



# A POPULATION-BASED ANALYSIS OF RACE/ETHNICITY, MATERNAL NATIVITY, AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AS RISK FACTORS FOR MALTREATMENT

October 3, 2012

CWDA

*Barbara Needell, PhD*

*Emily Putnam-Hornstein, PhD*

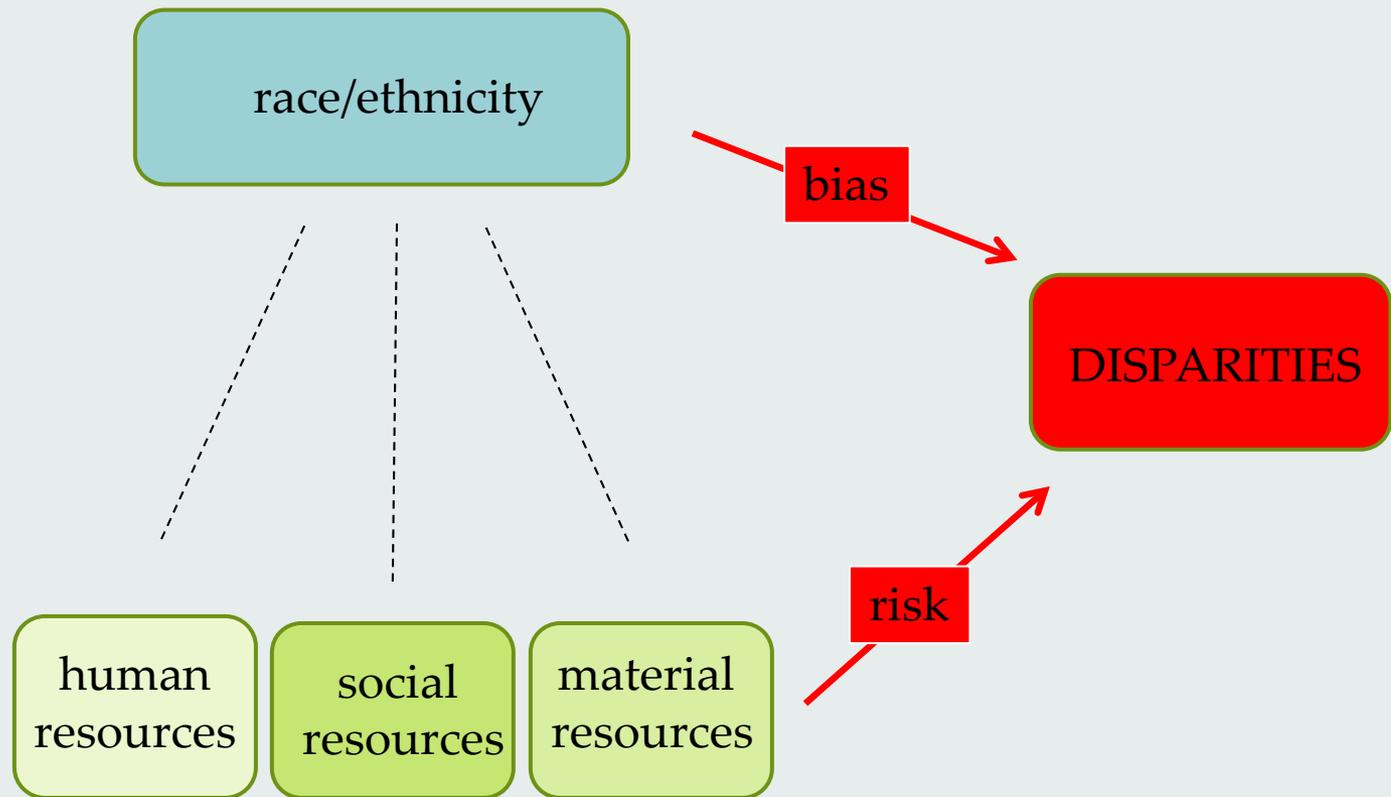
# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Thank you to our colleagues at the Center for Social Services Research and the California Department of Social Services
- Funding for this and other research arising from the California Performance Indicators Project generously provided by the California Department of Social Services, the Stuart Foundation, & Casey Family Programs

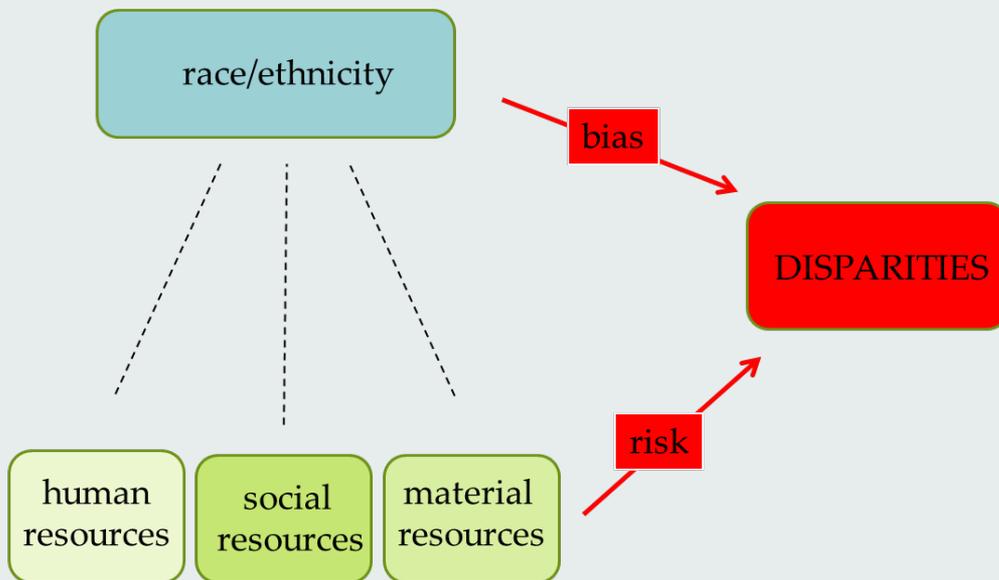
# DISPARITY DISCUSSIONS

- ✓ What? *(what defines disproportionality and disparity?)*
- ✓ Who? *(who is disproportionately represented?)*
- ✓ Where? *(where is disproportionality observed?)*
- ✓ When? *(when do disparities arise?)*
- ✓ How? *(how is disparity being addressed?)*
- ✓ Why? ***(why do disparities exist?)***

# WHY DO RACIAL DISPARITIES EXIST?



# WHY DOES IT MATTER?



- The relative contributions of bias versus differences in risk hold important implications for how and where we intervene to reduce/eliminate disparities...as well as what our expectations should be for identifiable improvements

*“Major factors affecting children’s entry into foster care included African American families’ higher rates of poverty, families’ difficulties in accessing support services so that they can provide a safe home for vulnerable children and prevent their removal, and racial bias and cultural misunderstanding among child welfare decision makers.” (GAO, 2007)*

# BACKGROUND

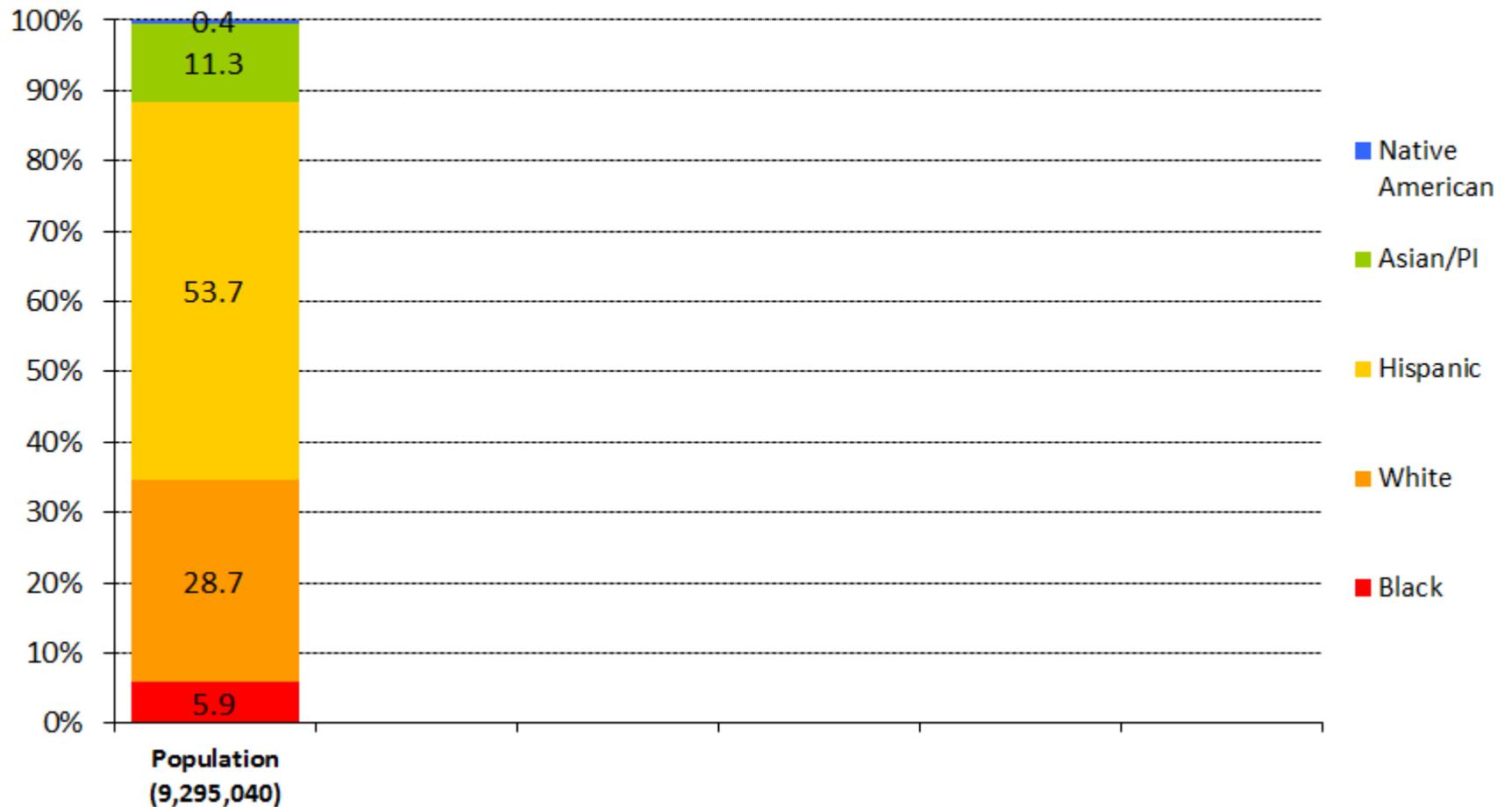
- Historically, racial disparities have been measured using aggregated data, capturing crude (or unadjusted) differences between racial groups
- Recent studies, however, highlight the importance of adjusting for individual and community-level factors correlated with both race and maltreatment risk and suggest that both reasons for poverty, and the impact of poverty, may vary across groups

# THE TYPICAL AGGREGATE RACIAL DISPARITY ANALYSIS

California,  
2011

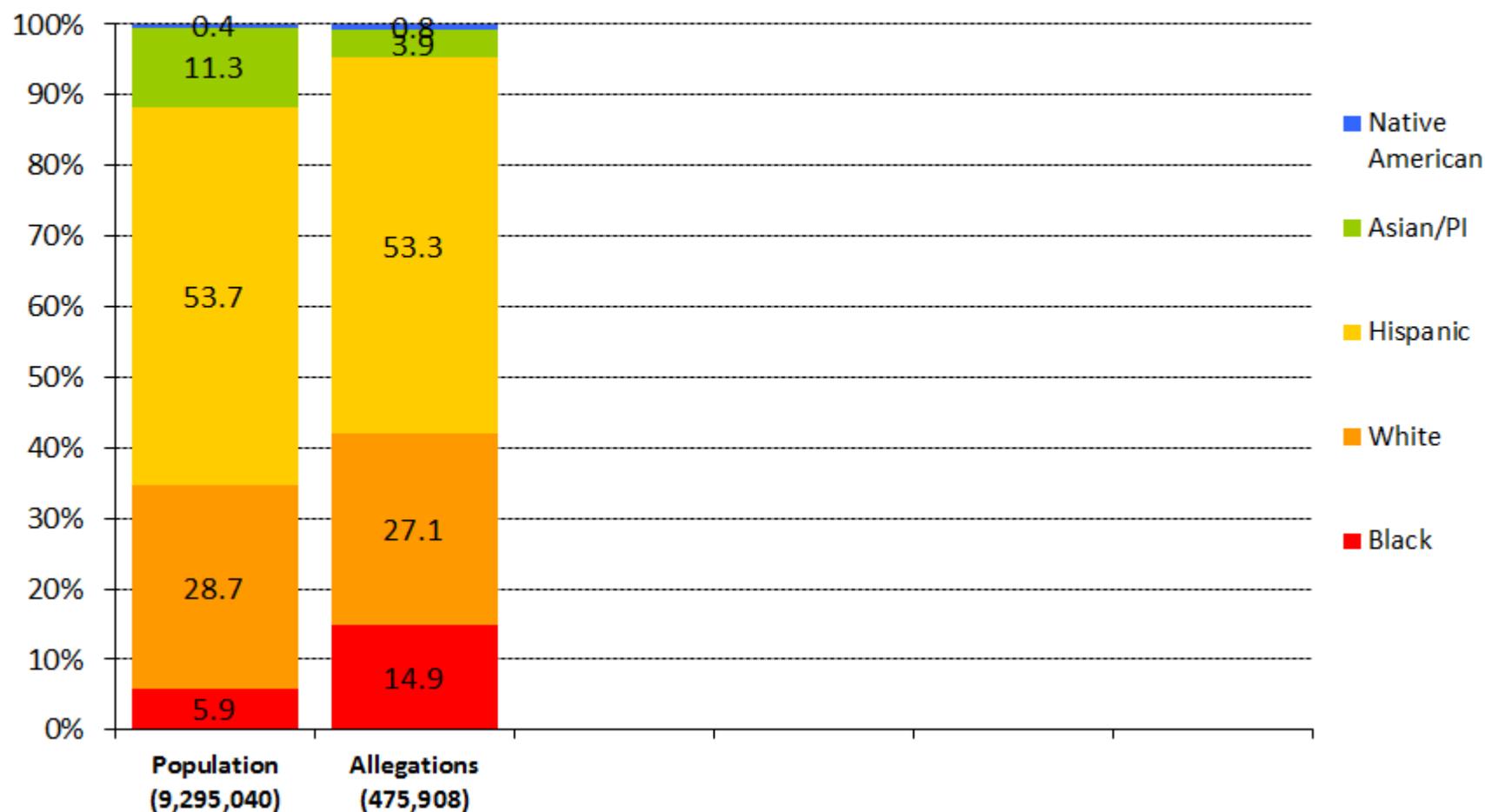
# California: Ethnicity and Path Through the Child Welfare System, 2011

