



ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION  
**Commission to Build a Healthier America**

# Beyond Health Care: The Intersection of Housing and Health

National Healthy Housing Policy Summit  
Washington, DC  
May 7, 2009

# America's Health Crisis



- Some of us can expect to live an average of 20 years less than others, depending on our race, income and education, and where we live
- We spend more than \$2 trillion/year on health care, yet:
  - In life expectancy and infant mortality, the US ranks near the bottom in comparison with other industrialized nations
- Poor health limits the productivity of our citizens
- Many health gaps have not decreased in more than a generation
  - Some gaps have grown larger
- Within each racial and ethnic group, lower-income adults have higher rates of poor or fair health than their more affluent counterparts

## Commission Leadership



### **Mark McClellan**

Physician and economist who helped develop and then effectively implemented Medicare prescription drug benefit. Former CMS Administrator (2004) and FDA Commissioner (2002). Director of the Engelberg Center for Health Care Reform, Senior Fellow in Economic Studies and Leonard D. Schaeffer Director's Chair in Health Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution.



### **Alice M. Rivlin**

Former U.S. Cabinet official, and an expert on the budget. First woman to hold the position of Director of the Office of Management and Budget and was founding director of the Congressional Budget office. Currently, Director of Greater Washington Research Program at Brookings Institution.

## Commissioners



**Katherine Baicker**  
Professor of Health Economics, Department of Health Policy and Management,  
Harvard University



**Angela Glover Blackwell**  
Founder and Chief Executive Officer, PolicyLink



**Sheila P. Burke**  
Faculty Research Fellow and Adjunct Lecturer in Public Policy, Kennedy School of  
Government, Harvard University



**Linda M. Dillman**  
Executive Vice President of Benefits and Risk Management, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.



**Sen. Bill Frist**  
Schultz Visiting Professor of International Economic Policy, Princeton University



**Allan Golston**  
U.S. Program President, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

## Commissioners



**Kati Haycock**  
President, The Education Trust



**Hugh Panero**  
Co-Founder and Former President and Chief Executive Officer, XM Satellite Radio



**Dennis Rivera**  
Chair, SEIU Healthcare



**Carole Simpson**  
Leader-in-Residence, Emerson College School of Communication and Former Anchor,  
ABC News



**Jim Towey**  
President, Saint Vincent College



**Gail L. Warden**  
Professor, University of Michigan School of Public Health and  
President Emeritus, Henry Ford Health System

## Commission Objectives

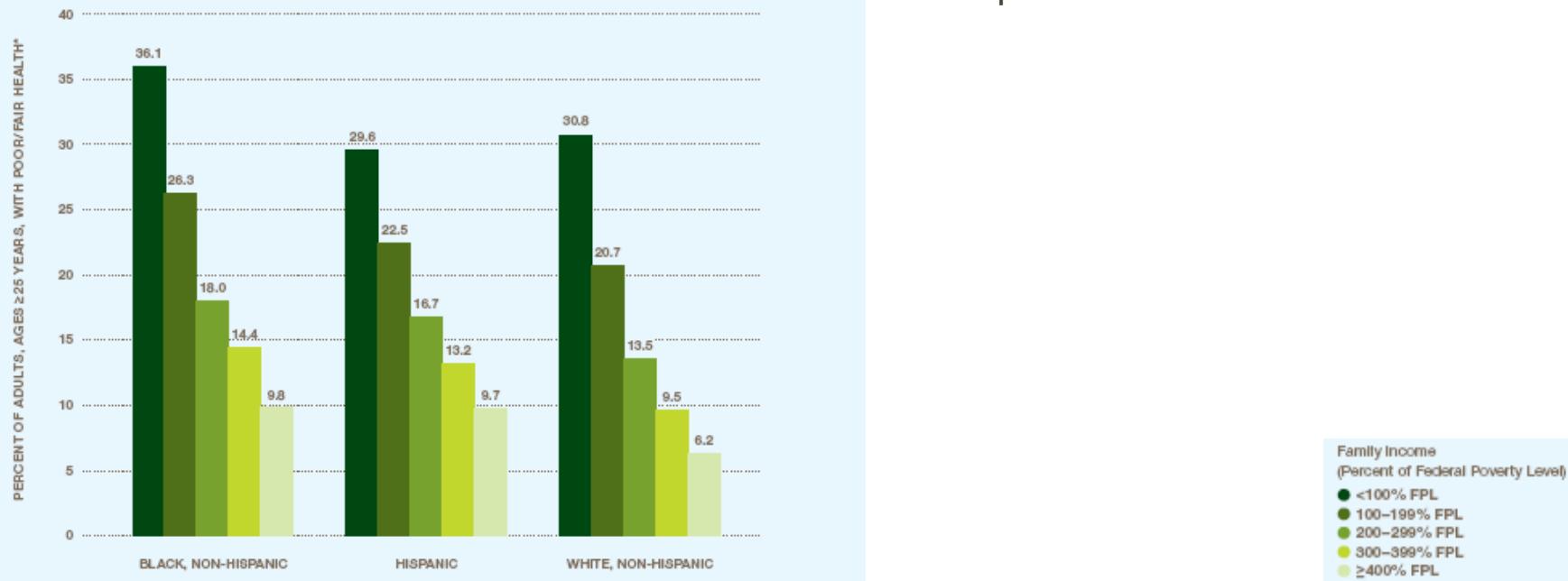
Raise awareness and identify areas for action by:

- Address work to decision-makers in public and private sector
- Reach non-traditional allies and advocates for social and policy changes
- Make academic research on social inequalities more accessible to policy makers
- Conduct work in a nonpartisan fashion
- Recommend solutions that are sustainable, flexible and relevant

## Socioeconomic and racial or ethnic differences are closely linked

### Income Is Linked With Health Regardless of Racial or Ethnic Group

*figure 7b* Differences in health status by income do not simply reflect differences by race or ethnicity; differences in health can be seen within each racial or ethnic group. Both income and racial or ethnic group matter.

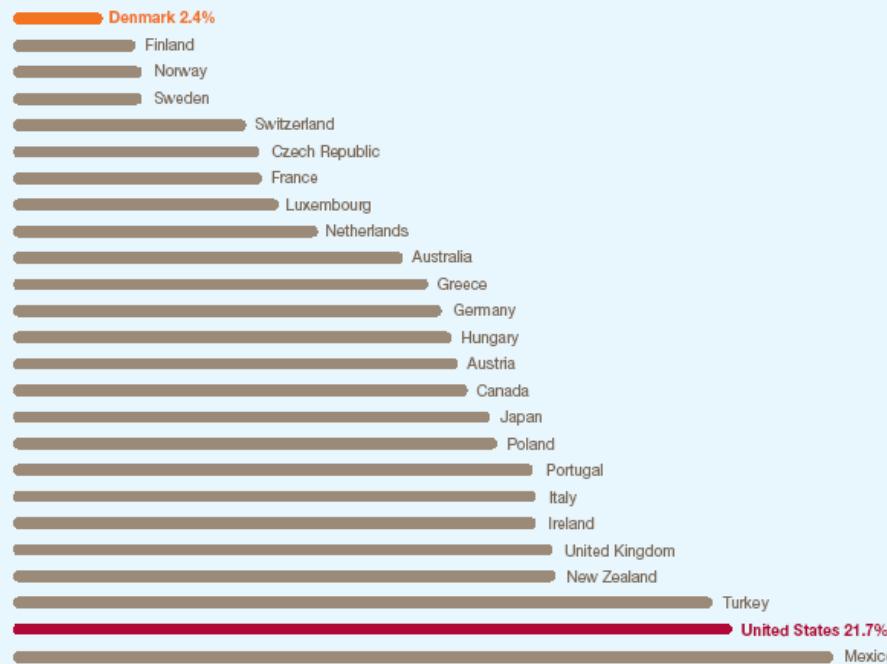


- These patterns – for health status but seen across a wide range of health conditions -- tell us that both income and race are important for health and health disparities.

