



Achieving Excellence with Equity by Aiming Higher Together

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Harvard Kennedy School and Tripod Education Partners, Inc.

*Halpern Lecture and Youth Public Service Award Event
Institute for Educational Leadership and American Youth Policy Forum*



WHY?

Nana on her 100th birthday, May 23, 2006.



Kathryn Elizabeth Chavers
1906-2006

Passing the Torch

My flesh is weak,
My soul is tired,
I pass the torch to you.

Inside this flame
Live many dreams
Now you must see them through.

The Predicament

The *Predicament* for Many Students of Color: Entangled in Cycles of Negative Reinforcement from Day One

Societal
STEREOTYPES
& Stigmas

INSIDE SCHOOLS

From: Ronald F. Ferguson (2016) *Aiming Higher Together: Strategizing Better Educational Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color*. Washington DC: The Urban Institute. May 2016.

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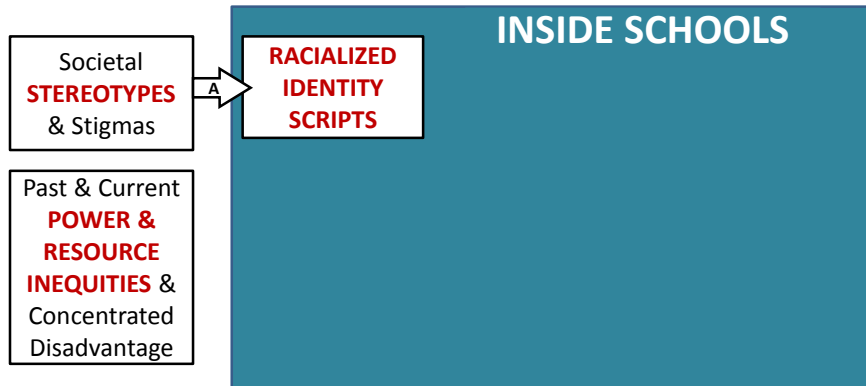


