**10 Poverty Myths, Busted**

*No, single moms aren't the problem. And neither are absentee dads.*

By [Erika Eichelberger](http://www.motherjones.com/authors/erika-eichelberger) | Tue Mar. 25, 2014 5:00 AM EDT

**Social Title:**

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**1. Single moms are the problem.**Only 9 percent of low-income, urban moms have been single throughout their child's first five years. Thirty-five percent were married to, or in a relationship with, the child's father for that entire time.\*

**2. Absent dads are the problem.**Sixty percent of low-income dads see at least one of their children daily. Another 16 percent see their children weekly.\*

**3. Black dads are the problem.**Among men who don't live with their children, [black fathers are more likely](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr071.pdf) [1] than white or Hispanic dads to have a daily presence in their kids' lives.

**4. Poor people are lazy.**In 2004, there was at least one adult with a job in [60 percent of families](http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=3894#_ftn3) [2] on food stamps that had both kids and a nondisabled, working-age adult.

**5. If you're not officially poor, you're doing okay.**The federal poverty line for a family of two parents and two children in 2012 was [$23,283](http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/13poverty.cfm) [3]. Basic needs cost [at least twice that](http://www.epi.org/resources/budget/) [4] in 615 of America's cities and regions.

**6. Go to college, get out of poverty.**In 2012, about 1.1 million people who made less than $25,000 a year, worked full time, and were heads of household had a bachelor's degree.\*\*

**7. We're winning the war on poverty.**The number of households with children living on less than $2 a day per person has [grown 160 percent](http://www.npc.umich.edu/publications/policy_briefs/brief28/policybrief28.pdf)[5]since 1996, to 1.65 million families in 2011.

**8. The days of old ladies eating cat food are over.**The share of elderly single women living in extreme poverty [jumped 31 percent](http://www.nwlc.org/resource/insecure-unequal-poverty-among-women-and-families-2000-2012) [6] from 2011 to 2012.

**9. The homeless are drunk street people.**[One in 45 kids](http://www.familyhomelessness.org/children.php?p=ts) [7] in the United States experiences homelessness each year. In New York City alone, [22,000 children are homeless](http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/pages/basic-facts) [8].

**10. Handouts are bankrupting us.** In 2012, [total welfare funding](http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=3808) [9] was 0.47 percent of the [federal budget](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/search/pagedetails.action?packageId=BUDGET-2013-BUD) [10].

\*Source: Analysis by Dr. Laura Tach at Cornell University.

\*\*Source: Census

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[1] http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr071.pdf  
[2] http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&amp;id=3894#\_ftn3  
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