KIDS COUNT! in Colorado 2017

ELEVATING EQUITY

A Vibrant Future for All Colorado Kids

COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN

KIDS COUNT! in Colorado 2017

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LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

April 27, 2017

How do Coloradans take care of our kids? We do it together.

In the Centennial State, we do things our own way—not just because we cherish our independent spirit, but because we recognize that we are all in this together.

We know that children can't insure themselves and build their own schools, and that's why we get together and figure out how to make those things happen.

In the past three years, legislators have passed dozens of bipartisan solutions to improve access to early childhood services—including affordable child care and high quality preschool. This is what working together on behalf of kids looks like.

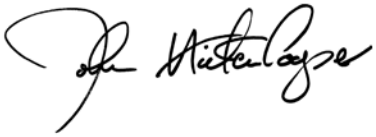
It also looks like 90 out of 100 state legislators voting to streamline access to child care for teen parents and survivors of domestic violence.

Working together on behalf of kids looks like a plummeting uninsured rate for children in Colorado. It looks like members of both parties being committed to the goal of covering all kids before and after federal health reforms.

Working together on behalf of kids looks like a massive bipartisan effort in Colorado to expand quality school choice, raise academic standards for students, establish accountability and evaluation systems, and improve early literacy.

Most importantly, doing what's best for kids always starts with hearing from Coloradans in their communities and in their own words. This year's ***KIDS COUNT*** report is rooted in the struggles and dreams of our neighbors—and I believe it reaches a new understanding of the experiences and realities of all Colorado children. It also reminds us that we still have a lot of work to do to ensure all Colorado kids succeed, regardless of their race, ethnicity, income or geography.

I urge each of you to read about these experiences and then think about your own Colorado story. How has it been steered by policies and systems—both for the positive and negative? What can you do to ensure *all* children have every chance to succeed?



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

April 27, 2017

Kelly Causey, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Colorado Children's Campaign

KIDS COUNT in Colorado! is a bit different this year. The first thing you might notice is all of the questions. For those of you accustomed to picking up this report to find answers, this change—and many others in the following pages—might be a surprise.

The questions you'll see throughout this report are similar to the questions we posed to Coloradans across the state as we sought answers to a question on our minds for years: What is driving the disparities we see between children of color and their White peers?

Last year in this report, we examined disparities of all kinds to better tell the story of how all children, no matter their background, are doing. By digging into the data, we can see the imbalances for children of color and families living in poverty. But that didn't tell us the whole story. Only Coloradans, in their own voices, could do that. So we took the data into communities and listened.

"How can you really understand or do anything if you don't really understand the history?" an Alamosa resident asked.

Behind every data point is policy and practice that impacts all children, and many of these policies and practices have disproportionately created barriers to opportunity for children and families of color. Communities and families of color have deep knowledge of how these barriers have impacted their children, their ancestors and themselves.

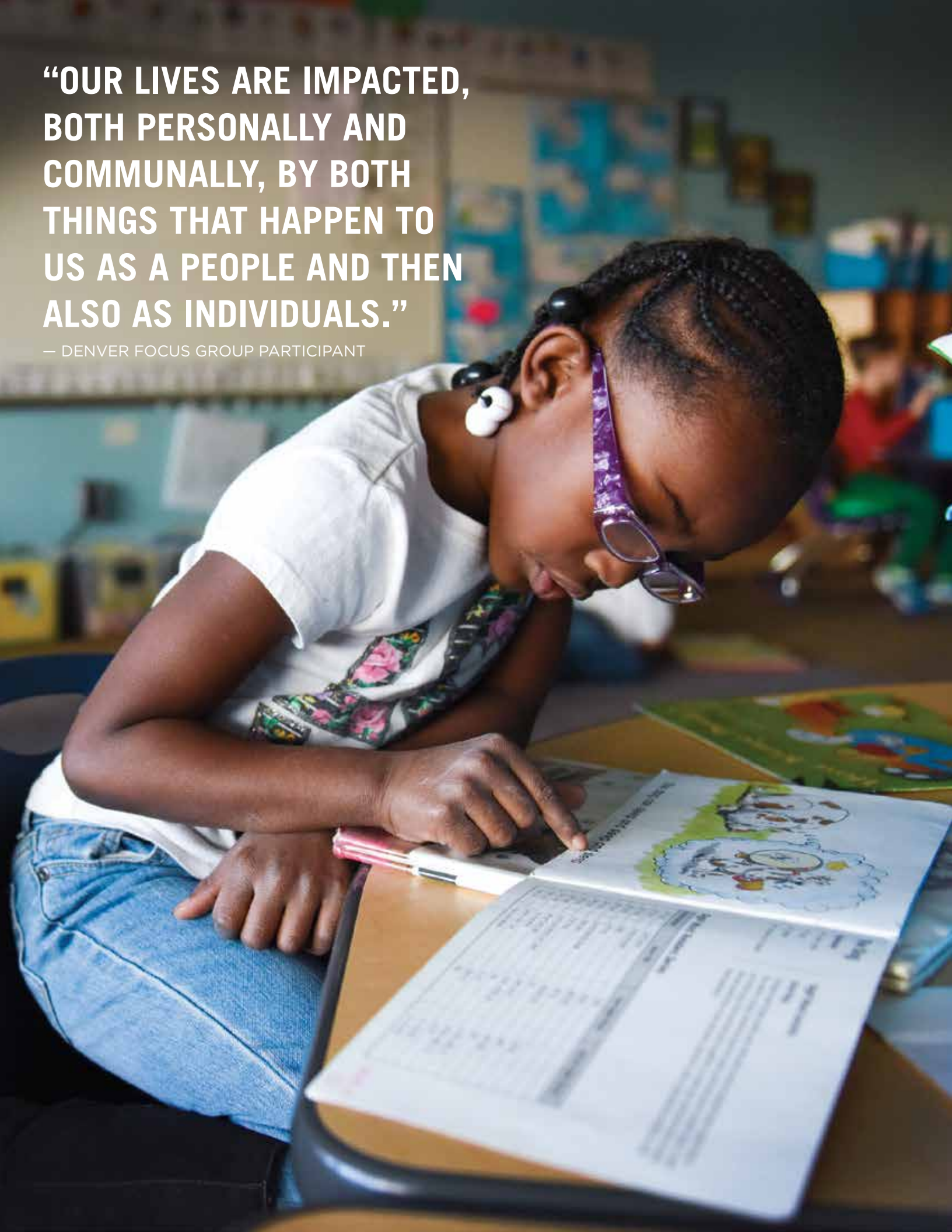
We learned that so many of these barriers are caused by public policy—and they can be undone by public policy. Removing barriers for Coloradans who face the most obstacles to health and happiness in fact removes barriers for all of us. We all benefit from equity-focused policy change.

We also heard countless examples of resilience in the face of policy barriers. Stories of parents instilling in their children a strong sense of personal and cultural history. Communities coming together to provide culturally responsive health care. And elders who take the time to share their knowledge and wisdom with kids in their communities. Imagine what Colorado could be if our public policies build on these strengths to create opportunities for all kids.

The findings in these pages—data paired with voices—are complex and interwoven. But don't let that scare you away. This is a time to lean into discomfort. To let our values guide us. This is a time to be bold about what we want for our children and know that everything we need to create opportunities for them, we have.

I invite you to ponder a few more questions while you dig into the pages that follow: What is our responsibility to Colorado children? If some of our kids aren't doing well, what does that say about us as a state? Should we be proud of a Colorado in which only some children can truly aim high?

I'd love to hear what answers you find.



“OUR LIVES ARE IMPACTED, BOTH PERSONALLY AND COMMUNALLY, BY BOTH THINGS THAT HAPPEN TO US AS A PEOPLE AND THEN ALSO AS INDIVIDUALS.”

— DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

INTRODUCTION

We all want our kids to inherit a bright and vibrant future. Each of us strives to create a world for our children in which there is nothing stopping them from achieving their highest dreams. We work toward a future in which our kids are healthy, happy and engaged in their communities and the world around them. We work for a future in which our kids can grow up to do anything they put their minds to, whether it's traveling the world, starting a small business in their hometown or becoming a teacher. Whether our family members have been here for generations or whether we're brand new Coloradans, we all hope to leave our children a better world than the one we inherited.

If we want this type of future for our own children, we must work to make it a reality for *all* kids in Colorado. Our state can only live up to its core values when *every Colorado child* has the opportunity to succeed. Too many Colorado kids, however, face barriers to opportunity, and too often those barriers disproportionately impact children of color due to systemic inequities based on race, both past and present. In 2017, it shouldn't be possible to predict a child's life outcomes based on the color of her skin—but data on Colorado's kids show that challenges such as attending a high-poverty school, lacking access to culturally relevant health or child care and struggling to find affordable housing too often fall along racial and ethnic lines.

This year's KIDS COUNT report delves into disparities in child well-being based on race and ethnicity in an effort to shine a light on issues where our state can and must do better at creating equitable opportunities for children. In an effort to raise up the voices of the people behind the numbers, we spent time last fall traveling to four communities across the state and holding conversations about child well-being data, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, with parents, youth, community leaders and elders. Through these conversations, community members in the San Luis Valley, La Plata County, Morgan County and Denver graciously shared their deep knowledge about the factors—whether local, statewide, or national—that contribute to the disparities we see in children's well-being. Although the wisdom Coloradans provided through these conversations is too vast to be contained in the pages that follow, the insights and input of these parents, grandparents, youth and community leaders guided the indicators we selected to include in this year's report, while also providing rich context that helped enhance our understanding of the data. **We would like to express our deep and abiding gratitude to the community members across the state who graciously shared their time, their wisdom and their profound knowledge of history with us during these conversations.**

"How can you really understand or do anything if you don't really understand the history?" — ALAMOSA FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

The disparities we see in many areas of child well-being didn't just happen by coincidence; nor are they the result of individual choices or behavior. Rather, public policy choices throughout our country's history have shaped the opportunities available to children and families across the state. Too often, these policies and practices have led to limited opportunities for children and families of color—intentionally in some cases and unintentionally in others. From past practices like redlining, which denied many people of color the chance to purchase a home and build wealth, to current policies that limit our state's ability to address inequities in school funding, our public policies have created a system of unequal opportunity. Within the pages of this year's KIDS COUNT, we highlight some of the policies that have brought us to the place in which we stand today, incorporating Colorado history where possible. In order to close the opportunity gaps that currently exist, we must first understand the policies and practices that created them.

Although we have been shaped by the past, we are not powerless in changing the future. Our country's shared legacy of unequal opportunity is complicated, and solutions to correct the inequities that persist today will also be complex—but we Coloradans have never shied away from a challenge. We have faith that our state's lawmakers, community members, leaders and parents have the creativity and the commitment to create a Colorado where every child has the support and resources he or she needs to thrive.

INTRODUCTION

"I used to sit between my grandparents' legs on the floor and just be listening to the stories that they would tell. I know where I'm coming from. I know what I reach for." — DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

While the data contained in these pages show that we, as a state, have work to do to create a Colorado where children from all racial and ethnic backgrounds have equitable opportunities, we know that children, parents, families and communities aren't defined by disparities or data points. What defines all of us is much bigger and more beautiful than statistics about our socioeconomic status or our access to health care. Instead, Colorado families of all races and ethnicities are defined by the joy and pride we feel when a child we love reaches a special milestone, whether it's a first laugh or a first day at college. We're defined by our resilience, and by the hard work and sacrifices we make every day to create a better future for our children. We're defined by our culture's unique strengths and our deep wells of love for our kids. We are defined by our shared sense of history, of knowing where we came from and what we're reaching for, in the eloquent words of our focus group participant. We're defined by all of this and so much more.

We know that with smart public policies that build on the inherent strengths of each Colorado family, we can make our state the best place in the country to be a kid—for all kids, whether they are African-American, Southern Ute, Somalian, White, Vietnamese or Mexican. We envision a Colorado in which a child's race can't be used to predict the quality of her teacher, her opportunity to attend an early learning program that will nurture her growing curiosity, or her ability to see a doctor when she has the flu. A Colorado where all kids know they are equally valued and supported in becoming whatever it is they aspire to be. Join us in making this Colorado a reality for every child by advocating for policies and practices that create equitable opportunities for all children. We all benefit when every child has the opportunity to soar.

BACKGROUND ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC TERMINOLOGY

Most of us are probably familiar with the experience of taking a survey and being asked to identify our race or ethnicity. But what determines the boxes we check? Is it the color of our skin? The language we speak? What about our family's cultural heritage? While nearly everyone has been asked to check a box and identify ourselves as Black, White, Asian, Pacific Islander or American Indian, many of us probably haven't thought much about how those categories are determined—or why we choose the box we choose.

It's a common assumption that race is determined by skin color or some other fixed physical or biological characteristic, but nothing about race is based in biology. Rather, the concept of race is much more arbitrary—and it has changed considerably over time based on social and political factors. At various points in America's history, race has been used as a way to justify providing benefits to some, while disadvantaging others. The practice of using race as a basis for advantaging some groups over others reaches back to America's earliest days. The Naturalization Act of 1790 declared that only free White people could become citizens of the United States; because there is no biological basis for whiteness, however, it was then left to the court system to determine who was White and who was not. As the definition of whiteness changed, so, too, did definitions for other racial categories.

Today, the racial and ethnic categories we find on many surveys are defined by the federal Office of Management and Budget, but they continue to change and shift over time as the way people identify themselves shifts and changes as well. Although none of us is defined by the boxes we check on surveys and forms, examining data for different racial and ethnic categories provides vital information that can help shine a light on inequities and disparities that we should work to correct.

A NOTE ON THE TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS REPORT

When disaggregating data in this year's KIDS COUNT report, we generally use the racial and ethnic categories used by the original data source. Therefore, comparisons across different data sources should be made with caution, as definitions for each racial or ethnic group may vary across sources.

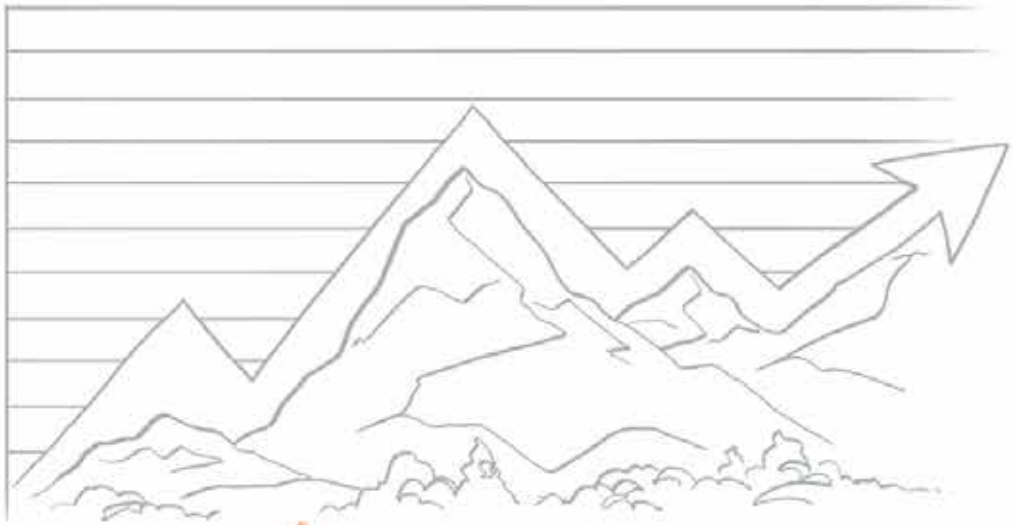
Throughout the report, some terms are used interchangeably. For example, "Black" and "African-American" are used interchangeably, as well as "Hispanic" and "Latino," and "American Indian" and "Native American." Other terms used throughout the report are "children of color" or "families of color." In accordance with other literature, these terms are generally used to refer to people who identify as African-American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or multiracial, as well as Latinos of any race. Unless otherwise specified, we use the term "White" to mean individuals who identify as White and not Hispanic.

Ethnicity, often discussed in tandem with race, is a separate concept and typically refers to a shared culture, nationality or heritage. Most surveys and data sources typically only report data for two ethnicities: Hispanic/Latino or non-Hispanic. Because Hispanic origin is an ethnicity and not a race, individuals who identify as Hispanic can be of any race.

DIGGING DEEPER: A NEED FOR MORE DETAILED DATA ON RACE AND ETHNICITY

Disaggregating data for each of the racial and ethnic categories included in most state and federal data sources can begin to help us identify differences in child well-being. Even these categories, however, are too broad to illustrate the diversity that exists within each group in terms of country of origin, culture and language. For example, the Asian category encompasses people of many different backgrounds, from Indian or Hmong to Vietnamese, Korean or Bangladeshi. Similarly, the American Indian category includes members of hundreds of tribes, all with distinct cultures, traditions and histories. Although data for these subgroups are not always available due to small sample sizes, community members across the state expressed strong interest in more detailed data that could better highlight the differences that exist within each racial and ethnic category. Whenever possible, federal, state and local agencies should aim to collect and report data for more detailed racial and ethnic subgroups in order to provide the clearest and most accurate picture of the different challenges and opportunities facing Colorado kids.

DEMOGRAPHICS



COLORADO'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON THE WELL-BEING OF OUR STATE'S CHILD POPULATION, WHICH IS GROWING AND BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIVERSE EACH YEAR.

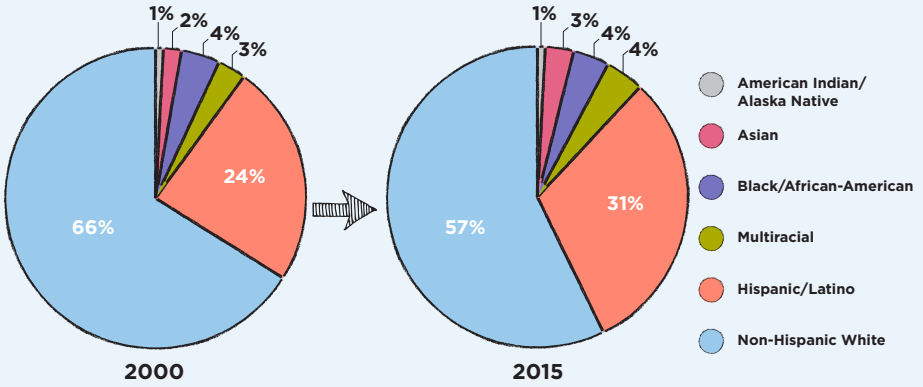
DEMOGRAPHICS

Today's kids are tomorrow's community leaders, entrepreneurs and parents. It's essential that we provide kids of all racial and ethnic backgrounds with abundant opportunities to reach their goals.

As of 2015, Colorado was home to 1,279,041 children under 18, according to State Demography Office estimates—an increase of 15 percent since 2000.[1] Our state's rich history of racial and ethnic diversity is reflected in the diversity of our child population. In 2015, children of color made up 43 percent of all kids in the state—more than two in every five children.[2]

COLORADO HAS A RICH HISTORY OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY. AS THE STATE'S CHILD POPULATION GROWS, IT CONTINUES TO BECOME MORE DIVERSE.

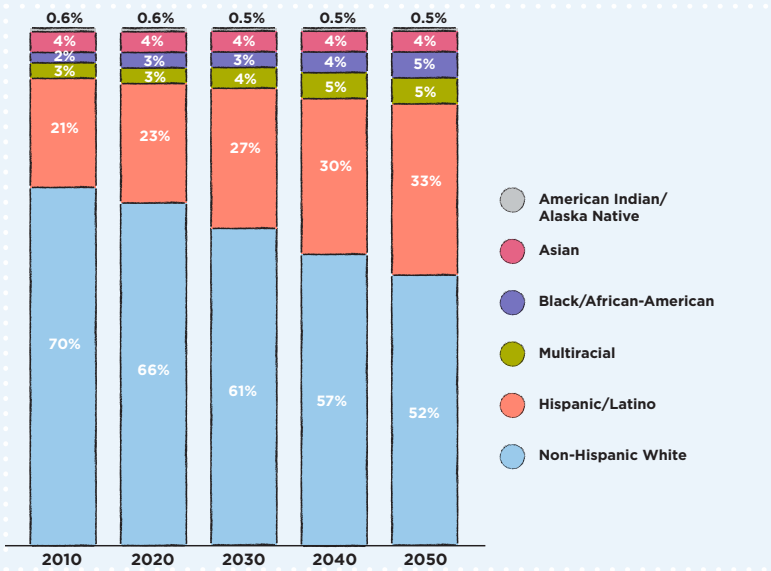
RACIAL AND ETHNIC MAKEUP OF COLORADO CHILDREN UNDER 18



Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau.

Children are on the leading edge of a demographic trend happening across the nation, as our country's overall population also becomes more and more diverse. Here in Colorado, people of color made up approximately 30 percent of all Coloradans in 2010; by 2050, this proportion will rise to 48 percent.[3]

POPULATION PROJECTIONS SHOW THAT COLORADO'S OVERALL POPULATION WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY DIVERSE IN THE DECADES TO COME.



Source: National Equity Atlas. Racial/ethnic composition: Colorado, 1980-2050

[1] Colorado State Demography Office. Population by single year of age—region.
[2] Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau.
[3] National Equity Atlas. Racial/ethnic composition: Colorado, 1980-2050.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Colorado's immigrant families contribute to the rich fabric of diversity in our state.

As of 2015, nearly a quarter of Colorado kids lived in immigrant families, defined as a family in which at least one parent was born outside of the United States. Colorado's immigrant families work hard to create a bright future for their children; many people immigrate to the United States specifically to provide a better life for their kids. However, policy barriers related to immigration and documentation status can affect the services and opportunities available to them. The importance of considering immigration and documentation status when examining child well-being, particularly for Latino children, was a theme that arose consistently in our conversations across the state. Although most data sources do not collect information on documentation status, participants shared with us the many ways that immigration and legal status of both children and their parents shapes kids' lives.

"We come back to the same thing, and it's legal status. Everything we're discussing revolves around that." — LATINO FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT IN DENVER

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey, the vast majority of children in immigrant families in Colorado are U.S. citizens (approximately 91 percent), although more than 40 percent of kids in immigrant families have at least one parent who does not have citizenship status. Some parents who are not U.S. citizens are legal permanent residents, some are refugees who are not yet able to apply for U.S. citizenship, and others lack proper documentation. Participants in our conversations noted the many ways that documentation status in particular can influence families' opportunities. They noted that parents who lack documentation often must work jobs that pay below minimum wage or are dangerous. Undocumented workers are also vulnerable to exploitation in the workforce, as those who raise objections to low pay and unsafe working conditions may be subjected to threats to have their immigration status revealed to authorities. Community members also noted that families in which parents are undocumented may face limited choices when renting a home since many landlords require a social security number for a credit check; as a result, families in which parents are undocumented are often confined to living in high-poverty neighborhoods that offer few resources. Additionally, participants mentioned the mental and emotional stress some children in immigrant families experience due to worries about parents or siblings being apprehended or deported.

Participants also noted regional differences in how immigration status shapes opportunities across Colorado. Fort Morgan, for example, is home to a robust community of African immigrants, many of whom came to the United States as refugees. People who enter the country as refugees are eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship five to seven years after their arrival. They also qualify for some public programs, such as health coverage through Medicaid or the Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+). In the San Luis Valley, however, participants noted that many immigrants in the community are seasonal or migrant workers who came to the area for employment at ski resorts or in the agricultural industry. Some of these families are undocumented and therefore lack access to medical care since they do not qualify for public coverage or subsidies through the state's health insurance marketplace.

Colorado's success depends on the well-being of all children in our state, regardless of race, ethnicity or immigration status. Although data on child well-being by immigration or documentation status are limited, Coloradans' lived experiences clearly illustrate the ways that immigration or legal status can affect children's lives and opportunities. Like all families, Colorado's immigrant families want the best for their kids. When developing strategies to improve child well-being, it is essential that we build on the strengths of immigrant families and remove the barriers they face in accessing the economic, early learning, health and educational resources all kids need.

“WE COME BACK TO THE SAME THING, AND IT’S LEGAL STATUS. EVERYTHING WE’RE DISCUSSING REVOLVES AROUND THAT.”

— LATINO FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT IN DENVER

WHAT DO YOU PICTURE WHEN YOU HEAR THE PHRASE "THE AMERICAN DREAM?"

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

What do you picture when you hear the phrase "the American dream?" For many, the phrase elicits the idea of "equal opportunity"—the belief that through hard work and determination, everyone has the chance to get ahead and create a better future for the next generation. Colorado families of all backgrounds have hopes and dreams for their children's futures, and they work hard, passing on their family's unique strengths and deeply held values, to help them become a reality.

Economic security helps families support their children's dreams by ensuring they have access to stable housing, safe communities, sufficient amounts of nourishing food, and high-quality health and educational options. Although economic security is often gauged by family income, a family's economic circumstances are determined by much more than a paycheck. As the Great Recession illustrated, working hard and saving money isn't always enough to attain economic stability; policies that affect the choices available to families, as well as the broader economic conditions in which they find themselves, have an impact, too. Factors such as the availability of transportation, housing, and benefits such as paid family leave or health insurance coverage all influence Coloradans' economic security.

Throughout our country's history, public policy choices have opened doors to economic opportunity for some in the form of housing, employment and income security, while simultaneously building barriers for others. The results of these unequal opportunities are apparent in the disparities that persist today. Some Colorado children live in families that are able to afford safe and stable homes located in thriving communities where well-funded schools, caring doctors and opportunities to play outside are plentiful. Other children in our state live in families who—despite working hard—are faced with limited housing and transportation options, struggle to find affordable child care and experience barriers to accessing the health care their children need to grow up healthy and strong. Challenges like these affect Colorado families of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, but discriminatory policies and practices implemented throughout our nation's history have too often meant they disproportionately affect children of color.

When faced with disinvestment, discrimination or economic hardship, Coloradans in communities large and small have developed innovative strategies for making ends meet and providing their children with the support they need to fulfill their potential. However, our state can do more to invest in the inherent strengths of local communities and create economic opportunity for all Coloradans. We all benefit when children—whether Black, White, Asian, American Indian or Latino—can focus more on getting their homework finished than worrying about whether they'll have food to eat at dinnertime. Together, we can build a Colorado where every family has the economic resources they need to provide for their children's most basic needs today, while working toward building a strong foundation for tomorrow.

"In 2008 when everything crashed, people here rallied together. If someone lost their house, they invited those people to move in with them. I think across the valley, people are good. We don't let our family members go hungry. We take care of our own. I do think we're very good about that."

— ALAMOSA FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

COMMUNITY VOICES

Given its importance to overall child well-being, family economic security was a central topic in the 10 community dialogue sessions held around the state. Participants explored indicators such as the child poverty rate and the home ownership rate, but the themes that arose from discussions were much broader. They encompassed immigration status, a lack of affordable housing options, discriminatory housing and lending practices, and the important role that intergenerational wealth plays in determining a family's economic circumstances. Data on these topics are included below as available, along with quotes illustrating how Coloradans across the state experience them in their own lives.

