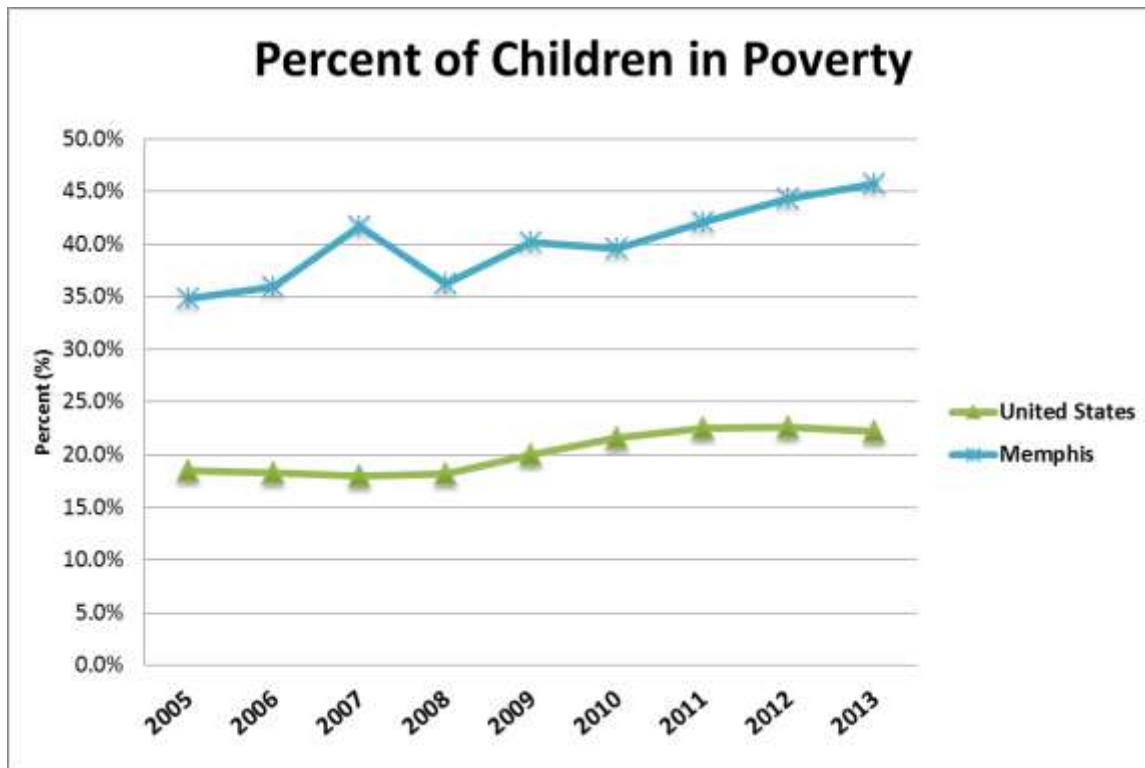


Memphis Child Poverty: A Brutal Contrast

2013 brought the welcome news that child poverty had started to retreat. Memphis, on the contrary and bucking all national trends, saw child poverty rise dramatically. A comparison of child poverty in Memphis and the rest of the nation highlights the severity of this problem.



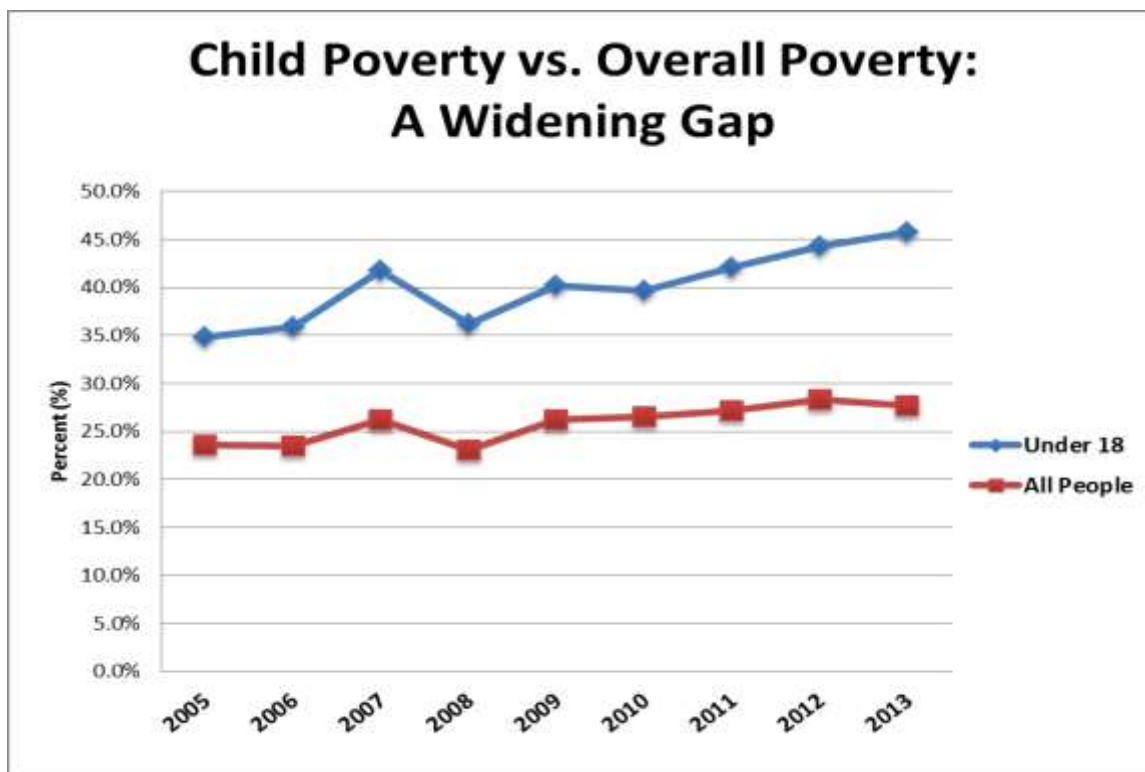
2013 Elena Delavega from Census Data.