# The U.S. has a higher proportion of its population – and particularly of its children – living in poverty than most other affluent countries

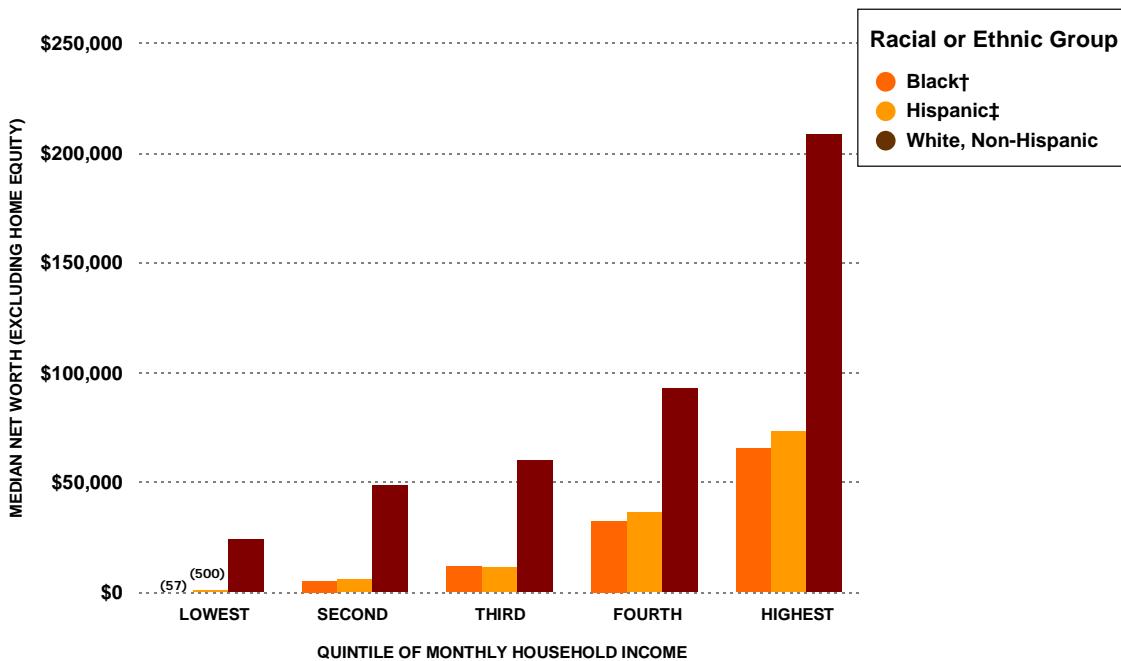
## More Child Poverty in America

figure 11 The U.S. has higher rates of child poverty\* than many other countries. In 2000, one-fifth of American children were poor—a proportion that was nine times higher than in Denmark.



# At each level of income, Blacks and Hispanics have far less accumulated wealth than whites.

Figure 7. At every income level, blacks and Hispanics have less accumulated wealth than whites.



†Report does not indicate whether Blacks are non-Hispanic

‡Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race

Source: Braveman PA et al. Socioeconomic status in health research: One size does not fit all. *JAMA*, 294(22), 2005. Based on US Census Bureau Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2000.

# The Commission's Recommendations

A twin philosophy: Good health requires personal responsibility and a societal commitment to remove the obstacles preventing too many Americans from leading healthy lives