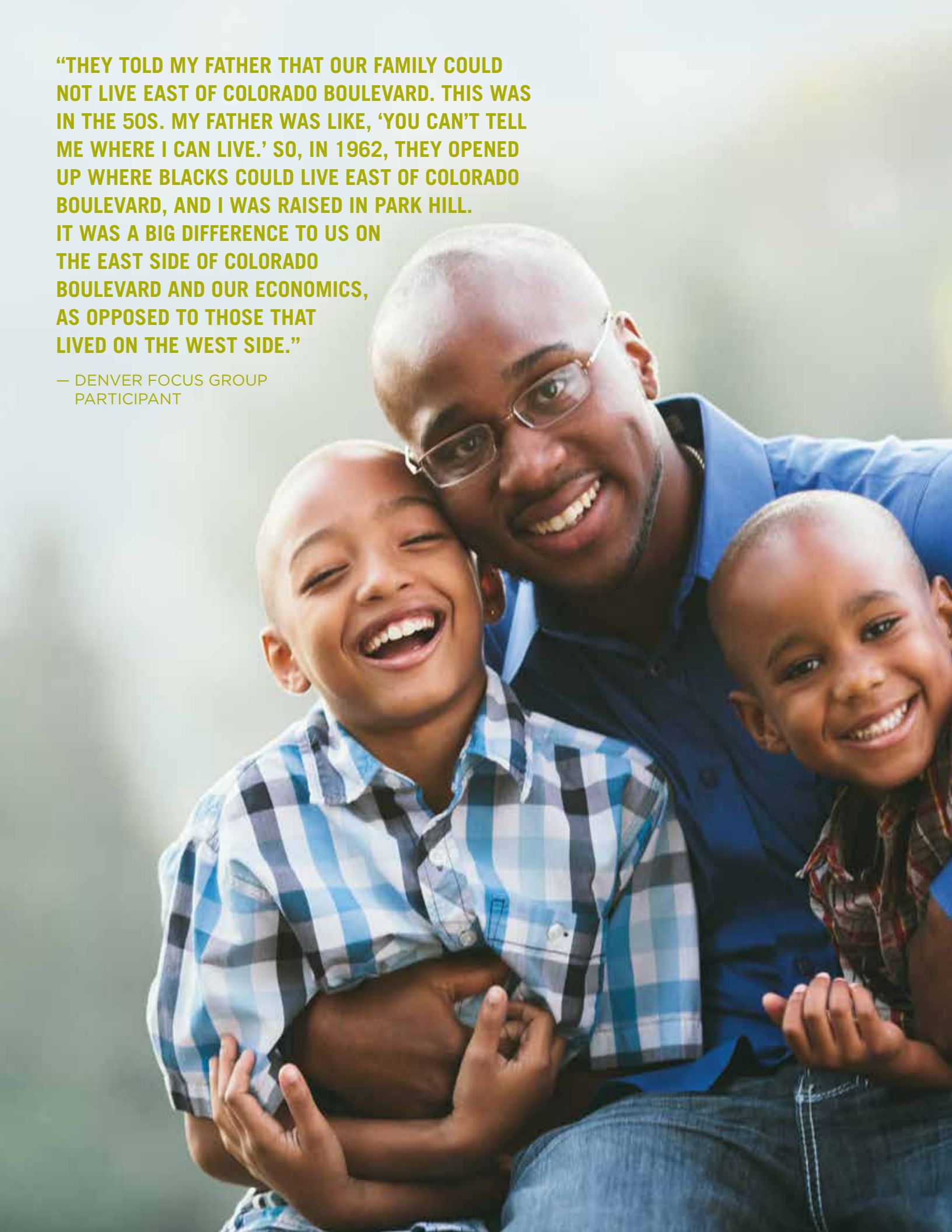
HOME OWNERSHIP AND DISCRIMINATORY LENDING PRACTICES

For some, home ownership is a foundational part of the American dream. Whether it's a two bedroom rowhouse nestled in the heart of the city, a sprawling ranch where the nearest neighbor is miles away, or a house where multiple generations of family can live together under one roof, home ownership offers stability, a sense of security, and a huge source of equity for families, allowing them to pass on wealth and other advantages to their children.

For decades, policies and practices excluded many people from the dream of home ownership, while providing a boost to others. Starting in the 1930s, millions of Americans benefited from long-term, low-risk home loans backed by the Federal Housing Administration. These loans served as a toehold into the middle class for many White families, but they were often unavailable to people of color due to a discriminatory practice known as redlining. The term "**redlining"** refers to a process in which lenders created color-coded "Residential Security Maps," which ostensibly assigned ratings to different neighborhoods based on their credit-worthiness. All too often, however, these ratings corresponded more closely with a neighborhood's racial and ethnic composition than with the purchasing power or economic security of its residents. Neighborhoods that were "lacking homogeneity" were typically rated as less credit-worthy, while predominantly White neighborhoods often received the highest ratings.[4] (See the pull-out box on page 19 for a Residential Security Map of Denver.) As a result of redlining, banks and mortgage lenders often denied home loans to people living in neighborhoods in which residents were predominantly people of color. Lending decisions based on redlining denied millions of families of color the opportunity to own a home and starved many communities of color of the investments that help neighborhoods thrive.

Although the Fair Housing Act outlawed housing discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity in 1968, some discriminatory lending practices persist today. As recently as 2006, an affluent African-American or Hispanic family earning more than $200,000 per year was more likely to be given a subprime mortgage loan—which typically have higher interest rates and less favorable terms—than a White family making less than $30,000 per year.[5]

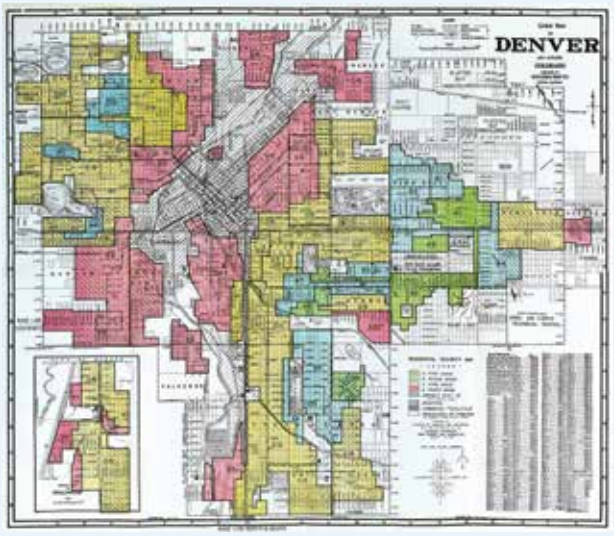
[4] Nelson, R.K., Winling, L., Marciano, R., Connolly, N., et al. (n.d.). Mapping inequality. Retrieved from https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining."
[5] Faber. J.W. (2013). Racial dynamics of subprime lending at the peak. *Housing Policy Debate* 23(2), pp. 328-349.



"THEY TOLD MY FATHER THAT OUR FAMILY COULD NOT LIVE EAST OF COLORADO BOULEVARD. THIS WAS IN THE 50S. MY FATHER WAS LIKE, 'YOU CAN'T TELL ME WHERE I CAN LIVE.' SO, IN 1962, THEY OPENED UP WHERE BLACKS COULD LIVE EAST OF COLORADO BOULEVARD, AND I WAS RAISED IN PARK HILL. IT WAS A BIG DIFFERENCE TO US ON THE EAST SIDE OF COLORADO BOULEVARD AND OUR ECONOMICS, AS OPPOSED TO THOSE THAT LIVED ON THE WEST SIDE."

— DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY



A residential security map of Denver from 1938. *Restrictive housing covenants isolated many people of color in specific neighborhoods within the city, such as Five Points and areas of Southwest Denver. Redlining then deprived these communities of the investments in infrastructure and services that help neighborhoods thrive.*

Although borne of segregation, Denver's Five Points neighborhood also provides an example of community resilience and resourcefulness in the face of policy barriers. During the 1920s when racist housing policies prevented Denver's African-American residents from living in other areas of the city, Five Points was home to a vibrant array of African-American owned businesses. Welton Street, the commercial heart of the neighborhood, thrived during this time period and featured African-American owned shops, doctor's offices, newspapers, grocery stores, jazz clubs and restaurants. The area was also home to leaders such as Dr. Justina Ford, the first licensed female African-American physician in Denver, as well as Dr. Clarence Holmes, an African-American dentist who practiced in the neighborhood and who helped found the Colorado-Wyoming chapter of the NAACP, as well as the Glenarm branch of the YMCA.

Source: Denver Public Library.

Home ownership has historically been one of the quickest paths to building wealth that can be passed down from generation to generation. The policies and practices that excluded many people of color from owning homes have also contributed significantly to a racial wealth gap that persists in the present day.

Wealth, defined as assets minus debts, provides a critical safety net for families, helping them avoid a financial crisis when their car breaks down or when a family member is diagnosed with an illness. It also provides a strong foundation for the future, allowing families to help pay for a college education or contribute to a down payment on a first home.

As a result of policies and practices that had disparate effects on families' economic opportunities, there are stark racial and ethnic differences in wealth. As of 2013, the average White household in America had $10 in wealth for every dollar in wealth held by a Latino household, and $13 in wealth for each dollar held by an African-American household. This wealth gap cannot be explained by differences in employment levels, educational attainment or savings habits: a recent analysis found that, "White adults who don't graduate high school, don't get married before having children, and don't work full time" typically have greater wealth than Black and Latino adults who have higher levels of educational attainment, work longer hours and are married.[6] Due to structural barriers that permeate many of the major institutions in our society, the pursuits we typically think of as generating wealth—higher education, additional income, home ownership—produce unequal returns for White people and people of color, exacerbating the wealth gap over time.[7] For example, one study found that for every dollar increase in income, White Americans typically see wealth increase by $5.19, while a dollar increase in average income for African-American families yields only 69 cents in additional wealth. The study cites historical and current-day discrimination in employment and promotions, as well as differences in access to benefits such as health insurance as the driving factors behind this disparity.

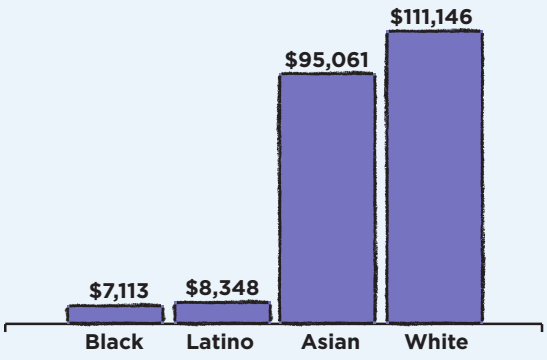
[6] Traub, A., Sullivan, L., Meschede, T., & Shapiro, T. (2017). The asset value of whiteness. New York, NY and Waltham, MA: Demos and the Institute on Assets and Social Policy.
[7] Sullivan, L., Meschede, T., Dietrich, L., Shapiro, T., Traub, A., Ruetschlin, C., & Draut, T. (2015). The racial wealth gap: Why policy matters. Waltham, MA & New York, NY: Institute for Assets and Social Policy and Demos.

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

Although data on wealth among Native Americans were not available due to a small sample size, a participant in one of our La Plata County conversations noted a long-standing federal policy that serves as a barrier to purchasing homes and building equity for Native Americans who live on reservations. Under current policy, the federal government holds much of the land on reservations "in trust," meaning they hold the title to the land for the tribe or for an individual.[8] This complexity around ownership of tribal lands presents barriers for people living on reservations who wish to obtain conventional home loans. Because the trust status limits banks' abilities to repossess the land or foreclose in the event that homeowners default, banks have historically been reluctant to provide mortgage loans to Native Americans who live on trust land.[9] Given the key role that home ownership has traditionally played in building equity, this policy has served to significantly limit opportunities to accumulate wealth among many Native Americans living on reservations.

HISTORICAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT HELPED WHITE AMERICANS PURCHASE HOMES OR ATTEND COLLEGE WHILE EXCLUDING MANY AMERICANS OF COLOR HAVE CREATED A WEALTH GAP THAT PERSISTS TODAY.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD WEALTH (ASSETS MINUS DEBTS) IN THE U.S., 2011



Source: Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2008 Panel Wave 10, 2011. As cited in Sullivan, et al. (2015).

"One thing that stood out for me that drives disparity…[is] that a lot of people of color don't have what's called generational wealth where the parents, when they pass on, they leave a hundred grand, or they leave a college fund. What ends up happening is you have families that literally every generation starts over."

— DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

[8] Indian Land Tenure Foundation. (n.d.). Glossary. Retrieved from https://www.iltf.org/glossary.
[9] Stebbins, L., & Pate, K. (2011). Native American entrepreneurship in South Dakota's nine reservations. Washington, DC: Corporation for Enterprise Development. Retrieved from http://cfed.org/assets/pdfs/Native_American_Eship_in_South_Dakotas_9_Reservations.pdf

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

For many families, housing represents the largest slice of the family budget and therefore has a significant impact on economic security. Across Colorado, affordable housing options are limited, and many families are finding themselves unable to afford to rent or purchase a home as housing costs in many areas of the state rise at unprecedented rates.

All children fare better when they have a safe, stable place to call home—a secure and consistent place to sleep, play, color, spend time with family or do homework. For many Colorado families, however, finding safe and affordable housing is a growing challenge. Whether rural or urban, communities across the state have experienced increases in housing costs that are unsustainable, pushing some children and families out of their homes and limiting housing options for low- and middle-income Coloradans.

Affordable housing emerged as a major theme across the community conversations held throughout the state. In Denver, participants specifically and frequently mentioned the impact that gentrification has had on their ability to remain in their homes. Rents in the city and its inner suburbs are rising rapidly in the face of significant demand. Increasing home values, which can benefit families by increasing their home equity, are also bringing higher property taxes that are unaffordable for some homeowners. These trends have pushed many families out of the communities of which some have been a part for generations.

"I'm not blaming anybody who has recently moved here, but the influx of all these people and people who are more affluent… What's happened, a lot of [the housing] that people have had and been able to rely on for some kind of shelter, they've torn down. They've put up expensive condos and townhomes and everything else, which priced people out of the market altogether."

— DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

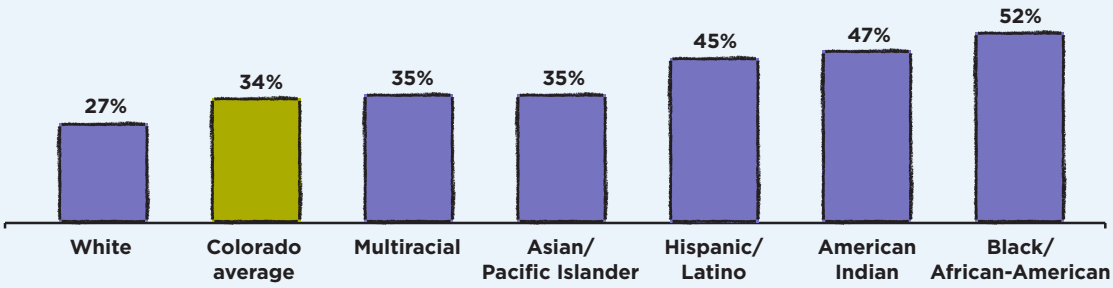
Looking for more data on Family Economic Security? Visit the KIDS COUNT Data Center at **datacenter.kidscount.org** for information on child poverty, parental employment and more.

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

Another consequence of rising housing costs across the state is that many families are forced to spend growing portions of their incomes on mortgages and rent. Spending a large amount of household income on housing costs strains family budgets and makes it more difficult to afford other necessities, such as food, medicine or child care. Families who spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs are considered to be "housing cost-burdened." **Between 2011 and 2015, more than one in three Colorado children lived in households that were housing cost-burdened.** Due to structural barriers that have often excluded people of color from employment or wealth-building opportunities, housing cost burden disproportionately affects children of color in Colorado, with African-American households most likely to be affected.[10]

RISING RENTS AND HOUSING PRICES ACROSS THE STATE ARE STRETCHING FAMILY BUDGETS AND LIMITING AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS. MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF COLORADO CHILDREN LIVE IN FAMILIES THAT ARE HOUSING COST-BURDENED.

PERCENT OF COLORADO CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING MORE THAN 30 PERCENT OF INCOME ON HOUSING, 2011-2015



Source: Population Reference Bureau analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2011-2015 American Community Survey.

RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION AND HIGH-POVERTY COMMUNITIES

When it comes to child well-being and economic opportunity, place matters.

If you were buying or renting a home, what characteristics would you look for in the surrounding community? Perhaps you would prioritize lots of wide open spaces for children to run, play tag or explore nature. Maybe you would look for great schools that create a sense of community, or parks and safe playgrounds. A neighborhood with safe drinking water and clean air might be important to you. You might look for a community in which you and your family feel welcomed and where you experience a sense of belonging.

Although the specific characteristics families prefer may differ, we all want our children to grow up in safe, inclusive communities equipped with the structures that support their healthy development. Unfortunately, racial and economic segregation of neighborhoods and communities isolates too many children from the education, health and early learning resources they need to get off to a strong start. Restrictive housing covenants, redlining, racially motivated violence and discriminatory lending practices have, throughout our country's history, dictated where families of color had the opportunity to live and **created inequities in the neighborhoods where Colorado children live, attend school and play.**

[10] Population Reference Bureau analysis of data from the 2011-2015 5-Year American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).

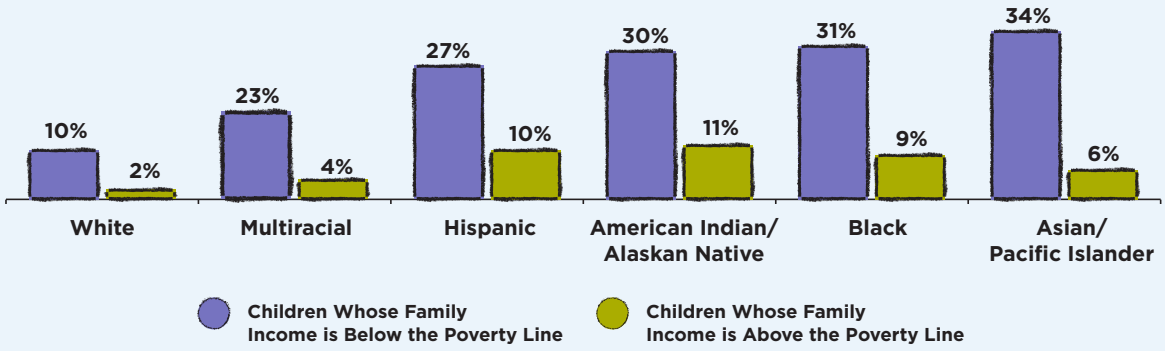
FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

Communities that have historically been deprived of resources are often areas of concentrated poverty, defined as an area where more than 30 percent of all residents are living below the poverty line. Due to discriminatory policies and disinvestment, high-poverty areas often lack the basic structures all families want for their children: well-resourced schools, safe places to play, grocery stores or reliable transportation options, for example.

In 2017, the racial and ethnic makeup of a community shouldn't correlate with the resources available to its residents—but in Colorado, policies and practices have created conditions in which children of color are consistently more likely to live in areas of concentrated poverty than White children at similar levels of family income. Between 2011 and 2015, only 10 percent of poor White children in Colorado lived in high-poverty areas, compared to 31 percent of poor Black children and 34 percent of poor Asian children. In some cases, children of color whose family incomes are *above* the poverty line remain more likely to live in a high-poverty area than a White child whose family income is *below* the poverty level. In Colorado, for example, 11 percent of non-poor American Indian children lived in areas of concentrated poverty between 2011 and 2015, a rate higher than the 10 percent of poor White children living in high-poverty areas.[11]

POLICY CHOICES HAVE CREATED COMMUNITIES THAT ARE OFTEN SEGREGATED ALONG RACIAL OR ECONOMIC LINES, CONCENTRATING MANY CHILDREN OF COLOR IN AREAS OF HIGH POVERTY, REGARDLESS OF THEIR OWN FAMILY INCOME.

PERCENT OF COLORADO CHILDREN LIVING IN AREAS OF CONCENTRATED POVERTY BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND FAMILY INCOME, 2011-2015



Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2011-2015 American Community Survey estimates.

Community environments and resources have profound impacts on children's opportunities. Research shows that living in an area of concentrated poverty that lacks the basic structures kids and families need affects *all* children, even if their own family income is above the poverty line.[12] Living in an area that is highly segregated by race or income can even affect children's chances of moving up the income ladder as they grow up. One large-scale study found that communities that result in the greatest income mobility typically have low levels of racial and economic segregation, as well as lower levels of income inequality, higher-quality schools, lower violent crime rates and more two-parent families.[13]

[11] Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2011-2015 American Community Survey estimates.
[12] Turner, M.A. & Kaye, D.R. (2006). How does family well-being vary across different types of neighborhoods? Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
[13] Chetty, R., & Hendren, N. (2015). The impacts of neighborhoods on intergenerational mobility. Retrieved from http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/images/nbhds_exec_summary.pdf

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

CHILD POVERTY

Colorado's child poverty rate has declined in recent years, but low and stagnant wages are keeping many family incomes below the poverty line.

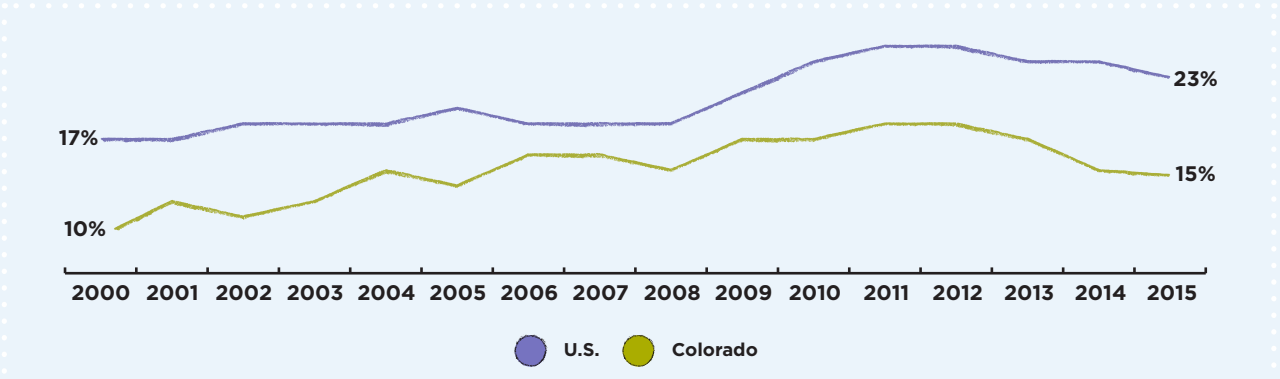
Three-quarters of Colorado children have parents who are securely employed, defined as working full-time for at least 50 weeks per year.[14] Participants in community dialogue sessions noted, however, that many working families still struggle to make ends meet due to low wages in industries that are common in Colorado, such as tourism or agriculture. Although the state has added more than 270,000 jobs since 2007, wages in Colorado have stagnated, remaining flat since the end of the Great Recession.[15] And due to structural barriers to employment and advancement, people of color are disproportionately represented in jobs paying low wages. According to the National Equity Atlas, the median wage for White Coloradans was $24 in 2014, while the median wage for Coloradans of color was $17.[16] This $7 per hour difference translates to a disparity of hundreds of dollars per month and thousands of dollars per year for a full-time worker.

As of 2015, thousands of Colorado families earned wages that put their annual incomes below the poverty line, defined as $24,250 annually for a family of four. Experiencing poverty sends ripple effects across every area of a child's life: poverty affects children's access to nutritious foods, the quality of their housing, and their likelihood of developing health problems, among other things. The challenges that often accompany poverty also contribute to toxic levels of stress that can affect children's mental and physical health throughout their lifetimes.

Although Colorado's child poverty rate fell for children of nearly all racial and ethnic backgrounds between 2014 and 2015, it remains too high. As of 2015, 14.7 percent of Colorado's children under 18 lived in poverty— more than 180,000 kids.[17]

COLORADO'S CHILD POVERTY RATE DECLINED SLIGHTLY IN 2015, BUT MORE THAN 180,000 COLORADO CHILDREN STILL LIVE IN FAMILIES WITH INCOMES BELOW THE POVERTY LINE.

PERCENT OF CHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING IN POVERTY



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2001 Supplemental Survey and 2002-2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

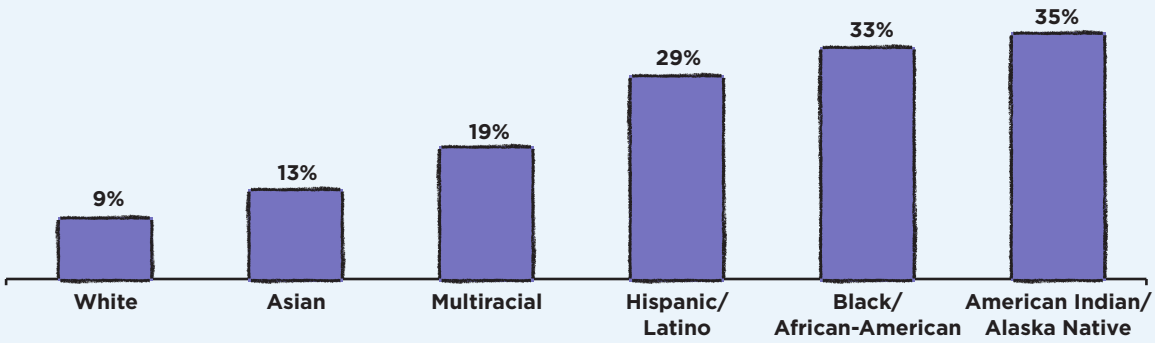
[14] Population Reference Bureau analysis of data from the 2015 American Community Survey.
[15] Colorado Center on Law and Policy. (2016). State of Working Colorado: 2016 Edition. Retrieved from http://cclponline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/2016_SOWC_Final.pdf.
[16] PolicyLink National Equity Atlas. (n.d.). Median hourly wage by race/ethnicity: Colorado, 2014. Retrieved from http://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Wages:_Median/Trend:40186/Colorado/false/.
[17] U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey.

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

Due to the historical and present-day policies and practices discussed throughout this section, poverty is more likely to affect children of color than White children.[18] As noted earlier in this section, poverty often looks different for children of color and for White children due to residential segregation and the concentration of poverty. Experiencing family-level poverty while also living in a high-poverty community serves as a kind of double disadvantage, further limiting children's opportunities to access the community resources they need to thrive.

DUE TO POLICIES THAT HAVE CREATED AND MAINTAINED INEQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES IN AREAS SUCH AS HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT, POVERTY AFFECTS CHILDREN OF COLOR AT HIGHER RATES THAN WHITE CHILDREN.

PERCENT OF COLORADO CHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING IN POVERTY BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2011-2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.

DISAGGREGATING DATA FOR MORE DETAILED RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS HELPS PAINT A MORE COMPREHENSIVE PICTURE OF CHILD WELL-BEING.

As discussed on page 9, the broad racial and ethnic categories used by state and federal agencies are blunt, often masking the differences that exist among distinct groups included within each category. Disparities in poverty rates within each of the major racial and ethnic categories offer a good example of intra-group differences in child well-being.

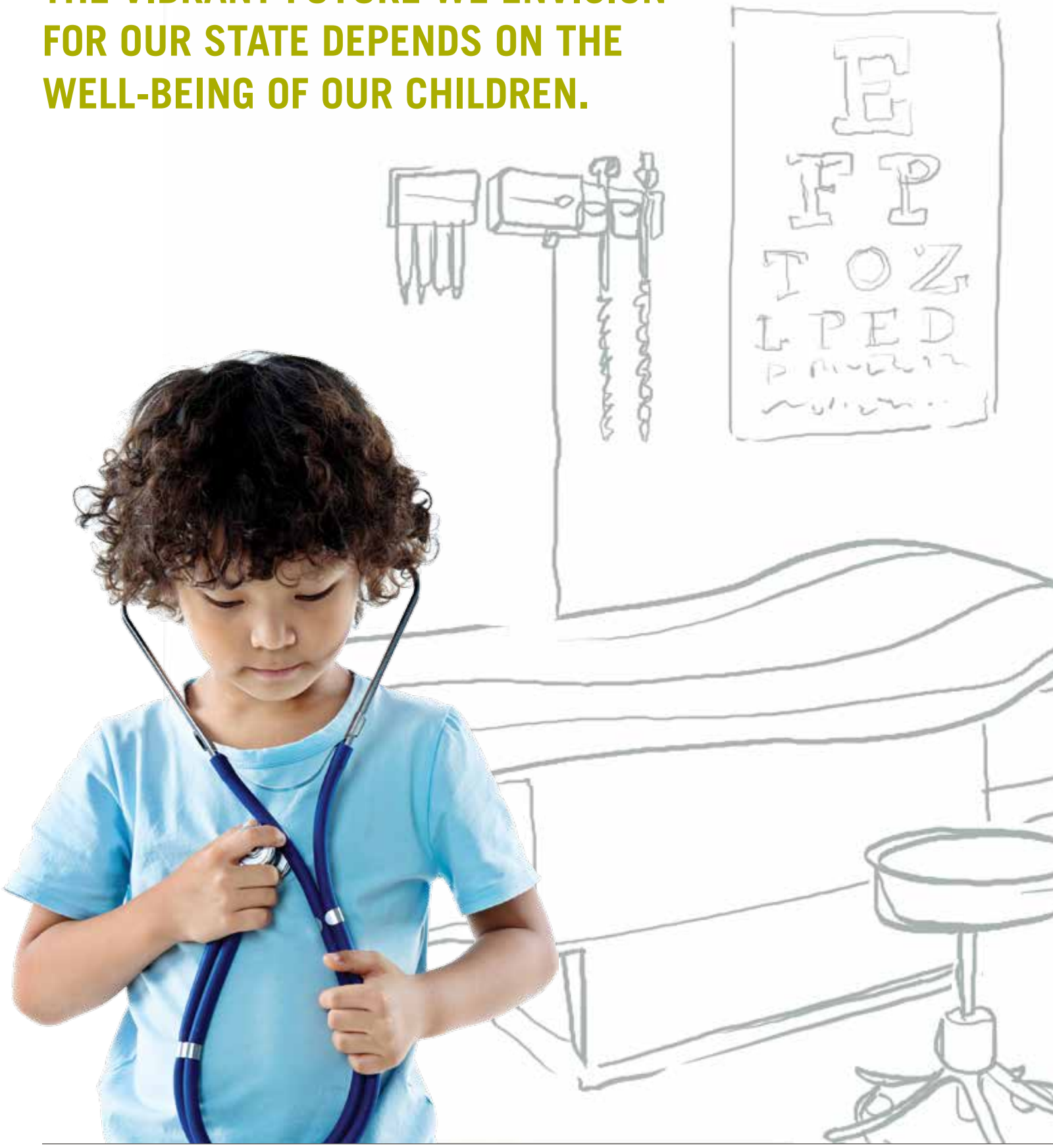
Although small sample sizes limit our ability to disaggregate data on Colorado kids at the detailed subgroup level, national data can help illustrate the disparities that exist within the broader categories. Among Hispanic/Latino children, for example, poverty rates ranged from a low of 13 percent among children from Spain to more than 37 percent among Guatemalan kids. Similar disparities exist within the Asian population. In 2015, poverty rates ranged from 6 percent of Asian Indian children to 31 percent of Hmong children. Within all racial and ethnic groups, poverty rates and other indicators of child well-being also differ between children living in immigrant families and those in U.S.-born families.

