

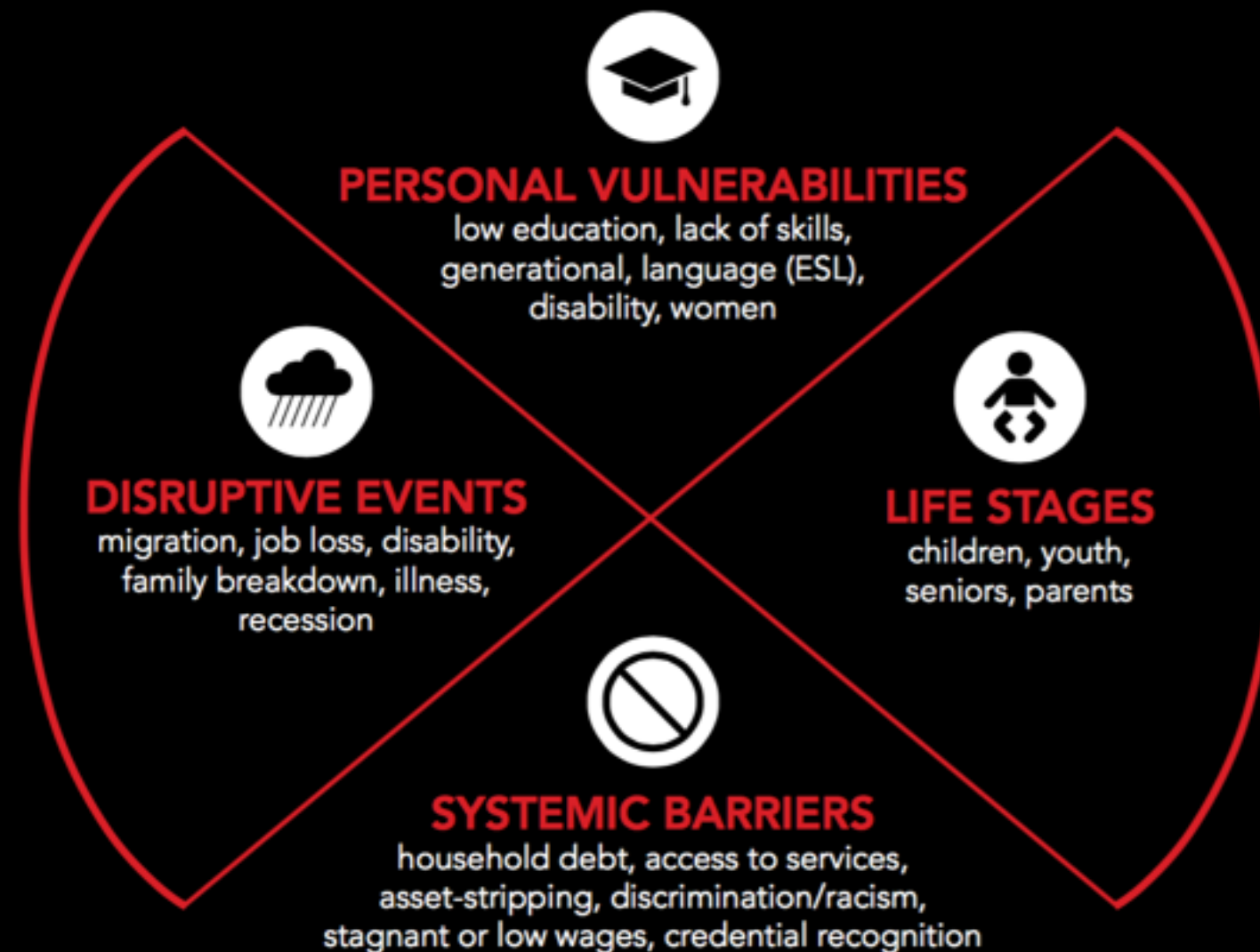
why we need to talk about racism and family homelessness

