

# Health Equity & Race

SMC Health Government Alliance on Race & Equity Initiative

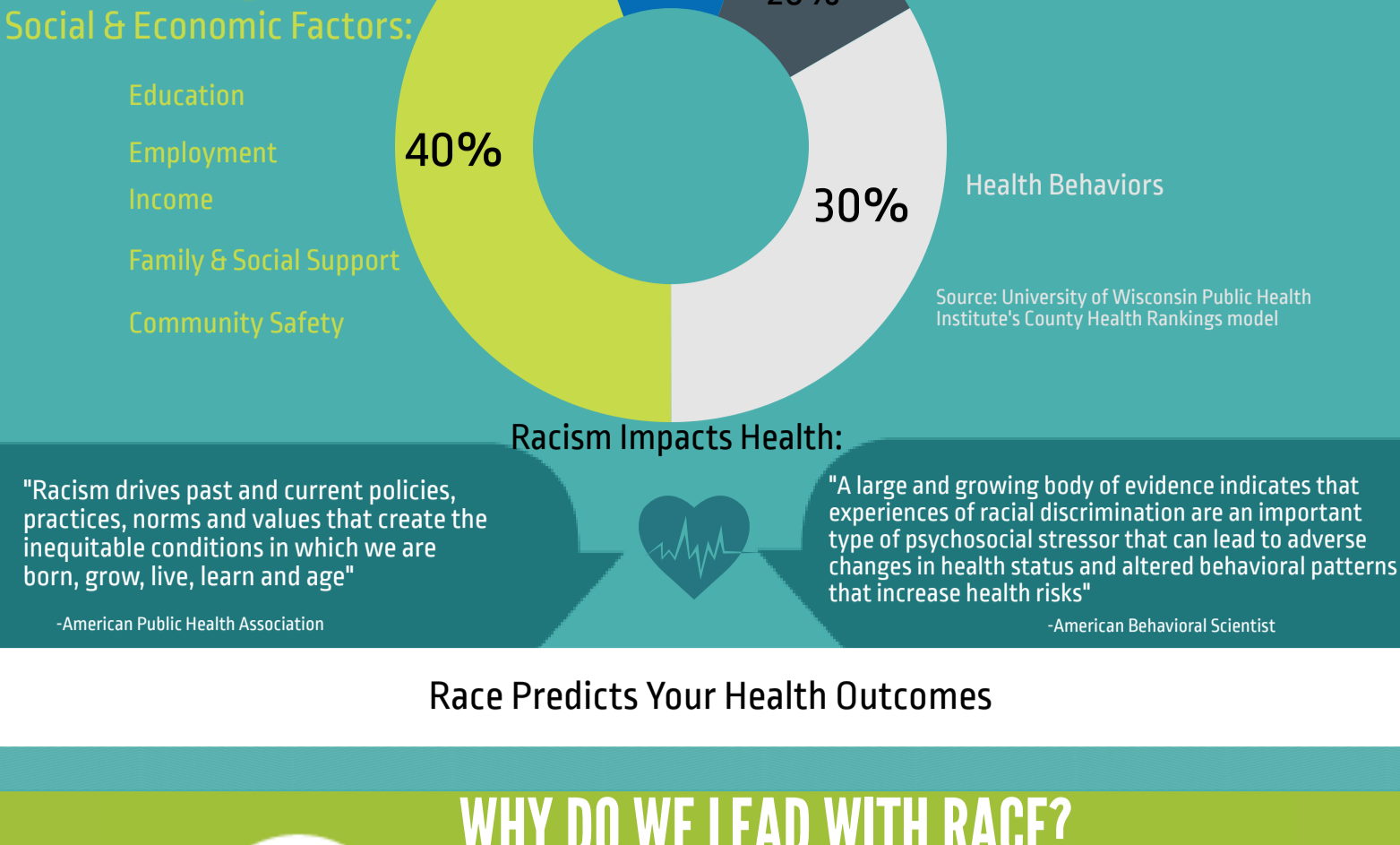


**SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH**

Addressing racial health inequities is a County Health priority as we work to create a shared vision of what it means to be All Together Better. To advance our progress towards racial equity, our department works with colleagues from across the Bay Area and the country in an effort called the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE).

