Creating More Opportunity in the U.S. by Intervening Early and Often

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# Public Cares Most about Equal Opportunity

Poverty:
"It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves."

Inequality:
"Do you, yourself, think of America as divided into haves and have-nots, or don't you think of America that way?"

Opportunity:
"Our society should do what is necessary to make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity"
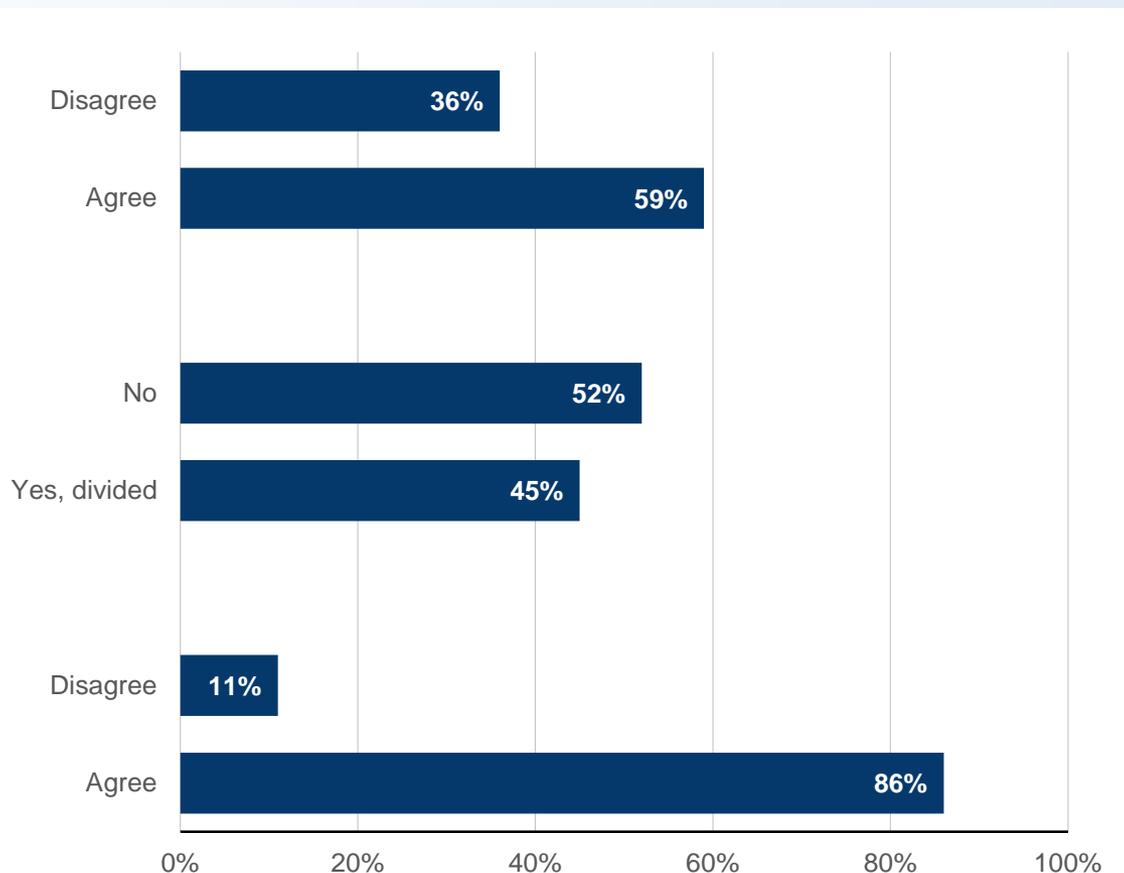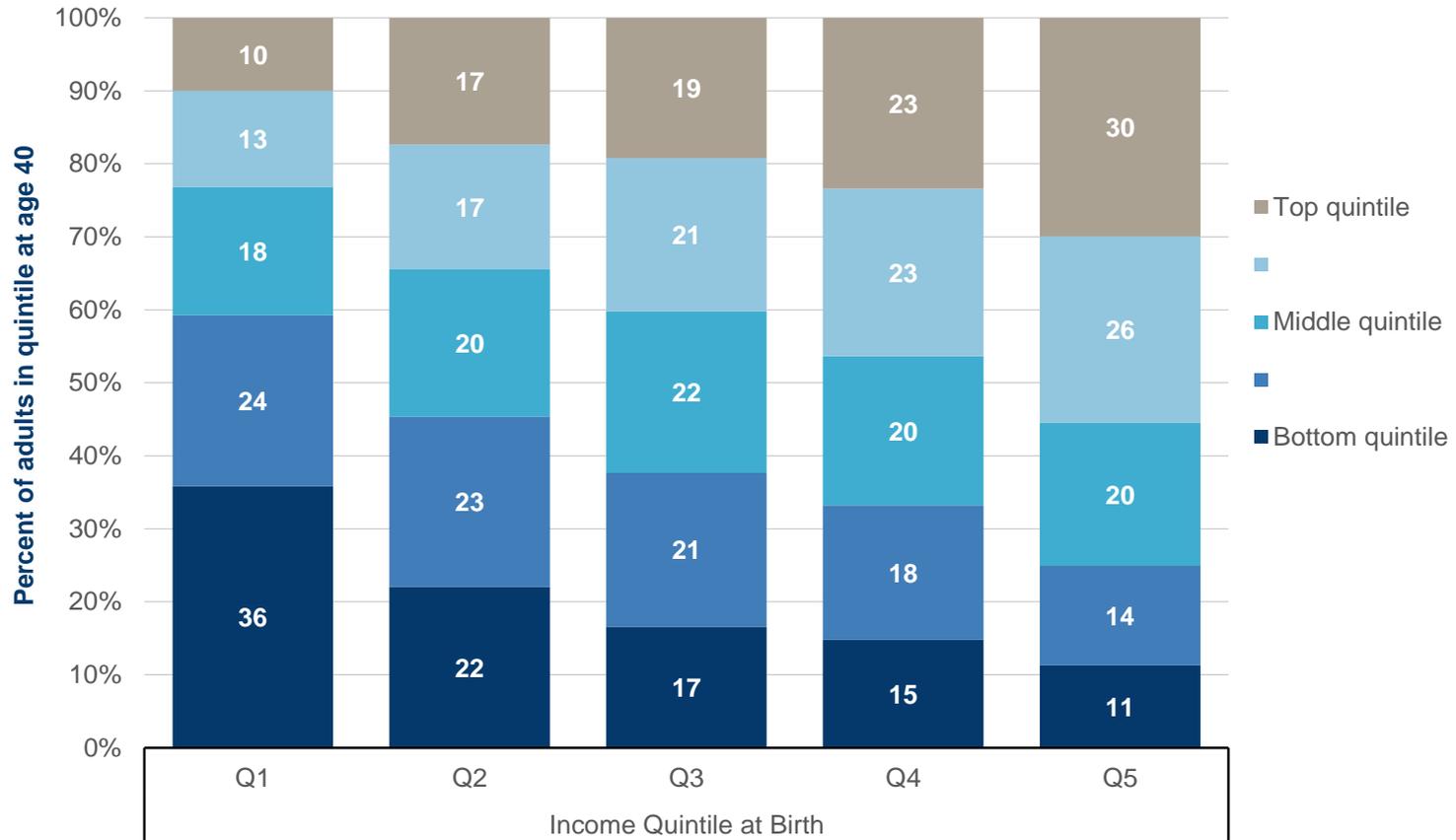

