

Integrating Racial/Ethnic Equity into Policy Research: Policy Assessments to Improve Child Health

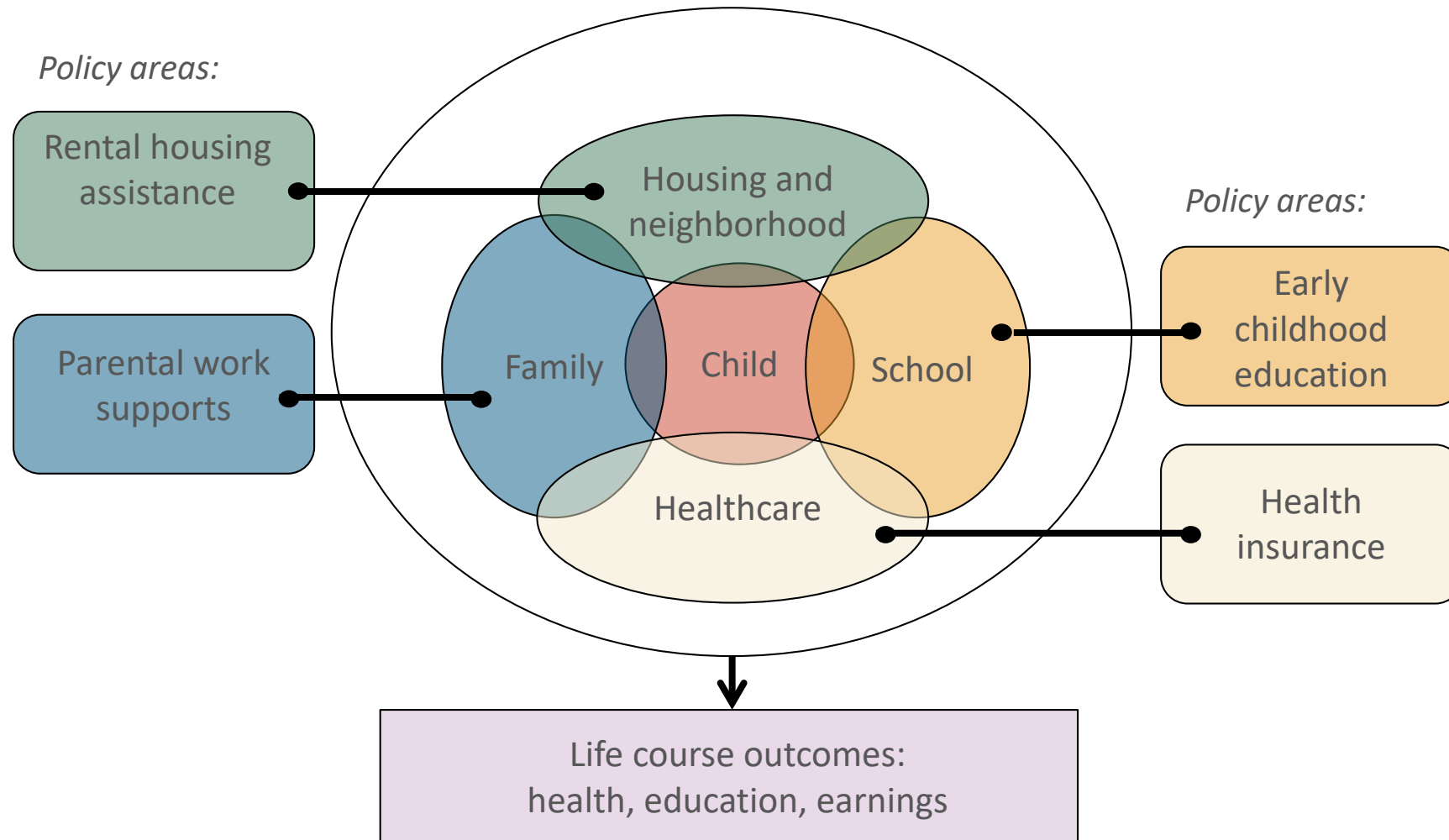
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Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research and Evaluation Network
October 12, 2020

Outline

- Conceptual framework
- Policy equity assessment tool
- Policy examples
 - Family and medical leave
 - SNAP
- Recommendations for equity-focused policy research

Social determinants of children's healthy development



www.diversitydatakids.org

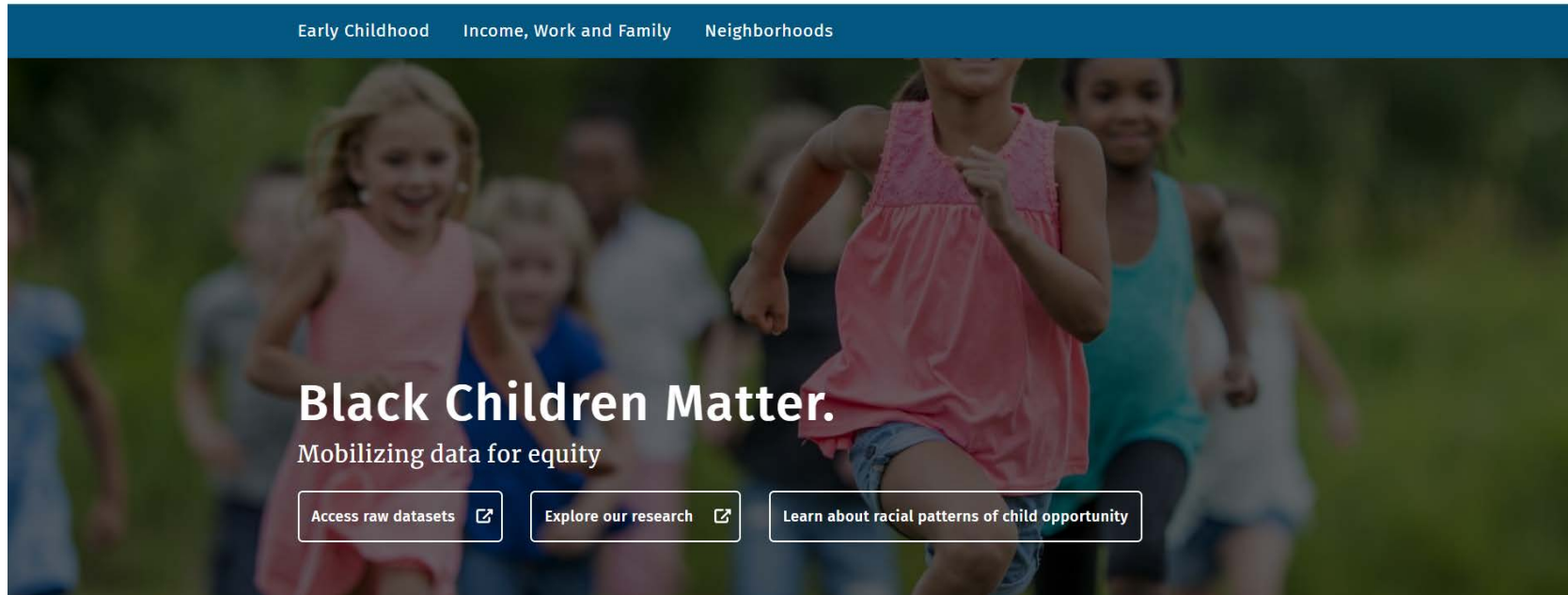
Datasets Child Opportunity Index Policy Equity Assessments

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data for a diverse and equitable future


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Early Childhood Income, Work and Family Neighborhoods



Black Children Matter.

Mobilizing data for equity

Access raw datasets 

Explore our research 

Learn about racial patterns of child opportunity

Funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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Diversitydatakids.org: child opportunity measures for all U.S. neighborhoods

- COI: 29 indicators capturing three domains of opportunity
- Focus on neighborhood features that matter for children today
- Includes social determinants of health, including **walkability, access to green space and access to healthy food stores**
- Granular data on nearly all US neighborhoods (72,000 census tracts)
- Data comparable across neighborhoods and over time (2010, 2015)
- Other ddkids.org data sets include **Food Stamps receipt**

Policy equity assessments

The policy research field is moving towards an equity approach



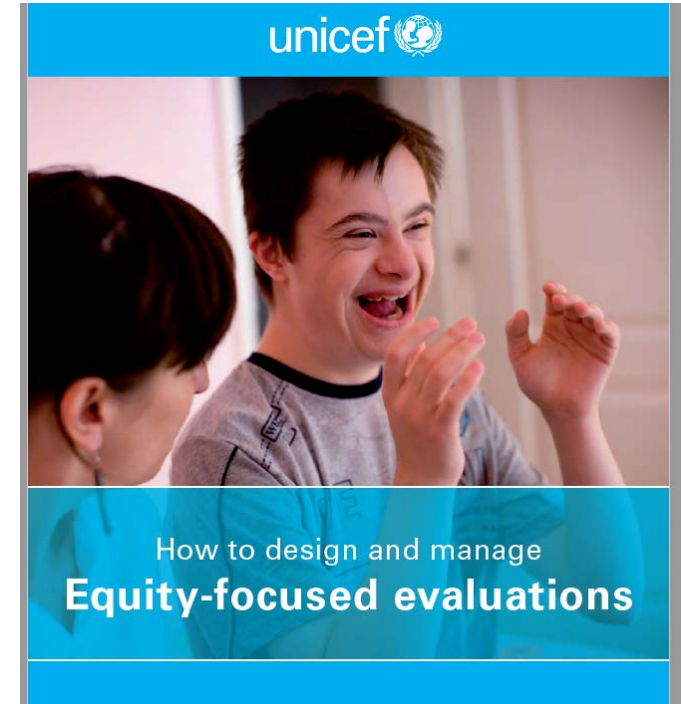
Trusted evidence.
Informed decisions.
Better health.




Identifying Racial and Ethnic
Disparities in Human Services
A Conceptual Framework and Literature Review



Developing an Equity-Focused Policy
Research Agenda for Low-Income
Families with Young Children





Policy equity assessments have three stages guided by key questions

- **Logic:** Does the policy set explicit/implicit goals to address racial/ethnic gaps?
- **Capacity:** Does the policy have the capacity to meet the need of the overall eligible population and those of each racial/ethnic subgroup?
- **Research evidence:** Is the policy effective for racial/ethnic subgroups and does it reduce inequities?

Source: Joshi et al., (2014) Integrating Racial/Ethnic Equity Into Policy Assessments to Improve Child Health." *Health Affairs* 33(12): 2222-2229.