*(missing values & other race excluded from % calculations)*



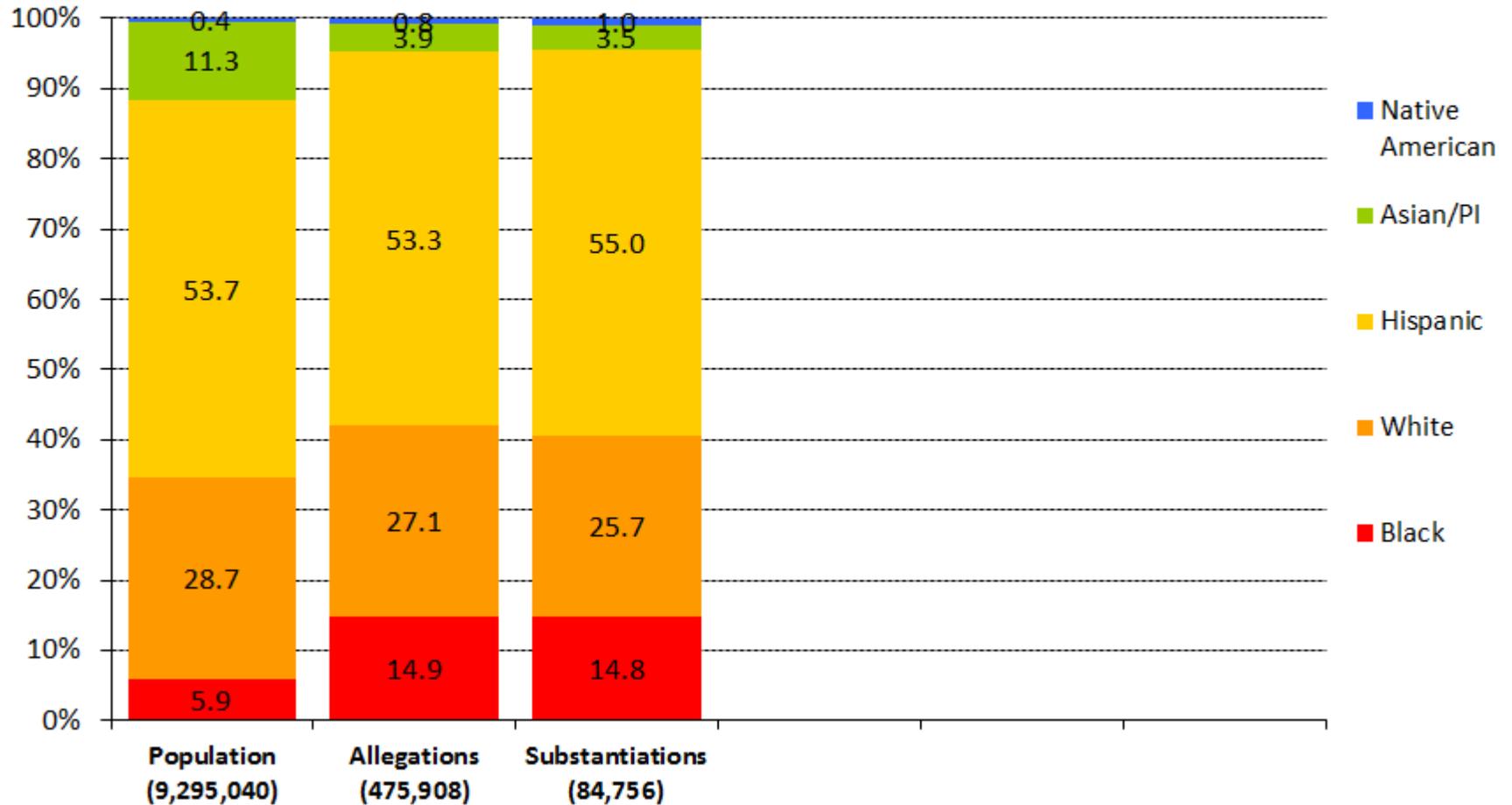
## California: Ethnicity and Path Through the Child Welfare System, 2011

*(missing values & other race excluded from % calculations)*



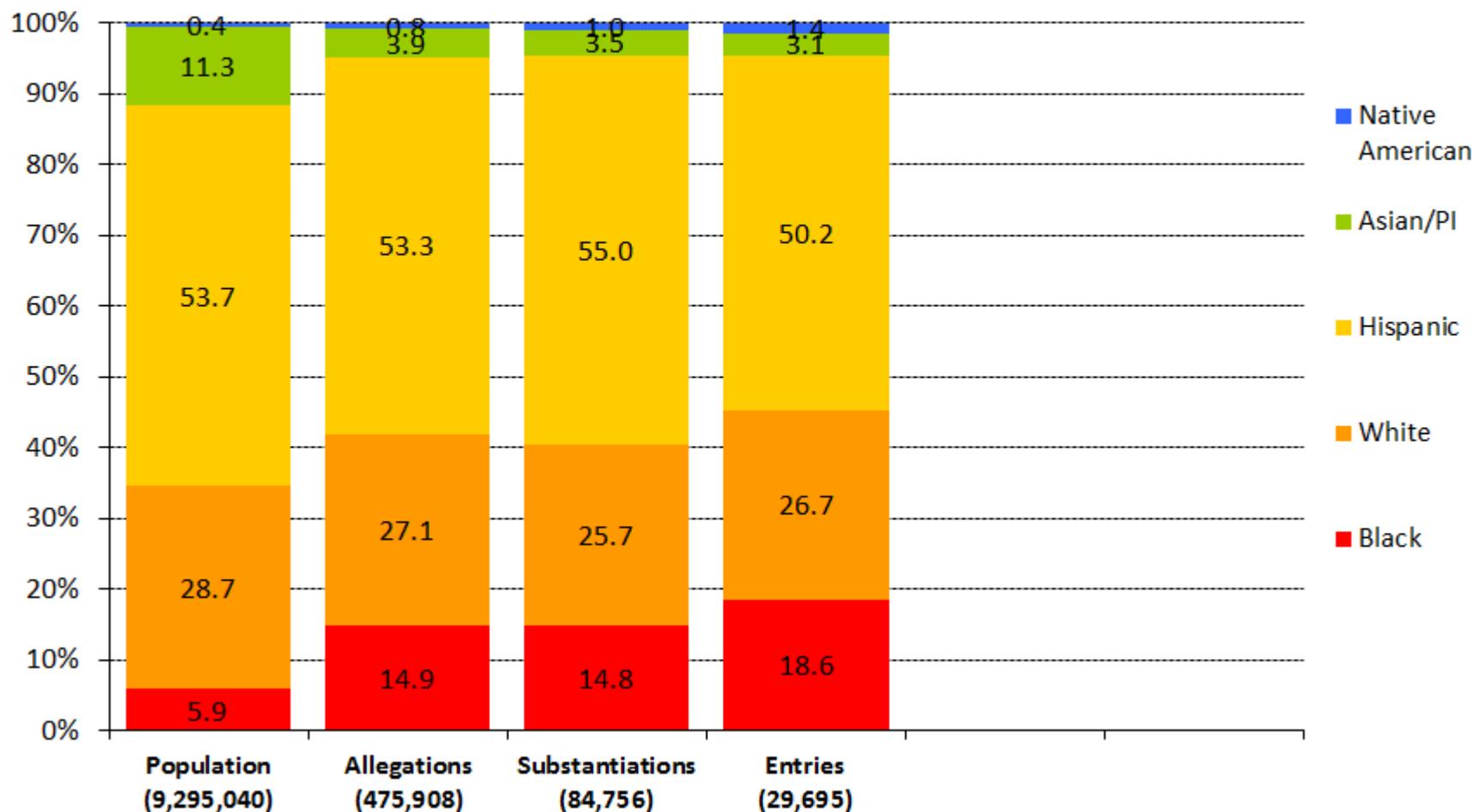
## California: Ethnicity and Path Through the Child Welfare System, 2011

*(missing values & other race excluded from % calculations)*



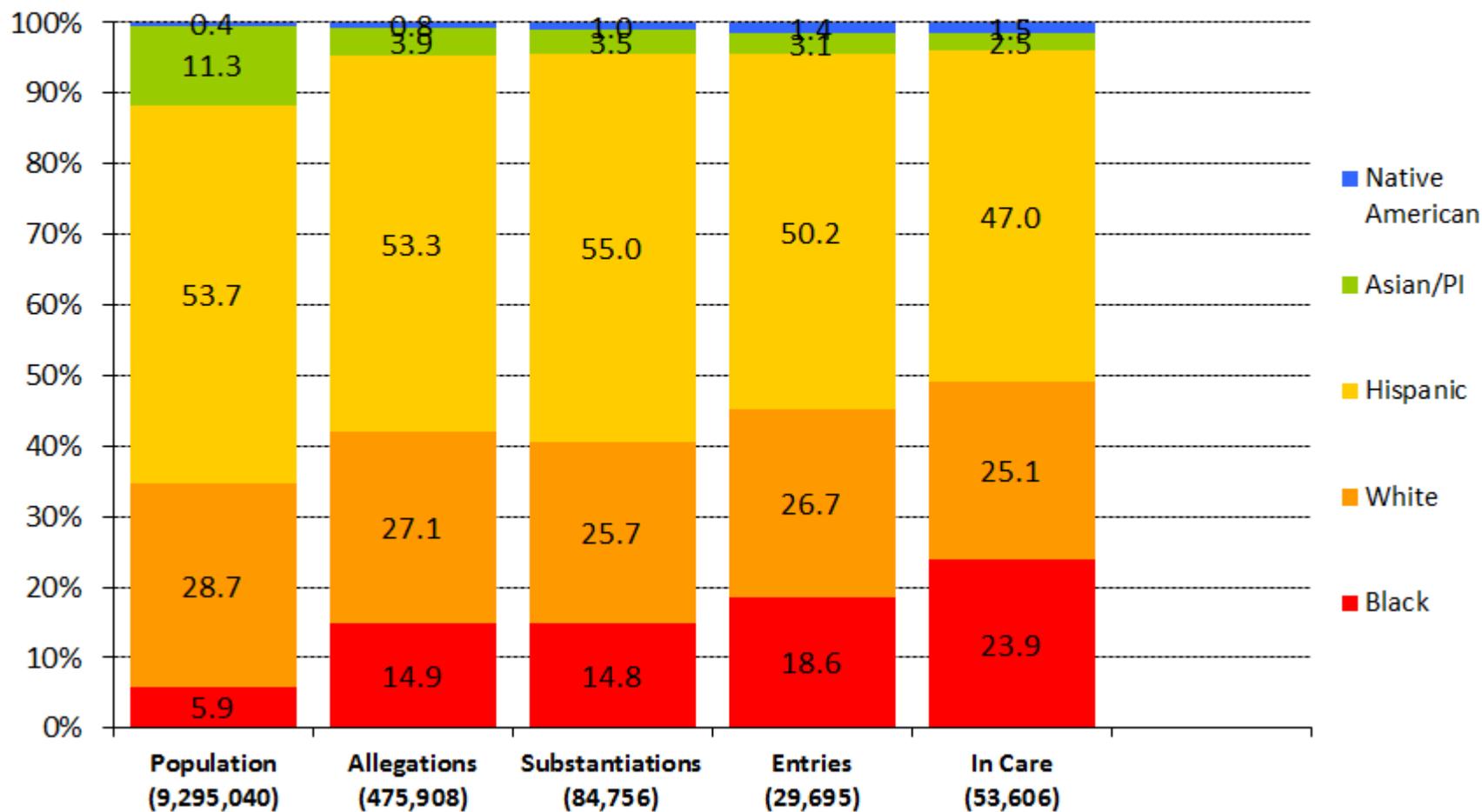
## California: Ethnicity and Path Through the Child Welfare System, 2011

*(missing values & other race excluded from % calculations)*



## California: Ethnicity and Path Through the Child Welfare System, 2011

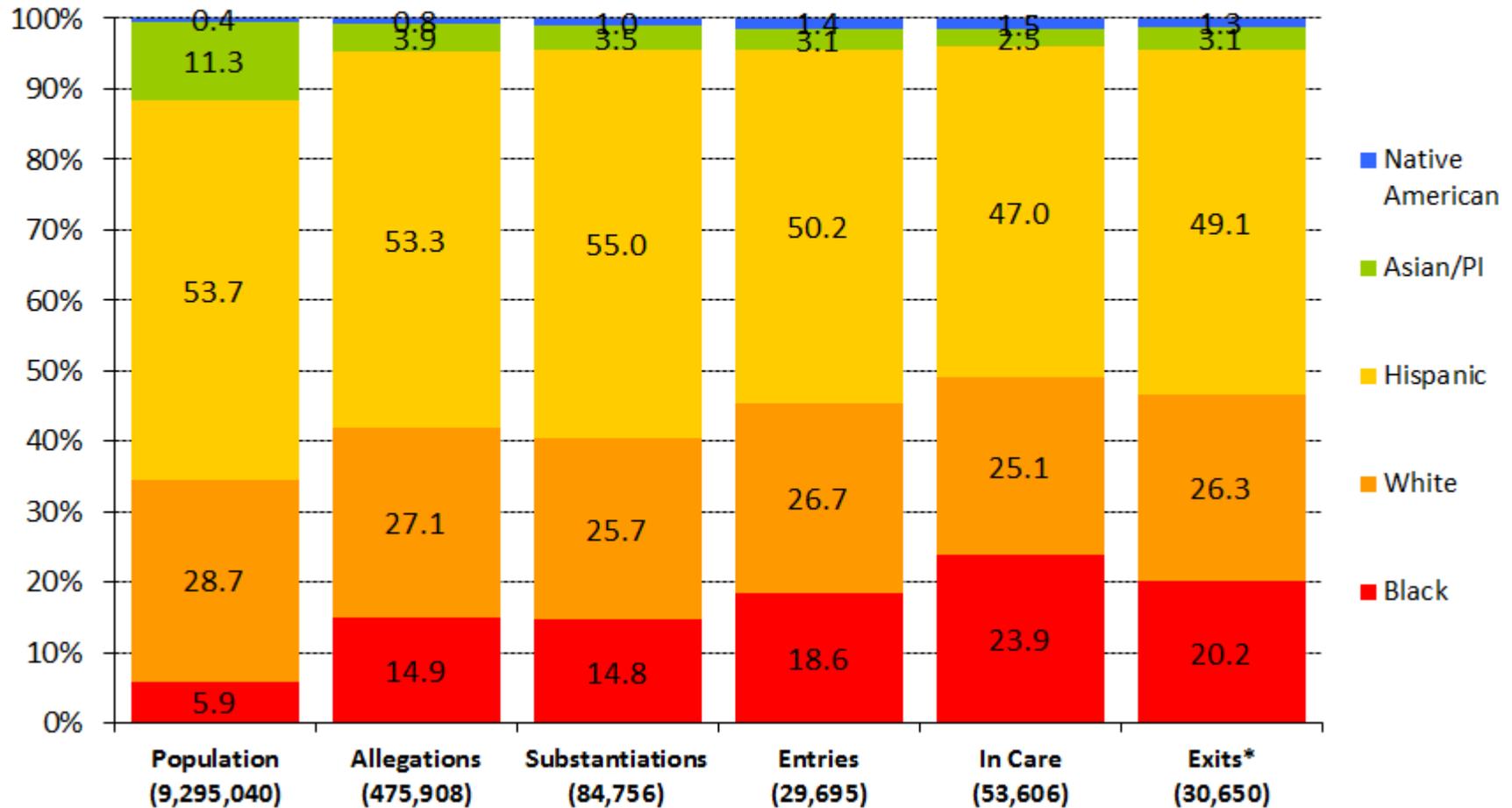
*(missing values & other race excluded from % calculations)*



