



Austin: A Tale of Two Cities

April 22, 2021

Alison Bentley, Ph.D.

Director of Data & Evaluation, United Way for Greater Austin

COVID-19.

Systemic Racism.

Inequality.

An aerial photograph of a city skyline at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with scattered clouds. The city features numerous skyscrapers, some with glass facades reflecting the setting sun. A wide river flows through the city, with several bridges crossing it. In the foreground, there are green trees and a park area. The overall scene is vibrant and modern.

Top Metro Economy in U.S.

Top U.S. Job Market

4th Best City to Raise a Family

4th Best City to Start a Business

5th Best City to Start A Career

Healthiest Metro Area

Most Fun City in America

An aerial photograph of a city skyline, featuring a prominent domed capitol building in the background. The foreground is dominated by several large, modern office buildings with glass and concrete facades. The sky is clear and blue. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

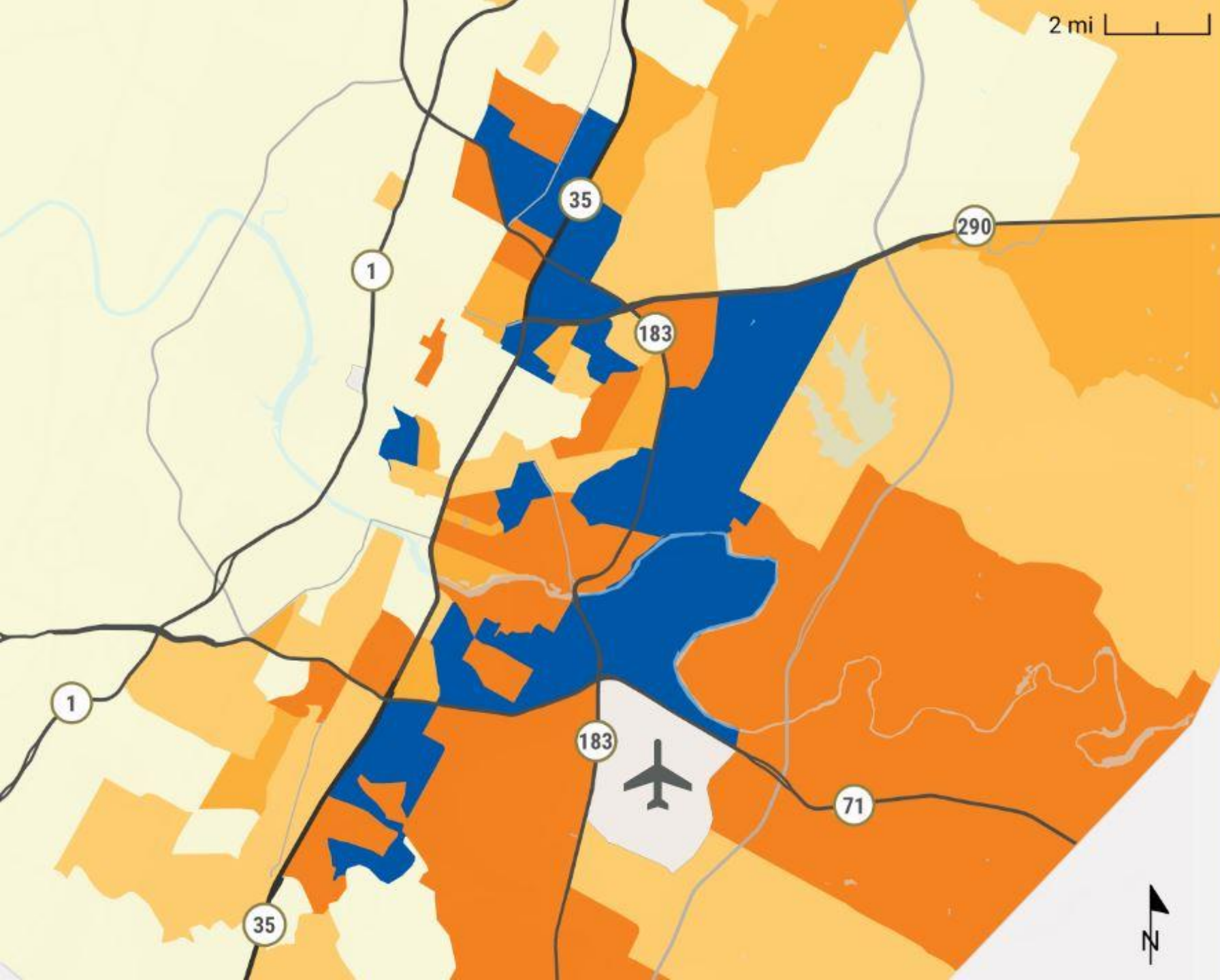
Persistent Food and Child Care Deserts
Rising Child Poverty Rate
Low Levels of Kindergarten Readiness
Dearth of Adult Functional Literacy
Least Affordable City for Minimum Wage Workers
Top 20 in Economic Segregation