Without more granular data for subgroups such as those mentioned above, the disparities within each broad racial and ethnic category are often invisible. Some data sources and government agencies, such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, have established guidelines that require the collection of data for more detailed ethnic groups, but others have yet to take this step. Across the nation, many organizations, particularly within the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, have advocated for data collection and reporting practices that allow for better disaggregation of data. Collecting data for more detailed ethnic groups can help ensure the specific needs and assets of each individual community are not lost in the numbers, while helping policymakers better target resources and support.

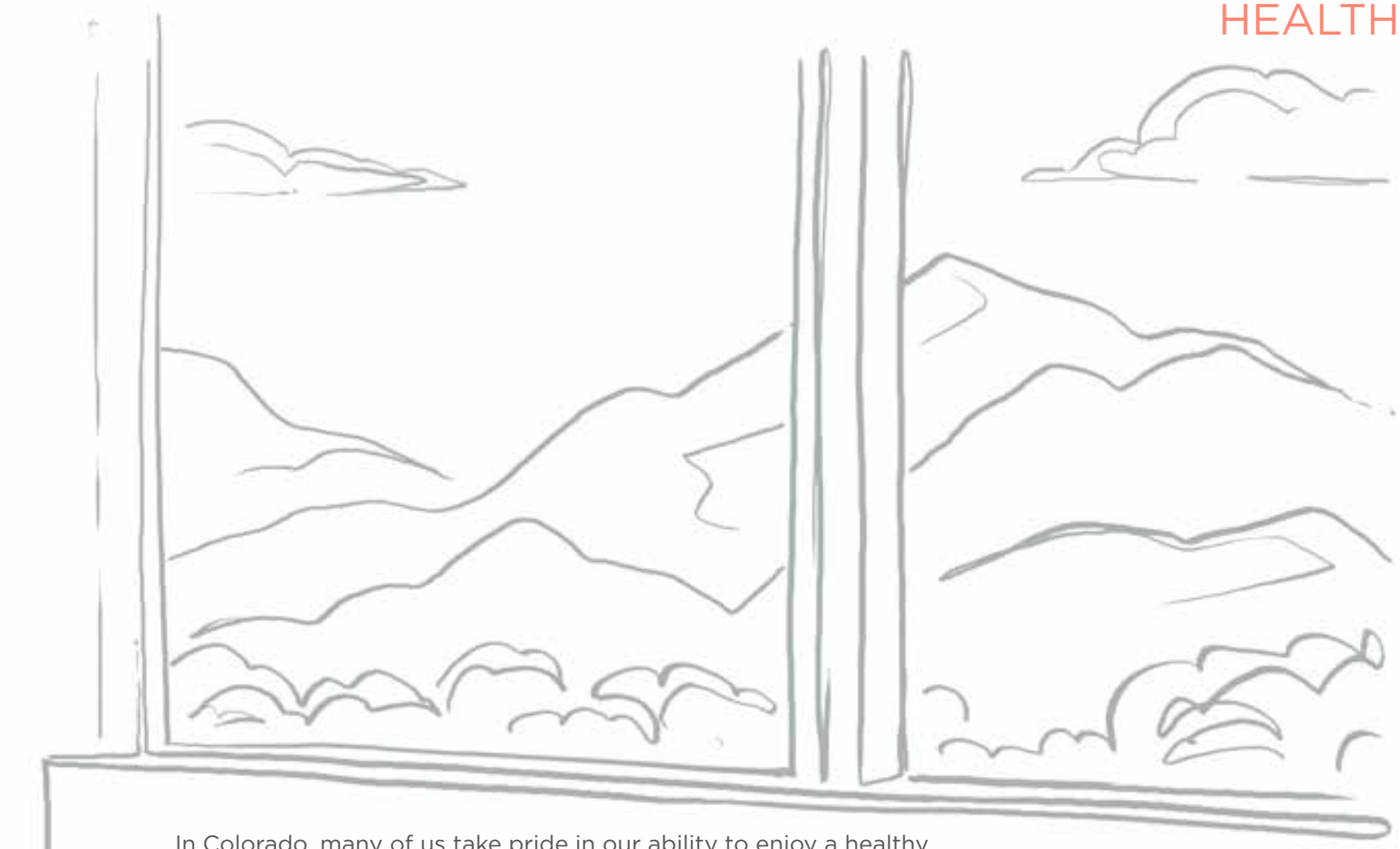
[18] U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey estimates.

HEALTH

THE VIBRANT FUTURE WE ENVISION FOR OUR STATE DEPENDS ON THE WELL-BEING OF OUR CHILDREN.



HEALTH



In Colorado, many of us take pride in our ability to enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle. Ensuring that all kids have the opportunity to enjoy Colorado's clear air and open spaces starts in the earliest years of a child's life. While it's critical that all Colorado children have health insurance that lets them seek care when they need it, it's important to remember that healthy lives happen outside of the doctor's office. It's our responsibility to make sure kids of all races and ethnicities have access to fresh foods, safe places to grow and play, and resources to get the care they need.

Unfortunately, research shows that the circumstances of a child's birth often have lifelong impacts on their health. Our shared legacy of unequal opportunity drives continuing inequities in access to health care and the building blocks of a healthy lifestyle. Historical discrimination makes children of color more likely to be born into families where financial hardship creates barriers to accessing health care in the earliest years. Policies and practices continue to isolate children of color in high-poverty neighborhoods where nutritious foods and healthy infrastructure can be hard to come by. And although recent policy changes have improved health insurance coverage for many of Colorado's children, immigration status and affordability continue to create barriers to coverage and care.

Colorado has long enjoyed a reputation as one of the healthiest states in the nation. But healthy living shouldn't be limited to our world-class skiing, mountain air and miles of trails—it must also include safe sidewalks, nutritious school lunches and health coverage for all. The vibrant future we envision for our state depends on the well-being of our children. Let's make sure that each child, no matter the circumstances of their birth, has the opportunity for a healthy life.

COMMUNITY VOICES

Participants in the 10 conversations held across the state discussed indicators such as uninsured rates for children and babies born to mothers with early prenatal care. These topics led to conversations on culturally relevant health care, the impact of immigration and documentation status on access to coverage and care, and access to healthy food or safe places to play.

HEALTH

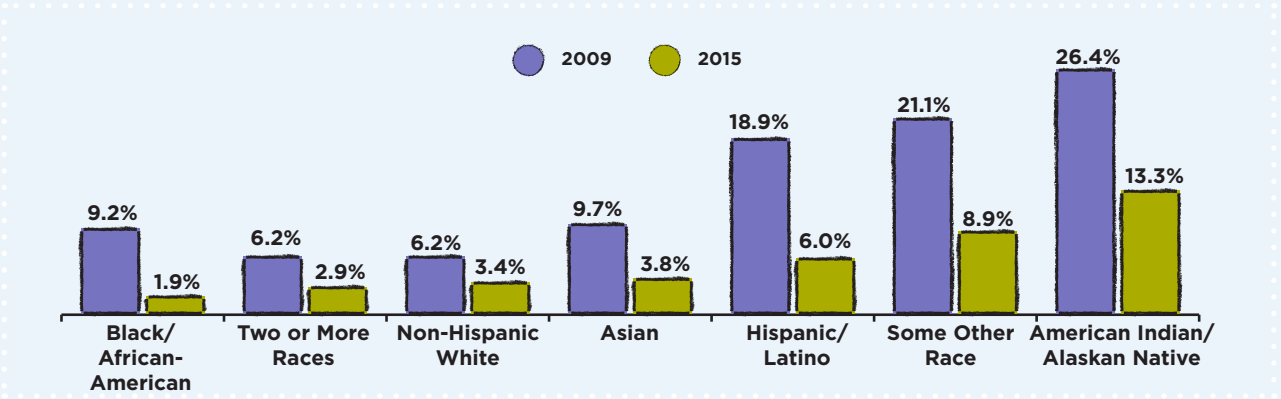
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Whether it's for flu-season sniffles, a tumble off the monkey bars or a chronic health condition, the last thing parents want to worry about is if they'll be able to get their child the care children who are undocumented need. Health insurance coverage provides important protections to make sure all Colorado families can afford care to keep kids healthy.

Thanks to state policy changes, federal reform and coordinated community efforts, more Colorado kids have health insurance than ever before. Coverage rates have improved across all races and ethnicities since Colorado implemented its first reforms in 2008, and children of color have seen some of the greatest gains.[19] Black/African-American children boast the lowest uninsured rate of any group, with less than 2 percent of kids lacking coverage. Uninsured rates for Asian children, children of two or more races, and non-Hispanic White children also remain below the statewide average of 4.2 percent.[20]

ALTHOUGH HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE HAS IMPROVED FOR KIDS OF ALL RACES AND ETHNICITIES, BARRIERS TO COVERAGE REMAIN.

UNINSURED RATES FOR COLORADO CHILDREN UNDER 18

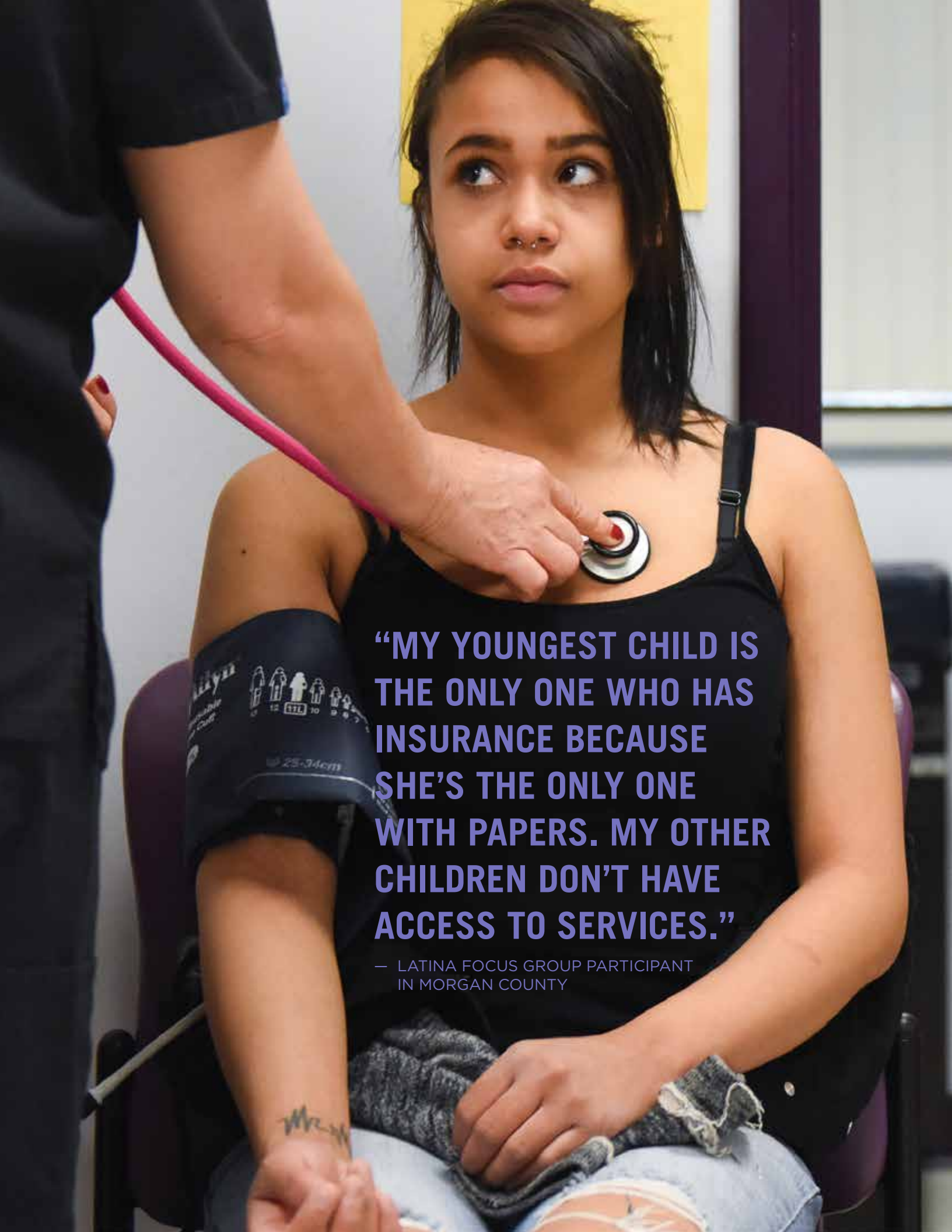


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 and 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Despite improvements in the overall uninsured rate, the current health care system still excludes some groups of children and makes access to coverage difficult for many more. Current policies perpetuate significant barriers to coverage for American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) children and Hispanic/Latino children, in particular.

Because Colorado has a relatively small population of AIAN children, the uninsured rate fluctuates widely from year to year. From 2014 to 2015, for example, the uninsured rate for AIAN children rose from 3 percent to 13 percent.[21] While reported numbers should be interpreted with caution, the high uninsured rates for AIAN children accord with a long history of health care access barriers for the American Indian community. The federal government has historically had a responsibility, outlined through laws and treaties, to provide health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives through the Indian Health Service (IHS). However, chronic underfunding of the IHS and Urban Indian health programs means too few facilities and providers offer care to eligible AIAN populations.[22] Access to services can vary significantly across locations and funding consistently falls short of demand—so much so that individuals covered by IHS alone are considered by the Census Bureau to be uninsured.[23] Additionally, historical barriers to employment and education have created conditions in which American Indians and Alaska Natives are more likely to be employed in

[19] U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 and 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
[20] U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
[21] U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 and 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
[22] Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. (2013). Health Coverage and Care for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Retrieved from http://kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/health-coverage-and-care-for-american-indians-and-alaska-natives/.
[23] U.S. Census Bureau. Data Inputs: American Community Survey. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/did/www/sahie/methods/inputs/acs.html.



“MY YOUNGEST CHILD IS THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS INSURANCE BECAUSE SHE’S THE ONLY ONE WITH PAPERS. MY OTHER CHILDREN DON’T HAVE ACCESS TO SERVICES.”

— LATINA FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT IN MORGAN COUNTY

HEALTH

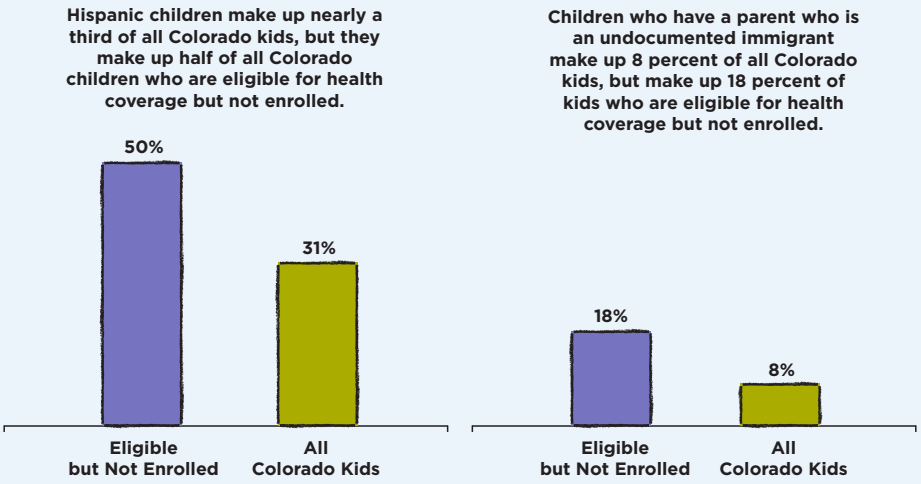
low-wage jobs that typically do not offer health coverage. Limited access to employer-sponsored coverage may also contribute to the higher uninsured rates among AIAN families, further exacerbating disparities in health outcomes.[24]

CHILDREN WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR HEALTH COVERAGE BUT NOT ENROLLED

Important provisions of the Affordable Care Act expanded eligibility for public or subsidized health coverage for most children in families below 400 percent of the federal poverty level (approximately $95,400 for a family of four in 2014). Unfortunately, this expanded eligibility doesn't guarantee that children are getting enrolled in the coverage for which they qualify. In 2014, 75 percent of Colorado's uninsured kids were eligible for assistance through Medicaid, Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) or subsidies on Colorado's state-run insurance marketplace. Overall, 10 percent of Colorado kids who were eligible for public coverage or subsidies were not enrolled as of 2014—approximately 62,000 children.[25]

Federal immigration policy creates an outsized impact on the uninsured rate of Hispanic/Latino children. Although the majority of uninsured Hispanic/Latino children are themselves U.S. citizens, they are more likely than the average Colorado kid to live in families where at least one parent is an undocumented immigrant.[26] When parents are not eligible for health insurance coverage or assistance, they may be less likely to get connected to resources to enroll their children. Additionally, even when their children are legal residents entitled to coverage, parents may be wary of enrolling children for fear of exposing undocumented family members and risking legal action or even deportation.

CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS WHO ARE UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS FACE BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT, EVEN WHEN THEY ARE ELIGIBLE FOR HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.

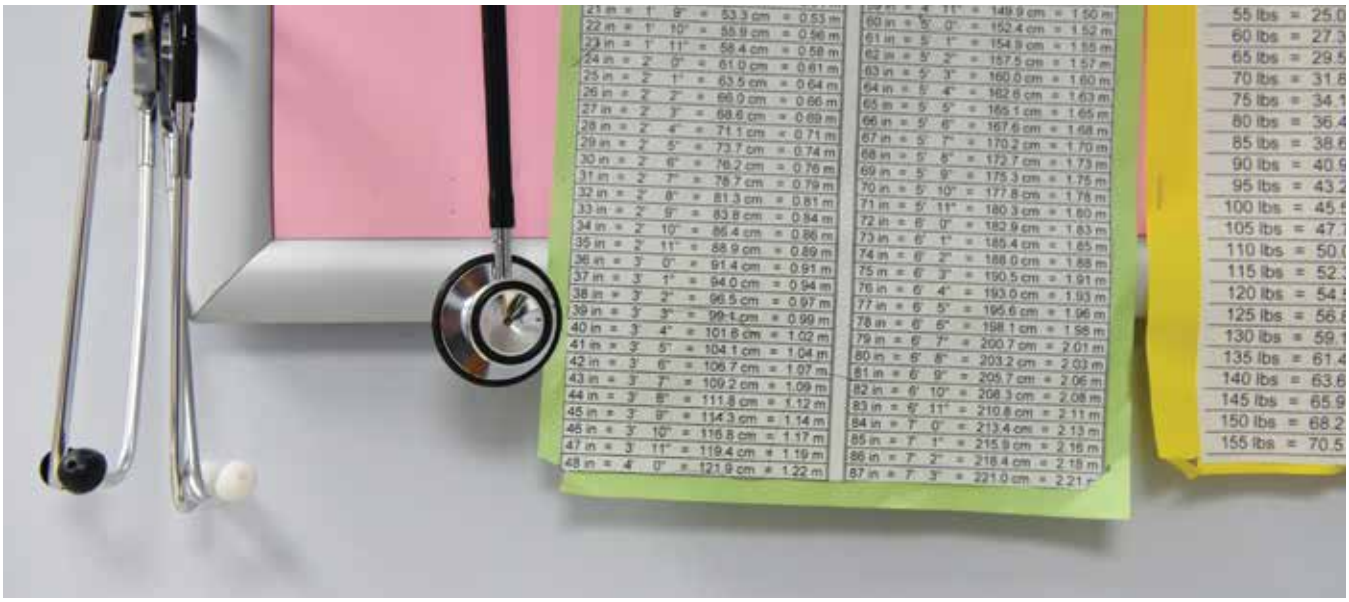


Source: Colorado Health Institute. (2015).

While only 2 percent of Colorado's child population are undocumented immigrants, children who are undocumented make up 14 percent of Colorado's uninsured child population.[28] Children who are undocumented are not eligible for Medicaid, CHP+ or the tax credits offered through the insurance marketplace. Without access to preventive services or more affordable care, families must either go without care or go to extreme lengths to secure necessary treatment for their children. Additionally, language barriers, negative perception of public assistance or simply not being aware of eligibility may prevent thousands more children—of all races and ethnicities—from getting the coverage they deserve.

[24] Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. (2013). Health Coverage and Care for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Retrieved from http://kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/health-coverage-and-care-for-american-indians-and-alaska-natives/.
[25] Colorado Health Institute. (2015). Health insurance status of Coloradans: Higher rate of eligible Coloradans are getting health coverage.
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*

HEALTH



ACCESS TO CARE

Expanding health insurance options for all kids helps more families seek care without facing prohibitively high costs. Even when children have health insurance, however, cost and access barriers can still make it difficult for families to do what they know is best for their child's health. According to the 2015 Colorado Health Access Survey, a Colorado-specific survey fielded and analyzed by the Colorado Health Institute, nearly 5 percent of Colorado kids had a parent who reported that their child did not get needed doctor or specialist care due to the cost, and 19 percent had parents who reported difficulties paying medical bills.[29] While fewer respondents reported these barriers in 2015 than in 2009, nearly one in five families still face financial challenges when it comes to their child's health needs.

A shortage of providers—and especially providers who accept public insurance, speak the same language or come from the same cultural background—further complicates the decisions a family must make when seeking care. Many rural areas have just one provider serving a large geographic region, and families must travel significant distances to receive care. Even in urban areas, limited access to a car, unreliable public transportation, and long waitlists for providers and specialists can make it nearly impossible for children to get in to see a provider as often as they should. For low-income families across the state, access to services may be limited by the scarcity of providers accepting Medicaid. Because Medicaid provider payment rates tend to be lower than private insurer rates, providers may be reluctant to serve patients using Medicaid.[30] Many of Colorado's kids in greatest need have the fewest options for care.

"I heard a really profound story the other week that just saddened me. It was a Hispanic family…This one child had pretty severe neurological things going on…Not addressed. No extensive testing or follow up done. The family being primarily Spanish-speaking, got on a bus and went to Mexico just this week to try to find adequate care, to find out what was going on with their child. What is wrong with that kind of picture? Families shouldn't have to go to that extreme."

— DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

[29] Colorado Health Institute analysis of data from the 2015 Colorado Health Access Survey. The Colorado Health Access Survey is field and analyzed by the Colorado Health Institute and funded by The Colorado Trust.
[30] *Ibid.*

HEALTH

"For low income families that have Medicaid, a lot of those kids are getting turned down for services that they need. Just because you have this contractor for the state doesn't mean you'll get good care."

— DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

For many families, high-quality care comes from the community.

In conversations throughout the state, Coloradans expressed pride in uniting to care for community members in need. Native American community members in La Plata County shared a strong tribal approach to preventative health care and traditional forms of healing. They praised local health clinics that work to provide culturally responsive services that are open to the entire community. Alamosa residents highlighted their community's strength in looking out for neighbors and pulling together in times of need. Examples from across the state highlight the many ways in which communities care for one another.

"My mom, she [uses] a lot of herbs, so she'll make tinctures for us that are herbs or she'll have us drink tea when we're sick. I don't think I've ever gotten so sick that I needed to go to my healthcare, and that's all thanks to her because she's so knowledgeable…It's taught me a lot."— LA PLATA FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

However, cultural barriers can sometimes prevent families from accessing health care.

For refugee families in Fort Morgan, for example, the variety of languages and dialects spoken can make it difficult to provide translation services. Language barriers present an additional challenge in navigating the health care system and communicating with providers.

Research has shown that cultural differences between providers and patients may lead to lower-quality care. When providers come from the same background as their patients, they may be better able to build trust, help with decision-making and provide care that suits the patient's individual needs.

Bias—both conscious and unconscious—can also impact the quality of care a patient receives. Unfortunately, the health care workforce does not reflect the diversity of the population. Nationwide, just 9 percent of physicians identify as Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, or Hispanic. In contrast, children of these races and ethnicities make up 40 percent of Colorado's kids.

While providers of any race can deliver great care, a more diverse provider workforce will help make high-quality care more accessible to all Colorado's families. Colorado must support more providers of color to pursue training and work in our state, in addition to providing resources and training to support all health care professionals in delivering culturally and linguistically appropriate care. By building on communities' strengths in this arena, we can ensure that high-quality health care is available to all Colorado kids.

Sources:
Smedley, B.D., Stith, A.Y., and Nelson, A.R. (2003). Unequal treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
Association of American Medical Colleges. (2014). Diversity in Medical Education: Facts & Figures 2014. Retrieved from: http://aamcdiversityfactsandfigures.org/section-ii-current-status-of-us-physician-workforce/.

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Scraped knees, broken arms and ear infections are as much a part of childhood as stuffed animals and freshly sharpened pencils. Imagine a Colorado where every child can go to the doctor—whether for a well-child check-up or a true emergency—when the need arises. Continuing to safeguard coverage for all children, regardless of race, income, or citizenship, will ensure the next generation of Coloradans grows up healthy and strong.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Babies give us a first glimpse of Colorado's future. From the first moments of a child's life, they are learning, growing and being shaped by the world around them. We have a responsibility to make sure that world provides a safe, nurturing environment in which every baby has the chance to grow into a curious, vibrant and healthy child.

Early Prenatal Care

Supporting an expectant mother's health during pregnancy provides one of the earliest opportunities to ensure that babies have a healthy start to life. Access to prenatal care starting in the first trimester increases the likelihood that a mother will have a healthy pregnancy and get the ongoing care she needs for herself and her new baby.

However, women in Colorado report that not having health insurance, not having enough money and not being able get an appointment prevented them from receiving early prenatal care.[31]

[31] Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section. Colorado Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), 2013.

