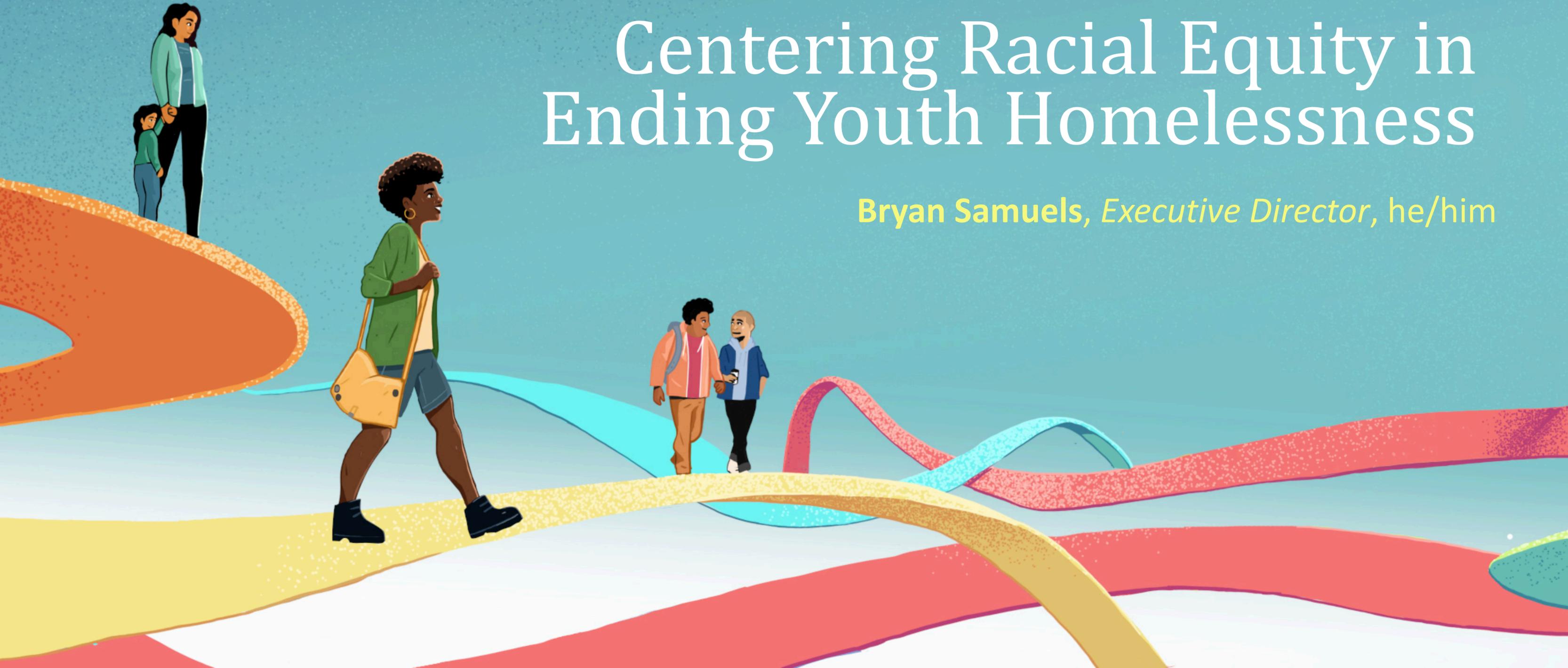


# Centering Racial Equity in Ending Youth Homelessness

**Bryan Samuels**, *Executive Director*, he/him



# Centering Racial Equity in Ending Youth Homelessness

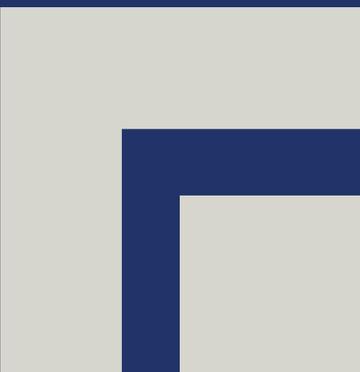
RHYTTAC

November 18, 2021

Bryan Samuels, Executive Director



# A Picture of Disproportionality



# Pre-existing disparities have been amplified during the pandemic

While much of the public attention during the pandemic has focused on death and disease, youth of color face exceptional adversities in meeting their basic needs

