



ECI Partners- Blytheville

Highlights from November Conversations

about Moving the Needle on Poverty
in the Community

What are we looking at?

What gaps and barriers can we see that contribute to people living in poverty?

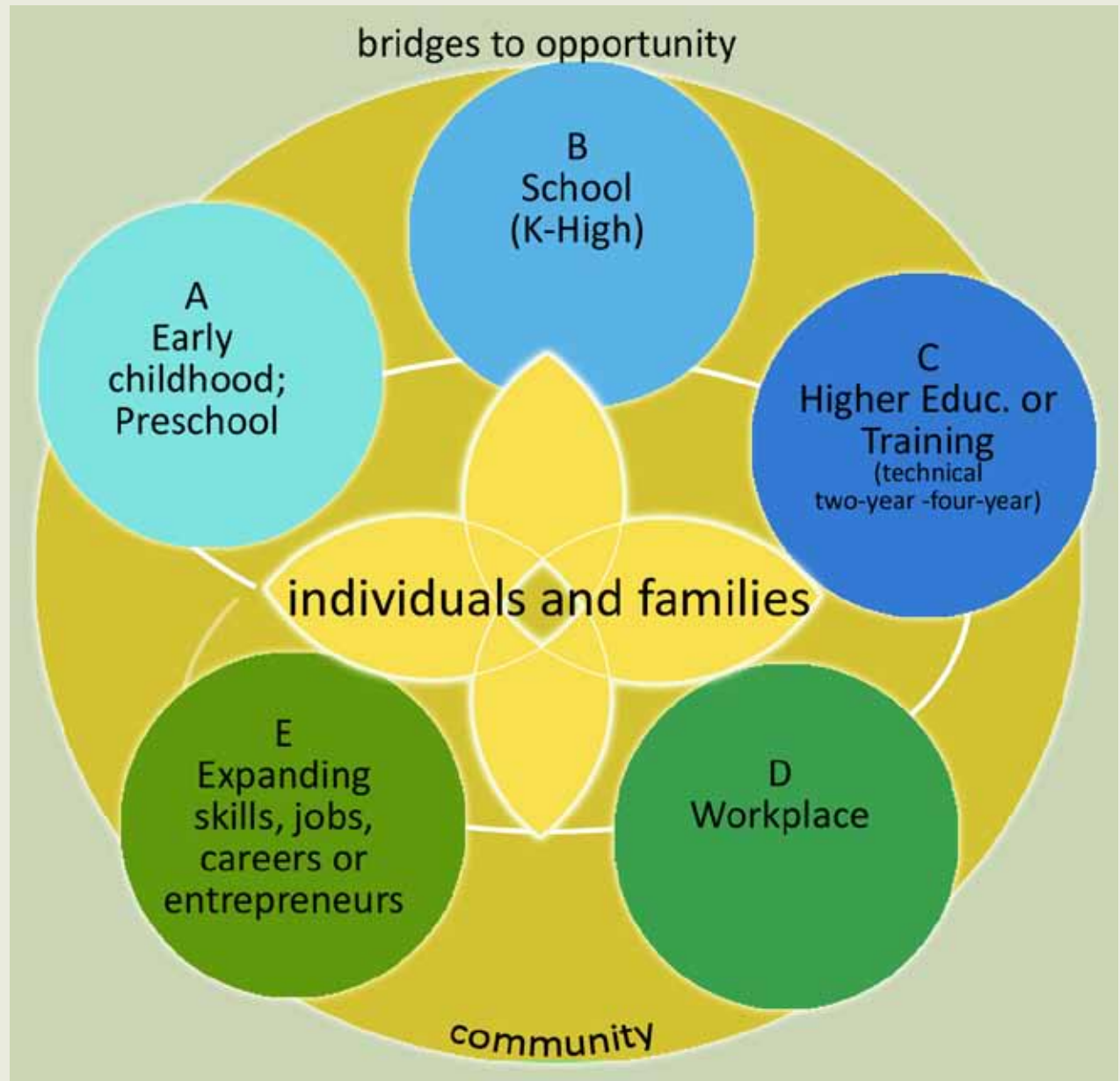
We examined a diagram of how individual and family attitudes, situations and asset levels intersect with institutions and systems in key transitions from pre-school to the workplace

