



JULY 30, 2019

# Creating Opportunities for Disconnected Youth

2019 NAWRS Conference – David Blount, Alan Dodkowitz, Nathan Sick, and Natalie Spievack

# Work Featured

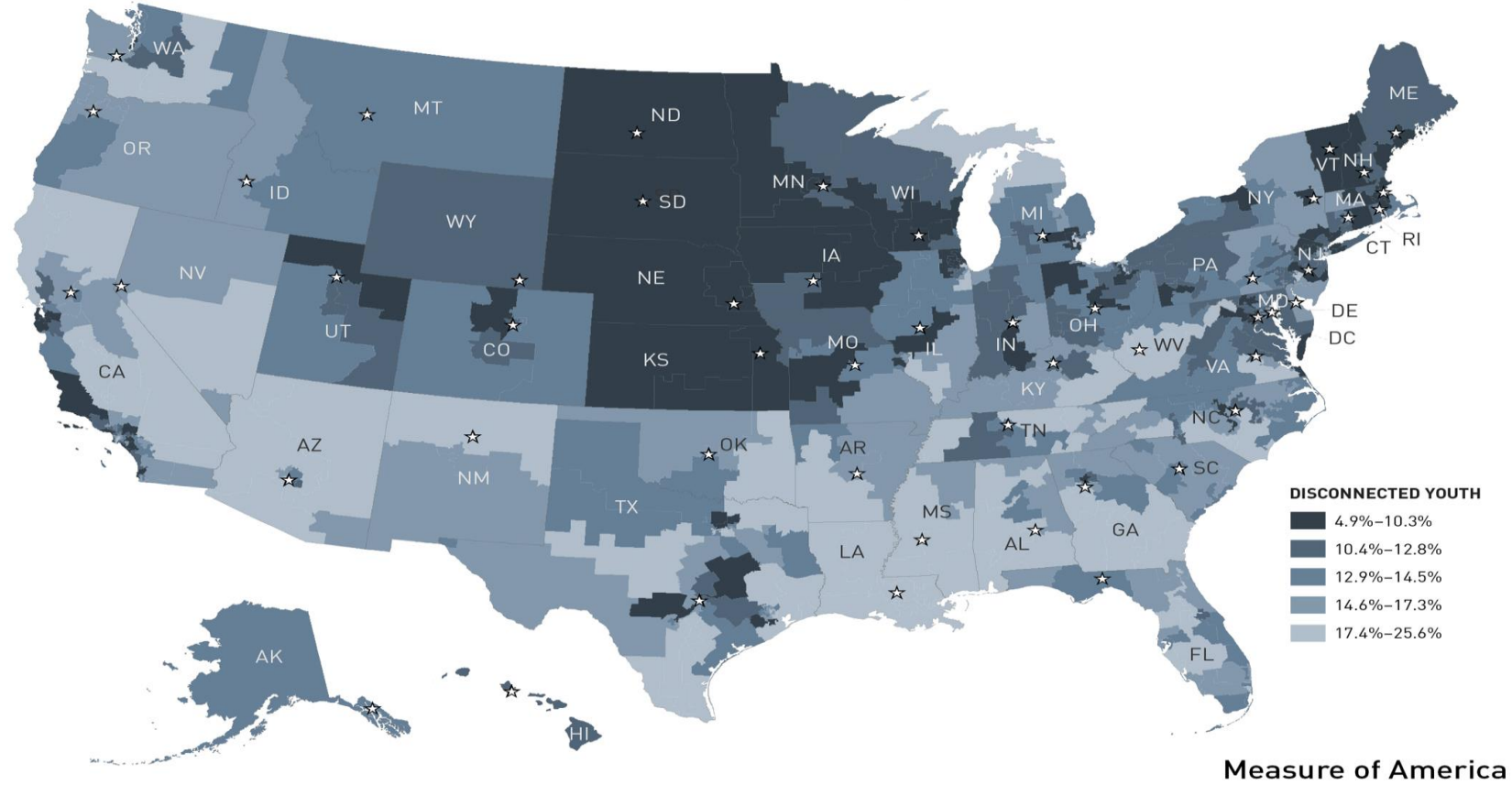
- Summer Youth Employment Study: David Blount and Natalie Spievack
  - Youth employment data snapshot
  - Employer study
- Young Parents' Work and Education: Nathan Sick
- The Performance Partnership Pilot (P3): Alan Dodkowitz

# America's Disconnected Youth

- Disconnected or “opportunity” youth are individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither working nor in school
- As of 2017, there were 4.6 million disconnected youth in America, who represent 11.5 percent of 16- to 24-year-olds (Measure of America)
- Rural populations (19.3 percent), Native Americans (25.8 percent), and African-Americans (17.2 percent) have the highest youth disconnection rate (Measure of America)
- Disconnection is linked to inadequate health care, housing, and transportation, and to negative outcomes including lower future earnings, lower educational attainment, and higher rates of criminal justice involvement (The Aspen Institute; Lewis and Gluskin 2018)
- Some estimates place the cost to society of not altering the trajectories of opportunity youth as high as \$6.3 trillion over their lifetimes (Aspen Institute)

# America's Disconnected Youth

## Youth Disconnection by Congressional District



Source: <http://measureofamerica.org/disconnected-youth/>

# Summer Youth Employment Study

# Summer Youth Employment Study: Project Components

- Youth employment data snapshot
  - Brief: “The Youth Workforce: A Detailed Picture” (published July 2019)
    - A detailed snapshot of youth employment using data from the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)
  - Blog: “Youth Employment: Critical, but not Equitable” (published July 2019)
    - Examines inequities in youth work participation and employment outcomes
- Employer study
  - Research question: How can summer youth employment programs work with employer partners to help build on-ramps to longer-term job opportunities for youth?
  - Data collection method: site visits to three cities with summer youth employment programs
  - Research report will be published September 2019

