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

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Public Cares Most about Equal Opportunity

**Poverty:**
“It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can’t take care of themselves.”

**Inequality:**
“Do you, yourself, think of America as divided into haves and have-nots, or don’t you think of America that way?”

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

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Note: Data from question 2 only available through 2011.
Intergenerational Mobility

Social mobility matrix: U.S. overall

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

More equality

Less equality
Understanding Mobility

• Why are some kids able to climb the ladder of opportunity while others can’t?
• And what could we do to improve the chances of the less advantaged to get out of poverty and achieve the American Dream?
• The Social Genome Model (Brookings, Urban Institute, Child Trends) is an attempt to answer these questions.
A Life Cycle View of Mobility

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

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

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

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

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

**Adulthood**
Reaches middle class (family income at least 300% of the poverty level)
Low-Income Children Falling Behind

- Born to poor family (family income < 200% FPL)
- Born to non-poor family (family income ≥ 200% FPL)

Percent meeting benchmark:

- Early childhood: 45%
- Middle childhood: 49%
- Adolescence: 38%
- Transition to adulthood: 44%
- Adulthood: 43%

Bar chart showing the percentage meeting benchmarks at different stages of life for children born to poor and non-poor families.
Middle Class by Middle Age?

- Blacks: 28%
- Bottom income quintile: 35%
- Hispanics: 44%
- Women: 52%
- ALL: 55%
- Men: 58%
- Whites: 63%
- Top income quintile: 71%
# Intervening Early and Often

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

SGM Target Population: Low-income children (family income < 200% FPL)
Success Rates by Stage by Income at Birth After Intervention at Multiple Stages for Kids Born Low-Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Low-Income (%)</th>
<th>Higher-Income (%)</th>
<th>Effect of Interventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early childhood</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle childhood</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>49%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescence</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early adulthood</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle age</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Summary of Results and Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Marginal Lifetime Income Effect</th>
<th>Cost Per Child</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIPPY (Age 3-5)</td>
<td>$43,371</td>
<td>$3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool (Age 3-5)</td>
<td>$45,651</td>
<td>$8,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFA and SEL (Age 6-11)</td>
<td>$47,594</td>
<td>$8,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talent Development (Age 14-18)</td>
<td>$68,574</td>
<td>$1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$205,189</td>
<td>$21,100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impacts on Racial Gaps

White-Black difference in success rate

- Early childhood
- Middle childhood
- Adolescence
- Early adulthood
- Middle age

Success rate
Conclusions

• U.S. poverty is high and social mobility low, especially in some communities and among low-income and Black children.
• Public more interested in providing opportunity than in redistributing income.
• We know how to improve the lives of low-income and minority children (the evidence-base exists)
• The problem is political will