

Social Determinants of Health and COVID-19: A Provider's Brief Perspective

Dr. Michael Maurer, MD, FAAP
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
Addressing Inequalities and Social Determinants of Health Webinar
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Disclosures

- No financial disclosures

Objectives

- Understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food insecurity
- Discuss the complexities of telemedicine as a solution to accessing care as well as creating another barrier for low-income families
- Review the racial disparities observed during the COVID-19 pandemic and describe racism in the context of child health
- Provide healthcare workers tools to combat racism and implicit bias in their daily lives and practices

Food Insecurity

Definition

- The disruption of food intake or eating patterns because of lack of money or other resources¹
- Two categories:
 - (1) Low food security:** “Reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.”
 - (2) Very low food security:** “Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.”

¹Nord M, Andrews M, Carlson S. Household food security in the United States, 2005 [Internet]. Washington: USDA Economic Research Service; 2005 [cited 2017 Nov 27]. Report No.: ERR-29. Available from: https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/45655/29206_err29_002.pdf?v=41334 [PDF – 880 KB]

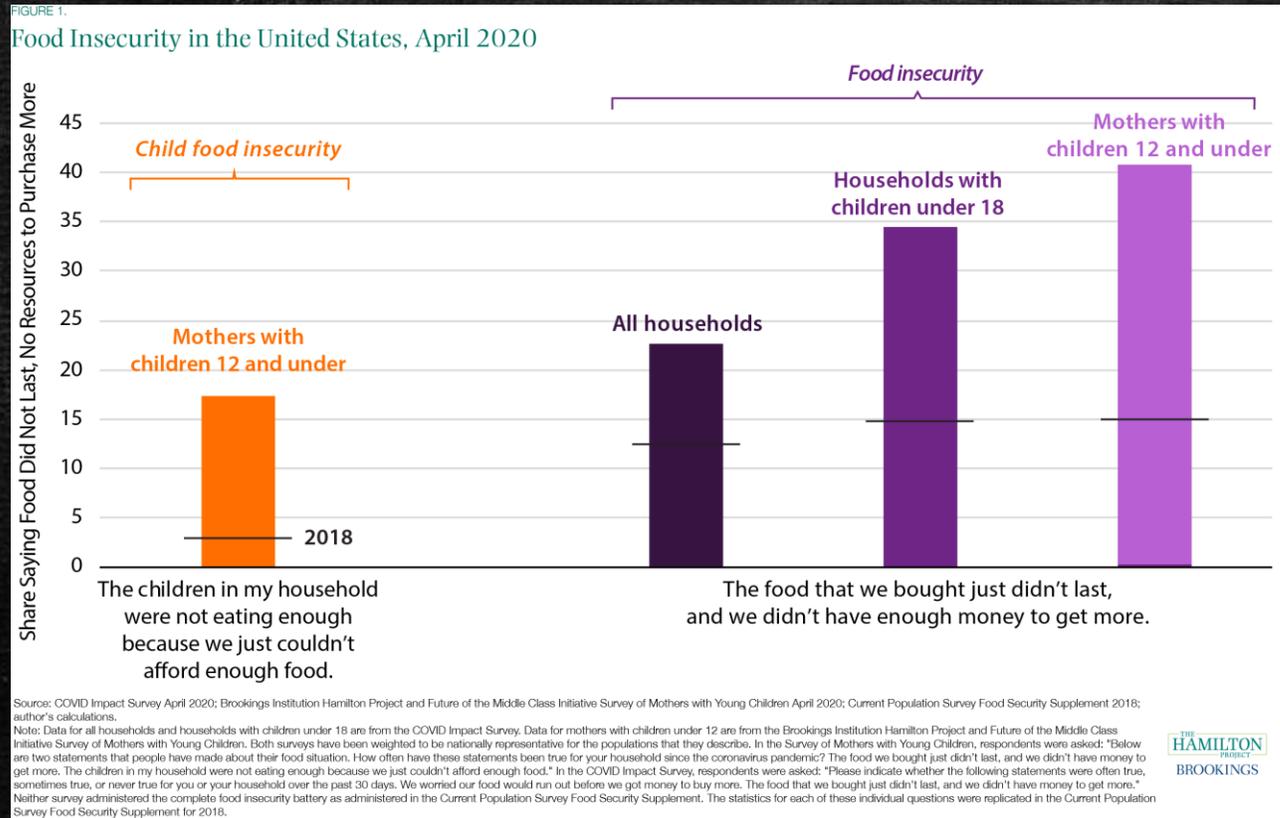
Food Insecurity, cont.

- Contributes to worsening of illnesses and prolonged recovery from illnesses
- Linked to mental health problems (connected to other SDH) and behavioral health problems
- Malnutrition, obesity
- Toxic stress!²