# Youth Employment Data Snapshot

# Youth employment rates are much lower than historical standards, particularly among teens

- Youth employment rate (ages 16-24) was **69.1% in 1979**, and **55.5% in 2018**
  - Teen employment rate (ages 16-19) declined even more, from **59.3% to 35.2%**, over the same period
- Commonly termed the “youth employment crisis”



# Youth employment matters for a variety of long-term outcomes

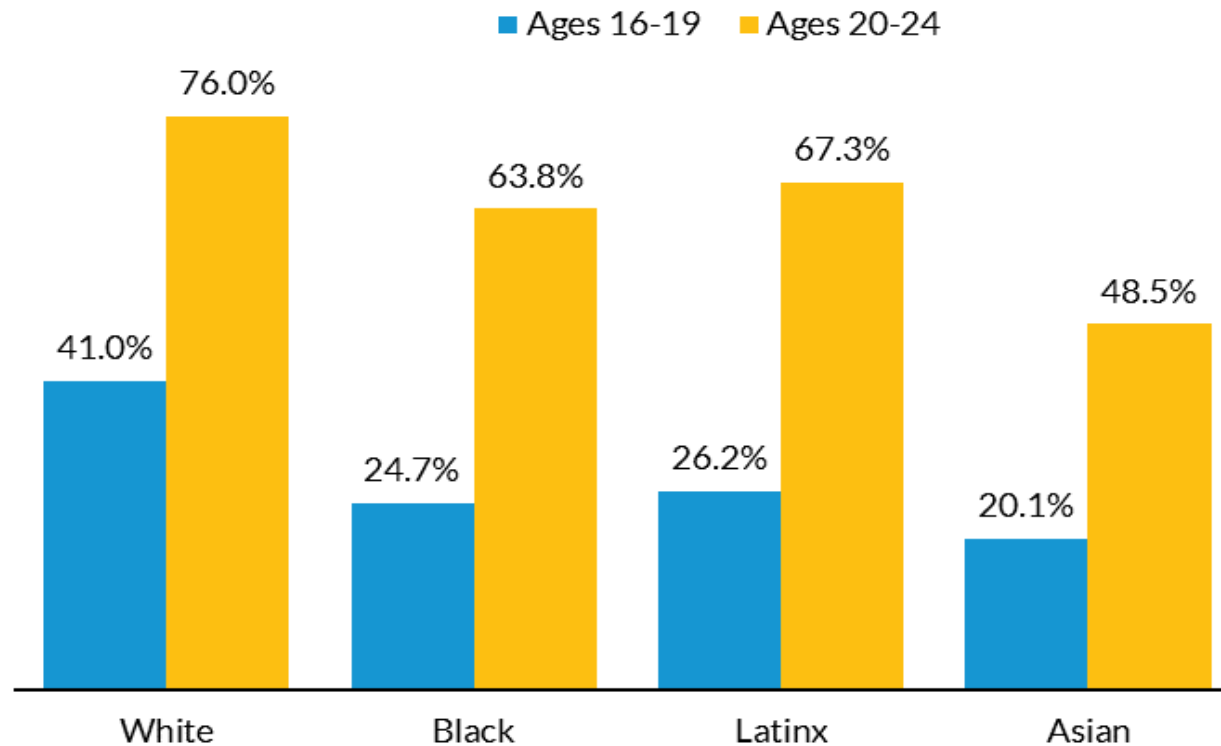
- Young people who do not have stable jobs by their early 20s are at greater risk for joblessness and permanently lower earnings (The Rockefeller Foundation 2014)
- Effective youth employment programs have demonstrated positive effects on long-term outcomes
  - Year Up led to 53% higher **earnings** (Fein and Hamadyk 2018)
- Summer youth employment programs can reduce **criminal justice involvement**, decrease **mortality**, improve **school attendance** and **graduation rates**, and contribute to the development of critical “**soft skills**” (Modestino 2017; Heller 2014; Gelber, Isen, and Kessler 2015, Leos-Urbel 2014; Sachdev and McDonnel 2011)
- Many of these effects are stronger for disadvantaged youth and youth of color

# Methods

- Data analysis using the first wave of the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)
  - Nationally representative panel survey administered by the US Census Bureau that collects information on household composition, receipt of public benefits, education, and employment
  - 29,825 households interviewed
  - Data represent information from January 2013 through December 2013
- Sample: 4,676 youth (ages 16-24) who had a job at any point during the reference period
  - Youth were considered employed if they reported work in at least one month of the year

White youth were employed at significantly higher rates than Latinx, black, and Asian youth, regardless of age group

