Income Inequality Grew in Maine Over the Past Two Decades

Maine’s Richest Families vs. Poorest Families

- The richest 20 percent of families have average incomes 6.3 times as large as the poorest 20 percent of families.
- This ratio was 5.4 in the late 1980s.
- This growth in income inequality is the 34th 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.

Maine’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 2.1 in the late 1980s.

Gains for Rich Families Outpaced Gains for Poor Families

Between the late 1980s and the mid-2000s:
- The average income of the poorest fifth of families increased by $1,872, from $16,430 to $18,302. This is an increase of $110 per year.
- The average income of the middle fifth of families increased by $6,927, from $42,624 to $49,551. This is an increase of $407 per year.
- The average income of the richest fifth of families increased by $26,391, from $89,329 to $115,720. This is an increase of $1,552 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