Stage 1: Policy logic

Policy Assessment Steps	Examples of Equity-Focused Questions
Historical context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the policy change over time to address any documented racial/ethnic exclusionary practices or barriers to participation?
Primary goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are racial/ethnic disparities explicitly included in the policy's targeted outcomes?• Does the need for the program differ by race/ethnicity?
Targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the policy target groups (i.e. migrant workers) or characteristics (i.e. poverty) that include a higher proportion of racial/ethnic minorities?
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there an existing review of the policy's racial history?

Example sources: original legislation, reauthorizing legislation, regulations, policy guidance, peer-reviewed/published accounts of legislative history, key informant interviews

Stage 2: Policy capacity

Policy Assessment Steps	Examples of Equity-Focused Questions
Policy eligibility and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Do eligibility criteria differentially exclude the eligible population or the population in need by race/ethnicity?
Policy resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Are there resources targeted towards policy enhancements or expansions that could reduce racial/ethnic disparities?
Policy/service implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Do implementation practices differentially affect administrative burden by race/ethnicity (e.g., language barriers, documentation requirements)?
Coordination/ Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Does the program foster collaboration (i.e., across departments, levels of government, sectors) in order to more effectively address racial/ethnic disparities?
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is program data available by race/ethnicity?

Example sources: regulations, Congressional appropriations and budgets, program administrative data, large surveys (Census data), implementation/process evaluations

Stage 3: Policy research evidence

Policy Assessment Steps	Examples of Equity-Focused Questions
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the findings from subgroup analyses by race/ethnicity for short- and long-term impacts?
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does available data document how implementation procedures differ by subgroups of participants or by sites that serve different race/ethnic populations?
Simulations/ Cost effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do studies simulate expansions of different program components and eligibility scenarios and estimate the impact on racial/ethnic disparities?
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is program outcome and implementation data broken down by race/ethnicity?

Example sources: Experimental studies, quasi-experimental studies, natural experiments, systematic reviews, implementation evaluations

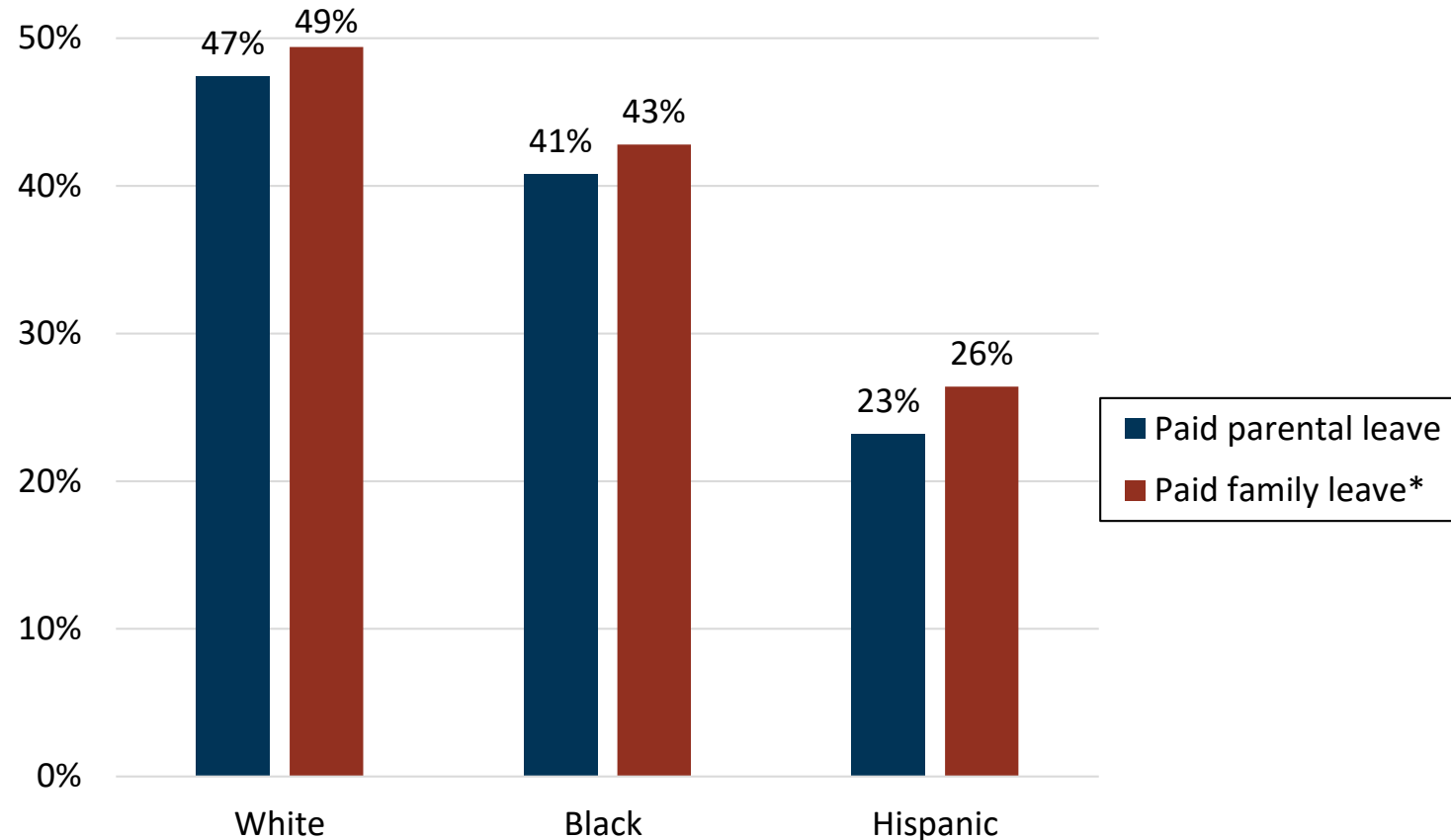
Policy equity assessment of Family & Medical Leave

Focus: Black and Hispanic workers

What is family and medical leave (FML)?

- Time away from jobs to care for serious medical conditions
 - Different from sick leave
- Medical leave
 - Care for own health or family member's health
- Family leave
 - Bond with new child (birth, adoption or foster care)
 - Includes mothers and fathers

Policy need: Limited access to FML through employers



*Paid family leave is paid leave to care for a sick family member

Source: Bartel, Kim, Nam, Rossin-Slater, Ruhm & Waldfogel, 2019

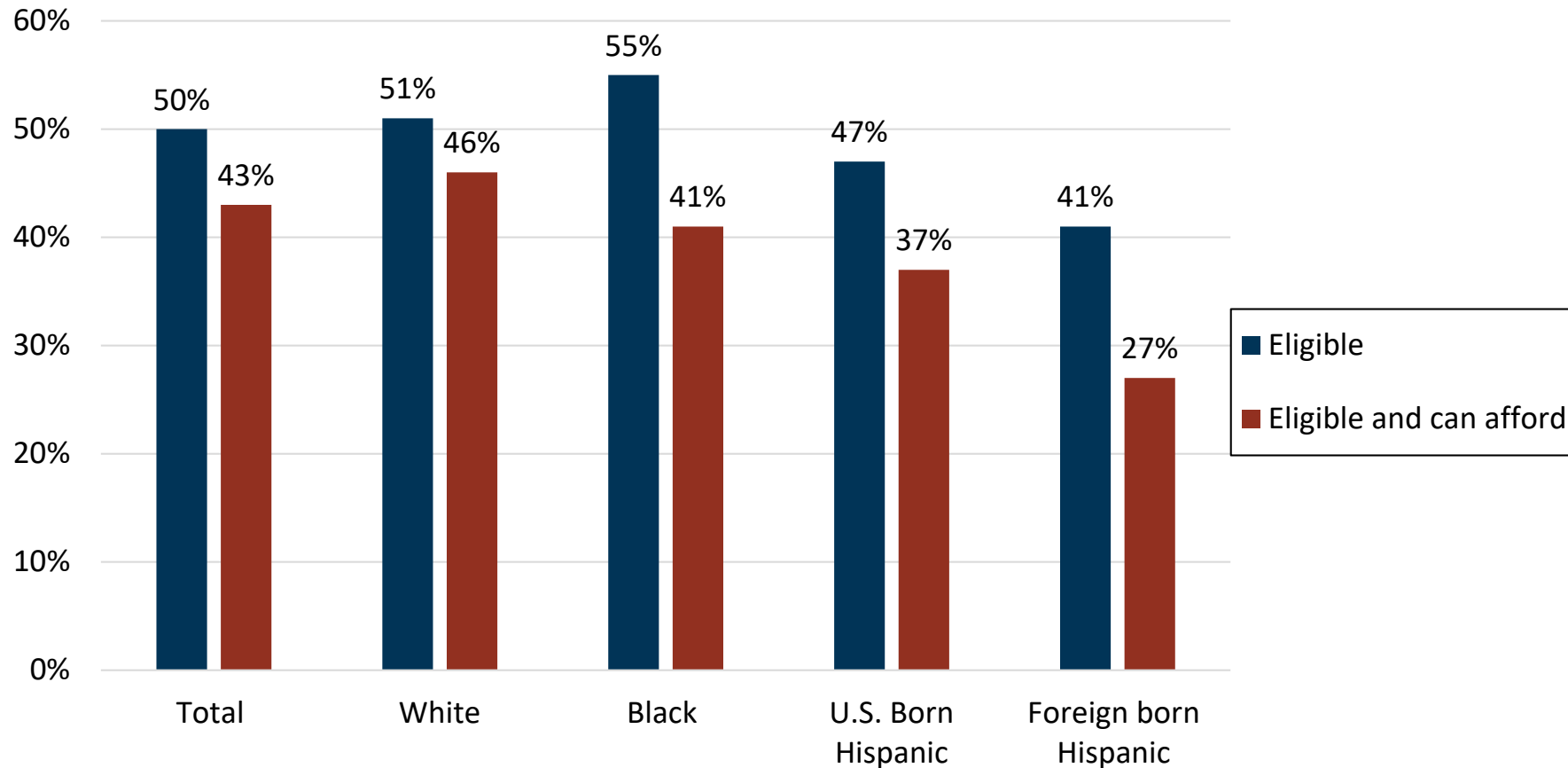
Policy history: Family & medical leave

- Federal employment policies are difficult to enact
- 1993: Family and Medical Leave Act
 - Labor standard that offers 12 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave
 - Focus on preventing **gender discrimination**
- 2002+: Expansion of state level TDI programs
 - Adds FML to existing state social insurance (pregnancy/disability)
 - Some **target lower-income workers** with higher wage replacement
- 2017+: State level paid FML programs
 - Creates a new FML social insurance program

