

Translating Good Research Into Good Policy: The William T. Grant Foundation

December 15, 2020

The Campaign for
**GRADE-LEVEL
READING**

Presenters



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**Supporting
Research to
Improve the Lives
of Young People**

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 **William T. Grant
FOUNDATION**



1930's

1940's

1950's

1960's

1970's

1980's

1990's

2000's

2010's



④ **Founded in 1936**

④ **Committed to understanding human behavior through research.**

④ **The most pressing challenges confronting young people change over time.**

④ **Young people ages 5-25 in the U.S.**

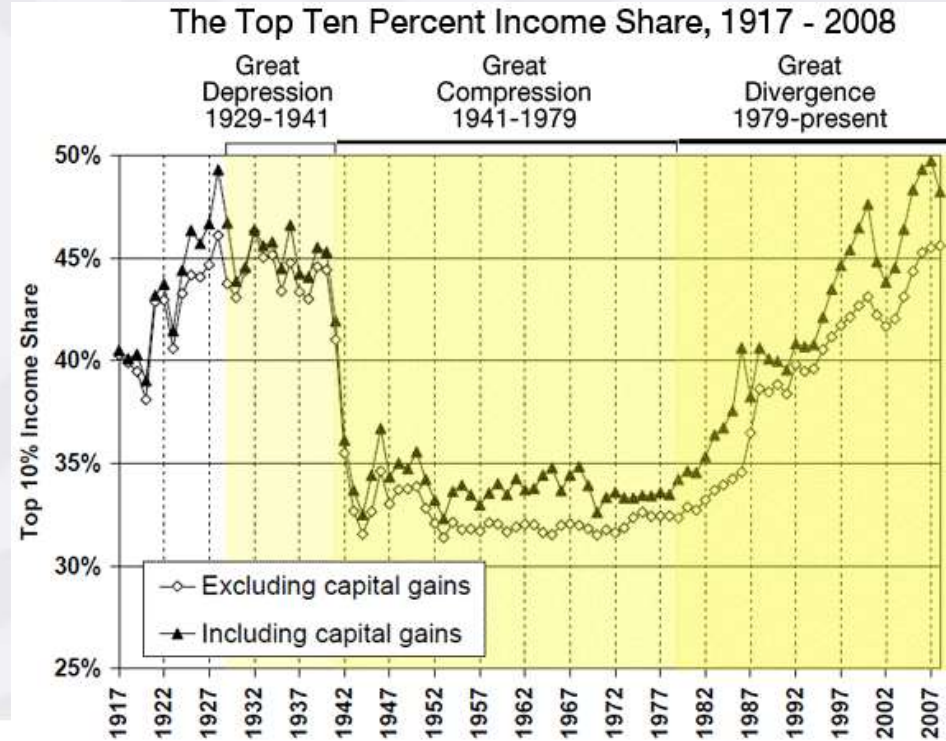
Mission of the Foundation

Supporting Research to Improve the Lives of Young People

- ④ Young people ages 5-25 in the United States
- ④ Focus areas
 - Research on **reducing inequality** in youth outcomes
 - Research on improving the **use of evidence from research** in policies and practices that affect young people

Reducing Inequality

- Income inequality has expanded over the past 40 years
- President Obama: “the defining challenge of our time”



Income is defined as market income (and excludes government transfers).
In 2008, top decile includes all families with annual income above \$109,000.

Source: Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez.

Reducing Inequality

Where do we stand today?

- ② Commentators on the right and left have expressed concern



Reducing Inequality

All too often, U.S. policy is to *hoard opportunities* for the advantaged, instead of *extending* them to the disadvantaged

- ⊕ Especially tax policies
 - Mortgage write-offs
 - Child care and college savings credits
 - Untaxed health care benefits
- ⊕ Labor market policies
 - Lack of family leave
- ⊕ Other nations have more inclusive policies
 - Families, child care, health, education, workforce

Inequality is the Problem

1. Levels of inequality are exceptionally high
2. High inequality causes economic and social harm
3. Social policies can combat inequality
4. We need research to identify effective policies, programs, and practices

Inequality in the Headlines

HOT TOPICS: [WSJ ECONOMIST SURVEY](#) [GRAND CENTRAL NEWSLETTER](#) [CENTRAL BANK WAT](#)

8:32 am ET
Apr 2, 2015

[BANKS](#)

Janet Yellen: Economic Inequality Long An Interest Of The Fed

“Research may be able to provide evidence on which public policies are most helpful in building an economy in which people are poised to get ahead. Conversely, it would also be beneficial to understand whether any policies may hold people back or discourage upward mobility.”

