

Uncovering *the* Legacy
of Poverty in America

“This book forces you
to see American poverty
in a whole new light.”
— Matthew Desmond,
Pulitzer Prize-winning
author of *Evicted*

**THE
INJUSTICE
OF PLACE**

Kathryn J. Edin,
H. Luke Shaefer, Timothy Nelson

KATHRYN J. EDIN AND H. LUKE SHAEFER

“A remarkable book that
could very well change the
way we think about poverty
in the United States.”

—*New York Times*
Book Review



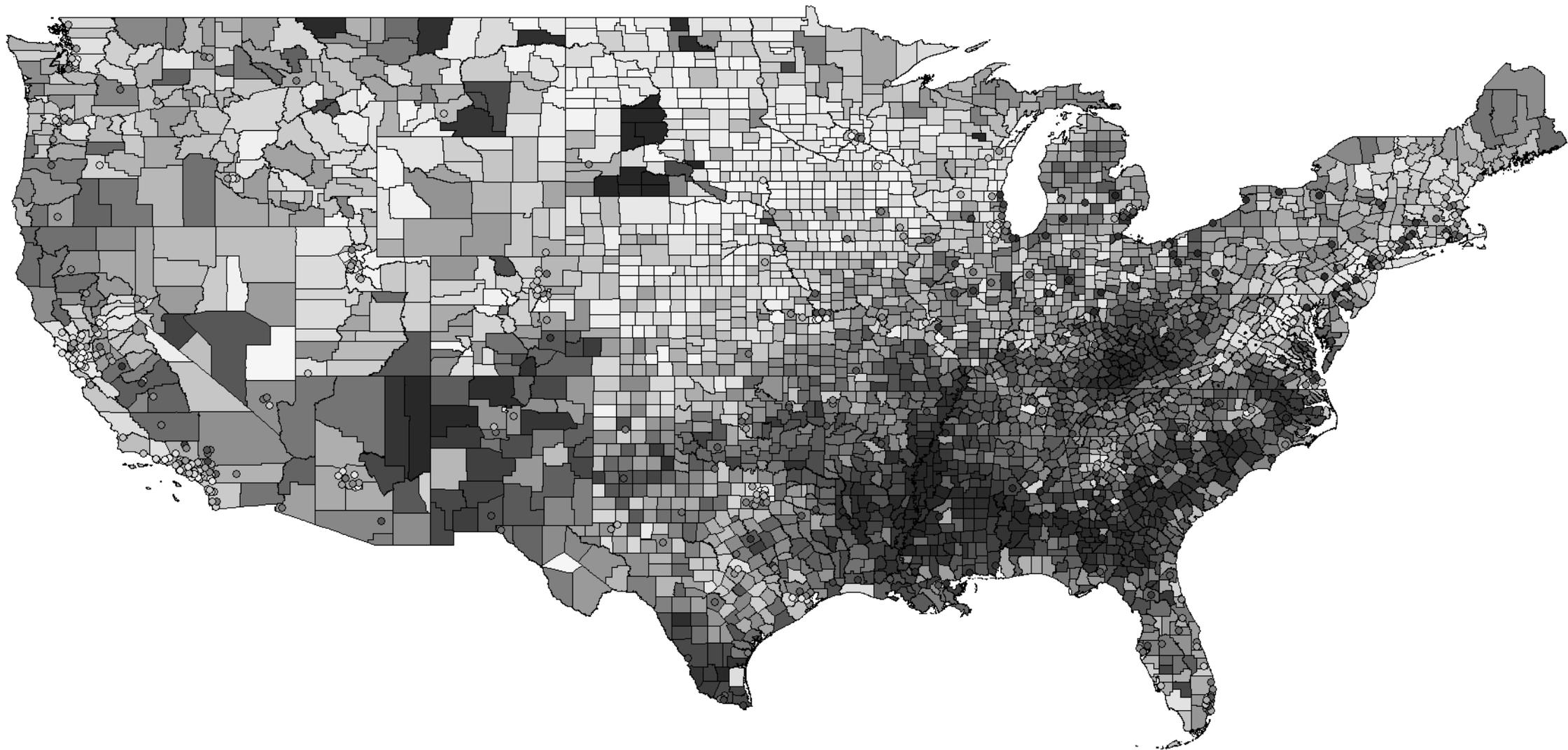
\$2.00 A DAY

Living on Almost Nothing in America



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Disadvantage across the United States



Most Disadvantaged

Most Advantaged



What did we find?

- America's most disadvantaged places are virtually all rural, in Appalachia, the Cotton Belt, and south Texas, and tribal lands
- Many cities known for poverty are not even among the 600 most disadvantaged places
- America's most disadvantaged places are extremely unequal
- Taken together, they are very racially diverse

What about cost of living?