In preparation for upcoming trainings to help normalize the conversation around race in our institution, this document provides background on key concepts related to racial health equity.

## WHAT DRIVES HEALTH OUTCOMES?



## Race Predicts Your Health Outcomes

## WHY DO WE LEAD WITH RACE?

**Race Matters:** Racial disparities persist regardless of socioeconomic status, class, or wealth. Outcomes by gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, age, and ability consistently demonstrate racial disparities.

**Structural Racism:** A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.

**Institutional Racism:** Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color.

**Individual Racism:** Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race.

**Racial Equity:** Racial equity means closing the gaps so that race can no longer predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all.  
 -Government Alliance for Racial Equity

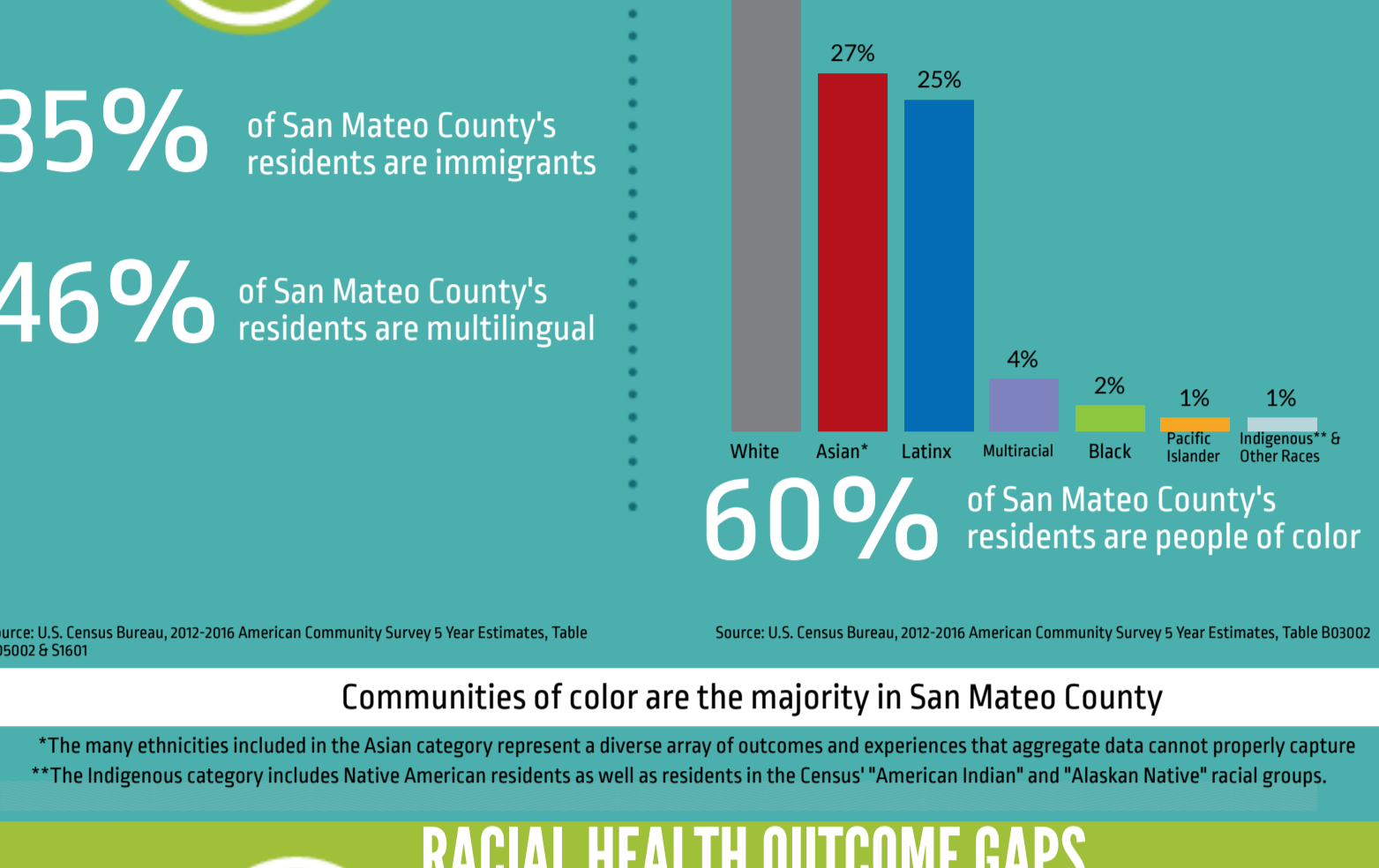
**Health Inequities:** Health inequities "are created when barriers prevent individuals and communities from accessing healthy conditions and reaching their full potential."  
 -American Public Health Association