Note: Data from question 2 only available through 2011.
Source: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, "Trends in Political Values and Core Attitudes: 1978-2012."
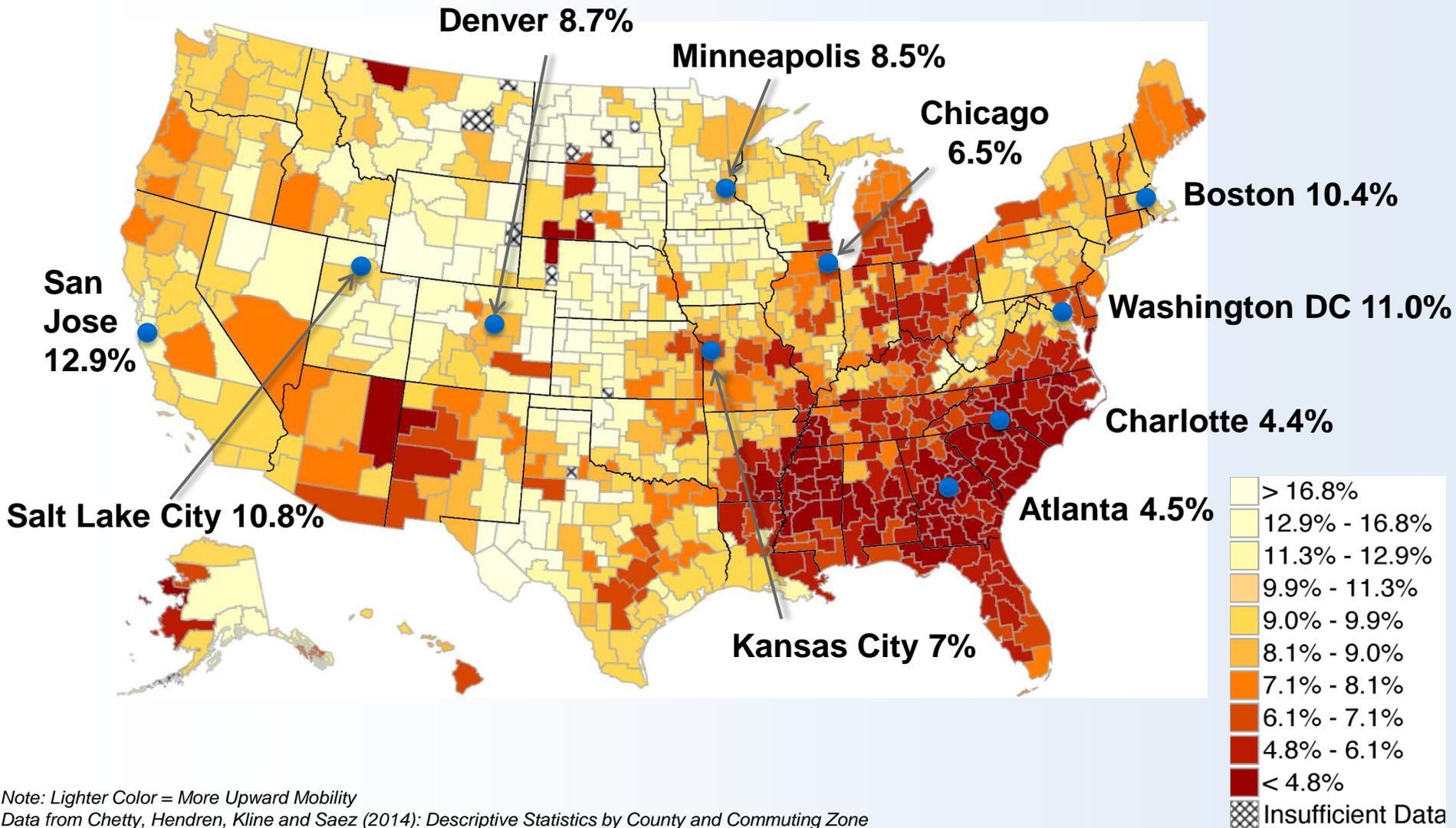
Intergenerational Mobility
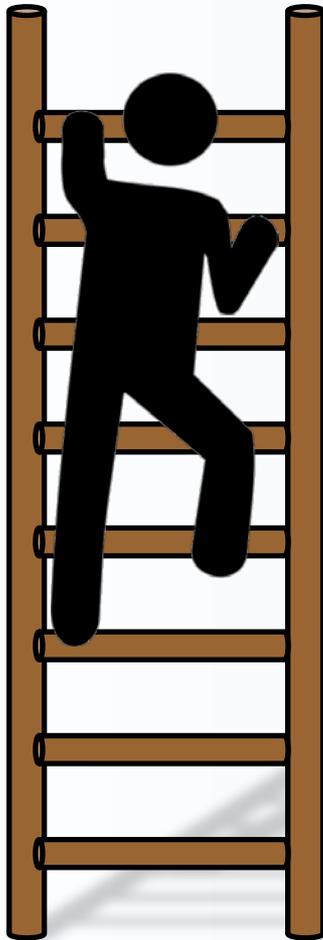