Marc Dones
Jeff Olivet

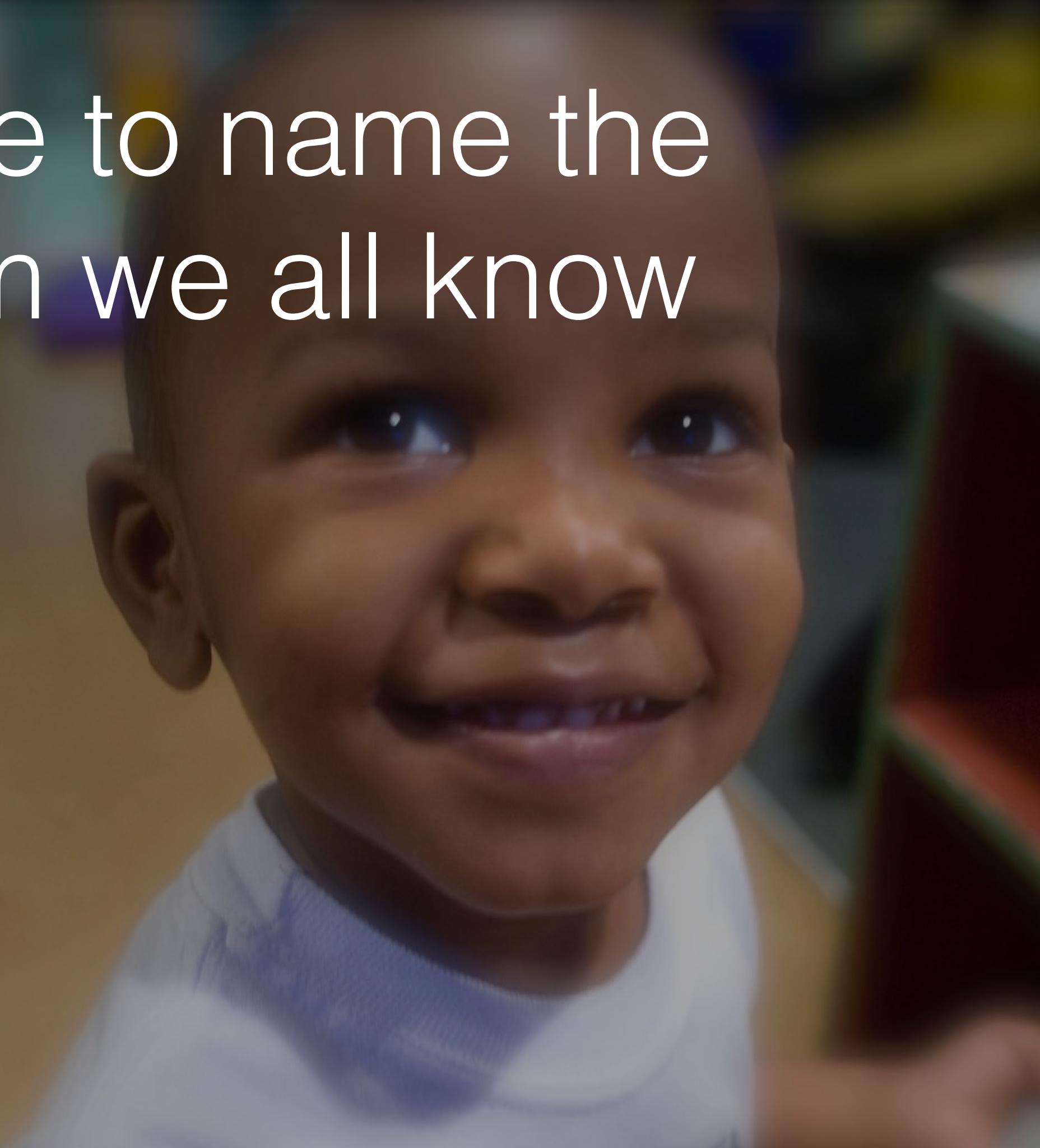


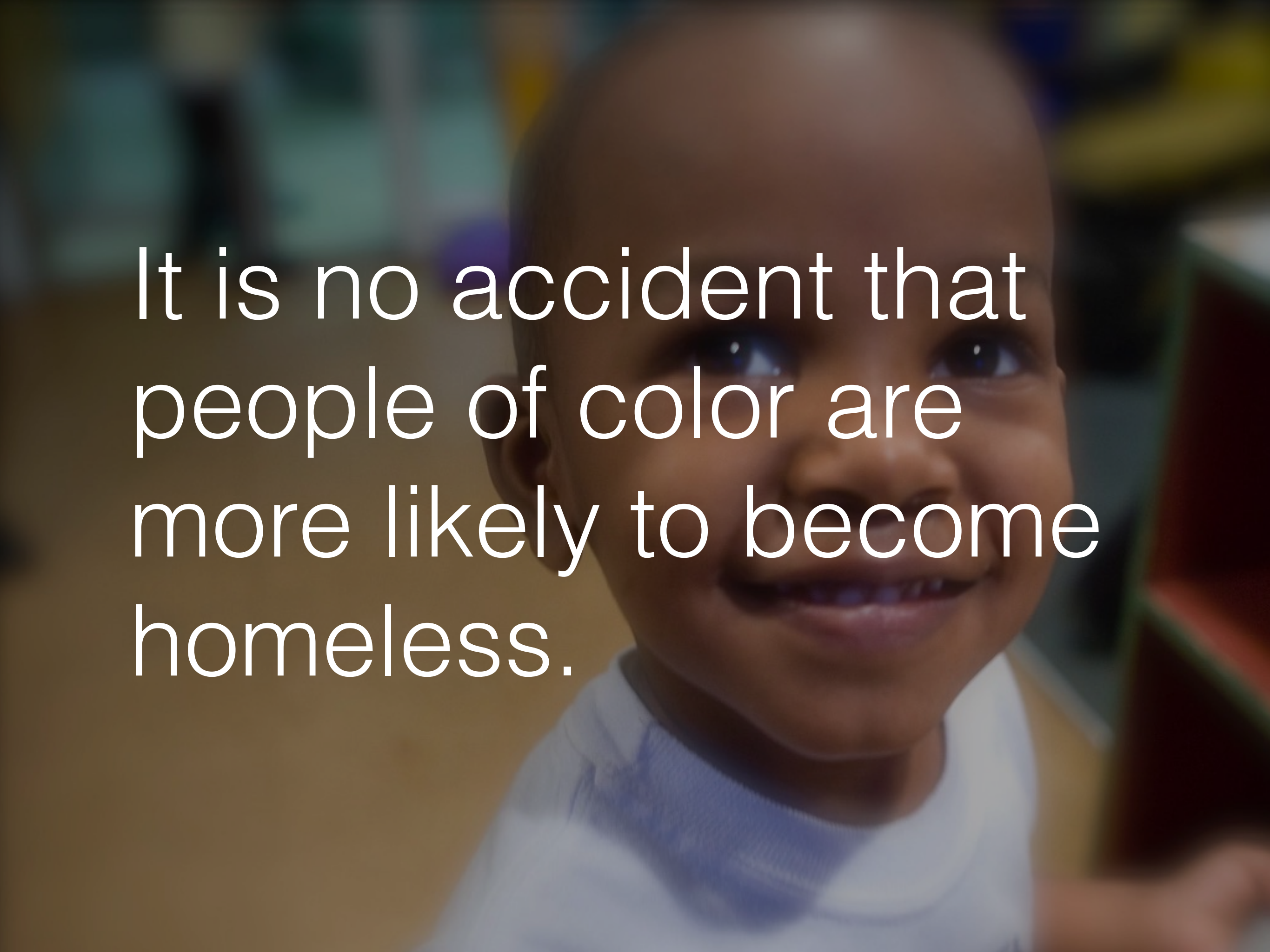
ROOT CAUSES OF POVERTY

Sources of Vulnerability*



It is time to name the
problem we all know
exists.





