



# YOUNG CHILDREN THRIVE WHEN HOUSEHOLD ENERGY NEEDS ARE MET

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## Protect Children’s Health – Support the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)



**382,591** Michigan households served by LIHEAP in budget year 2018\*

**25%** Share of Michigan LIHEAP families that include a young child

**\$1,078,631** LIHEAP funding available to tribes in Michigan in budget year 2018

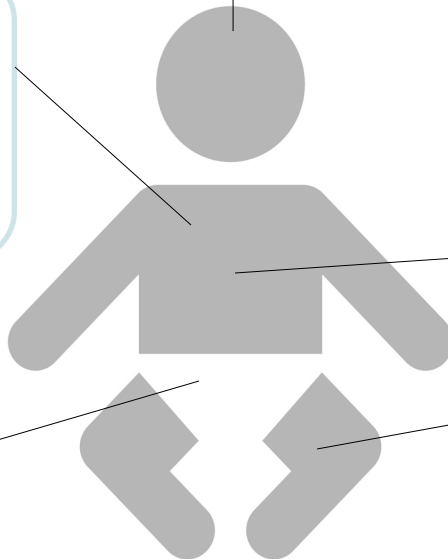
**-\$123,720,021** Cut in total Michigan LIHEAP funding from 2010 to 2018

\* Does not include households receiving LIHEAP through a tribal grantee; that number is unavailable.  
Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

**The early years are critical for brain development.**  
Meeting children’s basic needs promotes the emotional and cognitive development necessary for success in school and later in life.

**Asthma is the most common chronic health reason children miss school.**  
Energy powers heating and cooling systems that reduce asthma triggers and medical equipment that helps control asthma.

**Energy is essential to hygiene and health.** Without adequate lighting, it’s hard to provide nighttime child care such as changing diapers and administering medicine.



**Energy insecurity is food insecurity.** During the winter, families with low incomes reduce their calorie intake in response to increased heating bills.

**Residential energy security is crucial to growth.** When their homes aren’t warm enough, babies must direct calories toward keeping warm rather than growing. LIHEAP is linked to improved nutrition, which promotes growth, and fewer hospitalizations for young children in families with low incomes.

### Quick Facts

- ▶ Children under 5 face an increased risk of heat- and cold-related mortality.
- ▶ Unaffordable energy bills are a source of toxic stress for parents and other caregivers.
- ▶ Utility shutoffs can trigger eviction or the loss of housing assistance and may lead to homelessness.

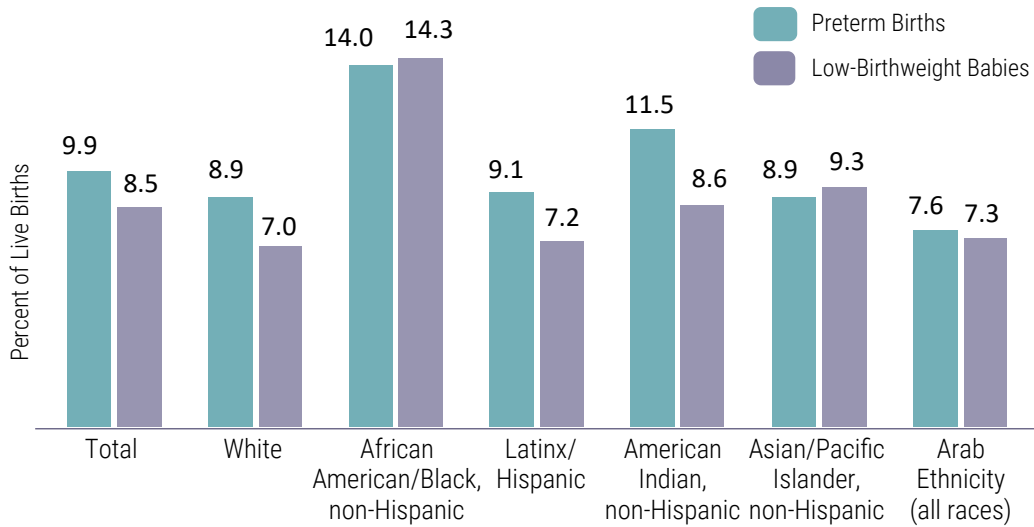
Sources: Bhattacharya et al. Heat or Eat? Cold Weather Shocks and Nutrition in Poor American Families; Berkowitz et al. Heat or Eat: The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and Nutritional and Health Risks Among Children Less than 3 Years of Age; Maayan Yakir and Mary Smyth, M.D., Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine

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## Burdensome Energy Bills Compound Racial Health Disparities

Due to systemic challenges to maternal health, including barriers to prenatal care, babies of color are more likely to be born facing health challenges themselves. Household energy security is especially important to protect these infants from the potentially lifelong health and education impacts of unhealthy temperatures and poor indoor air quality.

Michigan Birth Outcomes by Race and Ethnicity

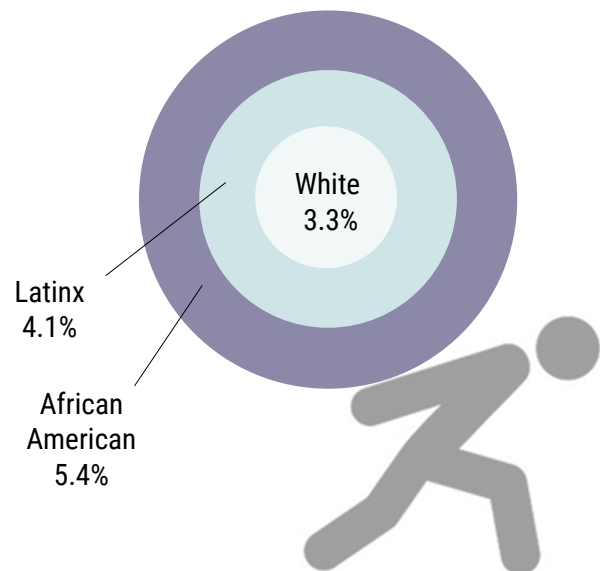


Source: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, 2014-2016

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A long history of discrimination in housing policy and the real estate and lending industries has disproportionately forced families of color into older, low-quality homes, which are often energy inefficient. At the same time, inequities in health, education and employment have led to lower incomes for these households. As a result, they face a greater energy burden (the share of income spent on energy bills) than White families. By making heat and electricity more affordable, services like LIHEAP promote health, growth and development during the critical early years so all children have the chance to achieve their full potential.

Share of Household Income Spent on Energy in U.S. Largest Metro Areas, by Race and Ethnicity



Source: American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy and Michigan Energy Efficiency for All

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**Protect LIHEAP to protect children's futures!**