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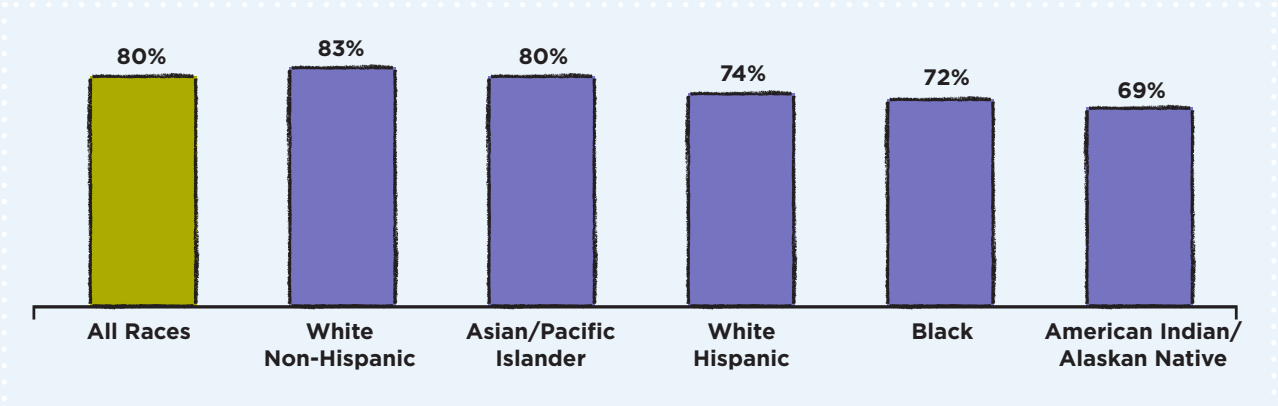
Although health insurance coverage has improved in Colorado, approximately 10.5 percent of women of childbearing age (18 to 44 years old) lacked health insurance coverage in 2015.[32] Given the structural barriers that have historically excluded them from the labor market, women of color are both more likely to lack coverage and more likely to live in poverty. High costs and limited resources mean many women cannot seek care as early or as often as they should. These factors place a disproportionate burden on women of color, leading Hispanic women, Black women, and American Indian/Alaska Native women to receive early prenatal care at lower-than-average rates.[33]

Even those who have coverage and can afford care may find it difficult to receive recommended early prenatal treatment. Coloradans in rural areas noted that a scarcity of providers may force them to travel significant distances for limited prenatal care options. For immigrant families, such as those we heard from in Fort Morgan, language and cultural barriers may prevent women from receiving early prenatal care, as well. And for women who value native healing traditions or other non-Western medicine, it may be difficult to find a provider whose practice aligns with their values and beliefs. Together, these challenges contribute to the disparities we see in women's ability to access and afford recommended care during pregnancy.

MANY WOMEN OF COLOR FACE BARRIERS TO HEALTH COVERAGE AND SERVICES THAT CAN IMPEDE ACCESS TO EARLY PRENATAL CARE.

BIRTHS TO COLORADO MOTHERS WHO RECEIVED EARLY PRENATAL CARE, 2015



Source: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section.

[32] U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
[33] Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section.

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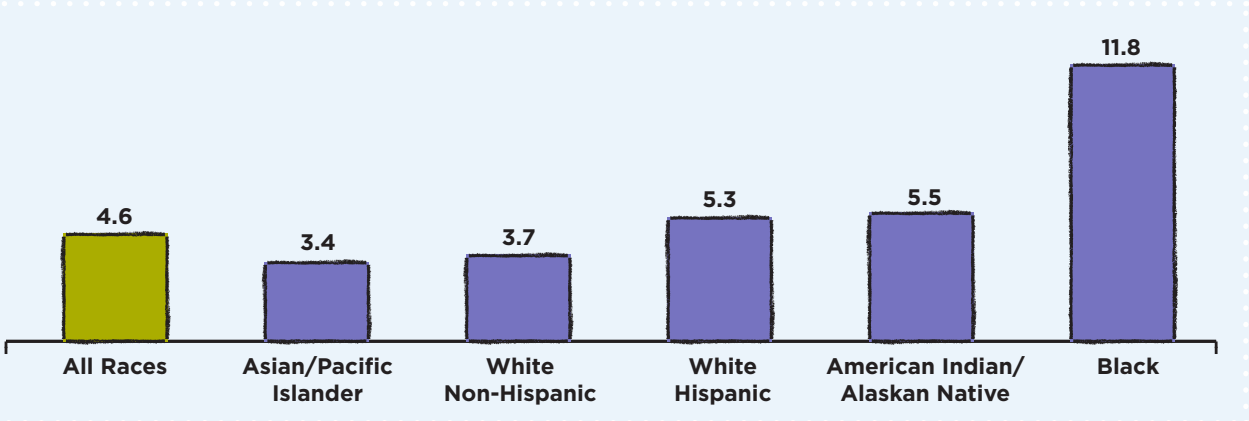
Infant Mortality

Just as proper prenatal care helps ensure a healthy start to a baby's life, a pregnant woman's exposure to stressful conditions—such as financial insecurity, poor nutrition, divorce and intimate partner violence—has been linked to lasting effects on the child's health.[34] High stress levels and lack of access to prenatal care, among other risk factors, increase the likelihood of low birthweight and premature birth, particularly among low-income mothers.[35]

Infant mortality rates provide a sobering example of how the course of a child's life can be linked to their race. Infant mortality refers to the death of a baby before his or her first birthday, and common causes include birth defects, preterm birth or low birthweight, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), maternal pregnancy complications, and injuries.[36] Rates of infant mortality vary widely by race and ethnicity—Hispanic and American Indian babies suffer infant mortality at above-average rates, and the rate for Black babies is more than twice as high as any other group.[37]

HEALTH CARE DISPARITIES, ECONOMIC BARRIERS, AND HISTORICAL DISCRIMINATION LEAD TO AN INFANT MORTALITY RATE FOR BLACK BABIES MORE THAN TWICE AS HIGH AS ANY OTHER GROUP.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS, 2015



Source: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section.

[34] Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development. Stress and pregnancy (prenatal and perinatal). Retrieved from http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/stress-and-pregnancy-prenatal-and-perinatal/introduction.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). Infant mortality.
[37] Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section.

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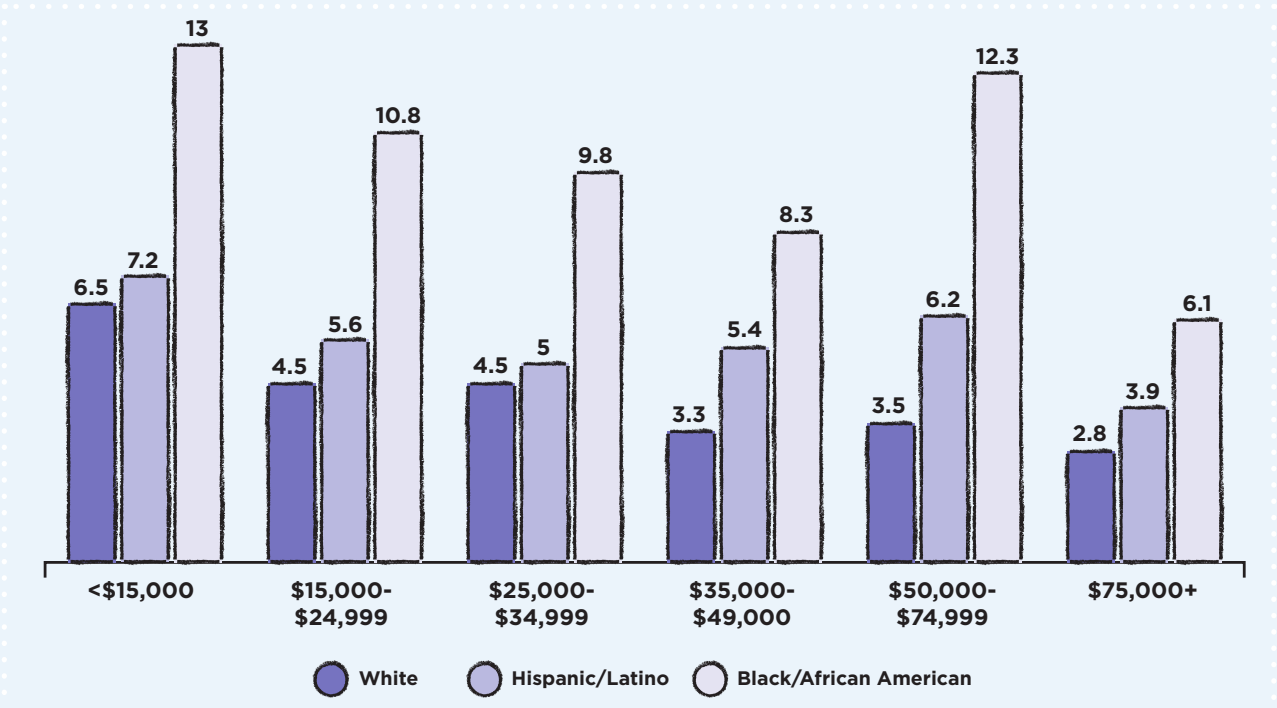
While race and socioeconomic factors—such as income or level of educational attainment—are often linked in health outcomes, racial disparities in parents' economic opportunity do not fully explain the variation in infant mortality rates. Infant mortality rates remain disproportionately high for Black infants, even when controlling for a mother's income and level of education. For example, Black families earning $50,000-$75,000 annually have an infant mortality rate as high as a Black family making less than $15,000.[38] In Colorado, a middle-income Black family faces an infant mortality rate twice as high as a White family below the poverty line, and more than four times higher than a White family at the same income level.[39]

Recent research conducted in Colorado measured cortisol, a marker of stress linked to adverse pregnancy outcomes, in pregnant women and new moms. Findings showed that African-American moms have higher levels of the stress hormone than White or Hispanic moms.[40] This study adds to the body of medical research that suggests racism and social isolation could be related to higher rates of stress, inflammation and preterm birth among Black women. Tragically, these factors may also contribute to the disadvantages Black babies face in surviving their first year of life.

EVEN CONTROLLING FOR INCOME, BLACK INFANTS STILL FACE DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH RATES OF INFANT MORTALITY.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS BY INCOME AND RACE/ETHNICITY, 2014



Source: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section.

[38] Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section.
[39] *Ibid.*
[40] Hoffman, et al. (2016). Measures of Maternal Stress and Mood in Relation to Preterm Birth. Obstetrics & Gynecology 127(3).

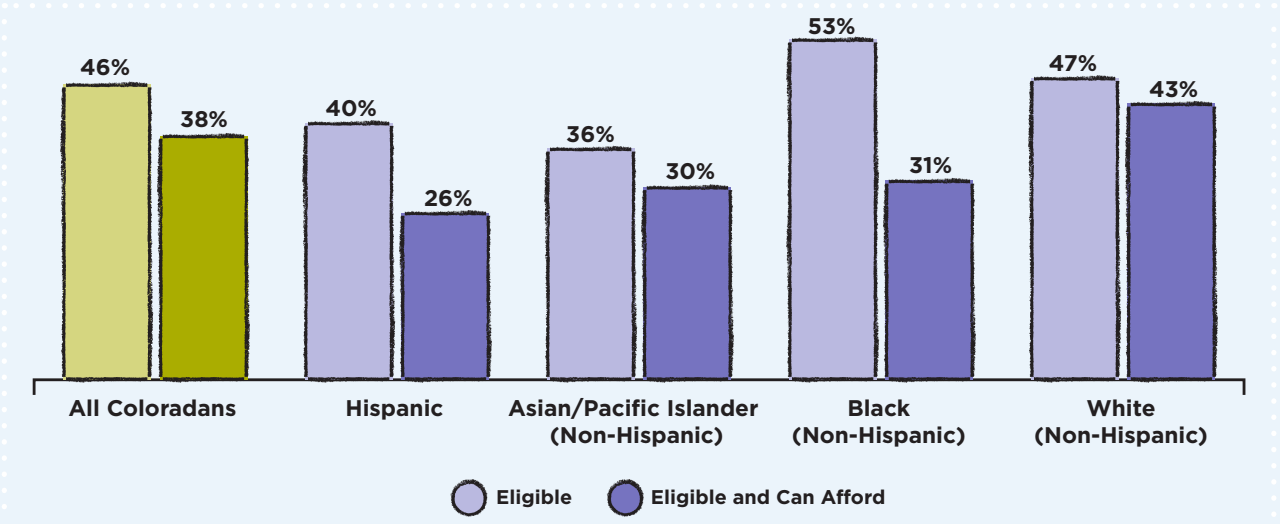
Family Leave

For many families, welcoming a new baby brings a joyful celebration of new life. Interactions with nurturing caregivers during the first months lay the foundation for a lifetime of healthy growth and development.

Recent studies show that extended maternity and paternity leaves reap benefits for children's health, cognitive development and behavioral outcomes.[41] Unfortunately, current family leave policy makes it impossible for most Colorado parents to take adequate time off of work to care for a new infant. Just 45.7 percent of working parents are eligible for FMLA unpaid leave in Colorado, the ninth lowest eligibility rate of any state.[42] When earnings are taken into account in addition to eligibility for FMLA, just 38.5 percent of working parents are able to afford to take the unpaid leave for which they are eligible.[43] For many more parents, even if unpaid leave is available, the wages lost during that time would leave them unable to support themselves without assistance.

FEWER THAN HALF OF WORKING PARENTS IN COLORADO HAVE ACCESS TO FMLA UNPAID LEAVE, AND FEW PARENTS OF COLOR CAN AFFORD TO TAKE IT.

WORKING PARENTS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FMLA UNPAID LEAVE (2011-2014)



Source: diversitydatakids.org, Family and Medical Leave Act Policy Equity Assessment.

Given the many structural barriers to inclusion in the workforce, parents of color are more likely to work in jobs that aren't eligible for FMLA unpaid leave. The policies described in the Family Economic Security section have also led to less wealth accumulation among families of color, making it far more difficult to afford to take leave, even when it is available. Together, these factors make unpaid leave accessible to just one in four Hispanic parents and one in three Asian/Pacific Islander or Black parents, compared to 43 percent of White parents.[44]

In addition to allowing time to care for and bond with their babies, paid family leave brings a number of economic benefits, including keeping parents engaged with an employer, making them more likely to return to work and continue earning wages at the same rate after childbirth.[45] Additionally, mothers who are able to take at least 12 weeks of leave after childbirth are less likely to experience depression that can make it difficult to provide the care they would like to give to their infants.[46]

[41] Chatterji, P. & Markowitz, S. (2012). Family Leave After Childbirth and the Mental Health of New Mothers. Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics (15).
[42] Joshi, P., et al. (2015). Family and Medical Leave Act policy equity assessment. Waltham, MA: diversitydatakids.org, Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy, Heller School for Social Policy & Management, Brandeis University.
[43] *Ibid.*
[44] Joshi, P., Geronimo, K., Romano, B., Earle, A., & Acevedo-Garcia, D. (2015). Family and Medical Leave Act policy equity assessment. Waltham, MA: diversitydatakids.org, Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy, Heller School for Social Policy & Management, Brandeis University. Retrieved from http://www.diversitydatakids.org/data/policy/5/family-and-medical-leave-act.
[45] Chatterji, P. & Markowitz, S. (2012). Family Leave After Childbirth and the Mental Health of New Mothers. Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics (15).
[46] *Ibid.*

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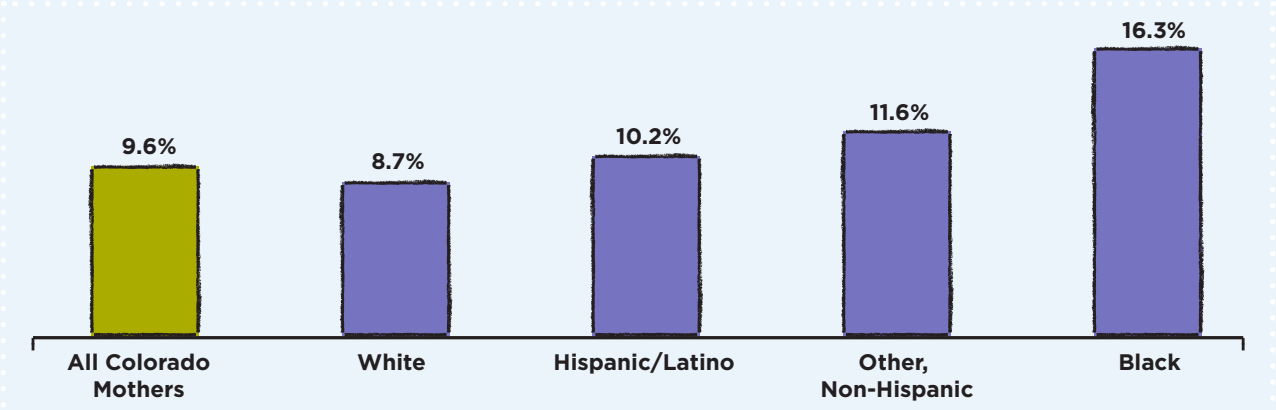
Pregnancy-Related Depression

About one in 10 Colorado women experience pregnancy-related depression, which can occur at any time during pregnancy and up to one year postpartum.[47] The effects of maternal depression are linked to reductions in young children's behavioral, cognitive, and social and emotional functioning.[48] Children raised by clinically depressed mothers are at risk for later mental health problems, social adjustment difficulties and difficulties in school.[49]

Previous sections have outlined how mothers of color are less likely to have access to prenatal care, family leave, health insurance coverage and other resources that provide support from a healthy pregnancy into the first year of a child's life. These factors, combined with discrimination, social isolation and economic barriers that can contribute to higher stress levels, may also contribute to the higher rates of pregnancy-related depression seen among women of color in Colorado. On average, between 2012 and 2014, 16.3 percent of Black mothers experienced pregnancy related-depression, the highest rate of any group.[50] Hispanic/Latino mothers and mothers of other races than White also faced higher-than-average rates of maternal depression.[51]

DISCRIMINATION, SOCIAL ISOLATION, AND BARRIERS TO HEALTH COVERAGE AND CARE CONTRIBUTE TO HIGHER RATES OF PREGNANCY-RELATED DEPRESSION AMONG WOMEN OF COLOR.

RATES OF MATERNAL DEPRESSION, 2012-2014



Colorado Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), 2012-2014.

It can be difficult for mothers of any race or ethnicity to grapple with mental health challenges in addition to the responsibility of caring for a newborn. It's our duty to ensure that all moms have the support they need during pregnancy and the resources they need to give their babies a healthy start to life.

[47] Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Vital Statistics Unit.
[48] National Center for Children in Poverty. (2008). Reducing Maternal Depression and Its Impact on Young Children: Toward a Responsive Early Childhood Policy Framework.
[49] Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2009). Maternal Depression Can Undermine the Development of Young Children: Working Paper No. 8. www.developingchild.harvard.edu.
[50] Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section. Colorado Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), 2012-2014.
[51] *Ibid.*

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HEALTHY LIVING

Tag! You're it! Giggles ring across the playground as pounding feet signal the best part of the day—recess! Growing bodies leap onto swing sets and launch themselves higher with every pump of their legs, and cheers erupt as a soccer ball soars through the goal.

Each moment of a child's day brings a chance for healthy growth, whether through the nutritious food that fuels them through the day or the active play that builds strong bodies. For too many Colorado kids, however, the healthiest choice isn't always the easiest one. Often, factors out of a child's control—such as where they live or how much money their parents make—determine whether they'll be able to have fresh veggies at dinner each day or whether there's a safe route to walk to school. During this critical period of development, we should make sure every child has the resources they need to nourish their growing bodies and minds.

The policies and practices outlined in the section on Family Economic Security (pages 14-25) laid the foundation for patterns of opportunity that vary greatly among kids of different backgrounds. Children of color in Colorado are far more likely to live in poverty than White children, which in turn impacts the choices families can make with limited resources. These differences have a profound impact on access to healthy foods and safe places to play.

Between 2013 and 2015, for example, 16 percent of Colorado children experienced food insecurity, meaning their access to adequate food was limited by lack of money and other resources.[52] The higher prevalence of poverty among households of color can be felt in the difficult decisions people must make about how to provide for their families. Nationwide, more than one in five Hispanic households and one in four Black households with children experienced food insecurity in 2015.[53]

[52] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2015). Household Food Security in the U.S. in 2015. Retrieved from https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/err215/err-215.pdf?v=42636.
[53] *Ibid.*

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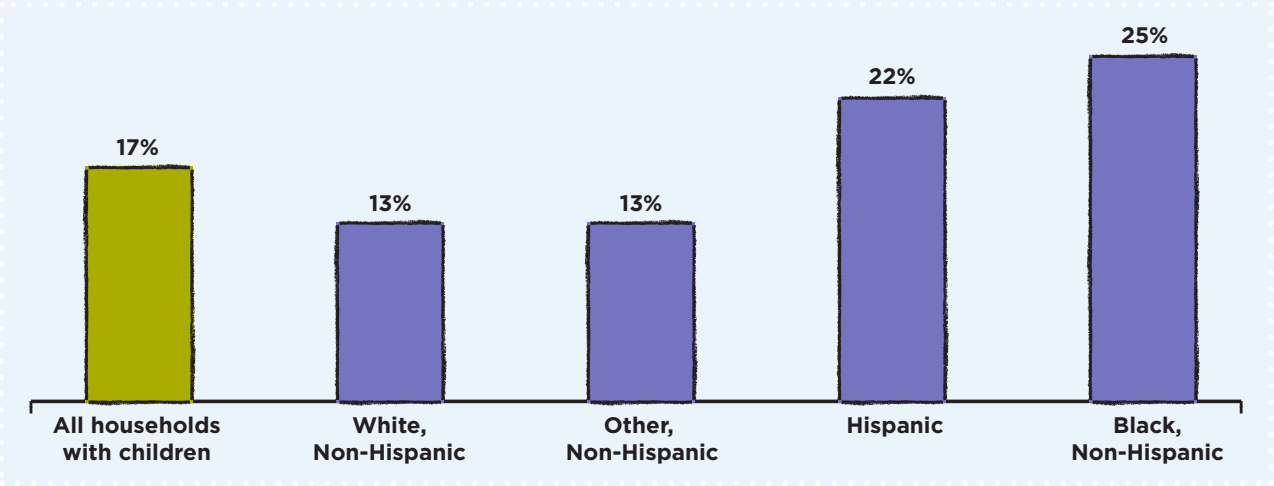
BARRIERS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY LEAD TO HIGHER RATES OF FOOD INSECURITY AMONG HISPANIC AND BLACK FAMILIES.

U.S. FOOD INSECURITY IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN, 2015



U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2015).

These numbers represent a stark example of how poverty impacts all aspects of a child's life. At the most basic level, food insecurity leaves children vulnerable to inadequate nutrition during a time of critical development. Research also shows that food insecurity impacts performance in math and reading, and can lead to behavioral challenges such as aggression, depression, anxiety, and poor attention.[54] For kids to be at their best, they need to be able to focus on the teacher's instructions rather than a hungry belly or an empty lunchbox.

School nutrition programs—such as the National School Lunch Program or Colorado's Breakfast After the Bell program—help guarantee meals to low-income students. However, schools vary in their ability to offer students access to healthy foods and opportunities to be active during the school day. We know that patterns of historical discrimination make kids of color more likely to live in high-poverty neighborhoods and, in turn, attend high-poverty schools, regardless of their families' income. Schools serving low-income communities of color are far less likely to have fresh, healthy foods readily available to students than more affluent schools serving predominantly White communities.[55] Limited resources and demands on classroom time also make it difficult for high-poverty schools to offer ample time for active play at recess or in

Looking for more data on children's health? Visit the KIDS COUNT Data Center at **datacenter.kidscount.org** for information on babies born at a low birthweight, overweight and obesity rates and teen births.

[54] Kimbro, R.T. & Denney, J.T. (2015). Transitions into food insecurity associated with behavioral problems and worse overall health among children. Health Affairs (34)11, pps. 1949-1955.
[55] Padres y Jovenes Unidos. (2016). Health Justice Report II.

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P.E. classes, and low-income students may not have the resources to pay for program fees, uniforms or equipment to participate in sports outside of class. Failing to address these resource inequities in schools perpetuates existing health disparities.

The tough choices brought on by a limited budget can also restrict a family's access to healthy foods. Because large, full-service grocery retailers are less likely to situate themselves in high-poverty areas, these neighborhoods often qualify as "food deserts," where residents have little or no access to fresh produce, lean meats and other nutritious foods. A food desert is defined as a census tract where at least 20 percent of the population lives below the poverty line and the nearest grocery store is greater than one mile away in an urban area or 10 miles away in a rural area.[56] Compounding the challenges caused by this scarcity, high-poverty neighborhoods may lack reliable public transportation or safe walking routes if residents lack a personal vehicle.

With limited access to more nutritious options, families living in high-poverty neighborhoods may need to rely on convenience stores or bodegas that are more likely to sell processed, unhealthy foods. As a result, children growing up in low-income or food-insecure families are both more likely to be overweight and to have challenges getting the nutrients they need for proper growth and development. Getting too much of the wrong foods can lead to unhealthy weight gain, high blood pressure, type-2 diabetes, heart disease and other health problems with lifelong consequences.[57] The connection between food insecurity and obesity may seem counterintuitive, but poverty contributes to an undeniable link between the two.

[56] Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section. Colorado Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), 2013.
[57] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012.

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In Colorado, communities come together to combat the many barriers to healthy living.

When clinics don't provide translation services, patients bring family members along to serve as interpreters. Pushing their babies in strollers, new moms organize group walks through their neighborhoods to stay active and compare notes on their children's development. In Southwest Denver, where full service grocery stores are hard to come by, Re:Vision's promotoras help families grow fresh produce in their own backyards. Organizing groups like Padres y Jóvenes Unidos lead families in efforts to highlight issues in their communities and advocate for policies that improve conditions for all kids.

A nurturing environment is one of the most important factors in a child's healthy growth and development, and family and community can help protect against the many external factors driving the health disparities we see in Colorado's kids. When advocating for equitable policies that remove barriers to health, we must do so in a way that supports existing community efforts and relies on the leadership of those most impacted.

Communities of color show profound resourcefulness and resilience despite the way current policies create disproportionate barriers to healthy living; imagine the potential that will be unlocked when those challenges no longer stand in the way.

To find more examples of the many ways community members meet barriers to health with creative solutions, we encourage you to explore the work of organizations including Padres y Jóvenes Unidos, LiveWell Colorado, Re:Vision, Full Circle of Lake County, the Stapleton Foundation, Colorado Center on Law & Policy's Vital Signs report, and Center for Health Progress's Waiting for Health Equity graphic novel. While by no means an exhaustive list, these groups are among the many in Colorado doing exemplary work to highlight and combat existing barriers to health equity.

CAN YOU IMAGINE THE POTENTIAL THAT WILL BE UNLOCKED WHEN THOSE WHO FACE THE MOST BARRIERS NO LONGER SEE THOSE CHALLENGES IN THEIR WAY?

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

THE FIRST FEW YEARS OF A CHILD'S LIFE ARE A MAGICAL TIME, FULL OF WONDER AND CURIOSITY.

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The first few years of a child's life are a magical time, full of wonder and curiosity. They're a time of baby giggles, tiny fingers and toes, first words, and snuggling up with mom or dad to hear a favorite story over and over. They're also a time of unmatched potential and opportunity, when children's minds are developing at an incredibly rapid rate. Young children are constantly gaining knowledge from the world around them—interacting with and learning from parents, siblings and teachers. Stimulating and nurturing early learning experiences that support this rapid development are critical to building a strong foundation for kids. Supporting parents' and families' efforts to give their children a strong start, whether in formal early learning programs or at home, is one of the most powerful ways we can ensure a bright future for our state.

All Colorado kids deserve the benefits that high-quality early learning experiences can provide. However, too few Colorado families have access to the early learning, child care and preschool resources that can help support their children's development. While barriers such as affordability of care affect families of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, other challenges—such as finding a program that is culturally relevant or experiencing the disproportionate use of suspensions and expulsions in early care settings—affect families of color at higher rates as a result of inequitable policies and practices. We haven't yet created a fair and equitable system when so many Colorado families struggle to access or afford child care and other early learning opportunities for their children—opportunities that will serve as a launching pad for their future dreams and pursuits.

We all benefit when we invest in children's early development. Whether at home with loving family members or in a preschool classroom with a favorite teacher, nurturing early experiences help children develop the skills and knowledge they'll need throughout their lifetimes. Together we can create smart, effective policies that build on the strengths of parents and families and ensure a strong start for every Colorado child.

COMMUNITY VOICES

Although data on children's early experiences are limited—and data disaggregated by race and ethnicity even more so—participants in the 10 conversations across the state had rich discussions about early learning and development. An issue that consistently arose, regardless of whether a community was large or small, rural or urban, was the availability and affordability of high-quality child care and preschool. People in all communities cited the difficult choices families must make when they aren't able to access stable and affordable child care for their children. Some participants also mentioned the importance of honoring different cultural values around children's earliest years, recognizing that while some families may choose formal early learning programs for their children, others prefer to have children stay at home and learn from family. Where available, data on the topics that surfaced during conversations with community members are included in the following section.

