

# Act 1

Concentrated Neighborhood

Poverty:

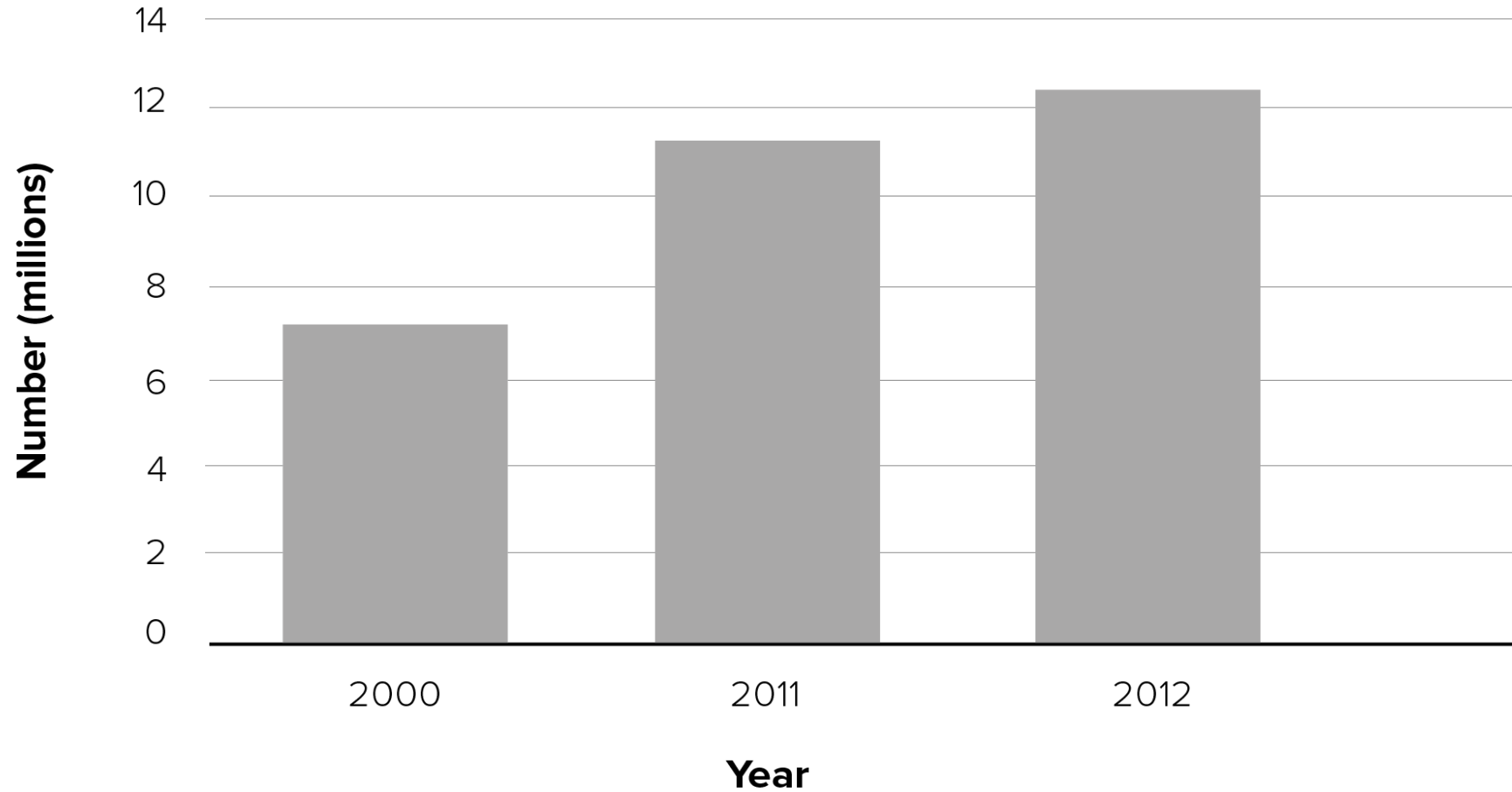
Who Experiences it, Where is it  
Located, How Does it Impact its  
Residents?

# Who is Confronted with Concentrated Poverty?

- Almost 12 million Americans live in concentrated poverty <sup>1</sup>
- Increase of 5 million from 2000 <sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 40 percent of people living in areas of concentrated poverty are African American <sup>3</sup>
- Nearly 40 percent of the total population living in communities of concentrated poverty are Hispanic <sup>3</sup>
- Almost three out of four African American families living in today's most segregated, poorest neighborhoods are the same families that lived in the concentrated poverty of the 1970s <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2013; <sup>2</sup> Kneebone, 2014; <sup>3</sup> Meade, 2014; <sup>4</sup> Sharkey, 2013

# NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN CONCENTRATED POVERTY



Sources: 2000 - U.S. Census Summary File 3; 2011-2012 - American Community Survey 5-year Summary File.