**UNTOLD STORIES**  
Young Adult & Racial Dimensions of COVID-19

Matthew Morton  
Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

Gerald Daniels  
Howard University

June 2021

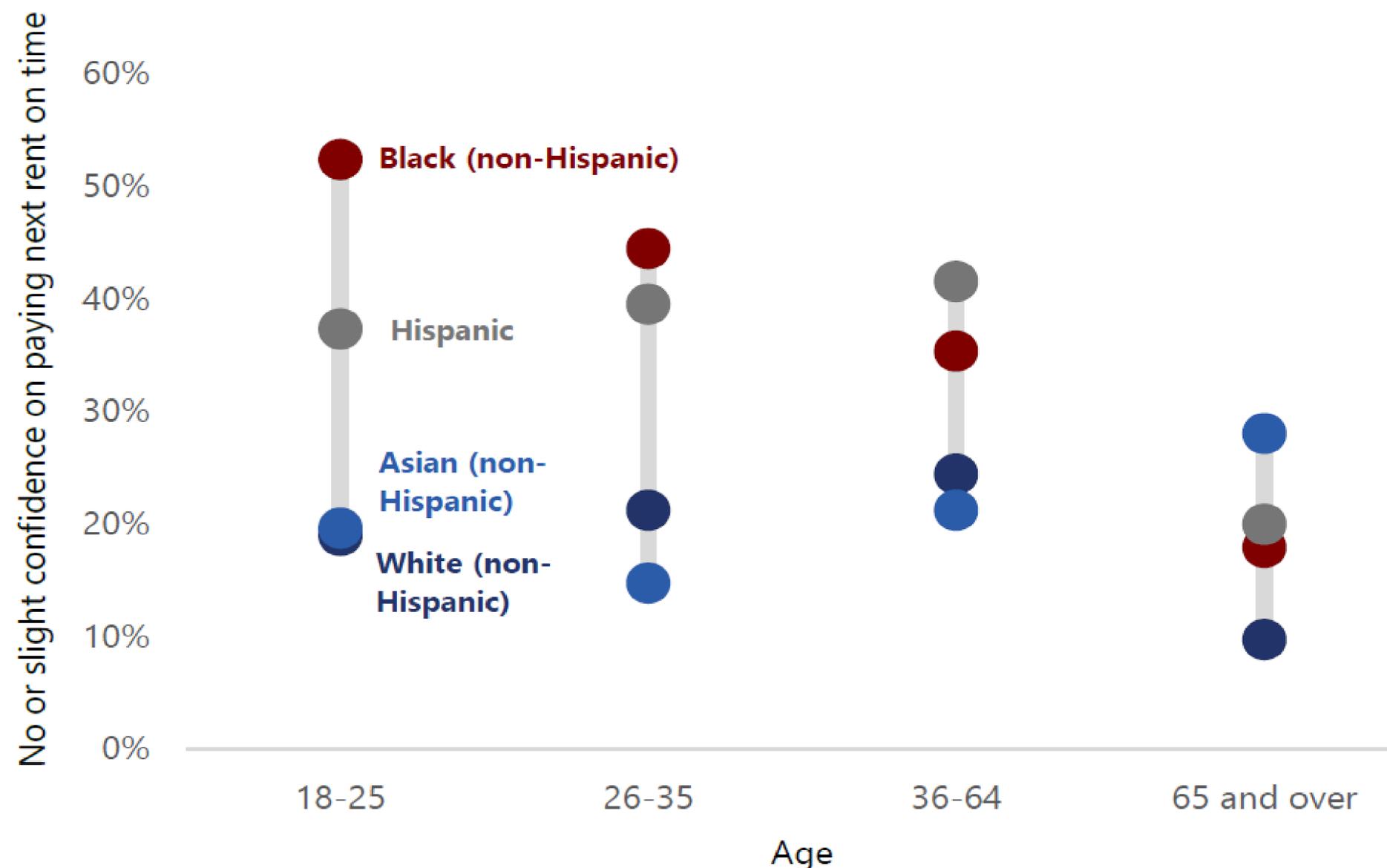
CHAPIN HALL  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

DAP  
DATA ANALYTICS PREM

# Among single adult households, Black young adults have faced especially high housing insecurity during the pandemic

During the pandemic about **3.8 million young adults** had little to no confidence in their (or their household's) ability to pay the next month's rent; about **1.3 million** had no confidence.