- Those in America's most disadvantaged places struggle with housing costs comparably to those in all but a handful of cities
- They do not have amenities like public transportation or many services





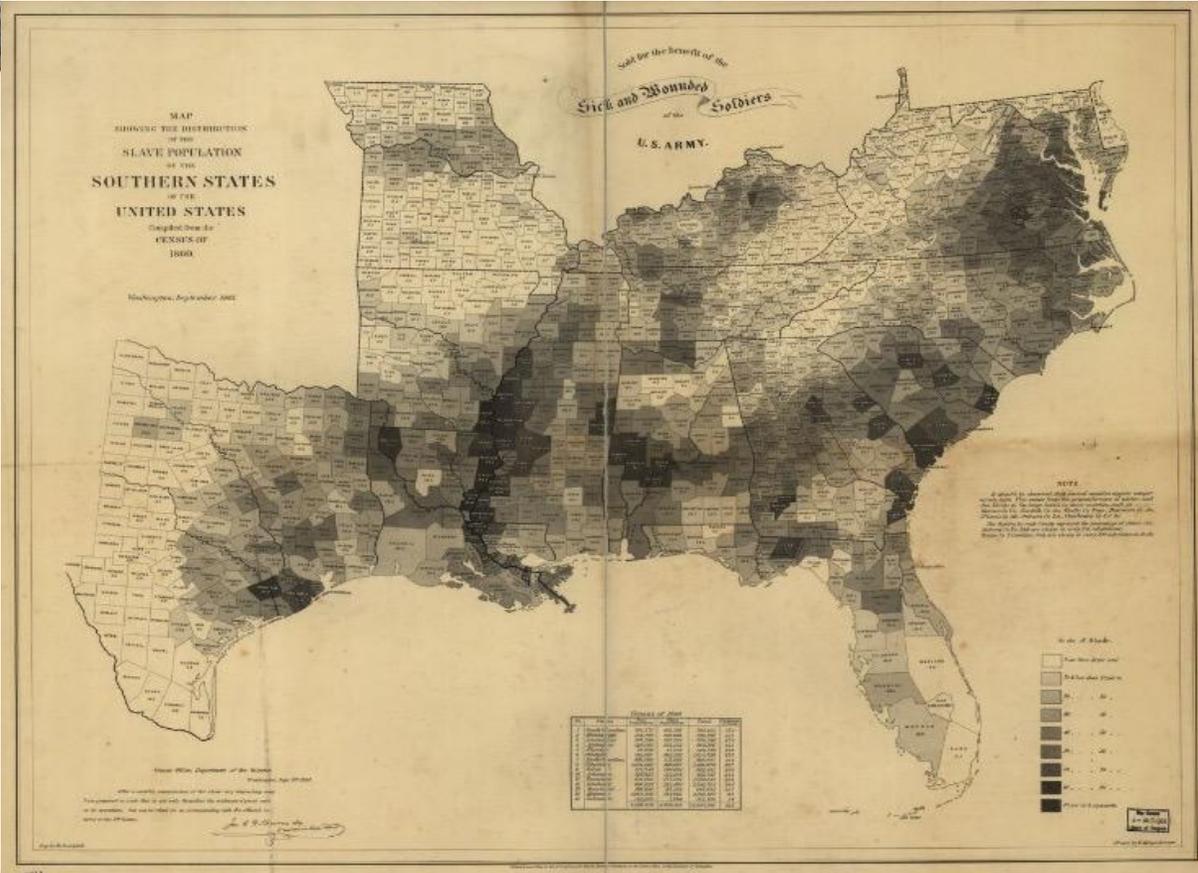
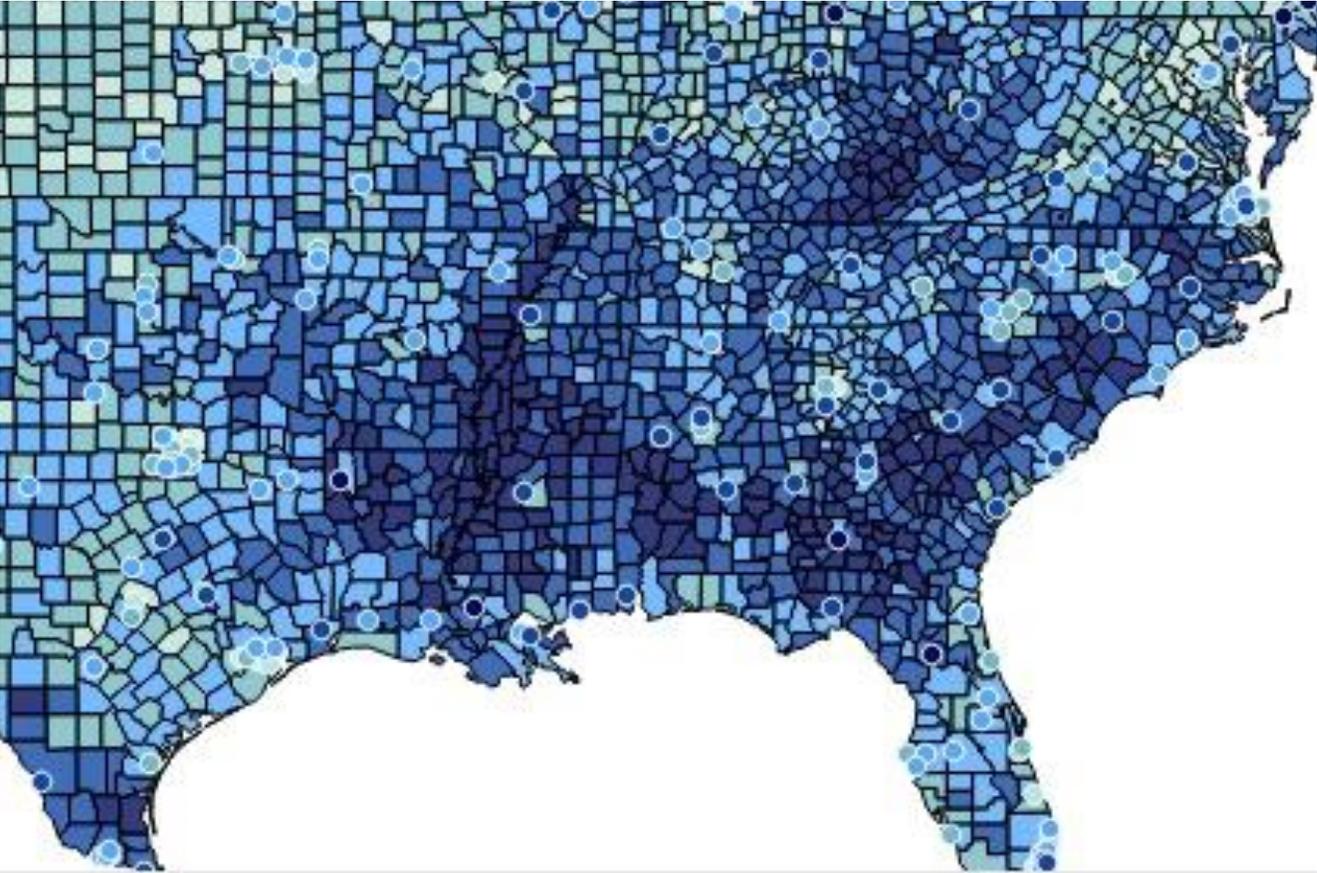
Crystal City
Texas