Current Questions

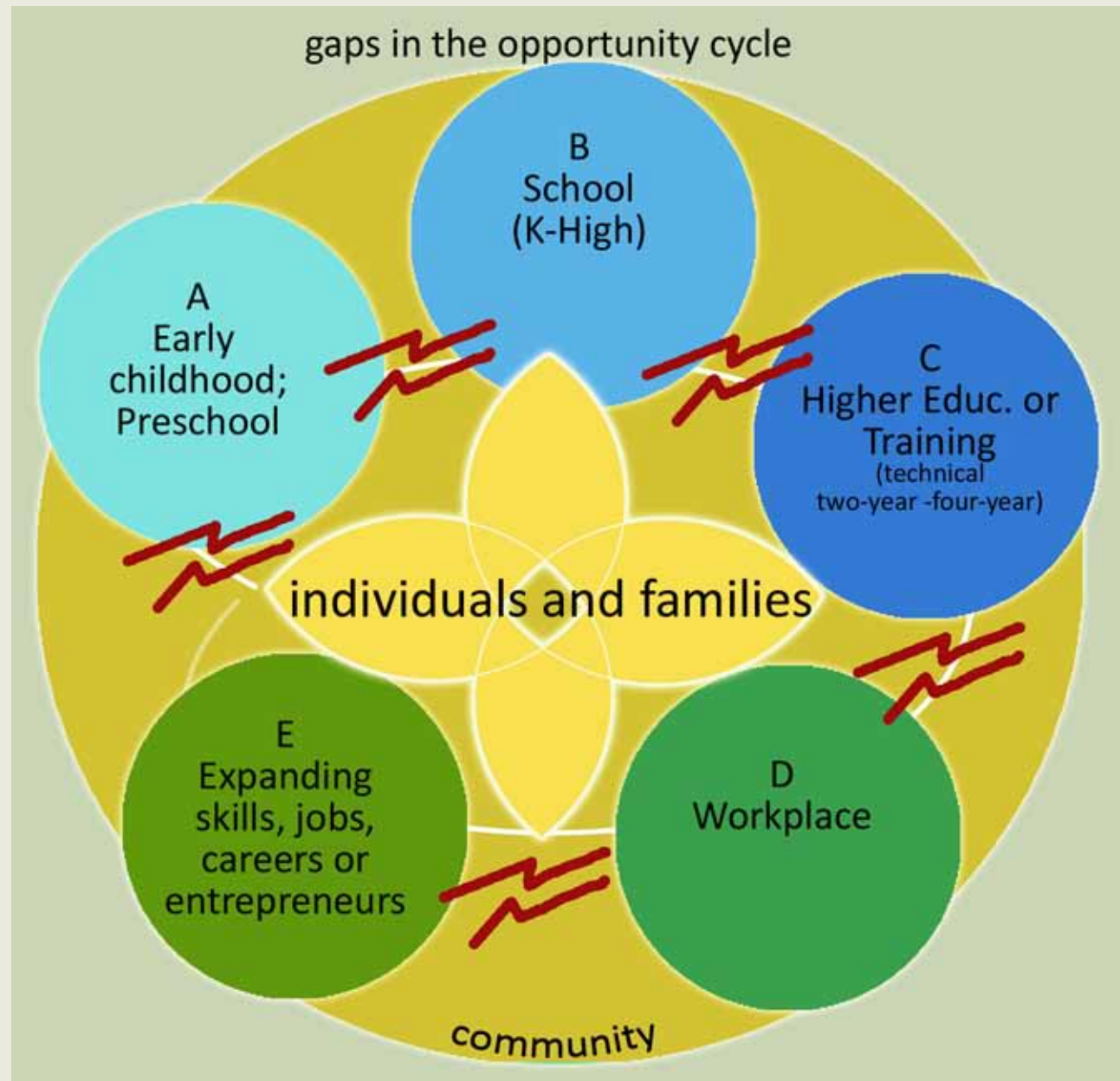
The big questions we're facing during this discovery and dialogue phase are:

1. What important aspects of the Mississippi County economic system create an important CONTEXT for the current situation?
2. “Why are people hitting barriers and living in poverty in our community?”
3. “Where are the gaps and possible places to rethink our approaches, programs, services, or expectations?”
4. “What do we think we know about the facets and faces of poverty in our communities?”