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT

High-quality preschool programs help boost school readiness for all children, but affordability and other factors limit options for many Colorado families.

A tiny boy with a big backpack is giddy with excitement, sprinting up to the front door of his preschool with a huge grin on his face. What will he learn today? Perhaps he'll come home and tell his parents everything his teachers taught him about animal habitats, or what words start with the letter "B." Maybe he'll sing his younger sister the song he sings with his classmates, or show off his counting skills to grandma.

High-quality learning experiences during early childhood, including preschool, help ignite children's inherent love of learning at an early age and boost kindergarten readiness. Decades of research show that quality early childhood education contributes to the development of cognitive skills, social-emotional skills and character skills including attentiveness, persistence, motivation, self-control and teamwork. Additionally, access to stable child care and preschool supports families in becoming economically secure by helping ensure that parents can work consistently. Investments in preschool and other early learning programs also pay dividends years later. Research shows that children who participated in a high-quality preschool program are less likely to require special education services, less likely to be held back a grade and more likely to graduate from high school on time.[58] These positive outcomes ripple outward to benefit all Coloradans.

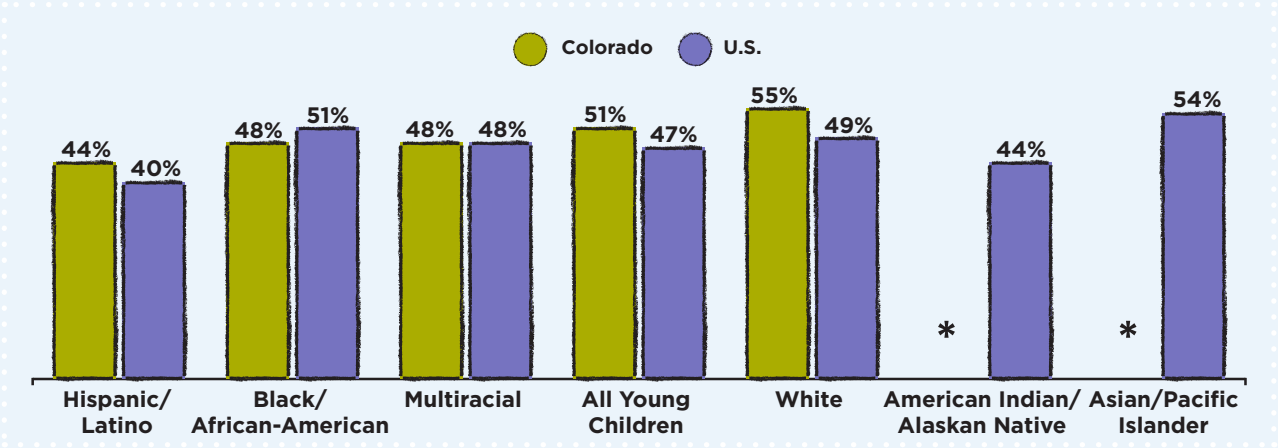
Although Colorado boasts some excellent preschool programs, both public and private, there simply aren't enough affordable, high-quality options to provide a preschool experience for every Colorado child. Enrollment in public programs such as the Colorado Preschool Program or Head Start is limited by funding constraints, and some private programs are out of reach for Colorado parents due to cost barriers. **As a result, only about half of all young children in Colorado were enrolled in nursery school, preschool or kindergarten between 2011 and 2015.[59]**

Due to systemic inequities based on race and ethnicity, barriers to preschool enrollment disproportionately impact children and families of color. Additionally, discriminatory housing and lending practices have created segregated communities, isolating many children—particularly children of color—in high-poverty neighborhoods that too often lack the structures that support families, including high-quality early learning programs.

ACROSS COLORADO, ONLY ABOUT HALF OF ALL YOUNG CHILDREN ARE ENROLLED IN PRESCHOOL, NURSERY SCHOOL OR KINDERGARTEN. BARRIERS TO PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECT CHILDREN OF COLOR.

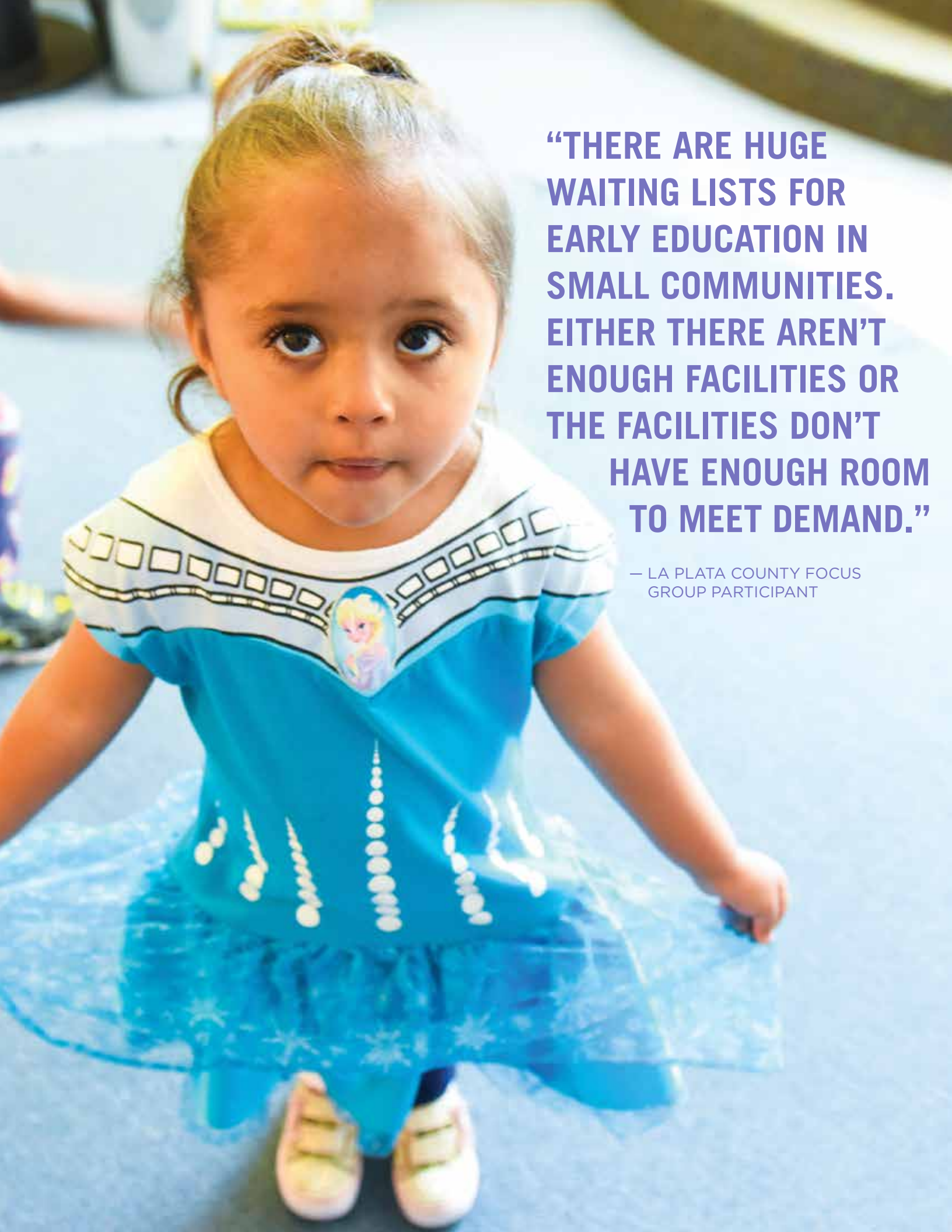
PERCENT OF 3-, 4- AND 5-YEAR-OLDS ENROLLED IN PRESCHOOL, NURSERY SCHOOL OR KINDERGARTEN

* Data unavailable for Colorado due to small sample size.



U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

[58] Barnett, W. S. (2008). Preschool education and its lasting effects: Research and policy implications. Rutgers, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research. Retrieved from http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/PB-Barnett-EARLY-ED_FINAL.pdf.
[59] Population Reference Bureau analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



“THERE ARE HUGE WAITING LISTS FOR EARLY EDUCATION IN SMALL COMMUNITIES. EITHER THERE AREN’T ENOUGH FACILITIES OR THE FACILITIES DON’T HAVE ENOUGH ROOM TO MEET DEMAND.”

— LA PLATA COUNTY FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

For example, in the Denver metropolitan area, American Indian, Black and Latino children are five times more likely than White children to live in "double-jeopardy" neighborhoods—high-poverty neighborhoods with no nationally accredited early childhood center.[60] Although national accreditation is only one indicator of quality, the disparity in access to these centers helps illustrate the ways in which neighborhood segregation can limit families' abilities to access early learning opportunities.

Cultural preferences differ when it comes to formal early childhood programs, but many parents of all races and ethnicities seek out center-based early childhood experiences for their young children.

While some families choose to enroll their children in a formal early learning program, others have a cultural preference for children to stay at home during their earliest years, surrounded and supported by family members. High-quality care provided by family certainly benefits children's development, but not all families have someone available to care for and nurture a child during the day. Data show that many parents of all racial and ethnic backgrounds seek out formal or center-based early learning experiences for their children, whether out of preference or necessity.

A recent brief from the National Research Center on Hispanic Children and Families tested a common assumption that a preference for family, friend and neighbor care is the driving factor behind lower enrollment in formal early learning programs among Hispanic/Latino children. The study examined Hispanic parents' perceptions of center-based child care and early learning programs and found that their views on center-based programs are largely similar to those held by Black and White parents. In fact, the study found that Hispanic parents are less likely than White parents to view care provided by relatives as nurturing or affordable. Additionally, Hispanic parents are less likely than White parents to believe that relative care prepares children for school.

Rather than a preference for informal care, the study identified affordability as the area where Latino parents' views on center-based care diverge the most from those of White parents; Latino parents with young children are less likely than White parents to perceive center-based early learning options as affordable.[61] These findings mirror those from a study conducted by Denver-based Padres y Jóvenes Unidos, which found that availability and affordability of high-quality early learning options were key factors driving lower rates of enrollment in formal early childhood education programs among Latino children in Southwest Denver.[62]

[60] Early childhood center data: diversitydatakids.org. Early Childhood Database (State Early Childhood Care and Education Licensing Database 2012 and 2013, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data 2009-2010, National Association for the Education of Young Children Accredited Program Database, 2012 and 2013). Poverty data: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey. Child data: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1.

[61] Guzman, L, & Hickman, S., Turner, K., Gennetian, L. (2016). Hispanic children's participation in early care and education: Parents' perceptions of care arrangements, and relatives' ability to provide care. Bethesda, MD: National Research Center on Hispanic Children and Families. Retrieved from http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-60HispECEParentPerceptions.pdf.

[62] Padres y Jóvenes Unidos. (2016). *The great unequalizer: How Denver's pre-k system fails the children of Southwest Denver and other low-income communities of color.*

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

Exclusionary discipline practices, including suspensions and expulsions, deny many young children valuable learning time in the early grades.

Children do some of the most important learning during their first years in the classroom. Whether sounding out letters for the first time, listening to a teacher's instructions or sharing toys with a classmate, the lessons of early childhood unlock the potential of all of our children to learn about themselves and the world.

School success by the end of third grade is a powerful predictor of later academic and life outcomes, including high school graduation and career readiness.[63] However, too few children, especially Black, Latino, Native American, and children with disabilities, are on track for success by the end of third grade. While there are many reasons for this trend, one is that exclusionary school discipline based on infractions often unrelated to safety push thousands of children—disproportionately boys, children of color and children with disabilities—out of the building at a time when school can have the greatest impact.

The first years of school represent an important transition in children's lives. It may be the first time they've been asked to sit quietly for an extended period or to navigate playtime without guidance from a caregiver. Sometimes, the stress and excitement of this new environment can be overwhelming. Temper tantrums, outbursts, bathroom mishaps, or defiance—some of the most common reasons for exclusionary disciplinary action in the early grades—reflect developmentally appropriate, though challenging, behaviors.[64]

In Colorado, the same disciplinary policies and practices apply whether a student is 18 years old or 5 years old. As a result, schools issued nearly 8,000 out-of-school suspensions to Colorado students in preschool through third grade (usually 3-year-olds through 8-year-olds) during the 2015-2016 school year.[65] In addition to the learning time lost, each time a student is sent out of the classroom for represents a missed opportunity to address the root causes of a child's actions.

For some children, these behaviors may be early signs of an emerging behavioral or learning issue. Addressing these issues early—when a child's brain is in the most malleable stage of development—provides the best chance to support a child in managing a potential issue through the rest of their schooling. Challenging behaviors may also signal other stressors in a child's life, such as home or family problems, that present a need for additional supports as they transition into the classroom.

"If you have a preschool program and you expel the children who need it the most, you're sabotaging your rate of return. No child is more in need of school-readiness-boosting preschool experience than a child who is being expelled or suspended from preschool. We would never send a child home because that child was struggling at reading. We would never send a child home if that child was struggling with math. Why would we send a child home for struggling with social-emotional skills?"

— DR. WALTER GILLIAM

[63] Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2013). Early Warning: Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters.
[64] National Conference of State Legislatures. (2015). Supporting children's social and emotional needs and reducing early childhood expulsions. Retrieved from http://www.ncsl.org/documents/cyf/NCSL_Supporting_Children_Reducing_Expulsions.pdf.
[65] Colorado Department of Education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

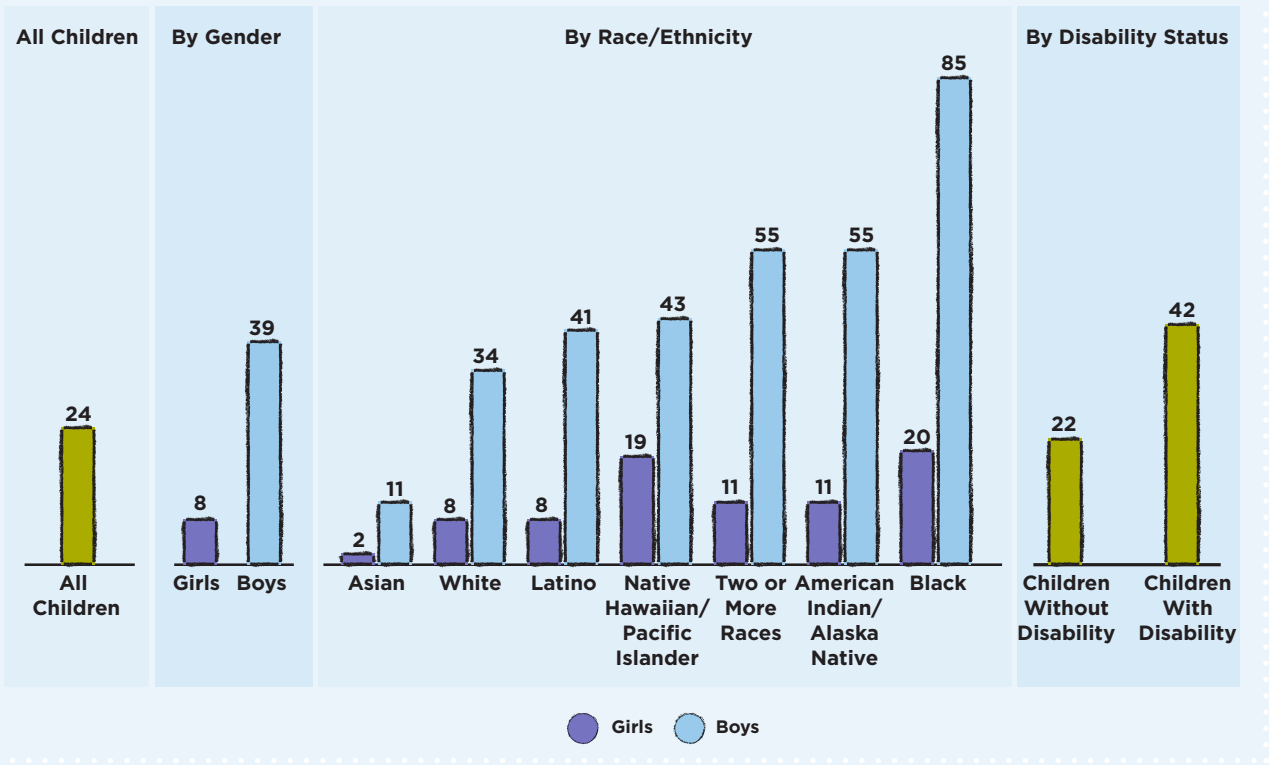
Research does not support suspensions and expulsions as an effective means to address behavior problems in young children. Evidence suggests the practice neither improves school safety or culture, nor serves as an effective intervention for the individual child.[66] In fact, such punitive measures in the early years are associated with negative student outcomes such as lower academic performance, higher rates of dropout, failure to graduate on time, decreased academic engagement and future disciplinary exclusion from school.[67]

Furthermore, evidence shows that disciplinary action is not applied equally to all children. In Colorado, young boys are five times as likely as girls to be subjected to disciplinary action in preschool through third grade, and a child with a disability is nearly twice as likely to be disciplined as a peer without a disability. Most strikingly, a Black boy is three and half times more likely to be disciplined than the average student in the early grades.[68]

Many factors contribute to this disparity. Economic barriers make it more likely that students of color live in poverty, creating the potential for stressful conditions that impact a child's behavior. Residential segregation makes students of color more likely to attend high-poverty schools that may lack additional resources to adequately address behavioral issues when they arise. However, the disproportionality in disciplinary action cannot be explained by socioeconomic factors alone. The degree and consistency of these disparities suggests that disciplinary action is applied differently to different students.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS ARE NOT APPLIED EQUALLY TO ALL STUDENTS. BOYS—PARTICULARLY BLACK BOYS—AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FACE DISCIPLINARY ACTION AT DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH RATES.

NUMBER OF COLORADO CHILDREN DISCIPLINED BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP (PER 1,000 STUDENTS), PREK-3RD GRADE, 2015-16



Source: Colorado Department of Education

[66] Skiba, Shure, Middelberg & Baker, 2011
[67] Achilles, McLaughlin, Croninger,2007; Arcia, 2006; Christle, Jolivette, & Nelson, 2005; Costenbader & Markson, 1998; Lee, Cornell, Gregory, & Fan, 2011; Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Rodney et al., 1999; Skiba & Peterson, 1999
[68] Colorado Department of Education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Research suggests that, when confronted with children exhibiting the same challenging behavior, educators perceive Black children as being less innocent and more culpable than their peers.[69] People perceive Black boys, in particular, to be older than they are and more likely to pose a danger to other children.[70] This type of bias, informed by the automatic and often unconscious stereotypes that are pervasive in our culture, has significant implications for racial disparities in school discipline.[71]

Implicit bias may influence educators' perceptions of student behavior, even with the best intentions. As a result, some students are more likely to be disciplined than others, even for the same transgression.[72] It is important to provide educators with supports to both understand implicit bias and how it may impact disciplinary practices. At the same time, we must make sure our schools have the resources to intervene and provide support to students and teachers when challenging behaviors arise, so that teachers can devote as much time as possible to classroom instruction.

We know that investments in early development pay huge dividends in preventing and closing opportunity gaps. Yet research shows that practices like out-of-school suspension and expulsion contribute to widening the education equity gap. In the early years of rapid brain development, we need thoughtful discipline policies that help children unlock their potential. By focusing on alternatives to suspension and expulsion for non-threatening behavior, we have an opportunity to address the root causes of a child's actions. With the appropriate resources for both schools and students, we can support all children to stay in the classroom and on track for academic success.

[69] Goff, P.A., Jackson, M.C., Allison, B., Di Leone, L., Culotta, M., & DiTomasso, N.A. (2014). The essence of innocence: Consequences of dehumanizing Black children. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 106.
[70] Gilliam, W.S., & Reyes, C. (2016). Teacher decision-making factors that lead to preschool expulsion: Scale development and preliminary validation of the preschool expulsion risk measure.
[71] Eberhardt, J.L., Goff, P.A., Purdie, V.J., & Davies, P.G. (2004). Seeing Black: Race, crime, and visual processing. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87.
[72] Gilliam, W.S., Maupin, A.N., Reyes, C.R., Accavitti, M., Shic, F. (2016). Do Early Educators' Implicit Biases Regarding Sex and Race Relate to Behavior Expectations and Recommendations of Preschool Expulsions and Suspensions? Yale University Child Study Center.

K-12 EDUCATION

"WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?"

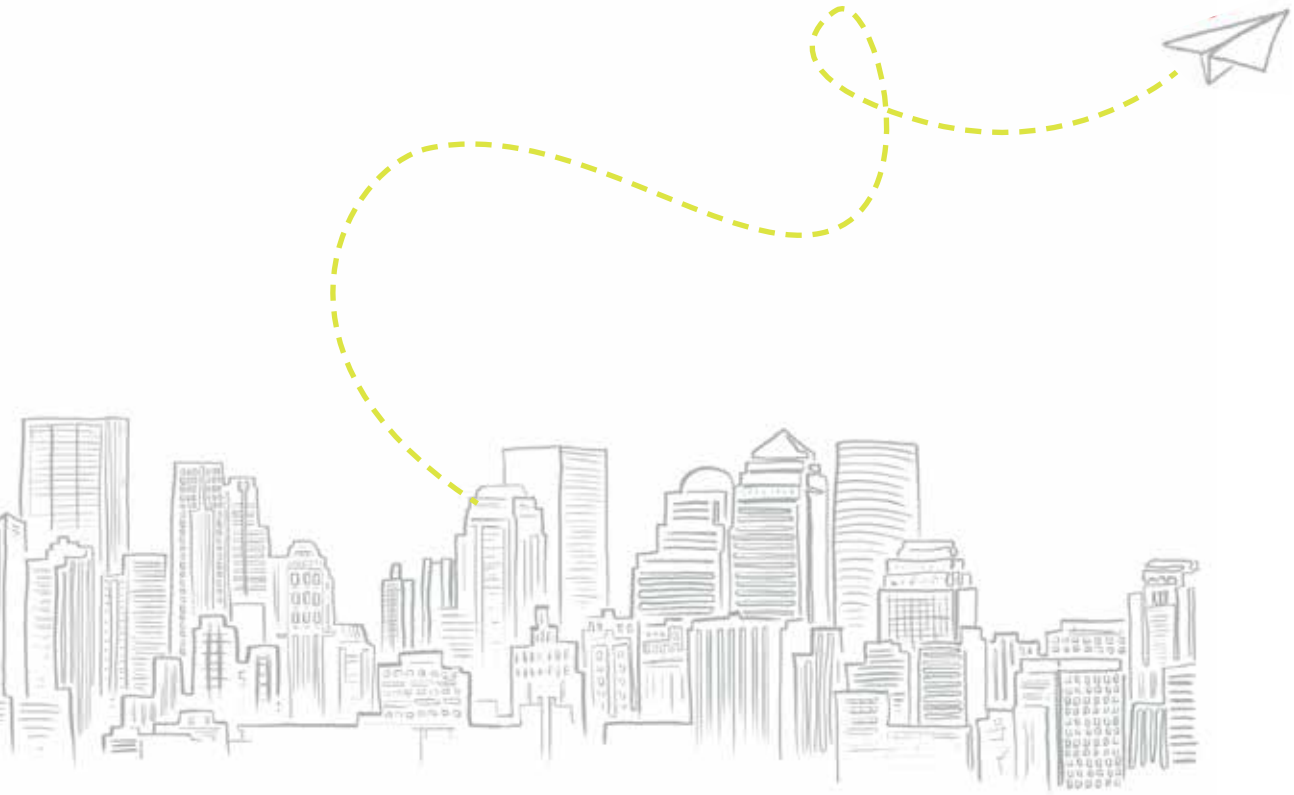
K-12 EDUCATION

"What do you want to be when you grow up?" It's one of the most common questions we're asked during childhood. While the specific answers may vary, all kids have big dreams for themselves and their futures. Their eyes light up when they talk about becoming a dancer or a geologist, or perhaps a firefighter.

What would Colorado be like if we provided **all** kids with the support they need to reach these dreams?

As things stand today, children of color face more barriers to getting the education they need to reach their goals than do White children. Although the Supreme Court overturned the concept of "separate but equal" more than 60 years ago in the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, policies and practices enacted throughout our history have created unequal educational opportunities that persist today. Housing discrimination created segregated neighborhoods, which in turn created segregated schools. The school funding structure, based largely on property wealth, has created a system in which schools across the state have vastly different educational resources. As a result, some Colorado children attend schools with high-quality, experienced educators, crisp new textbooks and state-of-the-art culinary labs; others attend schools with classrooms that are bursting at the seams, no school counselors and a roof that leaks during class. In turn, these opportunity gaps create disparities in important measures of educational success. Resilient communities have developed innovative ways to equip their children with the knowledge and critical thinking skills they need to succeed, but all children should have a high-quality school available and accessible to them.

Children—whether they're Black, Latino, Asian, Native American or White—have limitless potential. It's up to all of us to unlock it. Together, we can ensure that every Colorado child has the opportunity to attend a school in which they feel safe, in which they are challenged to do their best, and in which they receive the support and instruction they need to soar toward their dreams. Join us in making this vision a reality for every Colorado child. We'll all benefit when we do.



K-12 EDUCATION

COMMUNITY VOICES

Community leaders and members who participated in the 10 dialogue sessions held across the state explored and provided feedback on indicators including the percentage of students attending a high-poverty school, the percentage of kindergartners in a full-day program and teacher turnover rates. These topics sparked larger discussions about some of the historical and current-day policies and practices that create gaps in educational opportunity between children of color and White children.

Topics that surfaced during the discussions included inadequate school funding, large class sizes, racially segregated neighborhoods, difficulty recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers, disproportionality in discipline (see pages 49-51 in the Early Childhood section), and a lack of culturally responsive programming for students of color. Where available, data on these topics are included here and enhanced by the voices of community members from across the state. Data on other topics, such as implicit bias or cultural competency in education, are limited and therefore not included here, but it should be noted that these factors also perpetuate racial and ethnic inequities in education.

SCHOOL FUNDING INEQUITIES

What are the ingredients necessary to create an excellent school? Some might say skilled teachers who are invested in their students' success are key. Others may mention the importance of classes that support the whole child, from music to physical education to advanced calculus. Some may say that what makes a school excellent is a culture that values students' social and emotional needs.

Funding alone can't create a great school, but it can help schools afford the ingredients. Although Colorado's Constitution lays out the noble vision for a "thorough and uniform" system of public education, the state's school funding system has created vast inequities in the amount of money each school district receives to educate its students. As a result of these inequities, some schools in Colorado are better equipped than others to provide students with a top-notch education.

"The funding for school districts mirrors residential, racial and economic segregation, and it's a problem."

— DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

Basing school funding partially on local property values creates profound inequities from community to community.

Across the country, funding levels for schools are determined to a large extent by local property values, as property taxes on local homes and businesses make up a significant share of school funding. This structure is problematic because property values vary widely from community to community. Take, for example, the Sanford school district in Conejos County and the Aspen school district in Pitkin County. Assessed property value in Aspen was more than $1.6 million per student in 2016-2017—more than 76 times as high as the $21,582 in assessed property value per student in the Sanford school district.[73, 74] On average, the 20 percent of school districts with the highest assessed property values per pupil had 15 times as much assessed property wealth per student as the 20 percent of districts with the lowest assessed property values per student.

School funding inequities affect Colorado kids of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, but unfair policies across a host of institutions have created a system in which children of color are particularly affected. Past discriminatory housing and lending practices, such as redlining, often isolated people of color into segregated and under-resourced areas.

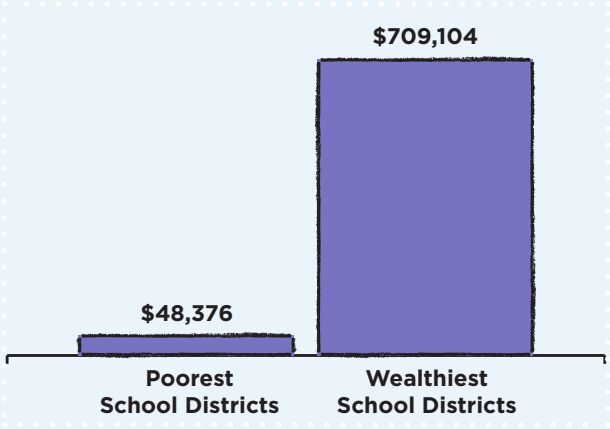
[73] According to the Colorado Department of Education's 2016 school finance brochure, "Assessed valuation is based on a percentage of a property's actual value. For example, in budget year 2016-17, residential property is expected to have an assessed valuation equal to 7.96% of its actual value."
[74] Colorado Department of Education. Projected fiscal year 2016-2017 funding summary.