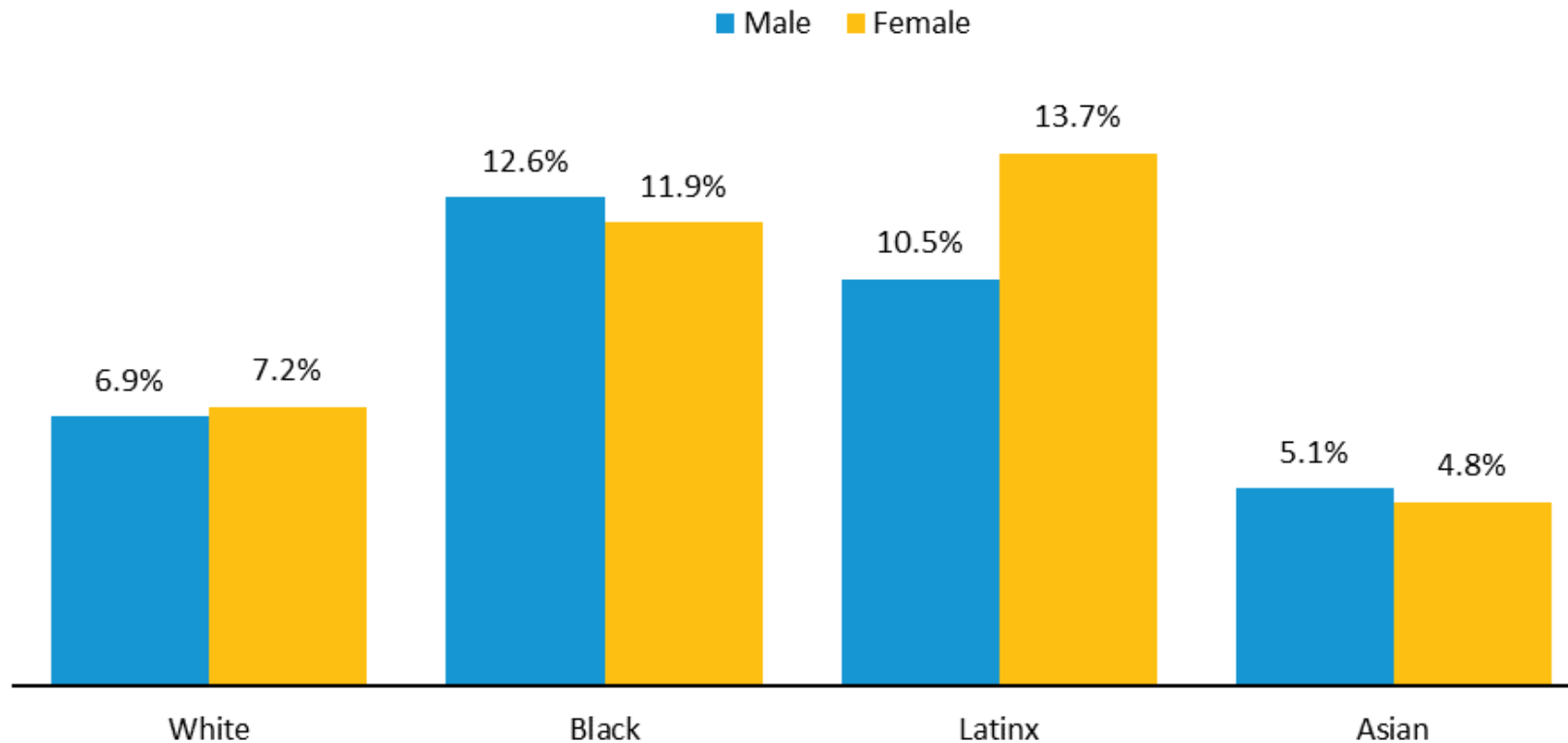
**Percent of Youth Employed by Race/Ethnicity and Age**



Source: Authors' analysis of 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation.

# Black and Latinx youth had the highest rates of disconnection

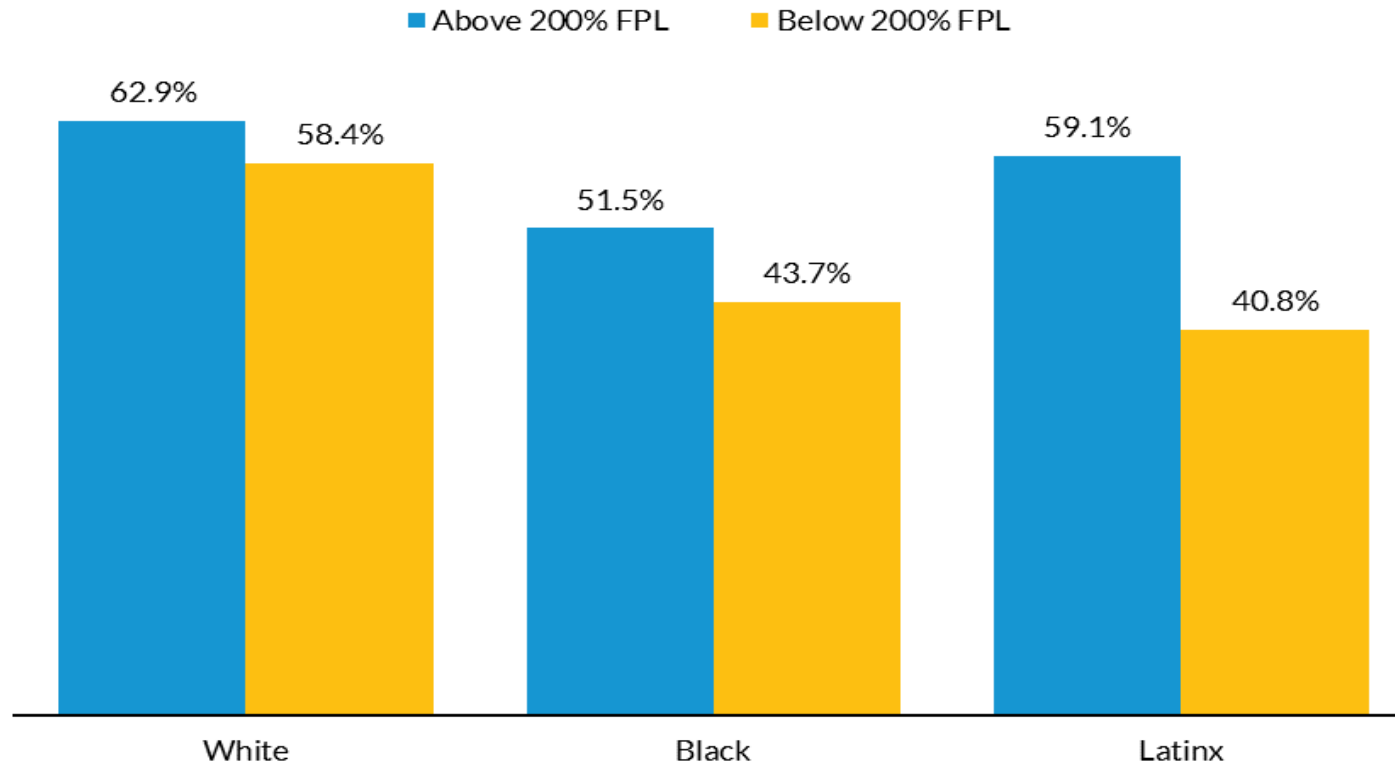
Percent of Youth Who are Disconnected by Race/Ethnicity and Gender