We started looking at the cycle of life transitions and where we see gaps and barriers for people



We saw gaps in the transition from home to early childhood learning A. We added gaps between A-B and then between B-C. These ideas are highlighted on the following pages. In December, we will continue examining these issues.



Observations on the GAPS in Current Situation related to transition "A"—early childhood preparedness



The school system has limited capacity and deals with the whole spectrum of children on the reading and level of basic identification of shapes, colors, words.

Though we have many childcare centers, we still don't have enough coverage for young infants, not enough for after school hours for school aged kids

Ideas: industrial based childcare might work. More case management efforts and connecting the provider network! We must differentiate the issues facing women and use a variety of support strategies

Some kids entering pre-school have no picture of what a successful life looks like or requires.

The health and nutrition levels for some preschoolers is limited. There are still mindsets at home of dependency.



...more observations and insights about the “A” and “B” gaps.

There are positive shifts underway in the school systems: more differentiation in teaching approaches, tied to the student’s level and learning styles.

The community is responding to providing academic and social supports, especially through tutoring, mentoring. One gap: no transportation available for after-school tutoring programs.

In dealing with kids from impoverished situations, we have to urge: “Just because this is where you grew up, it doesn’t have to be your destiny.”

Public schools working on school success by adding STEM schools, specialty training for nursing, welding, trades.
Ark. Northeastern provides career coaches in some high schools. It is addressing some gaps in college readiness and providing joint credits for classes and community service.

Identifying more “B” Gaps related to secondary and school success as a bridge to further opportunity.



The schools are committed to student achievement at or above proficiency (by some future date?) This requires a cultural shift in expectations inside the schools—and across the community.

Even kindergarten students are getting computer literate!

In dealing with kids from impoverished situations, we have to urge: “Just because this is where you grew up, it doesn’t have to be your destiny.”

Schools currently are training kids for jobs that don’t exist; we need to figure out how to invent the kind of economy that can tap their expertise and employ them here!

Identifying “C” Gaps between secondary and higher education or training environments




Many adults still aren't comfortable or proficient with computing, which is now essential in most work or higher learning environments.

Though we have many bridges to college and technical training, these institutions still find almost 50% of students require remedial help!

Starting in 2011, Great River Promise scholarships will provide every grad of a high school in the county (with no criminal history) a FREE scholarship to ANC. This will open the door and reduce an access gap to college.

There is now a policy for Remedial programs at ANC: “test into program and test out” ...need policy changes here to better meet the students' unique needs.

Identifying other "C" Gaps between secondary and workplace



Ex-convicts aren't being supported to get ready for work...they are way behind!

WE'LL DO MORE EXPLORATION OF THE TRANSITION FROM "C" TO "D" , THE WORKPLACE, AND ON AT DECEMBER 11TH MTG.

There are fairly significant basic literacy and substance abuse problems in the population that is disconnected from work

What does Census data tell us about the range of people in our County facing poverty?

2000 U. S. Census: Poverty by Age in County	Population	Total People Below Poverty Level	Percent of People in Poverty	Under 5	5	6-11	12-17	18-64	65-74	75 +
Mississippi Co.	51,070	11,752	23.0	1,492	306	1,547	1,441	5,753	592	621
White	32,997	4,486	13.6	448	86	375	422	2,472	331	352
Black	16,772	6,932	41.3	986	218	1,122	968	3,125	246	267
Hispanic	1,059	297	28.0	59	14	57	44	120	3	0
2006-08 Avg.										
Mississippi Co.	44,995	12,211	27.1	1,795	97	1,655	1,745	6,092	353	665
White	28,318	4,705	16.6	467	51	386	439	2,737	210	415
Black	15,529	7,205	46.4	1,178	46	1,189	1,293	3,121	143	235
Hispanic	1,148	301	26.2	90	0	54	0	157	0	0

Sources: UALR Census State Data Center and online resources. Summary File 3
 2000 Census of Population and Housing—Poverty by Age, Race, and County.
 POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY RACE SEX AND AGE ACS:
 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2006-2008, THREE YEAR AVERAGES

Some common language about “poverty”

The USDA Economic Research Service defines poverty as:

“Any individual with total income less than an amount deemed to sufficient to purchase basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, and other essential goods and services.”