THE SPINACH
CAPITAL OF
THE WORLD.

Founded in 1907

YOUNG SCHOOL

Our Map of Deep Disadvantage Compared to a Map of Enslavement in 1860



Nothing to do but drugs...

- “There’s really nothing around here, for kids. That’s why they go to drugs.” [Sweet Pea]
- “There’s nothing [there] anymore, since their skating rink burned, and burned out all the movie [theaters], they don’t got anything except one movie theater.” [Clay resident]
- “I just want things to change. I mean, better for the kids, better for the teenagers... Parks for the little kids, something for the teenagers to do to get them out of trouble.” [Dolly]
- Down here, they just want to build roads and...drug stores, so it’s not nothing that you can really do down here.” [Marie]

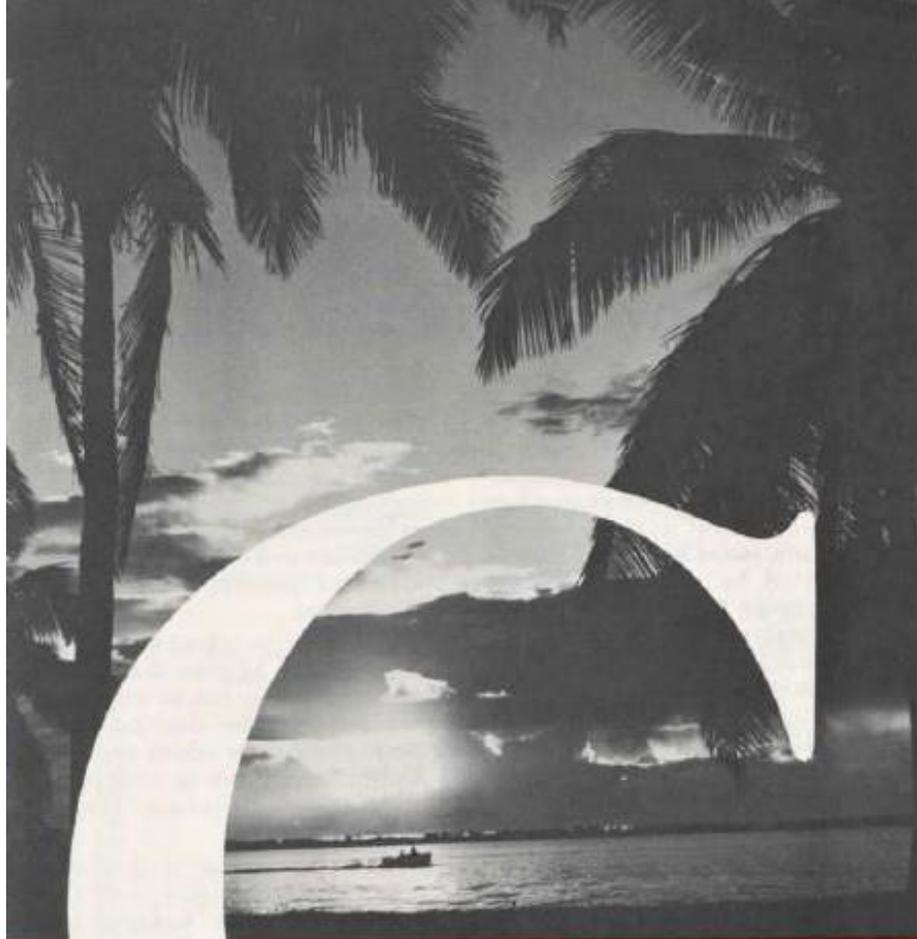
Brett Favre on welfare scandal: 'I have done nothing wrong'