FMLA eligibility: restrictive criteria leaves out many employees

- Employees must meet requirements:
 - Work hours (1,050)
 - Job tenure (at least 1 year)
- Applies to all public sector agencies and schools
- Does not apply to private employers with **less than 50 employees**
- 2018 DOL survey: 56% of employees are eligible

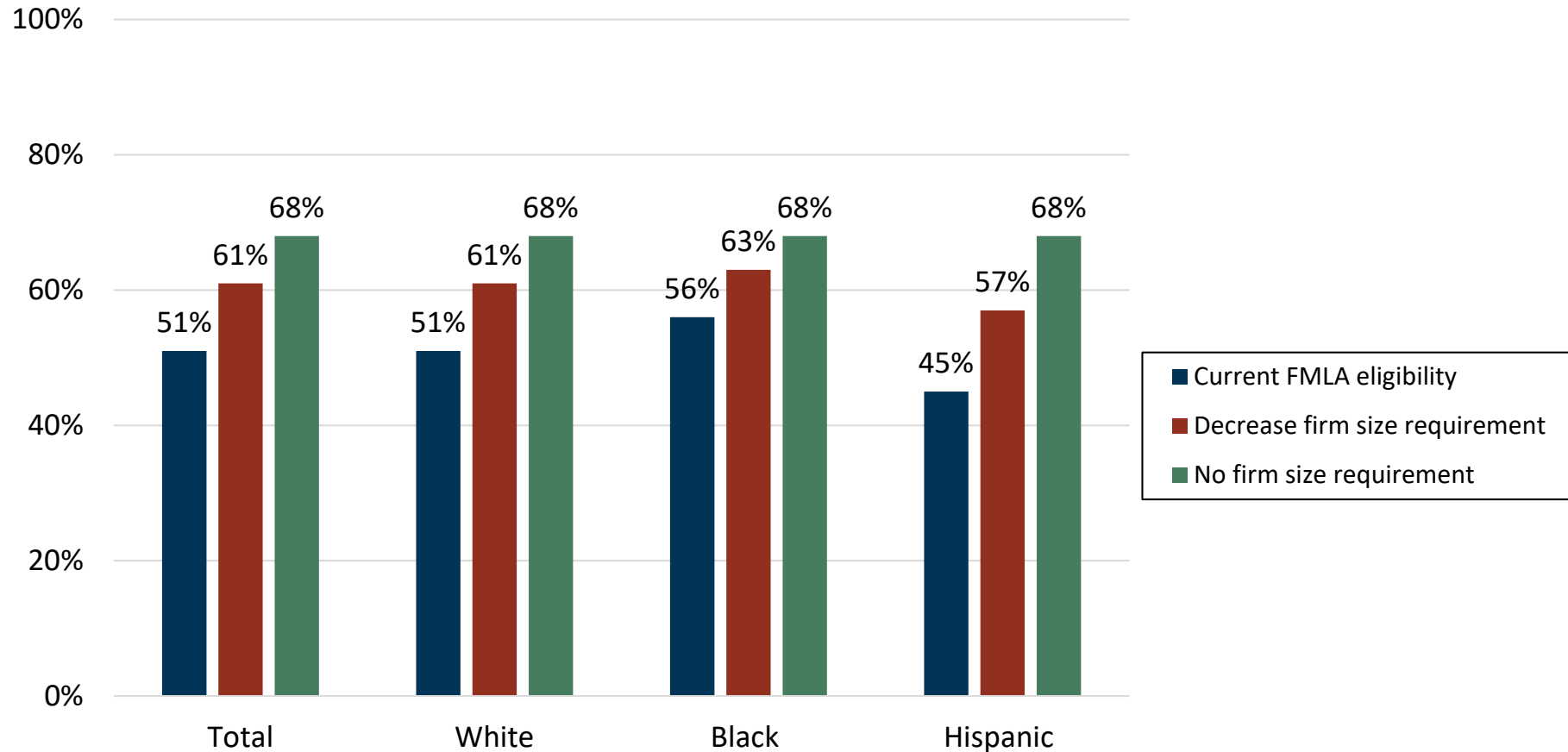
FMLA access: eligibility criteria disproportionately excludes Hispanic workers



Note: Excludes the self-employed

Source: Authors' calculations of *Current Population Survey* 2014-2017.

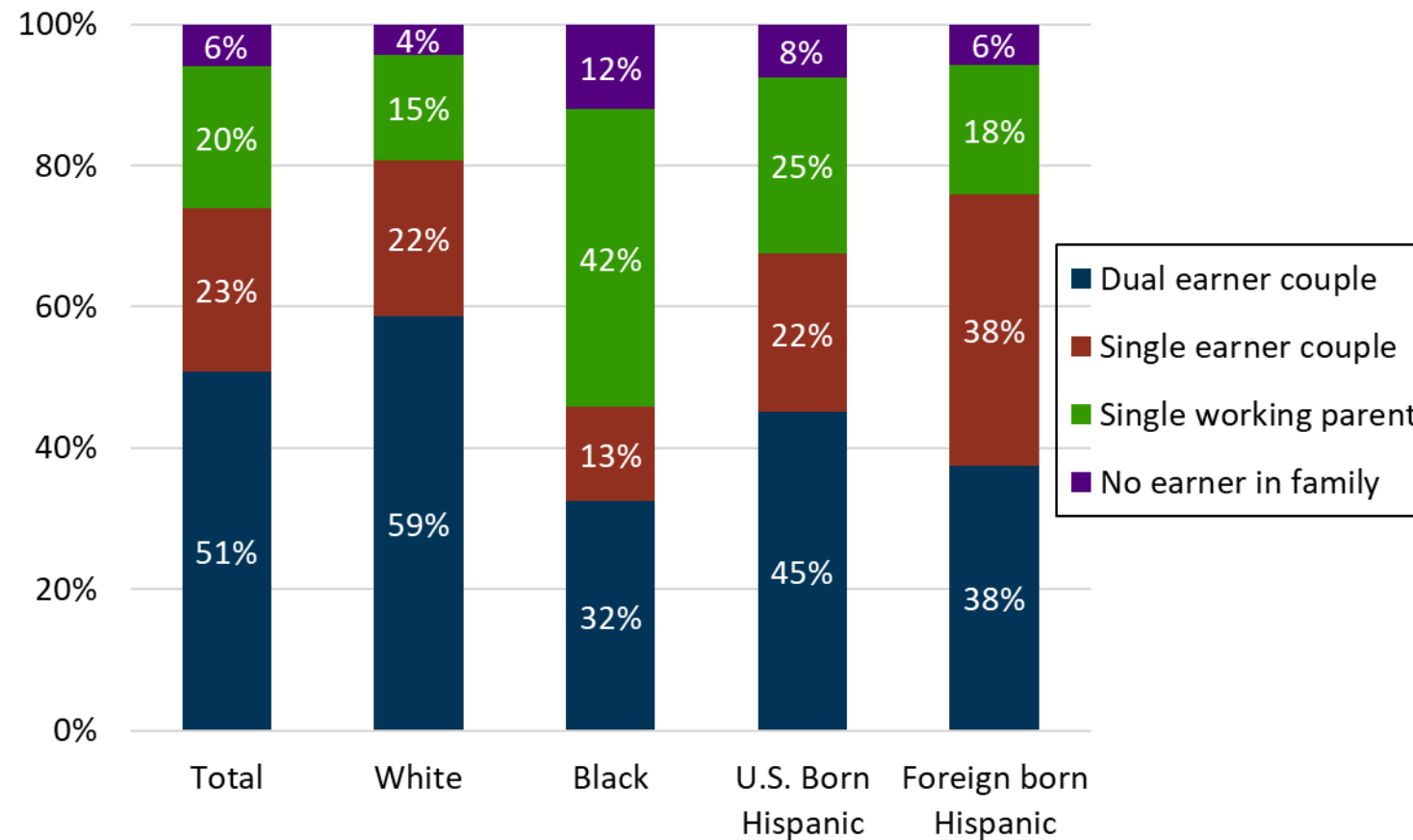
FMLA eligibility: changing firm size threshold increases eligibility access for Hispanic workers



Note: Excludes the self-employed

Source: Authors' calculations of *Current Population Survey* 2014-2017.