**RACIALIZED
IDENTITY
SCRIPTS**

INSIDE SCHOOLS

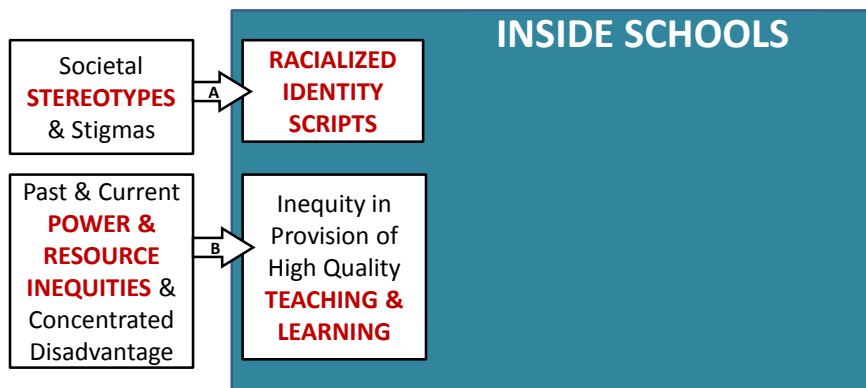
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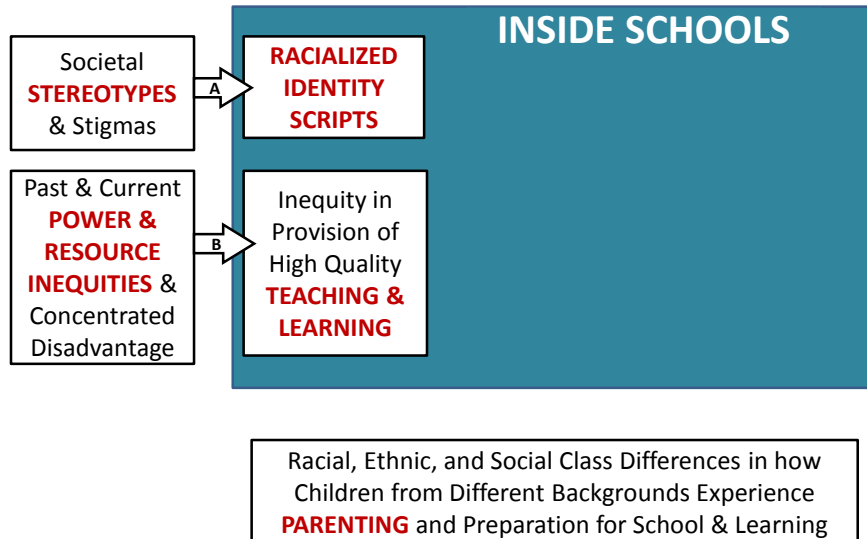