# California: Ethnicity and Path Through the Child Welfare System, 2011

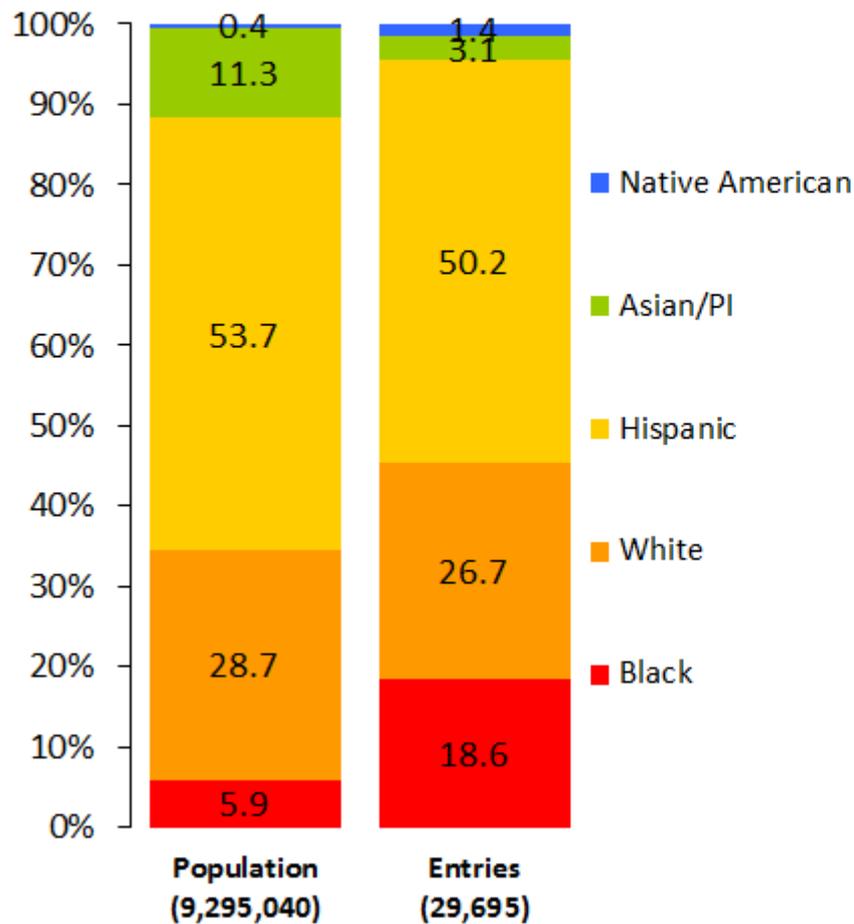
*(missing values & other race excluded from % calculations)*

*\*includes children age 18*



# California: General Population Disparity Index

*Entry Disparity (relative to overall population)*



*Black Disproportionality*

$$\frac{18.6\%}{5.9\%} = 3.15$$

*White Disproportionality*

$$\frac{26.7\%}{28.7\%} = 0.93$$

*Hispanic Disproportionality*

$$\frac{50.2\%}{53.7\%} = 0.94$$

***Black vs. White Disparity Index***

$$\frac{3.15}{0.93} = 3.39$$

***Black vs. Hispanic Disparity Index***

$$\frac{3.15}{0.94} = 3.36$$

# PROBLEMS WITH THIS APPROACH

- Aggregated data such as this do not tell us if there are individual differences in the likelihood of referral, substantiation, or entry to foster care among children of different races/ethnicities who have the same risk factors/risk profile
- *Why have we relied on aggregated data in our discussions of racial disparities?*
  - GOOD REASON: aggregate data summarize group over/under-representation (very real)
  - BAD REASON: we have not had better data to work with
    - Administrative CPS data do not allow for individual-level risk differences to be calculated because we do not have individual-level information for children in the population who DID not have contact with CPS
    - Also missing in the CPS data is information concerning well-established correlates of child maltreatment

# NEW RESEARCH FROM CALIFORNIA

- Putnam-Hornstein, E., Needell, B., King, B. & Johnson-Motoyama, M. (in press). Racial and Ethnic Disparities: A Population-Based Examination of Risk Factors for Involvement with Child Protective Services. Child Abuse and Neglect