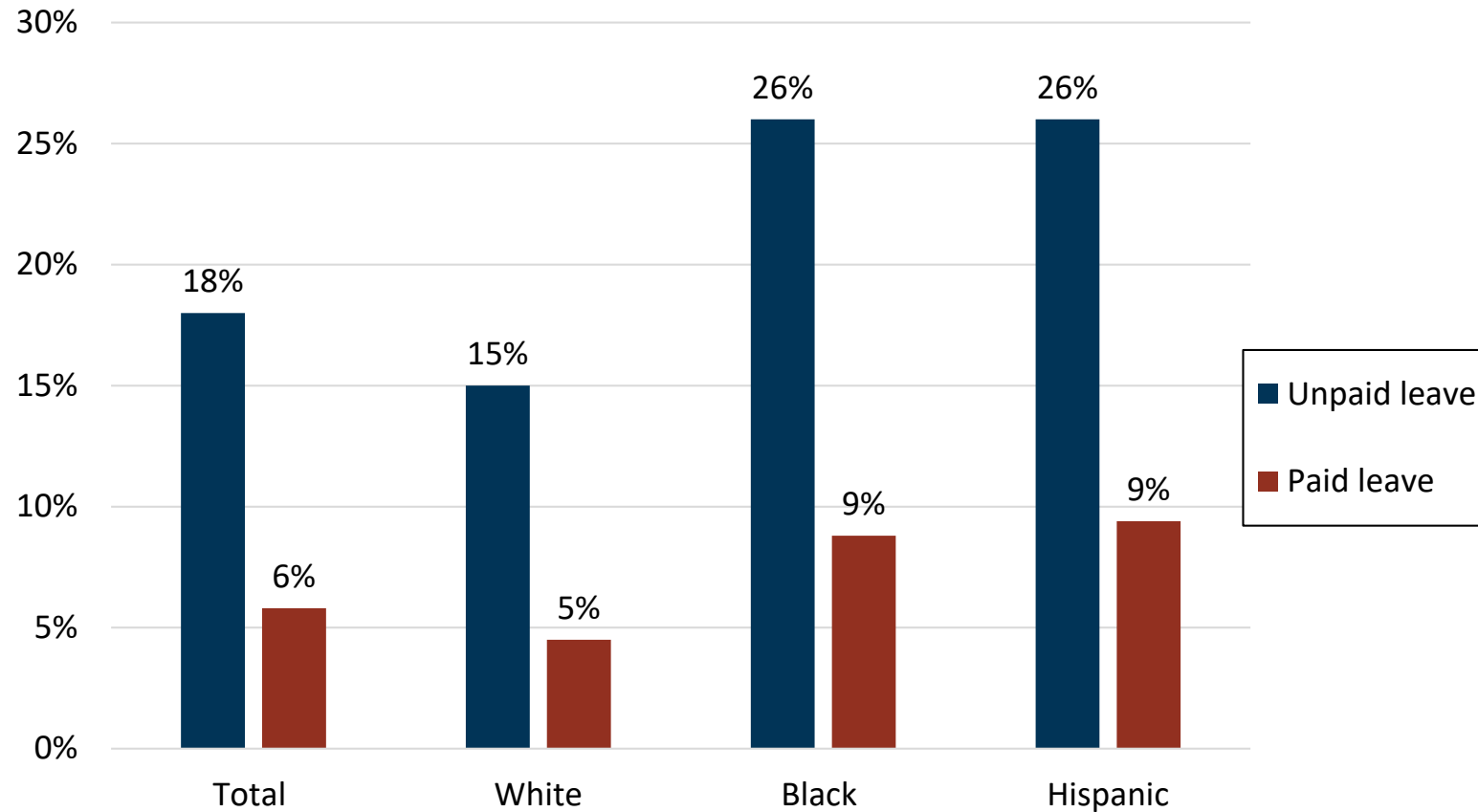
FMLA take up: Do families have more than 1 earner to potentially absorb wage loss from unpaid leave?



*Couple includes married or cohabiting partner

Source: Authors' calculations of the Current Population Survey, 2016-2019.

Research evidence: Paid family leave can reduce the share of workers that experience economic hardship



Source: Joshi, Baldiga, Earle, Huber, Osypuk & Acevedo-Garcia, 2019



FMLA research evidence: positive impacts accrue to higher SES families

- **Positive impacts on leave taking:**
 - college-educated mothers and fathers
 - married mothers
- **Positive impacts on infant health:**
 - larger impacts on childbirth outcomes for college-educated and married mothers
 - reduced infant mortality for college-educated and married mothers

Sources: Han, Ruhm & Waldfogel, 2009; Rossin, 2011



Paid FML research evidence: reduces racial/ethnic disparities in leave taking

- Paid FML increased leave-taking from:
 - White mothers: 3-5 weeks to 6-7 weeks
 - Black mothers: 1-2 weeks to 6 weeks
 - Hispanic mothers: 1-2 weeks to 5 weeks

Source: Rossin-Slater, Ruhm & Waldfogel 2013



Key take aways about equity in FML Policy

- **Logic**
 - FMLA explicitly designed to address gender equity
 - Higher need for affordable FML among Black and Hispanic workers
- **Capacity**
 - Eligibility criteria leaves out many Hispanic workers
 - Barriers likely lower take up rates among Hispanic and Black workers
- **Research evidence**
 - FMLA (unpaid leave) reproduces r/e inequities
 - Reducing firm size criteria and enacting paid FML increases r/e equity but does not eliminate gaps

LEARN MORE ABOUT POLICY EQUITY ASSESSMENTS AND THE FMLA

- ✓ Go to diversitydatakids.org
- ✓ Click “Policy Equity Assessments”



The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu at the top, with "Policy Equity Assessments" circled in red. Below the menu is the site's logo and tagline, followed by a secondary navigation bar with categories like "Early Childhood", "Income, Work and Family", and "Neighborhoods". The main content area features a large image of children running, with the headline "Black Children Matter." and the subtext "Mobilizing data for equity". Three call-to-action buttons are visible: "Access raw datasets", "Explore our research", and "Learn about racial patterns of child opportunity".

Datasets Child Opportunity Index **Policy Equity Assessments**

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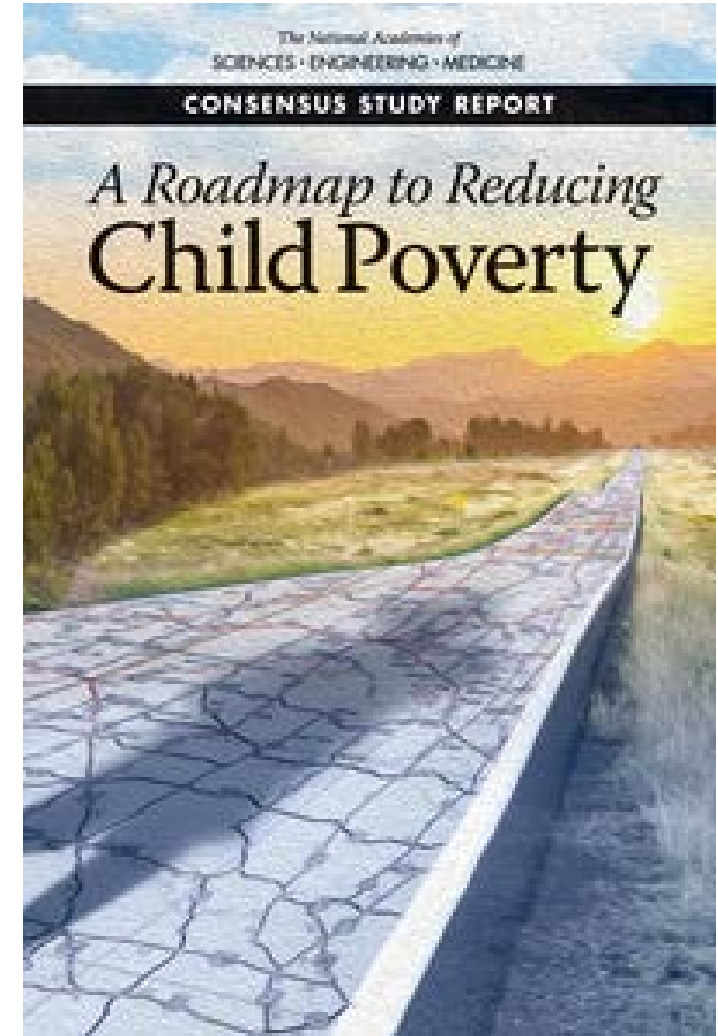
Policy equity assessment of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Focus: Children in Immigrant Families