It is no accident that
people of color are
more likely to become
homeless.



it is the result of racism.



DISPROPORTE REPRESENTATION

ACCORDING TO HUD

50+% of the total homeless population are minorities. More than **40%** are African American.

African Americans are **3 times** more likely than Whites to become homeless.



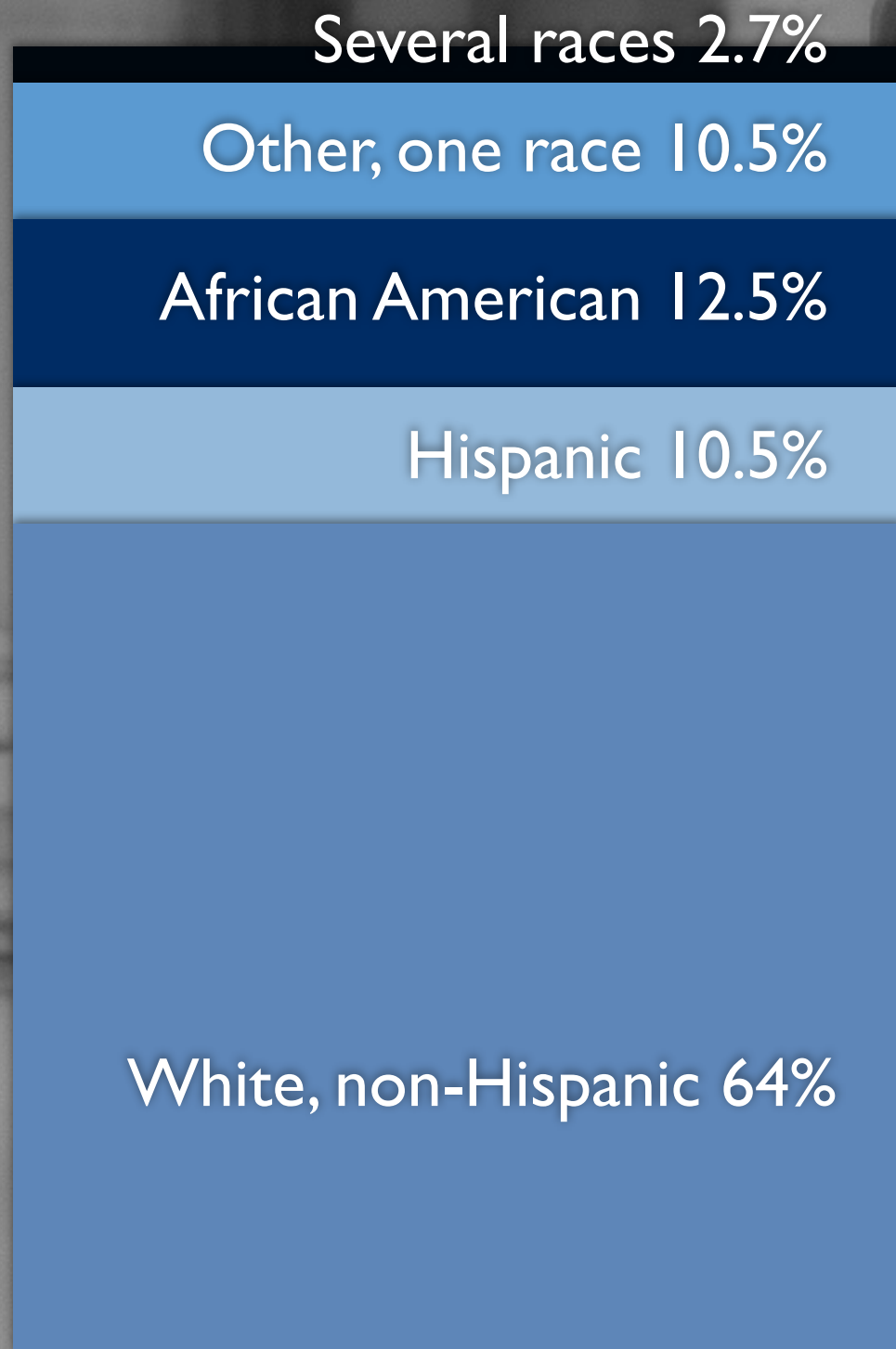
One study found that:

Blacks were **16x** more likely than whites to live in shelters.