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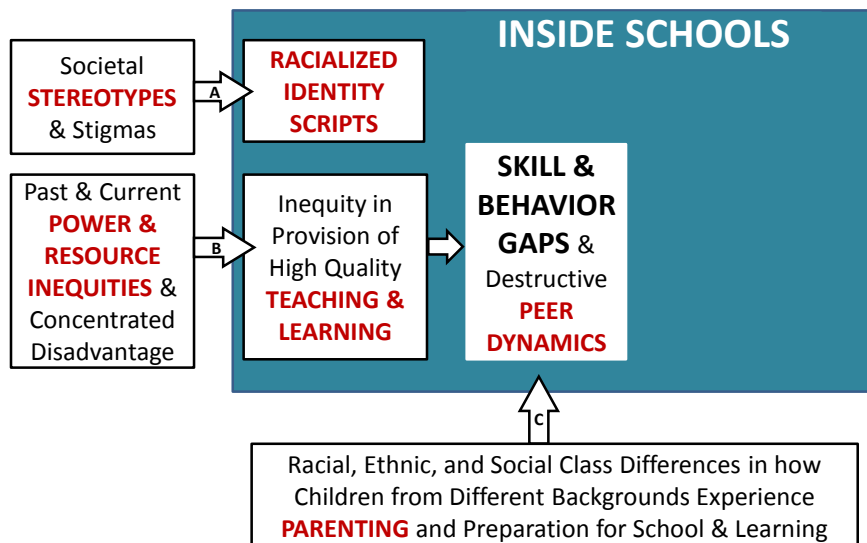
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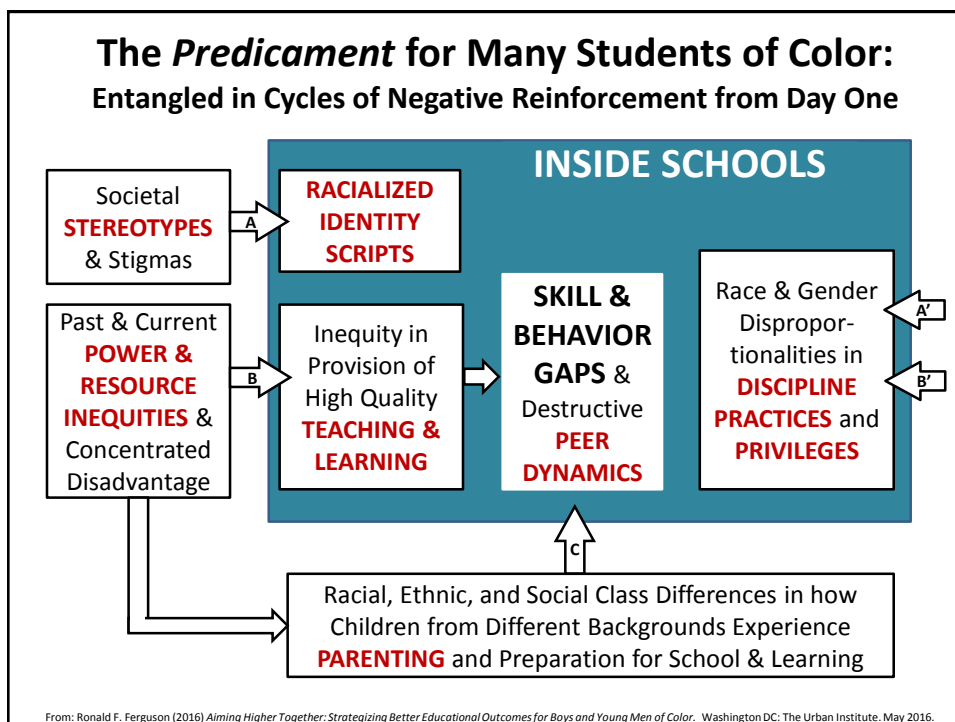
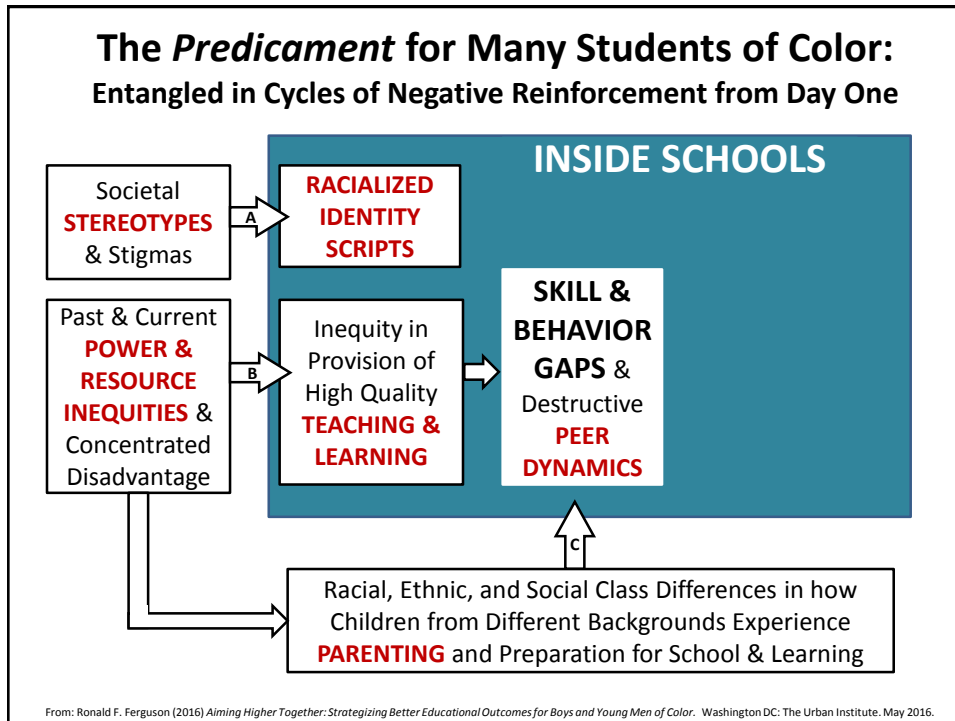


