

TABLE 2a.—*Nonwhite poor: Relative importance of age groups among all poor and nonwhite poor*

Age group	Millions of poor persons	Nonwhite poor persons		
		Millions of persons	As percentages—	
			Of all poor this age	Of all non-white poor
All ages.....	34.3	10.6	30.9	100.0
Children.....	13.9	5.4	38.8	50.9
Under 6.....	5.8	2.3	39.7	21.7
6 to 15.....	8.1	3.1	38.3	29.2
Youths, 16 to 21.....	3.0	.9	30.0	8.5
Adults, 22 to 64.....	12.0	3.5	29.2	33.0
22 to 54.....	9.3	2.9	31.2	27.4
55 to 64.....	2.7	.6	22.2	5.6
Aged, over 64.....	5.4	.8	14.8	7.6

WHO ARE THE POOR?

The current programs and planning of the Office are based mainly on a few fundamental relationships of family income, expenditure, size, composition, and location. These are described in detail in two articles by Miss Mollie Orshansky in the Social Security Bulletin for January and July 1965.¹

The primary assumptions in this framework are:

1. That at the lowest income levels, characteristic of "poverty," about one-third of expenditure is for food;

2. That all income must be expended, so that cash income from all sources (including welfare assistance), measurable from year to year, may be used as a surrogate for expenditure;

3. That the food required for a minimum subsistence diet for each family type (one adult, male; one adult, female; etc.) may be priced, using the recurrent, nationwide price reports of the Department of Agriculture for this "market basket," and then converted (by multiplying by 3) to the total cash expenditure requirement of the family type. Any family having a lower cash income than the computed expansion must then perforce be "poor."

4. That on average the food and other outlays of low-income farm families involve total cash expenditures approximating only 70 percent of those by similar nonfarm families. (This excludes from "poverty" a number of farm families whose cash incomes are below the poverty threshold for nonfarm family incomes.)

The foregoing assumptions result in 62 nonfarm and 62 farm poverty thresholds which may be summarized in 26 income thresholds approximating most of the family conditions encountered:²

¹ The relationships themselves were developed from 1955 and 1959-61 expenditure surveys by the Department of Labor and the Department of Agriculture.

² It should be noted that all tabulations of 1964 incomes, as collected by census, used the full range of 124 values to classify incomes as being above or below poverty. This abbreviated series is presented here because it is useful for general discussion and analysis.