

*Integrating the Life Course Perspective  
into a Local MCAH Program*



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MCHB Partnership Meeting  
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# Overview

- ✦ About Contra Costa County
- ✦ The Life Course Initiative
- ✦ Our Road Map
- ✦ Building Economic Security Today (BEST)
- ✦ Challenges and Lessons Learned



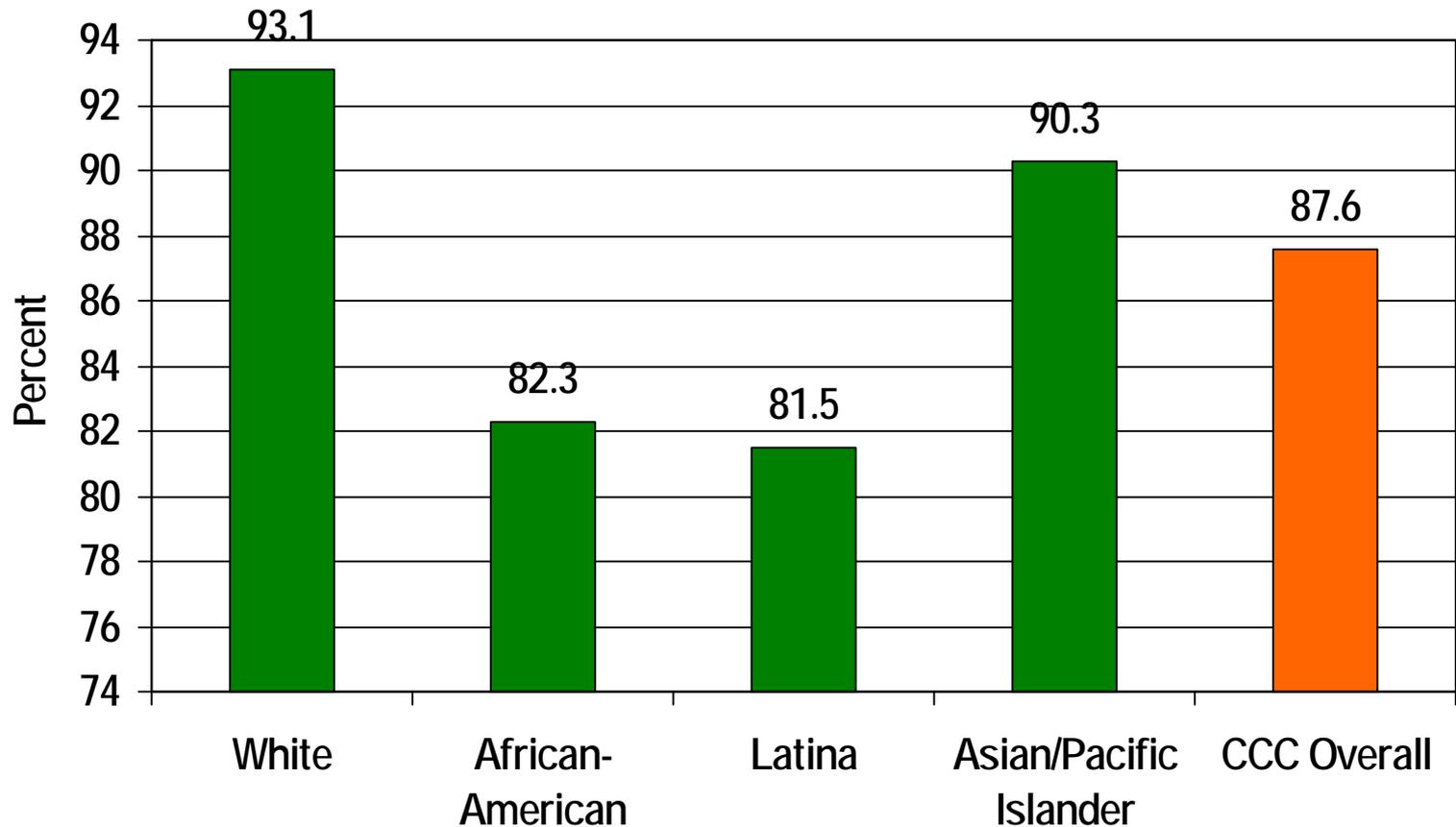
# Where is Contra Costa County?