*Note: Summary statistics are weighted using person level weights and Phases 2-3 (Oct. 28, 2020–Dec. 21, 2020). These graphs include respondents in single adult renting households only.*

(Source: Morton & Daniels, 2021)

# A broad & hidden challenge

**1 in 10**



young adults ages 18 to 25 endures some form of homelessness in a year. Half of the prevalence involves couch surfing only.

**1 in 30**



adolescent minors ages 13 to 17 endures some form of homelessness in a year. A quarter of the prevalence involves couch surfing only.

## Incidence of First Time Homelessness

About half of the youth who experienced homelessness over a year faced homelessness...

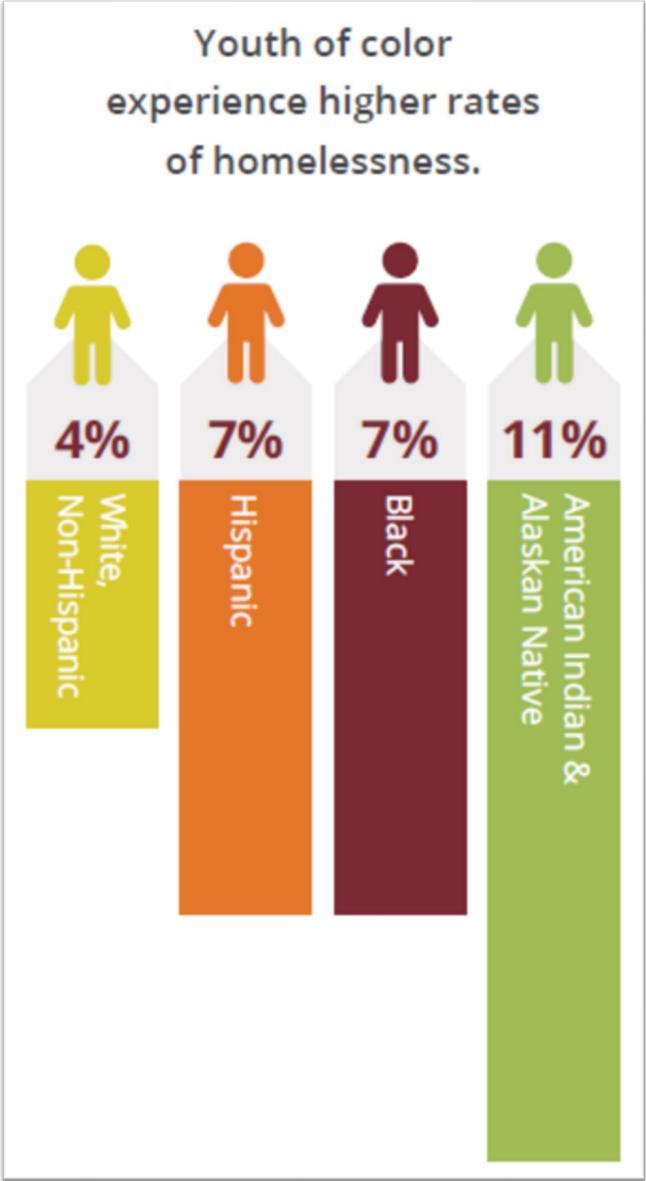
*...for the first time.*



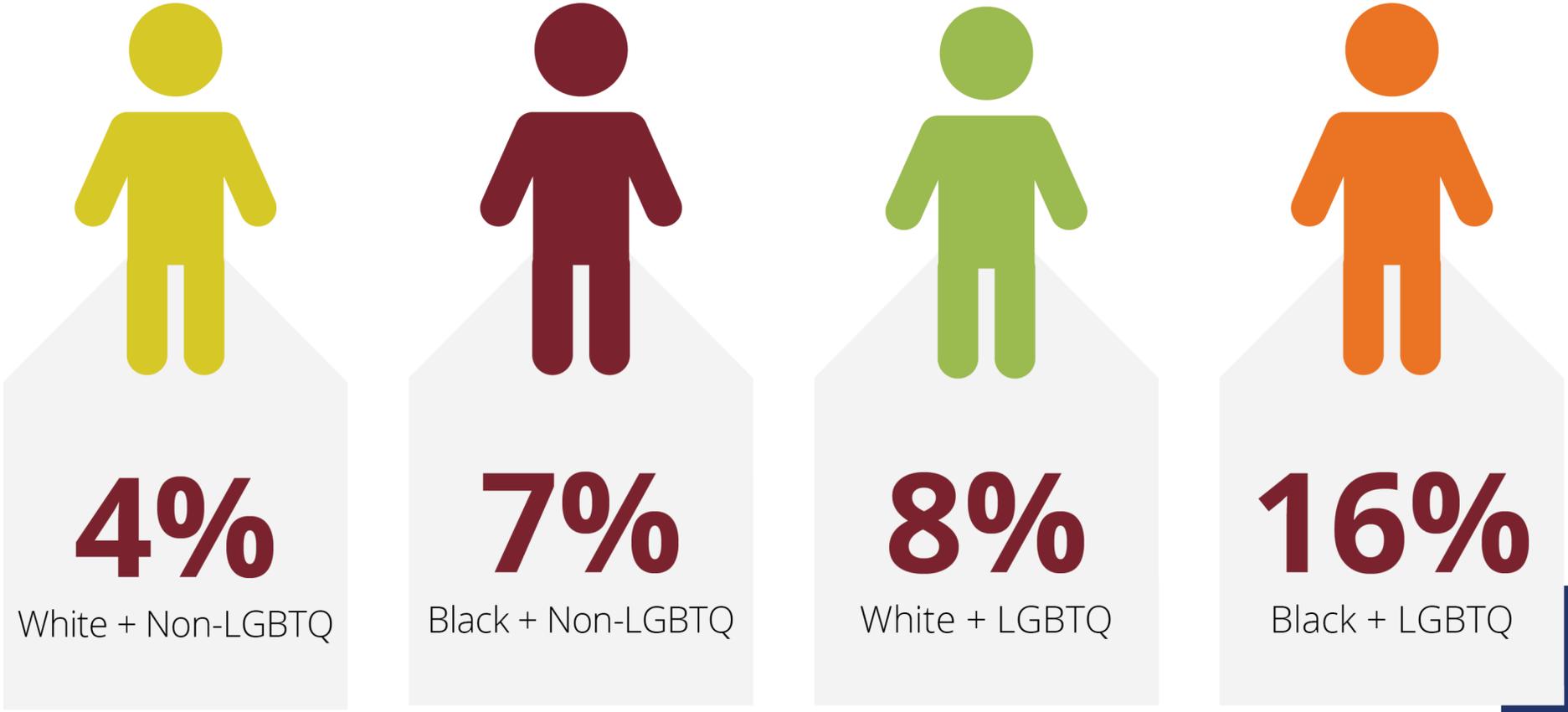
(Source: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago)

(Source: VoYC National Survey)

# Disproportionality & intersectionality



Explicit homelessness over the last 12 months, self-reported by young adults, ages 18-25. These estimates do not include reports of couch surfing only.