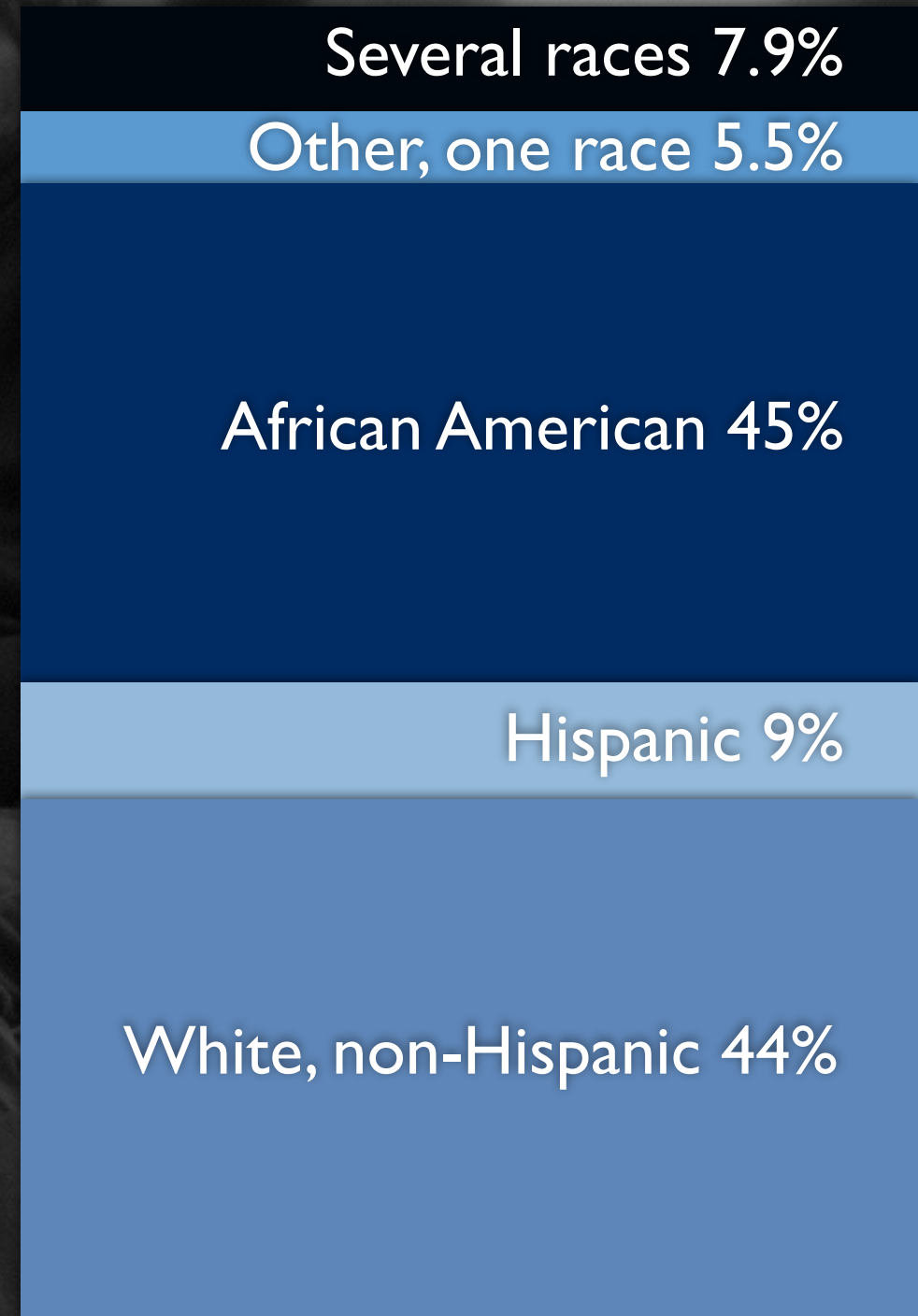
AND

Black children under 5 were **29x** more likely than white children to end up in shelters.

(Culhane & Metraux, 1999)



Total US Population



Shelter Population

Among African Americans...

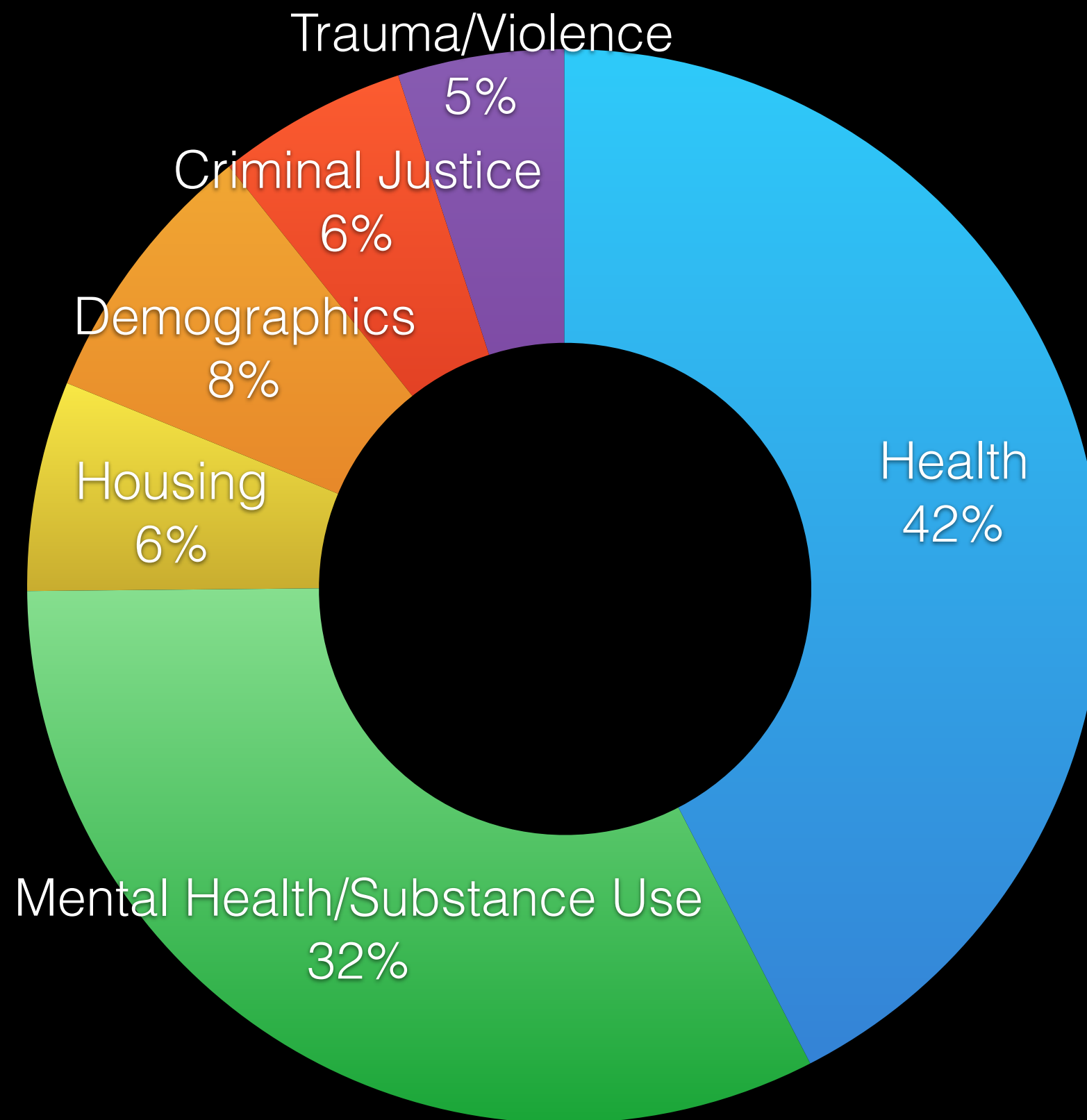
National Population	Poverty Population	Homeless Family Population
13%	27%	59%