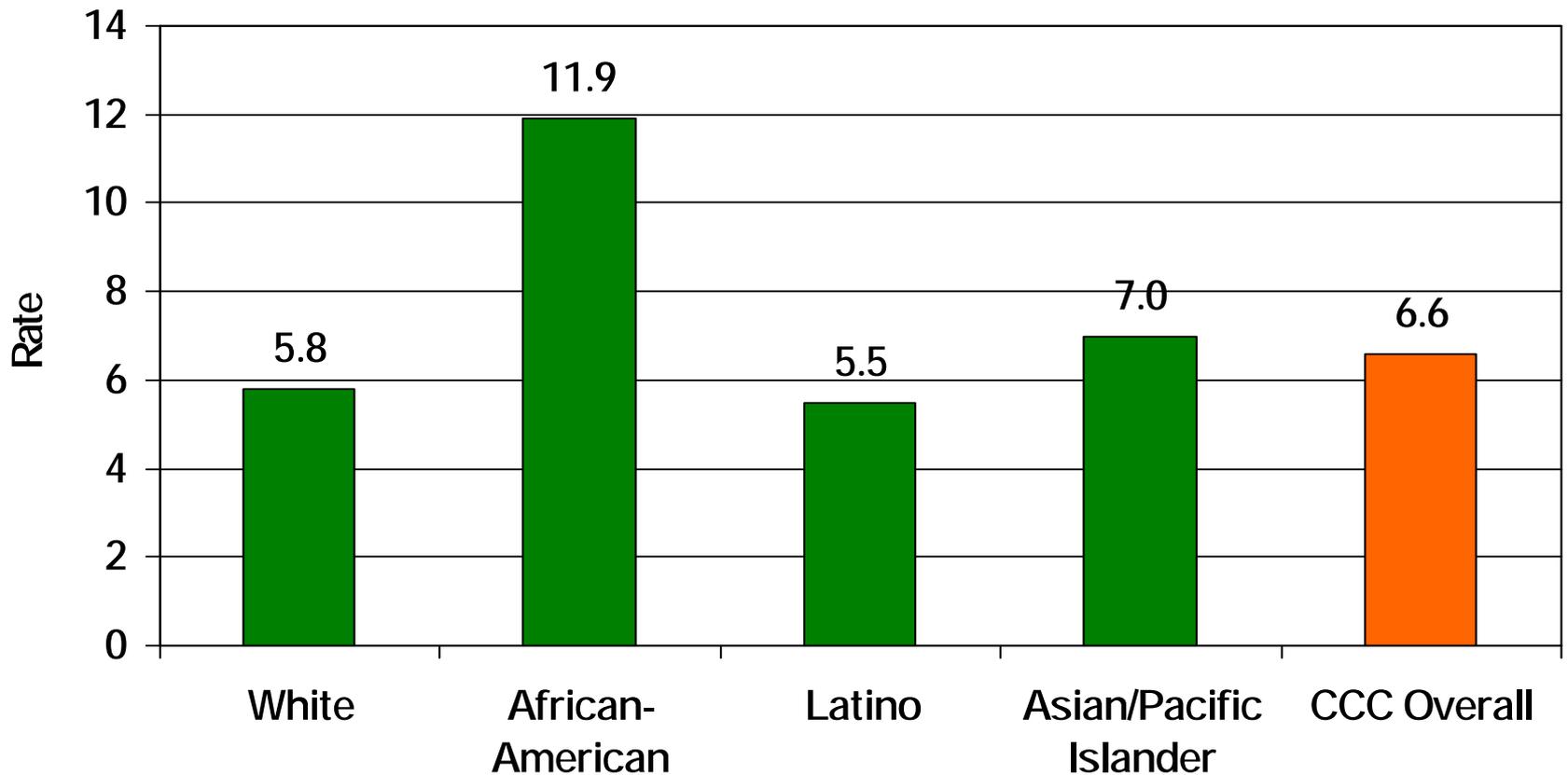
# Contra Costa Demographics

- ✚ County Population = 1,060,435
- ✚ 54% White, 22% Hispanic/Latino, 13% Asian, and 8% African American
- ✚ 19.6% of Contra Costa residents live below 200% of the poverty line
- ✚ About 13,500 births per year

