



## HOW DOES POVERTY IMPACT CHILDHOOD OBESITY? A SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE

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## Objectives

- 1) Participants will be able to discuss how poverty impacts children's ability to maintain a healthy body weight
  
- 2) Participants will be able to identify resources for helping children overcome poverty-related barriers to a healthy body weight
  
- 3) Participants will be able to formulate at least one professional practice goal to help children in their clinical population affected by poverty maintain a healthy body weight

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## Poverty and Obesity: Review of the Literature

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## Poverty

### Poverty

- \$16,240 per year for a family of two
- \$24,600 per year for a family of four

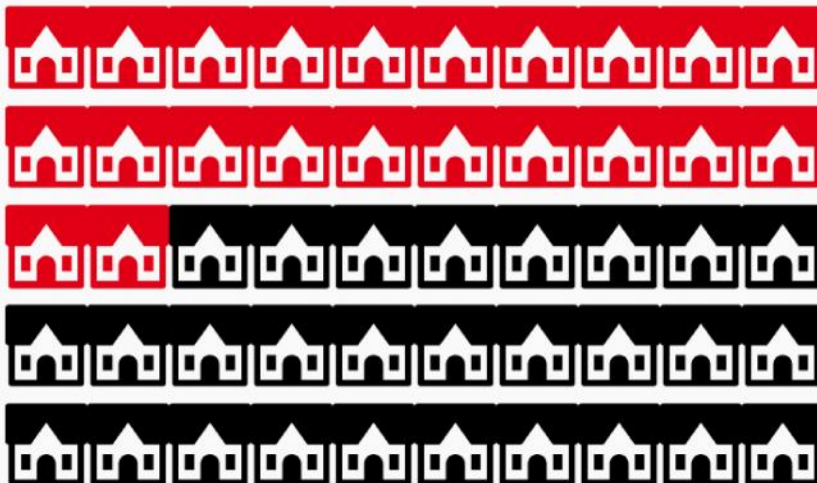
### Low income:

- \$32,480 per year for a family of two
- \$49,200 for a family of four
- Amount families need to afford basic expenses

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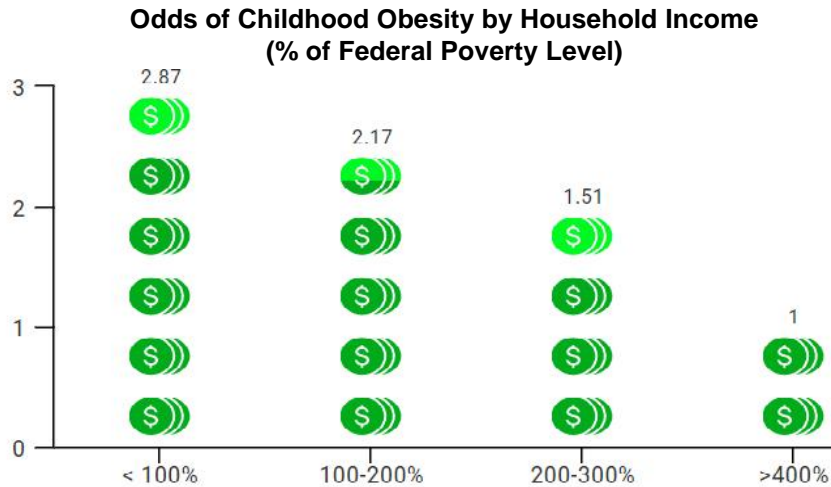
## Poverty

43% of children live in low income households = 30 million children



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## Poverty and Obesity



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## Poverty and Obesity

- **Household-level poverty:** inability to afford healthy foods or pay-to-play sports leagues, increased family stress



- **Neighborhood-level poverty:** lack of well-maintained parks, food swamps/food deserts, fewer healthcare providers (especially specialists)



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## Poverty and Obesity

Most research focuses on household-level poverty, but **there likely exists a relationship between neighborhood-level poverty and obesity too.**

- Above and beyond household-level poverty
- Varies by gender and race/ethnicity

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## Poverty and Obesity: Ongoing Research