# Risk for homelessness is not equally distributed



**346%**

Youth with less than a high school diploma or GED had a 346% higher risk

**120%**

LGBT youth had a 120% higher risk

**162%**

Youth reporting annual household income of less than \$24,000 had a 162% higher risk

**33%**

Hispanic, non-White youth had a 33% higher risk

**83%**

Black or African American youth had an 83% higher risk

**200%**

Unmarried parenting youth had a 200% higher risk



# Risk factors for homelessness overlap with risk factors for school dropout

The relationship between educational attainment and homelessness is bidirectional.

Low educational attainment is a risk factor for homelessness\*....



Young adults with less than a high school diploma or GED were

**4.5x**

more likely to report experiencing homelessness than their peers who completed high school.

...and homelessness is a risk factor for lower educational attainment.



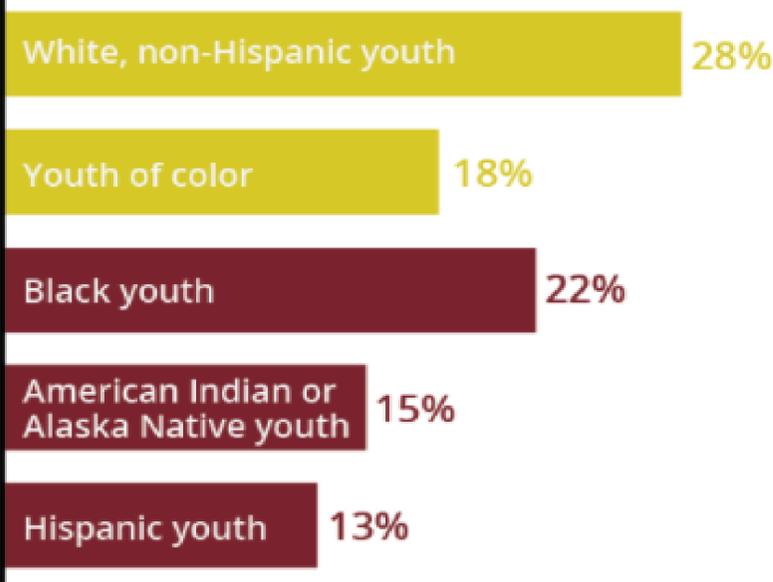
Young adults who experienced homelessness were less than

**1/3**

as likely to be enrolled in four-year college as stably housed peers.

