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Long Term Effect of Poverty on Child Development

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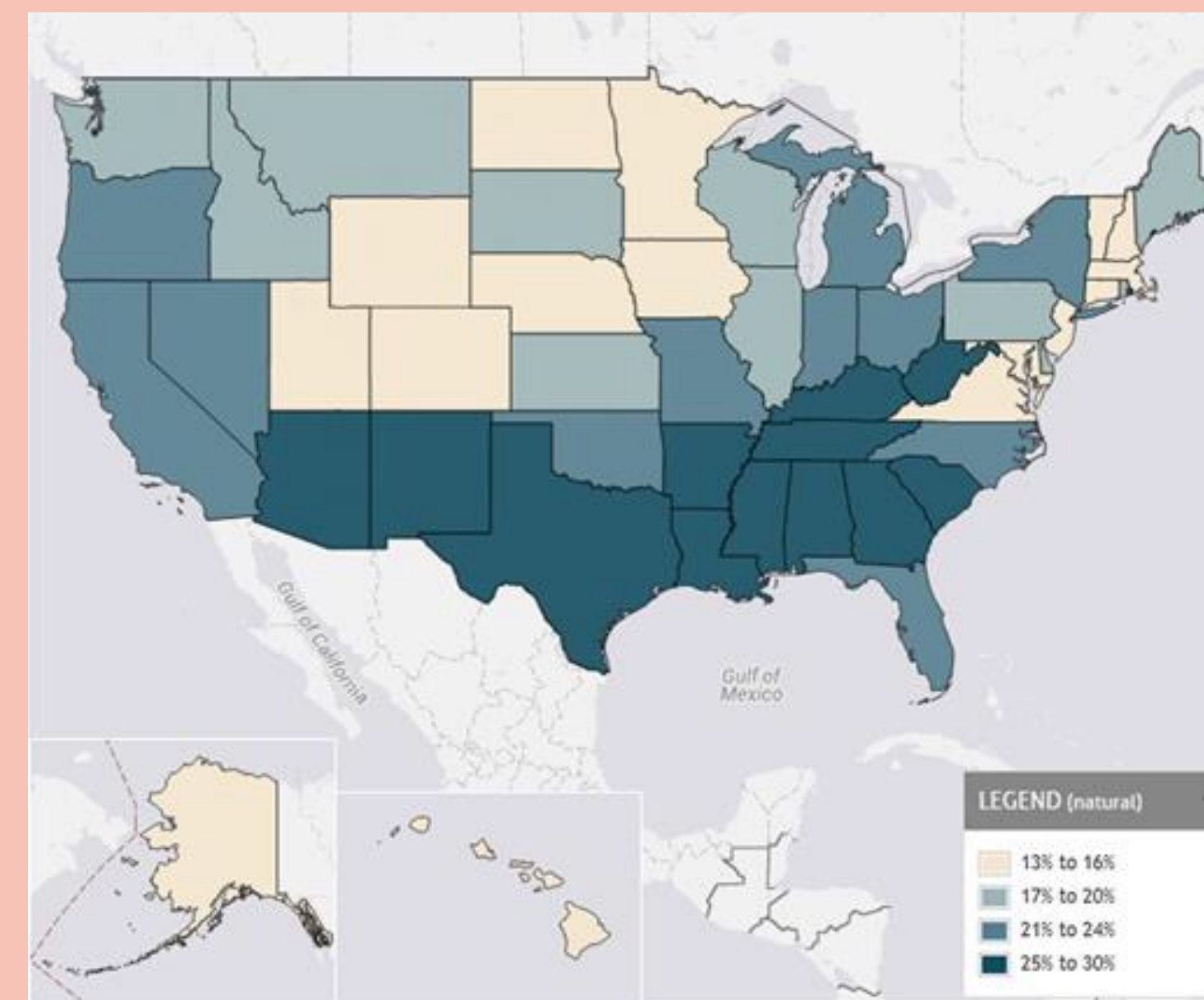


Abstract

Poverty is an important social determinant of health and contributes to child health disparities. Children who experience poverty, particularly during early life or for an extended period, are at risk of a host of adverse health and developmental outcomes throughout their life course (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997). Poverty has a profound effect on specific circumstances, such as birth weight, infant mortality, chronic illness, and environmental exposure. Children living in poverty are at increased risk of inattention, impulsivity, defiance, and poor peer relationships (Boyle, 2011). Poverty and other adverse social determinants have a detrimental effect on child health and are the root causes of child health inequity in the United States.

Key Points

- Low birth weight is often used as a marker for infant and child outcomes and has been found to be a leading predictor of first-year mortality risk (Collins 2008).
- Children raised in poverty have been shown to have higher levels of depression and antisocial behavioral problems than those raised in families with adequate incomes.
- Higher levels of parental education decreases the likelihood that a child will live in a low-income or poor family. Among children with at least one parent with some college or additional education, 13% are poor and 31% are low income. By contrast, among children whose parents have less than a high school degree, 57% are poor and 86% are low income (Jiang, 2019).



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Conclusions & Discussion

I believe that knowledge needs to expand rapidly, especially regarding the neurobiological effects of poverty and related environmental stressors on the developing human brain, as well as the life course of chronic illness caused by poverty. I believe it is critical that we find a way to prevent the negative consequences of poverty on children. What is the government doing now to alleviate poverty and avoid long-term consequences for children's development? What will the poverty level be in the future and how can we improve it?

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