Some 475,000 Minors in Puerto Rico Live in Poverty

08/09/2015

Seven of the 16 indicators measured by the Kids Count Data Book worsened for Puerto Rico in comparison with five years ago, IDJ executive director Xiomara Caro said.

“In many of these indicators, especially in those in the economic well-being category, we’re worse than Mississippi, which is the poorest state in the United States,” said Caro regarding the study, which revealed that 83 percent of the children in Puerto Rico live in zones of high poverty.

“This panorama reflects that children ... are growing up in a environment where economic insecurity is at alarming levels,” said Caro about the figures that also show that the parents of 60 percent of Puerto Rican youngsters do not have stable jobs.

The investigation also found that 57 percent of the island’s children and young people live in single-parent households, of whom 82 percent are headed by women, and also that 47 percent of the grandparents living with their minor grandchildren are in charge of their basic needs.

The study also notes that poverty in Puerto Rico, with a population of roughly 3.5 million, has remained constant over the past five years, at 56-57 percent.

Of the educational indicators reflected in the study, 38 percent of teenagers do not finish high school and 45 percent, or 39,000 children, do not attend preschool.

“As an organization, we’re focused on bringing children and young people out of the shadows

and being a platform for releasing statistics that will allow us to create strategies, mobilize other organizations and communities to create public policies that generate changes benefitting the development and conditions of this population," Caro said.