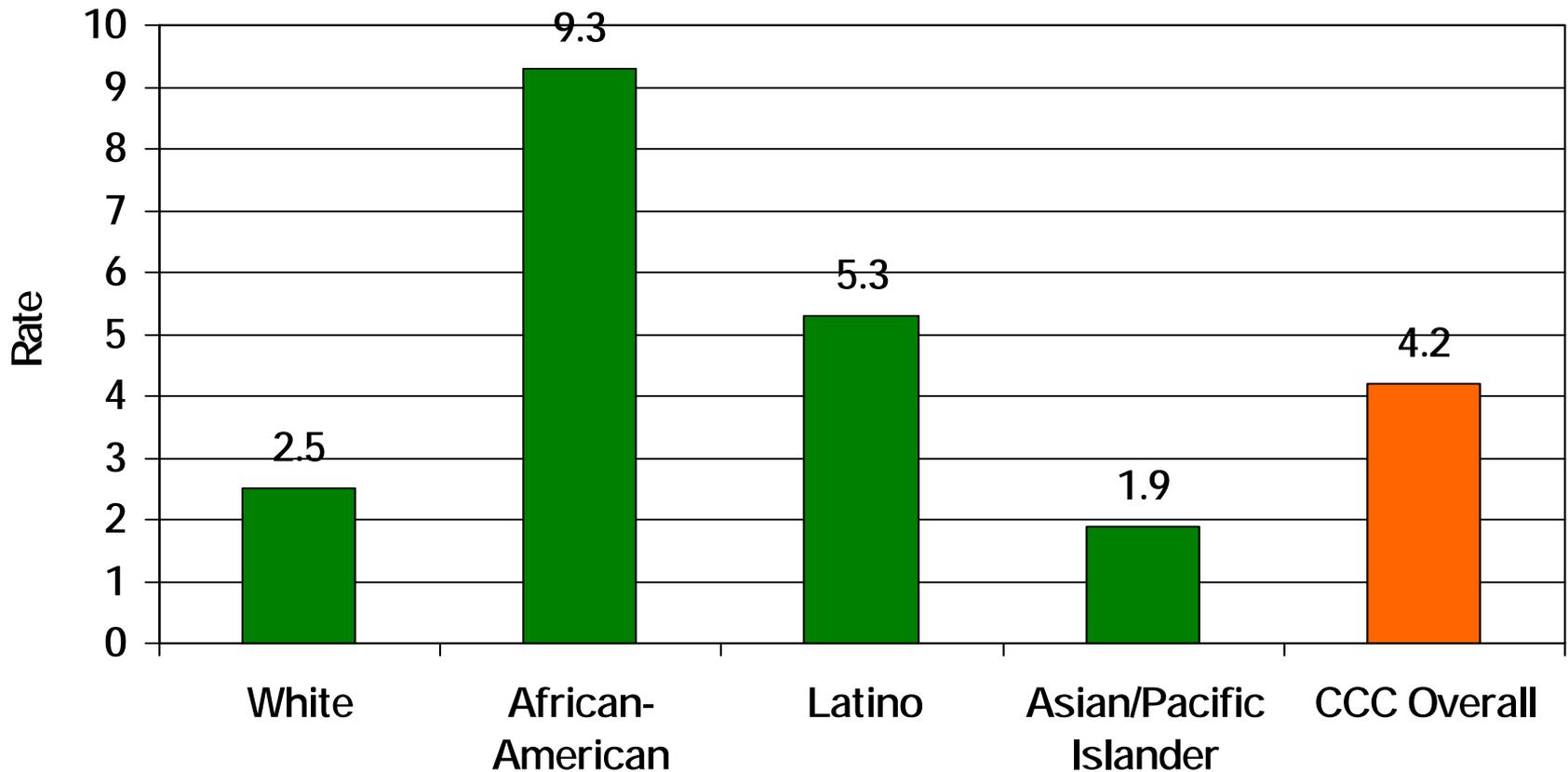
# Percent of Mothers who Received Early Prenatal Care, by Race/Ethnicity, Contra Costa, 2004-2006



# Rate of Low Birth Weight Births (per 100 live births), by Race/Ethnicity, Contra Costa, 2007



# Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births), by Race/Ethnicity, Contra Costa, 2004-2006



# The Life Course Initiative

- ✦ A 15-year initiative
- ✦ Launched in 2005
- ✦ The Life Course Perspective (Lu and Halfon)
- ✦ A 12-Point Plan to Close the Black-White Gap in Birth Outcomes (Lu, Kotelchuck, et al.)



