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27 Signs That The Standard Of Living For America's Middle Class Is Dropping Like A Rock

Posted By [admin](#) On October 7, 2010 @ 3:54 am In [Commentary](#) | [2 Comments](#)

[The Economic Collapse](#) ^[1]

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If you still have a job and you can put food on the table and you still have a warm house to come home to, then you should consider yourself to be very fortunate. The truth is that every single month hundreds of thousands more Americans fall out of the middle class and into poverty. The statistics that you are about to read are incredibly sobering. Household incomes are down from coast to coast. Enrollment in government anti-poverty programs sets new records month after month after month. Home ownership is down, personal bankruptcies are way up and there are not nearly enough jobs to go around. Meanwhile, the price of basics such as food and health care continue to skyrocket. Don't be fooled by a rising stock market or by record bonuses on Wall Street. The U.S. economy is not getting better. After World War II, the great American economic machine built the largest and most vigorous middle class in the history of the world, but now America's middle class is disintegrating at a blinding pace.

Most of those who write about the plight of the American middle class believe that things can be turned around and that the middle class will eventually be stronger than it ever has been. But unfortunately, that is just not the case. As a society, we have lived far, far beyond our means for decades. Now the bills are coming due and none of our leaders seem to know what to do.

Meanwhile, the U.S. economy is being rapidly assimilated into the emerging one world economy. Middle class American workers now find themselves in direct competition for jobs with the cheapest labor on the other side of the globe. Of course many multinational corporations have taken advantage of this by moving factories and jobs to countries like China where blue collar workers make about a dollar an hour. This has helped raise the standard of living for workers in those nations by a nominal amount, but it has been absolutely devastating for the standard of living of America's middle class.

So what does all of this mean?

It means that the U.S. economy is headed for collapse and middle class Americans are in for some really, really hard times.

[Having A Supply Of Healthy Foods That Last Just Makes Sense \(AD\)](#) ^[2]



The following are 27 signs that the standard of living for America's middle class is dropping like a rock....

#1 Household spending for the middle fifth of all U.S. income earners [was down 3.5%](#) ^[4] in 2009. That was the steepest one year decline since records began being kept back in 1984.

#2 Median household income in the United States fell from \$51,726 in 2008 [to \\$50,221](#) ^[5] in 2009.

#3 According to one new report, in 2009 residents of New York state experienced their first full-year decline in income [in more than 70 years](#) ^[6].

#4 Of the 52 largest metro areas in the United States, [only the city of San Antonio](#) ^[7] did not see a decline in median household income in 2009.

#5 Home ownership in the United States declined [for the third year in a row](#) ^[8] in 2009.

#6 In 2009, [approximately 4 million Americans](#) ^[9] fell out of the middle class and now live below the federal poverty line.

#7 The number of Americans enrolled in the food stamp program has set a new all-time record [for 20 consecutive months](#) ^[10].

#8 In July (the last month for which data is available), [41.8 million Americans](#) ^[10] were on food stamps.

#9 The number of Americans in the food stamp program [skyrocketed more than 55 percent](#) ^[11] between December 2007 and July 2010.

#10 In 2009, [more than 48 million Americans](#) ^[9] were enrolled in the Medicaid program.

#11 [One out of every six Americans](#) ^[12] is now enrolled in at least one anti-poverty program run by the U.S. government.

#12 According to one recent study, approximately 21 percent of all children in the United States [are living below the poverty line in 2010](#) ^[13].

#13 According to the Cato Institute, anti-poverty spending by the U.S. government [has](#)

[increased 89 percent](#) ^[14] over the past decade.

#14 The cost of health care increased [a staggering 9.6%](#) ^[4] for all U.S. households from 2007 to 2009.

#15 It turns out that [only the top 5 percent](#) ^[15] of all U.S. households have earned enough additional income to match the rise in housing costs since 1975.

#16 35 percent of all U.S. households now live [on \\$35,000 or less](#) ^[5].

#17 New York state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli says that Wall Street bonuses for 2009 [were up 17 percent](#) ^[16] when compared with 2008.

#18 [According to a poll taken in 2009](#) ^[17], 61 percent of Americans "always or usually" live paycheck to paycheck. That was up substantially from 49 percent in 2008 and 43 percent in 2007.