Source: Authors' analysis of 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation.

# Youth from low-income households were employed less often, regardless of race/ethnicity

**Percent of Youth Employed by Household Income Status and Race/Ethnicity**



Source: Authors' analysis of 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation.

# Wages were lower among younger youth, female youth, and black and Latinx youth

	Average Hourly Wages	
	Ages 16-19	Ages 20-24
<b>All youth</b>	<b>\$7.06</b>	<b>\$9.82</b>
Gender		
<i>Male</i>	\$7.30	\$10.59
<i>Female</i>	<b>\$6.85</b>	<b>\$9.01</b>
Race/Ethnicity		
<i>White, non-Hispanic</i>	\$7.04	\$10.18
<i>Black, non-Hispanic</i>	<b>\$6.78</b>	<b>\$8.77</b>
<i>Latinx</i>	<b>\$7.35</b>	<b>\$9.32</b>
<i>Asian</i>	*	\$10.77

Source: Authors' analysis of 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation

Notes: Asterisk denotes small sample size (n<100).

# Implications for practice

- Black and Latinx youth, particularly those ages 16 to 19 and those who are low-income, should be the focus of targeted efforts to increase youth employment
- Disconnected youth should be specifically targeted for education, training, and employment programs, but youth enrolled in school are also important to target, as racial and ethnic disparities in employment rates are significantly larger among this group than among out-of-school youth
- Efforts to increase youth employment should consider both whether youth jobs pay sufficiently high wages and whether the job opportunity can lead to well-paying jobs later in life
- Efforts seeking to affect youth employment should ensure that those opportunities lead to fair compensation for female, black, and Latinx youth
- Continuous improvement of youth employment programs is important
  - Summer youth employment programs **are** a potential solution

# Employer Study



# Background on Summer Youth Employment Programs (SYEPs)

- SYEPs have received increased support and funding in recent years as an intervention to the “youth employment crisis”
- Research has pointed to positive impacts on participants as well as opportunities to enhance longer-term employment outcomes
- Research discusses key program components and promising strategies that may help SYEP participants translate short-term benefits into long-term gains
- Employers could play a pivotal role to help improve the program’s employment outcomes

# Employer Study Goal

Through interviews and focus groups with SYEP administrators, employers, and past participants, we sought to understand:

- Overall value-add and role of SYEPs for employers and local workforce system
- Promising practices and challenges with implementation of SYEPs
- Motivations guiding employer participation
- Successes and challenges
- How employers can help elevate and enhance the services provided by SYEPs
- The role of SYEPs in advancing equity

# Where did we go?

## St. Louis

- STL Youth Jobs
- 700–1,000 youth served
- 8-week placement
- Fit- and interest-based placement
- Job coaches

## New Orleans

- NOLA Youth Works
- 550–600 youth served
- 5-week placement
- Tiered placement structure
- Career coaches

## Philadelphia

- Summer Work Ready
- 8,000–10,000 youth served
- 6-week placement
- Tiered placement structure
- Weekly professional development

# Who did we speak with?

## SYEP Staff

- Program background
- Goals and objectives
- Program details
- Implementation and employer engagement challenges
- Employer engagement approach

## Employers

- Value add of SYEP to employers
- Successful engagement
- Potential steps to improve programming and expand role

## Past Participants

- SYEP experience and job placement details
- Value of the experience
- Connection to future opportunities