Social mobility matrix: U.S. overall

Source: Richard Reeves, "Saving Horatio Alger: Equality, Opportunity, and the American Dream." The Brookings Essay series. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

Chances of Reaching the Top Fifth Starting from the Bottom Fifth by Metro Area

Denver 8.7%

Minneapolis 8.5%

Chicago 6.5%

Boston 10.4%

San Jose 12.9%

Washington DC 11.0%

Salt Lake City 10.8%

Charlotte 4.4%

Atlanta 4.5%

Kansas City 7%

Legend:
- > 16.8%
- 12.9% - 16.8%
- 11.3% - 12.9%
- 9.9% - 11.3%
- 9.0% - 9.9%
- 8.1% - 9.0%
- 7.1% - 8.1%
- 6.1% - 7.1%
- 4.8% - 6.1%
- < 4.8%
- Insufficient Data

Note: Lighter Color = More Upward Mobility
Data from Chetty, Hendren, Kline and Saez (2014): Descriptive Statistics by County and Commuting Zone

Inequality May Affect Mobility

More equality
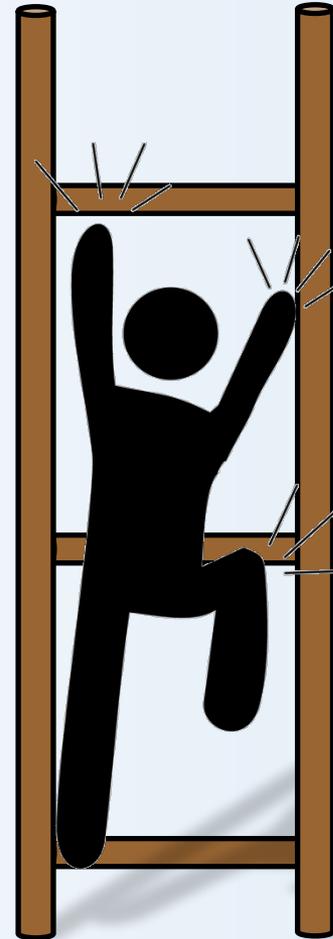
Less equality

Understanding Mobility

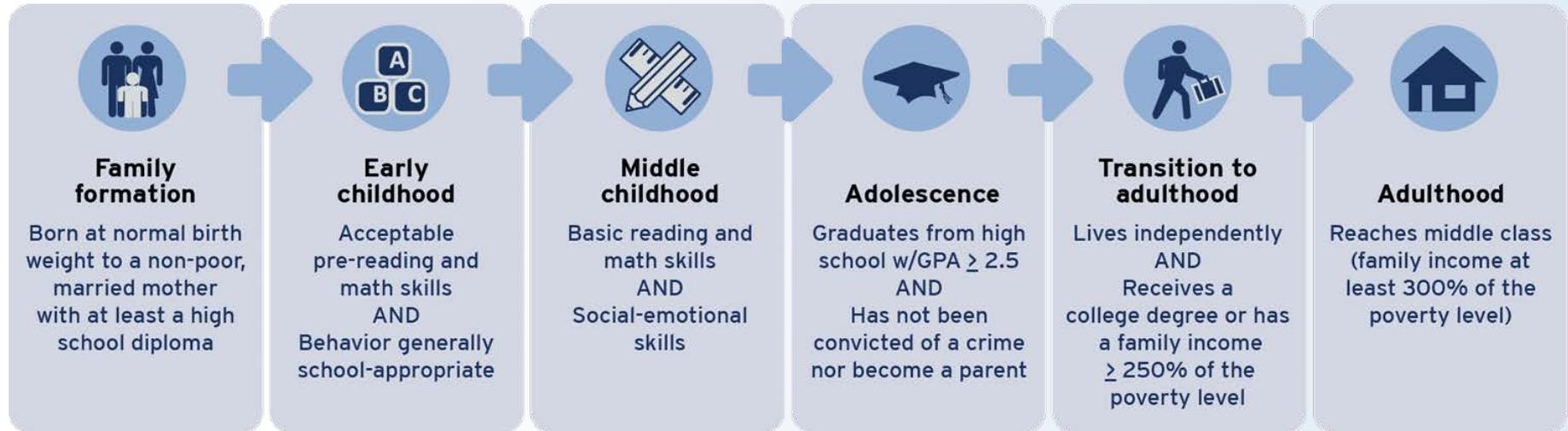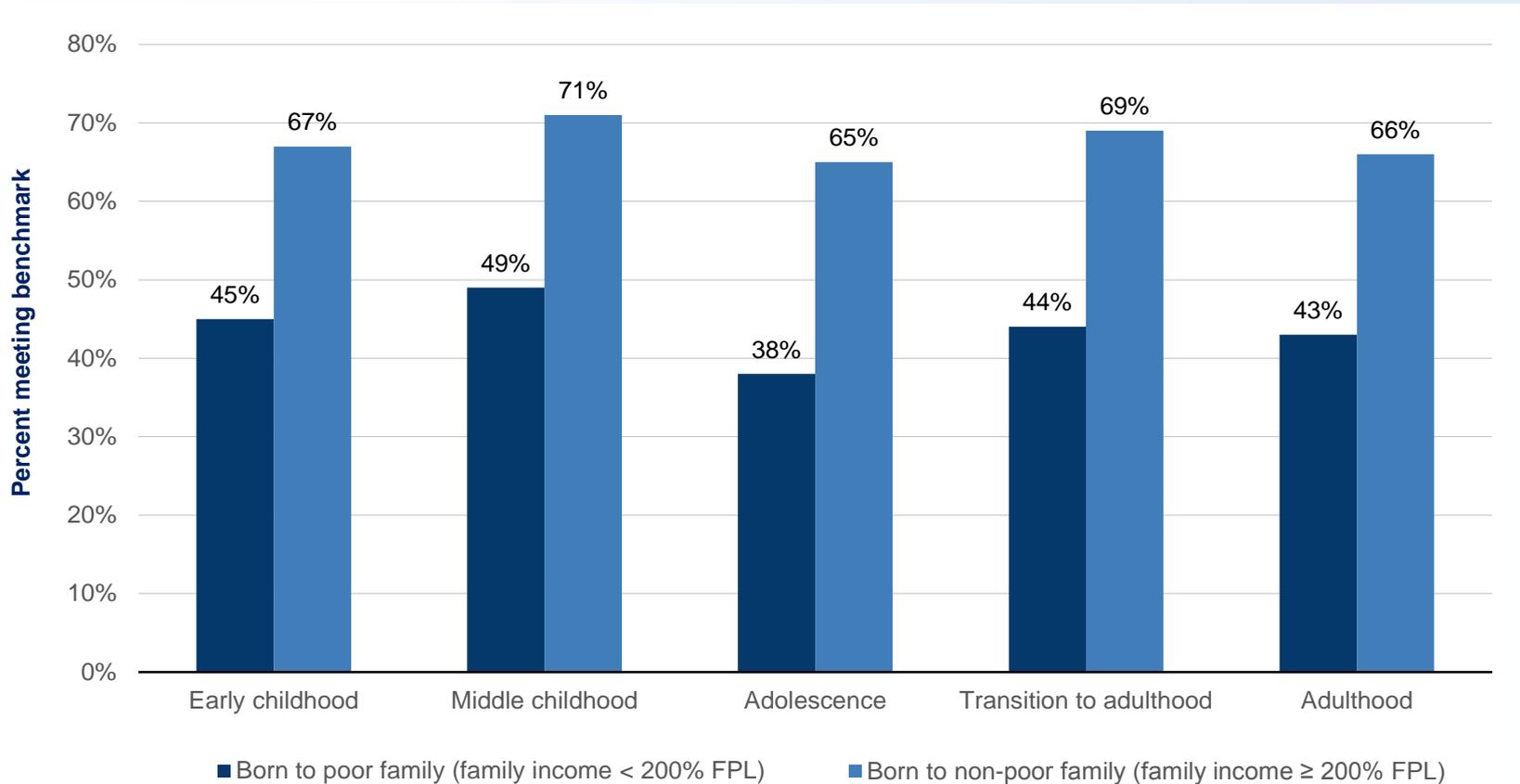- Why are some kids able to climb the ladder of opportunity while others can't?