by **Mississippi Today**

October 11, 2022





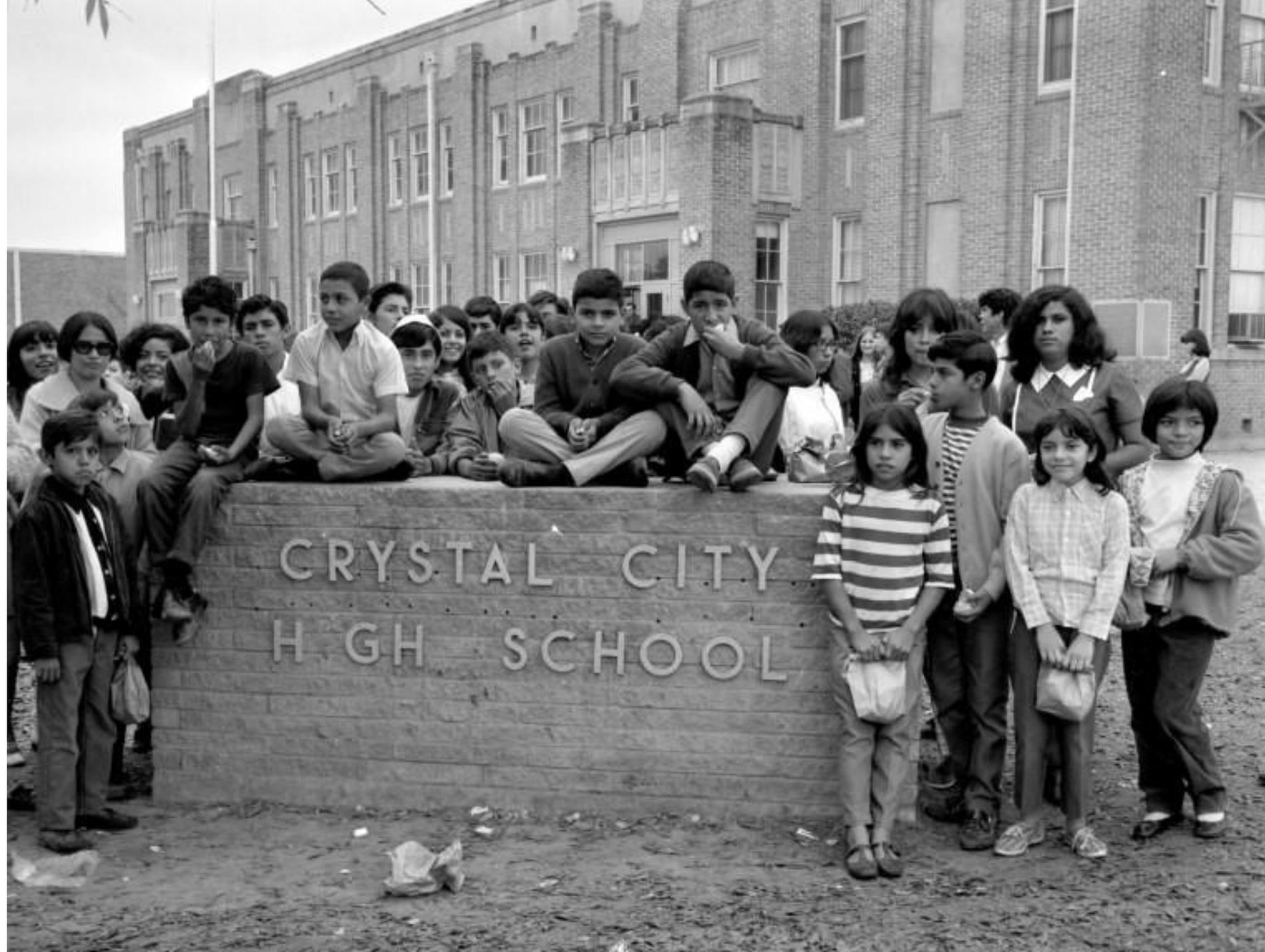
*Special In This Issue—
How To Start
A Private School!*

the **CITIZEN**

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CITIZENS' COUNCILS OF AMERICA