K-12 EDUCATION

Subsequent policy decisions—such as choices to build interstates through thriving communities of color or to locate a trash transfer station in a poor neighborhood—have in some cases further damaged property values in communities. By creating inequities in property *values*, these policies and practices in turn contribute to inequities in the local property *taxes* that go toward funding schools. As a result, children of color in Colorado are disproportionately represented among students in the poorest school districts (as measured by assessed property value per student). **As of 2016-2017, nearly 60 percent of students in the poorest fifth of school districts in Colorado were students of color and 40 percent were White students; in the wealthiest fifth of school districts, the pattern was reversed.**

A LARGE SHARE OF SCHOOL FUNDING IS DETERMINED BY LOCAL PROPERTY VALUES. HOWEVER, ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUE PER STUDENT DIFFERS WIDELY FROM SCHOOL DISTRICT TO SCHOOL DISTRICT.

ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUE PER STUDENT, 2016-2017



Colorado Department of Education

Some states, including Colorado, supplement local property tax dollars with state funds in an effort to overcome the inequities in local funding. Colorado's school finance formula, for example, provides a base amount of funding to school districts and includes additional funding for districts with higher concentrations of students who are economically disadvantaged or who are learning English as a second language.

In many cases, however, state funding isn't enough to correct the imbalances in local funding. In addition to state funding and local funding from property taxes, some Colorado districts generate additional funding through mill levy overrides. A mill levy override is an additional property tax approved by voters, and the additional revenue from the override stays in the local school district. In some districts with lower property wealth, one mill raises less than $4,000, while in districts with higher levels of property wealth, one mill raises over $13 million. Due to the differences in property values from community to community, poor districts may be taxing themselves at the highest allowable rate but generating negligible amounts of funding, while other very wealthy districts can generate substantial amounts of funding by raising their property taxes by a relatively small amount, thus exacerbating inequities from district to district.[75] As just one comparative example, in the 2015-16 school year Mapleton School District levied 26.08 total program mills in addition to 9.73 override mills, with each mill raising approximately $501,000, or $61 per pupil in the district. On the other hand, Platte Valley RE-7 levied just 5.36 total program mills in addition to 1.51 override mills, with each mill raising approximately $1,654,000, or $1,465 per pupil in the district.[76] In other words, Mapleton residents are taxed at a much higher rate than residents in Platte Valley RE-7, but each mill raises much less funding per pupil in Mapleton due to lower property wealth in the district.

All children deserve a school that is equipped with the resources needed to provide an excellent education. What message does it send to a child when she sees schools with shiny new classrooms and a fancy auditorium for school plays, while her school relies on worn, outdated textbooks and has no art or music classes? While it takes more than funding to create the type of schools we all want our children to attend, ensuring that every school in Colorado can afford to provide high-quality teachers, thought-provoking books and learning materials, and safe, stimulating environments is critical to the success of all of our state's students.

[75] Colorado Department of Education. (2016). *Understanding Colorado school finance and categorical program funding.* Retrieved from https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/fy2015-16brochure.

[76] Colorado School Finance Project. (2016). Tax effort and fiscal capacity. Retrieved from http://www.cosfp.org/HomeFiles/Adequacy_Equity/2016/Tax_Effort_&_Fiscal_Capacity_by_District.pdf.

K-12 EDUCATION

"Something I've experienced and noticed in my lifetime…is that the class sizes can be really huge. Some classes can consist of 30 students, and just one to two teachers in there. You can't really get the amount of support you really need. If you're having a problem with anything, you've got to wait."

— DENVER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

HIGH-POVERTY SCHOOLS

Imagine you're a first-year teacher. You're fresh out of your teacher training program, full of enthusiasm, and fiercely dedicated to ensuring the kids in your classroom receive the best education possible—an education that will allow them to reach their dreams of becoming surgeons, joining the military, running a ranch or starting a successful business. Now, imagine that nearly every student in your class of 30 is facing a major challenge outside of school. Some haven't eaten dinner the night before. Others come to class with incomplete homework because they were taking care of younger siblings while mom and dad were working their second jobs. Some are unable to focus on your lesson because they're spending all of their mental energy wondering where they'll sleep tonight.

In high-poverty schools, in which students of color are disproportionately represented due to historical and present-day racial and economic segregation, scenarios like these are all too often the reality. A high-poverty school is often defined as one in which at least 75 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. When the majority of students are facing immense hardship outside of school, it becomes difficult for a teacher—no matter how talented or dedicated—to be able to offer the level of support each child needs in order to learn successfully.

Although high-poverty schools serve students facing significant challenges, funding inequities mean that they often have fewer resources. National research shows that high-poverty schools have higher rates of teacher turnover, as well as higher percentages of teachers who are uncertified or who are new to the teaching profession.[77, 78] Schools with concentrated poverty also tend to offer fewer advanced coursework opportunities and are less likely to have a school counselor on staff. All of these factors contribute to poorer educational outcomes for many students who attend high-poverty schools.[79]

[77] National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). Teacher turnover: Stayers, movers and leavers. The Condition of Education 2016. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_slc.pdf.
[78] U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. (n.d.). Educator equity profile: Colorado. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/equitable/coeep.pdf.
[79] Center for Law and Social Policy. (2015). Course, counselor and teacher gaps: Addressing the college readiness challenge in high-poverty high schools. Retrieved from http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/publication-1/CollegeReadinessPaperFINALJune.pdf.

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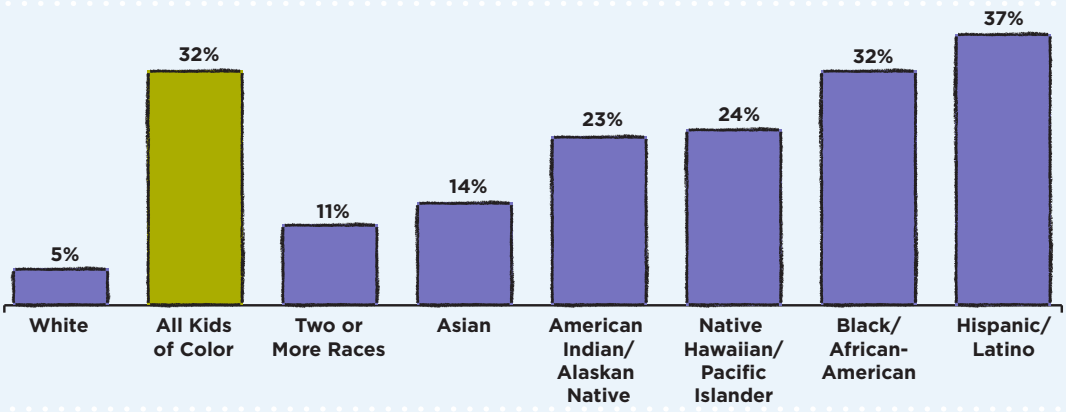
As of the 2016-2017 school year, there were more than 350 schools across Colorado in which at least 75 percent of students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL), a threshold commonly used to identify high-poverty schools. **Due to policies that have isolated many families of color in high-poverty neighborhoods, as well as segregating school district attendance boundaries, Colorado students of color are more than six times as likely to attend one of these high-poverty schools as their White peers.** In 2016-2017, 32 percent of Colorado students of color attended a school in which at least 75 percent of students qualified for FRL, while only 5 percent of White students attended a high-poverty school.[80] Raising the FRL threshold to examine schools where at least 90 percent of students qualify for FRL—often considered "extreme poverty" schools—the disparities become even starker. **Only 1 percent of White students in Colorado attended an extreme poverty school in 2016-2017; meanwhile, 9 percent of students of color attended these schools.**

RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BOUNDARIES ISOLATE MANY COLORADO STUDENTS OF COLOR IN HIGH-POVERTY SCHOOLS.

PERCENT OF STUDENTS ATTENDING A SCHOOL IN WHICH >75 PERCENT OF STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH



Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the Colorado Department of Education

Examined a different way, the typical White student in Colorado attends a school in which 32 percent of students come from low-income families, while the typical student of color attends a school in which 55 percent of students live in low-income families.[81]

As discussed in the next section, the difference in the average poverty rates of schools attended by White students versus students of color is one of the most powerful predictors of the gap in achievement between these students. If Colorado can correct this imbalance, research suggests that we can make dramatic progress toward narrowing the achievement gap between students of color and their peers.

[80] Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the Colorado Department of Education.
[81] *Ibid.*

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SCHOOL SEGREGATION

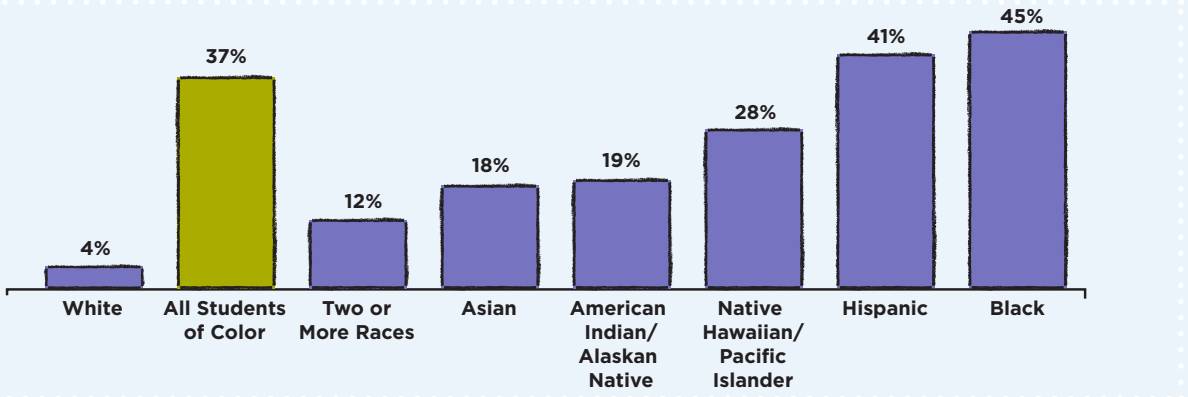
The U.S. has a long history of segregation of public schools based on race. In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public facilities segregated by race were constitutional so long as the facilities were equal. Although segregated public facilities were almost never equal, segregation in public places, including schools, remained legal in the years following this decision. Some states had laws on the books during this time period that mandated racial segregation of children in public schools. In other states, including Colorado, the practice of educating students of different races and ethnicities in separate schools was less explicit but no less pervasive.[82]

In 1954, civil rights advocates won a hard-fought victory as the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed school segregation based on race in *Brown v. Board of Education*, overturning the concept of "separate but equal" and declaring that "separate education facilities are inherently unequal."[83] Despite this decision from the nation's highest court, it took decades for school districts in many states to comply with the Supreme Court's decision, and often another court order was necessary before districts would work to desegregate schools, as was the case in Denver. For more information on the Denver desegregation case that reached the U.S. Supreme Court, see the *Keyes v. Denver* spotlight on page 61.

Although more than 60 years have passed since the landmark decision in *Brown*, schools in many areas of Colorado have yet to become fully integrated by race or class. Colorado students of color remain more likely than their White peers to attend schools that are highly segregated along racial or economic lines. **Across the state, 37 percent of students of color attended schools that are highly segregated by race, compared to 4 percent of White students. Hispanic and Black students in Colorado are particularly likely to attend highly segregated schools.**

COLORADO STUDENTS OF COLOR WERE NINE TIMES MORE LIKELY THAN WHITE STUDENTS TO ATTEND A HIGHLY SEGREGATED SCHOOL IN 2016-2017

PERCENT OF STUDENTS ATTENDING A SCHOOL IN WHICH STUDENTS OF COLOR MAKE UP AT LEAST 75 PERCENT OF ENROLLMENT, 2016-2017



Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the Colorado Department of Education

A Note About Terminology

Throughout the K-12 Education section, the term "highly segregated school" is used to refer to a school in which students of color make up at least 75 percent of enrollment. Nothing about the racial or ethnic makeup of a school determines school quality; rather, research shows that segregated schools often are deprived of the financial and human resources allocated to more integrated schools. More information on how attending a highly segregated school impacts students' educational opportunities can be found throughout this section.

[82] MacDonald, V.M. (n.d.). Demanding their rights: The Latino struggle for educational access and equity. U.S. National Parks Service: Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://www.nps.gov/heritageinitiatives/latino/latinothemestudy/education.htm.
[83] Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

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That school segregation remains a significant problem in many areas of Colorado is troubling. **Highly segregated schools are one of the biggest contributors to achievement gaps between students of color and their White peers.** These gaps are driven largely by the fact that students of color are more likely than White students to attend high-poverty schools where fewer teachers are licensed or experienced, teacher turnover is higher, and fewer advanced courses are offered.

While many of the forces contributing to the segregation of schools have their roots in the past, Colorado must take action to remedy the effects that linger today by ensuring that current policies do not exacerbate or perpetuate these inequities. Policies that integrate schools and ensure an equitable distribution of resources for all students are critical to narrowing the gap in educational outcomes between children of color and their White peers.

Inter-district segregation: Long-standing patterns of residential segregation coupled with school district boundary lines exacerbate school segregation in many communities.

Housing policy at the local, state and national level has contributed to high levels of residential segregation in many regions. This residential segregation, coupled with the way school district boundary lines were drawn, perpetuates racial and economic segregation of students. As a result, school districts that share a border can have vastly different resources and student populations. Students on one side of the street may attend schools in a high-poverty, under-resourced district where teacher turnover is high, books are outdated and opportunities for advanced coursework are limited, while their neighbors on the other side of the street attend schools that are much better equipped with the resources to help students succeed.

One Colorado school district boundary line in particular helps illustrate the disparities that can exist in close proximity. A recent *EdBuild* report examined the most economically segregated school borders in the country and found that the border between Littleton and Sheridan ranked among the 10 most segregated district boundaries. The dividing line separates Littleton, a district in which 9 percent of school-aged children lived in poverty as of 2014, from Sheridan, where 49 percent of school-aged children live in poverty—a difference of 40 percentage points. Meanwhile, the average difference in poverty rates between school districts across the country was only 7 percentage points.[84]

While the report did not examine segregation by race, the student populations at Littleton and Sheridan also have very different racial and ethnic makeups. As of the 2016-2017 school year, students of color made up 27 percent of all Littleton students, compared to 87 percent of all students in the Sheridan school district. All too often, racial and economic segregation in schools go hand-in-hand.

Inter-district segregation: *Racial or economic segregation* ***across district lines****. For example, Littleton school district has a poverty rate of 9 percent, while neighboring Sheridan's poverty rate is 49 percent—more than five times higher.*

Intra-district segregation: *Racial or economic segregation* ***within a district and between schools****. For example, Steele Elementary and Valverde Elementary are both part of Denver Public Schools and are located only two miles apart. However, students of color make up only 17 percent of the student population at Steele Elementary, compared to 95 percent of all students at Valverde Elementary.*

[84] EdBuild. (2015). Fault Lines: America's Most Segregating School District Borders. Retrieved from https://s3.amazonaws.com/edbuild-public-data/data/fault+lines/EdBuild-Fault-Lines-2016.pdf.

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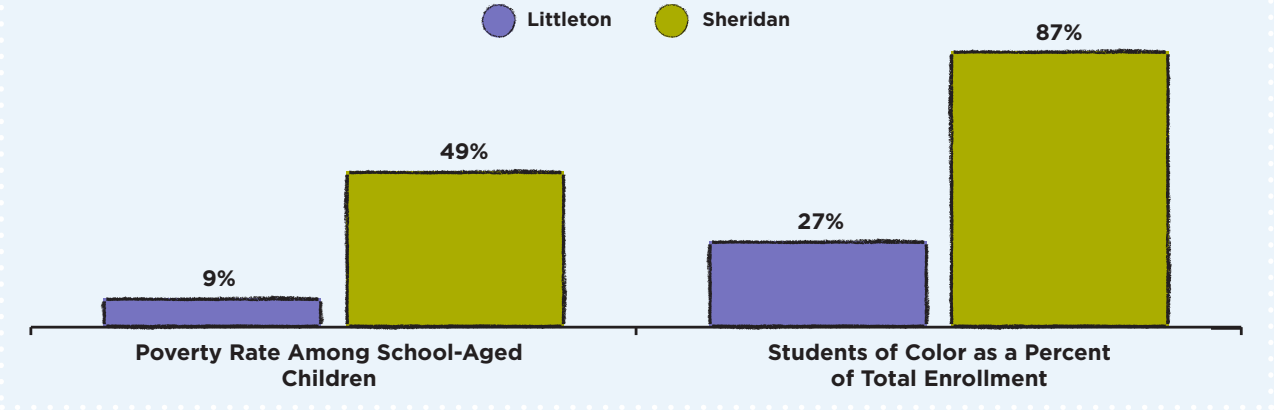
LITTLETON AND SHERIDAN ARE GOOD EXAMPLES OF THE SEGREGATING EFFECT OF MANY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES. ALTHOUGH THE TWO DISTRICTS SHARE A BORDER, THEY SERVE VERY DIFFERENT STUDENT POPULATIONS.



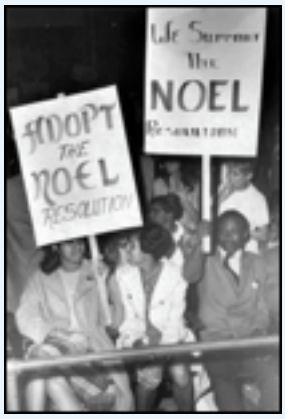
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates 2015. Colorado Department of Education.

Although research has found that segregation *between* districts is primarily responsible for school segregation, such as in the case of Littleton and Sheridan, policy tools for integrating across district lines are limited as a result of a 1974 Supreme Court decision. Only one year after handing down the *Keyes v. Denver* decision that would catalyze desegregation efforts in Denver Public Schools, the court dealt a blow to integration efforts that span across district lines in *Milliken v. Bradley*, the effects of which are still felt today.

The case originated when a group of Black parents, together with the Detroit chapter of the NAACP, sued the state of Michigan arguing that state policies had created highly segregated schools in Detroit. At the time, the vast majority of Detroit students were Black, making meaningful integration within the district difficult without the cooperation of the predominantly White school districts surrounding Detroit. After a U.S. District Court ordered the state to come up with a plan to integrate Detroit's schools by involving surrounding school districts, the suburban school districts appealed. In a 5-4 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court sided with the suburban districts, declaring that school districts are "autonomous entities" and cannot be required to participate in cross-district desegregation plans. This decision continues to limit the inter-district integration options available today, perpetuating segregated school districts and immense disparities in educational opportunities across district lines.

Source: EdBuild. (2015). Fault Lines: America's Most Segregating School District Borders. Retrieved from https://s3.amazonaws.com/edbuild-public-data/data/fault+lines/EdBuild-Fault-Lines-2016.pdf;

SCHOOL INTEGRATION CLOSE TO HOME: A LOOK AT DENVER'S DESEGREGATION HISTORY



The battle to integrate schools, led by communities of color, has required extraordinary courage, unwavering persistence and remarkable tenacity. Efforts to dismantle segregated schools and ensure all children have equal educational opportunity have reached the nation's highest court several times during the past century, including one case that originated here in Colorado.

Although the Supreme Court outlawed separate but equal schools in 1954 and ordered states to integrate their public schools with "all deliberate speed" one year later, it took decades for some school districts—including Denver—to comply with the ruling. While Denver Public Schools never had a formal law or policy on the books mandating that children of color and White children be educated separately, some members of the Denver school board intentionally pursued strategies to create or maintain segregated schools. These strategies included manipulating school attendance boundaries to ensure White students attended separate schools from Black and Hispanic students, building new schools in predominantly Black neighborhoods so that Black students would not enroll at nearby White schools, and using mobile classroom units at overcrowded Black schools rather than have students attend majority-white schools. The board also set up "optional" attendance areas in Park Hill to allow White parents to opt their children out of attending schools with Black students.

In 1969, frustrated with the school board's attempts to keep schools segregated, eight Black parents from the Park Hill area of Denver sued the school district in a case known as ***Keyes v. Denver.*** The U.S. District Court found evidence of intentional racial segregation of schools in Park Hill and ruled in favor of the parents; it also ordered the desegregation of schools in other areas of the city after finding that conditions in schools serving students of color were not equal to those in schools serving White students. The school district appealed, and the case eventually reached the Supreme Court, where a majority of justices found that the Denver school board had implemented a "systematic program of segregation affecting a substantial portion of the students, schools, teachers and facilities within the school system." As a result of the Keyes case, Denver was under court order to desegregate its schools and began a busing program to create schools that were more racially balanced.

Prior to the Supreme Court's decision, DPS Board Member Rachel B. Noel, the first African-American woman elected to public office in Colorado and a staunch advocate for school integration, introduced a resolution calling for the desegregation of Denver's schools. First introduced in 1968 shortly after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, the resolution passed in 1969, was quickly repealed by new anti-integration board members in 1969, and passed again in 1970. Thousands of White families also fled Denver for the suburbs. The suburbs were not included in the desegregation plan, and an amendment to Colorado's Constitution known as the Poundstone Amendment prevented Denver from annexing portions of the surrounding counties or school districts. Despite these obstacles, busing continued in Denver for more than 20 years.

The district's desegregation plan remained under court supervision until 1995 when Judge Richard Matsch lifted the court order, declaring that, "the vestiges of past discrimination have been eliminated to the extent practicable." Matsch added that, "The Denver now before this court is very different from what it was when this lawsuit began... Black and Hispanic men and women are in the city council, the school board, the state legislature and other political positions. Business and professional leadership is multiracial. People of color are not bystanders... Their voices will be heard in the Denver school system."

In the years since the decision to release Denver from its court-ordered desegregation plan, many schools in the district have resegregated along racial and ethnic lines. An article that appeared in *Westword* two years after the court order was lifted noted the diverse racial and ethnic makeup of Manual High School: in 1996-1997, the student body at Manual was 41 percent Black, 15 percent Hispanic and 44 percent White. By 2016-2017, much had changed: Manual's student population was 40 percent Black, 48 percent Hispanic and 6 percent White.

Sources: Denver Public Library, The New York Times, Westword, Keyes v. Denver.
Photo source: https://history.denverlibrary.org/rachel-noel-1918-2008.

K-12 EDUCATION

Intra-district segregation: Segregation within districts and between schools is a problem, too.

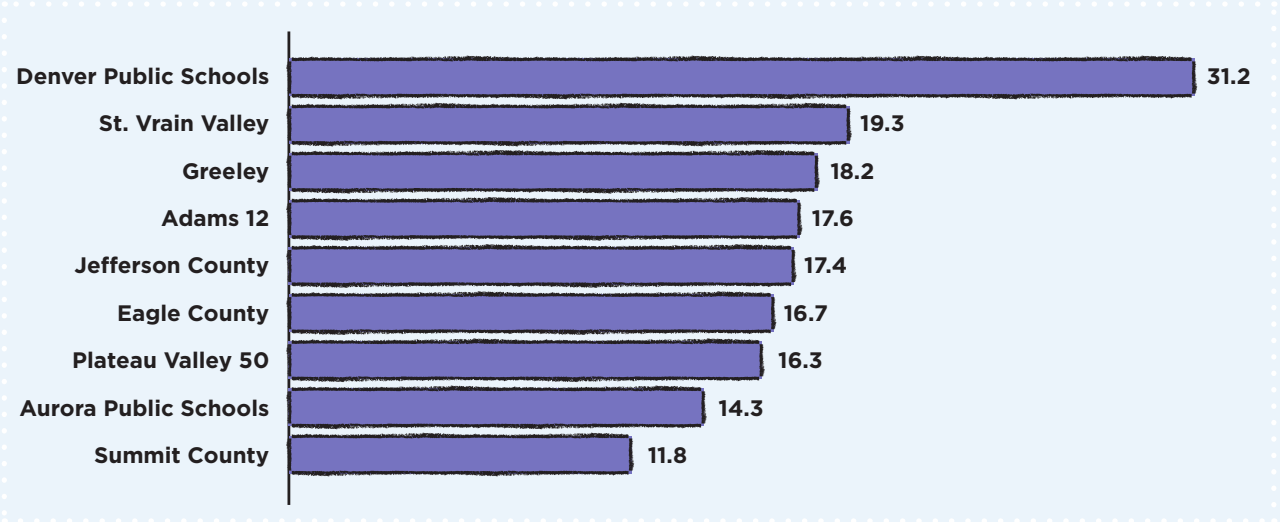
Segregation among schools in the same district also contributes to racial and economic segregation of students, although to a lesser extent than segregation across district lines.[85] One tool for measuring segregation within individual districts is the **segregation index**.[86] The index compares the percent of students of color at a school attended by the average White student in the district to the percent of students of color in the district as a whole. The greater the imbalance between those two measures, the more segregated the district. **A perfectly racially balanced school district would have a segregation index score of zero, while a completely segregated school district would have a segregation index score of 100.**[87]

Which Colorado districts have the most intra-district segregation?

The below graph highlights segregation indices for the most highly segregated Colorado districts (plus the Charter School Institute).[88] **As of the 2016-2017 school year, Denver Public Schools was the most highly segregated district in the state, with a segregation index score of 31.2.** Students of color made up 77 percent of DPS's enrollment, but the average White student in DPS attended a school that was only 53 percent students of color. If DPS were perfectly racially balanced, the average White student would attend a school in which the student population was also 77 percent students of color.

DPS was more highly segregated in 2016-2017 than it was 10 years prior, when its segregation index score was 27.9. This increase in segregation occurred despite an increasing number of White students enrolled in DPS and despite the implementation of universal school choice, which decouples school assignment from neighborhood in an effort to overcome the effects of residential segregation. In another effort to increase integration, DPS has more recently implemented strategies such as enrollment zones, in which students in some areas of city are guaranteed a seat at one of several schools in their zone, rather than at one particular school.[89] The effects of the enrollment zones on school segregation remain to be seen.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS MOST HIGHLY SEGREGATED BY RACE: 2016-2017
(0 = COMPLETE INTEGRATION, 100 = COMPLETE SEGREGATION)



Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the Colorado Department of Education

[85] Clotfelter, C. T. (2004). After Brown: *The rise and retreat of school desegregation.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
[86] Clotfelter, C.T., Ladd, H.F., & Vigdor, J.L. (2008). School segregation under color-blind jurisprudence: The case of North Carolina. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research.
[87] Most of the literature uses a segregation index that ranges from 0 to 1. We calculated the segregation index using the same methods outlined in the research base and multiplied the index score by 100 for ease of interpretation.
[88] School districts in which there is only one school at each level (for example, one elementary school, one middle school and one high school) were excluded from the analysis, as were multi-district online schools that are authorized by a single district but enroll students from districts across the state.
[89] Enrollment zones. (n.d.). Denver Public Schools. Retrieved from http://schoolchoice.dpsk12.org/shared-boundary-enrollment-zones/.

K-12 EDUCATION

School segregation is not simply a problem facing the Denver metro area; it extends beyond Denver into suburban and rural districts as well. **Other highly segregated Colorado districts include St. Vrain Valley, Eagle County and Greeley.** The Charter School Institute (CSI) also received a high segregation index score of 30.7. It differs from the other local education agencies included in the graph on page 62 in that the schools it authorizes are spread out across the state and are not concentrated in one geographic area. CSI's high segregation index score stems from the fact that students of color make up about 53 percent of all students enrolled in schools authorized by the Charter School Institute, but the average White student at a CSI-authorized school attends a school where students of color make up only 36 percent of his or her classmates.

School segregation: How it drives the achievement gap

Research has long documented a relationship between school segregation and achievement gaps, but the specific link between the two wasn't well-understood until recently when a Stanford study shed new light on the connection.[90] The study examined 215 million test scores from students across the country, along with dozens of demographic and socioeconomic data points on U.S. schools and districts. It found that the most powerful predictor of the achievement gap was the difference in the poverty rates of schools attended by the average White student and that of schools attended by the average student of color. **In districts where students of color were much more likely to attend high-poverty schools than their White peers, achievement gaps between these student groups tended to be significantly larger as well.**[91]

In high-poverty schools, needs tend to be much greater, but resources—both human and financial—are often more limited. Colorado kids of all racial and ethnic backgrounds deserve to attend a school that is equipped to provide them with the knowledge, abilities and confidence they can draw upon for the rest of their lives. In order to create a future in which all kids graduate from high school ready for college and career, we must implement policies and practices that help integrate schools and ensure an equitable distribution of funding and other resources.