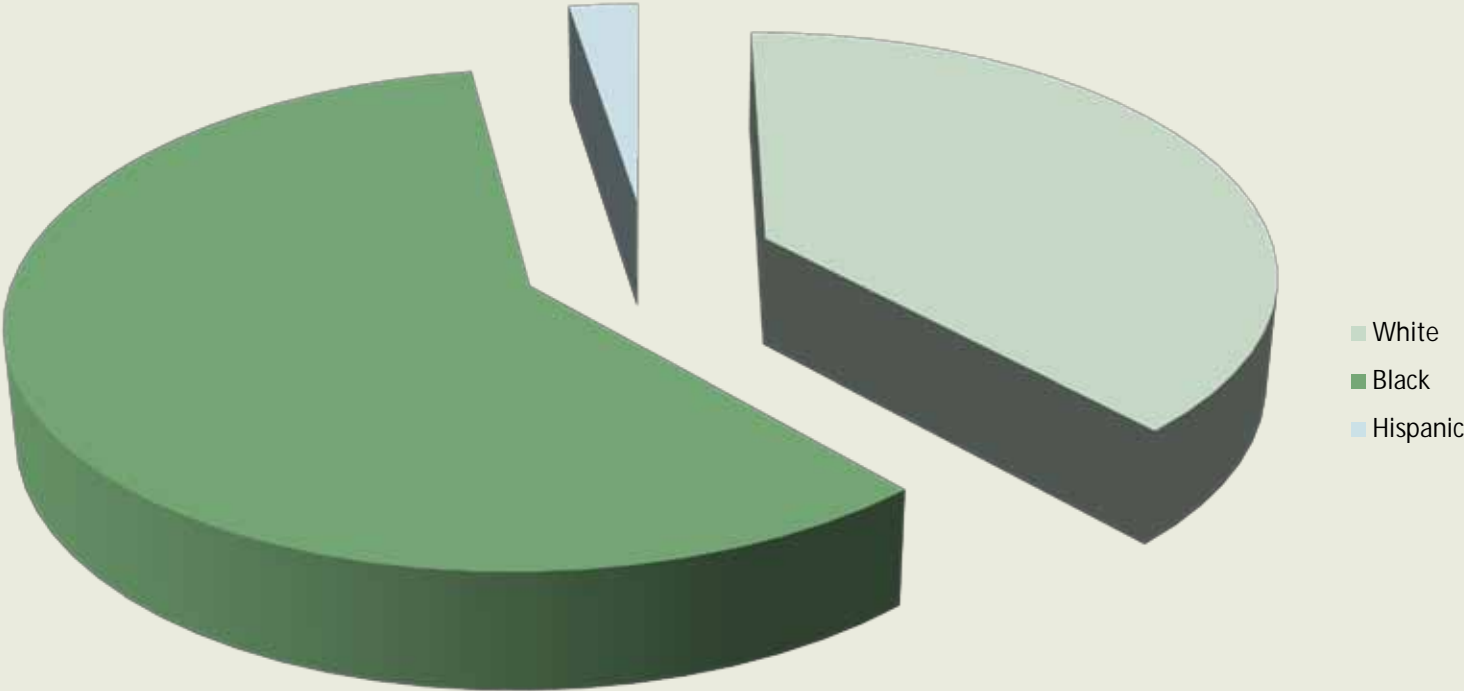
The government’s current income guidelines as published in the Federal Register in January 2009 online:

The 2009 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia

Persons in family	Poverty guideline
1	\$10,830
2	14,570
3	18,310
4	22,050
5	25,790
6	29,530
7	33,270
8	37,010