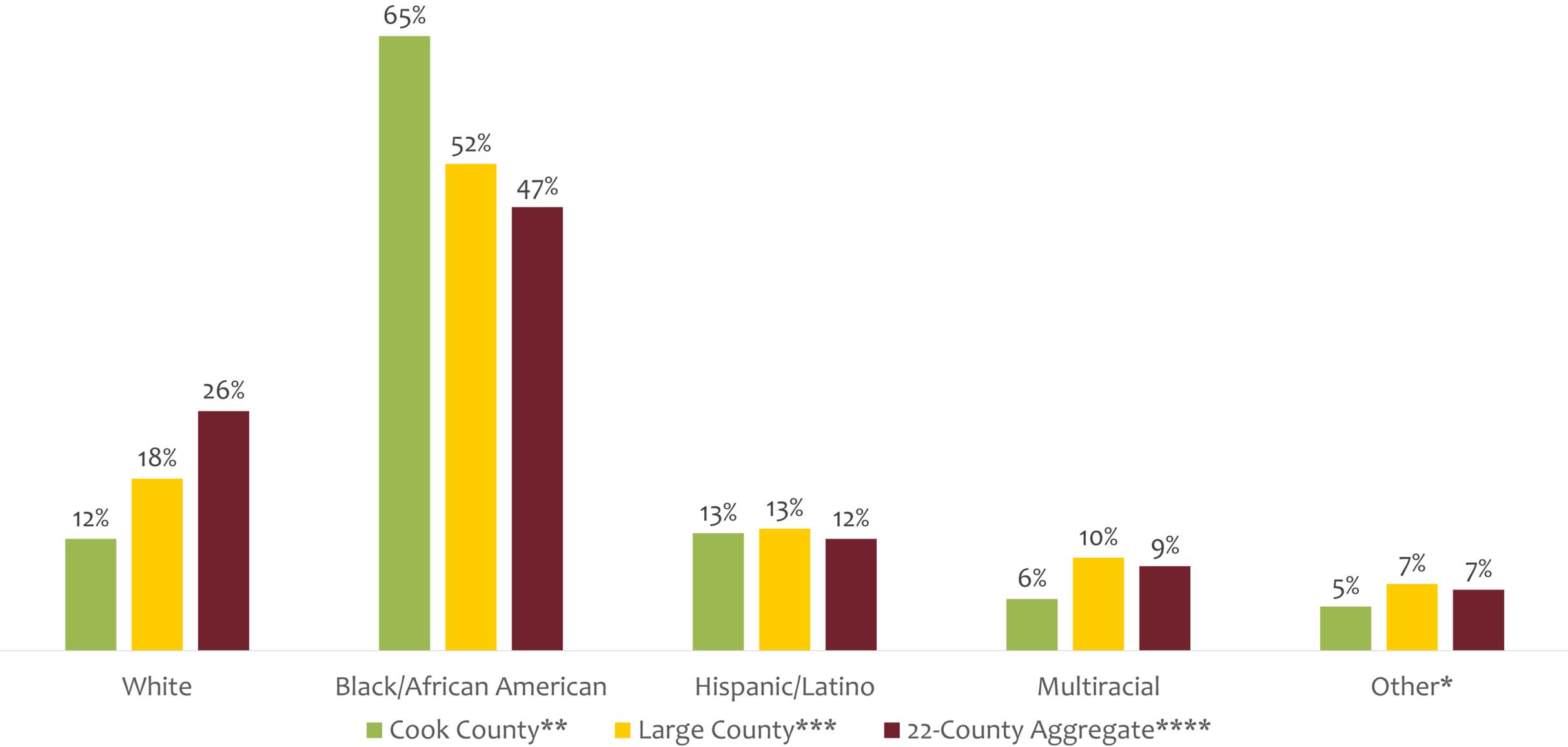
Racial and ethnic inequities cut across both homelessness and educational outcomes.