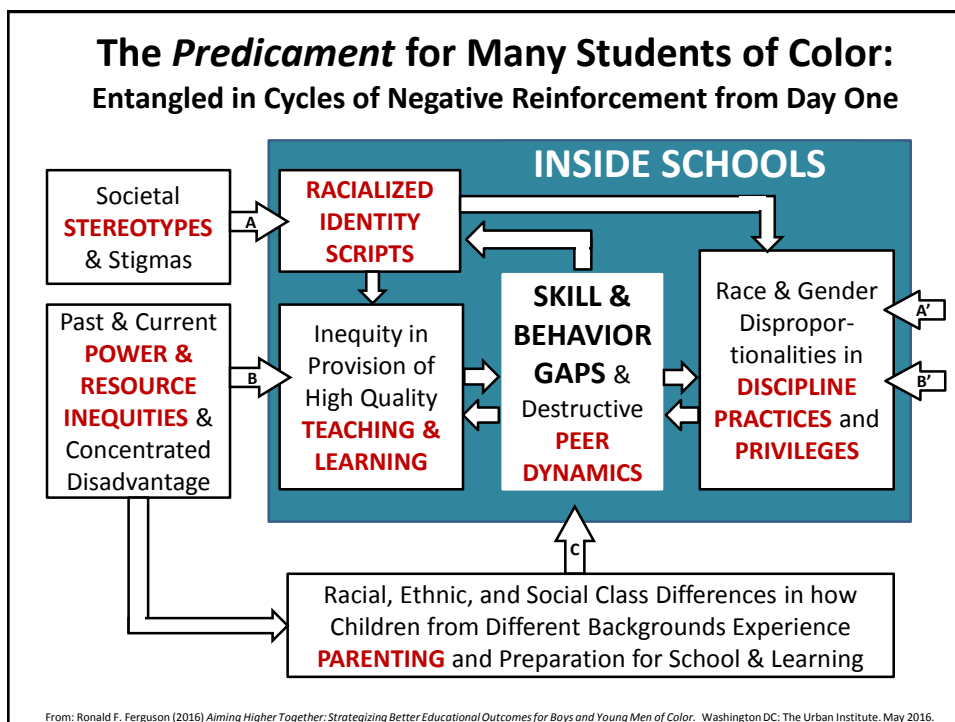
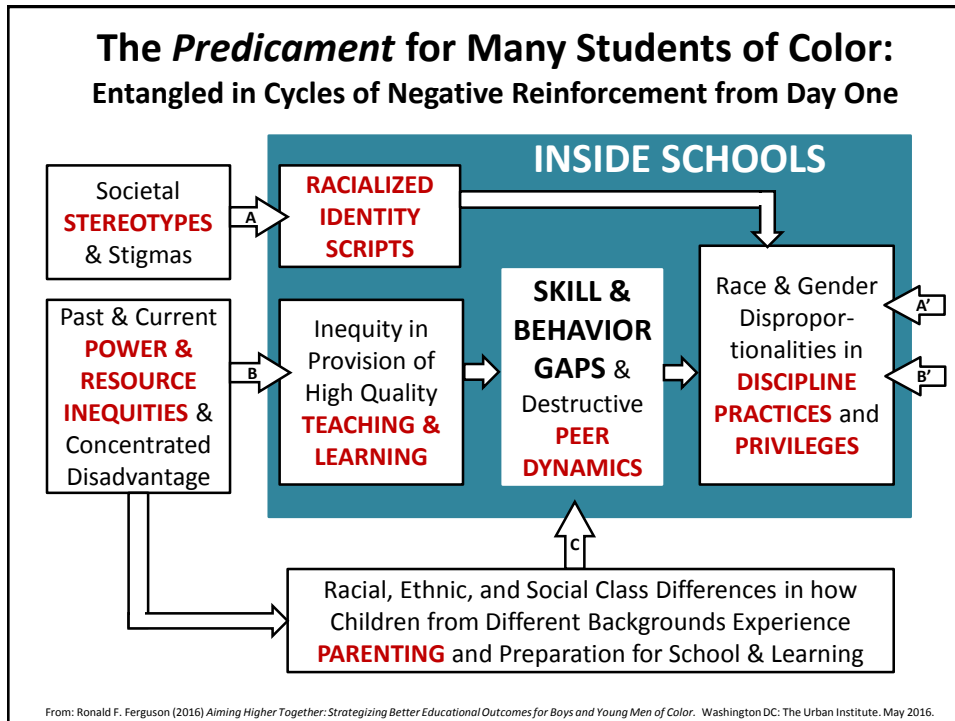
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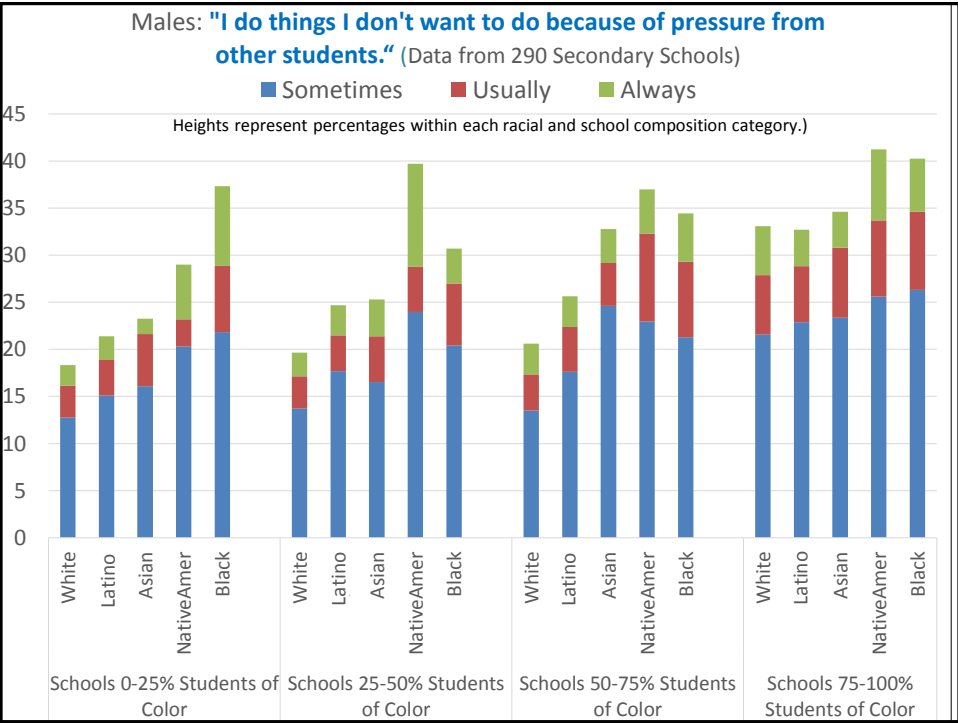