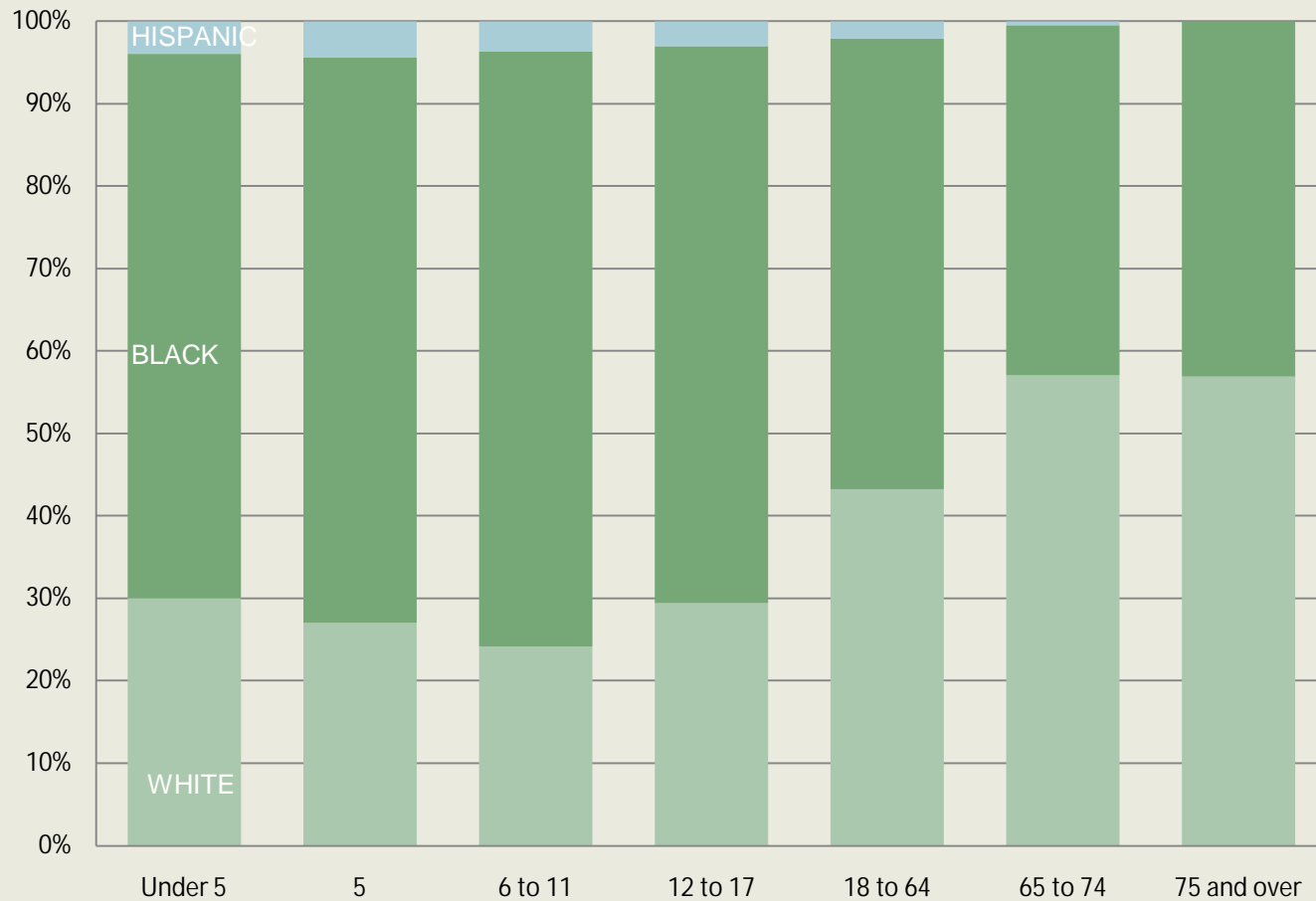
Total People Living Below Poverty in Mississippi County in 2000