Among young adults, ages 18-25, experiencing homelessness, rates of at least some postsecondary education:

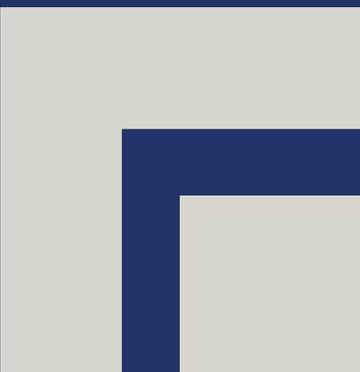


(Source: VoYC Education brief)

# Nationally, Black youth have especially high rates of homelessness



**Missed Opportunities:  
Pathways into and out of youth  
homelessness**



# In-depth Interviews with Youth

---

Interview participants (86%) were age 18 or older.

---

Just over half identified as either Black/African American (31%) or multiracial (21%), and 23% identified as White.

---

Most young people reported gender identities as either male (52%) or female (41%). 7% identified as transgender or gender nonconforming.

---

58% identified as heterosexual/straight, 38% did not. Among those, 11% identified as bisexual and 10% identified as gay or lesbian.

# “Where did your story of housing instability begin?”

“It would begin when I was three years old...I was taken way from my mom.”  
Angel

chronic parent-child conflict, rejection by parent  
52 %

displacement from home via foster care  
44%

death of parent and/or caregiver  
35%

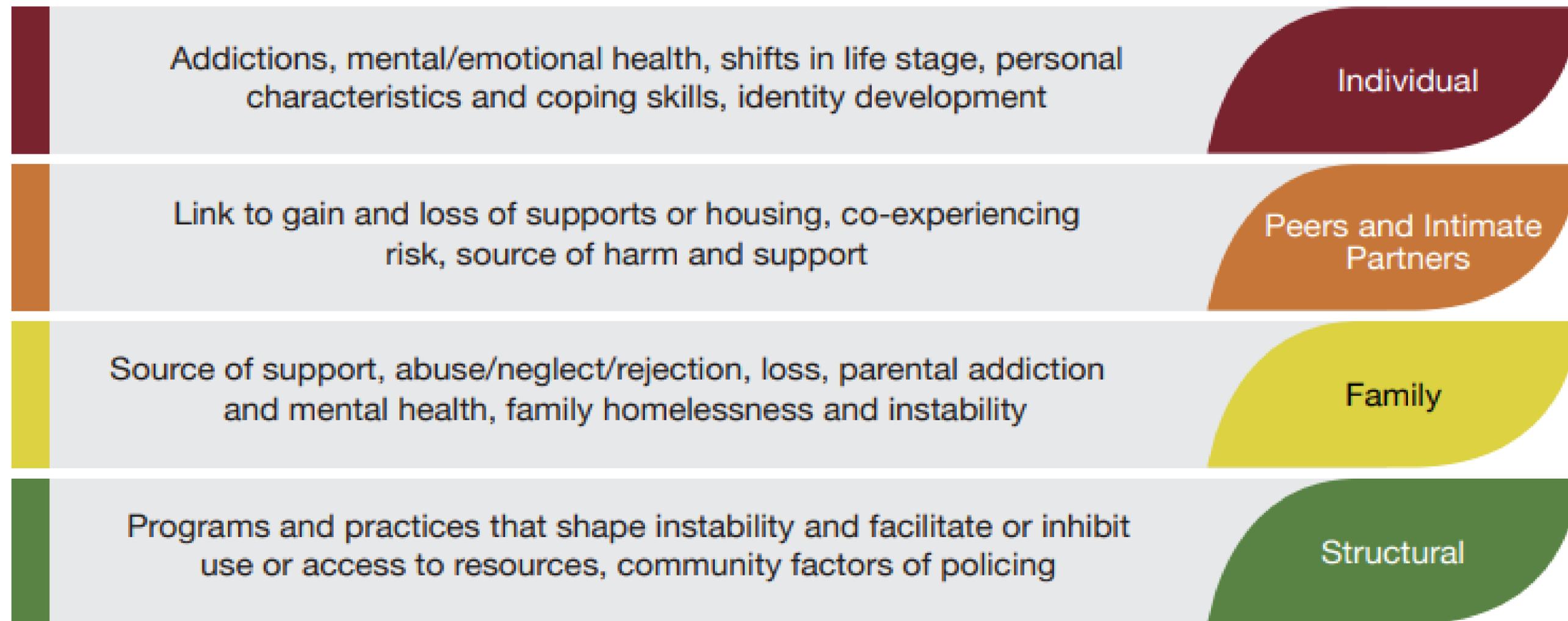
family homelessness  
24%

parent with a mental health condition and/or addiction  
34%

“My story begins...when I was ...11 years old. ...we ended up...living on the streets...tried to sleep in parks or storefronts....couch surfed, for the next 2 years.”  
Kyle