- And what could we do to improve the chances of the less advantaged to get out of poverty and achieve the American Dream?

- The Social Genome Model (Brookings, Urban Institute, Child Trends) is an attempt to answer these questions.

A Life Cycle View of Mobility

Family formation
Born at normal birth weight to a non-poor, married mother with at least a high school diploma

Early childhood
Acceptable pre-reading and math skills AND Behavior generally school-appropriate

Middle childhood
Basic reading and math skills AND Social-emotional skills

Adolescence
Graduates from high school w/GPA $\geq$ 2.5 AND Has not been convicted of a crime nor become a parent

Transition to adulthood
Lives independently AND Receives a college degree or has a family income $\geq$ 250% of the poverty level

Adulthood
Reaches middle class (family income at least 300% of the poverty level)

Low-Income Children Falling Behind

Middle Class by Middle Age?

Blacks	28%
Bottom income quintile	35%
Hispanics	44%
Women	52%
ALL	55%
Men	58%
Whites	63%
Top income quintile	71%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

BROOKINGS
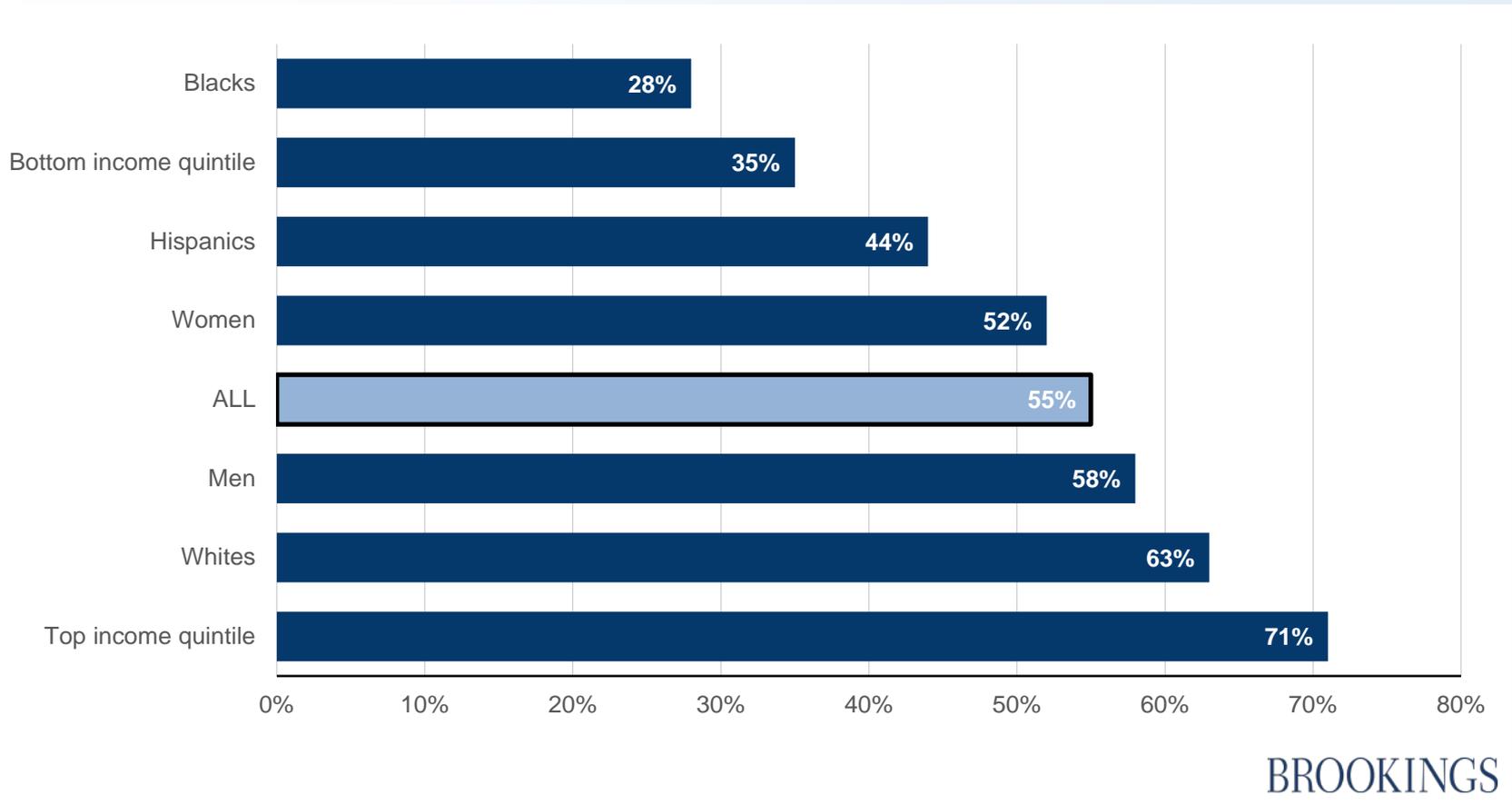
Intervening Early and Often

Life Stage	Intervention Model	Description	Level of Evidence	Adjusted Variable	Effect Size
Early Childhood	Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters	Biweekly home visits and group meetings to instruct and equip parents to be effective teachers for their children	Meets the DHHS criteria for an evidence-based program model	Reading	0.75 SD
				Hyperactivity	-0.68 SD
	Preschool	High-quality center-based preschool programs that provide educational services to children directly	Meta-analysis of quasi-experimental and randomized studies of early childhood center-based interventions (Camilli et al., 2010).	Reading	0.45 SD
				Math	0.45 SD
				Antisocial Behavior	-0.20 SD
Middle Childhood	Social Emotional Learning	A broad range of interventions that focus on improving behavioral, emotional, and relational competencies	Highest-rated i3 development application (2013)	Reading	0.36 SD
				Math	0.27 SD
	Success for All	A school-wide reform program with a strong emphasis on early detection and prevention of reading problems	Highest-rated i3 scale-up application (2010)	Antisocial Behavior	-0.22 SD
Adolescent	Talent Development	A comprehensive high school reform initiative aimed at reducing student dropout rates	Highest-rated i3 validation application (2010)	Reading	0.32 SD
				Math	0.65 SD

