



# Executive Summary: Race for Results

For Wisconsin to reach its full potential, every child, every family, and every community must thrive. For every child and family to be successful, it takes family supporting jobs, high quality education, and targeted support for working parents. The problem is that those things are not equitably available across race and ethnicity. The policies and systems that have been created make the things essential to well-being much more available to White children, families, and communities. That has to change. Wisconsin will not be successful as a state if it continues to put barriers in the way of children of color that keep them further away from opportunity. Addressing barriers to success for children of color is particularly important right now, given that the future of Wisconsin will be much more diverse than it currently is. In fact, nearly all of the population growth in the foreseeable future will be from children of color.

## Introduction

While addressing racial and ethnic disparity challenges is a moral imperative, it is also an economic imperative. What is good for children and families is good for our economy. If a strong economy is desired in a state and nation whose demographics are rapidly changing, all families must be able to achieve economic security, regardless of race, ethnicity, or immigration status. The success of all children is central to the shared prosperity of the state and the nation.

Based on the findings of the second Race for Results report released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the well-being of kids of color lags significantly behind their white peers throughout the nation. While the Race for Results index scores do not tell the story of individuals, as each has their own experiences and talents, the data offer an important snapshot of disparity in opportunity and the barriers that exist for different groups of our children. The index quantifies how far the nation has to go to live up to its stated values of opportunity and justice for all.

In Wisconsin, there is an even deeper and broader challenge. Wisconsin has the largest gap between the well-being of White and African American children in the nation, and there are significant challenges to well-being for Latino, American Indian, and Hmong children as well. **Wisconsin is failing its children of color.**

## Data

The data points clearly to places where the pathway to opportunity is blocked, and where there is opportunity and responsibility for all of us to act. According to the Race for Results report:

- 72% of White children in Wisconsin live in families that are economically secure, compared to just 24% of African American children. Other children of color also face a large economic opportunity gap: only 30%

of Latino children, 31% of Hmong children, and 36% of American Indian children. Being economically secure is defined as families earning more than twice the federal poverty level.(link to FPL)

- There is also significant variation within sub-populations of the main demographic groups. For example, the largest sub-group of Asian and Pacific Islander children in Wisconsin are Hmong. 31% of Wisconsin's Hmong children live in families who are economically secure, compared to 86% of Filipino children, 75% of Chinese children, and 50% of Asian and Pacific Islander children as a whole.
- More than 9 out of 10 White children in Wisconsin live in neighborhoods with low poverty, compared to 3 out of every 10 African American children. Fifty-nine percent of Latino children live in neighborhoods with low poverty, compared to 67% of American Indian children and 73% of Asian and Pacific Islander children. A low-poverty neighborhood is one in which fewer than 1 out of 5 residents earns less than the federal poverty level.

The new information also shows how far Wisconsin has to go in offering all children an excellent K-12 education.

- White children in Wisconsin are four times more likely to be proficient in reading in 4<sup>th</sup> grade than African American children, a difference that is larger than any other state. White children are also more than twice as likely as Latino children to be proficient at reading, and about a third more likely than Asian children.
- Wisconsin high schools graduate more than 9 out of 10 White children on time, compared to fewer than 2 out of 3 African American children. 78% of Latino children, 78% of American Indian children, and 91% of Asian students graduate on time.
- While half of young adults in Wisconsin who are White or Asian have at least a two-year college degree, that share drops to 21% for young adults who are African American and 20% of Latino young adults.

## Recommendations

There are large number of things that can be done so that every child and every family can be successful, including children of color. First, the minimum wage should be increased to a family supporting wage so that more parents can have access to **family supporting jobs**. Also, employers should commit to recruiting and hiring substantial numbers of additional workers from low-income households of color, and government agencies and employers should significantly increase the opportunities for youth of color to participate in career counseling and summer jobs.

To provide **high quality education** to all children, efforts must be made to expand affordable and high-quality early learning programs capable of helping all children meet key developmental milestones. In addition, school districts should increase the percentage of students who demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency by 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and school systems should intensify their commitment to diversify all levels of their workforce to reflect the diversity of their students.

To move children and parents of color closer to educational and economic success, there also needs to be better **support for working parents**. Public transportation services should be reconfigured in order to better meet the commuting needs of workers. In addition, the availability parent education, family counseling, and crisis interventions services should be increased to meet the additional stresses imposed upon newly employed families. Lastly, youth serving agencies should significantly increase the availability of quality intervention, support, and diversion programs for out- of- school, disconnected or delinquent youth.