**Implicit Bias:** "Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner"  
 -Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

When we are able to effectively advance racial equity, we are better positioned to advance all forms of equity.

## Systems & Institutions Have a Responsibility to Advance Racial Equity

## WE ARE A DIVERSE AND MULTIRACIAL COUNTY



## Communities of color are the majority in San Mateo County

\*The many ethnicities included in the Asian category represent a diverse array of outcomes and experiences that aggregate data cannot properly capture  
 \*\*The Indigenous category includes Native American residents as well as residents in the Census' "American Indian" and "Alaskan Native" racial groups.

## RACIAL HEALTH OUTCOME GAPS

Inequitable community conditions create inequitable health outcomes:

- Life Expectancy:** Black and Pacific Islander residents have the shortest life expectancy in the County. Black life expectancy estimates are over 6 years shorter than the County average.  
 Source: SMC Health Office of Epidemiology 2019-2017 analysis
- Low Birthweight:** Babies of color are more likely than White babies to be born below a healthy weight of 2,500 grams, which can have significant long-term impacts on a child's health.  
 Source: SMC Health Office of Epidemiology 2014-2016 analysis
- Premature Deaths:** The Black premature death rate is more than double the number of years of potential life lost before the age of 75 per 100,000 residents Countywide.  
 Source: SMC Health Office of Epidemiology 2010-2018 Analysis
- Mental Health:** The average number of days that SMC survey respondents felt worried, tense or anxious is much higher for residents of color.  
 Source: SMC 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment

### IMPACT

Negative social, economic, and environmental conditions harm the health of residents of color

## NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

Health Inequities in COVID-19 Positive Cases (as of July 20, 2020)

Race & Ethnicity	COVID-19 Positive Cases	San Mateo County Population
American Indian	.1%	.3%
Asian	10%	23%
Black	1%	2%
Latino	50%	20%
Pacific Islander	2%	1%
White	13%	41%
Multiracial	1%	4%
Other	0.5%	9%
Unknown	22%	

Latinx and Pacific Islander residents are over-represented in COVID-19 positive cases.

**Root Causes:**  
 Historical: Structural poverty\*, Housing discrimination, Employment discrimination  
 Current: Poverty, Housing overcrowding, Disproportionate makeup of essential workers

Source: Call Matters, "The neighborhoods where COVID collides with overcrowded homes"  
 Source: SMC Health Officer Statement July 20, 2020.

### IMPACT

The short- and long-term health and economic burdens of COVID-19 are disproportionately impacting Latinx and Pacific Islander residents

\* Historical conditions that lead primarily communities of color to live in an ongoing cycle of poverty

## EDUCATION OUTCOME GAPS

San Mateo County Suspension Rates and Student Population by Race & Ethnicity 2016-2017

Race & Ethnicity	Percent of Enrolled Students	Percent of Students Suspended
Black	2%	5%
Asian	23%	11%
Latinx	38%	57%
Pacific Islander	2%	4%
White	28%	16%
Multiracial	7%	5%

Latinx students account for over half of San Mateo County student suspensions, despite making up only 38% of the student body. White and Asian students are underrepresented among students suspended while Black and Pacific Islander students are overrepresented.

Source: Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, "The California Story: Structural Forces Behind Our Racial and Economic Inequality" & Kirwan Institute's Issue Brief, "Racial Disproportionality in School Discipline: Implicit Bias Heavily Implicated"  
 Source: CA Department of Education

### IMPACT

Many students of color face barriers to success in school

## HOUSING OUTCOME GAPS

San Mateo County Homeownership Rates 2012-2016

Race & Ethnicity	Homeownership Rate
White	67%
Asian	64%
Pacific Islander	35%
Latinx	36%
Black	35%

Homeownership rates for White and Asian households are nearly double those of Pacific Islander, Latinx, and Black residents.