# A “SNAPSHOT” OF CPS-INVOLVED CHILDREN

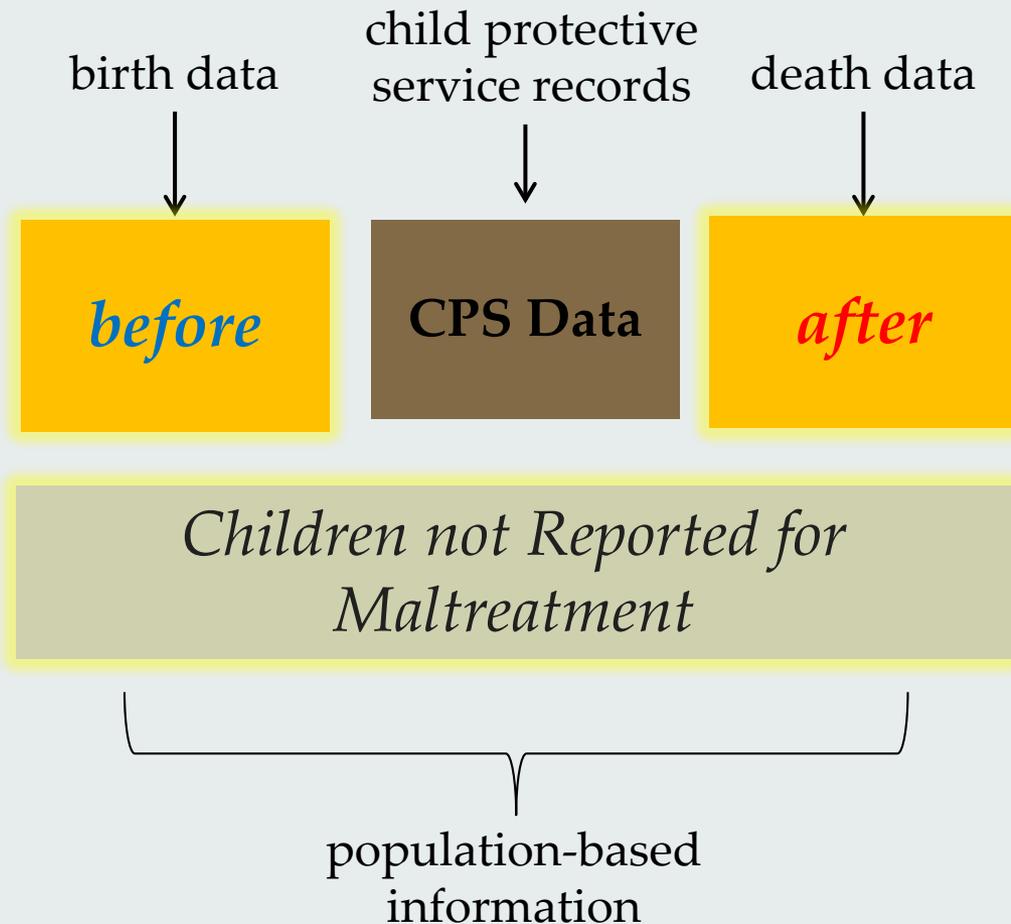
*before*

CPS Data

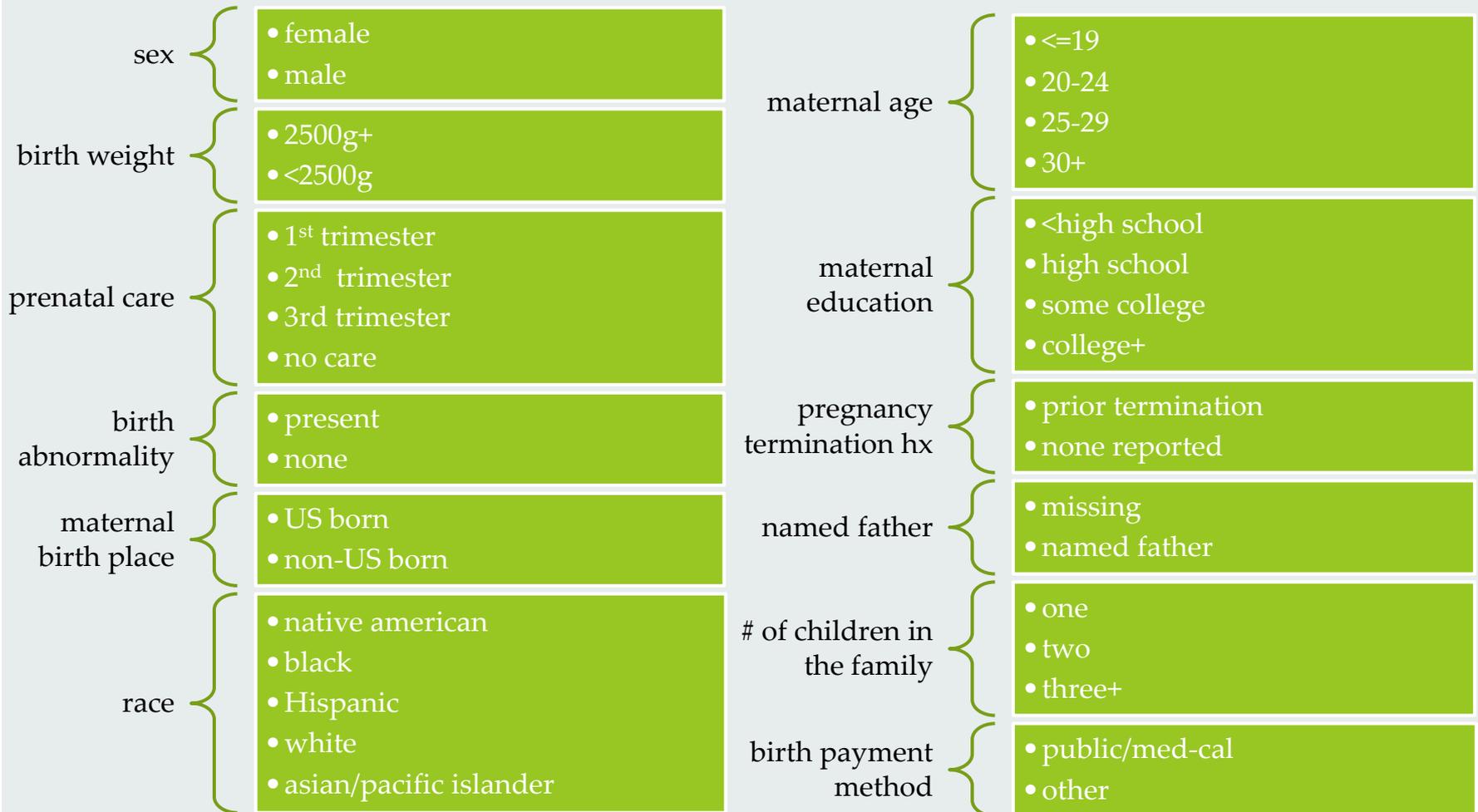
*after*

*Children not Reported for  
Maltreatment*

# EXPANDING CPS DATA WITH POPULATION-BASED DATA LINKAGES



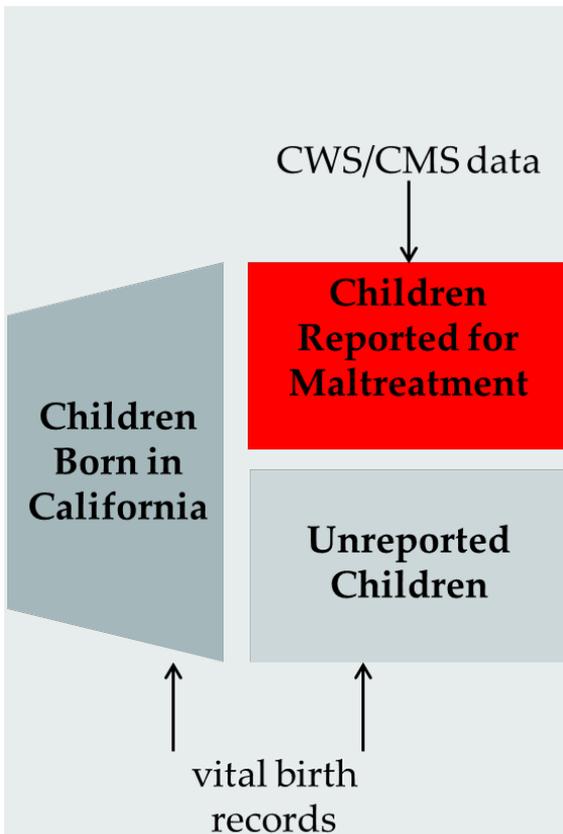
# BIRTH RECORD VARIABLES



# METHODS / APPROACH

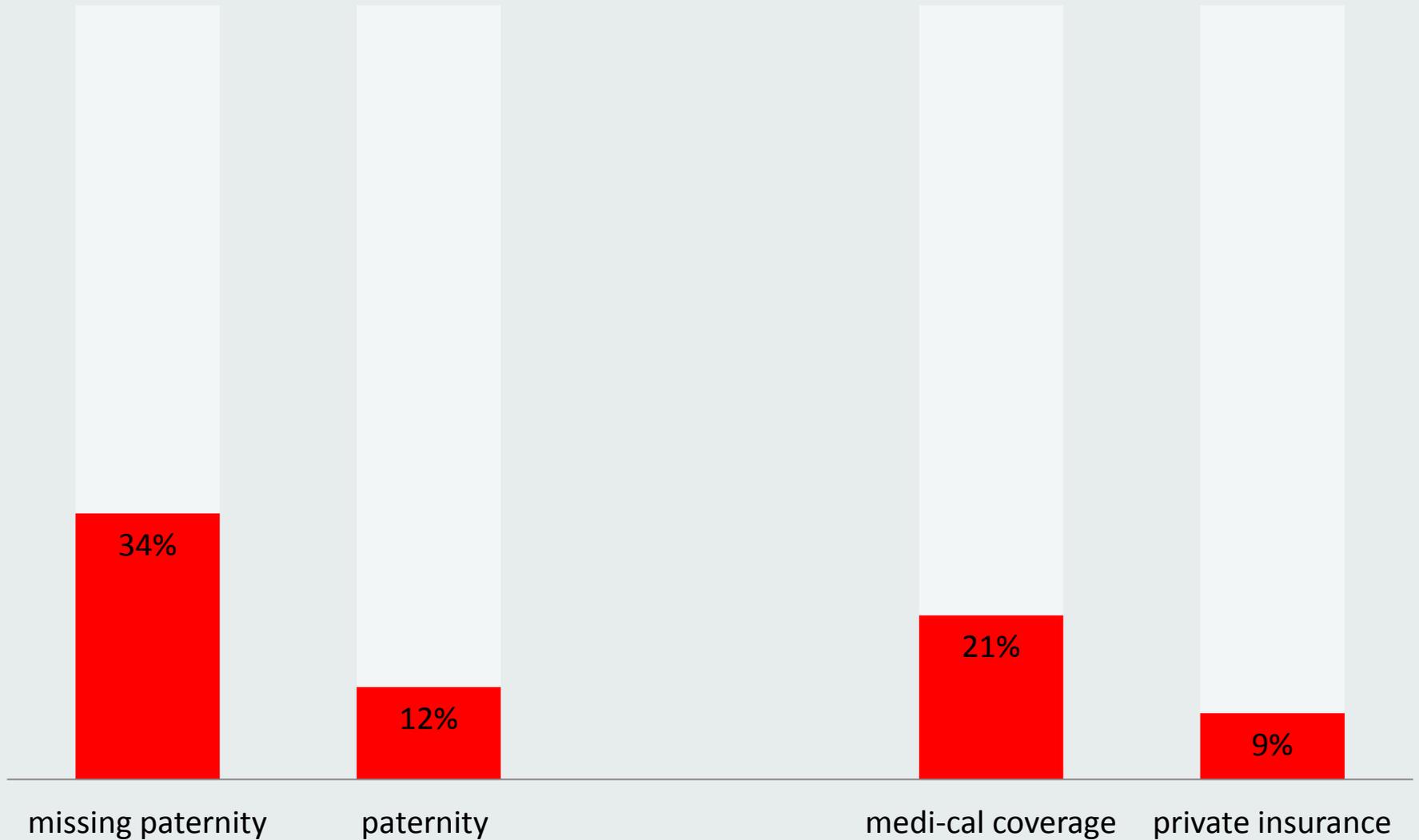
- Prospective analysis of full 2002 California birth cohort (N=531,035) from birth through the age of five
  - *Allows us to examine differences in risk of CPS contact by race/ethnicity, maternal nativity, and socioeconomic and health indicators*
  - *Allows us to examine risk factors associated with CPS contact*
- Modeled crude (unadjusted) rates of system contact by race/ethnicity
- Modeled adjusted rates of system contact to examine the independent effect of race/ethnicity when looking at children who have the same “profile” in terms of *sex, birth-weight, health, maternal age, paternity, birth order, maternal education, prenatal care*

# A FEW INTERESTING FINDINGS TO EMERGE...STARTING WITH RISK FACTORS FOR MALTREATMENT

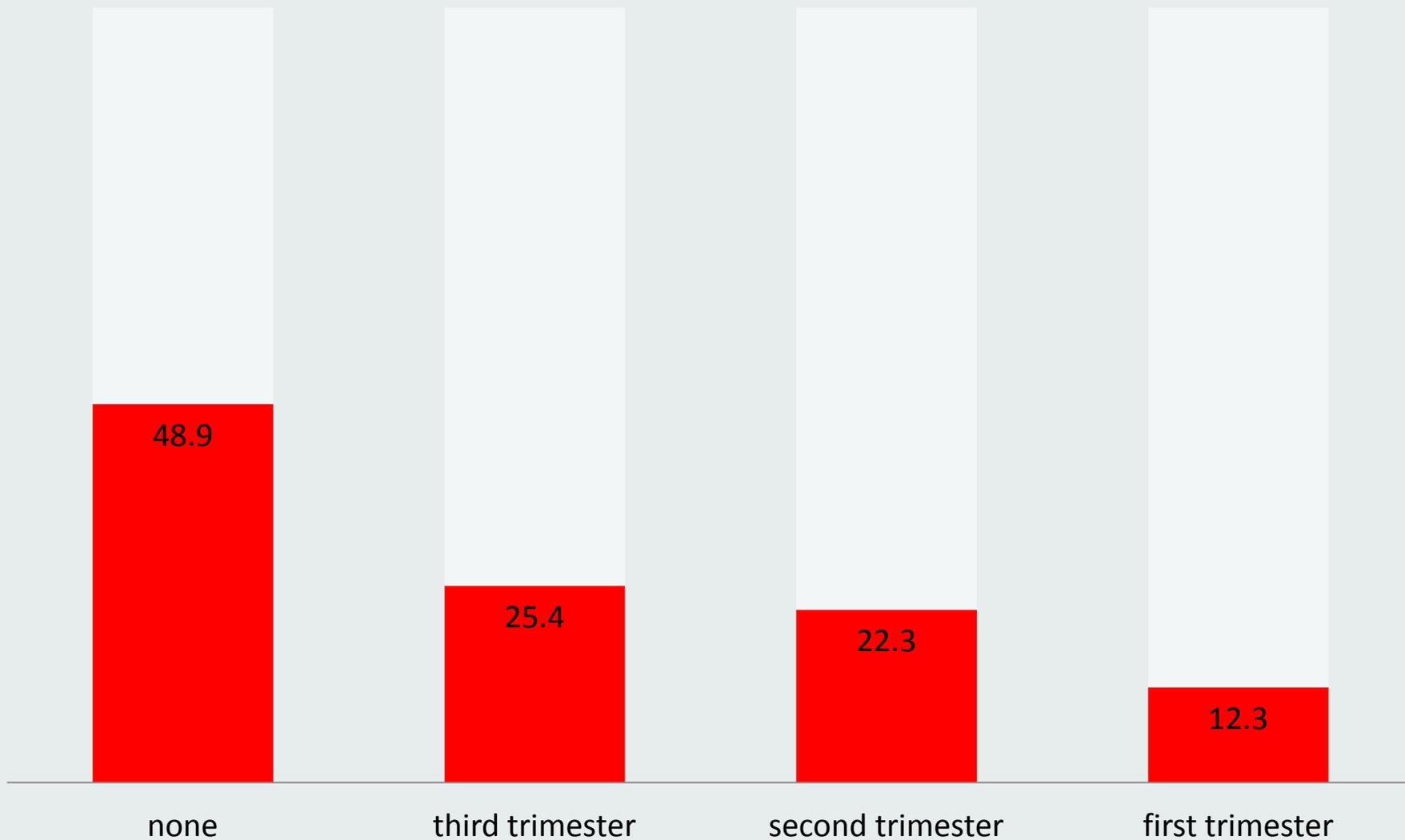


- 14% of children in cohort were reported to CPS by age 5
  - *lower bound estimate...could not match 16% of CPS records*
  - *children may have moved out of state and had contact*
- Significant variations in rates of CPS referrals by sociodemographic characteristics

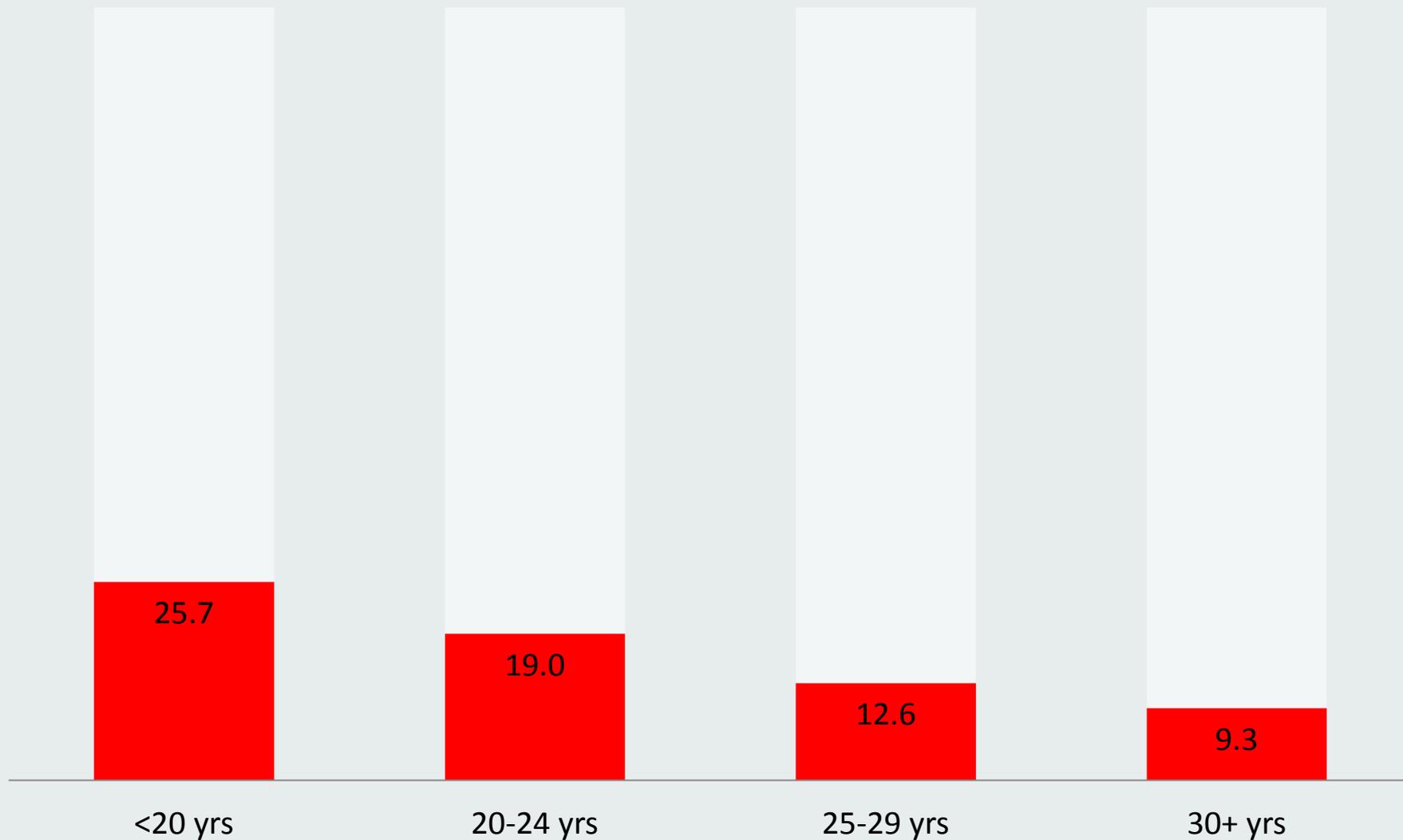
**Percentage of Children Reported for Maltreatment by Age 5:  
California's 2002 Birth Cohort, by paternity & birth payment**



**Percentage of Children Reported for Maltreatment by Age 5:  
California's 2002 Birth Cohort, by prenatal care**



**Percentage of Children Reported for Maltreatment by Age 5:  
California's 2002 Birth Cohort, by maternal age at birth**



THINKING ABOUT  
THESE RISK  
FACTORS...BEFORE  
GETTING TO RACE

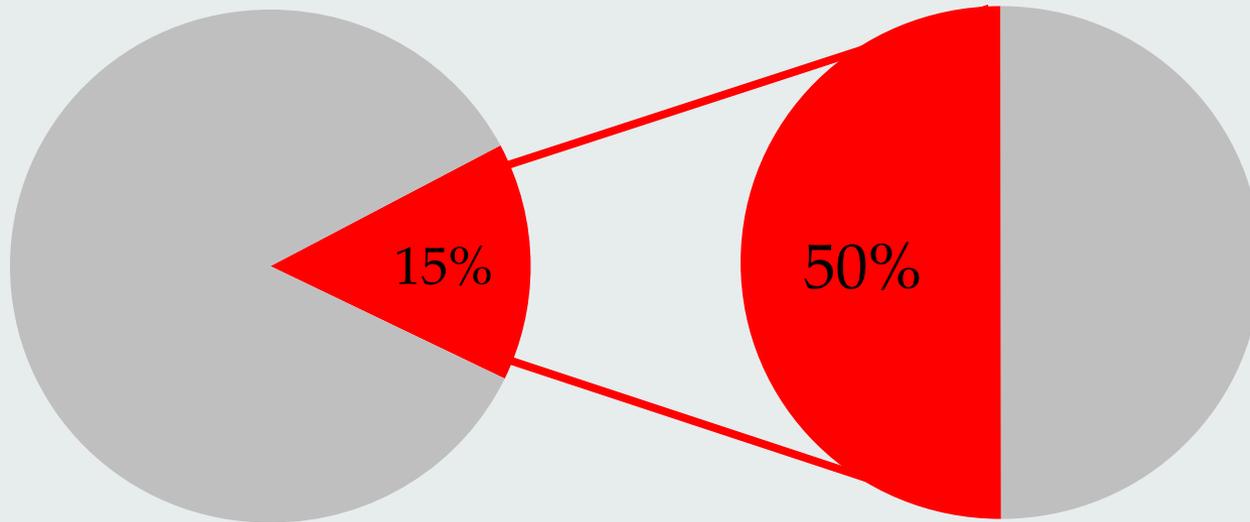
# AN EPIDEMIOLOGIC RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL?