42,308 Families are Not Even “Surviving” in Austin

	Federal Poverty Level	Low-Income (2x FPL)	Local Survival Budget (Two adults, two in child care)
Annual Income for Family of 4	\$26,500	\$53,000	\$88,716

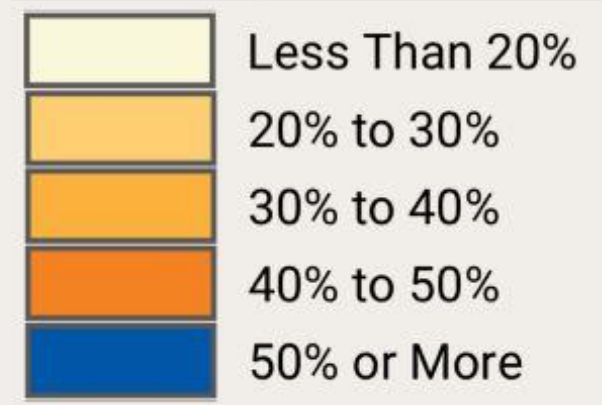
2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines; Survival Budget based on United Way Worldwide's ALICE Budget



Family Poverty

Travis County

Percentage of Low-Income Families



More than **one in three**

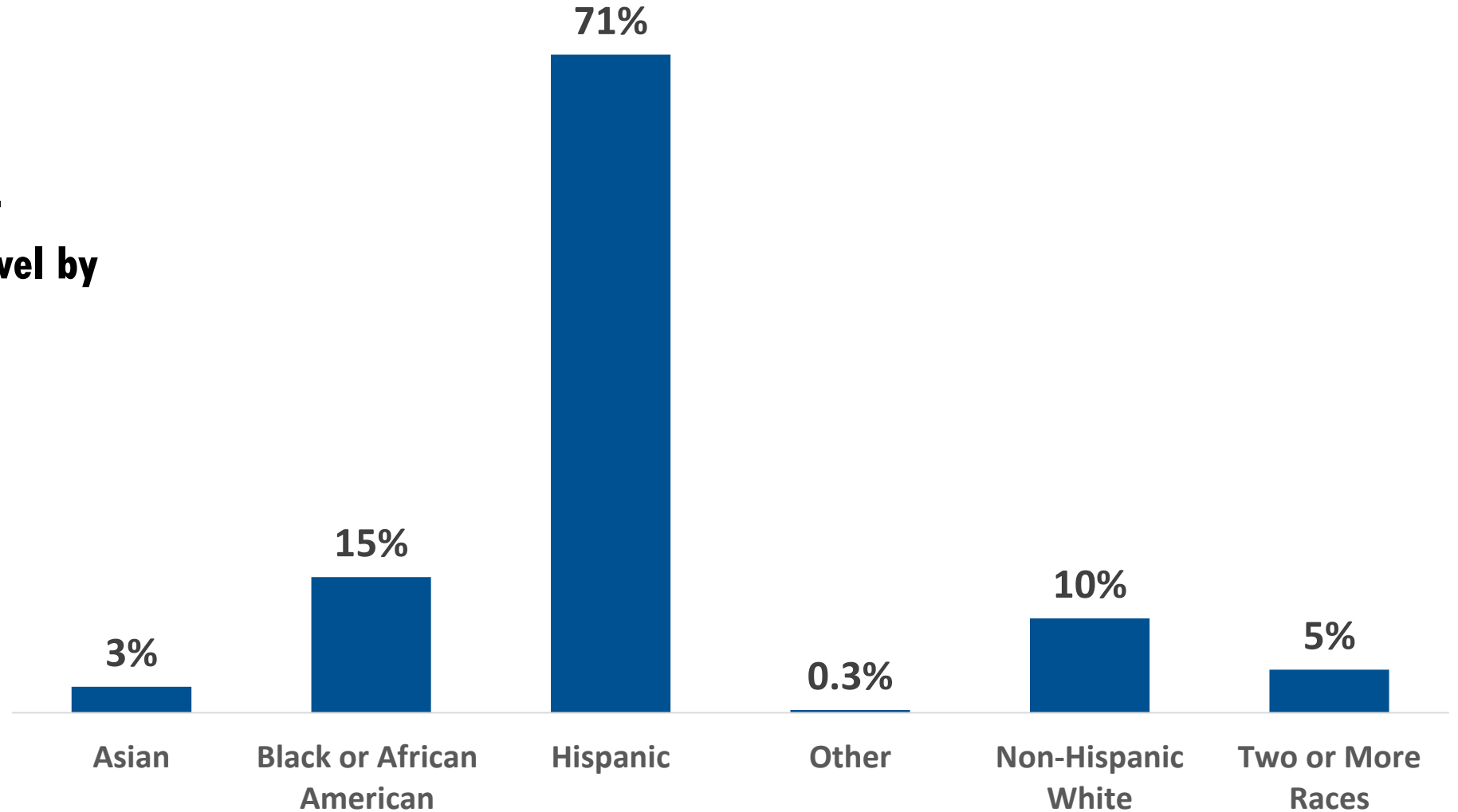
children under six living in Travis County