SEPTEMBER 1984

35 CENTS





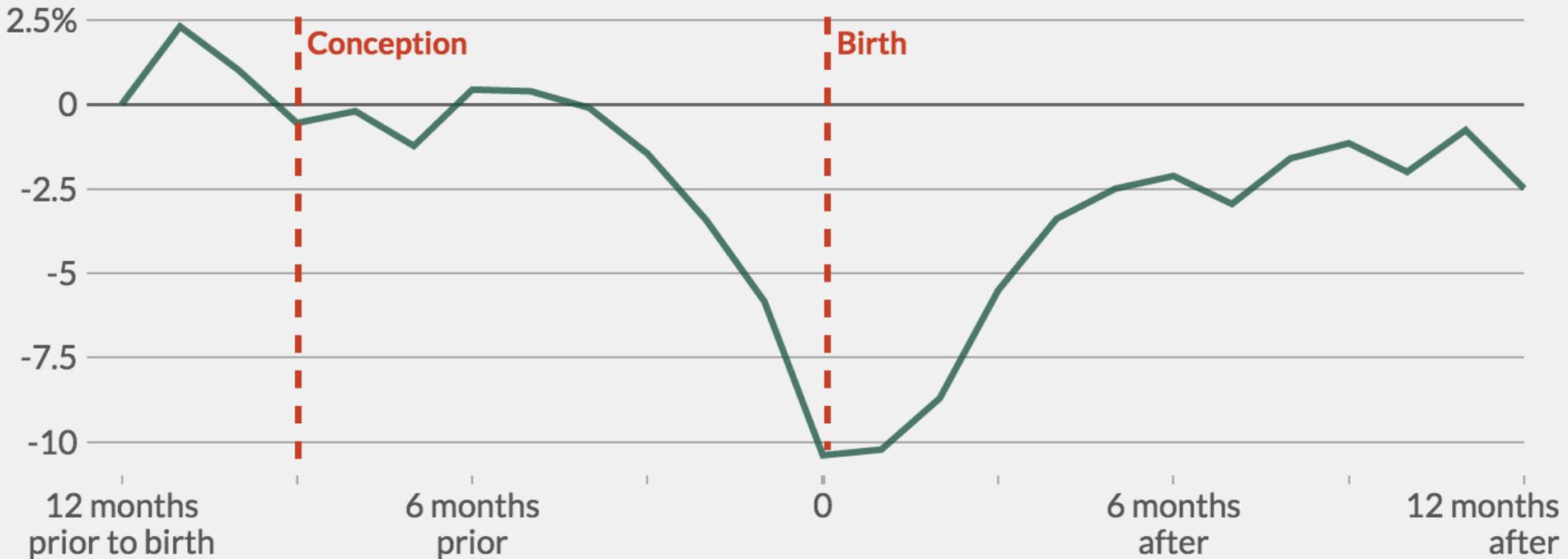
The city of Flint, Michigan launched the first-ever, city-wide cash “prescription” program for pregnant moms and babies, called Rx Kids

It has expanded to both rural and urban
Communities in Michigan



Family income drops sharply near the birth of a child

Percentage change in gross U.S. household income compared to 12 months prior to birth

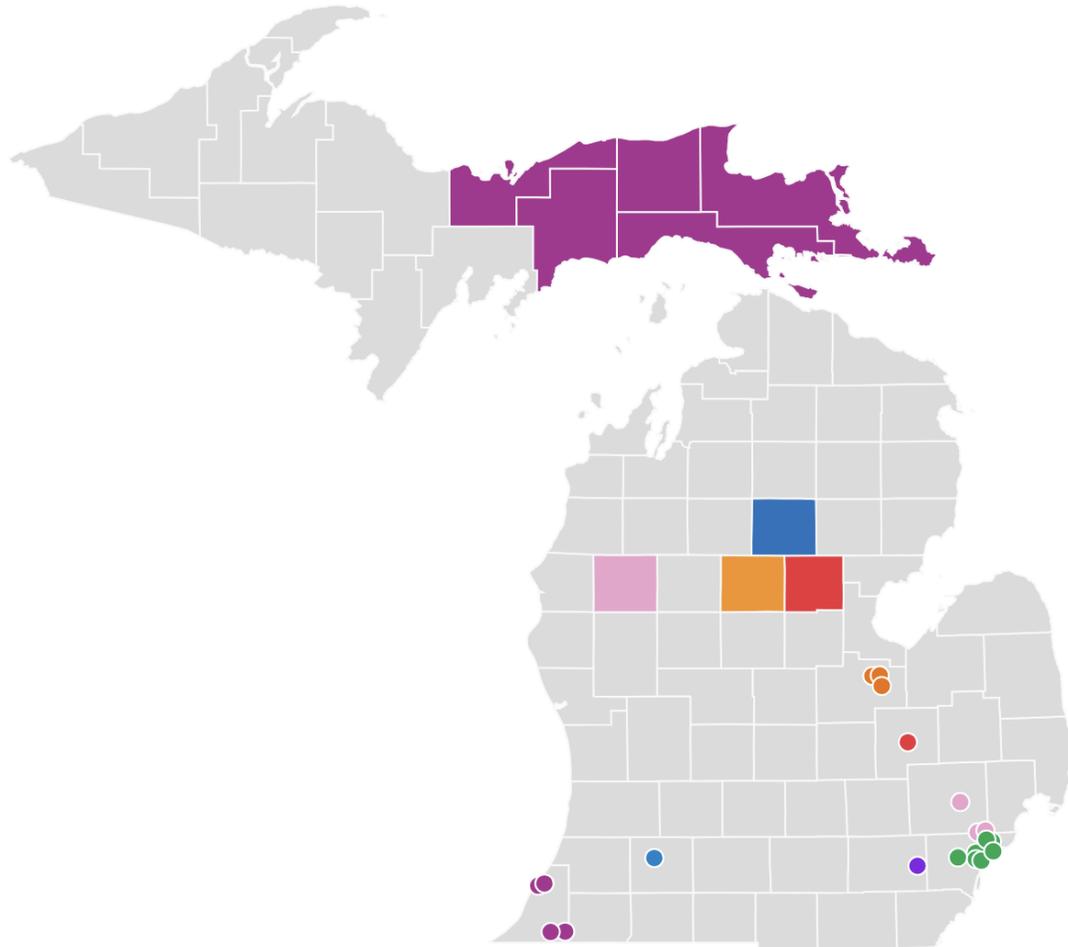


Source: Stanczyk, Alexandra. (2016). "The dynamics of household economic circumstances around a birth." Washington Center for Equitable Growth working paper series.