# Life Course Initiative Goals

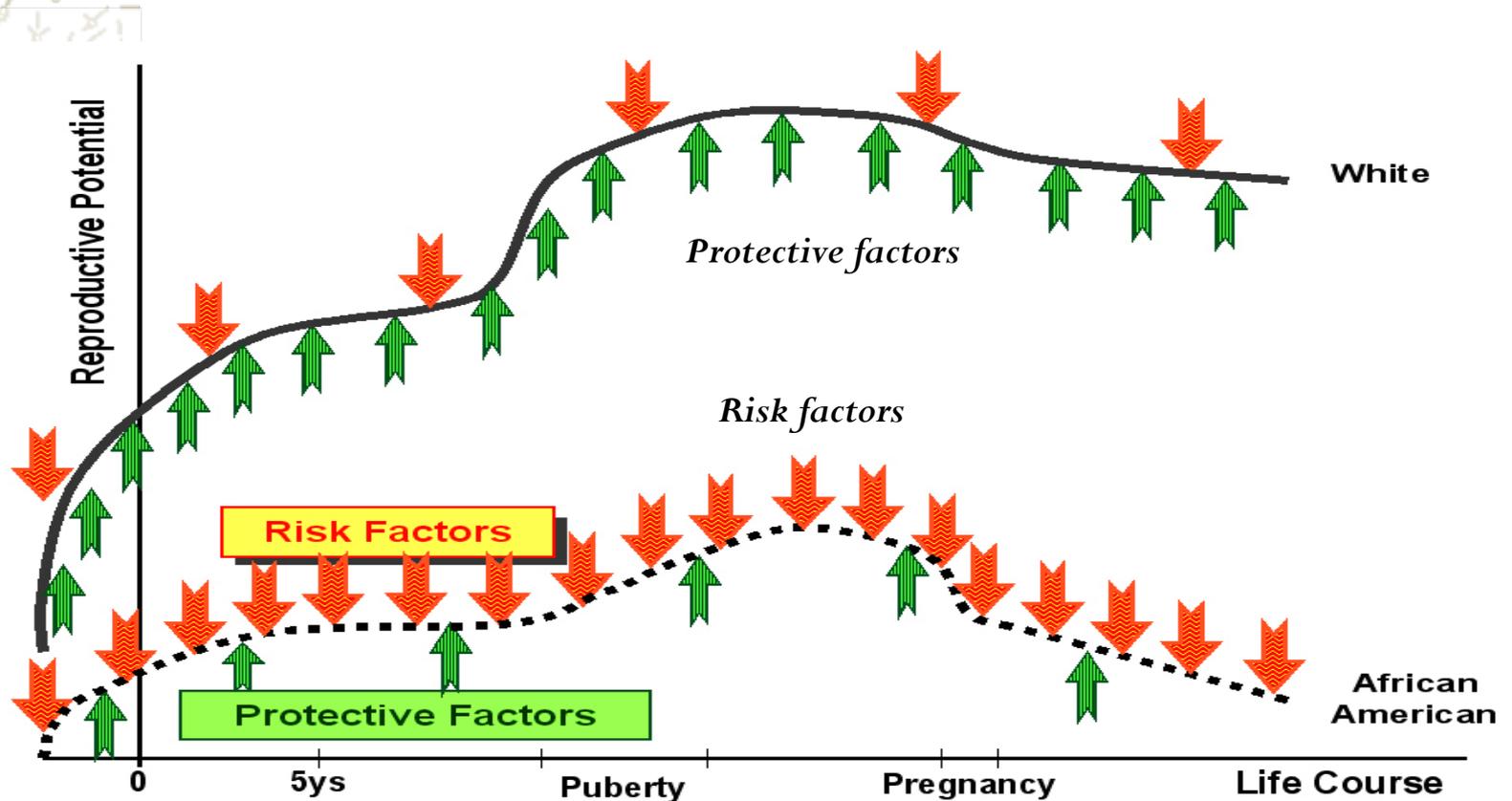
- ☀️ Reduce health disparities and health inequities
- ☀️ Optimize reproductive potential
- ☀️ Create a **paradigm shift** in MCH work

# Life Course Initiative Goals

☀ To change the health of a generation



# The Life Course Perspective (Lu and Halfon, 2003)



# Life Course Initiative Activities

- ☀ Staff education
- ☀ Laying the groundwork with higher- level management
- ☀ Interconception care
- ☀ Evaluation
- ☀ Developing a new intervention
- ☀ Created [Life Course Initiative website](#)

# Staff Education

- ✦ Theory of the Life Course Perspective (LCP)

- ✦ Life Course Game

- ✦ Life Course Activities

- ✦ 12-Point Plan

- ✦ Integrating the LCP into their work

- What are you currently doing that fits with the LCP?
- How can you integrate the LCP into future activities?