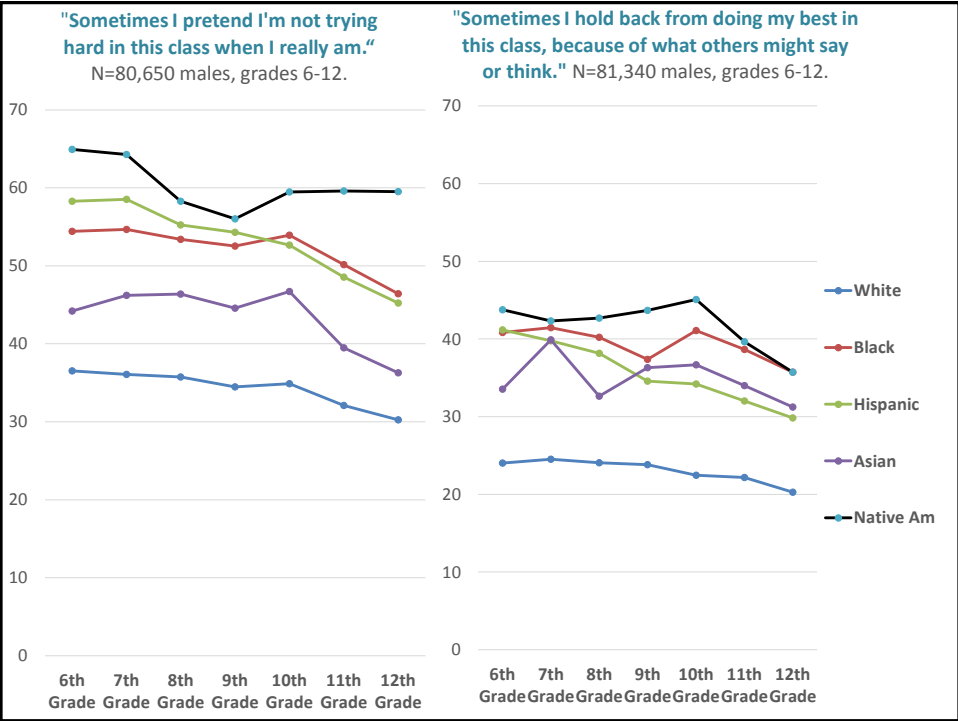
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Misbehaviors that may interfere with achievement
are not necessarily signs of bad intentions.

