Health Equity & Race

SMC Health Government Alliance on Race & Equity Initiative

SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

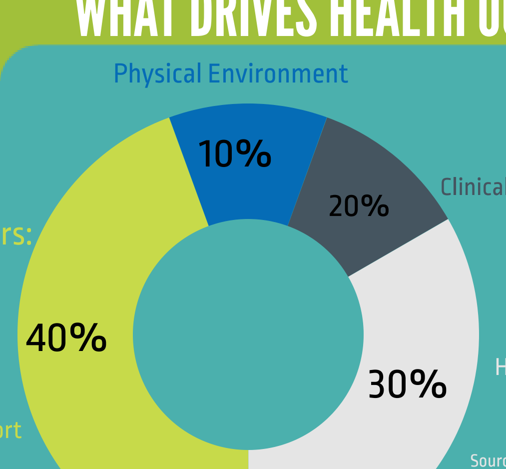
Addressing racial health inequities is a County Health priority as we work to create a shared vision of what it means to be All Together Better. To advance our progress towards racial equity, our department works with colleagues from across the Bay Area and the country in an effort called the Government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

Social & Economic Factors:

- Education
- Employment
- Income
- Family & Social Support
- Community Safety



Source: University of Wisconsin Public Health Institute's County Health Rankings model

Racism Impacts Health:

"Racism drives past and current policies, practices, norms and values that create the inequitable conditions in which we are born, grow, live, learn and age"

-American Public Health Association

"A large and growing body of evidence indicates that experiences of racial discrimination are an important type of psychosocial stressor that can lead to adverse changes in health status and altered behavioral patterns that increase health risks"

-American Behavioral Scientist

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.

Systems & Institutions Help Perpetuate Racial Health Inequities:

Racism has a long history in US policy and institutions.

Structural Racism

A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create an 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.

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

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

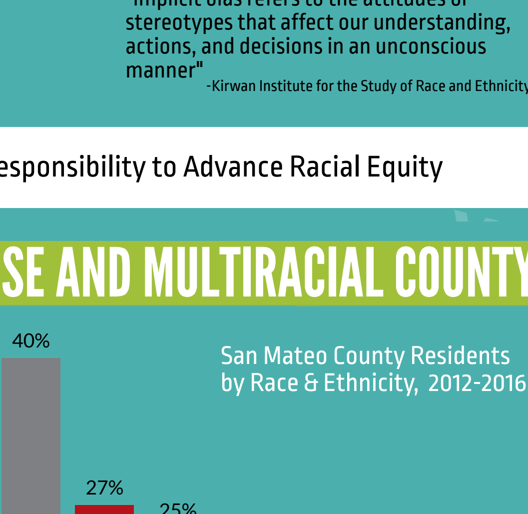
Systems & Institutions Have a Responsibility to Advance Racial Equity

WE ARE A DIVERSE AND MULTIRACIAL COUNTY

35% of San Mateo County's residents are immigrants

46% of San Mateo County's residents are multilingual

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B05002 & S1601



60% of San Mateo County's residents are people of color

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B03002

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 2015-2017 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 2015-2017 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 2013 Community Health Needs Assessment

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

EDUCATION OUTCOME GAPS

Root Causes:

Historical:

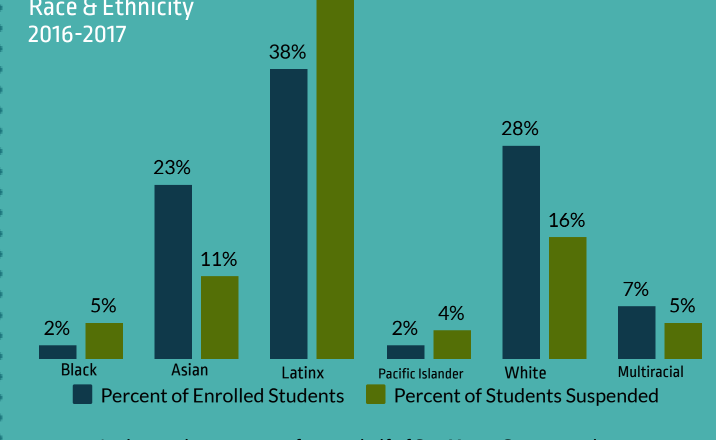
- School Segregation
- Funding Disparities

Current:

- Implicit Bias
- Teacher Diversity Rates
- Zero Tolerance Policies

Sources: 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"

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



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: CA Department of Education

IMPACT Many students of color face barriers to success in school

HOUSING OUTCOME GAPS

Root Causes:

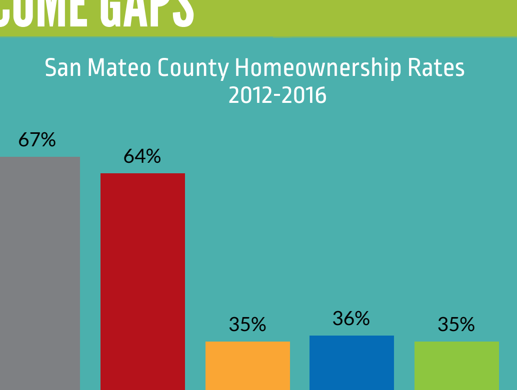
Historical:

- Residential Segregation
- Housing Discrimination
- Racial Property Deed Restrictions
- Home Loan Discrimination (Redlining)

Current:

- Predatory Lending
- Home Loan Discrimination
- Residential Segregation
- Housing Discrimination

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"



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

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

Root Causes:

Historical:

- Urban Renewal
- Residential Segregation

Current:

- Built Environment Disparities
- Complaint Based Systems

Sources: 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"

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

Source: UC Berkeley Transportation Injury Mapping System, 2012 to 2016 Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System; US Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

IMPACT Residents of color often live in unhealthy neighborhoods

ECONOMIC OUTCOME GAPS

Root Causes:

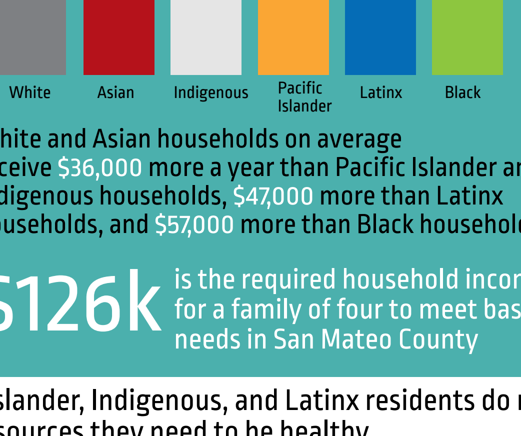
Historical:

- Employment Discrimination
- Segregation in unions
- Exclusion from GI Bill benefits
- Deindustrialization

Current:

- Wage stagnation
- Implicit Bias
- Hourglass Economy

Sources: 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"



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

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

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates and Insight Economic Development Center's Self Sufficiency Index

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)
- 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