“The Latino Paradox”

(Gonzalez-Baker, 1996)

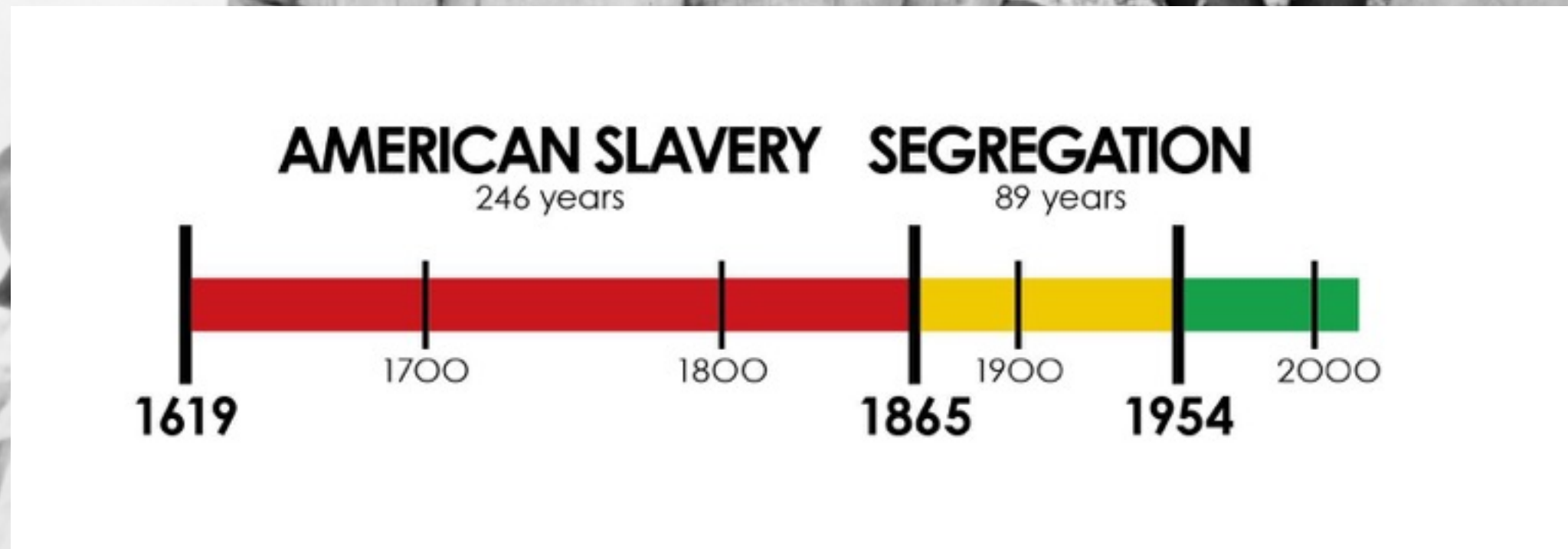
scoping review: 898 articles



(Center for Social Innovation, 2016)



A Historical Perspective



“Social and racial inequities are geographically inscribed.”

For 100 years, between 1870 and 1970, African Americans moved to the cities of the North and West.

Whites fled.



Volume I:
Executive Summary

Report of the
Secretary's Task
Force on

Black &
Minority
Health

1985



In January 1984--ten months after becoming Secretary of Health and Human Services--I sent Health, United States, 1983 to the Congress. It was the annual report card on the health status of the American people.

That report--like its predecessors--documented significant progress: Americans were living longer, infant mortality had continued to decline--the overall American health picture showed almost uniform improvement.

But, and that "but" signaled a sad and significant fact; there was a continuing disparity in the burden of death and illness experienced by Blacks and other minority Americans as compared with our nation's population as a whole.

What has 30+ years of research has revealed?