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## Poverty and Obesity Study

To examine the impact of migrating to a higher or lower poverty neighborhood on BMI trajectory using:

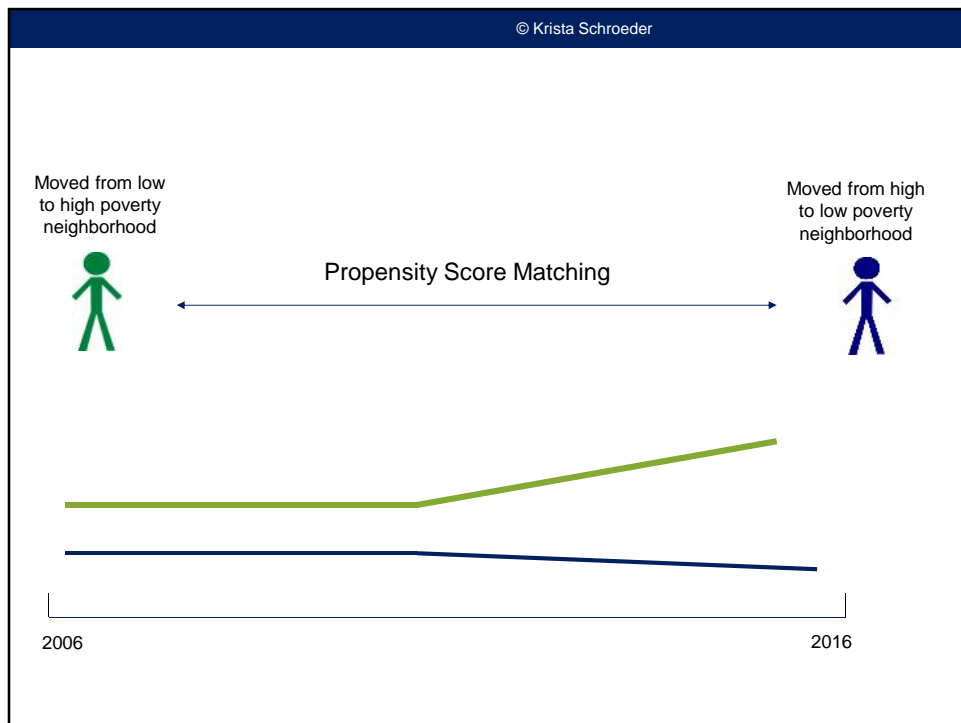
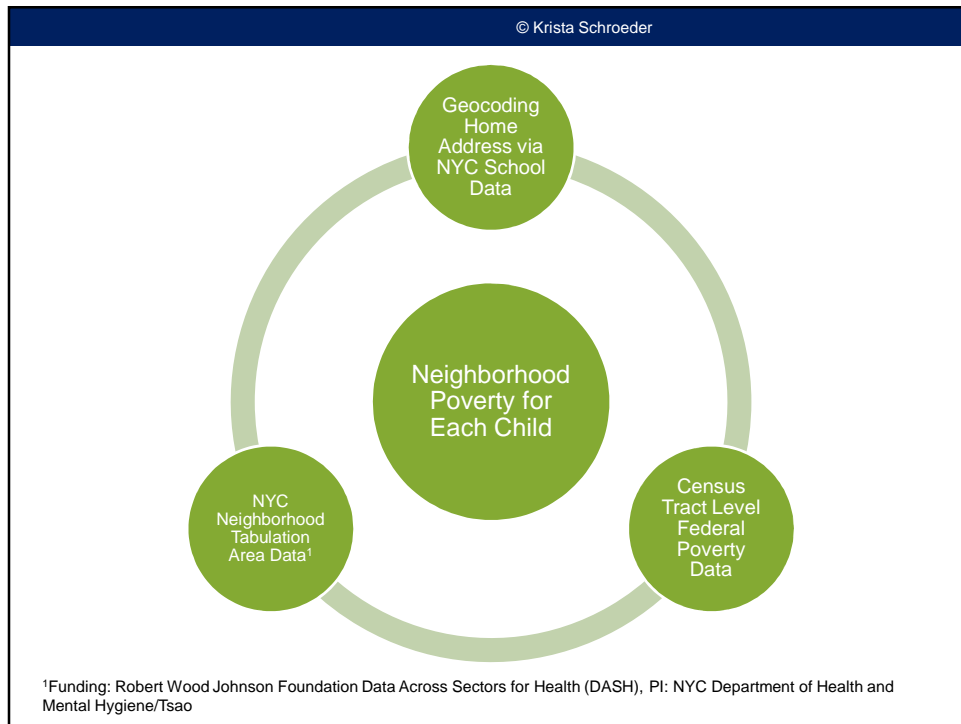
- Novel independent variable - migrating to a higher or lower poverty neighborhood
- Novel analytic approach - propensity score methods
- Novel data – data from New York City school system (largest school system in the nation), 10 years of longitudinal BMI measures