# Multisystem factors shape trajectories of housing instability



# Youth Descriptions of the Challenges they Faced in Their Personal Lives

---

**Personal:** 31% “mental health issues,” 21% addiction, 51% named personal preferences for being self-reliant, not being a burden, self isolate or “too much pride,” being a parent (24%), developmental life stage (e.g., seeking independence, having a “mind-shift,” needing to escape, seeking new life) 40%, 60% of youth named loss of belonging/sense of home/security

---

**Relational (Family/Peer)** chronic conflict and volatile family dynamics 100%, 35% parental death, physical or emotional abuse/neglect violence 30%, Parental addiction 26% or mental health problem (9%), parent chooses partner over child 17%, parental death 35%, intrafamilial stigma/discrimination 46% (highest were for youth identifying as transgender 67%, LGBTQ 65% and multiracial 51%).

---

**Structural:** 30% identified agency staff as positive critical portals; but, once receiving services, 38% identified controlling, unsafe or unsanitary shelters and 22% cited gaps in transition services in or out of system service system silos

# Young people experience a lot of fluidity in sleeping arrangements

## Types of sleeping arrangements while unstably housed



**COUCH SURFING:** using a series of other people's housing as temporary and improvised places to stay



**SHELTER:** a formal agency resource providing emergency, short term, or transitional housing services



**STREETS:** using spaces not intended for permanent residence. For example, parks, stairwells, abandon buildings, hotels, and vehicles

# HMIS Risk Data Findings: Black & Hispanic youth wait longer and experience worse outcomes

---

- **Black youth** have a 16% increased risk of remaining pending/unknown(as opposed to getting housed through self-resolution or family exits), and a 78% increased risk of reentering homelessness after a family exit, compared to white non-Hispanic youth.
- **Hispanic youth** have a 23% increased risk of remaining pending/unknown(as opposed to getting housed through self-resolution or family exits), and a 72% increased risk of reentering homelessness after a family exit, compared to white non-Hispanic youth.

# Recommendations



# Center Youth and Youth Experience in Program and Service Delivery

---

- Partner with and support **Black and Hispanic young people to co-create programs**, services and strategies for reducing housing insecurity and preventing youth homelessness
- Basic center and transitional living programs can design programs and deliver services that **center the experiences and voices of youth of color with intersecting marginalized identities** to meet immediate needs and support appropriate services and life skills building
- **Develop street outreach programs and homelessness identification around young people's fluid housing situations** over time (not just where they were last)

# Understand a Young Person's Pathway into Homelessness to better inform services and supports to exit homelessness

---

- Transitional living and basic center programs can **build in opportunities to better understand past familial traumas and adversities** to inform a more tailored approach to service delivery
- Transitional living programs can **connect youth experiencing homelessness with educational opportunities** through developing tailored solutions to support young people of color to achieve both housing stability and their educational goals

# Collect better data to identify opportunities for addressing racial inequities

---

- All runaway and homeless youth programs can **collect, use and share data on service usage and access over time disaggregated by sexual orientation, gender identity, race and ethnicity:**
  - Access to services and programs (and who isn't and why);
  - Early leaving from programs;
  - How long it takes young people to access services;
  - How long it takes a young person to exit homelessness; and,
  - Reentering homelessness

# From Reactive to Proactive



Define the problem • Identify causes, risk & protective factors • Develop & test interventions  
Scale-up evidence-based solutions • Monitor implementation



Youth homelessness  
is a **solvable problem.**



 @Chapin\_Hall

[www.chapinhall.org](http://www.chapinhall.org)

 **CHAPIN HALL**  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

# Thank You!

**Please complete the evaluation for this session.**

Click on the link in the Chat, then select:

Day Three

Workshop

Centering Racial Equity in Ending Youth Homelessness