**live in households with
low income.**



Austin Child Poverty is Disproportionate

**Children Five and Under
Living Below Poverty Level by
Race and Ethnicity**



Austin is Getting More Expensive...

	2015 Estimate	2019 Estimate	% Change
Rent	\$967	\$1,199	21%
Housing Value	\$277,100	\$362,300	27%

...But Incomes Aren't Keeping Up

	2015 Estimate	2019 Estimate	% Change
Median Family Income	\$80,519	\$102,643	24%
Median Family Income for Female Householders with children under 18 years old	\$26,660	\$29,882	11%

Child Care Costs More Than College

UT Tuition (Liberal Arts)



\$10,582

Austin Child Care (avg)



\$10,600

Austin Infant Child Care (avg)



\$11,450

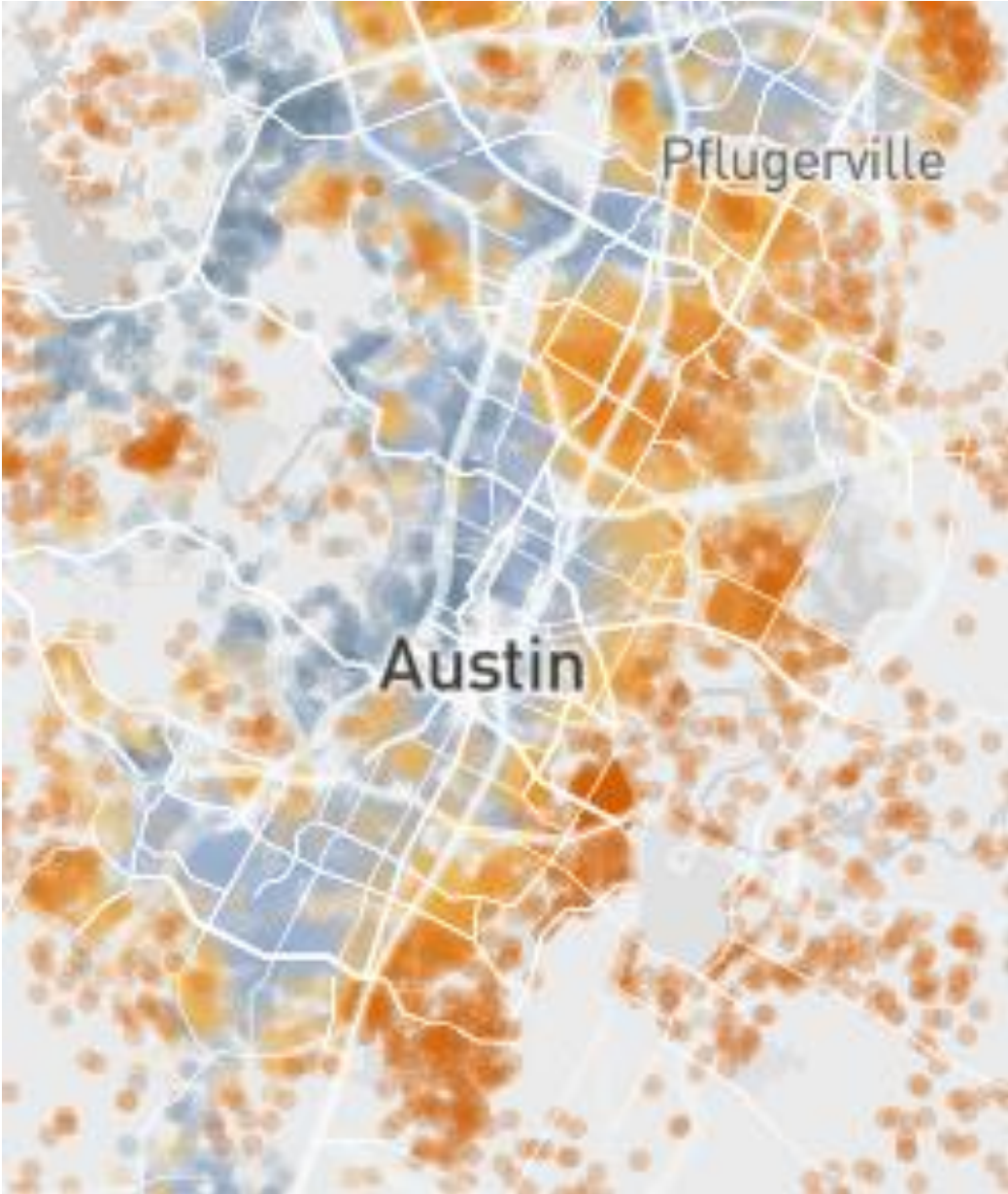
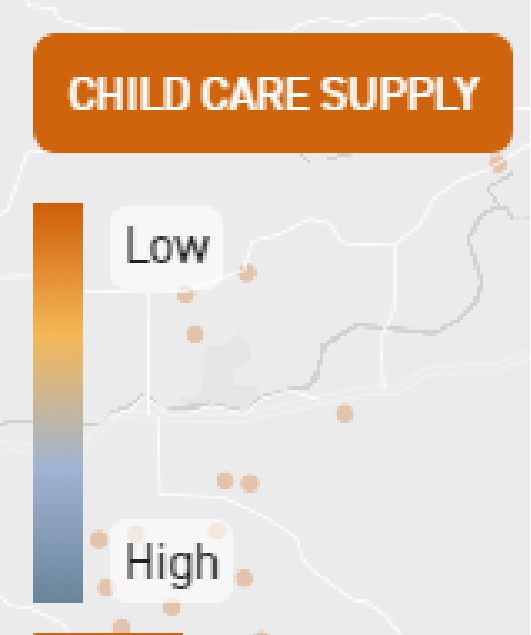