Looking for more data on K-12 education? Visit the KIDS COUNT Data Center at **datacenter.kidscount.org** for information on full-day kindergarten enrollment, students receiving special education services and more.

[90] Condron, D. J., Tope, D., Steidl, C. R., & Freeman, K. J. (2013). Racial segregation and the Black-White achievement gap, 1992 to 2009. *Sociological Quarterly* 54(1), pp. 130-175.
[91] Reardon, S. F. (2016). School segregation and racial academic achievement gaps. *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 2(5), pp. 34-57.

K-12 EDUCATION

IN-SCHOOL FACTORS

External factors, including residential segregation and inequitable funding structures, create resource disparities between schools attended predominantly by students of color and those attended predominantly by White students. These vast disparities in resources in turn influence the educational opportunities within each school, including access to experienced teachers and school counselors, as well as opportunities to take advanced coursework. Institutional barriers within the education system—such as the underrepresentation of teachers of color and the implicit bias that results in students of color being suspended or expelled more often than their White peers for similar infractions—also perpetuate gaps in educational outcomes between White children and children of color.

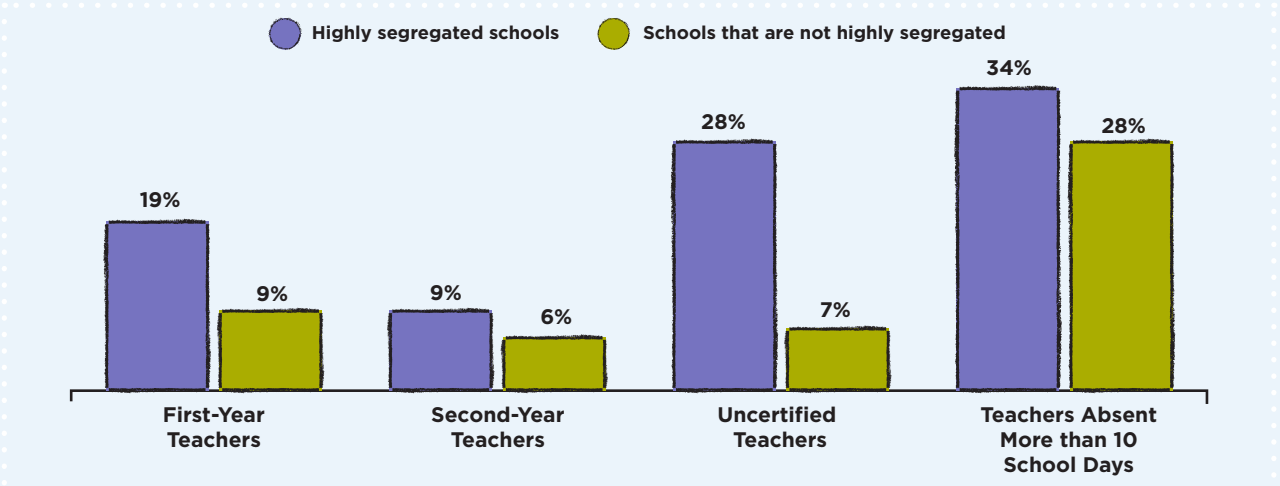
High-quality, experienced teachers are not evenly distributed across Colorado's schools.

Almost all of us can look back and point to a teacher who had a profound impact on our lives. He inspired us to pick up the cello. She made quadratic equations fun. He gave us the confidence we needed to try out for the school basketball team. All students—whether they are Latino, American Indian, Asian, White or Black—deserve excellent teachers that ignite their love of learning.

Studies have found that teacher quality is one of the most important in-school factors for improving student achievement.[92, 93] In an equitable world, all students would have access to high-quality, effective educators that pique their curiosity and help them develop into engaged critical thinkers. In reality, however, students of color and students who attend highly segregated schools are less likely to be taught by experienced or certified teachers.

In Colorado, teachers in highly segregated schools are more likely to be early in their career. As of the 2013-2014 school year, 28 percent of teachers in highly segregated schools were in their first or second year of teaching, compared to only 15 percent at schools that were less segregated.[94] Although teachers who are early in their careers can certainly be highly effective, studies show that—like many careers—experience matters. Teachers with more years of experience tend to have a greater impact on boosting student achievement.[95]

TEACHERS IN HIGHLY SEGREGATED SCHOOLS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE NEW TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION, UNCERTIFIED, OR ABSENT FOR A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.



Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights

[92] Rivkin, S. G., Hanushek, E. A., & Kain. J. F. (2005). *Econometrica* 73(2), pp. 417-458.
[93] Sanders, W. L., & Rivers, J. C. (1996). Cumulative and residual effects of teachers on future student academic achievement. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center.
[94] Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.
[95] Greenwald, R., Hedges, L. V., & Laine, R. D. (1996). The effect of school resources on student achievement. *Review of Educational Research* 66(3), pp. 361-396.

K-12 EDUCATION

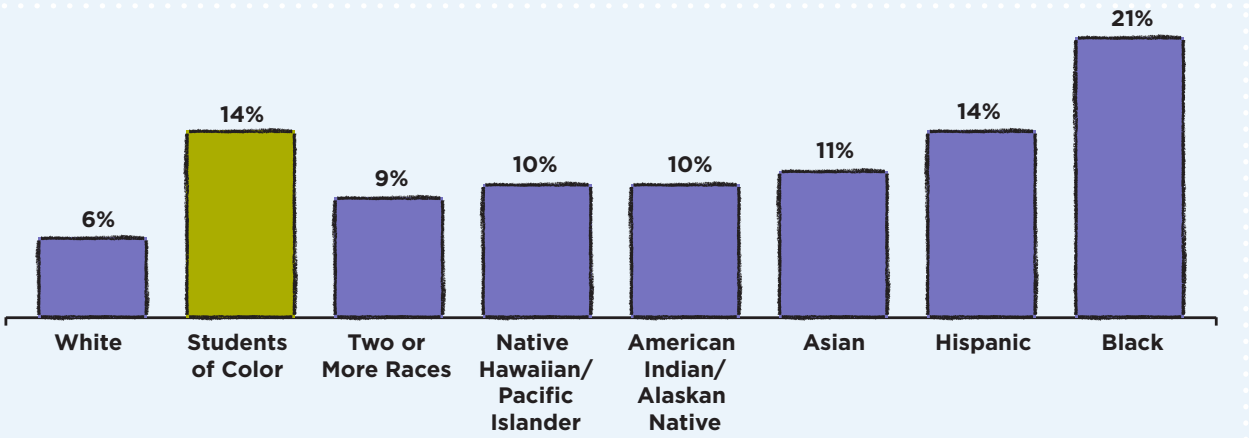
Students attending highly segregated schools—who are more likely to be students of color—are also less likely to have a certified teacher. Highly segregated schools in Colorado had four times as many uncertified teachers as less segregated schools (28 percent versus 7 percent) as of the 2013-2014 school year, according to data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.[96]

Examined another way, the average student of color in Colorado attends a school in which 14 percent of teachers are uncertified, compared to 6 percent of teachers in schools attended by the average White student. The disparity is especially pronounced for Black students; the average Black student in Colorado attends a school in which 21 percent of teachers lack certification—more than three times as high as the rate for schools attended by the average White student. Although research on teacher certification's impact on student achievement is mixed, certification does give an indication of the amount of preparation and training teachers received, as well as their investment in education prior to entering the classroom.

Data from the Colorado Department of Education also show that schools in which students of color make up a large share of the student population tend to have fewer teachers who received an effective rating in the educator evaluation process. In Denver Public Schools, for example, nearly 90 percent of teachers in "low-minority schools" received a rating of effective or higher, compared to only 63 percent of teachers in "high-minority schools"—a nearly 30 percentage point gap. The same pattern exists in Douglas County, where 82 percent of teachers in "low-minority" schools earned a rating of effective or higher, compared to only 42 percent of teachers in "high-minority" schools. In both of these districts, the gap based on race was larger than the gap based on family income.[97]

THE AVERAGE STUDENT OF COLOR IN COLORADO ATTENDS A SCHOOL IN WHICH 14 PERCENT OF TEACHERS ARE UNCERTIFIED, A RATE NEARLY TWO AND A HALF TIMES HIGHER THAN SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY THE AVERAGE WHITE STUDENT.

PERCENT OF TEACHERS WHO ARE UNCERTIFIED (AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL FTE) AT AVERAGE STUDENT'S SCHOOL, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2013-2014



Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights

"I think it's important to point out that it is not that something magical happens when Black kids sit in a classroom next to White kids. It's not that suddenly a switch turns on and they get intelligence or wanting the desire to learn when they're with White kids. ***What integration does is it gets Black kids in the same facilities as White kids, and therefore it gets them access to the same things that those kids get—quality teachers and quality instruction."***

– NIKOLE HANNAH-JONES, *THIS AMERICAN LIFE*

[96] Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.
[97] Colorado Department of Education.

K-12 EDUCATION

All Colorado students benefit from a high-quality and diverse teaching force. However, many Colorado districts experience challenges recruiting and retaining teachers, and policies and practices have created an underrepresentation of teachers of color.

Coloradans across the state, but particularly in rural areas, highlighted the difficulties that many school districts experience in recruiting and retaining teachers. Across both rural and urban districts, however, teachers of color remain particularly underrepresented.

When was the first time you had a teacher of the same race? For some, the answer may be the first day of preschool. Others may have completed their entire education without ever seeing themselves reflected in the face at the front of the classroom. When students see themselves reflected in their teachers, the effects can be powerful. Research has found that students of color reap academic benefits when taught by a teacher of color. Outcomes range from improved math, reading and vocabulary scores to increased graduation rates, higher enrollment levels in advanced coursework and lower suspension and expulsion rates.[98] White students benefit from a diverse teaching force, too. In an increasingly diverse society, learning how to interact with people from different backgrounds is of growing importance.

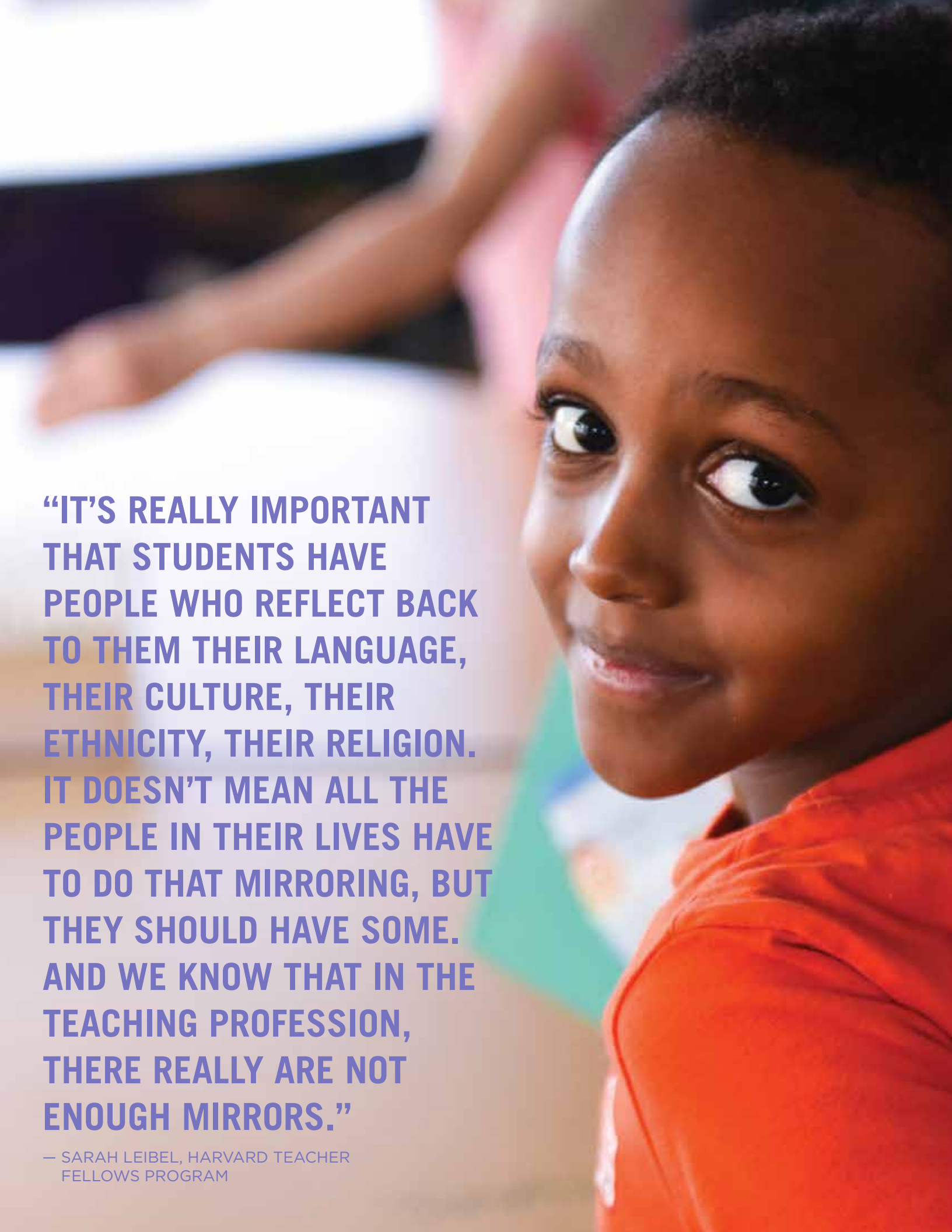
Although students of color are now estimated to make up a majority of students in U.S. public schools, the nation's teaching force remains overwhelmingly White.[99] Part of the underrepresentation of teachers of color can be traced back to *Brown v. Board of Education*. Although the Supreme Court case was a landmark decision for civil rights, one unintended consequence of the school desegregation efforts that occurred across the country in the wake of *Brown* was that many teachers of color were pushed out of the teaching profession as schools became integrated. In many places, teachers of color—who had long been dedicated to providing an excellent education to students in segregated schools, despite having far fewer resources than were provided to schools serving White students—were systematically excluded from teaching positions in newly integrated schools.[100]

Present-day policies and practices have an impact as well, particularly on the retention of teachers of color. A 2016 report by Dr. Sharon Bailey of Denver Public Schools examined the experiences of African-American teachers working in DPS. Teachers who participated in Dr. Bailey's study cited factors such as institutional racism, too few African-Americans in top leadership positions, and a lack of cultural competency as contributors to the district's difficulty attracting and retaining African-American teachers.[101] Other studies have found that dissatisfaction with administration, accountability or testing; problems related to student discipline; a lack of influence or autonomy; and poor working conditions are top contributors to turnover among teachers of color.[102]

"It's a problem for students of color because it's important for them to see mentors and role models. But I also think it's a problem for White students. I think there's a real benefit for White students in having diverse teachers, because ultimately we're trying to prepare all kids for a diverse world."

— JOHN KING, FORMER U.S. EDUCATION SECRETARY

[98] Albert Shanker Institute. (2015). *The State of Teacher Diversity in American Education.* Retrieved from http://www.shankerinstitute.org/sites/shanker/files/The%20State%20of%20Teacher%20Diversity_0.pdf.
[99] National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *Digest of Education Statistics:* 2015. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_203.50.asp?current=yes.
[100] Tillman, L.C. (2004). (Un)intended consequences? The Impact of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision on the employment status of Black educators. Education and Urban Society 36(3), pp. 280-303.
[101] Bailey, S.R. (2016). An examination of student and educator experiences in Denver Public Schools through the voices of African-American teachers and administrators. Retrieved from http://celt.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Dr.-Bailey-Report-FULL.pdf.
[102] Ingersoll, R. (2015). What do the national data tell us about minority teacher shortages? *The State of Teacher Diversity in American Education.* Washington, DC: Albert Shanker Institute. Retrieved from https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=albert+shanker+institute.



“IT’S REALLY IMPORTANT THAT STUDENTS HAVE PEOPLE WHO REFLECT BACK TO THEM THEIR LANGUAGE, THEIR CULTURE, THEIR ETHNICITY, THEIR RELIGION. IT DOESN’T MEAN ALL THE PEOPLE IN THEIR LIVES HAVE TO DO THAT MIRRORING, BUT THEY SHOULD HAVE SOME. AND WE KNOW THAT IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION, THERE REALLY ARE NOT ENOUGH MIRRORS.”

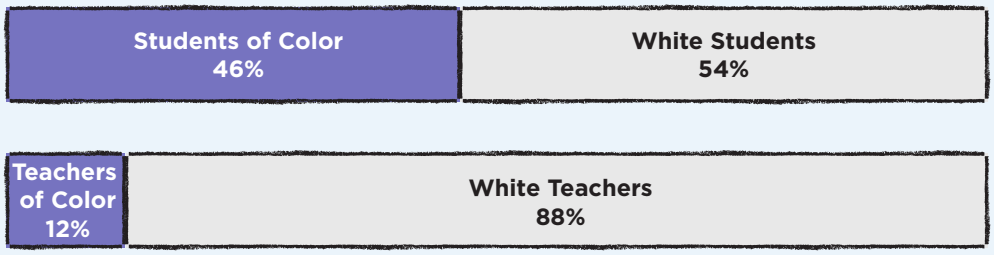
— SARAH LEIBEL, HARVARD TEACHER FELLOWS PROGRAM

K-12 EDUCATION

In Colorado, there is a significant mismatch between the makeup of the teacher workforce and the students they serve. **Teachers of color made up only 12 percent of the Colorado teaching force as of 2015-2016. In comparison, students of color made up 46 percent of Colorado's student population.** There were 46 districts across Colorado that employed no teachers of color as of 2015-2016; some of these districts are located in areas of the state that are predominantly White and serve relatively few students of color, but nine of the districts that employed no teachers of color had student populations in which students of color made up more than one-quarter of enrollment.[103]

IN COLORADO, THERE IS A MISMATCH BETWEEN THE MAKEUP OF THE TEACHER WORKFORCE AND THE STUDENTS THEY SERVE.

RACIAL AND ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, 2015-2016



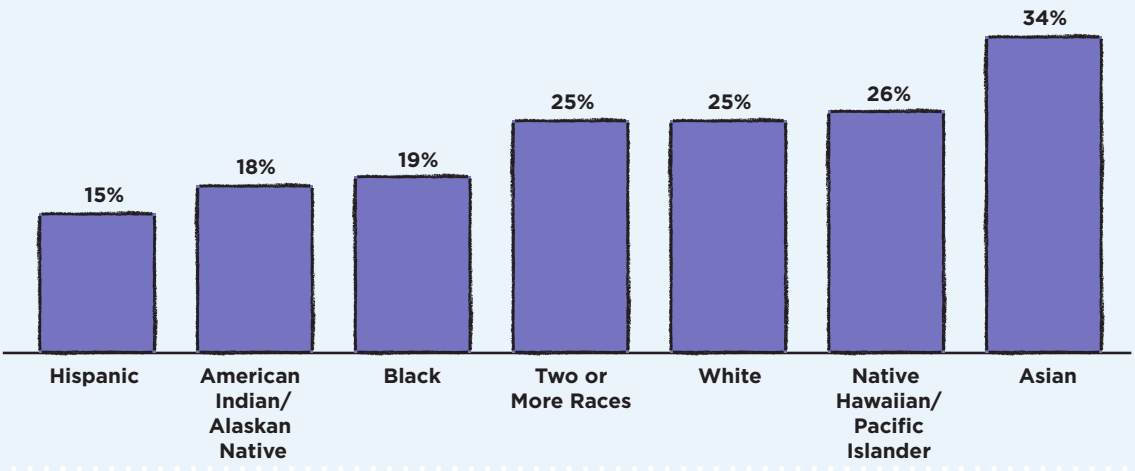
Source: Colorado Department of Education

Opportunities to enroll in advanced coursework, such as Advanced Placement courses or advanced math and science classes, do not exist in all schools across the state.

Data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights show that Hispanic, American Indian and Black students in Colorado are less likely than their peers to be enrolled in at least one AP course—but what is behind this disparity?

HISPANIC, AMERICAN INDIAN AND BLACK STUDENTS IN COLORADO ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE ENROLLED IN AN AP COURSE THAN THEIR PEERS.

PERCENT OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN AT LEAST ONE AP COURSE, 2013-2014



Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights

[103] Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from Colorado Department of Education.

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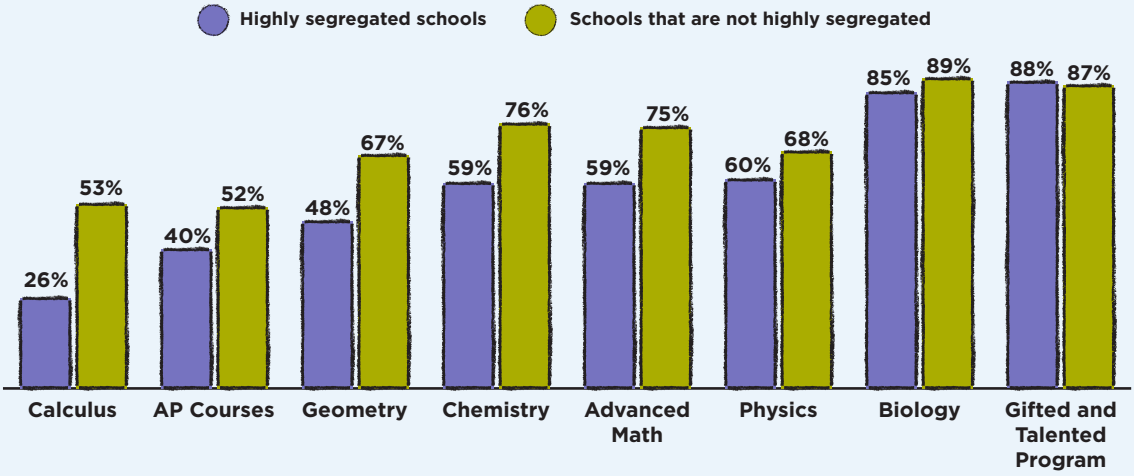
Part of the reason for lower enrollment in AP courses among some students of color may lie in the fact that highly segregated schools—which serve about two out of every five children of color in the state—are less likely to offer advanced coursework. As of the 2013-2014 school year, highly segregated schools in Colorado were significantly less likely than other schools to offer courses in calculus, geometry, chemistry or advanced math, as well as AP courses in any subject.[104] Denying students of color the opportunity to enroll in advanced coursework puts them at a disadvantage on their journey to college or career.

ADVANCED COURSEWORK OPPORTUNITIES ARE LIMITED IN COLORADO'S HIGHLY SEGREGATED SCHOOLS.

PERCENT OF SCHOOLS THAT OFFER AT LEAST ONE COURSE IN EACH SUBJECT, 2013-2014



Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights

"My daughter's a sophomore at Durango High School, and she's in a gifted program, and she's taking AP Calculus. There [aren't] a lot of Native students that are in AP programs or gifted programs, and there's not a lot of support for Native students who are gifted. You feel like you're alone, and we can't afford some of the programs that they do offer ... and none of them are culturally based."

— LA PLATA COUNTY FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

[104] Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

K-12 EDUCATION

DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

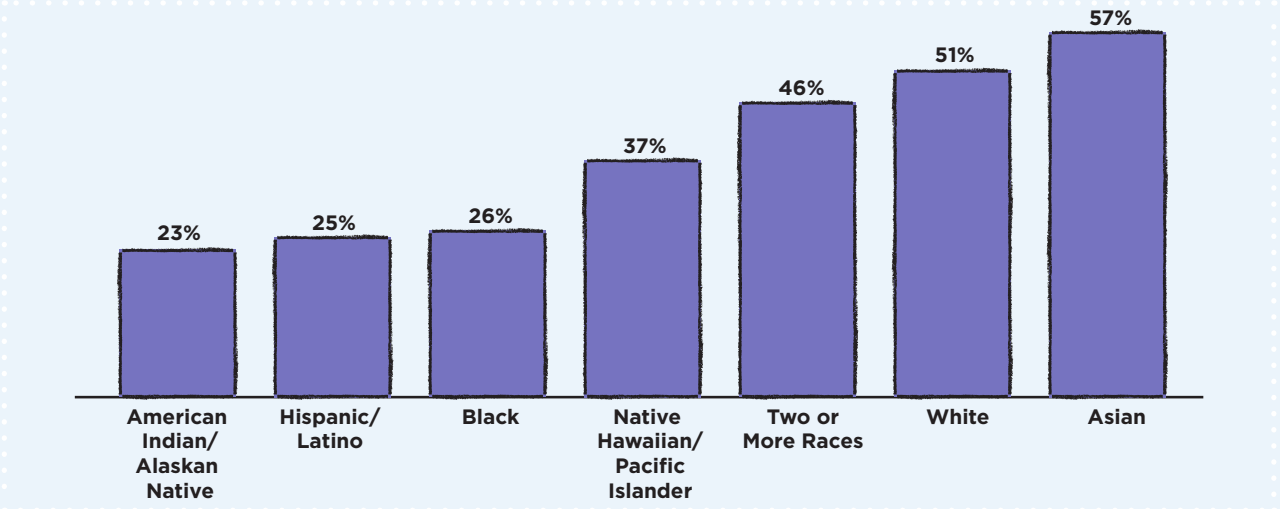
The policies and practices outlined in this section have created "opportunity gaps" that in turn result in gaps in important measures of student achievement, including proficiency in math and English language arts, on-time graduation rates, and college remediation rates. In order to ensure Colorado has a strong workforce in the decades to come, we must do more to give every Colorado child high-quality educational opportunities.

The proportion of students meeting or exceeding expectations in English Language Arts is too low for students from all backgrounds. Due to inequitable educational opportunities, however, many students of color are less likely than their peers to meet or exceed expectations in this important subject.

Approximately one-quarter of American Indian, Hispanic/Latino and Black students met or exceeded expectations in English Language Arts on the 2016 CMAS. Asian students and White students were most likely to meet or exceed expectations in English Language Arts, but fewer than two-thirds of students in these groups met or exceeded expectations in this important subject, showing that Colorado has work to do to ensure students from all backgrounds are gaining the skills they need.[105]

DUE TO INEQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES, MANY STUDENTS OF COLOR WERE LESS LIKELY TO MEET OR EXCEED EXPECTATIONS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ON THE 2016 CMAS.

PERCENT OF COLORADO STUDENTS WHO MET OR EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ON THE 2016 CMAS



Source: Colorado Department of Education

[105] Colorado Department of Education.

K-12 EDUCATION

Colorado's graduation rate has steadily improved since 2010, and on-time graduation rates have improved more quickly for students of color than for White students. However, Colorado still struggles to support students of color in graduating from high school on time.