SGM Target Population: Low-income children (family income < 200% FPL)

# Success Rates by Stage by Income at Birth After Intervention at Multiple Stages for Kids Born Low-Income

BROOKINGS
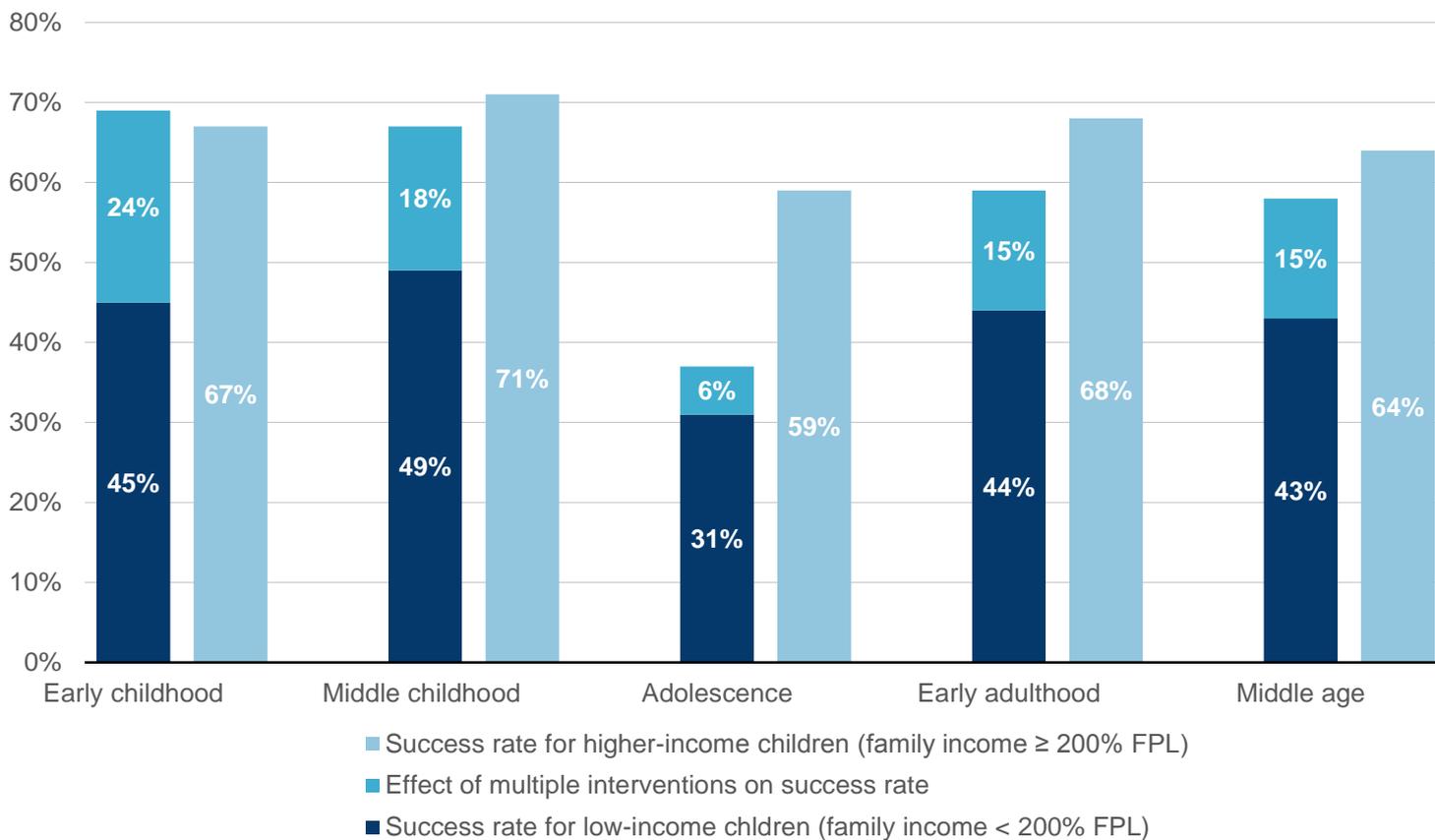
Summary of Results and Costs

Intervention	Marginal Lifetime Income Effect	Cost Per Child
HIPPY (Age 3-5)	$43,371	$3,500
Preschool (Age 3-5)	$45,651	$8,100
SFA and SEL (Age 6-11)	$47,594	$8,100
Talent Development (Age 14-18)	$68,574	$1,400
Total	$205,189	$21,100