52%

of programs serving children from households with low income are high quality.

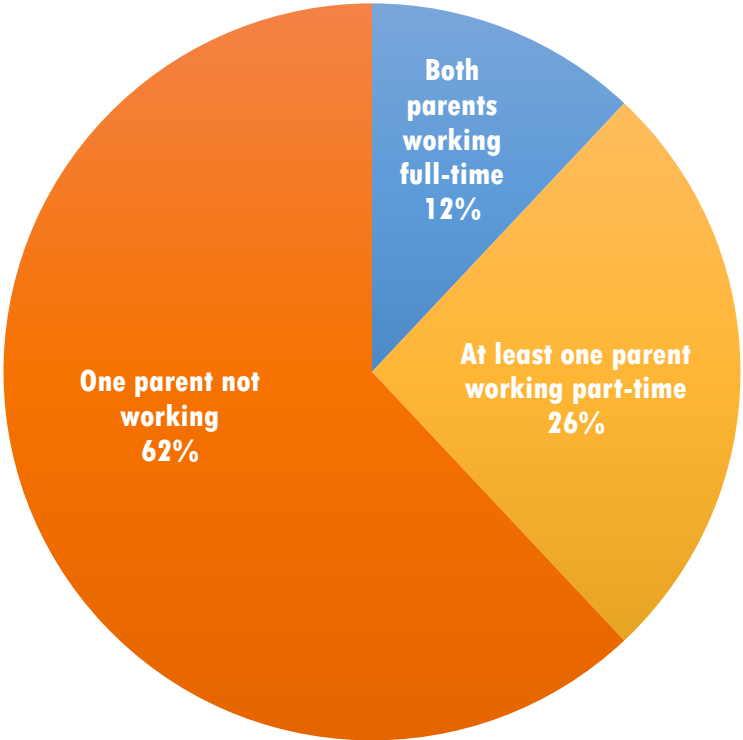
****High Quality Care in West Austin costs over \$20,000/year.***