# Evaluation

- ✦ Established Life Course Initiative Data Team, which meets regularly
- ✦ Conducted survey of Family, Maternal and Child Health Programs staff
- ✦ Developed logic model and evaluation plan

# Our Road Map: A 12-Point Plan

- ✦ To close the Black-White gap in birth outcomes
- ✦ Beyond prenatal care
- ✦ Beyond individual-level interventions
- ✦ Beyond the medical model



# Traveling Many Paths to Health Equity in Contra Costa County



# ● Building Economic Security Today (BEST)

Reduce disparities and inequities in health outcomes by improving financial security and stability



# Why Financial Stability?

✦ *Unnatural Causes*

✦ Wealth = Health/Social Gradient of Health

✦ 12 Point Plan

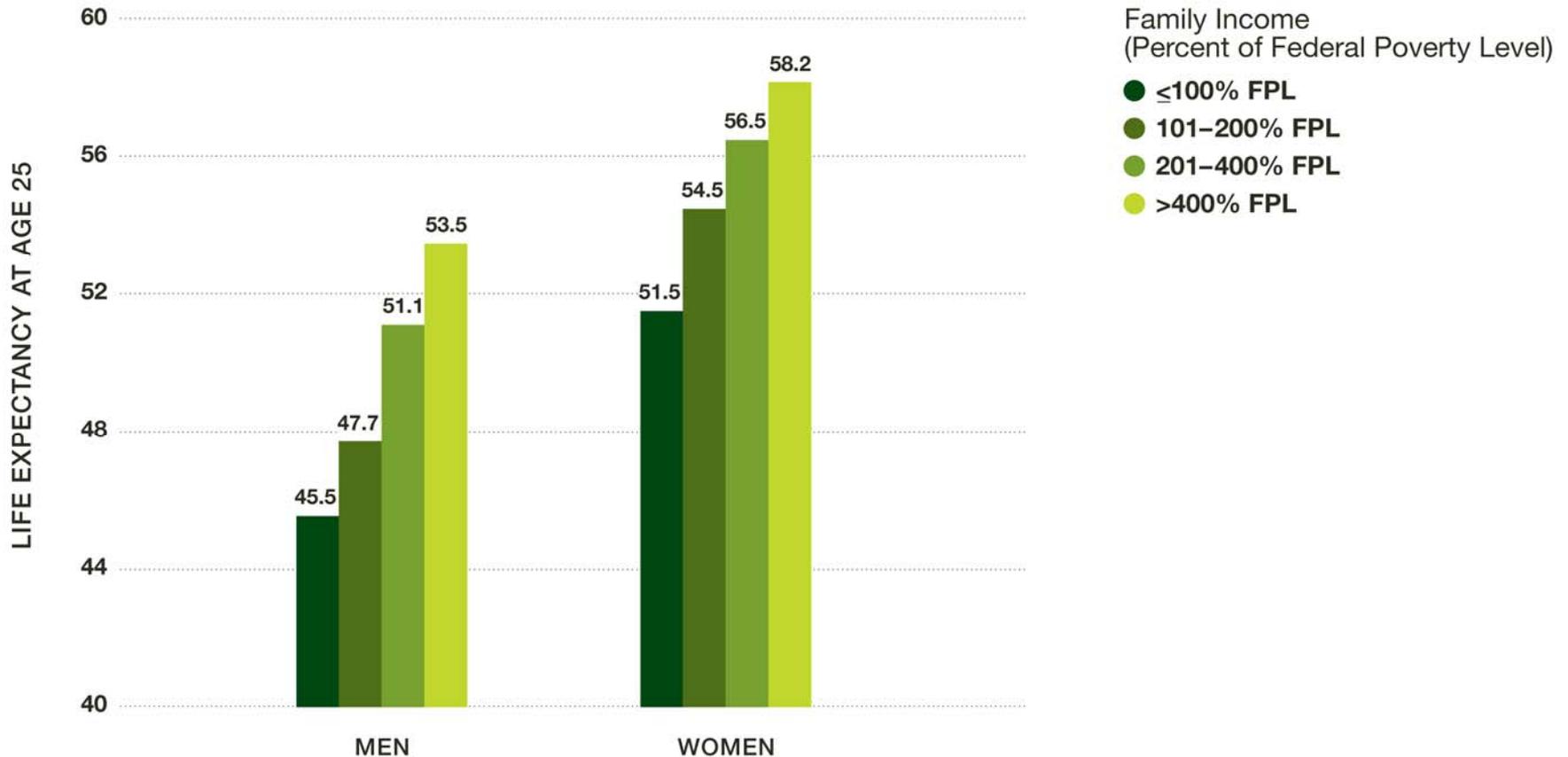
- Reduce Poverty

- Support Working Mothers and Families

✦ Feasibility

# Higher Income, Longer Life

Adult life expectancy\* increases with increasing income. Men and women in the highest-income group can expect to live at least six and a half years longer than poor men and women.