Our Initiative to Support Research to Reduce Inequality

④ What do we hope to accomplish?

- Identify effective programs, policies, and practices that work to reduce inequality in youth outcomes
- But our thinking about goals of the initiative is shifting

④ What have we learned so far?

- Several studies have identified specific approaches that significantly reduce inequality using designs that allow judgments of cause and effect
- Other studies have identified approaches that do *not* work
- Still other studies have identified mechanisms that, if leveraged, would reduce inequality in youth outcomes

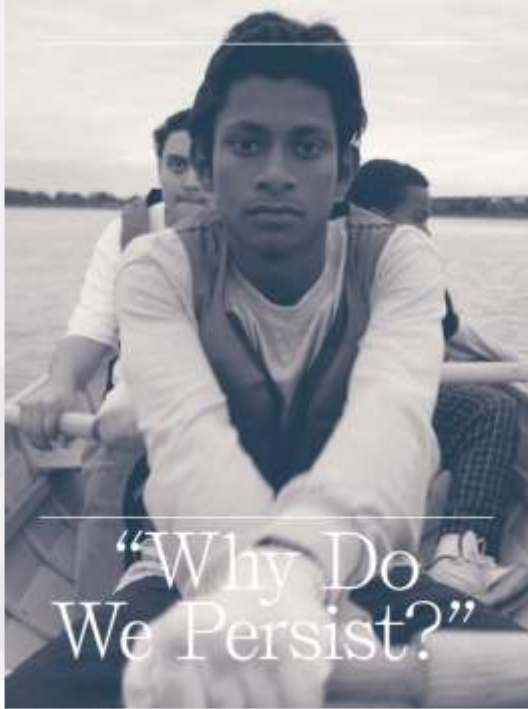
Our Initiative to Support Research to Reduce Inequality

- ④ How far will this research take us towards reducing inequality?
 - It's a loooong way from identifying an effective program to actually reducing inequality
 - Research we support has influenced research, but its reverberation in policy and practice is harder to trace
- ④ We knew this going in
 - Do not expect any single study to be transformative
 - Rather, bodies of evidence accumulate over time to make a difference in the real world

Our Initiative to Support Research to Reduce Inequality

- ④ A more fundamental challenge
 - Effective programs and policies may help those who experience them
 - But they will not reduce inequality in a larger sense unless the structural conditions that create inequality in the first place are addressed
- ④ This challenge calls on us to support research to disrupt the structural foundations of inequality
 - Systemic racism
 - Opportunity hoarding