Child Care Deserts

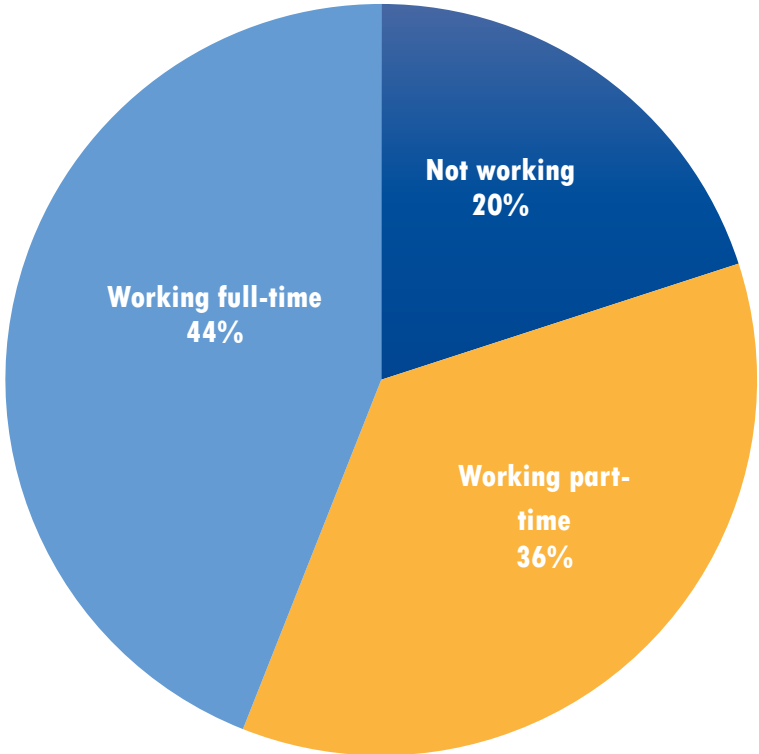


Parents Often Leave Jobs to Care for Children

Two-Parent Families with Low Income



Single Parent Families with Low Income

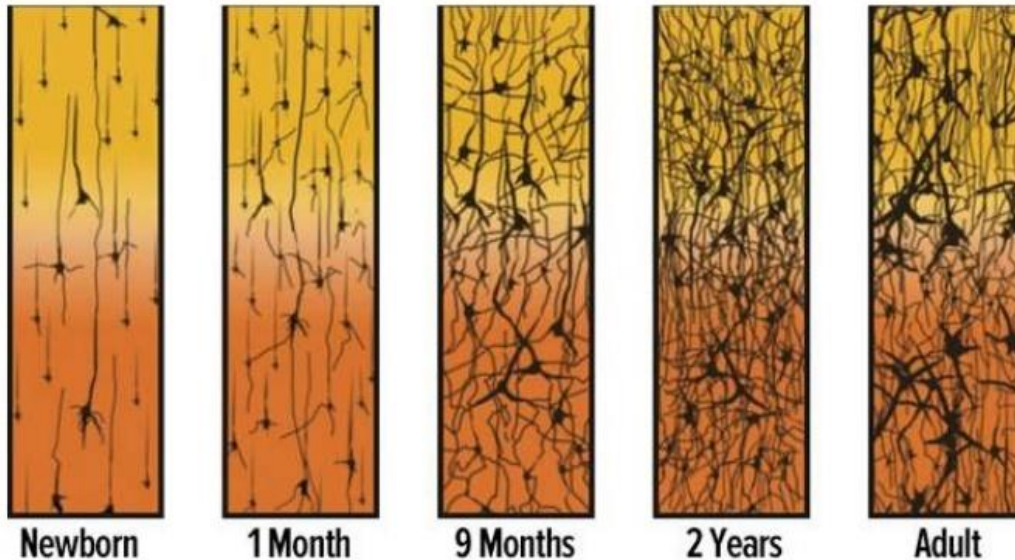


Data source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey PUMS

Our First 5 Years Are Critically Important...