- we classified as “high risk” any child with three or more of the following (theoretically modifiable) risk factors at birth:
  - *late prenatal care (after the first trimester)*
  - *missing paternity*
  - *<=high school degree*
  - *3+ children in the family*
  - *maternal age <=24 years*
  - *Medi-Cal birth for a US-born mother*

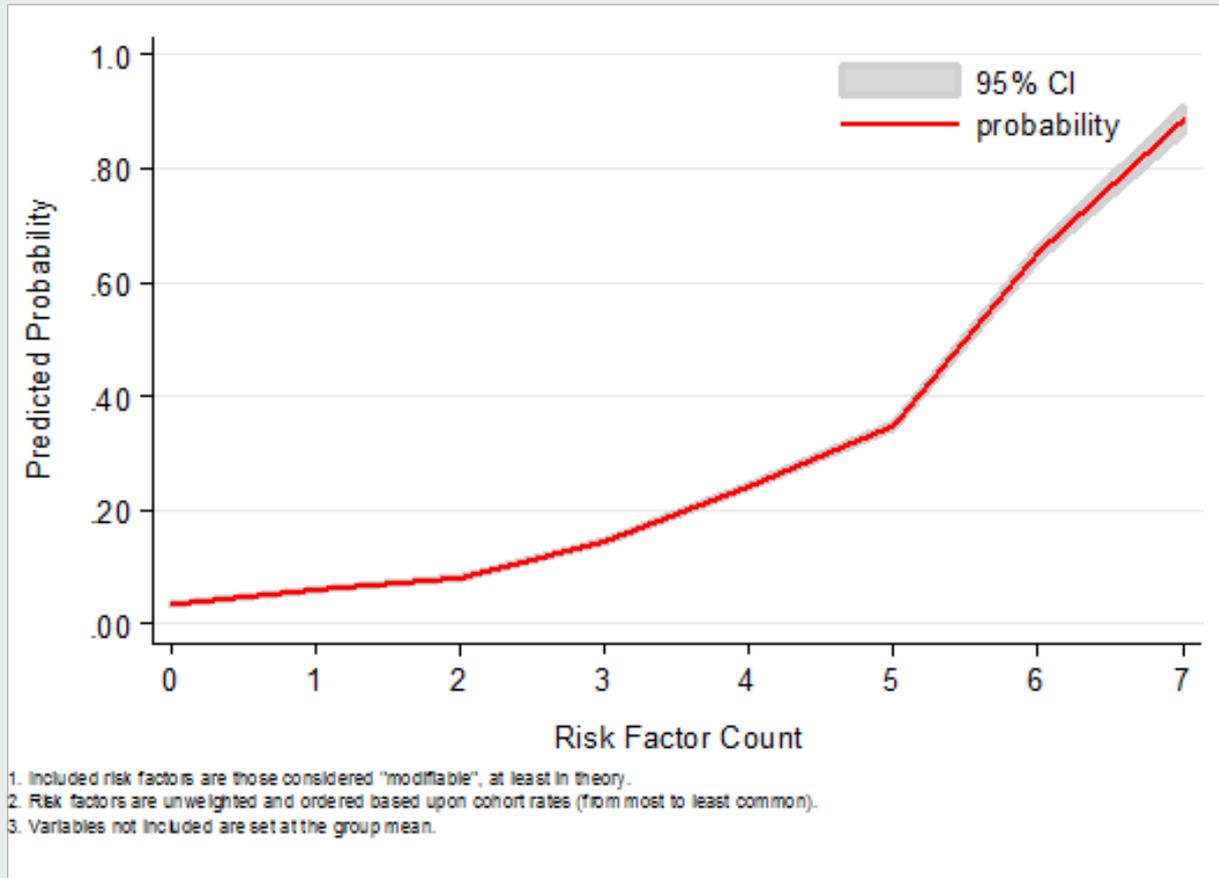
# ADMINISTERED AT BIRTH?

Full Birth Cohort

Children Reported to CPS



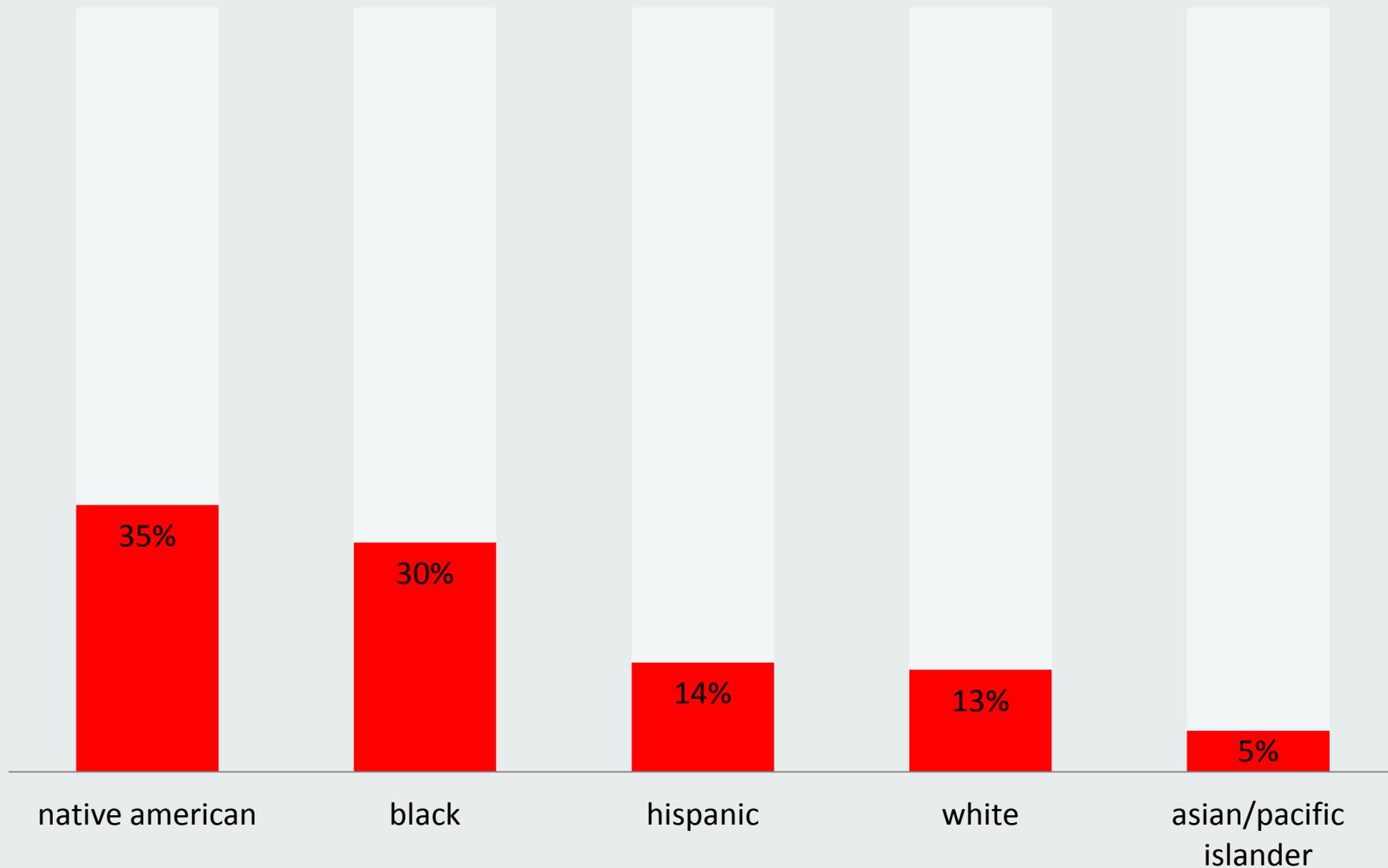
# RECOGNIZING THE RISK ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRESENCE OF MULTIPLE RISK FACTORS...



*High Risk on Every Modifiable Risk Factor: 89% probability of CPS report*  
*Low Risk on Every Modifiable Risk Factor: 3% probability of CPS report*

RETURNING TO  
RACE...

**Percentage of Children Reported for Maltreatment by Age 5:  
California's 2002 Birth Cohort, *by race/ethnicity***

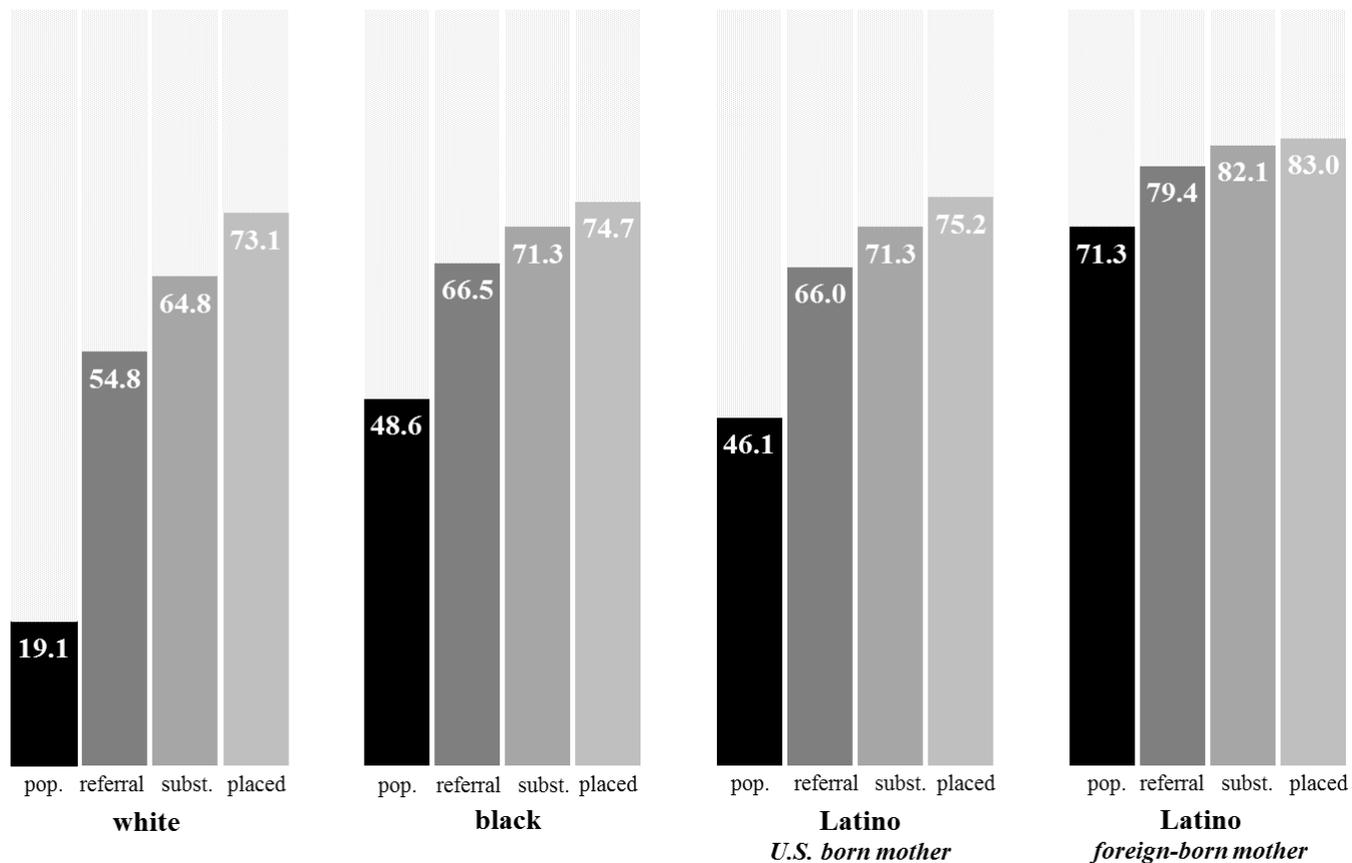


# RACIAL DISPARITIES AND CPS

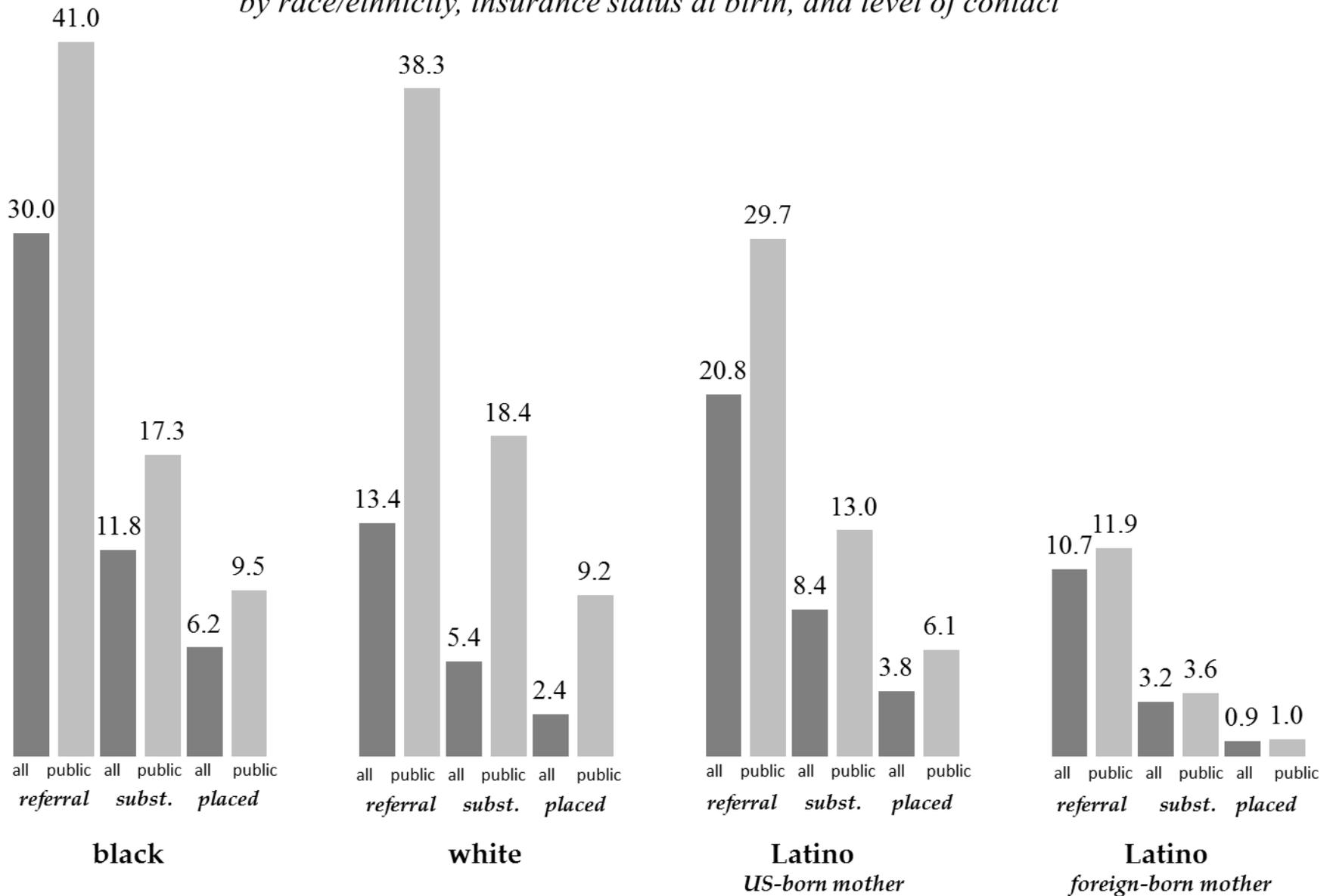
- Notable variations were observed in the distribution of cohort characteristics by racial/ethnic group, as well as maternal nativity
  - e.g. black vs. white: <HS degree (16% vs. 7%)
- Pronounced racial/ethnic heterogeneity in parenting risk burdens in the overall cohort (population), yet a much more consistent picture emerged among the publicly insured
  - black vs. white: <HS degree (25% vs. 25%)

# WHY FOCUS ON CHILDREN COVERED BY MEDI-CAL?

Percent of Birth Cohort Covered by Public Insurance at Birth  
*by Race/Ethnicity and CPS Contact*



