Metropolitan Area Data Book
    - County and City Data Book



# Looking for Corner Pieces

- Top Statistical Resources
  - FedStats.gov - [www.fedstats.gov](http://www.fedstats.gov)
    - Inter-agency portal for statistical information
    - Browse by topic
    - Browse by state
    - Search across agencies



# Filling in the Edges

- Major Statistical Reference Sources
  - Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970
    - <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS55561> (part 1)
    - <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS55811> (part 2)
  - Digest of Education Statistics
    - <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS6878>
  - Health, United States
    - <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS2649>



# Filling in the Edges

- Major Statistical Reference Sources
  - Uniform Crime Reports
    - <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS3082>
  - Yearbook of Immigration Statistics
    - <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS40400>
  - Agricultural Statistics
    - <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS1063>





# Filling in the Edges

- Major Online Resources for Demographic Information
  - American FactFinder
    - <http://factfinder.census.gov>
  - State and County Quick Facts
    - <http://quickfacts.census.gov>



# Looking Under the Table

Any Questions?