We know that 90% of all brain development happens by age 5

Synapse density over time

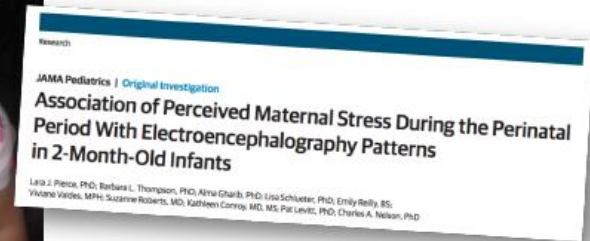


New Evidence Shows Early Impact of Stress




THE JPB RESEARCH NETWORK ON TOXIC STRESS
A Project of the Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Translation: Effects of Mothers' Stress Seen in the Brain Activity of 2-Month-Old Infants

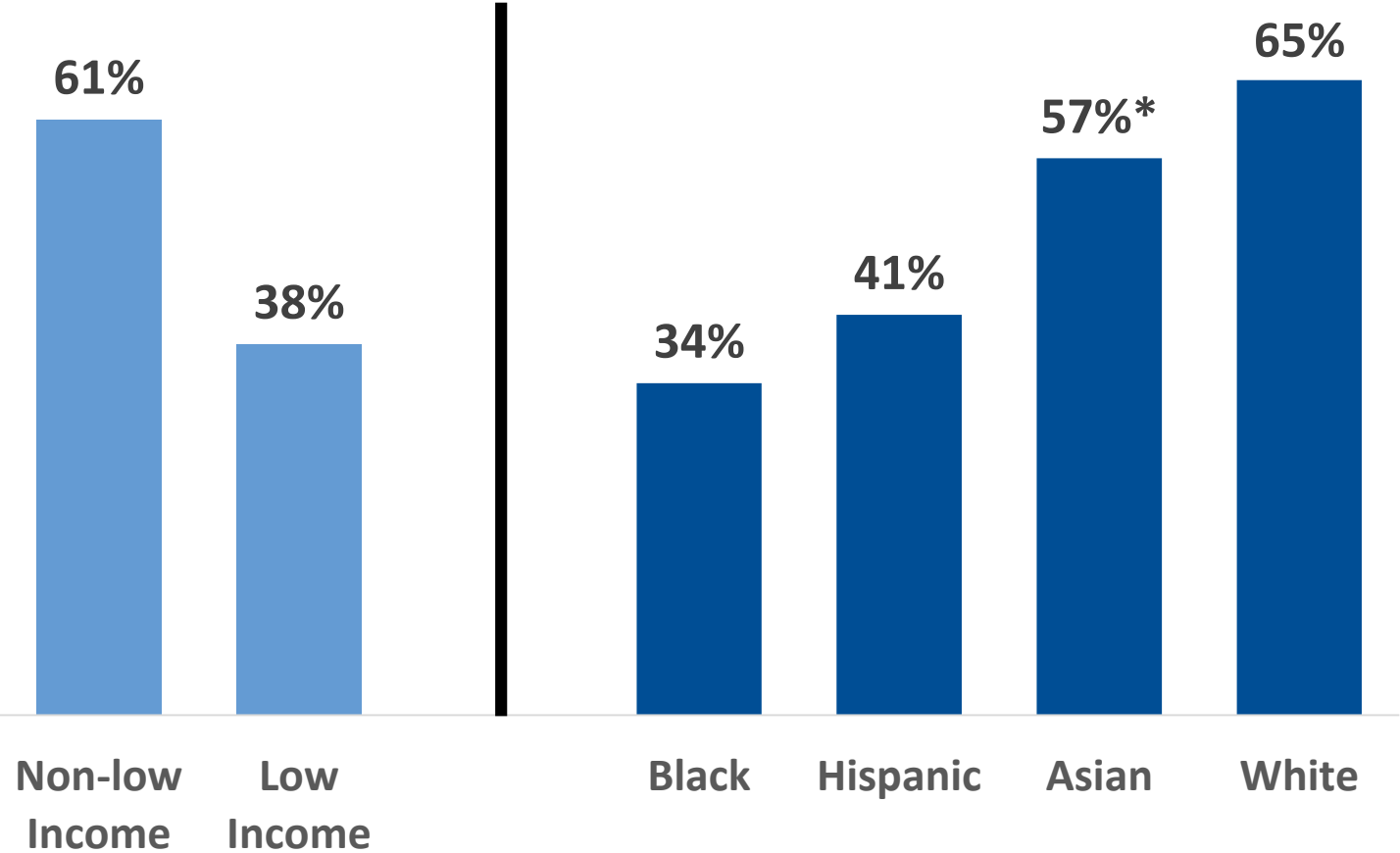


Source: American Medical Association (2019)

Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY

...But Many Children are Already Behind by Age 6

2019 - 2020 Kindergarten Readiness



only
36%
of children under four from households with low income are receiving any early learning services at all.