Percent of Birth Cohort with CPS Contact before age 5  
by race/ethnicity, insurance status at birth, and level of contact

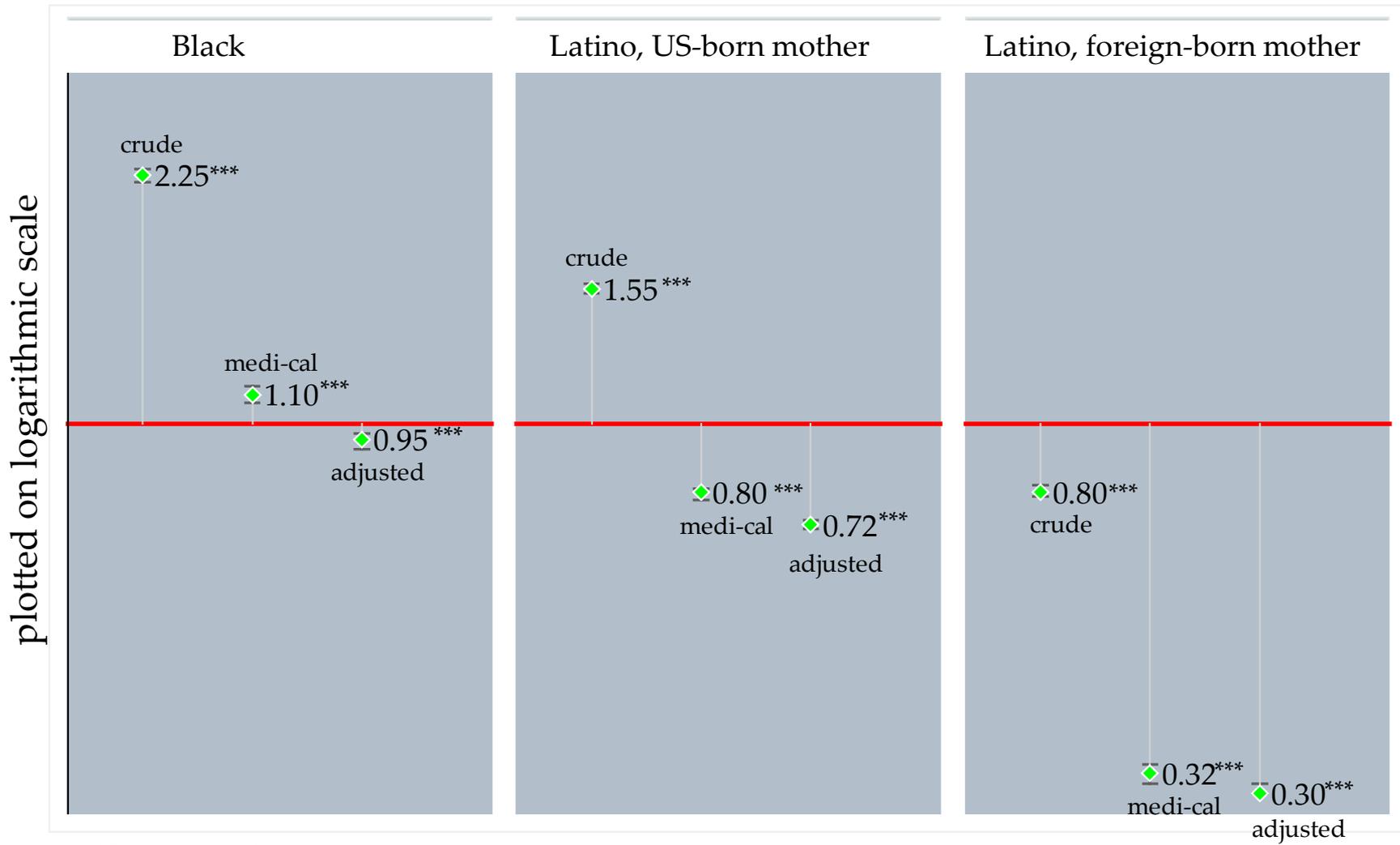


# APPROACH

- Examined aggregate (crude) racial disparities in the overall birth cohort
- Examined racial disparities among children covered by public health insurance at birth
  - *large and fairly racially invariant share of children covered by public insurance across CPS contact points*
  - *implications of this coverage for surveillance and contact with mandated reporters*
- Examined racial disparities among children covered by public health insurance at birth, *with adjustments for other risk factors earlier shown to be predictive of CPS involvement*

# Risk of Being Reported for Maltreatment by Age 5 (vs White)

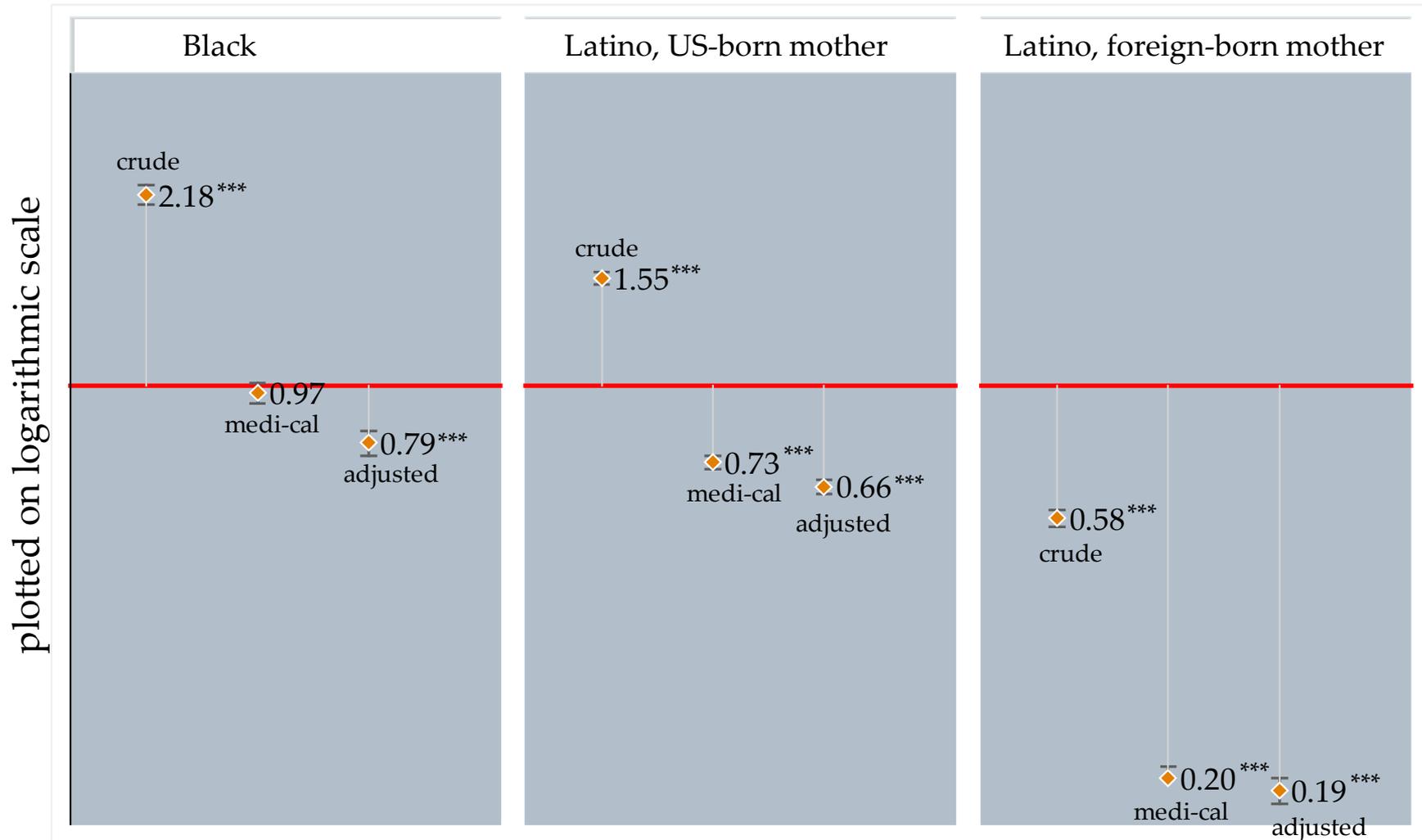
◆ RR    |——| 95% Confidence Interval



\* < .05    \*\* < .01    \*\*\* < .001

# Risk of Substantiated Maltreatment by Age 5 (vs White)

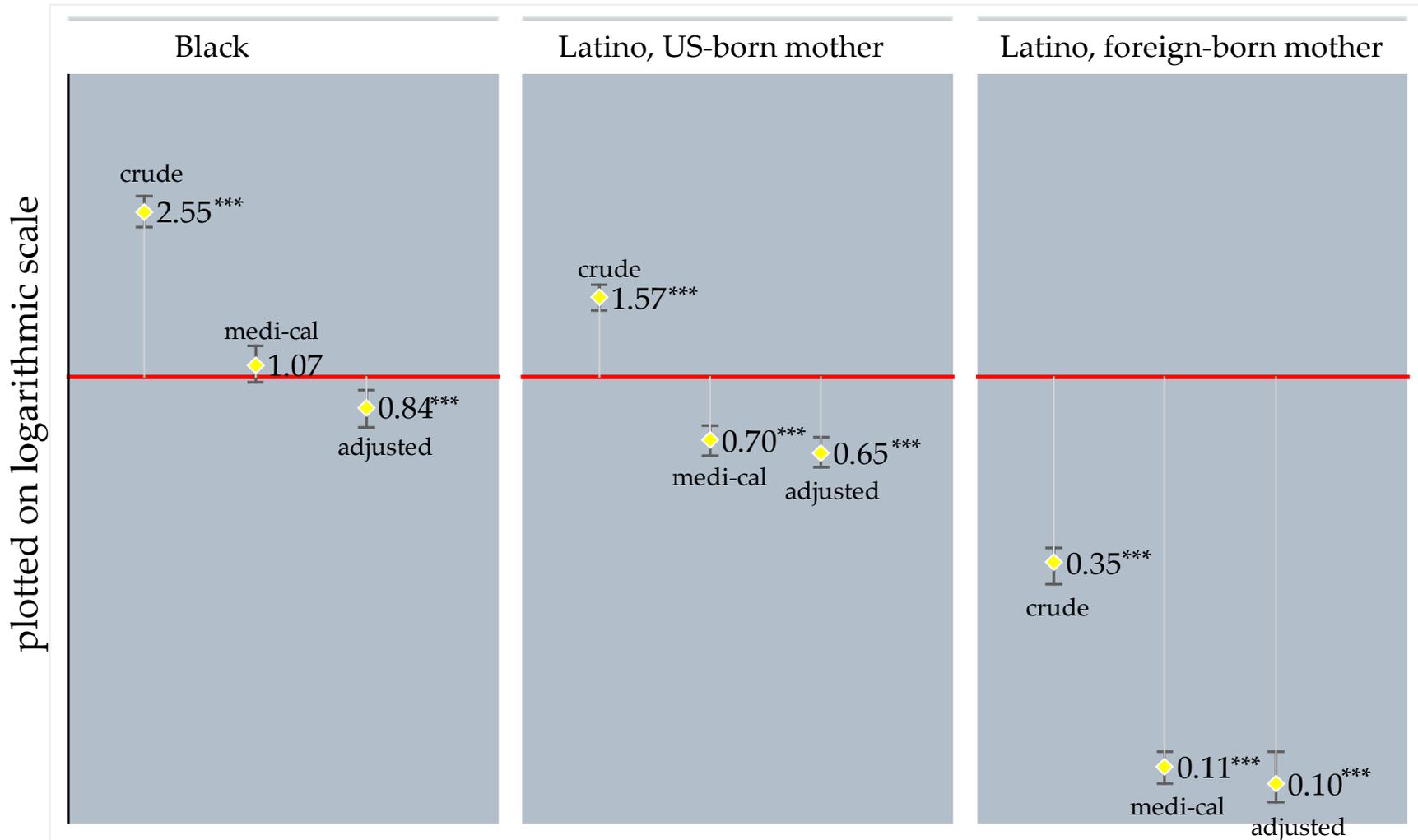
◆ RR    ┆──┆ 95% Confidence Interval



\* < .05    \*\* < .01    \*\*\* < .001

# Risk of Foster Care Placement by Age 5 (vs White)

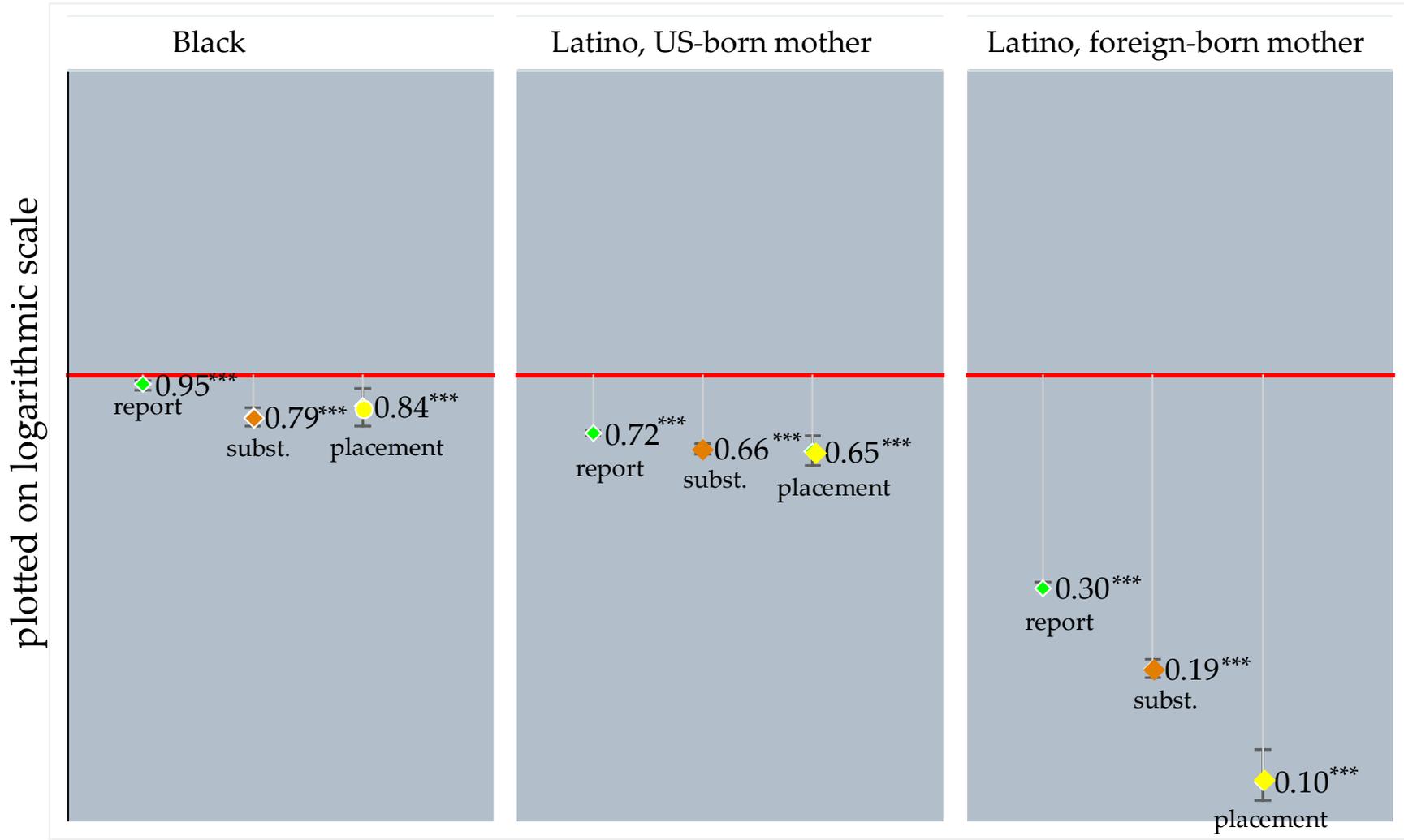
◆ RR    |——| 95% Confidence Interval



\* < .05    \*\* < .01    \*\*\* < .001

# Risk of Report, Substantiation, and Foster Care Placement by Age 5 (vs White)

◆ RR    |——| 95% Confidence Interval



\* < .05    \*\* < .01    \*\*\* < .001

# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Cumulative rates of child welfare contact by age 5 vary dramatically across racial/ethnic groups, as does the prevalence of other risk factors
- Summary statistics indicating large black/white racial disparities mask significant covariate effects
- The Latino population of children in California consists of at least two distinct subsets, differentially impacted by poverty and with different risks of child welfare contact