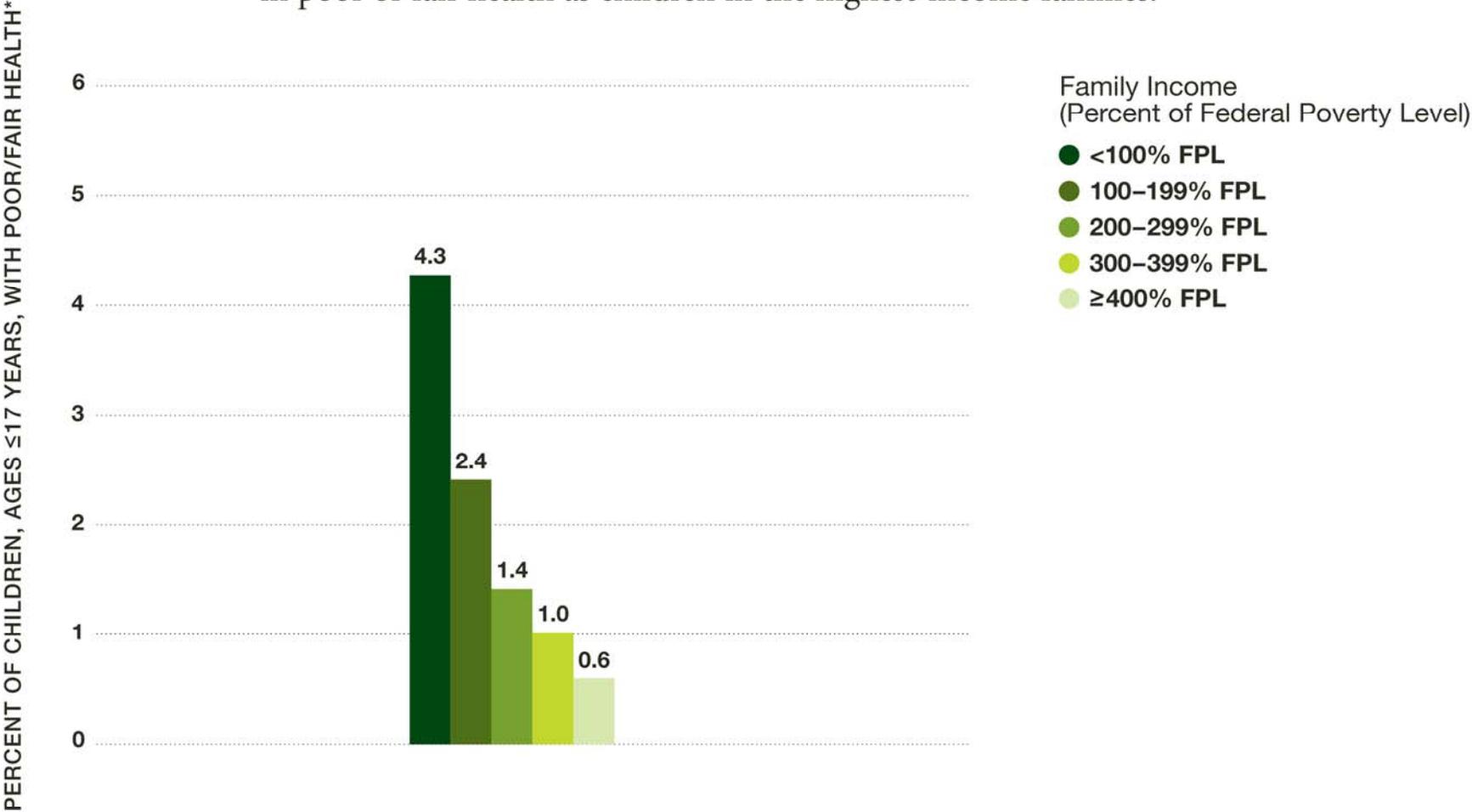
Prepared for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation by the Center on Social Disparities in Health at the University of California, San Francisco; and Norman Johnson, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Source: National Longitudinal Mortality Study, 1988-1998.

\*This chart describes the number of years that adults in different income groups can expect to live *beyond* age 25. For example, a 25-year-old woman whose family income is at or below 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level can expect to live 51.5 more years and reach an age of 76.5 years.

# Parents' Income, A Child's Chances for Health

Children in poor families are about seven times as likely to be in poor or fair health as children in the highest-income families.