Impacts on Racial Gaps

White-Black difference in success rate
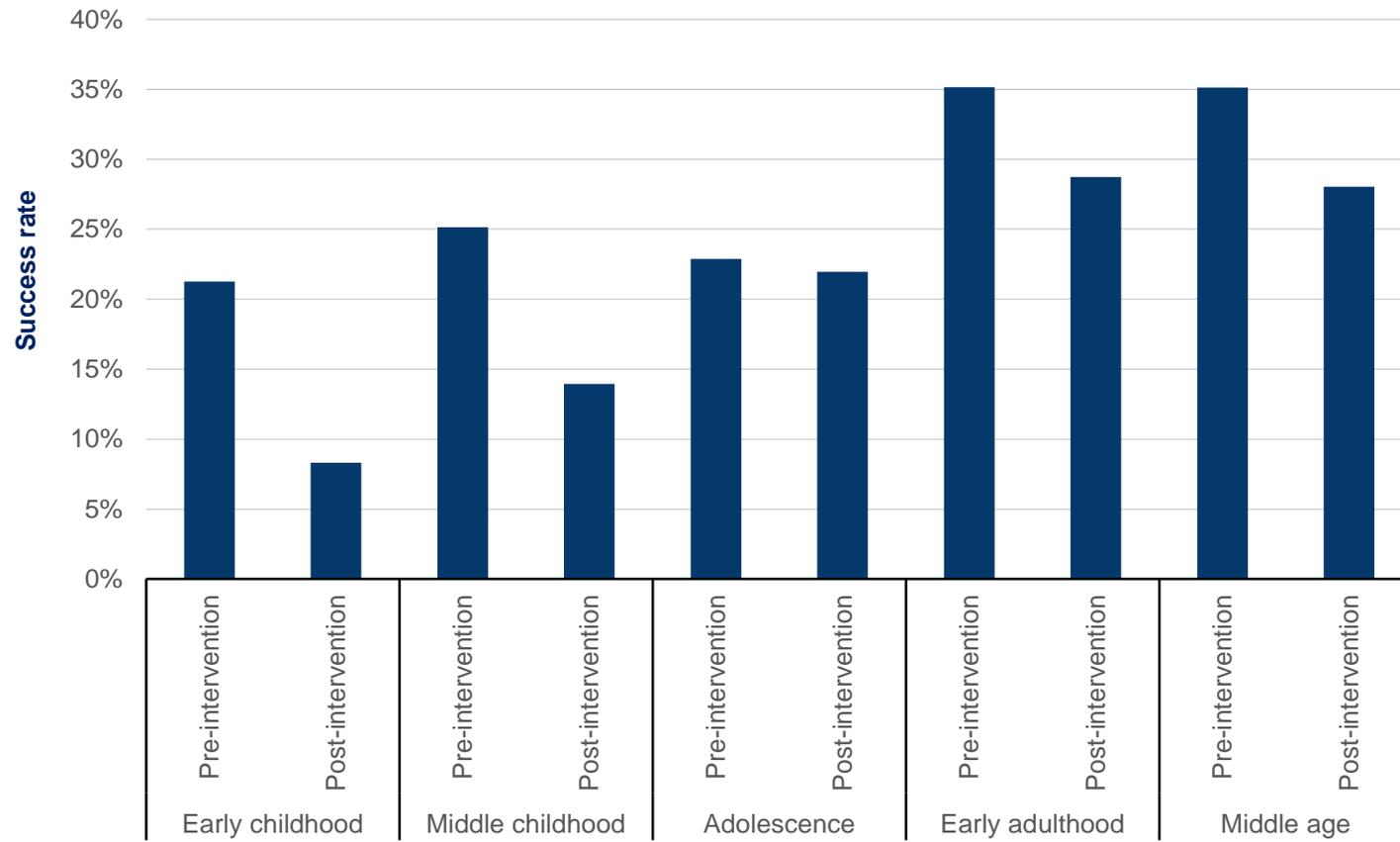
Conclusions

- U.S. poverty is high and social mobility low, especially in some communities and among low-income and Black children.

- Public more interested in providing opportunity than in redistributing income.

- We know how to improve the lives of low-income and minority children (the evidence-base exists)

- The problem is political will