# IMPLICATIONS?

- This (*and other*) recent studies suggest that once we are able to adjust for socioeconomic differences and the cumulative impact of other risk factors, racial disparities continue to emerge, but often not in the manner once thought!
  - low SES white children MORE likely than low SES black children to be referred, substantiated, and enter foster care
  - differential sorting by poverty (as suggested by Drake)?
- Aggregate racial disparities are very real and must be addressed. These disparities almost certainly arise from some combination of risk factors, bias, and access issues.

# IMPLICATIONS (PART 2)

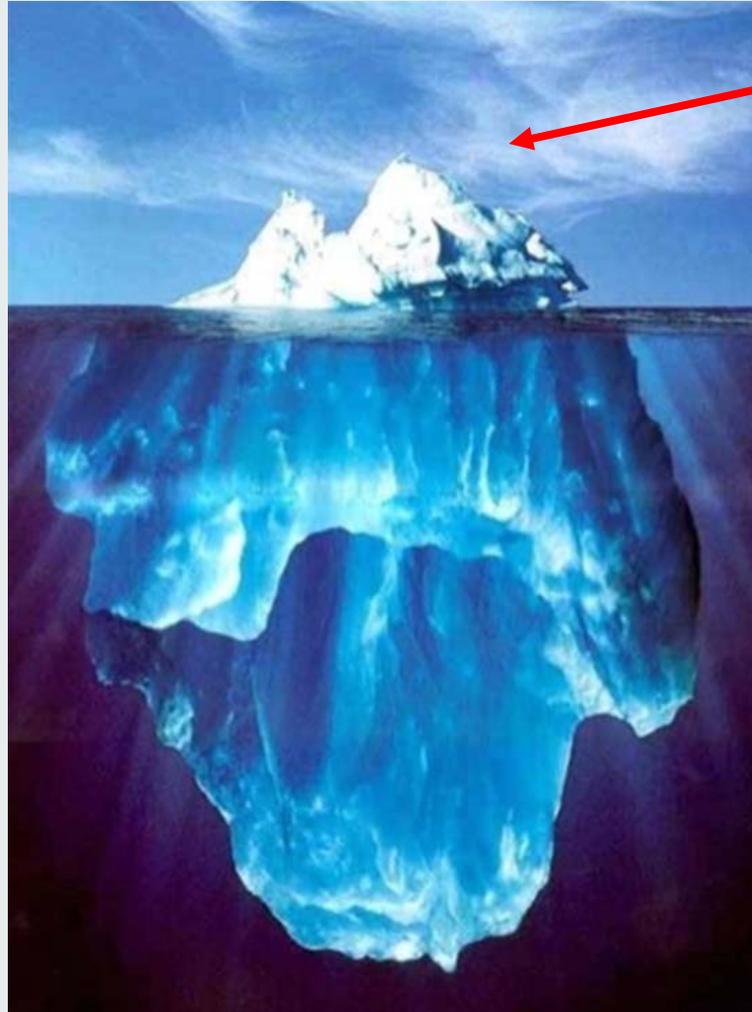
- The CPS system has focused heavily on reducing individual-level bias/increasing cultural understanding – both of which are very important.
- BUT the population-based data used in this study suggest that the risk of referral, substantiation, and entry to foster care for individual children varies much more so based on the presence of multiple risk factors at birth and the socioeconomic conditions in which they are born rather than race/ethnicity.
- To really “move the needle” to reduce racial/ethnic disparities, we need to not only continue to address individual-level bias, but we must also engage other systems to address entrenched differences in parenting burdens that place certain groups of children at disproportionate risk of CPS involvement.

# LIMITATIONS

- These data do not
  - Examine racial disparities for CPS involvement among older children
  - Explore racial disparities in services and outcomes once children are in the system
  - Examine possible variations by county in these dynamics
  - Indicate that there is no racial bias
  - Indicate that there is racial bias
  - Speak to the iceberg question...

# THE ICEBERG

Maltreated children *not* known to child protective services



Maltreated children known to child protective services

# POVERTY DATA

- 2010 estimates of the population of children (ages 0-17) living in poverty by race/ethnicity
- Using the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 2006-2010 five-year Estimates, poverty multipliers were calculated by race/ethnicity for California and each of its 58 counties
- These multipliers were then applied to California population data from the 2010 U.S. Census  
[http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare/population.aspx](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/population.aspx)

# WHY ARE PEOPLE POOR? \*

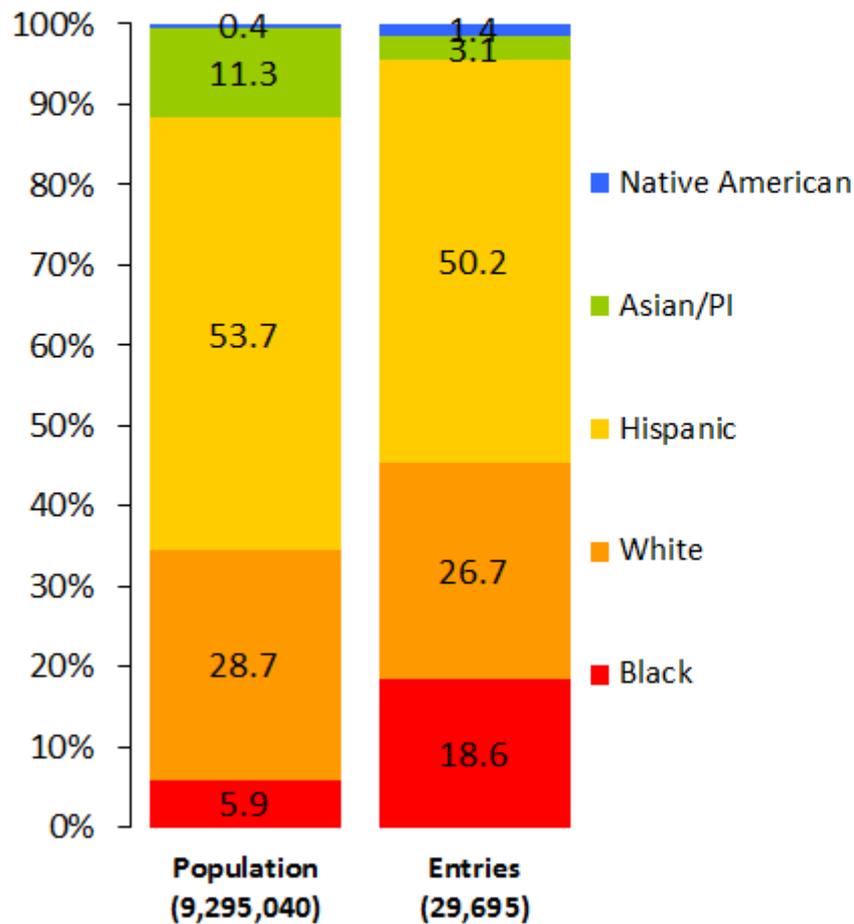
## 2006-2010 Estimates of CA Children in Poverty