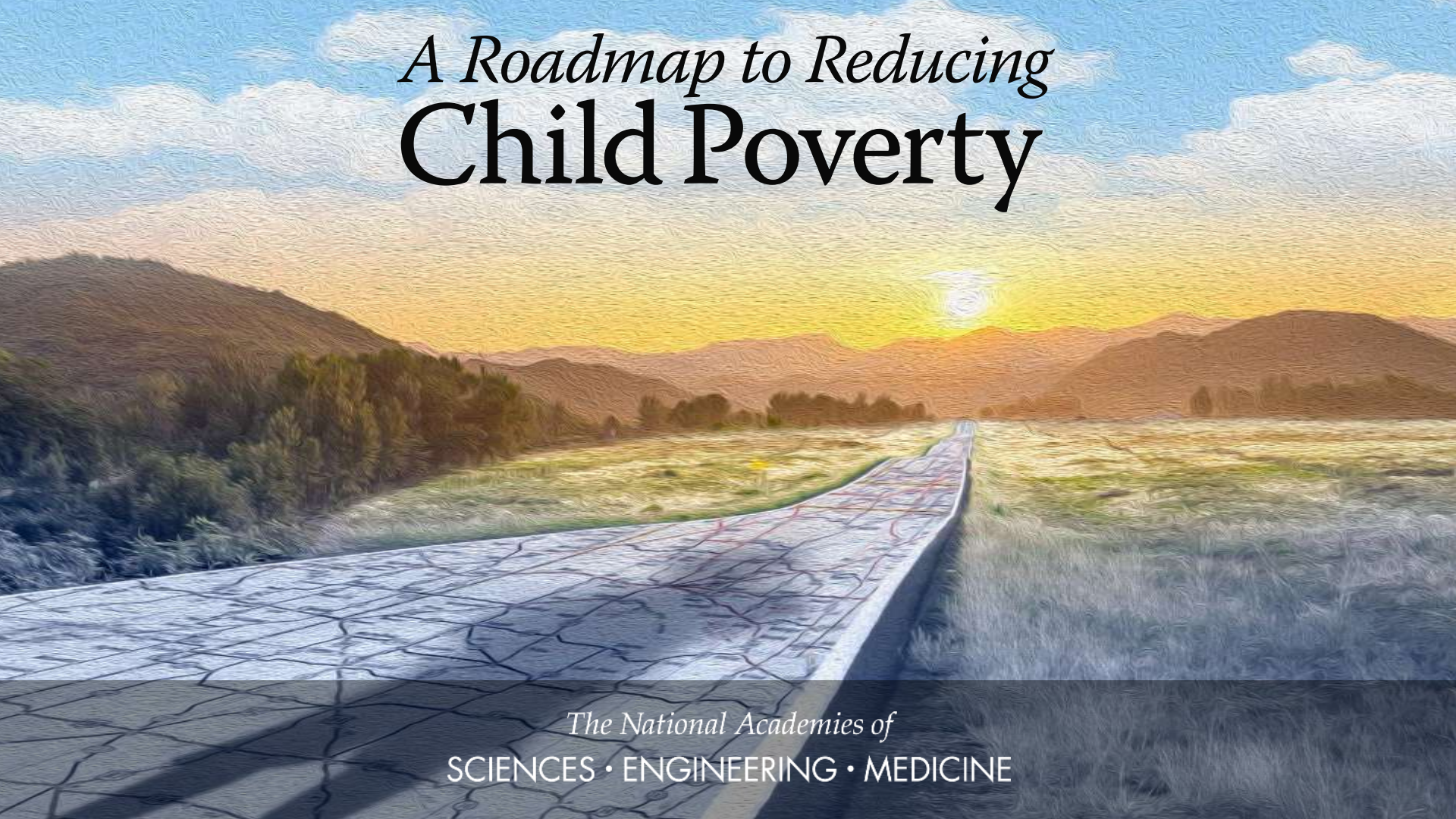
The WTGF Journey



- ④ From *understanding* to *reducing* inequality
- ④ From *programs and policies* to *structural change*
- ④ Research has a role to play in the pursuit of social justice

Cutting Child Poverty in Half

- ④ At the local level, we can support families in need
- ④ But broad-based structural changes require shifts in policies at the federal level
- ④ What programs and policies can achieve the goal of cutting child poverty in half within a decade?
 - Is this even feasible?
 - What about possible tradeoffs?
- ④ To answer these questions, we and other public and private funders asked the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to convene an expert panel to assess the evidence and make recommendations

A landscape painting of a road at sunset. The road, paved with large, irregular stones, leads from the foreground into the distance, curving slightly to the right. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the scene. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains, some covered in green vegetation and others in a mix of green and brown. The overall style is that of a classical oil painting.

A Roadmap to Reducing **Child Poverty**

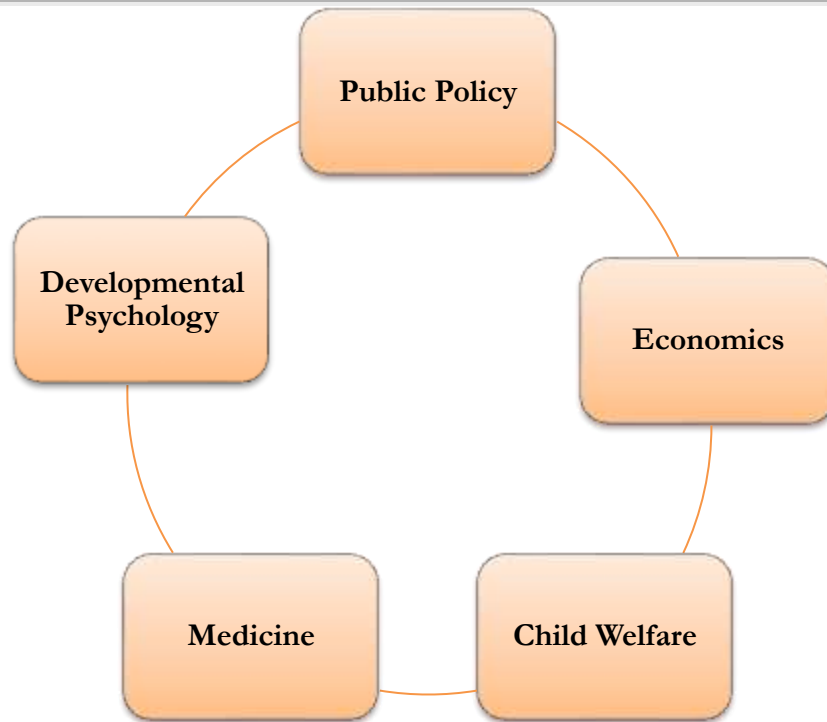
The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE



Study Sponsors

- **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**
- **The Foundation for Child Development**
- **The Joyce Foundation**
- **The Russell Sage Foundation**
- **The W.K. Kellogg Foundation**
- **The William T. Grant Foundation**
- **The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

Interdisciplinary Committee with Broad Perspectives



Statement of Task

The U.S. Congress asked the National Academies to provide a non-partisan, evidence-based report that:

Reviews research on linkages between child poverty and child well-being.

Provides objective analyses of the poverty-reducing effects of major assistance programs directed at children and families.

Provides policy and program recommendations for reducing the number of children living in poverty in the U.S. by half within 10 years.

Statement of Task

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Correlation and Causation:

Consistent correlations between poverty and a host of adverse childhood experiences and outcomes.

The committee's report focused on causal studies



Causal impacts of poverty

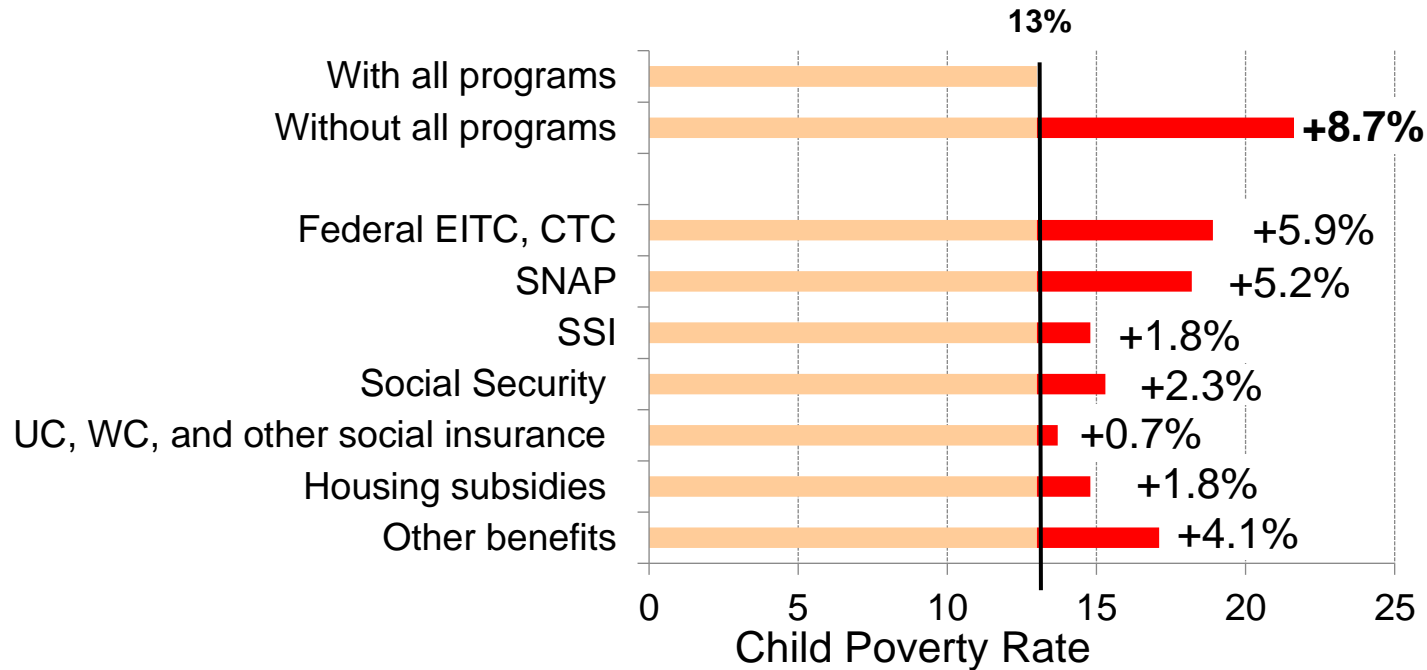
- The weight of the causal evidence indicates that poverty itself causes negative child outcomes, especially when poverty occurs in early childhood or persists throughout a large portion of childhood.
- Many programs that alleviate poverty, either directly, by providing income transfers —e.g., EITC— or indirectly, by providing food, housing or medical care —e.g., SNAP, medical insurance—have been shown to improve child well-being.

