



Child Poverty and Inequality: Securing a Better Future for Americas Children

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One of the United States great promises is that all children will be given the opportunity to work to achieve a comfortable standard of living. That promise has faded profoundly for children who grow up in poverty, particularly black and Hispanic children, and many of the deepening fault lines in the social order are traceable to this disparity. In recent years the promise has also begun to fade for children of the middle class. Education and hard work, once steady paths to economic success, no longer lead as far as they once did. But that doesnt have to be the case, as Duncan Lindsey shows in this articulate, impassioned volume. We can provide true opportunity to all children, insuring them against a lifetime of inequality, and when we do, the walls dividing the country by race, ethnicity, and wealth will begin to crumble. Long a voice for combating child poverty, Lindsey takes a balanced approach that begins with a history of economic and family policy from the Great Depression and the development of Social Security and moves onward. He details the shocking extent of economic inequality in the U.S., pointing out that this wealthiest of countries also has the largest proportion of children living in poverty. Calling for reform, Lindsey proposes several viable universal income security policies for vulnerable children and families, strategies that have worked in other advanced democracies and also respect the importance of the market economy. They aim not just to reduce child poverty, but also to give all children meaningful economic opportunity. Just as Social Security alleviates the sting of poverty in old age, asset-building policies can insulate children from the cumulative effects of disadvantage and provide them with a strong foundation from which to soar. Politicians, pundits, and parents always say that children are the future, but as long as so many grow up poor or without opportunity, that slogan will sound hollow. Duncan Lindseys book should be read by anyone who wants to know how we can take real action to brighten the future for children and for society as a whole.

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