Kids just want to fit in and be safe with peers!

AGENCY

Agency is **the capacity and propensity to take purposeful action**—the opposite of helplessness. Young people with high levels of agency do not respond passively to their circumstances. They take deliberate steps to achieve the outcomes they desire in their own and others' lives.

Agency is not a fixed trait. Instead, **parents and teachers help to inspire, enable, and focus it** by the opportunities and guidance they provide.

How? Work on every part of the predicament to shape opportunities and experiences from birth through early adulthood.

Starting at Birth

Two Compelling Facts

- Racial, ethnic, socio-economic, even gender skill gaps in the U.S. are very clear in national data by the age of two.
- Science is clear about the types of lived experiences in the first three years that make a positive difference!



We face a moral imperative to act!

Cognitive Gaps in Early Childhood

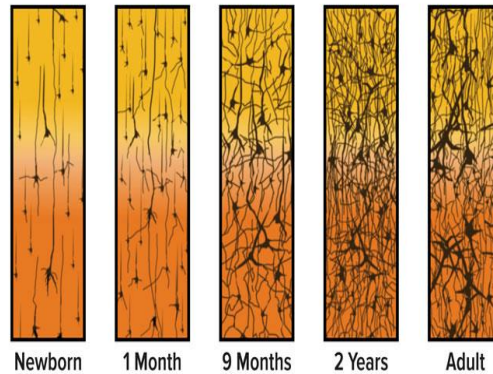
(As a percentage of scores for white females)

- At 1 Year Old
- At 2 Years Old



Source: AGI Calculations using Bailey Test score data from the U.S. national Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort.

A dense neural network by the age of 2!



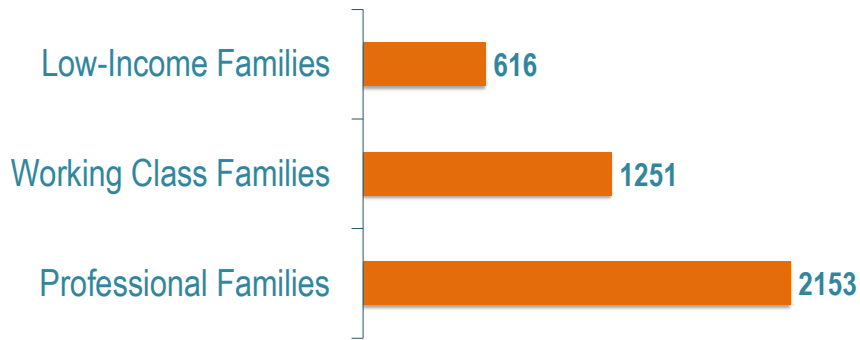
Source: Corel, J.L. The postnatal development of the human cerebral cortex. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; 1975

In one landmark study,* advantaged children in the U.S. heard as many as **30 million more words by the age of 3** compared to children whose families were receiving public assistance.



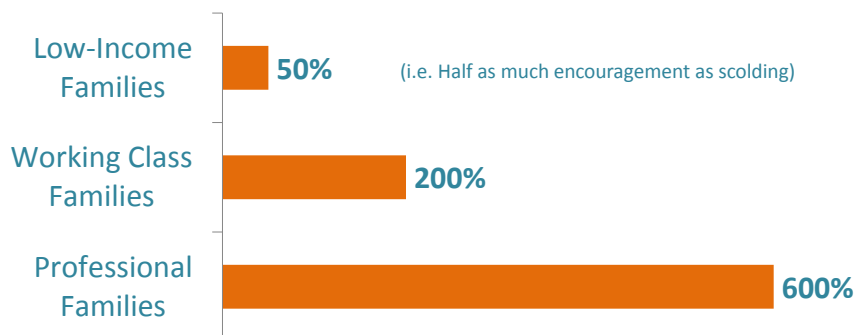
*Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley (1995). *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young American Children*. Baltimore: Brookes. Also, Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley (2003, Spring). "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3" (2003, spring). *American Educator*, pp.4-9.