Source: U. S. Census



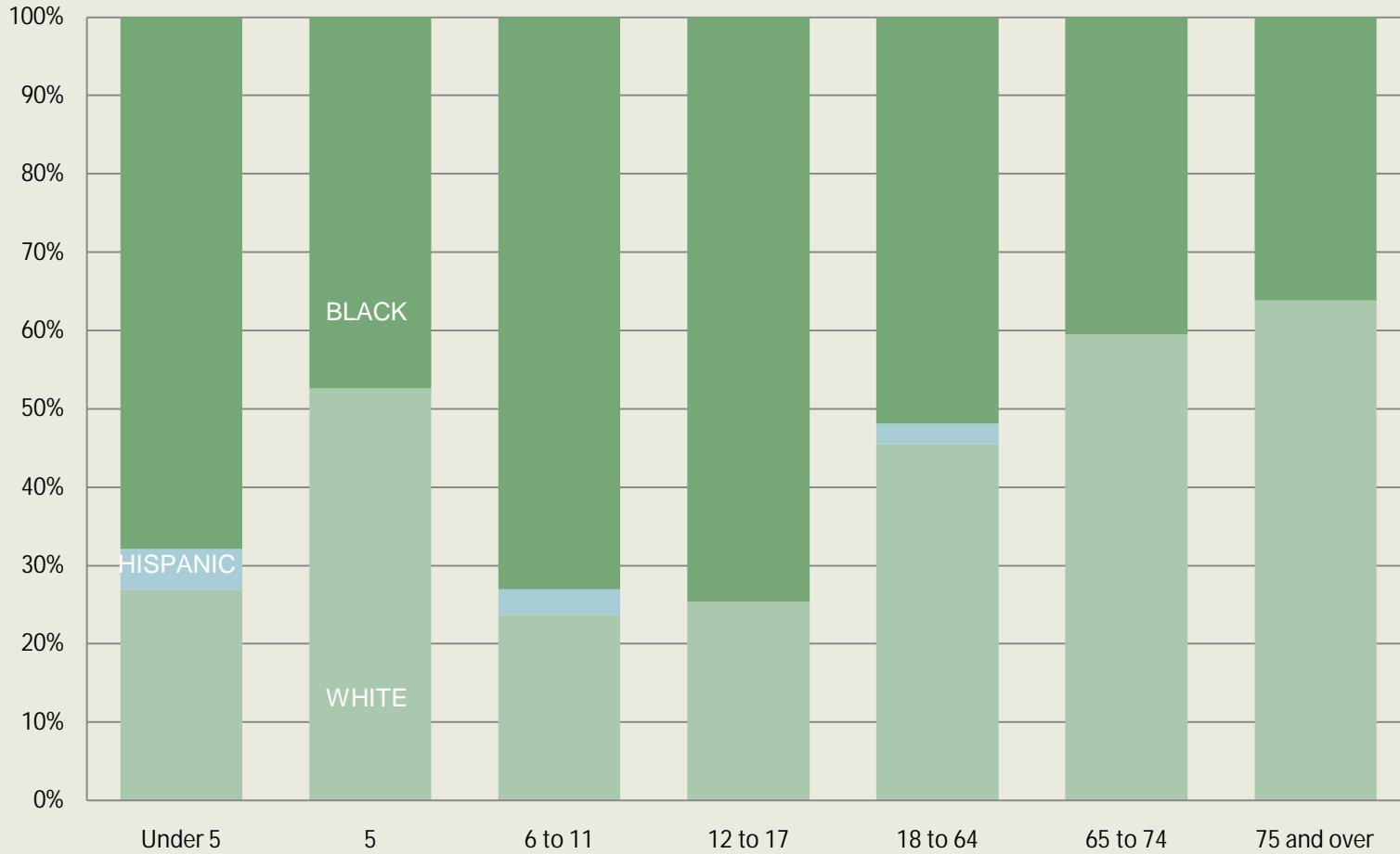
2000: Poverty by Age and Race in Mississippi County