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Child Poverty Rates Would Be Higher Without Existing Programs



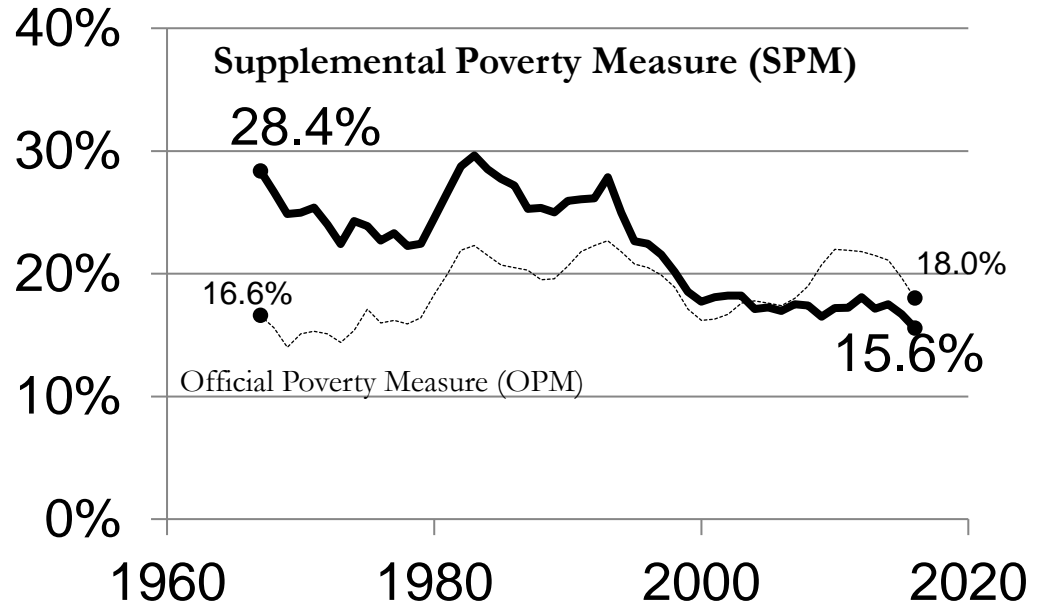
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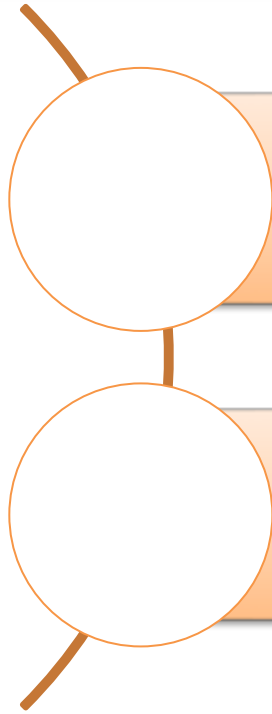
A 50% Reduction in Child Poverty is Achievable

- The U.K. cut its child poverty rate in half from 2001-2008
- Canada's Child Benefit program is on course to cut child poverty in half
- The US nearly cut its child poverty rate in half between 1967 and 2016



Anchored U.S. SPM child poverty rate. SOURCE: Original analyses commissioned by the committee from Christopher Wimer (2017, October).

The Committee developed:



20 individual policy and program options

4 policy and program packages

Criteria for Selecting Programs and Policies

- Strength of the research & evaluation evidence
- Magnitude of the reduction in child poverty
- Poverty reduction within high-risk subgroups
- Cost
- Impacts on work, marriage, opportunity & social inclusion

Summary of Simulated Programs and Policies

Program and policy options tied to work:

- Expand EITC
- Expand child care subsidies
- Raise the federal minimum wage
- Implement a promising training and employment program called WorkAdvance

Modifications to existing provisions relating to immigrants:

- Increasing immigrants' access to safety net programs

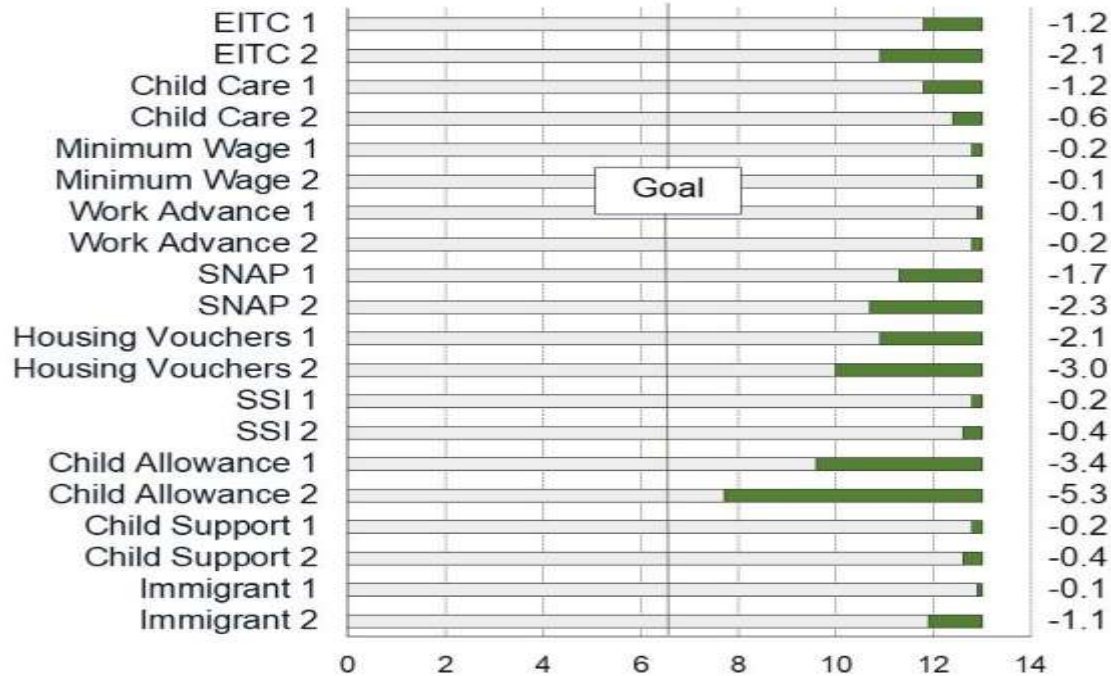
Modifications to existing safety net programs:

- Expand SNAP
- Expand the Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Expand SSI

Policies used in other countries:

- Replace Child Tax Credit with a universal child allowance
- Introduce a child support assurance program

No Single Program or Policy Option Met the 50% Reduction Goal



Composition and Impacts of Program and Policy Packages

	Work-oriented package			
Expand EITC	X			
Expand Child Care Tax Credit	X			
Increase the minimum wage	X			
Roll out WorkAdvance	X			
Expand housing voucher program				
Expand SNAP benefits				
Begin a child allowance				
Begin child support assurance				
Eliminate 1996 immigration eligibility restrictions				
Percent Reduction in the number of poor children	-18.8%			
Percent Reduction in the number of children in deep poverty	-19.3%			
Change in number of low-income workers	+1,003,000			
Annual cost, in billions	\$8.7			

Composition and Impacts of Program and Policy Packages

	Work-oriented package	Work-Based and Universal Support Package		
Expand EITC	X	X		
Expand Child Care Tax Credit	X	X		
Increase the minimum wage	X			
Roll out WorkAdvance	X			
Expand housing voucher program				
Expand SNAP benefits				
Begin a child allowance		X		
Begin child support assurance				
Eliminate 1996 immigration eligibility restrictions				
Percent Reduction in the number of poor children	-18.8%	-35.6%		
Percent Reduction in the number of children in deep poverty	-19.3%	-41.3%		
Change in number of low-income workers	+1,003,000	+568,000		
Annual cost, in billions	\$8.7	\$44.5		

Some Program and Policy Packages DID Meet the Goal

	Work-oriented package	Work-Based and Universal Support Package	Means-tested supports and work package	Universal supports and work package
Expand EITC	X	X	X	X
Expand Child Care Tax Credit	X	X	X	X
Increase the minimum wage	X			X
Roll out WorkAdvance	X			
Expand housing voucher program			X	
Expand SNAP benefits			X	
Begin a child allowance		X		X
Begin child support assurance				X
Eliminate 1996 immigration eligibility restrictions				X
Percent Reduction in the number of poor children	-18.8%	-35.6%	-50.7%	-52.3%
Percent Reduction in the number of children in deep poverty	-19.3%	-41.3%	-51.7%	-55.1%
Change in number of low-income workers	+1,003,000	+568,000	+404,000	+611,000
Annual cost, in billions	\$8.7	\$44.5	\$90.7	\$108.8