Minority

Stress

The Stress Concept

“any condition having the potential to arouse the adaptive machinery of the individual”

Pearlin, 1999

Interactions with society provide
the individual with information
on the construction of the world;
**health is compromised when such
information is incongruent with the
minority person's experience
in the world.**

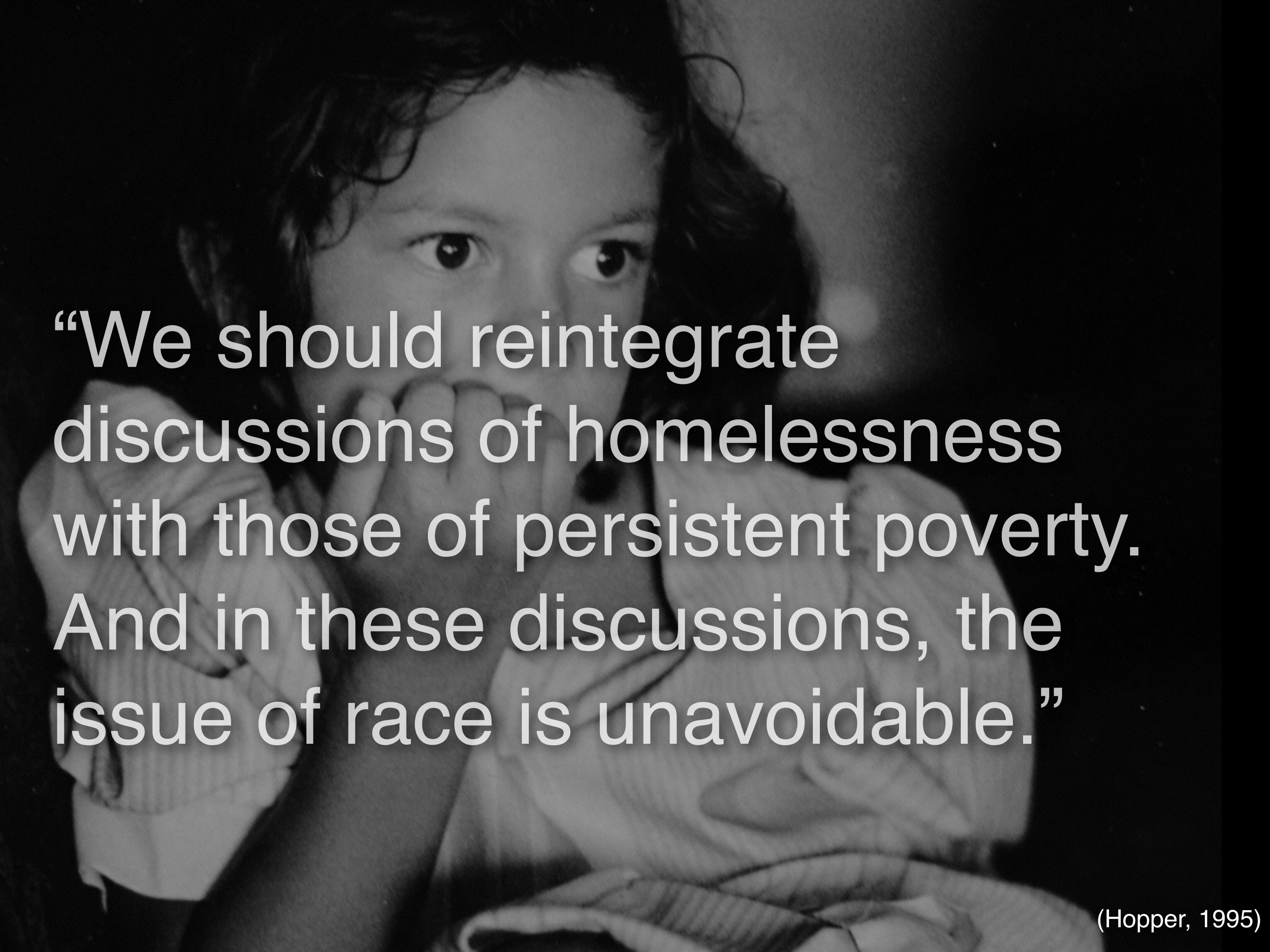
—Meyer, 2003



HEALTH

INCARCERATION





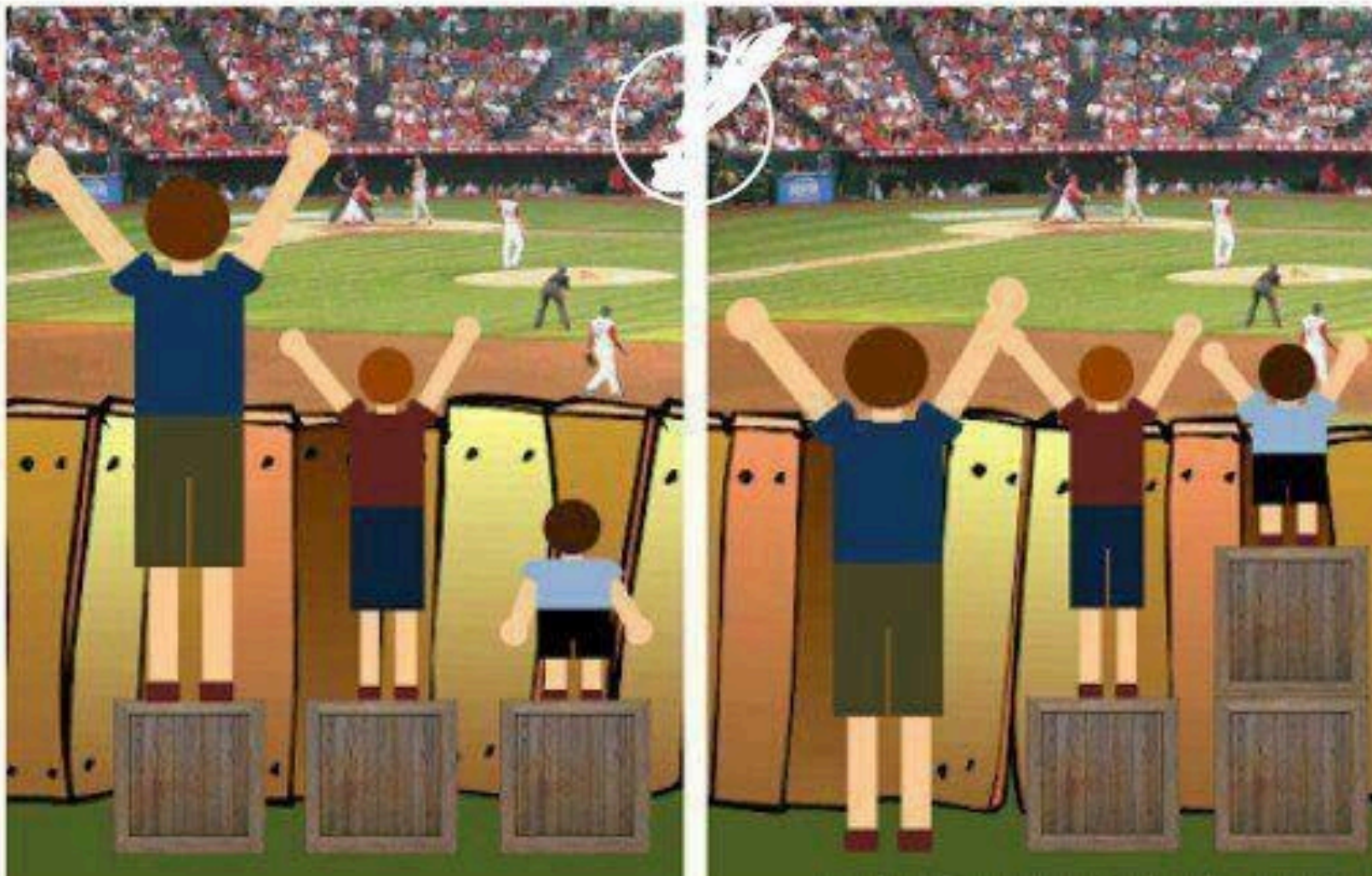
“We should reintegrate discussions of homelessness with those of persistent poverty. And in these discussions, the issue of race is unavoidable.”