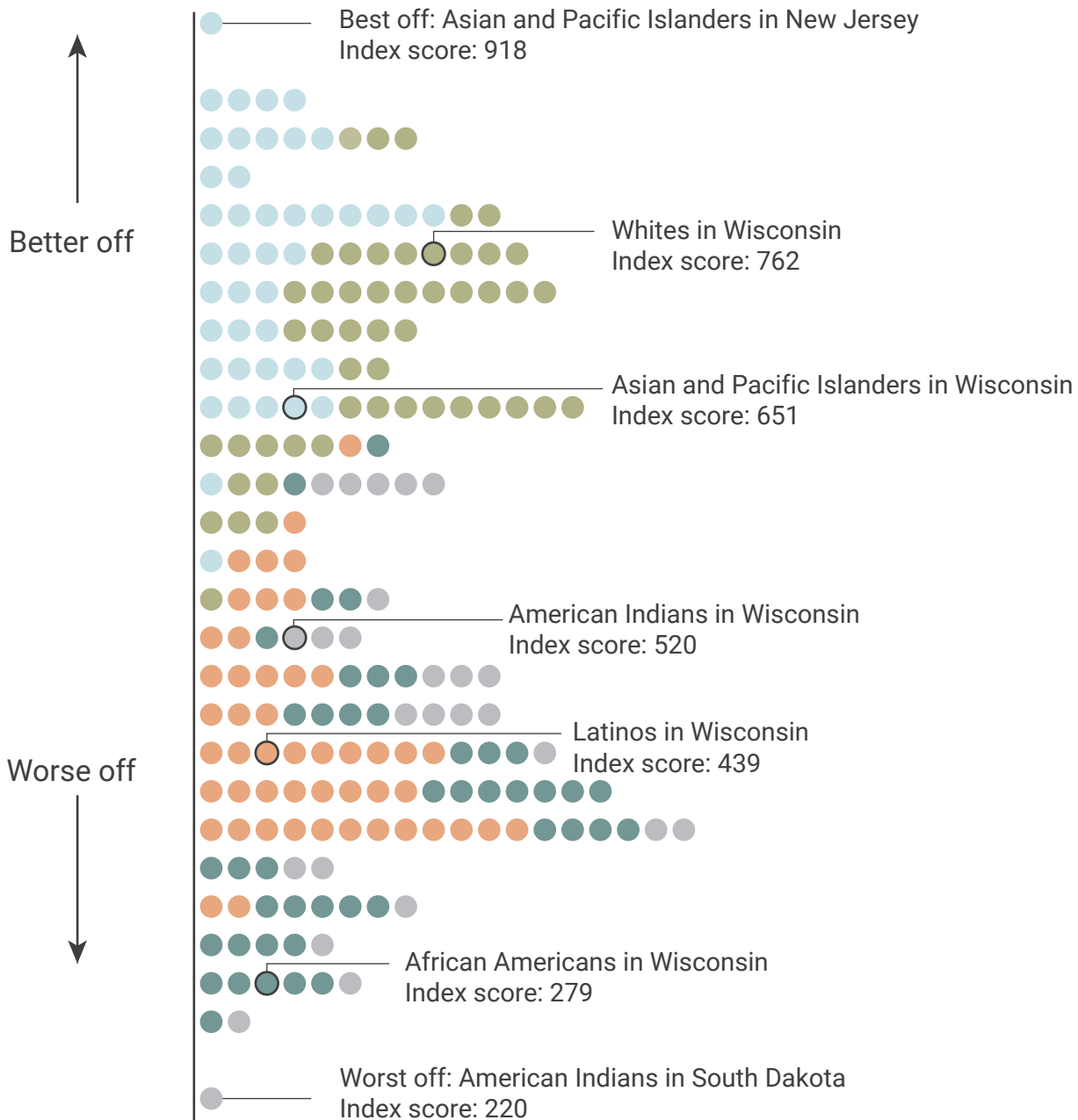
## Conclusion

This country's history contains myriad examples of the mistreatment of people of color. This mistreatment has aided in creating a deep difference in opportunity among children today based on their race or ethnicity. This country cannot move forward without recognizing the intergenerational impacts of this mistreatment and acknowledging that children of color cannot be expected to overcome the negative impact of the policies and systems that distance them from opportunity by sheer force of will. That is the responsibility of each one of us, and it is time, long past time, that we act.