Rx Kids Current Sites



Jan 2026:

- Saginaw County communities:
City of Saginaw, Buena Vista Township, Bridgeport Township
- Berrien County communities:
Benton Harbor, Benton Charter Township, City of Niles, City of Buchanan
- Lake County

Expansions on Deck

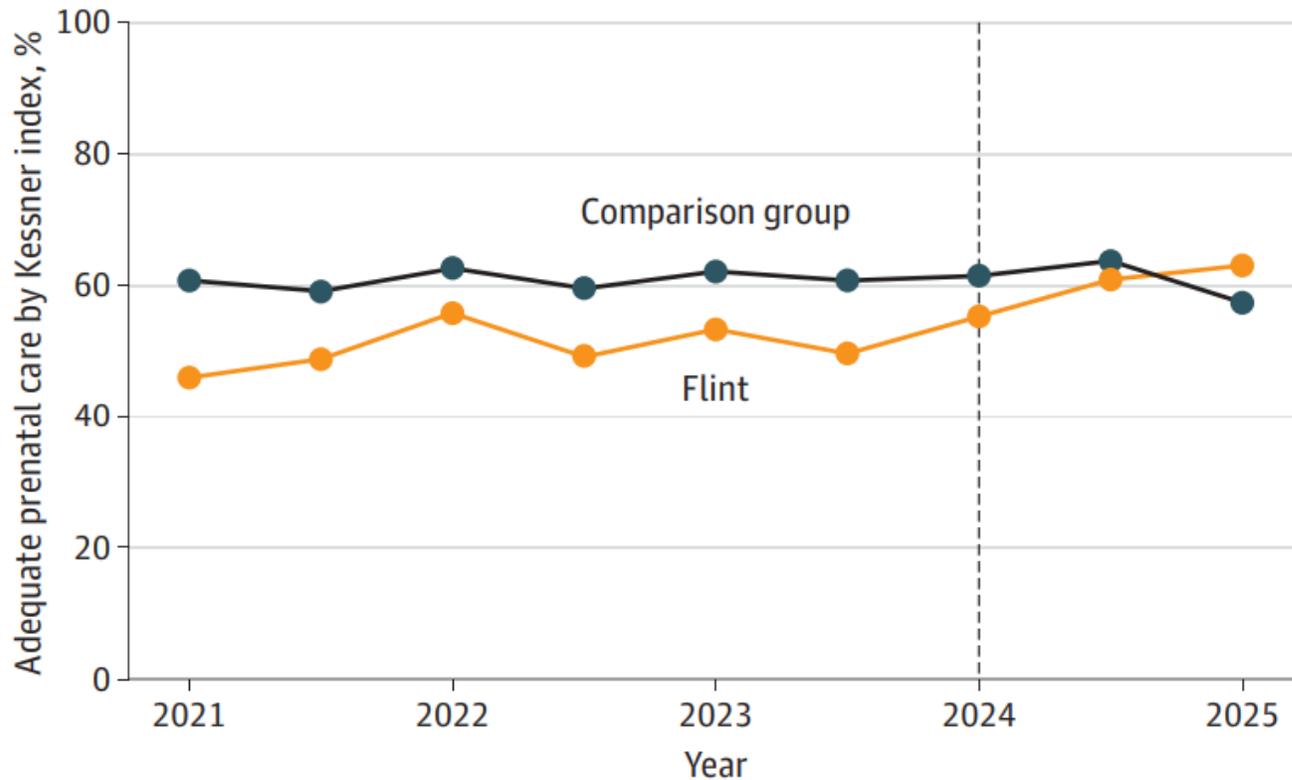


- **City of Detroit (Feb 9)**
- **Rest of UP (March)**
- **Montmorency County**
- **Calhoun County**
- **City of Jackson**
- **Cities of Center Line and Mt Clemons**
- **Cities of Muskegon and Muskegon Heights**
- **3 Kent County zip codes**
- **Cheboygan County**
- **Cass County**
- **City of Lansing**
- **Counties of Oceania and Crawford**

Rx Kids Impact: Healthier Behaviors



Adequate prenatal care utilization



Rx Kids implementation is associated with:

- More frequent, earlier **prenatal care**
- Decrease in births with no prenatal care
- Decrease in third trimester **smoking**
- Increased participation in other resources

According to participant surveys:

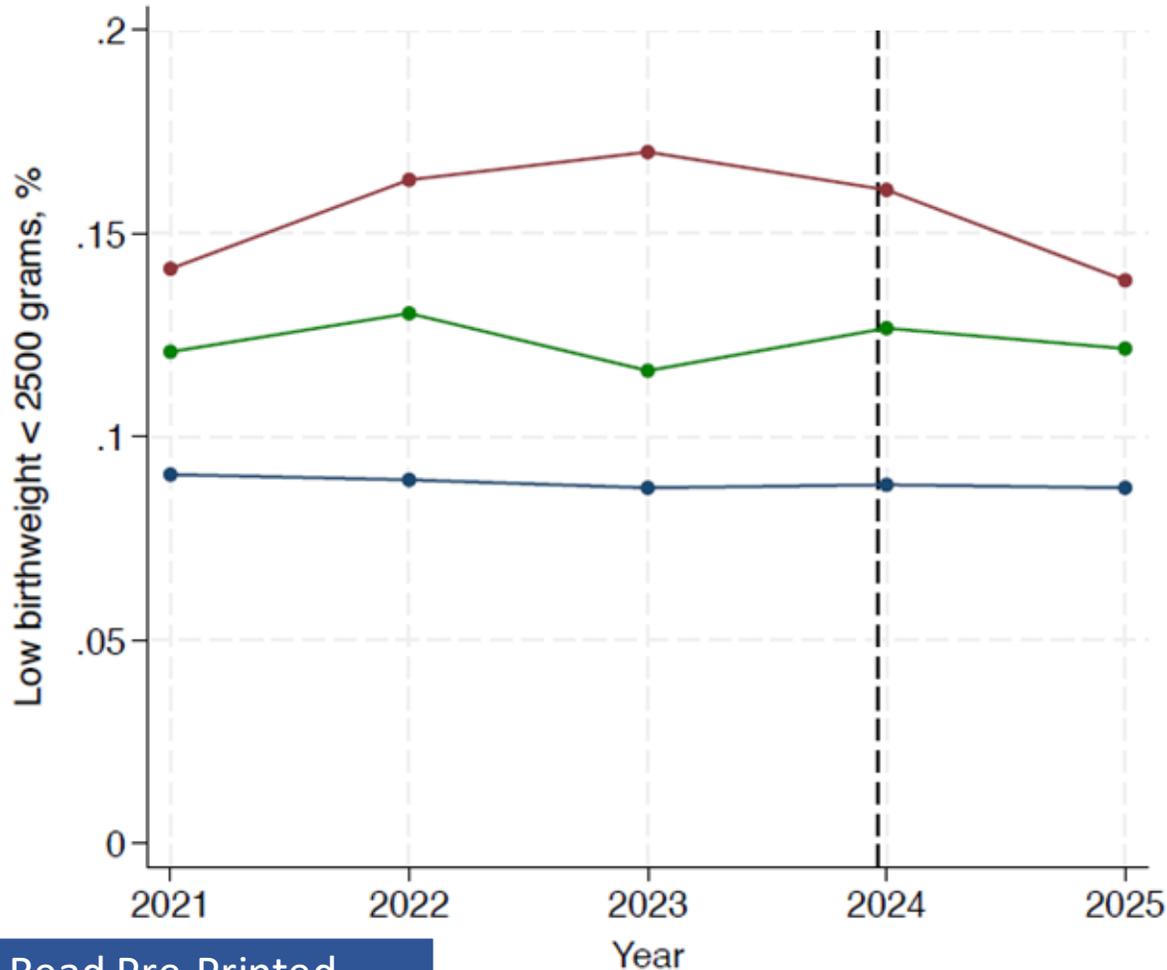
- 60% say Rx Kids made it easier to get healthcare their family needs.

Read More at [JAMA Network Open](#)