Source: Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, "The California Story: Structural Forces Behind Our Racial and Economic Inequality" & U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Housing Discrimination Against Racial and Ethnic Minorities 2012"  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

### IMPACT

A larger share of residents of color do not have a stable place to call home

## ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOME GAPS

67% of residents in census tracts with biking and pedestrian collision hot spots are people of color

**Root Causes:**  
 Historical: Urban Renewal, Residential Segregation  
 Current: Built Environment Disparities, Complaint Based Systems

Source: Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, "The California Story: Structural Forces Behind Our Racial and Economic Inequality" & PolicyLink, "Transportation For All Issue Brief"  
 Source: UC Berkeley Transportation Injury Mapping System, 2012 to 2016 Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

### IMPACT

Residents of color often live in unhealthy neighborhoods

## ECONOMIC OUTCOME GAPS

San Mateo County Median Household Income 2012-2016

Race & Ethnicity	Median Household Income
White	\$112k
Asian	\$112k
Indigenous	\$76k
Pacific Islander	\$76k
Latinx	\$64k
Black	\$54k

White and Asian households on average receive \$36,000 more a year than Pacific Islander and Indigenous households, \$47,000 more than Latinx households, and \$57,000 more than Black households

\$126k is the required household income for a family of four to meet basic needs in San Mateo County

**Root Causes:**  
 Historical: Employment Discrimination, Segregation in unions, Exclusion from GI Bill benefits, Deindustrialization  
 Current: Wage stagnation, Implicit Bias, Hourglass Economy

Source: Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, "The California Story: Structural Forces Behind Our Racial and Economic Inequality" & The Equality of Opportunity Project, "Race and Economic Opportunity in the United States: An Intergenerational Perspective"  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates and Insight Economic Development Center's Self Sufficiency Index

### IMPACT

Many Black, Pacific Islander, Indigenous, and Latinx residents do not have the financial resources they need to be healthy

## WHAT CAN WE COLLECTIVELY DO?

Concrete steps you can take to advance racial equity in San Mateo County:

**NORMALIZE:**

- Normalize discussions about racial inequities
- Develop shared understanding of key racial equity concepts
- Identify and acknowledge how past and current policies, practices, norms and values create racial inequities where you work and live

**ORGANIZE:**

- Ensure communities of color have voice and power in County Health decisions that impact their lives
- Strengthen people of color's access to leadership development pipelines and decision making processes
- Foster a culture where people of color, their perspectives, and their growth are fully included, supported, and celebrated

**OPERATIONALIZE:**

- Ensure full inclusion of people of color in all County Health institutions and systems
- Address implicit bias to promote equal opportunities
- Implement SMC Health Racial Equity Action Plan
- Equitably allocate public resources
- Target improvements for communities most impacted by health inequities
- Use a racial equity tool in your daily work and decision making
- Learn how well our delivery system is serving different racial groups
- Build healing, protective, and trauma-informed systems that address harms perpetrated by institutions

Together, we can make San Mateo County a healthy and equitable place to live, learn, work and play

## MOVING FORWARD

**EFFORTS UNDERWAY:**

- Employee Racial Equity Survey
- Training Supervisor & Managers on Race, Equity and Health
- Standardized data collection of Sexual Orientation Gender Identity (SOGI) and Race Ethnicity and Language (REAL) Project
- Participation in Government Alliance on Race and Equity community of learning and practice
- Developing Staff Race, Equity and Health Training
- Cultural Humility Trainings
- Language Access Policy Updates
- County Diversity & Inclusion Initiative
- Development of Racial Equity Action Plan with over 50 activities
- Quality Improvement Charter for Racial Equity

**Some goals from SMC Health's Racial Equity Action Plan include:**

- All staff complete Race, Equity and Health Training
- Internal communications about racial equity are clear, positive and intentional
- Racial equity established as a community priority through data collection and analysis
- Equity data and improvements provided by use of Racial Equity Tool (RET)
- County Health provides a public statement of commitment to advancing racial equity
- Evaluate and foster staff of color's sense of belonging, engagement, and growth

Together, we can make San Mateo County a healthy and equitable place to live, learn, work and play