# Overview of takeaways



Diversify **partnerships** and placement options for youth



Deepen **involvement** of employers in programming



Make **intentional matches** based on interest, skills, and need



Align **program goals** to broader workforce and community development goals

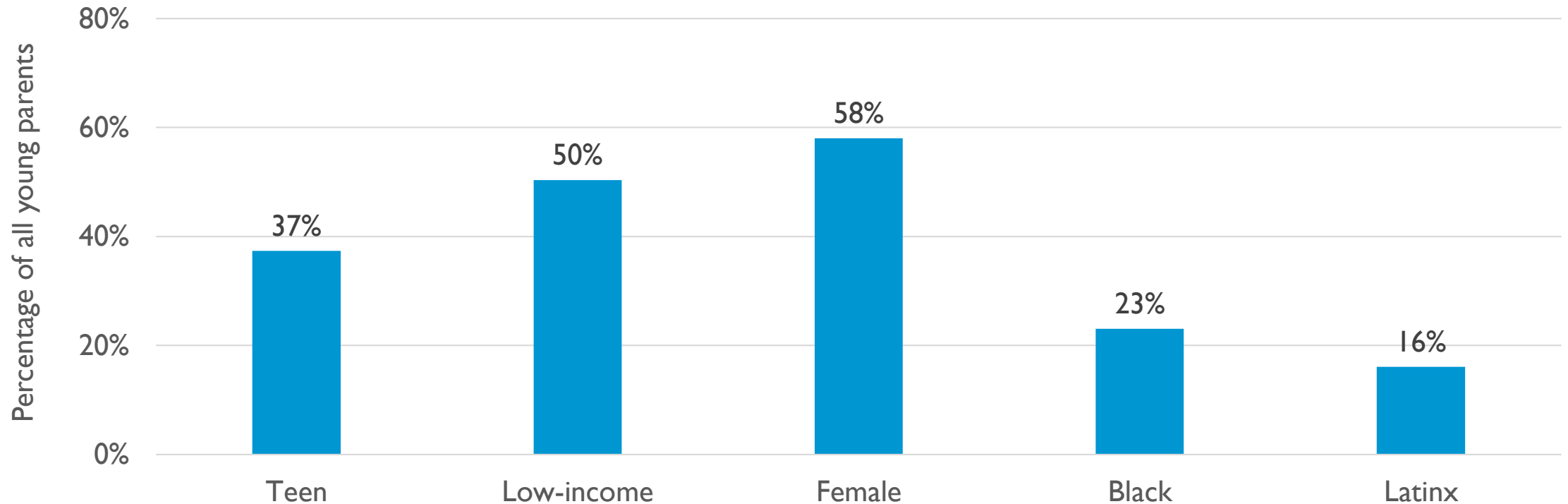


Leverage **relationships with employers and civic leaders** to strengthen partnerships

# Trends and Characteristics of Young Parents: Work, Education, and Disconnection

# Young parents are a vulnerable subset of young people

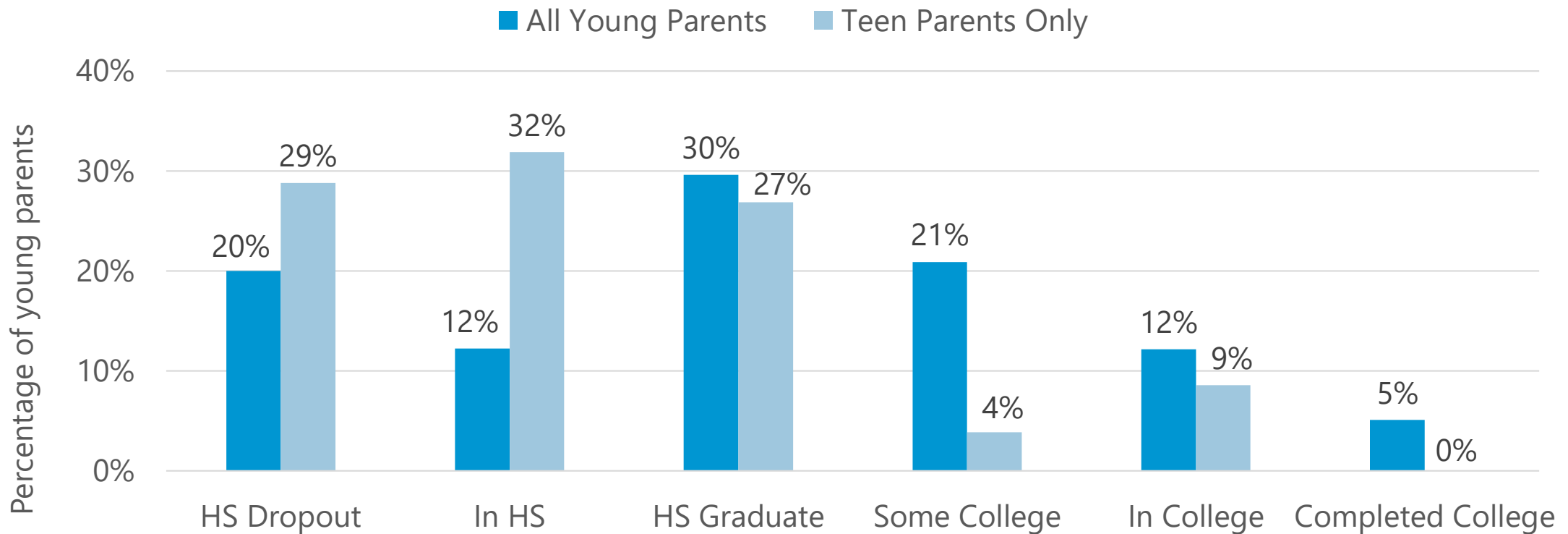
- There were more than 4 million young parents America in 2013 (Source: author's calculation from the 2014 SIPP)
- Young parents are particularly vulnerable to disconnection and could benefit from support.
- We conducted an analysis of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97) focusing on young parents (ages 16-24) and their work and education patterns through age 30



Source: Author's calculations from the NLSY97

# Many young parents had not finished school at the time they had their child

- Not having finished high school or attended college can lead to disadvantages in the labor market
- It can also lead parents to balance work and education, which can be effective but