My Experience

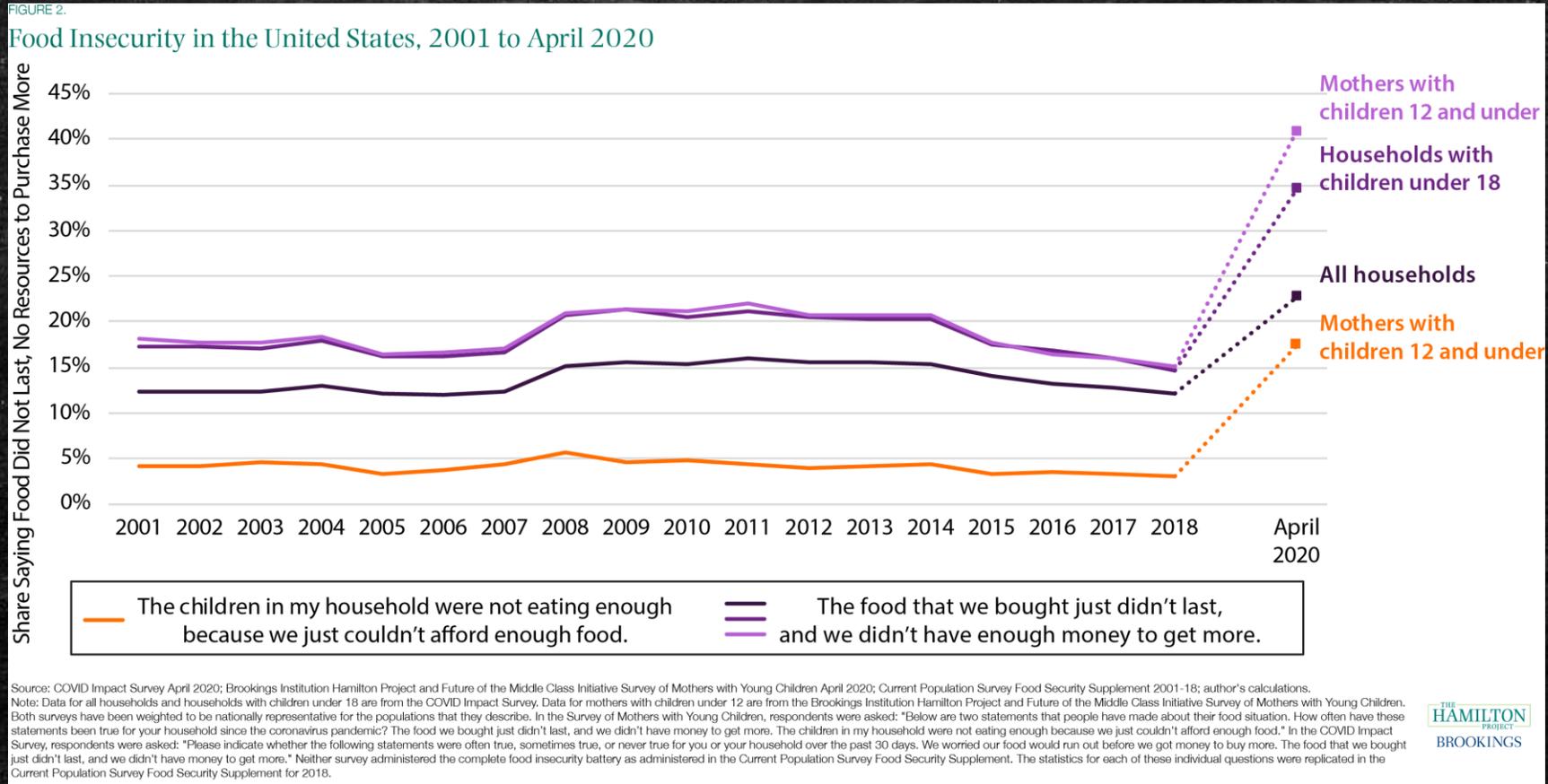
- Largely immigrant communities
- 85% of students on free or reduced lunch

So, what have we seen nationally?



- COVID Impact Survey and The Hamilton Project/Future of the Middle Class Initiative Survey of Mothers with Young Children
- Food insecurity doubled in homes with children under 12 years of age
- Higher rates in homes WITH CHILDREN

More specifically,



A Case

- Patient is a 3-year-old male born in Ecuador with a past history of speech delay, needed follow up during COVID-19 pandemic
- Mother contacted by patient access team, agreed to telemedicine appointment
- At time of appointment, mother was at work in the agricultural fields, patient not with her, but still wanted to complete the appointment on her phone
- Mother very engaged and provided full history and updates regarding patient's care

The New Frontier- Telemedicine

- Eliminates transportation as a barrier to accessing a clinician
- Can complete through a smart phone, which surprisingly almost every family has
- Allows provider to take a look into the homes and lives of her/his patients
- Can connect from anywhere and at anytime

The New Barrier- Telemedicine

- No computer access
- Unreliable internet connection
- Families unable to take off work and children left with other caregiver
- Inconsistent ability to use technology
- Disrupted patient visits in home environment
- Patient/family reluctance to perform virtual visits
- Sensitive examinations and patient privacy/confidentiality

Racial Disparities During COVID-19

- Black patients are dying at nearly 2x the rate of white patients
- CDC report shows that 33% of hospitalized patients are black when they represent only 18% of the surrounding community population
- Similar (or worse) data seen in majority of states
- Multifactorial in nature, but with underlying foundations in systemic racism

Systemic Racism and Children

POLICY STATEMENT Organizational Principles to Guide and Define the Child Health
Care System and/or Improve the Health of all Children

American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

The Impact of Racism on Child and Adolescent Health

Maria Trent, MD, MPH, FAAP, FSAHM,^a Danielle G. Dooley, MD, MPhil, FAAP,^b Jacqueline Dougé, MD, MPH, FAAP,^c SECTION ON
ADOLESCENT HEALTH, COUNCIL ON COMMUNITY PEDIATRICS, COMMITTEE ON ADOLESCENCE

What can we do?

- Look inside—Educate ourselves, become aware of our own implicit bias
- Be a leader—Set the stage in your office, practice, workspace to create an inclusive environment
- Advocate—Tell your representatives what we need as clinicians to help our patients as well as the impact certain policies have on child health and well-being

Thank you!

- A special "Thanks!" to the Children's Health Fund and the National Center for Disaster Preparedness