Memphis: Number One in Poverty

Memphis is again in 2013 ranked first in overall poverty and in child poverty. However, while overall poverty decreased slightly from 28.3% to 27.7%, the child poverty rates *increased* from 44.3% to 45.7%.

Bucking the Trend: Resistant Poverty

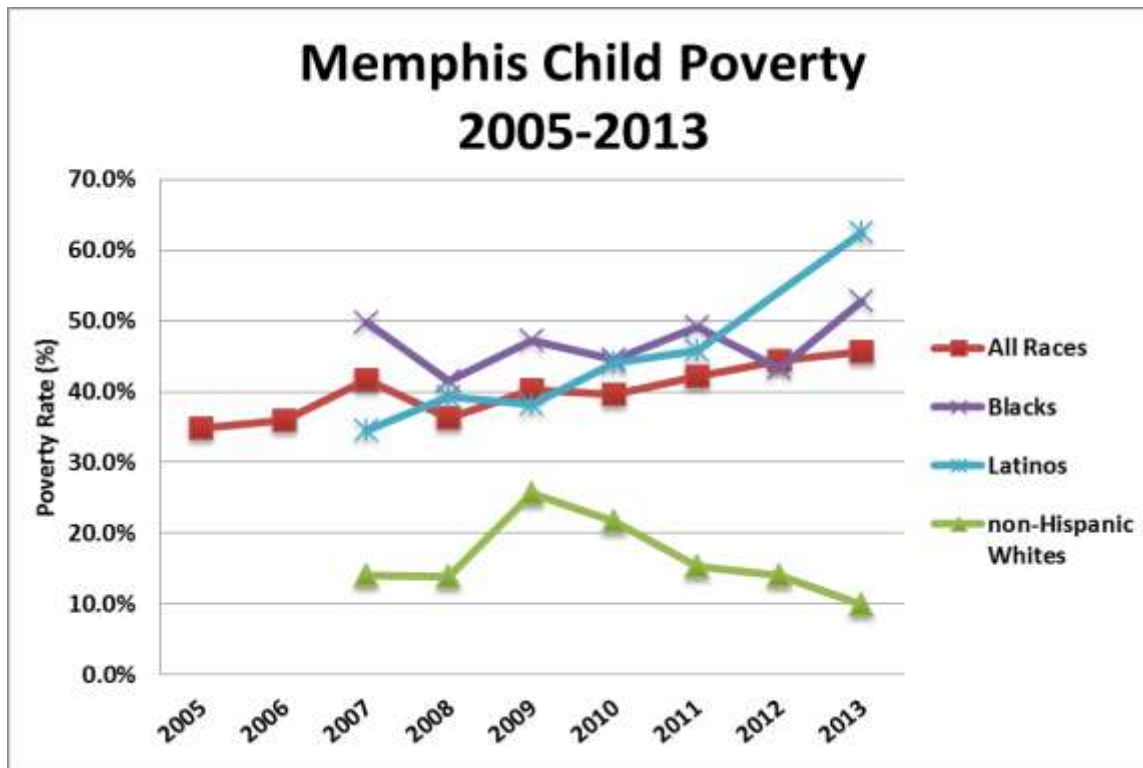
Memphis appears to have the most resistant child poverty in the United States. While poverty rates overall have decreased or remained the same in Memphis, poverty rates for children have increased. There are a lot of poor people in Memphis, but the majority of those remaining poor tend to be children. This is very troubling since children are not responsible for their poverty. A city in which poverty rates affect children disproportionately cannot escape an image of brutality and cruelty.



2013 Elena Delavega from Census Data.

Children of Color

Not only there is a gap between everybody else and children. Children of color are disproportionately affected by poverty. Currently, the poverty rate for non-Hispanic White children in Memphis is 9.9%, while the poverty rate is 52.8% for Black children and 62.5% for Hispanic children.



2013 Elena Delavega from Census Data.

Child poverty among non-Hispanic White children has decreased dramatically since 2009, while minority poverty has increased in almost 50% since 2008. The contrast is so stark as to be brutal. Clearly, can protect our vulnerable children. Is this evidence that we are simply choosing to abandon some children?

The Department of Social Work in the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Memphis is dedicated to understanding poverty and its causes through research and engaged scholarship. Our purpose is to identify the most effective ways to eliminate poverty and promote social and economic development for our region. If you would like more information on Memphis poverty, please contact Dr. Elena Delavega at mdlavega@memphis.edu

Sources:

Data obtained from the US Bureau of the Census, September 18, 2014

All Data except Latino (Hispanic): 2012 and 2013 ACS 1-Y Estimates (Table S1701: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months); 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2009, 2011, & 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (US Bureau of the Census)

Latino (Hispanic) Data: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, & 2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (US Bureau of the Census).