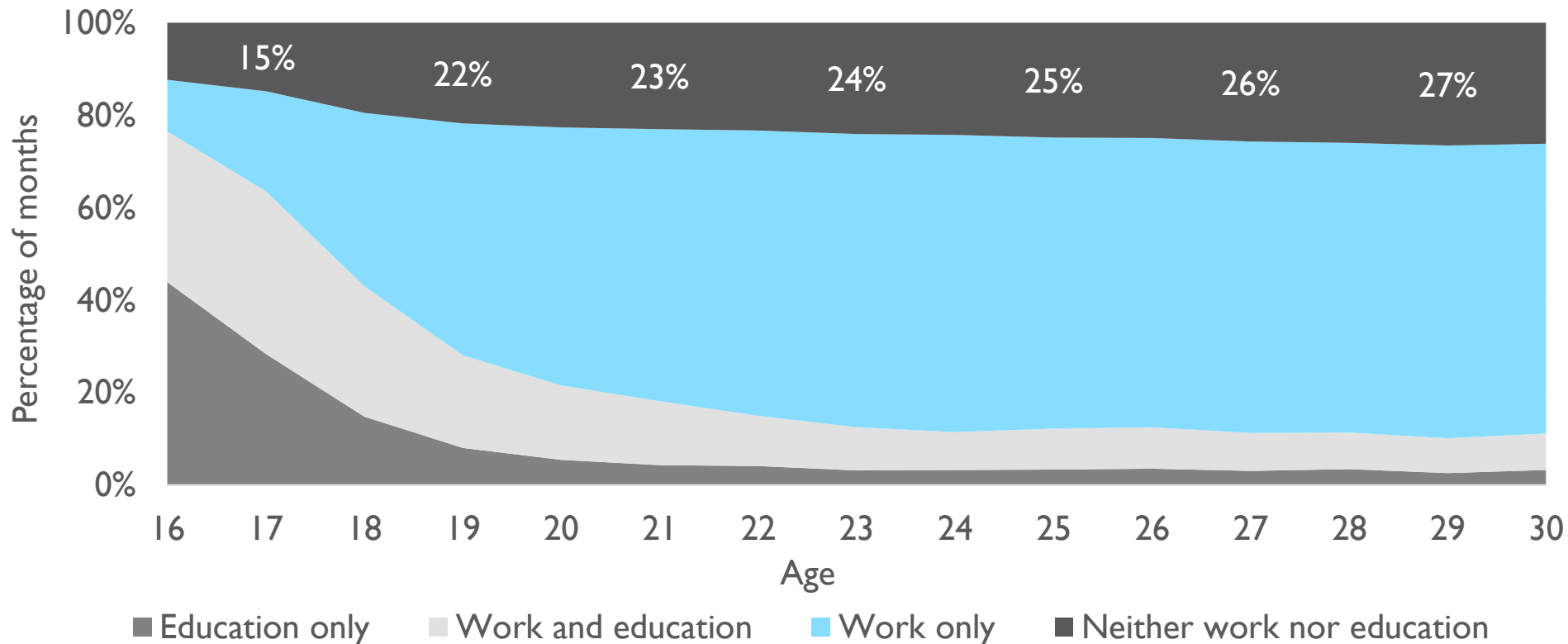


Source: Author's calculations from the NLSY97



# An analysis of young parents shows that they may spend about one-quarter of their time disconnected

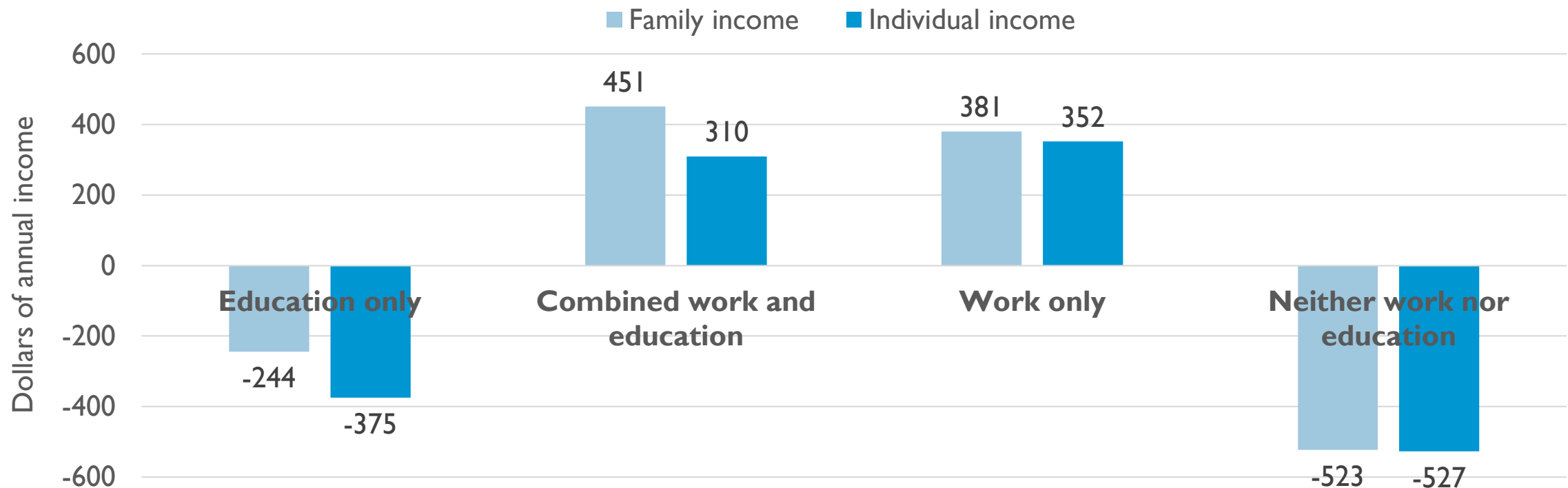
Young parents may spend up to 27 percent of their time disconnected through their twenties, but the majority of their time is spent working