Lessons From the Packages:

Individual policy and program changes are insufficient

Bundling work-oriented and income-support programs can reduce poverty AND increase employment

Costs of the Packages:

Package costs range from \$8.7 billion to \$108.8 billion per year

Studies have estimated the annual costs of child poverty to range between \$800 billion to \$1.1 trillion

Contextual Factors

Context can greatly influence the impact and success of anti-poverty programs and policies.

Stability & predictability of income

Equitable & ready access to programs

Equitable treatment across racial & ethnic groups

Equitable treatment by the criminal justice system

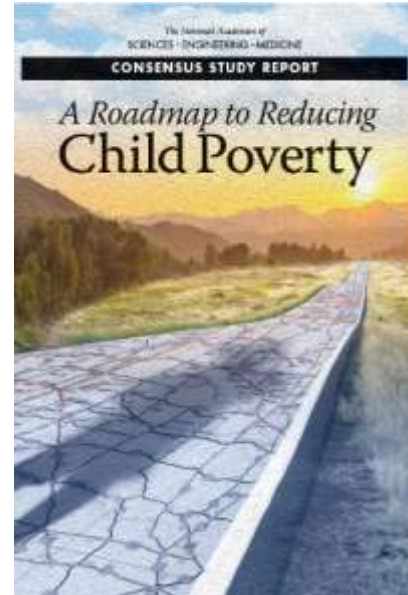
Positive neighborhood conditions

Health & well-being



Learn More:
www.nap.edu/25246

- Appendices
- Data Explorer Tool
- Report Highlights



CHILD WELL-BEING

Why are we focused on Child Well-Being?



Communities that can say, “all the children are well” have babies born healthy, kids who read proficiently by 3rd grade and teens who graduate from high school ready for college and careers. These are kids that grow up in communities where people are educated, employed, and housed.

United Way’s focus is to ensure every child, family and community has the opportunity to thrive.

Our goal is to raise the overall Child Well-Being Score across Greater Atlanta’s 13-county region from 58.9 to 68.9 by 2027. With this change, we’ll be improving the lives of 250,000 children.

Priah Ferguson
Official Spokeskid

CWB Measures



- % Low Birth Weights Births
- % Students Proficient or above 3rd Grade Reading Std.
- % Students Proficient or above 8th Grade Math Standards
- High School Graduation Rate
- College & Career Readiness Score
- % Children without Health Insurance

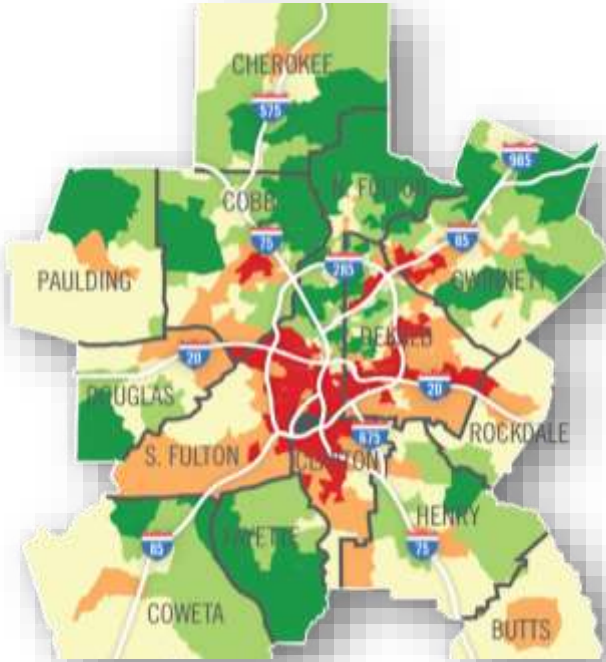


- % Families Not Financially Stable
- Families with Housing Cost Burden
- % Births to Moms without at High School Diploma



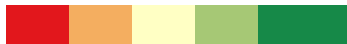
- % Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education
- % Adults without High School Diploma
- % Adults without Health Insurance
- Unemployment Rate

A Map and A Message



Child Well-Being Legend

Very Low Avg Very High



IN 2017, ACROSS THE GREATER ATLANTA REGION

- **Almost 500,000 children lived in communities with **low** or **very low** child well-being**
- **The overall child well-being score was 58.9**



THE REGION IS MAKING PROGRESS



Child well-being has improved across the region

The regional score has increased from 58.9 to 61.8. The goal for 2027 is 68.9.