- Black 29%
- White 9%
- Hispanic 26%
- Asian/PI 12%
- Native American 27%

\* <http://www.pisab.org/>

# California: General Population Disparity Index

*Entry Disparity (relative to overall population)*



*Black Disproportionality*

$$\frac{18.6\%}{5.9\%} = 3.15$$

*White Disproportionality*

$$\frac{26.7\%}{28.7\%} = 0.93$$

*Hispanic Disproportionality*

$$\frac{50.2\%}{53.7\%} = 0.94$$

***Black vs. White Disparity Index***

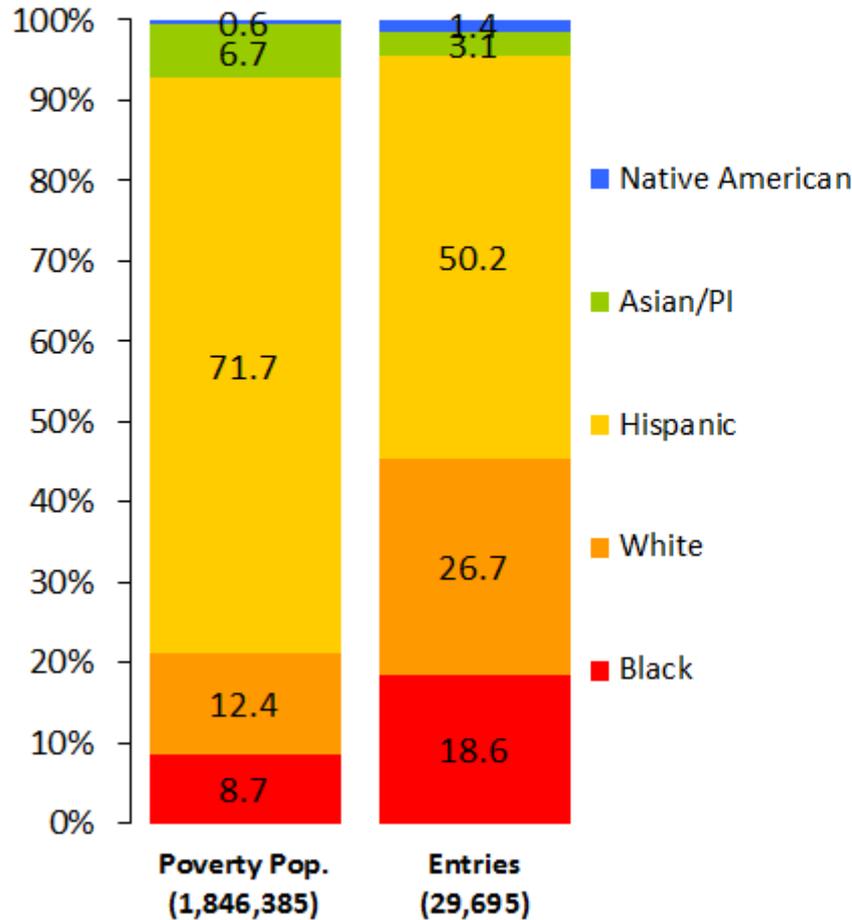
$$\frac{3.15}{0.93} = 3.39$$

***Black vs. Hispanic Disparity Index***

$$\frac{3.15}{0.94} = 3.36$$

# California: Population in Poverty Disparity Index

*Entry Disparity (relative to overall population)*



*Black Disproportionality*

$$\frac{18.6\%}{8.7\%} = 2.15$$

*White Disproportionality*

$$\frac{26.7\%}{12.4\%} = 2.16$$

*Hispanic Disproportionality*

$$\frac{50.2\%}{71.7\%} = 0.70$$

***Black vs. White Disparity Index***

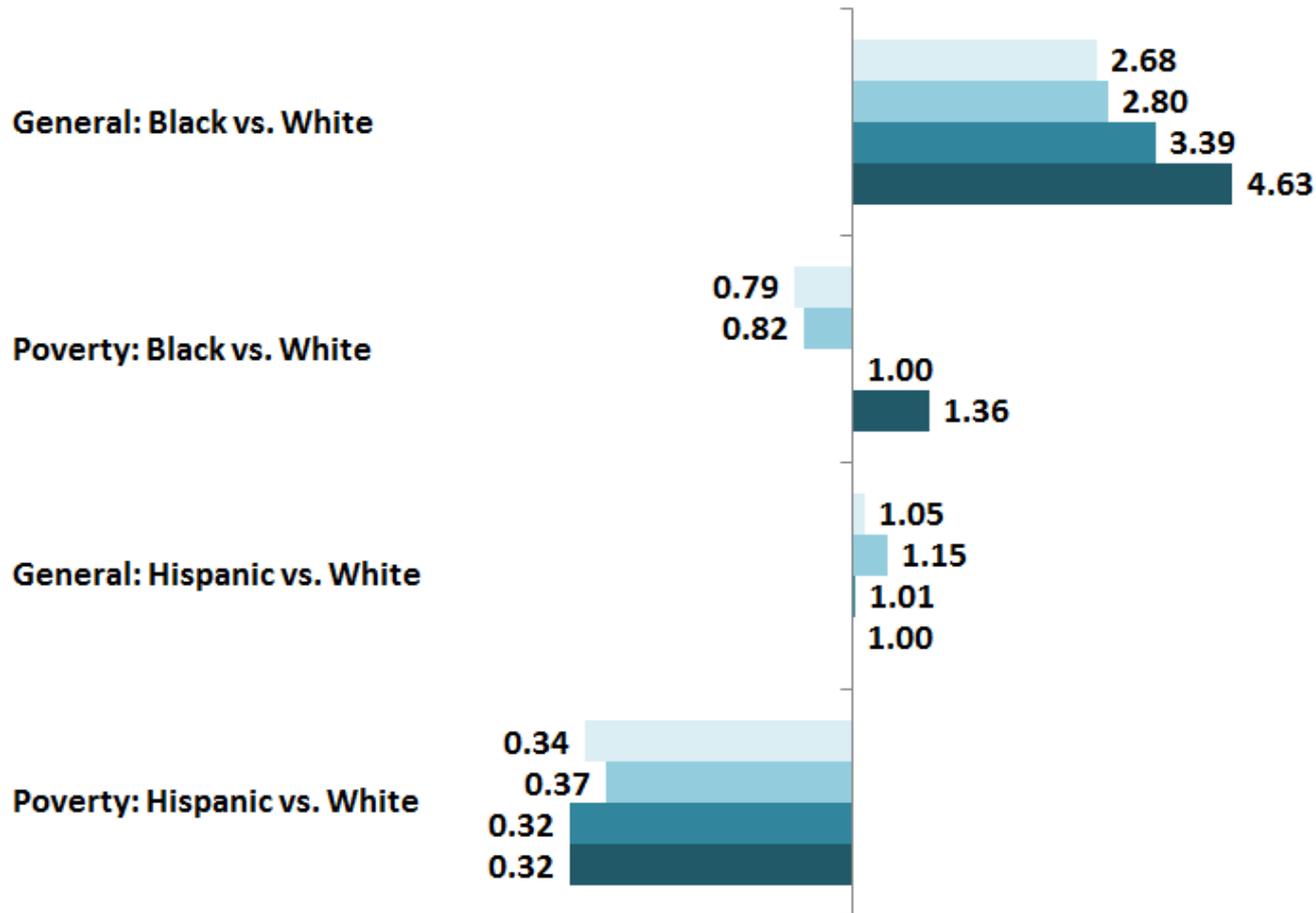
$$\frac{2.15}{2.16} = 1.00$$

***Black vs. Hispanic Disparity Index***

$$\frac{2.15}{0.70} = 3.06$$

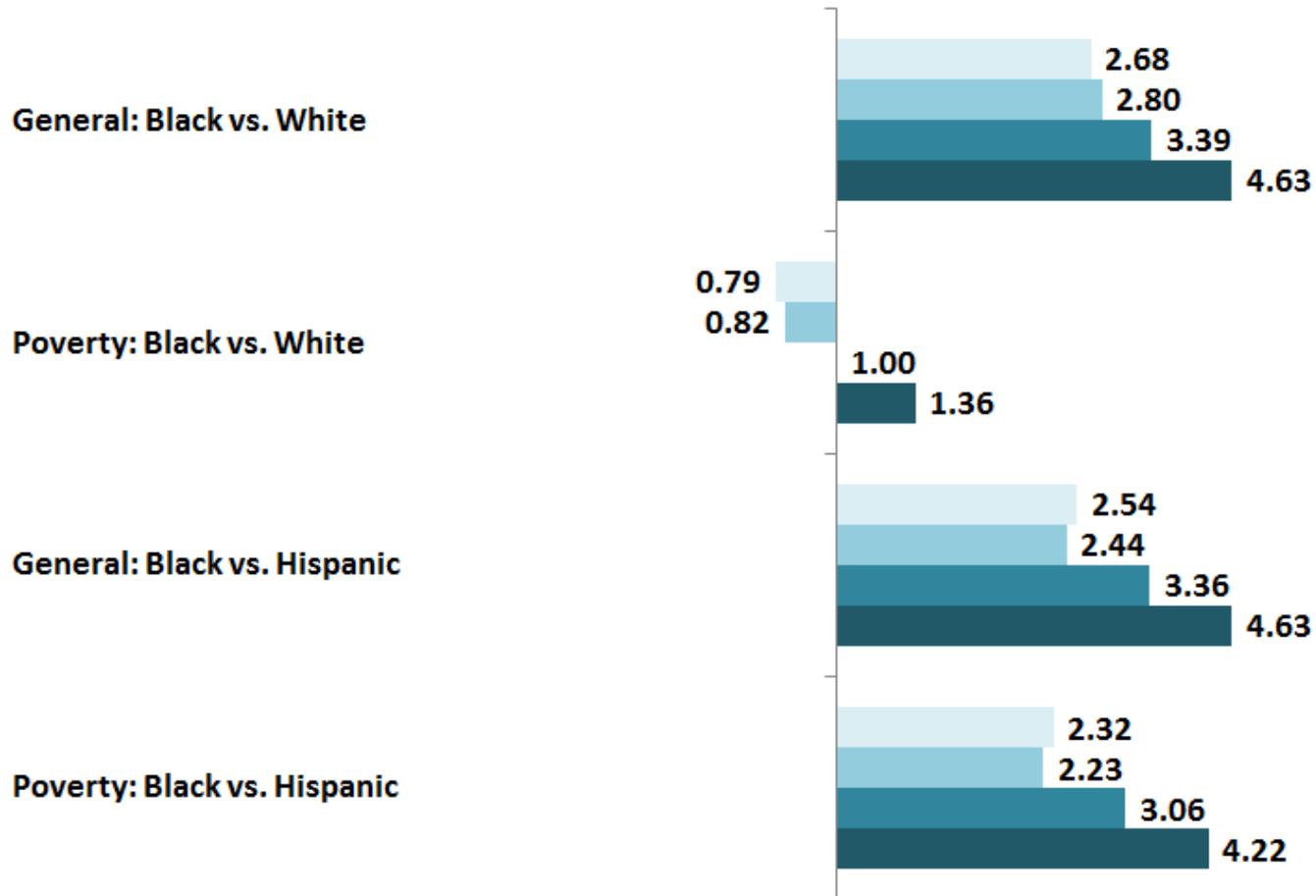
# California: Racial Disparity Indices, 2011

allegations   substantiations   entries   in care



# California: Racial Disparity Indices, 2011

allegations substantiations entries in care





# QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

[bneedell@berkeley.edu](mailto:bneedell@berkeley.edu)  
[ehornste@usc.edu](mailto:ehornste@usc.edu)



(IF TIME ALLOWS)  
WHAT IS INSTITUTIONAL/STRUCTURAL RACISM?

Stolen shamelessly from:

Annie E. Casey Foundation---RACE MATTERS TOOLKIT

<http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/PublicationsSeries/RaceMatters.aspx>

# What Single Policy from Decades Ago Contributed to These Present-Day Outcomes?

- Homeownership disparities
- Neighborhood disparities
- Surveillance & assessment disparities
- Health disparities
- Wealth disparities



# What Single Policy from Decades Ago Contributed to These Present-Day Outcomes (continued)

**In short, what policy strongly contributed to opportunity-rich or opportunity-poor settings/circumstances for raising kids & the judgments accompanying each?**



# The GI Bill: A Story of Embedded Racial Inequity



# Philip's Story

**Child Born  
Right After  
WWII**

**Father's  
Status**

**GI Bill: FHA  
& VA loans**

**Consequences  
for Child's  
Education**

**Consequences  
for Child's  
Well-being in  
Adulthood**

**Low-income,  
White**

**White  
veteran, high  
school  
diploma, from  
Philadelphia**

**Able to use  
low-interest  
mortgage  
provisions to  
move family  
from public  
housing to  
segregated  
suburban  
home ownership**

**Family borrowed  
from home equity  
to support child's  
college education  
(first in family to  
go to college)**

**Philip gets  
professional  
job, buys own  
house,  
inherits  
appreciated  
house  
when  
father  
dies**



# Thomas's Story

**Child Born  
Right After  
WWII**

**Father's  
Status**

**GI Bill: FHA  
& VA loans**

**Consequences  
for Child's  
Education**

**Consequences  
for Child's  
Well-being in  
Adulthood**

**Low-income,  
Black**

**Black  
veteran, high  
school  
diploma, from  
Philadelphia**

**Could not access  
home loan b/c of  
racially-restrictive  
underwriting  
criteria; family  
remained in rental  
housing in the city**

**Family could not  
afford to send  
child to college;  
high school  
diploma is from  
under-resourced  
segregated school**

**Thomas works  
in minimum  
wage jobs,  
continues to  
live in family  
home,  
considers  
joining the  
Army, has to  
borrow \$  
when father  
dies to give  
him decent  
funeral**



# Juan's Story

**Child Born  
Right After  
WWII**

**Father's  
Status**

**GI Bill: FHA  
& VA loans**

**Consequences  
for Child's  
Education**

**Consequences  
for Child's  
Well-being in  
Adulthood**

**Low-income,  
Latino**

**Latino  
veteran, high  
school  
diploma, from  
Texas**

**Could not access  
home loan b/c of  
racially-restrictive  
underwriting  
criteria; family  
remained in rural  
rental housing**

**Family could not  
afford to send  
child to college;  
high school  
diploma is from  
under-resourced  
language  
segregated and  
racially  
segregated  
school**

**Juan works  
in minimum  
wage jobs,  
continues to  
live in family  
home,  
marries  
newcomer  
Latina, sends  
part of  
family's limited  
income to her  
extended family  
in Mexico**



# Fast Forward to Today . . .

## Philip's Children:

Philip gives children his father's appreciated house

They live in thriving communities

Their college education's paid by home equity

Philip establishes trust fund for grandchildren

## Thomas' and Juan's Children:

They have no houses to inherit

They live in disinvested communities

At work, they complete college on work study and student loans, with subsequent starting debts to pay back

Thomas and Juan have few personal assets to leave grandchildren



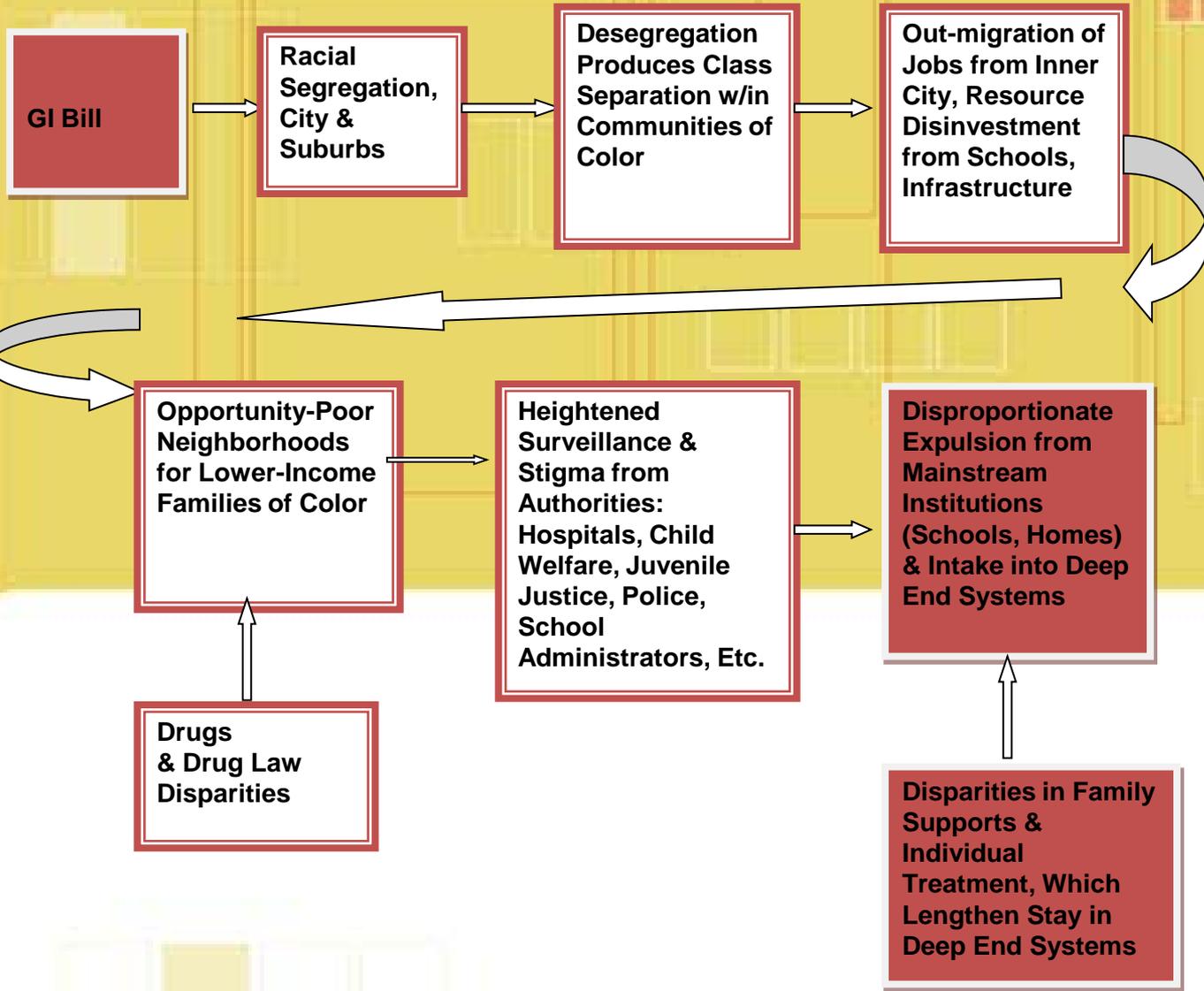
# Fast Forward to Today . . .

**Neighborhood-Based Opportunities include good schools, accessible jobs, affordable quality services, fair financial & retail outlets, safe recreational space, etc.**

**How Do “Opportunity-Rich” and “Opportunity-Poor” Neighborhoods Affect the Kids/Families You Serve Today?**



**POSSIBLE PATHWAY FROM THE GI BILL TO CURRENT CHILD WELFARE/JJ/EDUCATION DISPARITIES**



# Era of Equal Opportunity Policies (50s, 60s, and 70s)

## Opportunity Victories . . .

Mendez vs. Westminster  
Brown vs. Board of Education

Fair Housing Act of 1968

Affirmative Action

Voting Rights Act of 1965

## But Inequitable Outcomes

Schools today remain racially segregated and still unequal in terms of access to resources.

Discrimination persists in zoning, real estate practices, and lending.

Largest beneficiaries have been White women.

More elected officials of color but w/o adequate resources in urban areas to govern effectively; redistricting to erode political power; ballot box inequities.



# Era of Retrenchment (80s, 90s, 00s)

## Challenge to Opportunity Victories

English Only Laws as state referenda

“Racial Privacy” Act as state referenda

Anti-affirmative action legal challenges

## Inequitable Outcomes

Deprives civil rights (e.g. vote, legal proceedings, and education) for those with limited English proficiency

If it had passed, no data for accountability to promote equity in education, public contracting, or employment

Erode the small employment and education gains that have been made and increase the likelihood of return to previous practices



# How do Child Welfare Policies Map in Terms of Victories & Retrenchment for Racial Equity?

Adoption & Safe Families Act 1997 – quicker permanency but quicker termination of parental rights (impact on incarcerated mothers, who are disproportionately women of color)

Family Preservation & Support 1994/Promoting Safe & Stable Families 1997 – Do disparities exist in terms of who gets services?

Multi-Ethnic Placement Act 1994/Interethnic Adoption Provisions 1996 (MEPA-IEPA) – “Diligent recruitment largely ignored” (Race Matters Consortium: MEPA-IEPA)

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008- Kinship guardianship? Other provisions?



# Bottom Line

**Being classified as Black, Asian, Native American or Latino has never carried, and still doesn't carry, the same advantages as being classified as White.**

