Wisconsin

Income Inequality Grew in Wisconsin Over the Past Two Decades

Wisconsin’s Richest Families vs. Poorest Families

- The richest 20 percent of families have average incomes 6.0 times as large as the poorest 20 percent of families.
- This ratio was 4.7 in the late 1980s.
- This growth in income inequality is the 23rd largest in the nation.
- The very richest families — top 5% — have average incomes 9.9 times as large as the poorest 20 percent of families.

Wisconsin’s Richest Families vs. Families in the Middle

- The richest 20 percent of families have average incomes 2.3 times as large as the middle 20 percent of families.
- This ratio was 1.9 in the late 1980s.
- This growth in income inequality is the 26th largest in the nation.

Gains for Rich Families Outpace Gains for Poor Families

Between the late 1980s and the mid-2000s:

- The average income of the poorest fifth of families did not change significantly.
- The average income of the middle fifth of families increased by $6,583, from $46,706 to $53,288. This is an increase of $387 per year.
- The average income of the richest fifth of families increased by $31,600, from $88,840 to $120,440. This is an increase of $1,859 per year.

Based on the latest available data (2004-2006)
Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and Economic Policy Institute
Pulling Apart: A State By State Analysis of Income Trends
Available at: http://www.cbpp.org/4-9-08sfp.htm