Words the child heard spoken per hour:



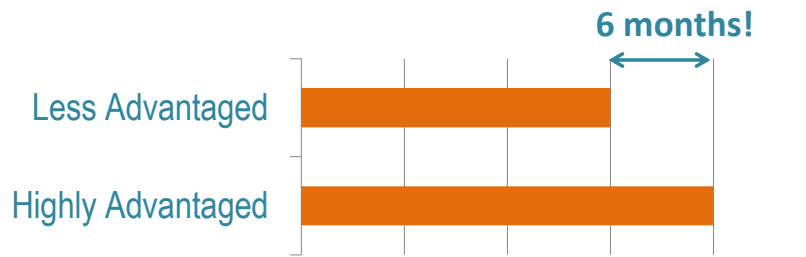
*Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley (2003, Spring). "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3" (2003, spring). American Educator, pp.4-9.

The ratio of praise or encouragement to reprimands, warnings, or scolding:*



*Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley (2003, Spring). "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3" (2003, spring). American Educator, pp.4-9.

In another major study,* less advantaged children were **six months behind the highly advantaged in language processing skills** by the age of two!



Anne Fernald, Virginia Marchman, and Adriana Weisleder (2013). "SES Differences in Language Processing Skill and Vocabulary are Evident at 18 Months." *Developmental Science* Volume 16, Number 2, pages 234-248.



The Boston Basics Campaign



Find this video and others at www.bostonbasics.org



MAXIMIZE LOVE, MANAGE STRESS



TALK, SING, AND POINT



COUNT, GROUP, AND COMPARE



EXPLORE THROUGH MOVEMENT AND PLAY



READ AND DISCUSS STORIES



**Boston
Basics**

Fun, Simple, and Powerful!

Rebranded for partner cities.

The Basics Campaign

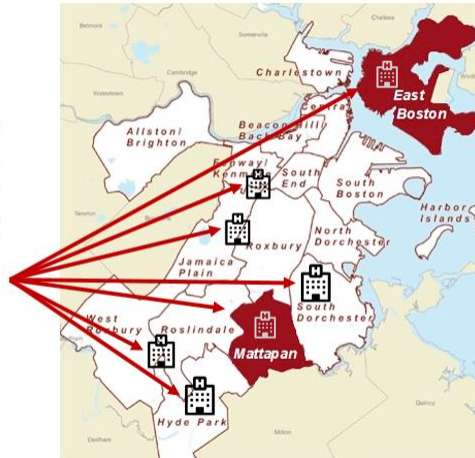
BROAD: Print, digital, advertising and public relations

+

**DEEP: Face-to-face learning, support,
and positive reinforcement
from trusted others**

Sector Based Approach

Healthcare is a priority sector Boston for 2018



Place Based Approach

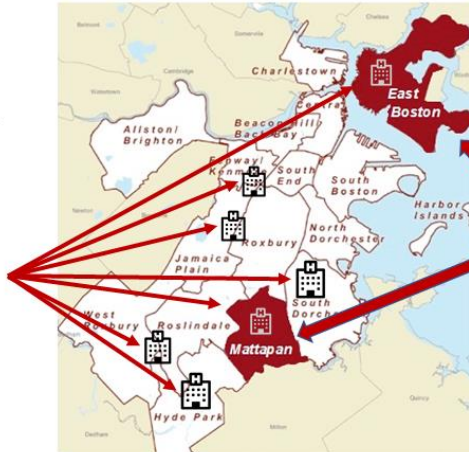
Deep Dive Neighborhoods in Boston for 2018 are East Boston and Mattapan