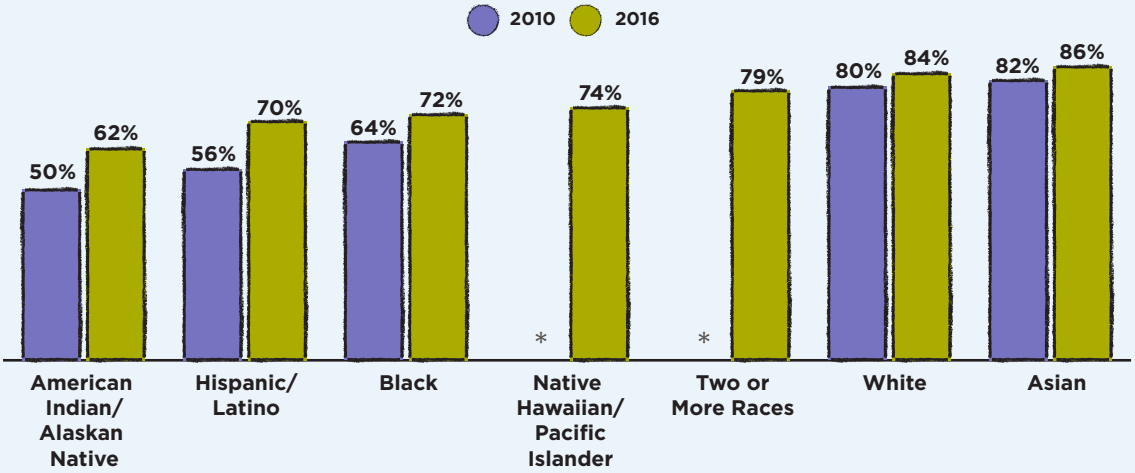
Graduating from high school is a joyful occasion—one that many families have dreamed of for their child since the day he or she entered the kindergarten door. A high school diploma helps unlock a brighter future for this generation of Colorado kids, as well as the next. Finishing high school opens up additional opportunities for college or careers and decreases the likelihood of experiencing the hardships associated with poverty. In 2015, Coloradans with a high school diploma earned 36 percent more than those without a diploma.[106]

Colorado's overall graduation rate has improved significantly since 2010, rising from 72 percent to 79 percent in 2016, and graduation rates have improved even more quickly for students of color.[107] Despite this improvement, the effects of barriers to educational opportunity remain clear, as gaps still exist between many students of color and their White peers. In 2016, 62 percent of American Indian students, 70 percent of Hispanic students, and 72 percent of Black students graduated on time, compared to 84 percent of White students and 86 percent of Asian students in Colorado.[108]

SINCE 2010, ON-TIME GRADUATION RATES HAVE RISEN MORE QUICKLY FOR COLORADO STUDENTS OF COLOR THAN FOR WHITE STUDENTS. HOWEVER, GAPS REMAIN DUE TO DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY.

PERCENT OF COLORADO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GRADUATING WITHIN FOUR YEARS

*The Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and Two or More Races categories were not added until 2011.



Source: Colorado Department of Education

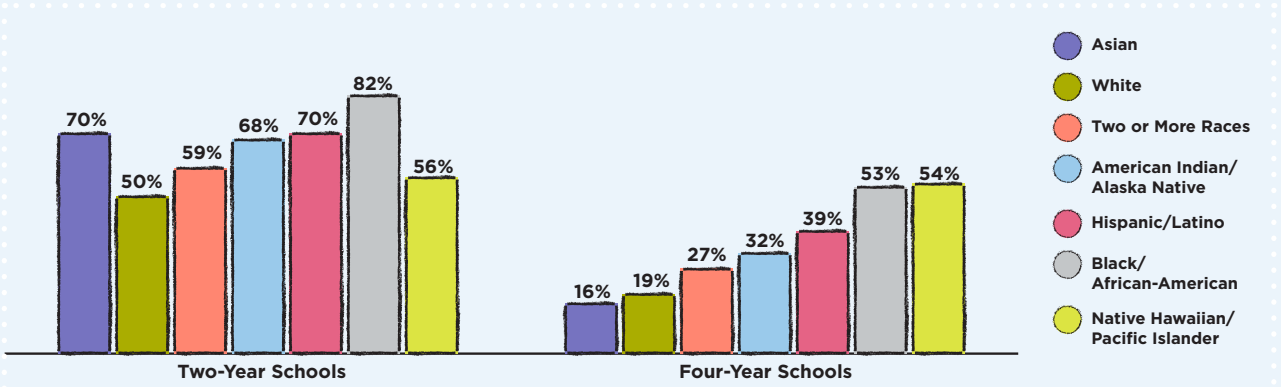
K-12 EDUCATION

Colorado must ensure that all students have opportunities that equip and prepare them for college coursework, should they choose to attend college.

Going to college is a goal for many Colorado students, regardless of their background. The opportunity to attend college, however, is not equally shared. Even when students do have the support they need to attend college, they often arrive on different playing fields. Remediation rates—the percent of Colorado high school graduates who attend a public, in-state college or university and require remediation in at least one subject—are high for students from all backgrounds, but Colorado struggles in particular at ensuring students of color are prepared with the knowledge they need to be able to begin college coursework immediately upon starting school. Remedial courses are costly for Colorado students, in terms of both time and money. Taking a remedial course delays students' opportunities to start taking the college-level courses they need to earn a degree. Additionally, remedial courses are not always covered by a student's financial aid package and may present an additional financial hardship.

COLORADO MUST DO A BETTER JOB AT EQUIPPING ALL STUDENTS WITH THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE THEY NEED TO SUCCEED IN COLLEGE.

PERCENT OF 2015 COLORADO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES WHO ATTENDED A PUBLIC, IN-STATE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY AND WERE EITHER ASSESSED AS NEEDING REMEDIATION OR ENROLLED IN AT LEAST ONE REMEDIAL COURSE



Source: Colorado Department of Higher Education

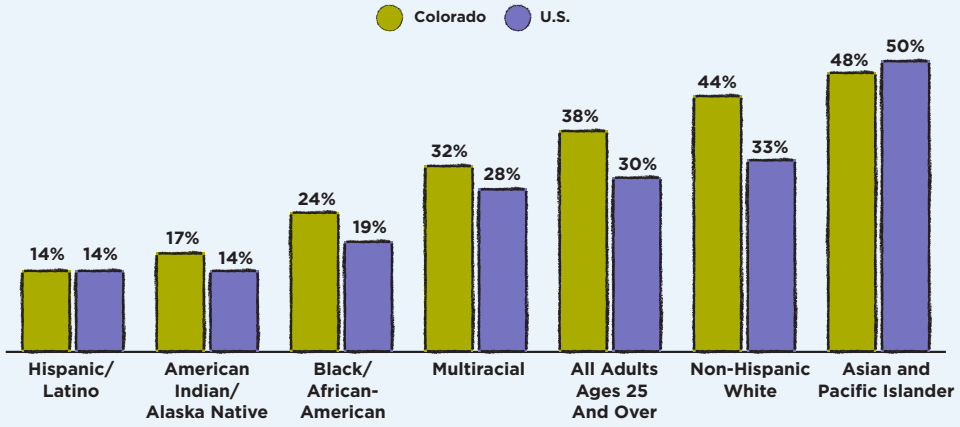
K-12 EDUCATION

The policies and practices that have created disparities within the K-12 education system have also resulted in an educational attainment gap among Colorado's adults.

In the coming years, an increasing number of jobs in Colorado will require some form of postsecondary education.[109] In order for Coloradans to thrive, it's essential that we find ways to prepare students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds for higher education if they choose to pursue this option. On average, between 2011 and 2015, 38 percent of Colorado adults ages 25 or older had at least a bachelor's degree, significantly above the national average of 30 percent.[110] However, data illustrating racial and ethnic gaps in degree attainment show that our state must do a better job of preparing students of color for higher education and supporting them on their path to a diploma once they enroll.

INEQUITIES WITHIN THE K-12 EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS CONTRIBUTE TO AN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT GAP AMONG ADULTS. COLORADO HAS A HIGHER-THAN-AVERAGE RATE OF ADULTS WITH BACHELOR'S DEGREES OR HIGHER, BUT THERE ARE LARGE GAPS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

PERCENT OF COLORADO ADULTS AGES 25 AND OLDER WITH AT LEAST A BACHELOR'S DEGREE, 2011-2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

[109] Colorado Department of Higher Education. (2016). Legislative report on the Skills for Jobs Act.
[110] U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

CONCLUSION

The disparities in child well-being that are highlighted throughout this report didn't just happen. Rather, they are a result of hundreds of years of policies and practices that disproportionately created barriers to opportunity for children and families of color. Some of these policies—such as redlining—explicitly worked to exclude people of color from opportunity, while others were well-meaning or "race-neutral" in intent, but not in impact.

Although many of these policies were set in motion long ago, their harmful effects will persist unless we work to remedy them. But the good news is that—just as public policy largely created today's inequities in child well-being—thoughtful public policy can correct these disparities and create a more equitable world for Colorado kids and families of all races and ethnicities.

How do we move further toward creating a more equitable Colorado for all of us? We can start by listening. Listening to those most affected by a given issue and letting those most impacted by a problem lead the way toward a solution.

Additionally, when making decisions—whether on a statewide policy initiative, a workplace practice, or a school-level policy or procedure—we should carefully consider how our choices advance equity. This process—often called an equity analysis—encourages us to ask questions in order to crystallize our desired outcomes, identify the root cause of an issue, and think through any unintended consequences. Some questions to ask when considering policy proposals or making decisions that will impact kids and families include:*

- What is the desired outcome?
- What do the data—disaggregated by race and ethnicity, whenever possible—tell us about the problem and who is affected?
- Who benefits from the proposed policy solution and who is burdened?
- Does the policy solution help close gaps in child well-being, or does it exacerbate them?
- Have the people who are most impacted by the problem, including communities of color, been engaged throughout the process?
- What is the plan for ensuring that those most impacted, including communities of color, will continue to be engaged throughout the implementation process?
- How will the success of the policy be monitored and evaluated?

By centering equity in our decision-making processes, we can help ensure that kids of all races and ethnicities have the opportunity to fulfill their potential. Creating a Colorado where race and ethnicity can't be used to predict one's life outcome doesn't just benefit some of us—it benefits all Coloradans. When we remove a barrier for one child, we create a clearer path to success for all children in our state. We build a Colorado where every child, whether she is a member of the Southern Ute tribe in Southwestern Colorado, a Latino child in Denver or a white child in Limon, can use her unique gifts to reach her highest dreams. What new frontiers will we reach when every child has the chance to soar?

* These questions were adapted from tools developed by the Center for Social Inclusion and The Colorado Trust's Health Equity Advocacy cohort.

APPENDIX A:
Background and Methodology for Community Dialogue Sessions

Since 1985, the Colorado Children's Campaign has worked to improve child well-being by advocating for the development and implementation of data-driven public policies. For the 2017 KIDS COUNT report, we committed resources to ensure that the report illuminates critical racial and ethnic disparities in child well-being through the lens of those most impacted by the issues.

To better understand and highlight the complex issues around racial and ethnic disparities in child well-being, as well as the strengths of communities, the Children's Campaign partnered with OMNI Institute (OMNI), a non-profit social science research organization in Denver, and the Center for Social Inclusion (CSI), a New York-based nonprofit focused on creating equitable outcomes through policy and research, capacity building, communications on race and institutional change.[111] As part of an initial information gathering effort, OMNI conducted dialogue sessions in four Colorado communities to gather perspectives of community members and organizational representatives on racial and ethnic disparities within key indicators of child well-being. In these sessions, communities could weigh in and give voice to the data, building the narrative to highlight structural barriers and community strengths, as well as potential opportunities for change.

OMNI facilitated 10 dialogue sessions in four Colorado communities: Denver, Alamosa, La Plata and Morgan counties.[112] Colorado is a large and diverse state, and experiences vary greatly depending on the geographic, demographic, political and economic context in which kids and families live. While no report could capture the experiences of all groups, these regions were selected to engage diverse communities across Colorado and ensure a broad geographic reach for this initial effort. We chose these regions to help reflect Colorado's diverse environments and communities: Denver represents the urban front range; Alamosa holds the rich history of southern Colorado's agricultural land; La Plata County is home to Colorado's two Ute reservations, a university, and outdoor recreation and tourism industries; and Morgan County is home to a robust refugee population that helps support an agricultural industry typical of the eastern plains.

While the data in this report in most cases represent all Colorado kids, the narrative input comes primarily from representatives of these four communities. Through our It's About Kids Network and future outreach, we hope to continue to add perspectives from resort towns, the Western Slope and many other communities across the state. We hope these dialogue sessions will be part of an ongoing statewide conversation about how to give each Colorado child, of any race or ethnicity, every chance to succeed.

RECRUITMENT

Dialogue sessions were facilitated separately for two different participant groups in each location: one session for participants who identified as organizational representatives or community leaders, and one session for community members who were not affiliated professionally with a specific organization and who typically did not have previous ties to the Children's Campaign's work. Two additional community member sessions were held in Denver due to its urban center and large, diverse population. For both types of sessions, OMNI and the Children's Campaign utilized partner networks to recruit participants and spread information about the sessions. In each of the four counties, community members championed the work to help secure parents and youth to attend sessions, spread the word to their networks, and provide logistical help such as transportation or building space. All participants were offered compensation for their time, either through gift cards or the opportunity to win a donation to their organization.

[111] http://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/about-us/what-we-do/
[112] OMNI Institute. (2016). KIDS COUNT in Colorado! 2016 Community Dialogue Sessions: Report of Key Findings.

APPENDIX A:
Background and Methodology for Community Dialogue Sessions

Because the 2017 KIDS COUNT report aimed to illuminate the stories behind the data about racial and ethnic disparities, recruitment efforts were targeted to ensure that communities of color were well represented among participants. Among the 167 participants across all sessions, 36 percent of participants identified as Hispanic/Latino, 31 percent as White, 19 percent as Black/African American, 14 percent as Native American or Alaska Native and 3 percent as Asian/Pacific Islander. Additionally, 75 percent of participants identified as female and 25 percent as male, and for community member sessions, 17 percent of participants were under the age of 19 years old.

Table 1: Participants' Age by Total and by Regional Sessions

Age	Total (n=163)	Alamosa County (n=34)	Denver County (n=62)	La Plata County (n=43)	Morgan County (n=24)
	Frequency (%)				
Under 19 years old	**27 (17%)**	14 (41%)	7 (11%)	4 (9%)	2 (8%)
20-29 years old	**21 (13%)**	0 (0%)	12 (19%)	6 (14%)	3 (13%)
30-39 years old	**32 (20%)**	3 (9%)	10 (16%)	13 (30%)	6 (25%)
40-49 years old	**38 (23%)**	7 (21%)	15 (24%)	9 (21%)	7 (29%)
50-59 years old	**32 (20%)**	8 (24%)	13 (21%)	8 (19%)	3 (13%)
60 years old and older	**13 (8%)**	2 (6%)	5 (8%)	3 (7%)	3 (13%)

Table 2: Participants' Race/Ethnicity by Total and by Regional Sessions

Race/Ethnicity *(check all that apply)*	Total (n=167)	Alamosa County (n=36)	Denver County (n=63)	La Plata County (n=43)	Morgan County (n=25)
	Frequency (%)				
American Indian or Alaska Native	**23 (14%)**	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	20 (47%)	1 (4%)
Asian	**5 (3%)**	0 (0%)	4 (6%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
Black or African American	**32 (19%)**	0 (0%)	31 (49%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
Hispanic/ Latino	**60 (36%)**	28 (78%)	18 (29%)	4 (9%)	10 (40%)
White	**52 (31%)**	7 (19%)	12 (19%)	20 (47%)	13 (52%)
More than one race	**1 (1%)**	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	**9 (5%)**	0 (0%)	3 (5%)	4 (9%)	2 (8%)

Note: Frequencies may total more than the size of the (sub)samples and percentages may equal more than 100%, as participants could select more than one race/ethnicity category.

APPENDIX A:
Background and Methodology for Community Dialogue Sessions

SESSION STRUCTURE

In collaboration with the Children's Campaign and CSI, OMNI developed facilitator guides detailing the structure of the sessions. OMNI staff co-facilitated each session in partnership with either Children's Campaign staff or a local facilitator from the community. The facilitators led participants in each session in two activities: a timeline activity and a data gallery walk. Where possible (and with consent), group discussions were audio-recorded to capture participants' thoughts in their own words.

For the timeline activity, facilitators set up a large timeline that included several major historical events, including the passage of national or state policies that disproportionately impacted communities of color. Participants added personal and community events to the timeline, followed by a discussion of how history and policy influence communities, families and individual lives. The activity aimed to let participants reflect on how their individual, family and community experiences related to larger historical events and forces. It also provided helpful framing for reviewing data indicators from a system-level perspective and helped surface community narratives and local history.

Following the timeline activity, participants in both sessions took part in a data gallery walk. The "data gallery" presented various indicators on child well-being in stations corresponding to the issue areas covered in KIDS COUNT (family economic security, early childhood, health and education). Participants first reviewed the indicators and discussed observations with other participants before reconvening for a facilitated discussion with the full group. The activity gave participants the opportunity to review data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and to discuss the root causes of disparities seen in their own communities or across the state.

OMNI analyzed dialogue session data to identify key themes and findings, including both regional patterns and themes that emerged across sessions. The resulting report of key findings (available from the Children's Campaign upon request) informed the content and structure of the *2017 KIDS COUNT in Colorado!* report. The discussions with community leaders and members helped guide the selection of indicators to include in the report and also provided vital context for much of the data. We are immensely grateful to the individuals and organizations who shared their knowledge and resources to make this project possible, and for the work they do each day for all of Colorado's kids.

COUNTY DATA DEFINITIONS

The Colorado Children's Campaign relies on data from federal, state and local agencies. These sources are the final authority relating to the quality of any data. Please note that all vital statistics are reported by place of residence, not place of birth or death.

POPULATION

Total Population (number)
Population estimates provided by the Colorado State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs. Estimates retrieved on December 14, 2016.

Child Population (Under 18) (number)
Number of children less than 18 years of age provided by the Colorado State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs. Estimates retrieved on December 14, 2016.

Children as a Percentage of Total Population (percent)
Number of children less than 18 years of age provided by the Colorado State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs. Calculations performed by the Colorado Children's Campaign. This statistic shows the proportion of a county's population that is under 18 years of age.

Young Child Population (Under 5) (number)
Number of children less than 5 years of age provided by the Colorado State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs. Estimates retrieved on December 14, 2016.

School-Aged Population (Ages 5-17) (number)
Number of children ages 5 through 17 provided by the Colorado State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs. Estimates retrieved on December 14, 2016.

VULNERABLE FAMILIES

Births to Single Women (percent)
Births to unmarried women per 100 live births provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three births to single women in the county.

Births to Women without a High School Diploma or GED (percent)
Births to women without a high school diploma or GED per 100 live births provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three births to women with less than 12 years of education in the county.

Teen Births (rate per 1,000 female teens ages 15-19)
Live births to women ages 15 through 19 per 1,000 women of that age (age-specific fertility rate) provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three teen births in the county.

Three Risk Factor Births (percent)
Births to unmarried women under 25 years of age with less than 12 years of education per 100 live births provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three births in this category in the county.

COUNTY DATA DEFINITIONS

Out-of-Home Placements (rate per 1,000 children under 18)
Number of children removed from their homes by the Department of Human Services per 1,000 children under age 18 provided by the Division of Child Welfare, Colorado Department of Human Services. Out-of-home placements include family foster care, specialized group homes, residential child care facilities, independent living situations, foster care with relatives, residential treatment centers, and both emergency and non-emergency placements or shelters.

Students Served by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program (percent)
Number of PK-12 public school students served by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program during the 2015-2016 school year provided by the Colorado Department of Education, based on Colorado school district submissions. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education program serves homeless children and youth, defined as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence…; and includes (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, inadequate trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement; (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings…; (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and (iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii)." Please note this indicator is derived only from school or school district records. This does not represent the total number of homeless children and youth in these communities, which would include both those children who were enrolled during the year and those who were not. Additionally, children and youth in homeless situations are difficult to identify for many reasons. High mobility, fear of stigma, and invisibility of populations not living in shelters or accessing other service agencies are examples of reported identification barriers. While the data are based on continual district efforts to identify students who are homeless, the identification challenges would suggest the actual numbers of students who are homeless in Colorado school districts and counties are likely higher than those reported.

FAMILY ECONOMICS AND SUPPORTS

Children Qualifying for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (percent)
Percent of children in public school grades PK-12 who qualified for free or reduced-price school lunches in the fall of 2016. Data provided by the Colorado Department of Education. Public school children qualify for free lunches if their family's income falls below 130 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). Public school children qualify for reduced-price lunches if their family's income is between 130 percent and 185 percent of the FPL.

Median Household Income (dollars)
Median household income in 2015, from the U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE).

Children (Under 18) in Poverty (percent)
Number of children under age 18 living in families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level in 2015 per 100 children, from the U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE).

COUNTY DATA DEFINITIONS

School-Aged Children (Ages 5-17) in Poverty (percent)
Number of children ages 5 through 17 living in families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level in 2015 per 100 children, from the U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE).

Children Receiving TANF Basic Cash Assistance Payments (percent)
Percentage of children receiving Basic Cash Assistance payments as part of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program during the 2016 calendar year. Caseload data by individual children is provided by the Colorado Department of Human Services. Calculations performed by the Colorado Children's Campaign.

Children Under 5 Receiving WIC Program Vouchers (percent)
Percentage of children under age 5 (until their fifth birthday) served by the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) during the 2016 calendar year. Number reflects unduplicated count of WIC child participants. Data provided by the Office of Information Technology. Calculations performed by the Colorado Children's Campaign. Note: Some local WIC programs provide services to children from other counties. Gilpin, Hinsdale, Mineral and San Juan counties did not have a WIC program in 2016 and children in these counties were served by neighboring counties.

CHILD AND MATERNAL HEALTH

Live Births (number)
Total number of live births provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three births in the county.

Low Weight Births (percent)
Babies born weighing 5.5 pounds or less (less than 2500 grams) per 100 live births provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three low weight births in the county.

Early Prenatal Care (percent)
Births in which prenatal care was initiated in the first trimester of pregnancy per 100 live births with known start of prenatal care provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three births to mothers receiving early prenatal care in the county.

Births to Women Smoking During Pregnancy (percent)
Births in which women reported smoking during pregnancy on infant's birth certificate per 100 live births provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Please note that these data are most likely underreported on birth certificates across the state due to mothers' knowledge of the risks of smoking during pregnancy. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three births to women who smoked during pregnancy in the county.

COUNTY DATA DEFINITIONS

Child Abuse and Neglect (rate per 1,000 children under 18)
Incidence of maltreatment of children under 18 (including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and/or neglect) provided by the Division of Child Welfare, Colorado Department of Human Services. The value is the number of unique substantiated cases per 1,000 children.

Infant Mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)
Deaths in the first year of life per 1,000 live births provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three infant deaths in the county.

Child (Ages 1-14) Deaths (rate per 100,000 children ages 1-14)
Deaths per 100,000 children ages 1 through 14 provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The data include deaths from natural causes (such as illness or congenital defects) and injury (including motor vehicle deaths, homicides and suicides). Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three child deaths in the county.

Teen (Ages 15-19) Deaths (rate per 100,000 teens ages 15-19)
Deaths per 100,000 teens ages 15 through 19 provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The data include deaths from natural causes (such as illness or congenital defects) and injury (including motor vehicle deaths, homicides and suicides). Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three teen deaths in the county.

Child (Ages 1-14) Deaths Due to Injury (rate per 100,000 children ages 1-14)
Deaths due to intentional and unintentional injuries per 100,000 children ages 1 through 14 provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The data include deaths due to homicide, suicide and accidents. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three child deaths due to injury in the county.

Teen (Ages 15-19) Deaths Due to Injury (rate per 100,000 teens ages 15-19)
Deaths due to intentional and unintentional injuries per 100,000 teens ages 15 through 19 provided by the Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Health and Environment. The data include deaths due to homicide, suicide and accidents. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than three teen deaths due to injury in the county.

Children (Ages 0-18) Enrolled in CHP+ (percent)
Estimated number of children ages 0 through 18 enrolled in the Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) during fiscal year 2015-2016 per 100 children. Data provided by the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than 30 clients in the county. Calculations performed by the Colorado Children's Campaign. As of 2015, children ages 0 through 18 whose family's modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is below 260 percent of FPL but above the Medicaid income eligibility cutoff are eligible for CHP+.

Important note: The numbers used to calculate this percentage include a unique count of all clients ages 0 through 18 who were served at any point during FY15-16. The CHP+ numbers reported here do not match official budget numbers. Official budget numbers reflect an average monthly caseload over the course of a year and are lower than the numbers reported here.

COUNTY DATA DEFINITIONS

Children (Ages 0-18) Enrolled in Medicaid (percent)
Estimated number of children ages 0 through 18 enrolled in Medicaid during fiscal year 2015-2016 per 100 children. Data provided by the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. Low number of events (LNE) indicates fewer than 30 clients in the county. Calculations performed by the Colorado Children's Campaign. As of 2015, children whose family's modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is below 142 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for Medicaid.

Important note: The numbers used to calculate this percentage include a unique count of all clients ages 0 through 18 who were served at any point during FY15-16. The Medicaid numbers reported here do not match official budget numbers. Official budget numbers reflect an average monthly caseload over the course of a year and are lower than the numbers reported here.

Uninsured Children (Ages 0-18) (percent)
Uninsured rates based on Colorado Health Institute (CHI) analyses of data from the 2015 American Community Survey (ACS). A child was counted as uninsured if his or her parent reported that the child did not have any form of health insurance at the time at which the ACS questionnaire was administered. CHI applied a method developed by the University of Missouri to apportion ACS geographic strata to Colorado counties in order to yield county-level estimates. Due to several counties being part of the same ACS stratum, uninsured rates will be similar for several rural counties.

Eligible for Medicaid, CHP+ or Subsidies But Not Enrolled (Ages 0-18) (percent)
EBNE estimates provided by the Colorado Health Institute. Estimates of the eligible but uninsured (referred to as the eligible but not enrolled) population come from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey. The data are weighted to represent the state population as well as geographic sub-regions within Colorado. CHI applies a method developed by the University of Missouri to apportion the ACS regions and yield county-level estimates. A child was counted as uninsured if his or her parent reported that the child did not have any form of health insurance when the ACS questionnaire was administered. Eligibility is based on family income as a percentage of the federal poverty level (FPL). CHI, in order to calculate the ratio of annual family income to federal poverty guidelines, developed a method to identify and calculate nuclear family income within households in which multiple related families reside. This approach more closely approximates eligibility determination guidelines. These analyses are limited to Coloradans for whom ACS income data were collected. Income and poverty data are not available for foster children or for people living in prisons, nursing homes, mental hospitals, college dormitories or military quarters. Eligibility for Medicaid, CHP+ and advanced premium tax credits (APTCs) is based on age, income and residency status.

EDUCATION

PK-12 Pupil Enrollment (number)
Number of children enrolled in public schools in the fall of 2016 provided by the Colorado Department of Education.

Kindergartners in a Full-Day Program (percent)
Number of kindergartners enrolled in a full-day kindergarten program in the fall of 2016 divided by the number of students enrolled in all public kindergarten programs, provided by the Colorado Department of Education. Calculations performed by the Colorado Children's Campaign.

COUNTY DATA DEFINITIONS

English Language Learners (percent)
Number of students classified as English Language Learners in the fall of 2016 divided by total enrollment, provided by the Colorado Department of Education. Calculations performed by the Colorado Children's Campaign.

High School Graduation Rate (percent)
Percentage of students who graduated from high school in 2016, four years after entering ninth grade. Data provided by the Colorado Department of Education. Calculations performed by the Colorado Children's Campaign.

4th Grade Students NOT Proficient in Reading (percent)
Percentage of 4th grade students who were not proficient in English Language Arts on the 2016 Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) provided by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). CDE does not report CMAS data if the number of students taking the test is fewer than 16; low number of events (LNE) indicates data that has been suppressed for this reason. County data are based on scores from the districts that comprise each county.

Students Scoring Proficient or Above on CMAS Math (percent)
The percentage of all students scoring proficient or above on the 2016 Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) in math provided by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). CDE does not report CMAS data if the number of students taking the test is fewer than 16; low number of events (LNE) indicates data that has been suppressed for this reason. County data are based on scores from the districts that comprise each county.

Students Scoring Proficient or Above on CMAS English Language Arts (percent)
The percentage of all students scoring proficient or advanced on the 2016 Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) in English Language Arts provided by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). CDE does not report CMAS data if the number of students taking the test is fewer than 16; low number of events (LNE) indicates data that has been suppressed for this reason. County data are based on scores from the districts that comprise each county.

Students Scoring Strong or Distinguished on CMAS Science (percent)
The percentage of all students scoring strong or distinguished on the science section of the 2016 Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessment provided by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). CDE does not report CMAS data if the number of students taking the test is fewer than 16; low number of events (LNE) indicates data that has been suppressed for this reason. County data are based on scores from the districts that comprise each county.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This edition of *KIDS COUNT in Colorado!* is dedicated to former Children's Campaign President & CEO Chris Watney. Her leadership and vision elevated the scope, reach and impact of this report in immeasurable ways.

The Colorado Children's Campaign thanks the following people and organizations that helped provide data and expertise for this 2017 KIDS COUNT in Colorado! report, and that dedicate themselves to the well-being of Colorado's children every day. We sincerely thank you for your generous contribution of time, data and advice.

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