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Children shouldn't be poor

A new report shows that one in six Oregon children live in poverty, defined as an income of \$1,157 a month for a family of three.

Can you imagine giving your child a modicum of what childhood memories are made of — family outings to the zoo, a bike to ride up and down the sidewalk or an afternoon at the movies — on that income?

The report, from Children First for Oregon, says a third of the children in the state are born to single moms. One in five is born to a mom with less than 12 years of education — meaning that the prospects for a decent family income aren't bright. Worst of all, one in six of our children has seen domestic violence at home in the last year.

The answers come from all quarters — personal, private charities,

and government. Head Start has done a wonderful job over the years to help enrich the lives of poor children. It's outrageous that only about half of those who qualify are served by the program.

Let's make sure that there is plenty of support for women trapped in abusive relationships.

Let's encourage our teenage girls — through the schools, through churches, and in person — to wait to have babies, until they're older, married and able to care for a child.

And let's reach out to all children, volunteering in the schools, giving a kind word to an overwhelmed mom at the grocery, and inviting them to come to Mass on Sunday.

These children aren't someone else's problem. They are our family.