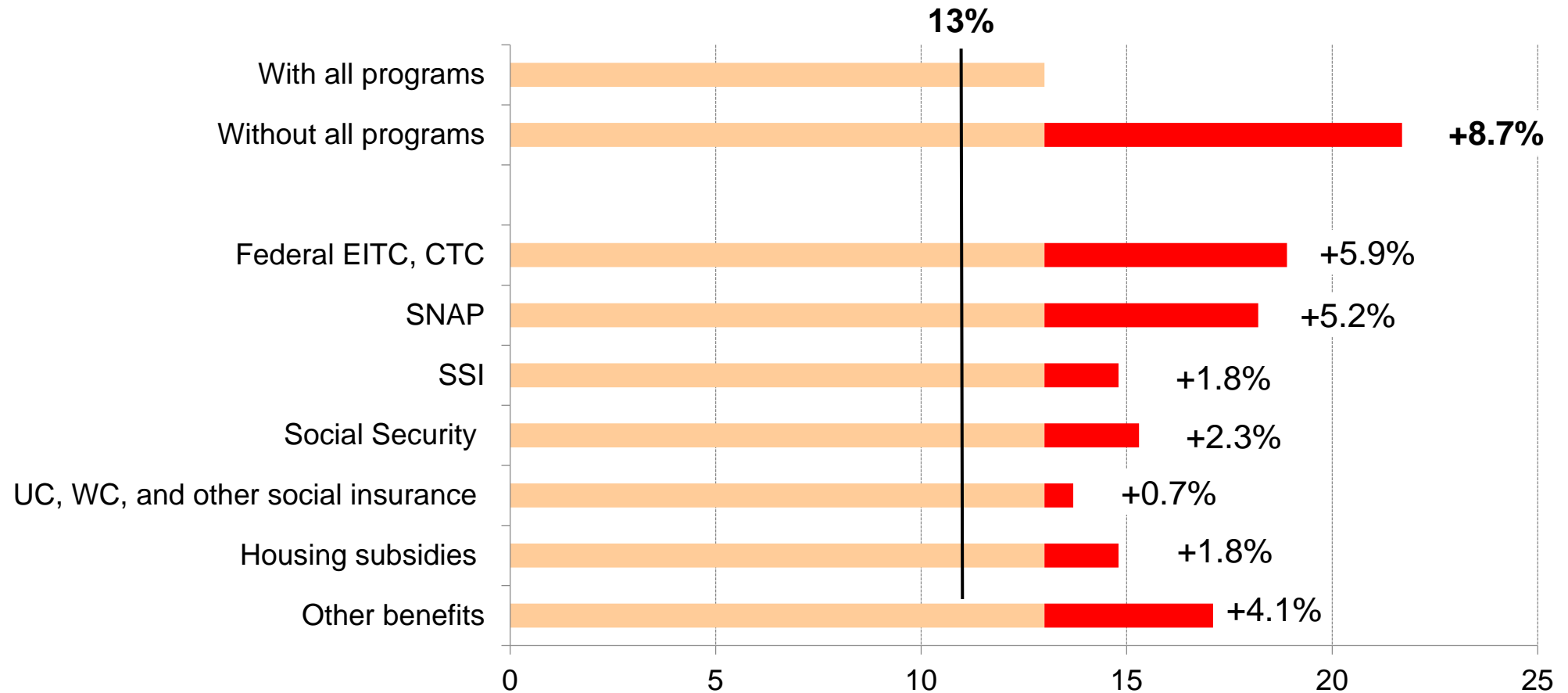
Research evidence: 2019 NASEM report

A Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty

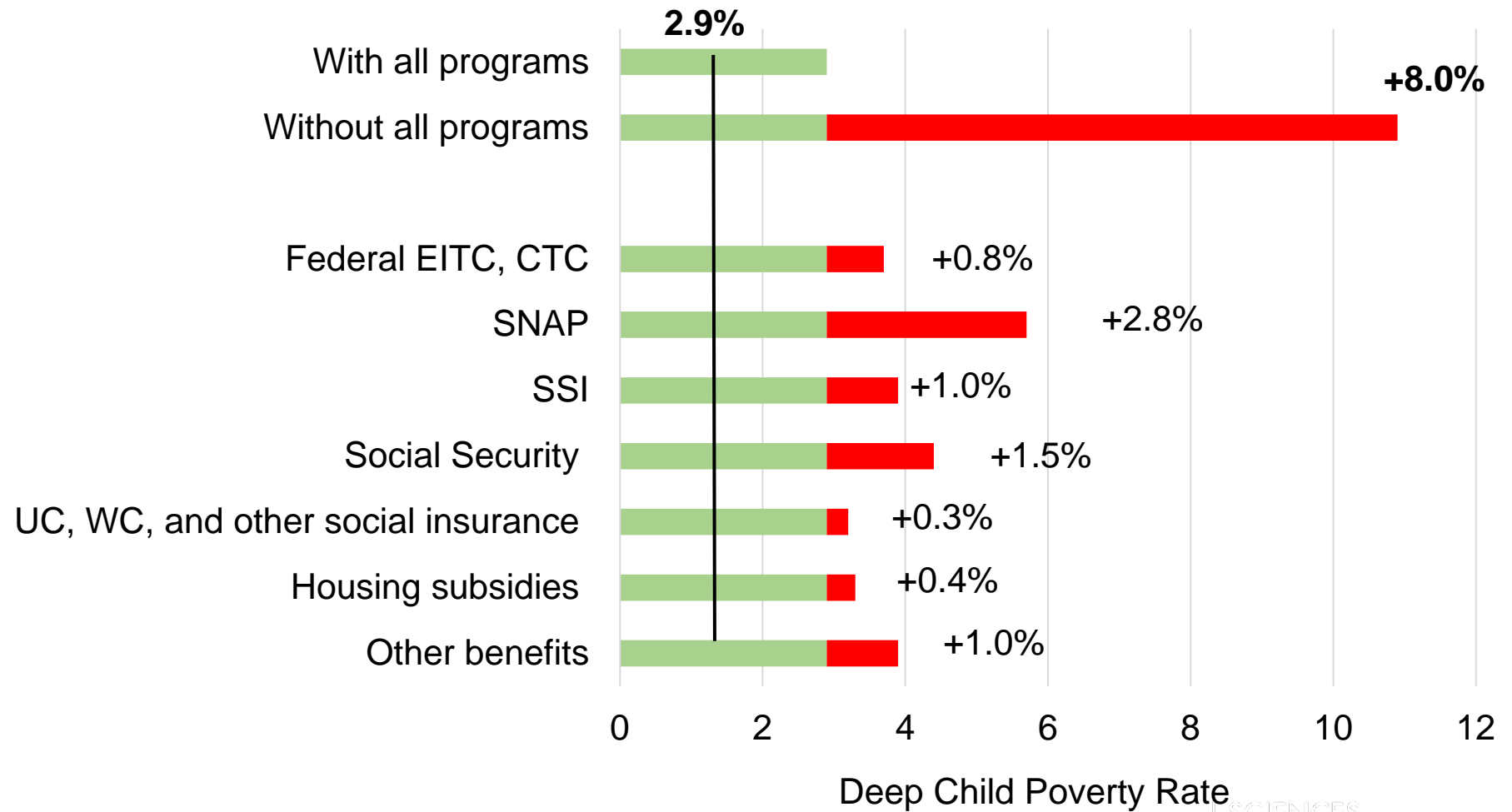
- Policy options to reduce child poverty (<100% of SPM) by half
- Simulated policy changes included changes to SNAP
- Effects by subgroup (e.g., race/ethnicity, nativity, citizenship immigration status)
- Policy options include restoring eligibility for legal immigrants/all immigrants for programs restricted after welfare reform
- Yet, this was not an equity-focused analysis, so we are extending it focusing on immigrant access/eligibility



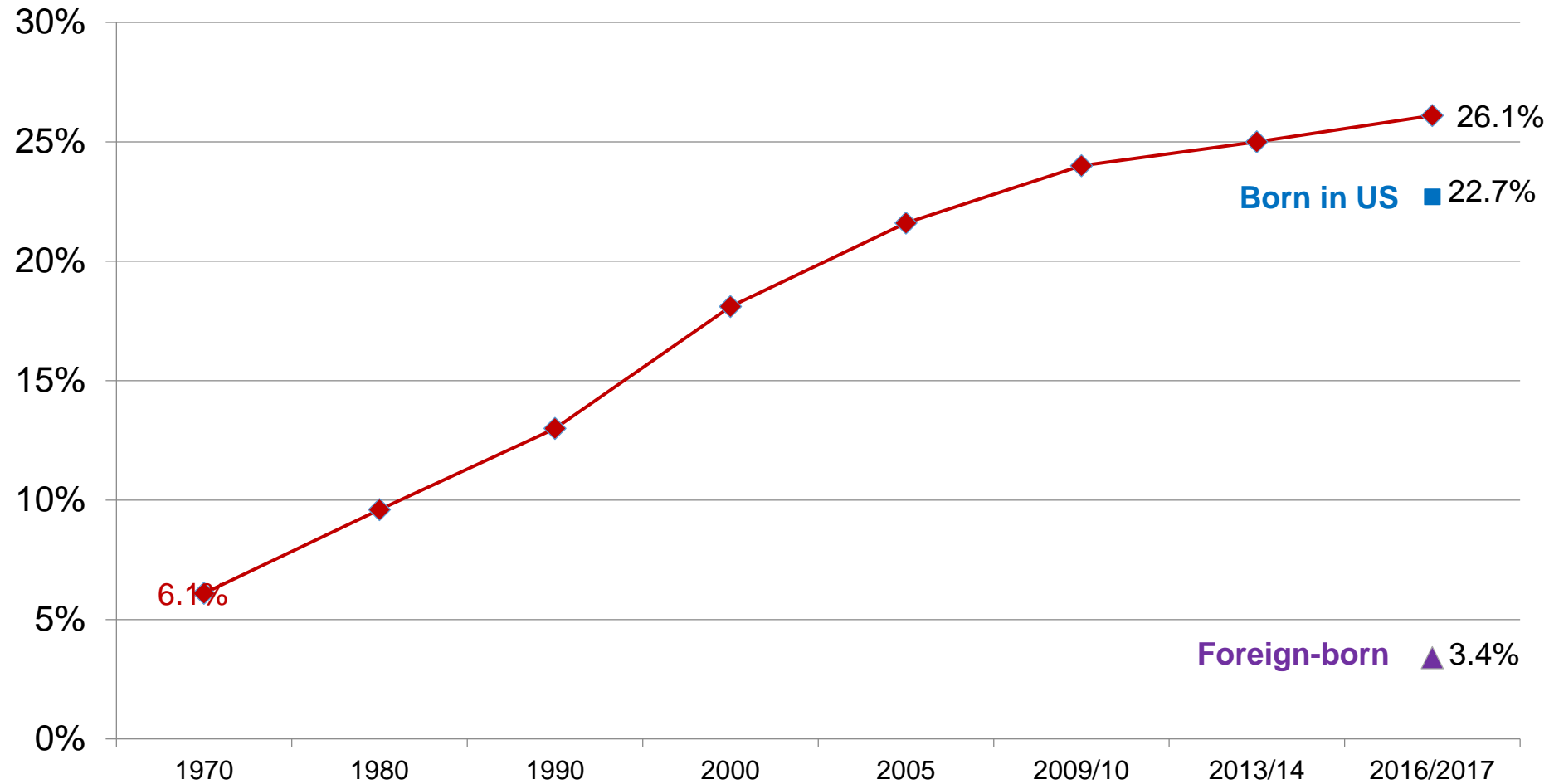
Child poverty would be higher without existing programs



Deep child poverty would be higher without existing programs

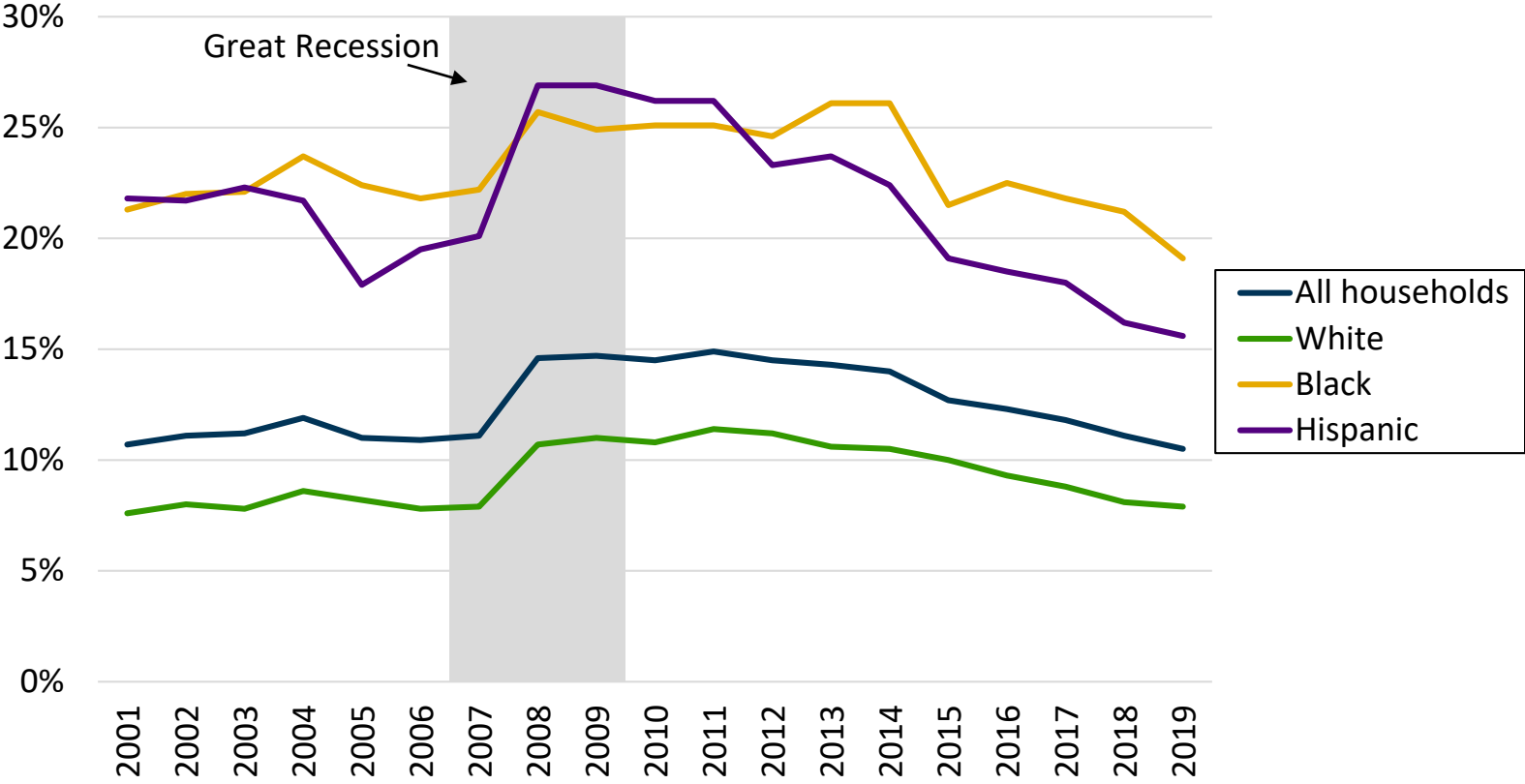


Children of immigrants are an increasing share of the U.S. child population; the vast majority of them are U.S. citizens