Source: Author's calculations from the NLSY97

# Time spent disconnected may be associated with lower earnings later in life

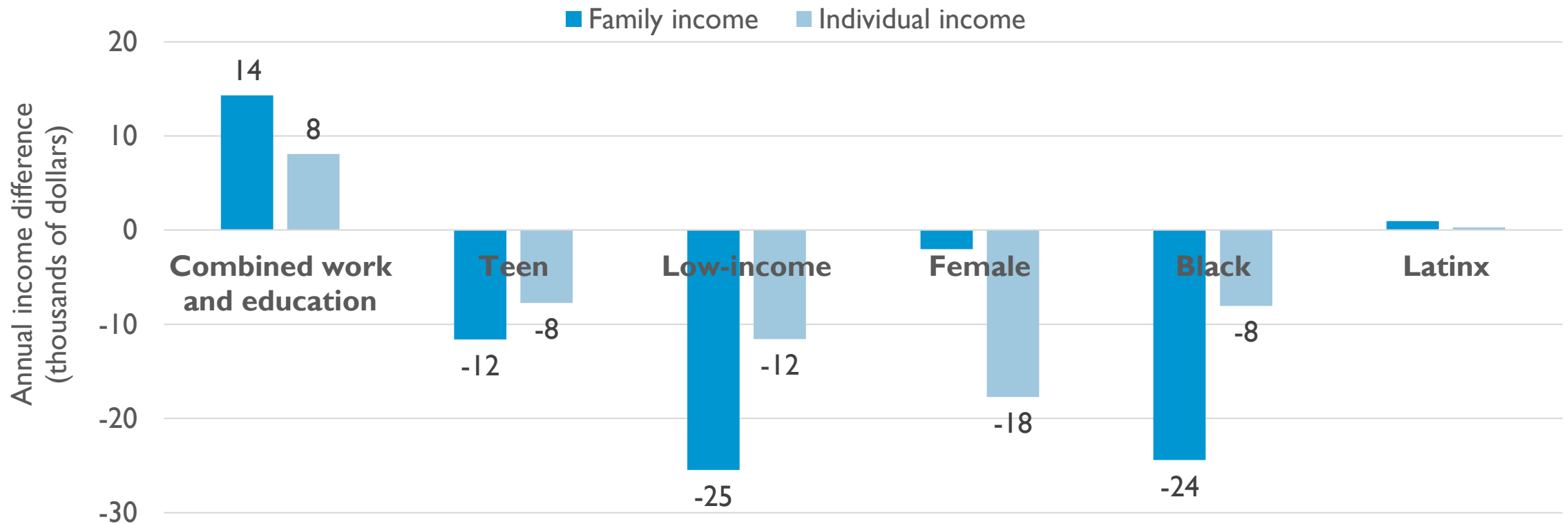
- Analysis shows that the share of time young parents spend disconnected during their twenties may be associated with lower earnings at age 30
- Across all subgroups, there is a negative association between percentage of time disconnected and income at age 30. Positive associations were shown from work, whether alone or combined with education



Source: Author's calculations from the NLSY97

# Female and minority young parents are disadvantaged in the long run

Young parents who were teen (ages 16-19) or low-income (under 200% of FPL) when they became parents earn less at age 30 than other groups. Black parents were disadvantaged in the long-run as well. Those three groups also spent more time disconnected.



Source: Author's calculations from the NLSY97

# The Performance Partnership Pilot (P3)

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- P3 Pilot- initiated by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 first provided authority to the Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services along with others to have agreements with states, regions, localities, or tribal communities that give them additional flexibility in using discretionary funds across multiple Federal programs
- Allow States, localities, and Tribes to pilot better ways of improving outcomes for disconnected youth by giving them additional flexibility in using discretionary funds across multiple Federal programs
- Programs can:
  - Serve disconnected youth populations, or are designed to prevent youth from disconnecting from school or work; and
  - Provide education, training and employment, or other social services, including interventions to improve health or social and emotional well-being.

# New York P3 Pilot

- Initiated in 2017, helps disconnected young parents, ages 17-24, use traditional WIOA Out-of-School Youth (OSY) services to obtain high school equivalency degrees, vocational training, and further employment and educational opportunities.
- Operated at two Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow (OBT) sites in Brooklyn- Sunset Park and Bushwick.
- 50 youth enrolled between the two sites starting in the Fall of 2017.
- Youth must be: Pregnant or parenting; School dropout; and otherwise disconnected

# Traditional OBT Model

- Traditional OBT model is a 20-week business-skills training-program which provides academic, vocational and soft-skills training, empowering disconnected youth to become self-sufficient with rewarding jobs and futures for a minimum of 15 hours a week and co-led by OBT and Department of Education (DOE) staff.
- Classroom courses help participants study for their HSE and provide close attention
- Vocational skills training in areas such as the Microsoft Office Specialist Certification (MOS) and/or National Retail Federation's (NRF) Professional Certification in Customer Service.
- Participants then receive internships with local employers
- Soft skills training and job shadowing also provided