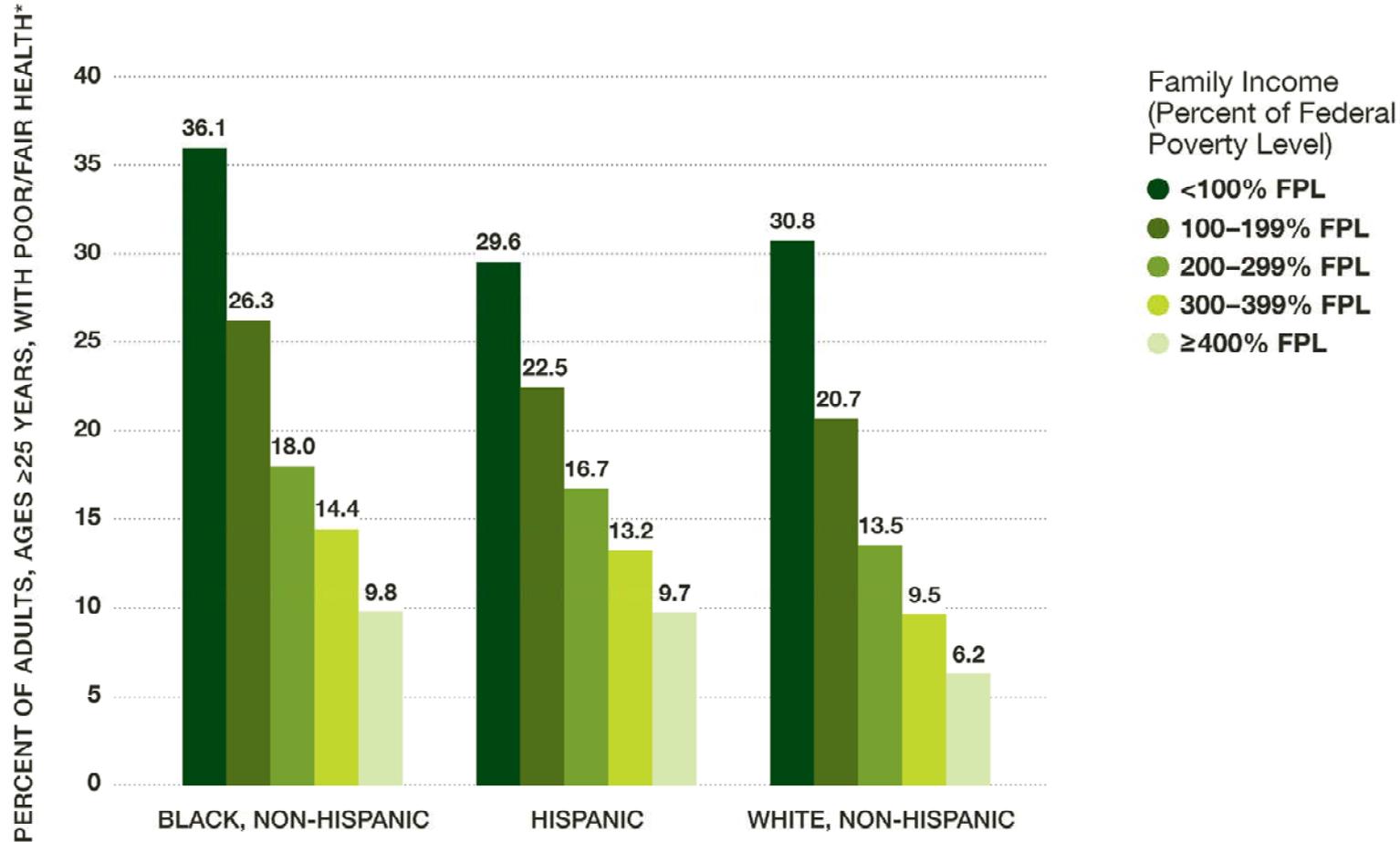


Prepared for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation by the Center on Social Disparities in Health at the University of California, San Francisco.  
Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2001-2005.

\*Age-adjusted

# Income Is Linked With Health Regardless of Racial or Ethnic Group

Differences in health status by income do not simply reflect differences by race or ethnicity; differences in health can be seen within each racial or ethnic group. Both income and racial or ethnic group matter.



Prepared for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation by the Center on Social Disparities in Health at the University of California, San Francisco.  
Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2001-2005.