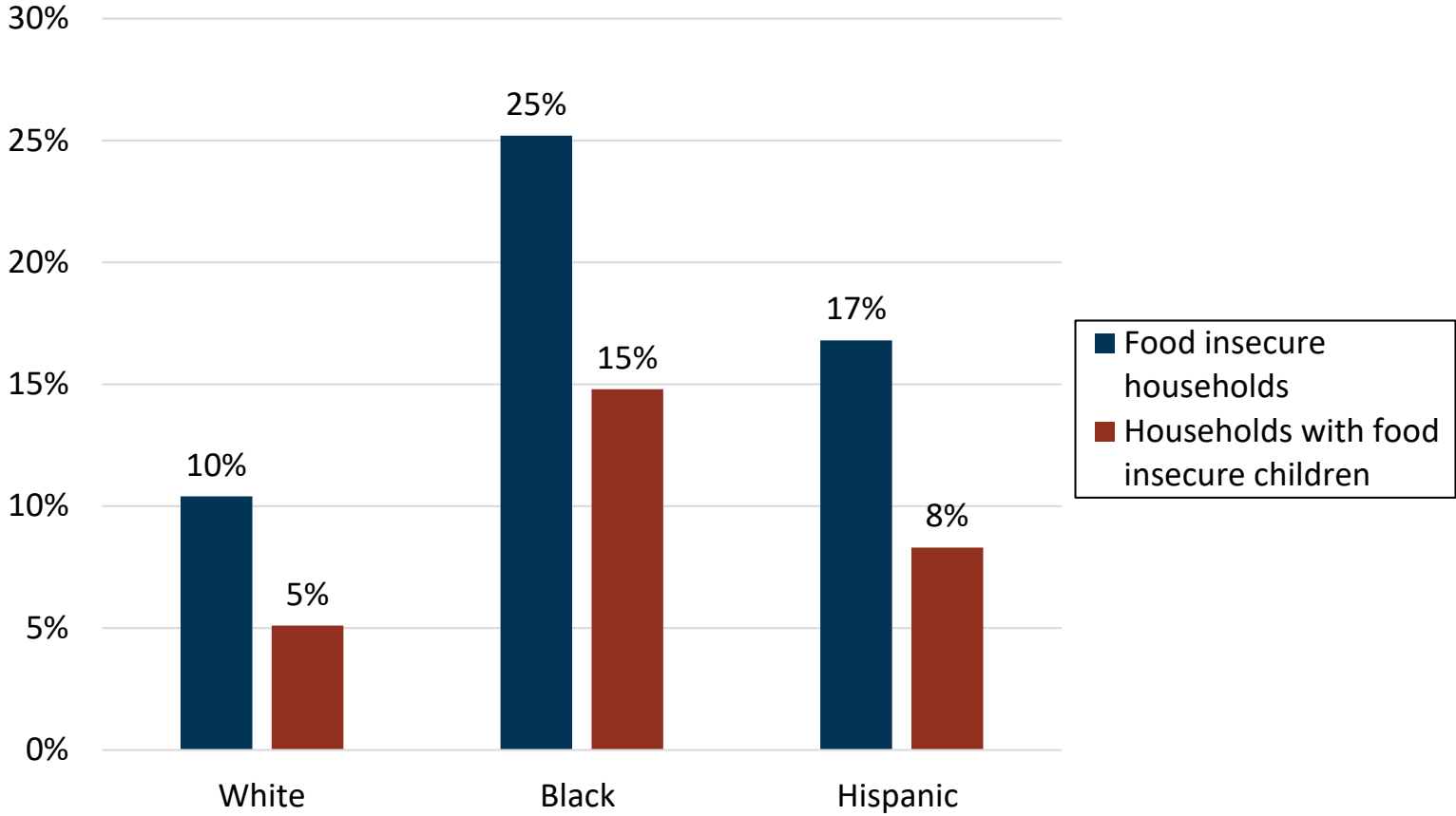
Note: Children of Immigrants include foreign-born children and those who have at least one foreign-born parent.
Sources: Urban Institute Tabulations from 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples (IPUMS); 2005 CPS, March Demographic and Economic Supplement and 2009/10, 2013/14 American Community Survey IPUMS data.

Policy need: Food insecurity for all households



Source: USDA Economic Research Service's calculations of Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data.