Travis County Ready Set K! Data 2015-2019; *Unreliable –use with caution; United Way collected data

Starting Behind Often Means Staying Behind

School readiness predicts how likely kids are to pass their 3rd Grade STAAR test:

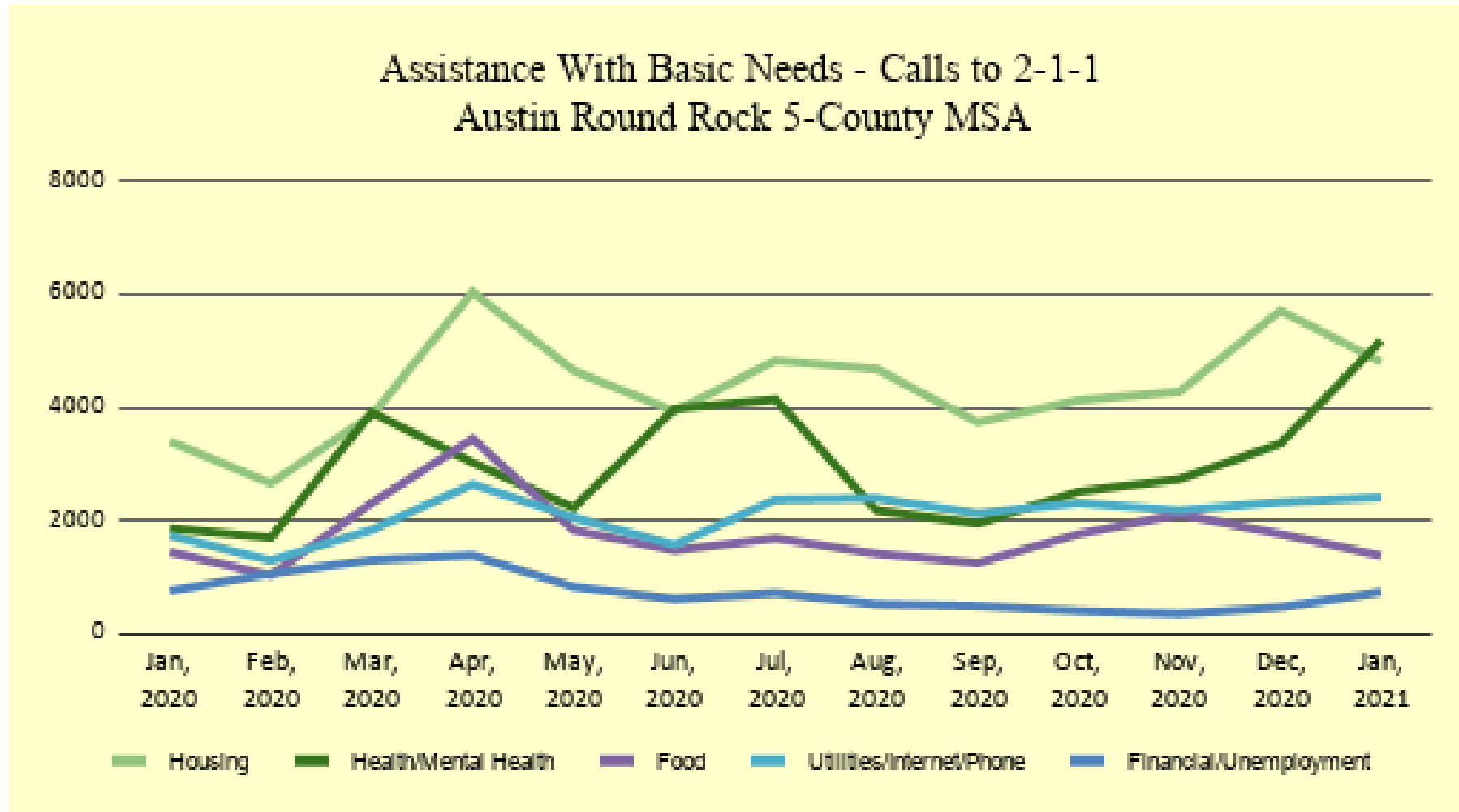
It also predicts:



- **High school graduation rates**
- **Juvenile justice system interactions**
- **Teen pregnancies**
- **Future earning potential**

How has COVID-19 Changed Travis County?