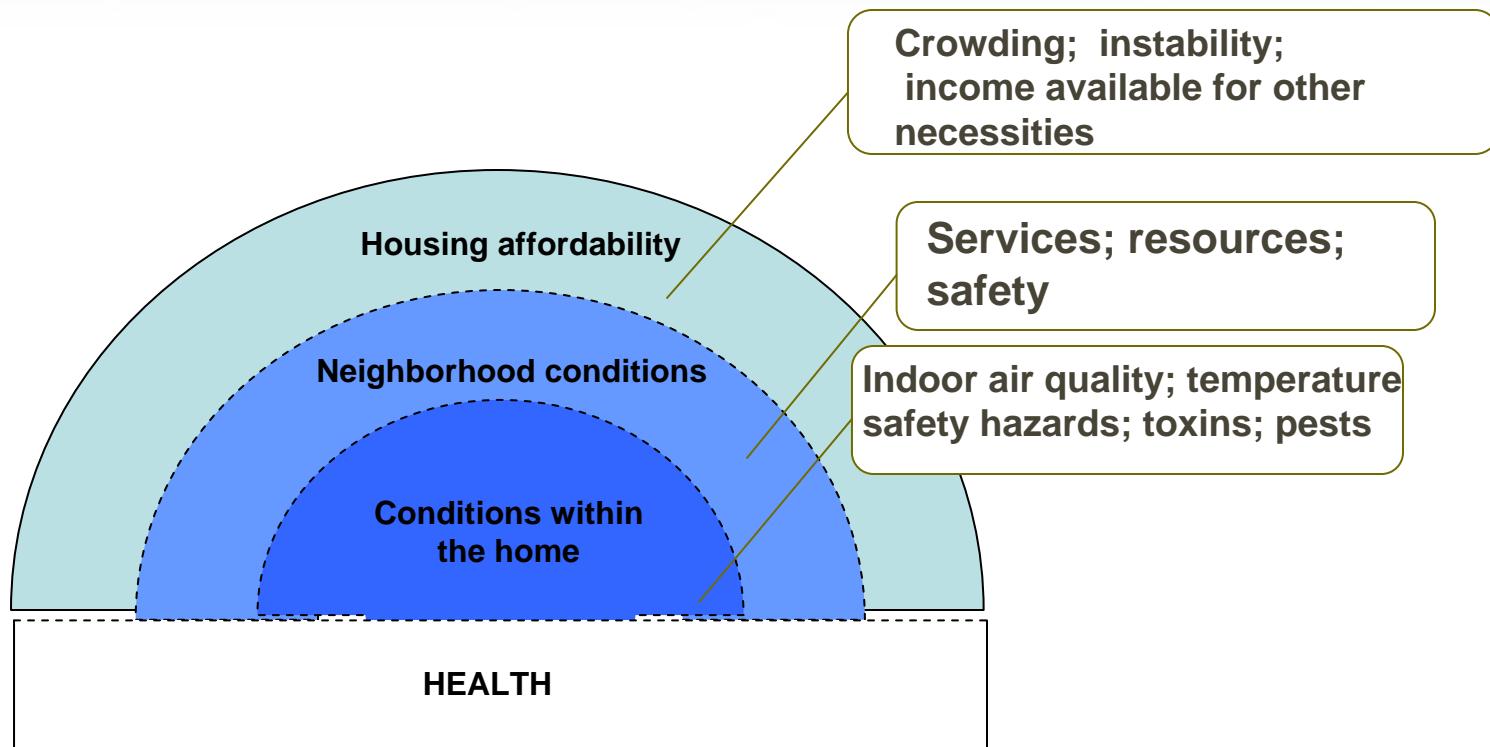
The recommendations focus on people and the places where we spend the bulk of our time:

- Homes and Communities
- Schools
- Workplaces

April 2009

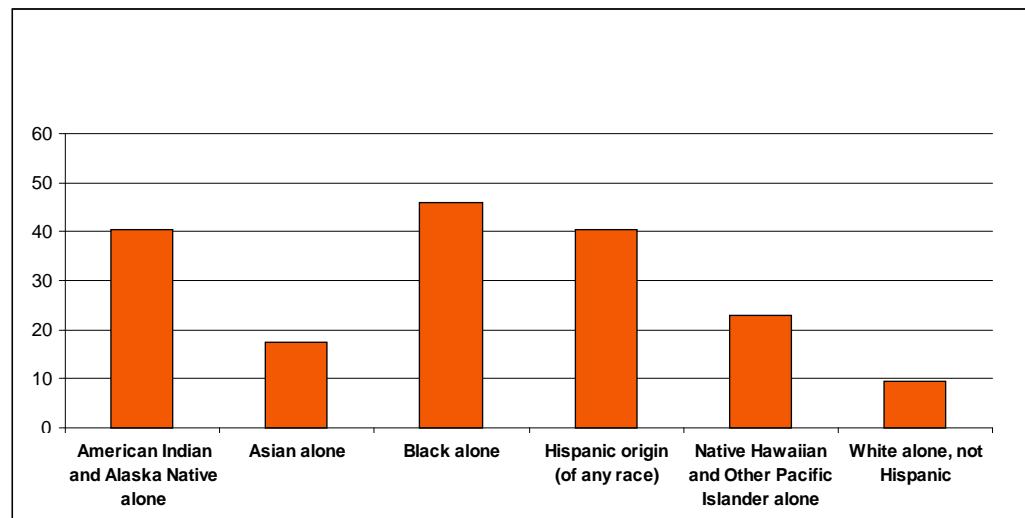
Building a healthier America is feasible in years, not decades, if we collaborate and act on what is making a difference