Policy need: Food insecurity for households with children



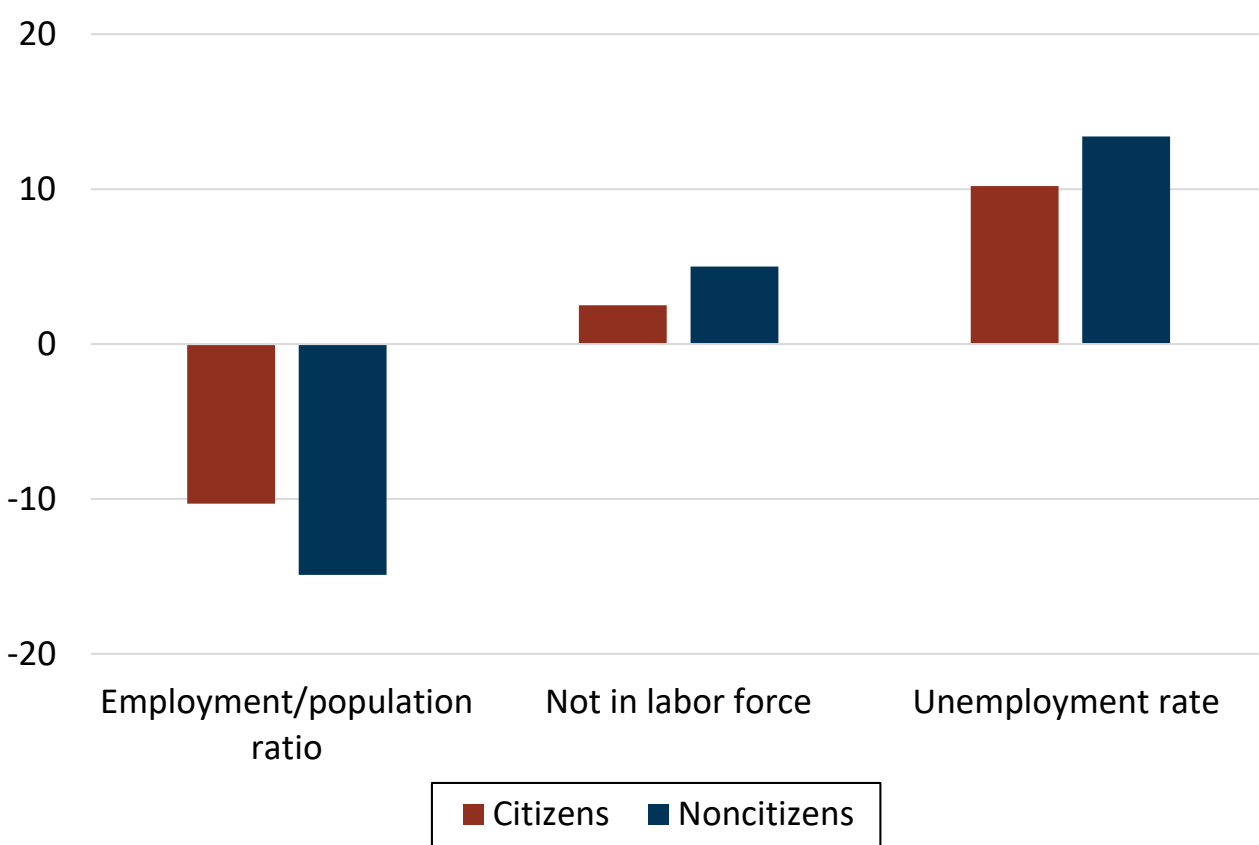
Source: Coleman-Jensen et al., 2019

Policy history

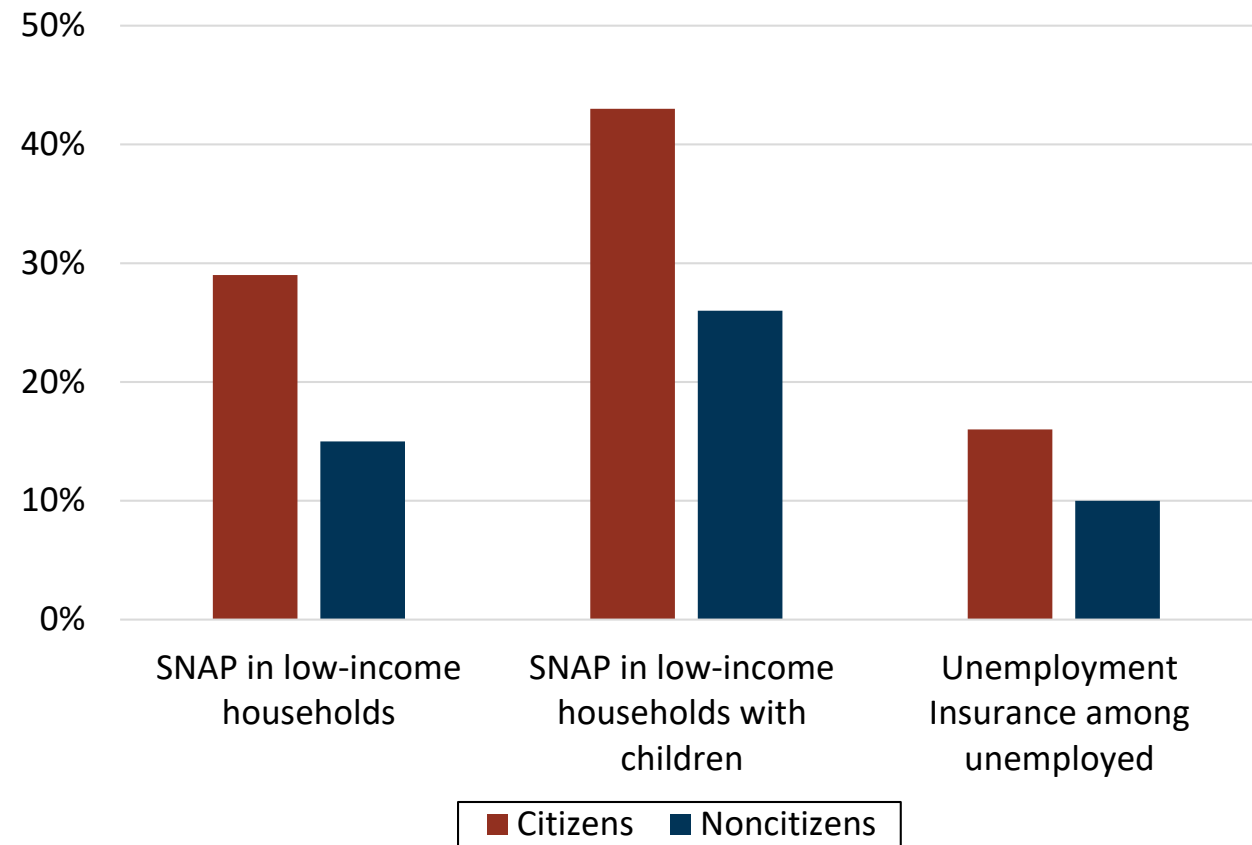
- 1964: Food Stamp Act passed
- 1971: Established uniform work registration requirements
- 1996: Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Personal Responsibility Act
- 1996: PRWORA, additional work requirements added
- 1997-1998: States expand eligibility to some immigrants
- 2002: Farm Bill restores eligibility for many qualified immigrants
- 2019: New “public charge” rule factor in the use SNAP benefits in determining admission to the U.S. and change of status

Policy access: Differential impacts of COVID-19 for citizens and noncitizens

Change in labor market outcomes (Feb to Apr 2020)



Safety Net Uptake (2018)



Source: East, Hoynes, & Watson, 2020



Policy components that create access barriers

- 5 year ban for legal immigrants; undocumented immigrants not eligible
- Deeming of sponsor's income
- Calculation of benefits for mixed status families
- Administrative burden: Document verification for proof of income, birth certificates, and social security numbers
- Inadequate translation services for caseworkers, websites, forms
- Public charge rules
- ICE enforcement of Secure Communities
- Both overly complex system and “fear factor” may limit access

Policy components: work requirements

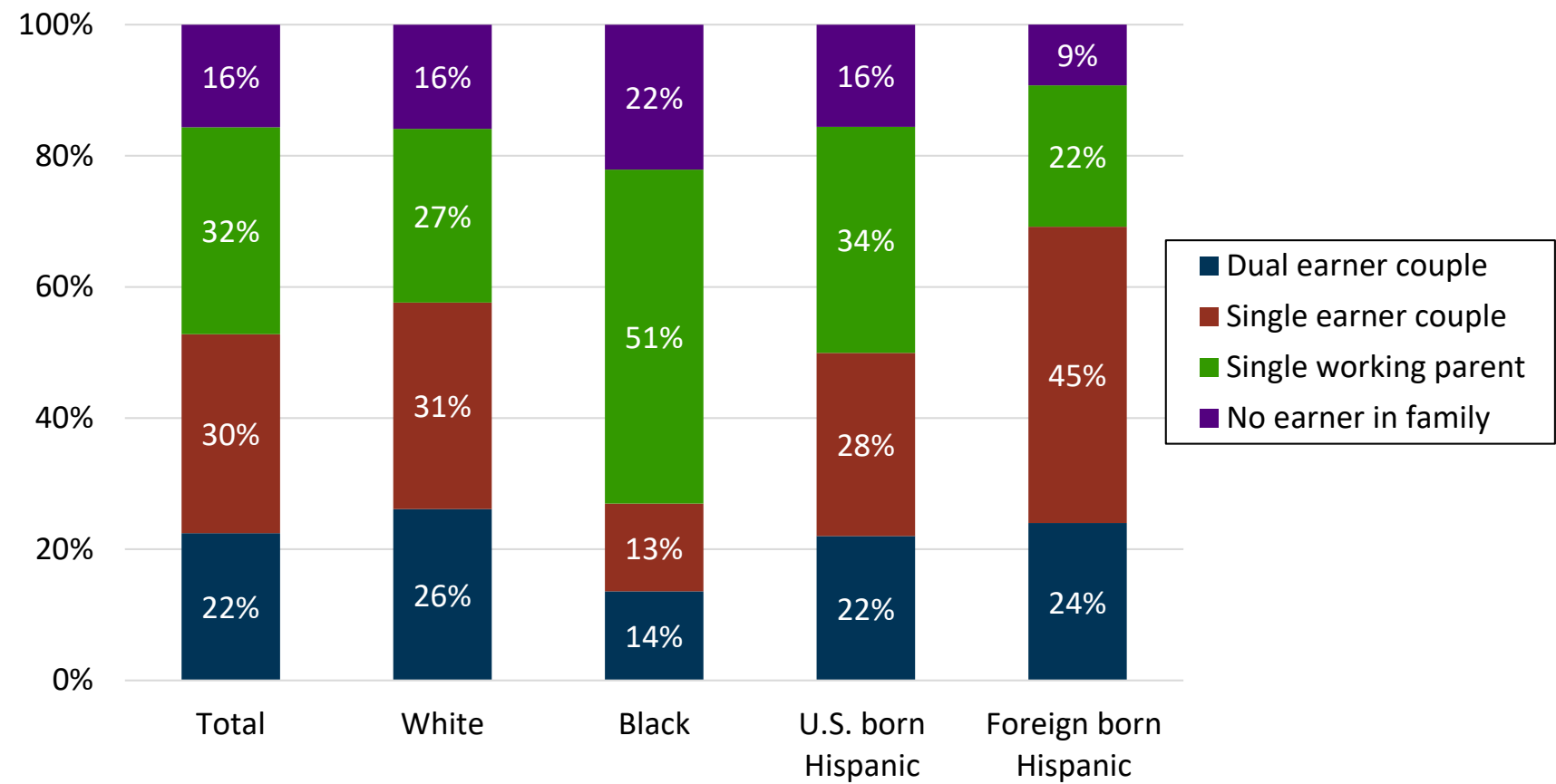
Almost all abled bodied adults, ages 16 to 59, with and without a dependent children must meet work requirements.

Individuals are excused from general work requirements if they:

- Work at least 30 hours a week;
- Meet work requirements for another program like TANF or unemployment insurance;
- Take care of a child under age 6 or an incapacitated person;
- Have a physical or mental limitation that prevents them from working;
- Participate regularly in an alcohol or drug treatment program; or
- Study in school or training program at least half time.



Policy components: work requirements can disproportionately exclude low-income Hispanic families



Source: Authors' calculations of the Current Population Survey, 2016-2019.



Research evidence

- SNAP is effective for reducing food insecurity of households with children (Gundersen et al, 2017) and has long-term positive health impacts for children across the life course (Hoynes et al., 2016).
- SNAP is one of the most important programs to substantially reduce immigrant families in poverty and deep poverty (Tiehen et al, 2015; NASEM, 2019).
- Among US born children living in immigrant families eligible for SNAP, restricting parents' eligibility, reduces children's participation by 50% (East, 2018).
- Immigrant mothers' eligibility for SNAP improves health outcomes for U.S. born children in immigrant families at ages 6 to 16 (East, 2018).

Policy research recommendations



- At a minimum, data collection and reporting should include race/ethnicity and nativity
- Evaluate families' access and outcomes across multiple programs by race/ethnicity and nativity
- Policy logic and capacity issues considered with research evidence when evaluating effectiveness

Appendix

Policy Equity Analysis steps and equity-focused questions: Logic

Policy Assessment Steps	Equity-Focused Questions
Historical Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are racial/ethnic disparities considered in the policy’s justification and development? • Does the policy change over time to address any documented racial/ethnic exclusionary practices or barriers to participation?
Primary purpose and other goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are racial/ethnic disparities discussed in the policy’s targeted outcomes? • Is discrimination against particular racial/ethnic groups addressed? • Does the theory of change explicitly account for the different circumstances of particular racial/ethnic groups?
Targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do eligibility requirements disproportionately exclude racial/ethnic groups? • Does the policy target funding and enrollment by characteristics correlated with racial/ethnic groups (e.g., income, wealth, poverty, health)? • Does the policy target access in terms of affordability that disproportionately affect racial/ethnic groups?
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are historical outcome and participation data available by race/ethnicity? • Have racial/ethnic policy assessments already been conducted?

Example sources: Original legislation, reauthorizing legislation, regulations, peer-reviewed published accounts of legislative history

Policy Equity Analysis steps and equity-focused questions: Capacity

Policy Assessment Steps	Equity-Focused Questions
Policy eligibility and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there racial/ethnic differences in the need for the policy? • Does the policy serve the total eligible population by race/ethnicity? • What is the extent of racial/ethnic differences in unmet need (need/eligible) and is it concentrated in areas with high racial/ethnic segregation? • To what extent do waiting lists, utilization and turnover vary by need and by race/ethnicity?
Policy Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are resources allocated to target outreach to racial/ethnic populations with barriers to participation? • Is there supplemental public/private funding for culturally relevant services targeting particular racial/ethnic populations? • Are resources channeled towards policy enhancements or expansions that could reduce racial/ethnic disparities?
Policy/services implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do implementation practices differentially affect administrative burden by race/ethnicity (e.g., language barriers, document requirements)? • Is there variation in quality or dosage by race/ethnicity? • Are evidence-based practices relevant to different racial/ethnic populations available and used? • Are outcome assessments and monitoring standards appropriate for different racial/ethnic populations (e.g., language, test settings)?
Coordination/ Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the service components coordinated within the program to more effectively serve the specialized needs of specific racial/ethnic populations? • Does the program include a collaborative aspect (i.e., across departments, levels of government, sectors) in order to more effectively address racial/ethnic disparities?
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are policy waiting lists, participation, quality, and dosage of services data available by race/ethnicity? • Is funding data available to quantify racial funding gaps?