A Combination of Sector-Based and Place-Based Approaches

Sector Based Approach

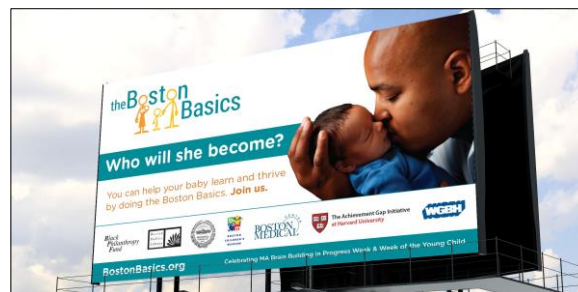
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Place Based Approach

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Broad Awareness: Billboards

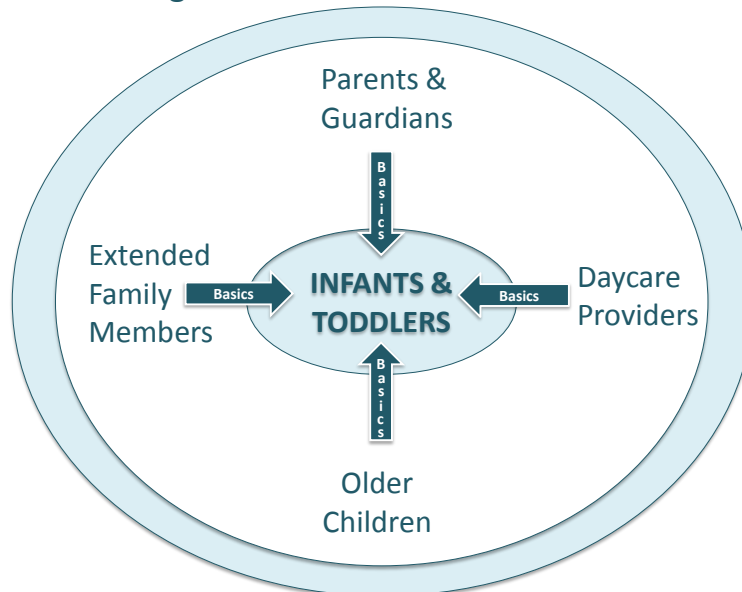


Multiple Sectors are Targeted in the Deep Dive Neighborhoods



Basics Care Circles

Surrounding Infants and Toddlers with the Basics





Poem:

The Caregiver's Promise

A Caregiver's Promise



With my heart I will love you
And shield you from stress.



With my mouth I will speak what I feel.
With soft words and sweet songs every time I behold you
I'll show you that my love is real.



With my fingers I'll point at the objects I name
And I'll count them in groups to compare.



With my feet I will take you outdoors to explore
While we play and enjoy the fresh air.



With my eyes I will read as I show you the world
Through bright pictures and stories in books.
These are ways to make sure that your brain is prepared
For successes wherever you look.

This my promise I make from the day of your birth
That these basics I'll faithfully do.

For my job is to help you grow happy and smart
Starting now when your life is brand new.

You will learn that your life is an artwork.
And that you are the artist in charge.
But before you decide what to do with your life
Listen now
To the beat
Of my heart.

On Us They Can Depend

As children we were fortunate
When every day we found
That the grownups had the answers
And they always seemed so sound.

When our problems over whelmed us
Down on childhood boulevard
Our small world was still coherent
Cause the grownups were in charge.

Now that we've become the grownups
Will the world just fall apart?
Will our kids at last discover
That we just don't have the heart?

No, instead will they be reassured
As we were way back then –
That the grownups have it covered
That on us they can depend.

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Ronald F. Ferguson, et. al. (2015). [“The Influence of Teaching.”](#) The Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard U.

Ronald F. Ferguson, (2016). [Aiming Higher Together: Strategizing Better Educational Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color.](#) The Urban Institute.

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A Tripod 7Cs Guide for Educators can be downloaded at
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