(Hopper, 1995)

EQUALITY IS NOT EQUITY

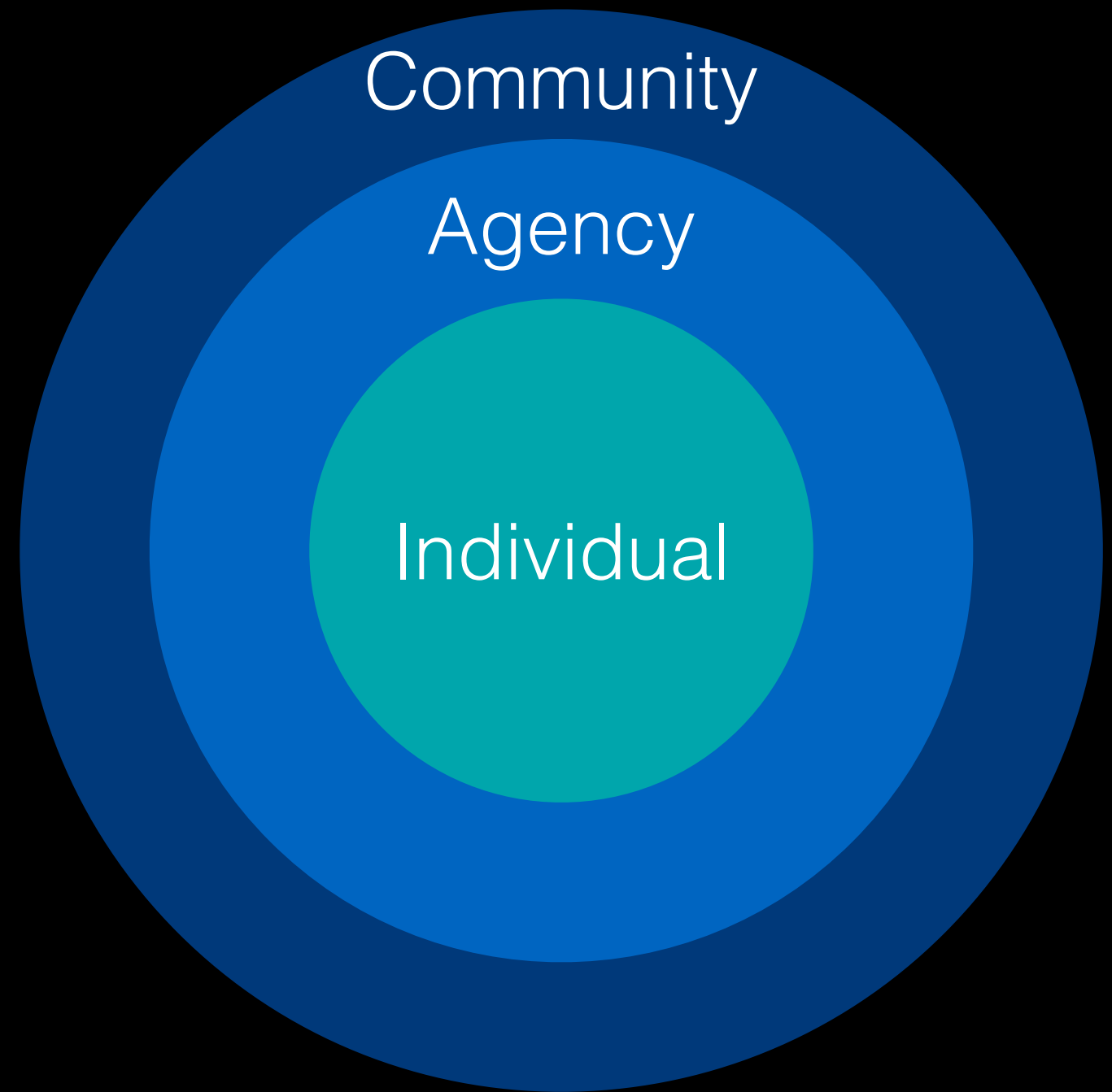
Equality

Equity

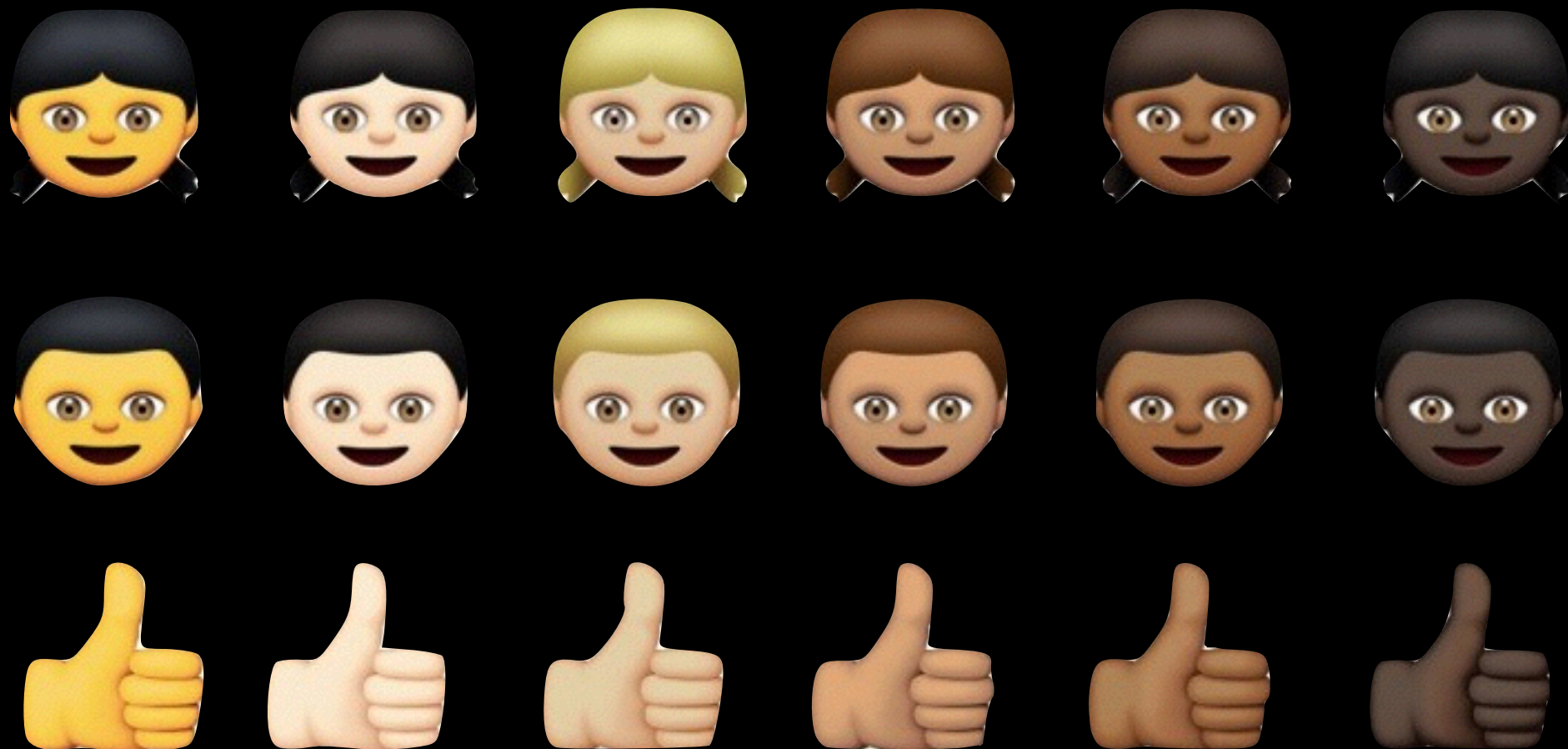


what does this all mean?

What is our
obligation in
dismantling
racism?



How do these responsibilities differ for white people and people of color?



What Can You Do About It?

1. Work to understand the problem more deeply
2. Consider your own biases
3. Examine the data—let us know what you find
4. Begin a dialogue in your agency/community
5. Call each other on racism when you see it
6. Set up structures to combat racism and discrimination in your agency (e.g., diversity officers/committees, staff training)

What We Are Doing

1. Mobilize partnerships
2. Review the research literature
3. Examine national and local data
4. Find interventions to adapt, then test and scale what works
5. Continue to educate people and to bear witness



www.center4si.com

Marc Dones

mdones@center4si.com

 [@marcformarc](https://twitter.com/marcformarc)

617-467-6014

Jeff Olivet

jolivet@center4si.com

 [@jeffolivet](https://twitter.com/jeffolivet)

617-467-6014

References

Carter III, G. R. (2011). From exclusion to destitution: Race, affordable housing, and homelessness. *Cityscape*, 33-70.

Culhane, Dennis P. & Stephen Metraux (1999). "Assessing Relative Risk for Homeless Shelter Usage in New York City and Philadelphia." *Population Research and Policy Review* 18(3): 219-236.

Hopper, K. (1996). Homelessness among african-americans: a historical and contemporary perspective. In *Homelessness in America*, ed. J. Baumohl. Oryx Press.

McKernan, S., Ratcliffe, C., Steuerle, E., & Zhang, S. (2013). Less than equal: racial disparities in wealth accumulation. Urban Institute.

Powell, J.A. (2003). *Race and Homelessness* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from http://www.kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/presentations/2003_09_29homelessness.ppt

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2015). The Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress.



Center for
Social Innovation