U. S. Census Data

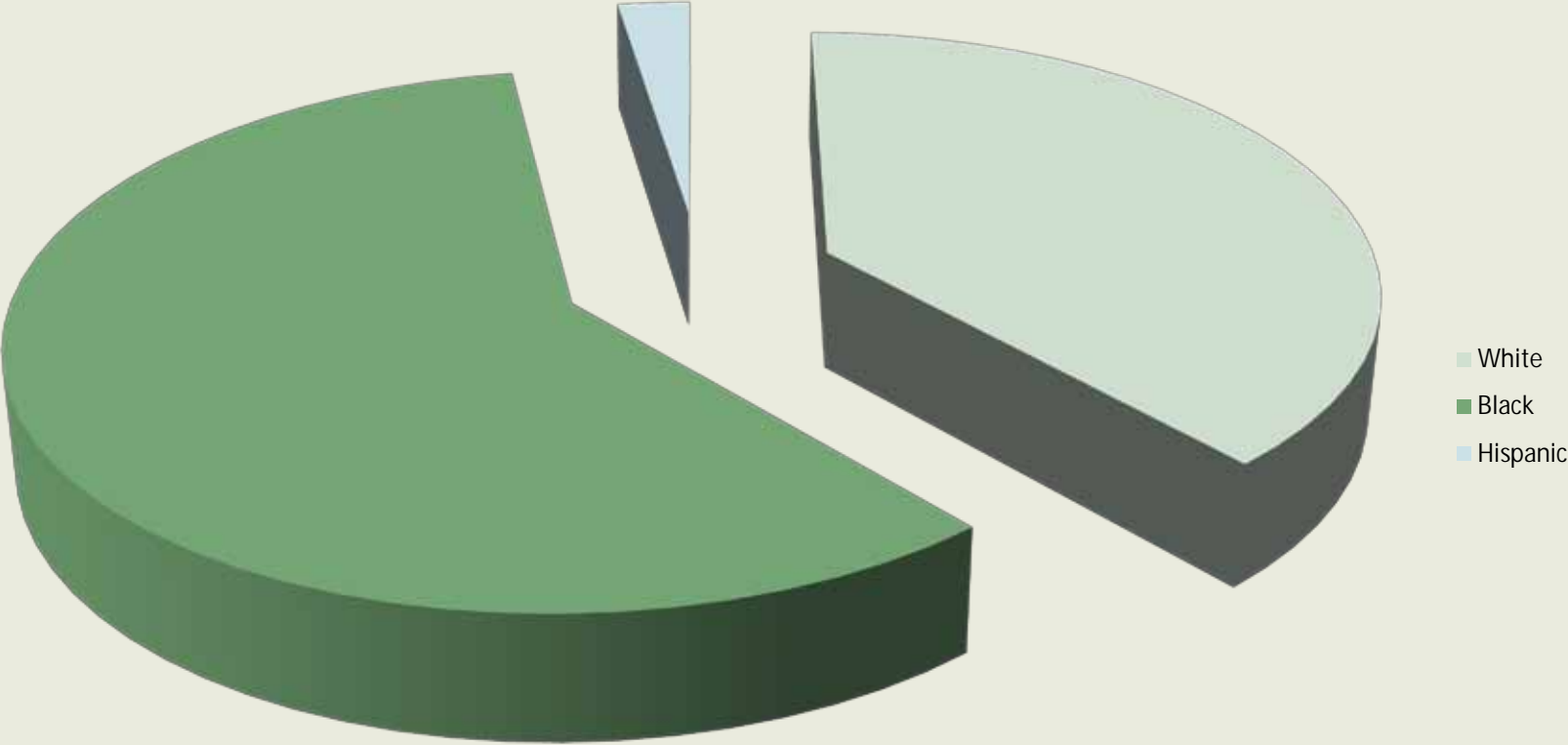


2006-8: Poverty by Age and Race in Mississippi County

American Community Survey, Census Estimates



2008 total people living below poverty
In Mississippi County (Census est.)



There are many different stories of poverty and vulnerability here... there is no *single* poverty situation.



**HERE ARE
A FEW RECENT SNAPSHOTS
WE'VE HEARD
OR ENCOUNTERED...**

3,341 people were depending on Food Stamps in our County.

55% of families living at poverty are female heads out household

Local food “pantries-kitchens” provided over 3,500 meals monthly

Pantries and Mission operations gathered and distributed over 15,000 pounds of food each month

The pantry-mission-ministry efforts distributed over 3,000 articles of clothing to people in need in a typical month (2009)

One of the local charitable clinics served over 1,200 people without health insurance this year.

What do these snapshots suggest about serious poverty?