Rx Kids Impact: Healthier Births



Low birthweight births over time, by location

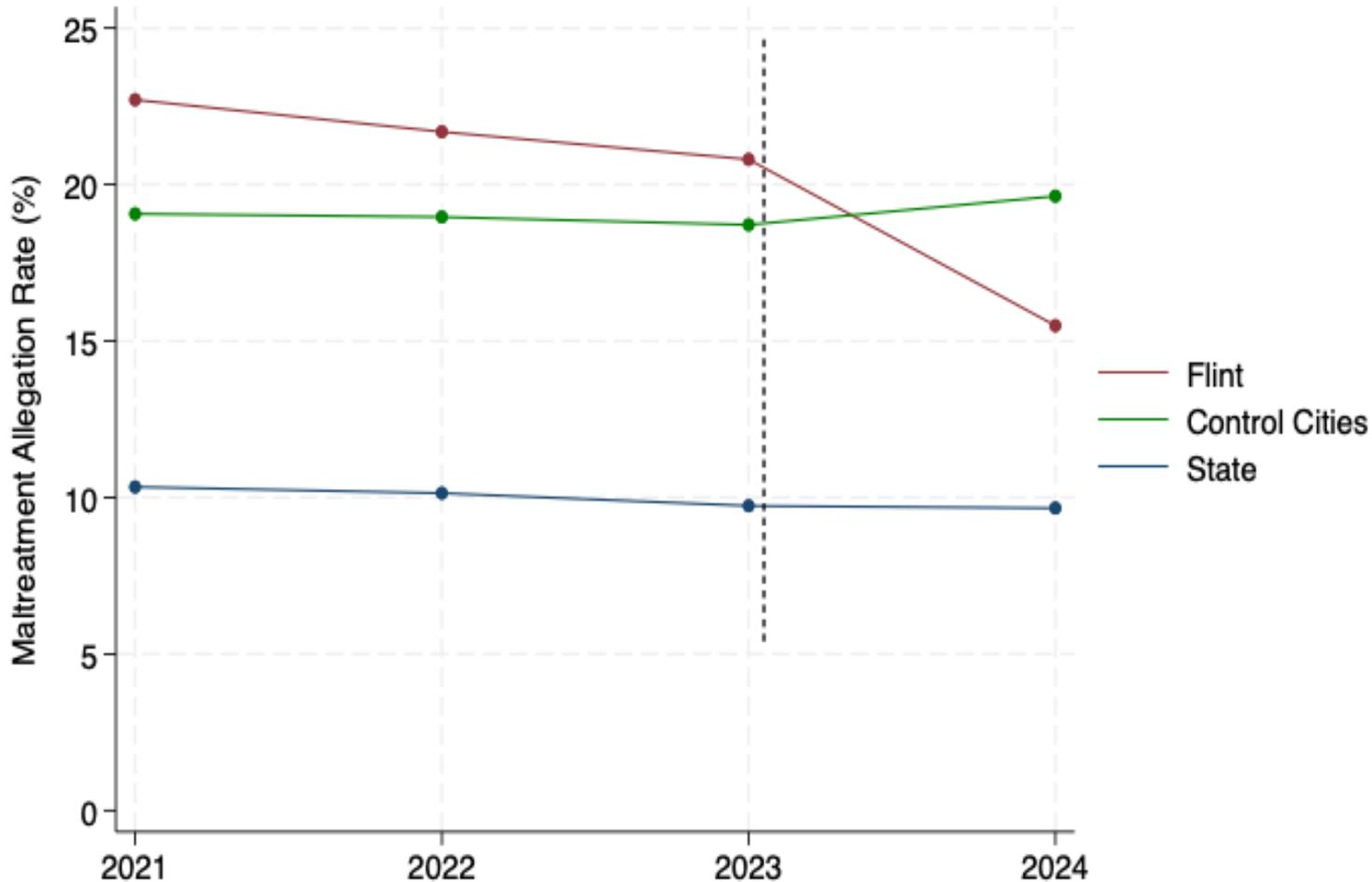


Rx Kids implementation was associated with POPULATION LEVEL outcomes:

- 18% decrease in preterm births
- 27% decrease in low birthweight births
- 29% decrease in NICU admissions

70% of Rx Kids moms say Rx Kids helped improve the health of them and their baby

Rx Kids Impact: Child Welfare Prevention



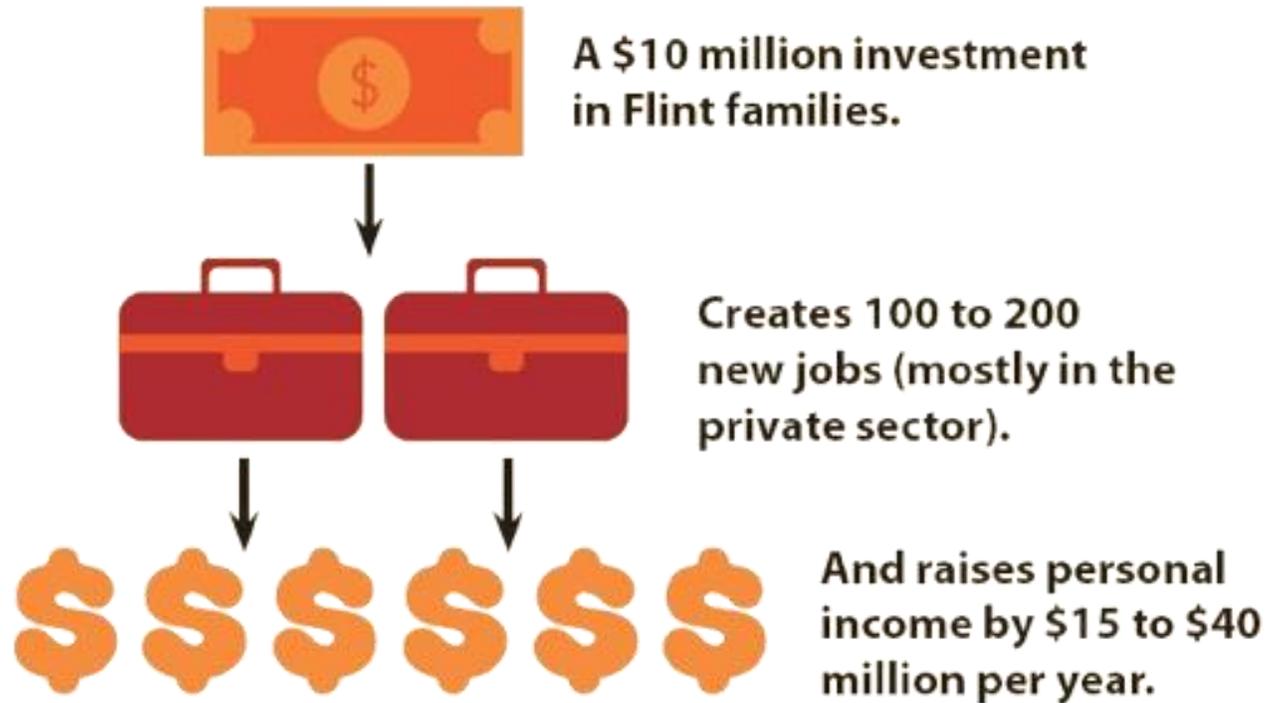
Rx Kids implementation was associated with POPULATION LEVEL outcomes:

→ **32% decrease in CPS investigated allegations among infants**

Rx Kids impacts local economy



Independent analysis from the Upjohn Institute finds:



2.4x

In the first 5 years, the program's expected benefits are more than twice its costs

40%

Of the benefits from Rx Kids go to the lowest income quintile

*These estimates are based on two economic models: REMI and the Bartik Benefit-Cost Model of State and Local Economic Policies.

Read report from the
[UpJohn Institute](#)

Values: Framing & Narrative



- How we should care for each other
- Reimagining of social contract
- Raising kids is hard for everyone
- Village walking alongside you
- Society trusts you
- Dignity and agency
- You are loved and deserving
- Celebrating our moms and babies



Baby Parade!