Example sources: Regulations, Congressional appropriations and budgets, program administrative data, program participant and provider survey data, U.S. Census Bureau data, qualitative interviews with technical assistance providers.

Policy Equity Analysis steps and equity-focused questions: Research evidence

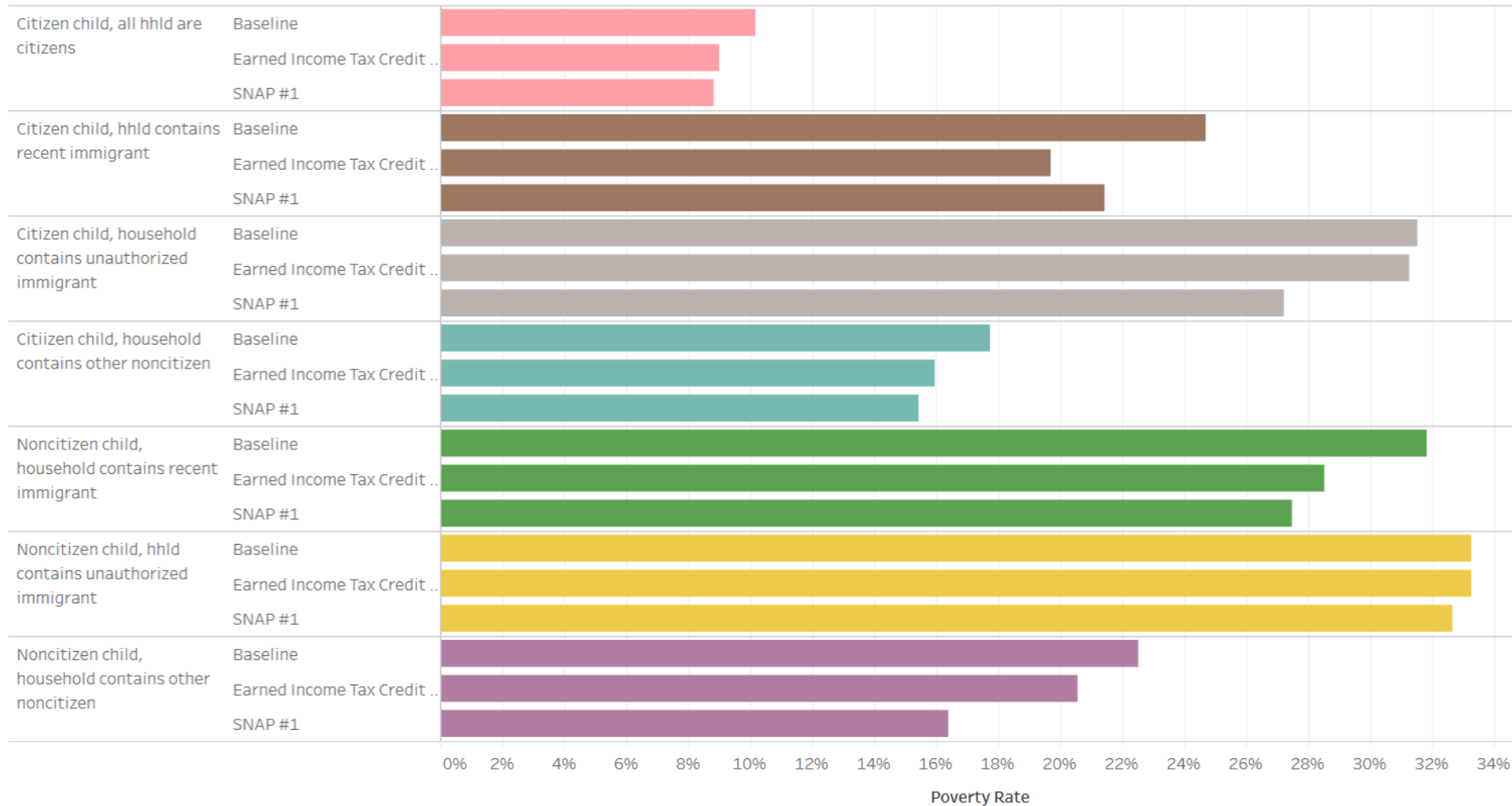
Policy Assessment Steps	Equity-Focused Questions
Rigorous evidence of policy (or expanded policy) effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the findings from subgroup analyses by race/ethnicity for short- and long-term impacts? • What are the findings from analyses of racial/ethnic disparities in outcomes between the most and least vulnerable participant subgroups? • What are the findings from analyses of reduction in racial/ethnic disparities in outcomes between participants and other population groups? • Are there any documented unintended effects that vary by race/ethnicity? • Does the research design and policy evaluation include input and interpretation of results from affected/targeted groups?
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does available data document how implementation procedures differ by subgroups of participants or by sites that serve different race/ethnic populations? • Are a racially/ethnically diverse group of policy participants interviewed about policy effectiveness and enhancements?
Cost effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do cost studies simulate different program components and eligibility scenarios that account for differential unmet need of racial/ethnic subgroups? • Are equity weights focused on race/ethnicity used in cost-effectiveness studies (in primary models or as part of sensitivity analyses)? • What is the funding gap to serve the eligible population? If the entire eligible population is not served, how much additional funding would be needed to serve it?
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do data collection and analyses include findings by race/ethnicity of participants, family members, or staff? • Is relevant outcome and implementation data broken down by race/ethnicity?

Example sources: Experimental studies, quasi-experimental studies, systematic literature reviews, implementation evaluations

SPM poverty changes under 10 NAS policies (2 versions each): 2015

◀
SPM Poverty Rates, baseline and 20 policies
▶
Percent change in poverty rates between baseline and 20 policies

SPM Child Poverty Rates, Baseline vs. 20 Policies: 2015



Select Poverty Level

Deep Poverty
 Poverty

SELECT POLICIES

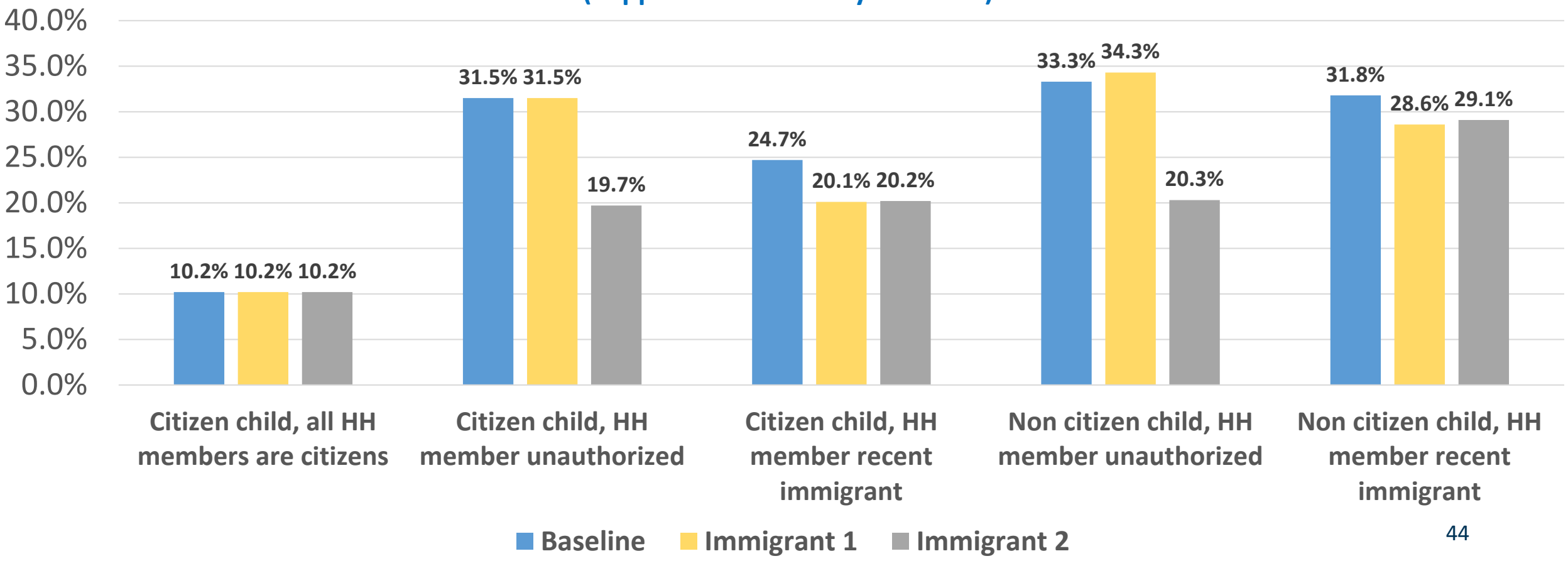
(Multiple values)

- Baseline
- Child Allowance #1
- Child Allowance #2
- Child Care #1
- Child Care #2
- Child Support Assurance #1
- Child Support Assurance #2
- Earned Income Tax Credit #1
- Earned Income Tax Credit #2
- Housing Voucher #1
- Housing Voucher #2
- Immigrant #1
- Immigrant #2
- Minimum Wage #1
- Minimum Wage #2
- SNAP #1
- SNAP #2
- Supplemental Security Income #1
- Supplemental Security Income #2
- Work Advance #1
- Work Advance #2



Restoring eligibility for recent and unauthorized immigrants reduces poverty for children in those families

Immigrant Policy #1 and Immigrant Policy #2: Poverty rates by citizen/immigration status (Supplemental Poverty Measure)





When immigrant eligibility is not built into policy design, policy changes do not benefit immigrant children

Cash Allowance #1 and #2: Poverty rates by citizen/immigration status (Supplemental Poverty Measure)

