



Inside Track

Majority of Kids Under 18 Live in Welfare Homes

CNS reported August 22 that, according to the Census Bureau's latest data on poverty and government assistance, "Americans under 18 years of age [are] growing up in a country where the majority of their peers live in households that take 'means-tested assistance' from the government."

In 2016, CNS noted, the population of Americans under 18 was about 73.6 million. Some 38.4 million of them, or 52.1 percent, lived in homes in which someone received welfare: i.e., "benefits from a means-tested program."

Continued CNS, "These included the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps), Medicaid, public housing, Supplemental Security Income, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the National School Lunch Program."

And of the total population, 319.9 million Americans, 114.8 million, or about 36 percent, lived in a home in which someone collected welfare.

But even worse is this: If you're under 18, you're probably living in a home that collects some form of taxpayer-financed largesse. "When examined by age bracket, persons under 18 were the most likely to live in a household receiving means-tested government assistance (52.1 percent), while those 75 and older were least likely (18.8 percent)."

Stable families are less likely to live on the dole: "The Census Bureau data indicate that people living in intact families are less likely to be on government assistance than people living in broken families. Nonetheless, the government-dependency rate is still high for intact families that have children under 18."

A broken home usually meant the family was on welfare, CNS reported. Of the kids under 18 where "a male householder was living without a spouse," almost 65 percent were in households that received welfare. The figure was 78 percent where the mother was in charge. And for kids under age six in that latter situation, almost 82 percent were in a home getting assistance.

Stable families and a strong culture will mean fewer Americans on welfare.

Trump Tariffs Good Business for U.S. Steel and Century Aluminum

On August 16, U.S. Steel announced that it would be investing a minimum of \$750 million to modernize and enhance its 110-year-old flagship plant in Gary, Indiana.

"There are no committed new jobs at this point, but the project will retain the more than 3,800 jobs in Gary," Abby Gras, a spokesperson for the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, told the *Chicago Tribune* August 16.

The 3,800 jobs in the Gary plant will be protected as a result of the new investment that comes in the wake of the Trump administration's tariffs on steel imports.



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Back on March 1, President Trump announced a 25-percent tariff on foreign-made steel and aluminum. U.S. Steel President and CEO David Burritt attributed the good news to President Trump's trade and tariffs policies, stating, "We are experiencing a renaissance at U.S. Steel." According to Burritt, the \$750 million investment will improve the environmental performance of their Gary plant and bolster the company's competitiveness.

The increased productivity from American steel plants and manufacturers, such as U.S. Steel, will help reduce America's reliance on foreign subsidized steel imports, much to the benefit of both U.S. national security and American workers.

In addition to the steel industry, another winner in Trump's trade and tariff policies is American-made aluminum. On August 22, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin celebrated the expansion of an aluminum mill in Hawesville, Kentucky. "We have all of the ingredients to succeed and all we needed was the fairly-traded market," said Jesse Gary, the executive vice president of Century Aluminum, who owns the Hawesville mill, the largest producer of aluminum in the United States.

He also credited the Trump tariffs for allowing Century Aluminum to revitalize a derelict part of their mill. "That gave us the fairly-traded environment we needed in order to restart those lines and so it's as a direct result of that," Gary said.

U.S. Steel's new \$750 million investment to revitalize its Gary plant and Century Aluminum's expansion to its Hawesville mill offer a positive outlook for America's future.

New Florida Law: "In God We Trust" Must Be Placed in All Public Schools

Public schools in Florida must now display the state motto "In God We Trust," per provisions of a state law passed in March and now brought to full effect with the opening of the new academic year.

Title XLVIII, Chapter 1003 of the state law has been amended to read: "Each district school board shall adopt rules to require, in all of the schools of the district and in each building used by the district school board, the display of the [Florida state] motto, 'In God We Trust' ... in a conspicuous place."

Local media reports that the state government has in at least a few cases e-mailed signs with the motto printed on them for use by the school districts in their schools and other district buildings. Other school districts around the state report having been given signs bearing the legally required motto.

In a statement regarding the recently enacted law, the Freedom From Religion Foundation called the Constitution as a witness for its claims: "These godly postings exclude and alienate the one-in-five students in our public schools who do not believe in god. And they're meant to," the foundation's statement reads. "These laws are not about patriotism, they're about turning believers into insiders, and nonbelievers into outsiders. There's nothing patriotic in undermining our nation's secular Constitution."

Most of the opposition to posting the motto in public-school buildings has invoked the First Amendment, specifically that amendment's provision prohibiting the establishment of religion. But the First Amendment most certainly does not prohibit the state of Florida from requiring schools to post a plaque reading "In God We Trust."



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The First Amendment reads, in relevant part, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.” This language not only keeps Congress out of the business of establishing a national religion, but it places a wall of separation, if you will, between the states and their establishment of religion and the interference of the federal government.

Teens Spend More Time on Digital Media, Less Time Reading

StudyFinds.org reported August 27 that San Diego State University researchers analyzed four decades of data obtained from an ongoing national lifestyle survey that studies the daily habits of more than a million adolescents.

The data revealed a number of troubling findings, including the fact that one-third of American teenagers have not read a single book in the last year. Furthermore, while one-third of 10th graders read the daily newspaper in the 1990s, according to past findings, just two percent reported doing the same thing in 2016. Likewise, while 60 percent of 12th graders read a book or magazine nearly daily in the late 1970s, only 16 percent reported doing so in 2016.

“The meteoric rise of internet-based activities cannot be understated: between social media, texting, gaming, and surfing the web, the average high school senior spent six hours a day online in 2016 — double the time from a decade earlier. Eighth graders (4 hours a day) and tenth graders (5 hours a day) didn’t lag far behind,” the report finds.

Time on social media, and time online in general, has increased significantly. The average 12th grader in 2016 spent twice as much time online as in 2006. Social media has dominated the attention of American teens, with 82 percent visiting social-media sites nearly daily in 2016, versus approximately 50 percent in 2008.

Jean Twenge, the study’s lead author, suggests that today’s teens are no less curious or intelligent than those of previous generations. Instead, she contends, they simply do not have experience reading and analyzing long-form texts.

She claims that this is problematic, as delving into those texts is vital for developing critical thinking skills. “Think about how difficult it must be to read even five pages of an 800-page college textbook when you’ve been used to spending most of your time switching between one digital activity and another in a matter of seconds,” she notes.

Twenge also contends that the absence of critical thinking among this generation of teens is sure to make a difference when these teens are of voting age.



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