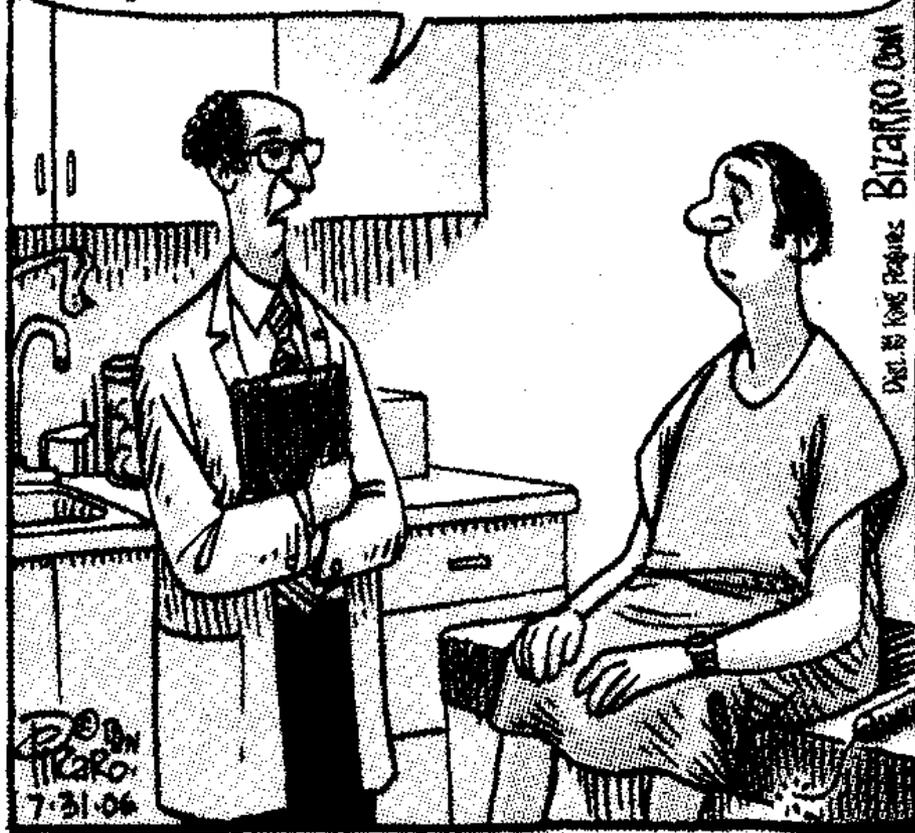
\*Age-adjusted

# Social Advantage and Health Across Lifetimes and Generations



Prepared for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation by the Center on Social Disparities in Health at the University of California, San Francisco.

Find a way to keep your stress level down. What works for me is making a ton of money & having practically free health care.



# Long-Term Outcomes

Family income for daily living maximized



Preservation of and increase in financial assets



Increased financial security and stability, and improved financial status



Increased access to care, improved housing, better neighborhoods, increased food security, decreased violence, etc.



*Improved health outcomes and financial status  
for future generations*

# Project Activities

☀ Staff trainings

☀ Developing interventions

☀ Partnerships

☀ Evaluation



# Home Visiting Intervention

## One-on-one:

☀ Assessment

☀ Information

☀ Referrals

☀ Follow-up



# WIC Intervention

## Groups:

- Series of educational classes

- Referrals**



# Intermediate Outcomes

- ✦ Increased knowledge and skills of staff and clients
- ✦ New practices for staff
- ✦ Increased confidence and readiness of clients to adopt at least one asset development strategy
- ✦ System changes



# Challenges

- ✦ Making paradigm shift and gaining staff buy-in is a slow process
- ✦ Addressing financial status and security sensitively
- ✦ Learning and integrating many new concepts
- ✦ Time and financial resources
- ✦ Measuring success



# Lessons Learned

- ✦ Flexible timeline in order to accommodate program priorities
- ✦ Opportunities to collaborate with new partners
- ✦ Develop evaluation plan while developing program interventions
- ✦ Unique approach re-energizes both staff and community partners



## MAKING A PARADIGM SHIFT IN MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

A REPORT ON THE  
NATIONAL MCH  
LIFE COURSE MEETING

Prepared by:  
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Michael Lu, MD, MPH



## POLICY BRIEF

### A NEW AGENDA FOR MCH POLICY AND PROGRAMS: INTEGRATING A LIFE COURSE PERSPECTIVE

Authors:  
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Milton Kotelchuck, PhD, MPH  
Nancy Adess  
Cheri Fies, MSW, DrPH

A photograph of a bright blue sky filled with soft, white, scattered clouds. The clouds are more concentrated in the upper half of the frame, leaving a clear blue area in the lower half. The overall tone is bright and airy.

*The sky's the limit!*

# For More Information

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*[www.cchealth.org/groups/lifecourse/](http://www.cchealth.org/groups/lifecourse/)*