Child Well-Being Level: Very Low (< 55.5), Low (55.7 and - 59.4), Average (59.6 and - 63.3), High (63.4 and - 67.3), Very High (> 67.5)

2016

58.9

2018

61.8

2027

68.9

ECONOMIC STABILITY



United Way of
Greater Atlanta

WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

We will improve overall Child Well-Being by focusing our efforts on a specific indicator.

Improve family financial
stability by 10%

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY?

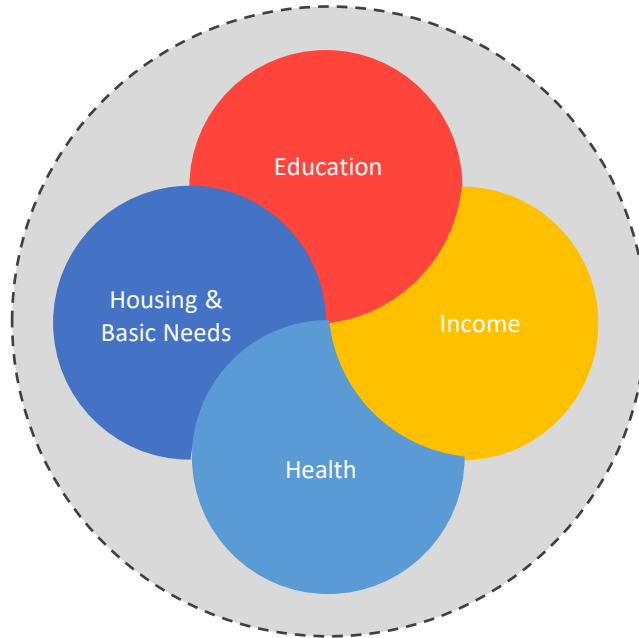
One clue: it's more than a job...

4 out of 5

Must choose to
heat or eat

20%

No insurance
No sick leave



33%

lack of childcare limits job
training and education choices
for moms

1 in 3

Can work remotely during the
pandemic

40%

cannot cover a surprise \$400
expense


SYSTEMS THINKING = BETTER SOLUTIONS



“The first step to solving an intractable social problem is to understand the system in which it sits. If you don’t, you might find yourself investing in a solution that is ineffective, takes more time or resources to implement, or even makes a problem worse.”

ECONOMIC STABILITY: STRATEGY SUMMARY

Economic Stability



SECURE HOUSING & BASIC NEEDS
Ensure children and their families have the food, shelter, transportation and technology that are fundamental to achieving educational outcomes, healthy lives and reaching economic stability.

14,270 Served



CLOSE THE SKILLS GAP
Create easy access to job readiness programs, increase opportunities for hands-on work experience, and provide financial support to secure credentials in high demand careers for low-wage workers and opportunity youth.

2,725 Served



ACCESS TO CHILDCARE & AFTERSCHOOL
Increase access to quality early learning and youth enrichment programs that are flexible, affordable and accommodate parents' work and training schedules.

11,158 Served



BUILD WEALTH
Provide supports so that families build financial literacy skills, improve credit scores, access financial products and attain assets that create economic mobility for themselves and the next generation.

14,410 Served



MANAGE HEALTH
Provide access to health services so that individuals are better able to manage their health, work consistently and live independently.

3,805 Served

Questions & Discussion

Upcoming GLR Learning Tuesdays Webinars:

LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE WEBINAR

Scaling Playful Learning: How Civic Infrastructure Can Support Young Learners
Tuesday, December 15, 3 p.m. ET/12 p.m. PT

JANUARY 2021

LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE WEBINAR

The Way Forward: Guided by Lessons Learned the Hard Way, With Randi Weingarten, American Federation of Teachers and Becky Pringle, National Education Association
Tuesday, January 12, 12:30 p.m. ET/9:30 a.m. PT

LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE WEBINAR

Education Leaders Respond to “The Way Forward” Conversations
Tuesday, January 12, 3 p.m. ET/12 p.m. PT

Please Join Us!

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