#19 Today, [28% of all American households](#) ^[18] have at least one member that is searching for a full-time job.

#20 Nearly 10 million Americans now receive unemployment insurance, which [is almost four times](#) ^[12] as many that were receiving it back in 2007.

#21 [A recent Pew Research survey](#) ^[19] found that 55 percent of the U.S. labor force has experienced either unemployment, a pay decrease, a reduction in hours or an involuntary move to part-time work since the recession began.

#22 In 2009, 43.6 million Americans were living in poverty. Sadly, the number of Americans living in poverty has increased for three consecutive years, and the 43.6 million poor Americans in 2009 was the highest number that the U.S. Census Bureau has ever recorded [in 51 years of record-keeping](#) ^[20].

#23 A staggering 25 percent of all American adults [now have a credit score below 599](#) ^[21].

#24 It is estimated that nearly a third of all Americans [cannot qualify for a mortgage](#) ^[22] because of low credit scores.

#25 For the first time in U.S. history, [banks own a greater share of residential housing net worth in the United States](#) ^[23] than all American households put together.

#26 Over 1.4 million Americans filed for personal bankruptcy in 2009, which represented [a stunning 32 percent increase over 2008](#) ^[24].

#27 According to a new report by the U.S. Census Bureau, the bottom fifth of all U.S. income earners brought in [just 3.4 percent](#) ^[25] of all income in 2009 while the top fifth brought in a whopping 49.4 percent of all income.

So is there any hope that things will turn around soon?

No, not really.

At this point, even some of the top economic authorities in the nation are admitting that we are

headed for very difficult times.

Goldman Sachs recently announced that the U.S. economy is likely to be either "fairly bad" or "very bad" [over the next 6 to 9 months](#) [26].

Not only that, but Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke now says that the U.S. economy is in a situation that is dire and "[unsustainable](#)" [27].

Not that Goldman Sachs or Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke should be trusted when it comes to the economy.

When it comes to the problems we are facing, the truth can be found in the long-term trends. If you have not done so already, please read "[11 Long-Term Trends That Are Absolutely Destroying The U.S. Economy](#)" [28]. It will open your eyes to the true horrors that our economy is now facing.

But statistics alone do not tell the real story.

Sometimes what gets lost in the endless economic statistics is the very real pain of the millions of Americans who are trying to live through this. The following story [from the Unemployed Friends website](#) [29] is from a woman named Leetah who is desperately hoping to be able to get through this upcoming winter....

The place I live in right now has no jobs and no places to live. My fiance, Lloyd, and I have been looking for anything but he lost his job from McDonald's and the factories (the only jobs to make a living off of) consider him an insurance liability. I can't get hired to a factory because of I was fired from our major factory for attendance (I had to miss 3 days of work because I was sick). So we are moving to the Edmond/OKC region where we are hoping to find a job and a place with running water and heating. We've spent the last few years without heat and running water and so having a place with water and heat would be heaven.

Winter is coming up fast and I am so afraid. Last winter we almost died from the cold and now the thought of cold makes my throat close up and my heart pound. But it isn't just ourselves we are looking out for, we have our dog too. Our wonderful APBT Maggie who is 2-years-old and has been with us since she was 5-months-old. She's our baby girl and we can't lose her. We almost lost her to the cold too and it scared me so much. We are going to be living in our car soon with our dog.

I am hoping to be able to keep our food stamps in the new city so we can still eat. I have already applied for ten+ jobs and nothing yet but I am keeping my hopes up. Hopefully it will get easier to find a job once we get there. Then we just have to save up and then we can afford an apartment. Now finding an apartment with my awesome dog is another story.

Please say a prayer for those who are out of work and on the verge of being forced out on the street.

You never know, you might be next.

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URLs in this post:

- [1] The Economic Collapse: <http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/>
- [2] **Having A Supply Of Healthy Foods That Last Just Makes Sense (AD):** <http://www.efoodsdirect.com//index.html?aid=14&adid=43>
- [3] Image: http://www.infowarsshop.com/United-We-Fall_p_339.html
- [4] was down 3.5%: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703298504575534341401915382.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLETopStories
- [5] to \$50,221: <http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/the-proof-is-in-the-numbers-america-is-getting-poorer>
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