Community Needs: 2-1-1 call volume has increased significantly



Early Childhood



Our Nation's Childcare Infrastructure Faces an Existential Risk

Center for American Progress

Coronavirus Pandemic Could Lead to Permanent Loss of Nearly 4.5 Million Child Care Slots



With School Buildings Closed, Children's Mental Health Is Suffering

Statesman

LEFT BEHIND: How the coronavirus is widening the student achievement gap

Family Financial Stability

★ THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Texas families filing for SNAP food assistance almost doubled in April



Job losses impact minority and hourly workers most in pandemic

KUT 90.5

Central Health Says Latinx Patients Test Positive For COVID-19 At A Rate 3 Times Higher Than Others

★ THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

They lost their jobs and insurance in the pandemic. Now they're slipping through Texas' health care safety net.

RAPID-EC

42% of households

are worried about paying for at least one basic need like food, rent or utilities

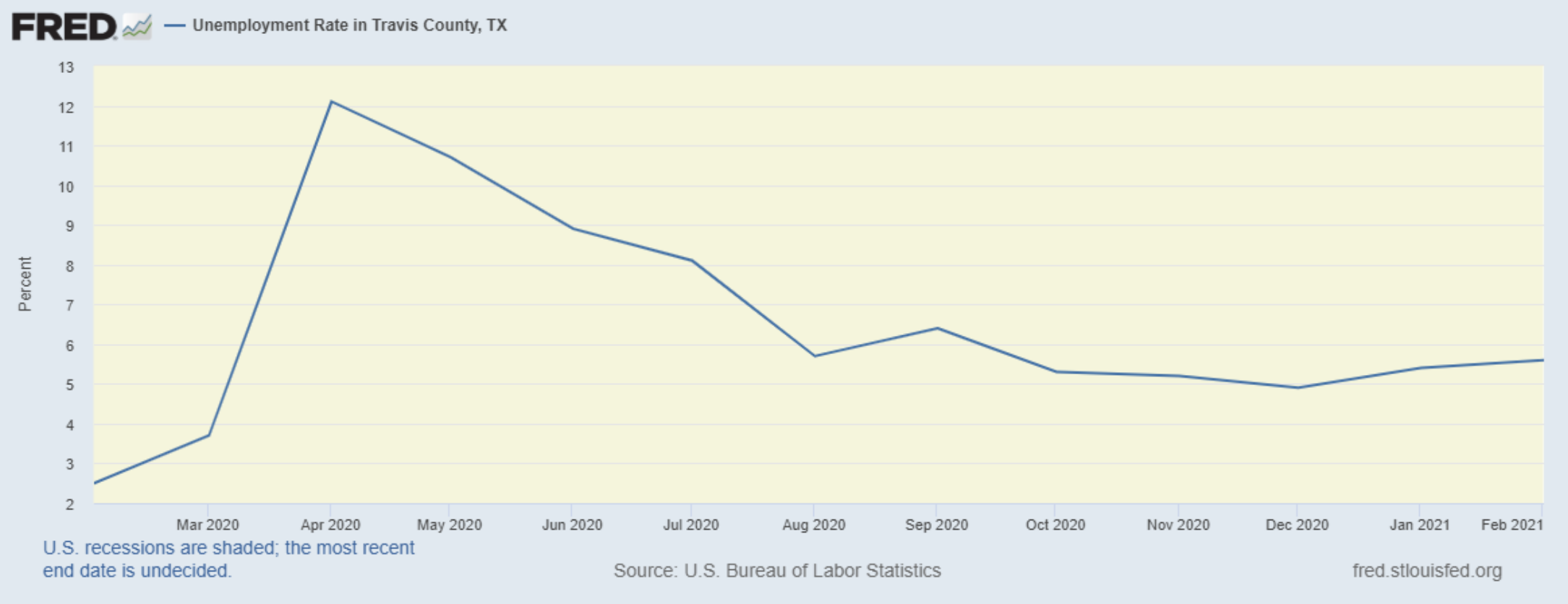
52% of children

within families with financial hardship are facing emotional distress

47% of parents

may not be able to return to work due to lack of child care

Family Financial Stability – Unemployment Rate



Highest rate: April 2020: 12.4%
Most recent: December 2020: 4.9%

Pandemic is Disproportionately Affecting Women

- **22% of all women have left the workforce during the pandemic.**
- **42% of women with children under the age of two have left work.**
- **41% of women either left the workforce or know a woman who has.**

Caregiving demands are a key factor behind these numbers.

LIVE UNITED

Success By 6 Coalition Data Dashboard

United Way for
Greater Austin



Focus Areas



Thank you



Questions: Alison.Bentley@uwatx.org