# P3 Enhancements-Additional Year of Services

- Traditional WIOA Out-of-School Youth (OSY) services last one year.
- As part of the P3 project, they are allowed an extra year of OSY services, plus an additional year of follow-up.
- This additional year has led to additional support in obtaining their high school equivalency or diploma, work credentials and vocational training, and supportive services.
- Longer time-frame to complete their HSE and more personalized attention
- Many youth have received a second internship
- Additional support and planning for future beyond OBT, including greater attention to applying to local colleges or job applications



# P3 Enhancements-Child Care Navigator

- Personalized child care navigator at each OBT sites to assist participants not only place their children in childcare, but also assist them through the program.
- Each navigator has a caseload of 25- substantially lower than that of other OBT case managers, who have caseloads ranging from 40 to 60 youth-which include non-P3 youth.
- Navigators have placed participants' children at child care centers throughout Brooklyn for little to no cost for participants.
- Navigators also provide parenting classes, assistance in receiving additional support services from OBT partners, and personalized support

# P3 Enhancements-Waivers and Funding

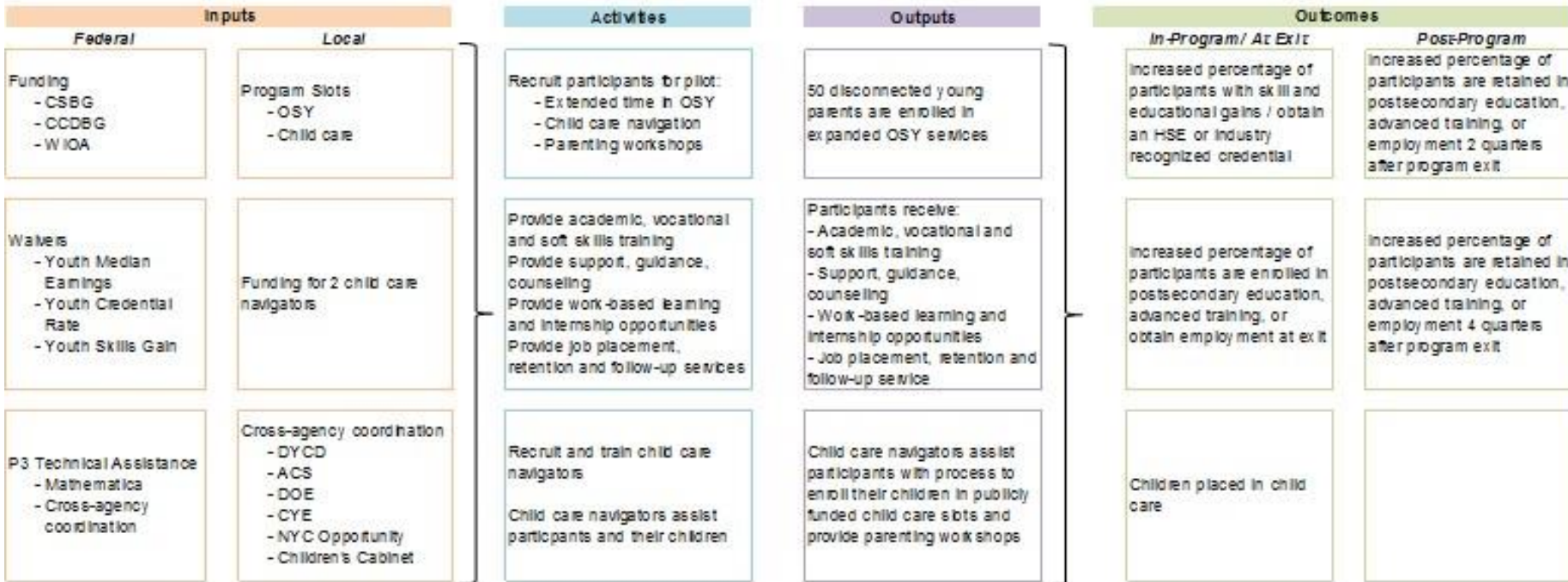
- P3 pilot braids several funding sources over three years:
  - WIOA- \$520,450 for training
  - Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)- \$534,700 for job placement
  - Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG)- \$911,190 for child care and parental support
  - Total- \$1,966,340
- Waivers on performance measures that will be tracked
  - Rather than reporting on regarding median earnings, credential rate, and skill gain, the pilot will report on: earning a high school credential or industry-recognized credential, employment after program exit, and skill gain

# P3 Logic Model

## NYC P3 Logic Model

**Situation:** Young parents are unable to access or stay in workforce development and education services because of lack of child care. Furthermore, those that are able to access high school equivalency (HSE) courses are unable to complete their equivalency in the one-year timeframe currently allotted through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Out of School Youth (OSY) program.

**Goal:** Improve education and employment outcomes for disconnected youth parents by piloting a service model to significantly improve the way New York City supports young parents moving through the City's OSY program.



**Assumptions**  
 Availability of child care slots      More time leads to improved outcomes

# Results Thus Far and Future Plans

- 52% of P3 participants have achieved their TASC diploma, which is higher than the NY State average pass rate
- 76% of P3 participants have achieved at least one occupational credential
- Urban will evaluate employment and educational outcomes of 50 P3 youth with 200 OSY youth who did not receive the enhancement in 2021

# Conclusions

- The problems facing opportunity youth are manifold and oftentimes lead to negative outcomes in various areas throughout their lifetimes
- In particular, opportunity youth who are young parents face additional difficulties which are oftentimes intergenerational
- There are many promising programs and initiatives to deal with these issues, but a national strategy currently does not exist
- Efforts to improve the outcomes of opportunity youth must include multifaceted efforts that not only tackle their disconnection to employment and education, but from other systems as a whole

# Presenter contact information

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Thank you!