# Housing Influences Health in Many Ways



## Percent of people in different racial or ethnic groups living in poor\* neighborhoods.

*At any income level, Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to live in poor neighborhoods than whites of similar income.*



\*A poor neighborhood is one in which at least 20% of residents have incomes at or below the federal poverty level.

Adapted from Bishaw A. *Areas with concentrated poverty: 1999*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau; 2005.

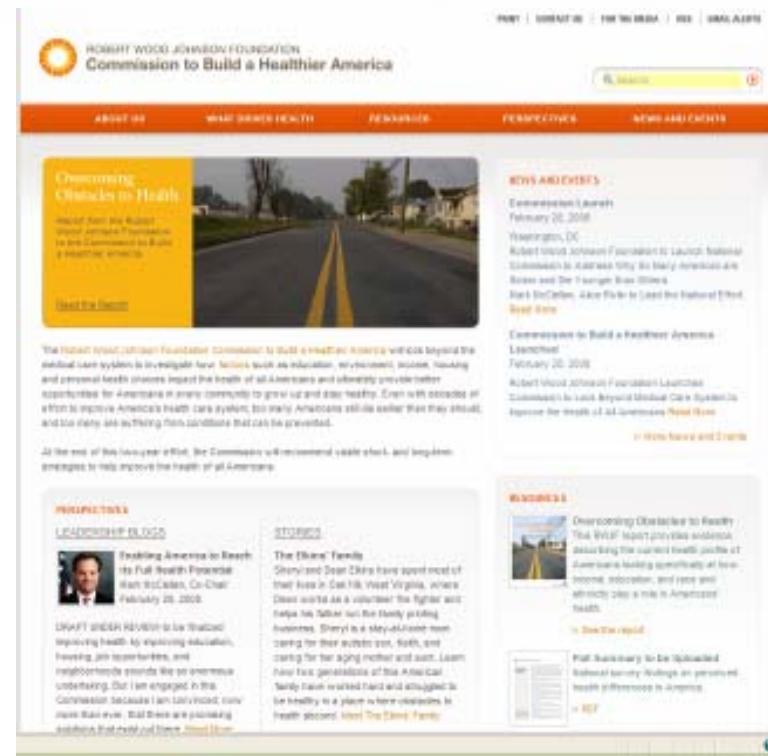


## Creating Healthy Homes and Communities

- Develop a “health impact” rating for housing and infrastructure projects that reflects the projected effects on community health and provides incentives for projects that earn the rating.
- Create “healthy community” demonstrations to evaluate the effects of a full complement of health-promoting policies and programs.

# Resources: [www.commissiononhealth.org](http://www.commissiononhealth.org)

- *Overcoming Obstacles to Health*
- Charts
- Leadership blog
- Multimedia personal stories
- Commission information and activities
- Commission news coverage
- Relevant news articles
- Interactive education and health tool
- State-level child health data
- Issue briefs
- *Beyond Health Care: New Directions to a Healthier America*
- State-level adult health data (May '09)



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Commission to Build a Healthier America website. The header features the organization's name and a search bar. The main navigation menu includes links for About Us, What Hurts Health, Resources, Perspectives, News and Events, and News and Photos. A large banner on the left highlights the "Overcoming Obstacles to Health" initiative, featuring a photo of a road and text about how various factors like education, environment, income, housing, and personal health choices impact health. Below this, a section titled "PROSPECTIVE" lists "Leadership in Health" and "DRAFT UNDER REVIEW: A National Strategy to Improve Health." To the right, a "STORIES" section features a profile of the "Elliott Family," which includes a photo of a road and text about how the family is working to improve health in their community. The footer contains links for "About Us," "What Hurts Health," "Resources," "Perspectives," "News and Events," and "Contact Us."



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