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## Poverty and Obesity Study

Retrospective analysis of secondary data

K-12<sup>th</sup> children attending NYC schools from 2006/2007-2015/2016



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## Poverty and Obesity: Implications for Clinical Practice

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### Case Study

- You work at a busy endocrinology practice in Nurseville, Florida. You care for many children who meet criteria for obesity. You always provide them with health behavior education about a nutritious diet and increasing physical activity, but you know that **social determinants of health (such as poverty) directly impact ability to engage in healthy behaviors**. You wonder “What can I do to help address social determinants of health for the children with obesity in my clinical practice?”



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## Implications for Clinical Practice

Consider screening for challenges related to poverty and other social determinants of health

- Multiple examples of screening tools in published research
  - Hunger Vital Sign: 2 question screener for food insecurity
  - Income, Housing, Education, Legal Status, Literacy, and Person safety survey (IHELLP): 11 questions
- Considerations
  - Screen all families
  - Sensitive and empathetic, not judgmental

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## Implications for Clinical Practice

Connect families with relevant resources

- Know your community resources
- Learn about federal resources
  - Benefits.gov, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), National School Lunch Program, Children's Health Insurance Program, National Immigration Law Center, State Unemployment Insurance Benefit
- Create a resource referral template
  - American Academy of Pediatrics - free template online

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## Implications for Clinical Practice

Gain clinical competency in addressing challenges related to poverty and social determinants of health

- American Academy of Pediatrics Curriculum on US Child Poverty
- American Nurses Association Resources on Diversity Awareness
- Food Research & Action Center Toolkit on Addressing Food Insecurity

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## Implications for Clinical Practice

Recognize what you can and cannot do



- Partner with other members of the healthcare team (social workers, community health workers, patient navigators)
  - Task sharing
  - Complementary roles
- Consider how attention to social determinants of health are integral to improving clinical outcomes
- Address root causes via advocacy
  - Letters to the Editor in local newspaper
  - Civic engagement and volunteering
  - Professional organization's policy arm
    - American Nurses Association Advocacy Toolkit

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## Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics Curriculum on US Child Poverty: <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/CPTI/Pages/U-S-Child-Poverty-Curriculum.aspx>

Food Research & Action Center Toolkit on Addressing Food Insecurity: <http://www.frac.org/wp-content/uploads/frac-aap-toolkit.pdf>

American Academy of Pediatrics Resources: Screening Tools and Resource Referral Template: <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/poverty/Pages/practice-tips.aspx>

American Nurses Association Advocacy Toolkit: <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/advocacy/ana-advocacy-toolbox/>

American Nurses Association Resources on Diversity Awareness: <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/innovation-evidence/clinical-practice-material/diversity-awareness/>

SNAP: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply>

WIC: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-how-apply>

National School Lunch Program: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/applying-free-and-reduced-price-school-meals>

Children's Health Insurance Program: <https://www.insurekidsnow.gov/>

National Immigration Law Center: <https://www.nilc.org/>

State Unemployment Insurance Benefit: <http://workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/unemploy/uifactsheet.asp>

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# Thank You

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