# Child Well-being by Race

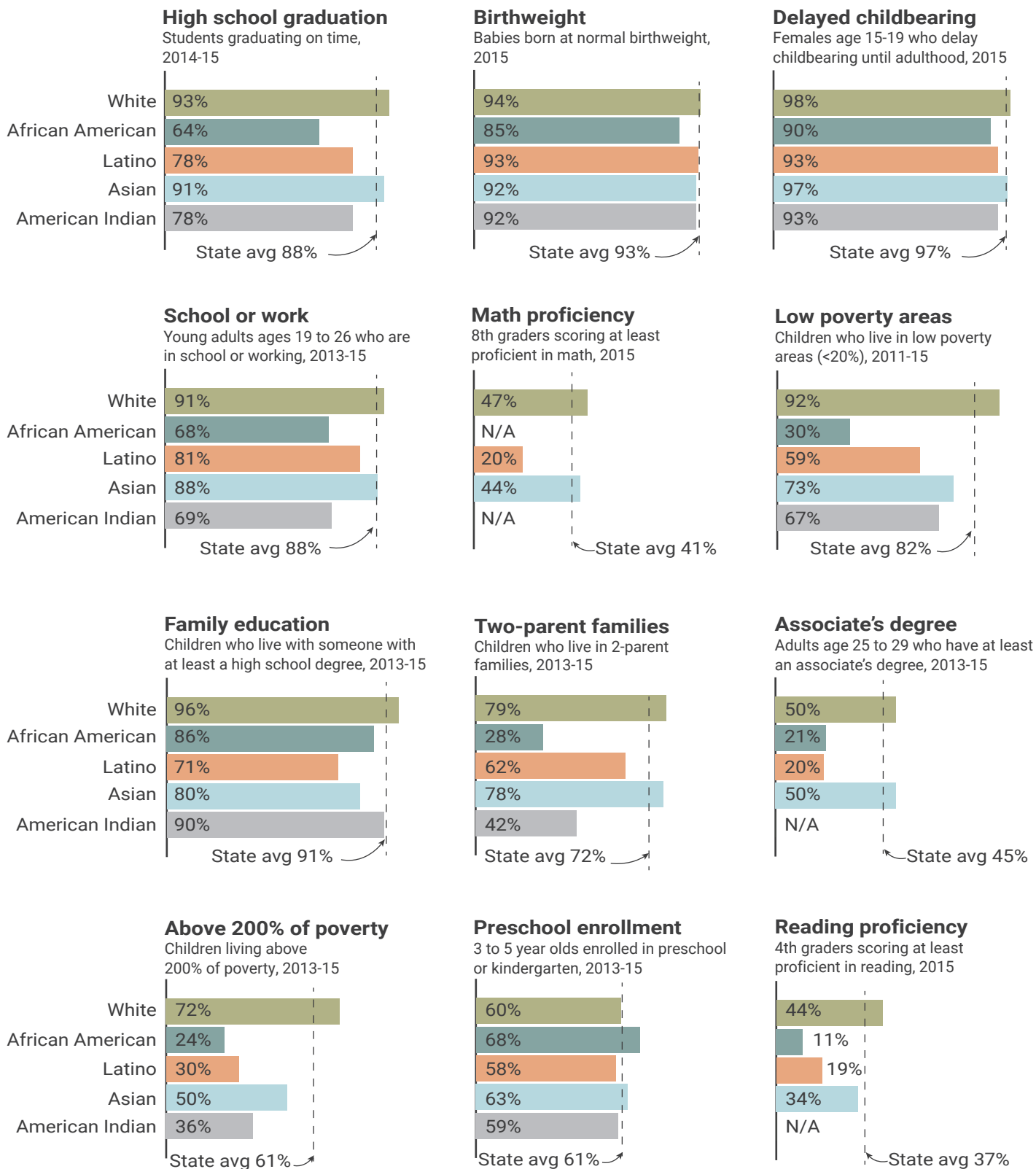
Each dot represents a racial group in a particular state and the overall score the group received on an index developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The index is based on twelve indicators of child and young adult well-being. Index scores range from zero to a maximum of 1,000.

- Asian and Pacific Islander
- White
- Latino
- African American
- American Indian



# Child Well-Being in Wisconsin by Race

How Wisconsin children of different races fare on the 12 indicators that make up the 2017 Race for Results Index.



N/A means information for that group is not available due to a large coefficient of variation. The Asian group includes Pacific Islanders.  
Source: KIDS COUNT