# How Were These Neighborhoods Formed? (Rural)

- Small southern African American towns that were once slave plantations, then sharecropping/debt peonage (African American Belt- Arkansas to North Carolina; the Mississippi Delta)
- More than one-half of residents in many American Indian reservation communities are poor (Desert Southwest and the upper Great Plains)

# How Were These Neighborhoods Formed? (Urban)

- **African Americans**
  - Great Migration – push and pull factors <sup>1</sup>
  - Construction and maintenance of ghettos <sup>2</sup>
    - Redlining policies and practices
    - White flight
    - Acts of terror
    - Restrictive covenants
    - Deprived of resources and investments
- **Hispanics**
  - Settled in gateway cities<sup>3</sup> (Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, Miami, San Diego )
    - These established enclaves continue to receive new waves of immigrants
    - Puerto Rican & Dominicans lived in concentrated poverty in Boston, Providence, Philadelphia and New York.
    - Mexicans often in urban clusters in the West
  - One in three individuals in major cities who lives in concentrated poverty is in a household in which English is not spoken at home<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, 1987; Wilkerson, 2010; <sup>2</sup> Massey & Denton, 1998; <sup>3</sup>Patterson, 2002; <sup>4</sup>Mead, 2014

# How Were These Neighborhoods Formed? (Suburbs)

- Between 2000 and 2008-2012, the number of poor suburban residents living in concentrated poverty grew by 139 percent - almost three times the pace of growth in cities
- While African Americans have been moving to the suburbs since the 1970s, there has been an increase in the last 15 years, often settling in pockets of concentrated poverty<sup>1</sup>
  - Example: Ferguson, Missouri<sup>2</sup>
    - Larman Williams in 1968, first African American to buy a home
    - By 1980, 14 % African American; 1990, 24%; 2000, 52%; 2010, 67%
    - Between 2000 and 2012, Ferguson’s poor population doubled
    - One in four lived below the federal poverty line and 44 percent of them fell below twice that level
    - Southeast corner isolated geographically from the rest of the city<sup>3</sup>
      - 8<sup>th</sup> poorest census tract in the state; 95 percent are African American
    - While race changed in the suburbs, the power structure remained the same
      - Police department, fire department, leadership class, school administrators and teachers

<sup>1</sup> Kneebone, 2014; <sup>2</sup>Rothstein, 2015; <sup>3</sup>Casselmann, 2014

How Does Concentrated  
Neighborhood Poverty Impact the  
People who Live There?

# Exposure to Neighborhood Inequalities

- Increase of violence
- Increase of crime
- Different forms of policing
- Hyper-incarceration
- Limited access to private services/poor public services
- Abundance of liquor stores
- Excess of fast food/food deserts
- Higher banking expenses
- Unhealthy environment
- Poor housing
- Underground economy
- Decayed physical conditions of the built environment
- Higher rates of unemployment/limited employment opportunities
- 1/3 adults are HS dropouts vs. 12% college grads

Wacquant, L. (2001); Sharkey, P. (2013); Wilson, W. (1987); Wilson, W.J, Quane, J. M. & Hwang, J. (2015); Jensen, E. (2009); Harding, D.J. (2003); Venkatesh, S.A. (2006)



# Social and Cultural Isolation

- Social Isolation-lack of contact or sustained interaction with individuals and institutions that represent mainstream society
  - Friends, relatives and community members do not introduce individuals to jobs, resources and opportunities
  - Inability to gain access and embody certain behaviors, norms and skills that help people understand/read/navigate the global world
  - Lack of diverse role models
  - Mistrust and betrayal of institutions

Young, A.A. (2003); Small, M.L. (2009); Patillo, M. (2003); Wilson, W.J. (1987); Royster, D. (2003); Ditomaso, N. (2013); Atkinson & Kintrea, (2004).

# Intangible Struggles in Concentrated Poverty

- Preferential treatment to those who do not live in concentrated poverty, which maintains social isolation<sup>1</sup>
  - Hoarding of social resources and opportunities
  - Negative reputations of schools and communities in concentrated poverty
  - Social stigma of neighborhoods and families
  - Stereotypes held by institutions and social actors about residents who live in concentrated poverty

<sup>1</sup>Royster, D. (2003); Ditomaso, N. (2013).

# Multi-Generational Impacts

“The American ghetto appears to be inherited...the neighborhood environments in which African American and white Americans live have been passed down across generations.”

(Sharkey, 2013 p. 9)

- Children grow up and remain in the same type of environment
- Childhood exposure to neighborhood inequalities maintains concentrated poverty
- Childhood exposure is not felt only in a single lifetime, but affects the next generation
- Inequality is something that occurs over long periods of time and structures the opportunities available to families over multiple generations

Sharkey, 2013

# Agency in the Midst of Concentrated Poverty

- African Americans and Latinos in these areas do have meaningful social networks
  - Churches
  - Community centers
  - Social ties
  - Local clubs
  - Strong relationships
  - Safe spaces
    - Beauty shops, barber shops, homes

Stack, C. (1974); Ladner, J. (2000); Lofton, R. (2015); Wacquant, L.J.D. (1997)

## **ACT 2**

**What is the Impact of  
Concentrated Neighborhood  
Poverty on Students and Schools?**

# Concentrated Poverty and Schools

“A school’s socioeconomic background is a strong determinant of its students’ achievement”-- Coleman Report, 1966

- Mary Kennedy in 1986 found that the relationship between school poverty concentrations and student achievement averages is stronger than the relationship between family poverty status and student achievement.<sup>1</sup>
- Among children who experience poverty, live in areas of concentrated poverty, and are not reading proficiently by third grade, 35% fail to graduate from high school by age 19.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kennedy, 1986; <sup>2</sup>Hernandez, 2012

# Concentrated Poverty and Schools

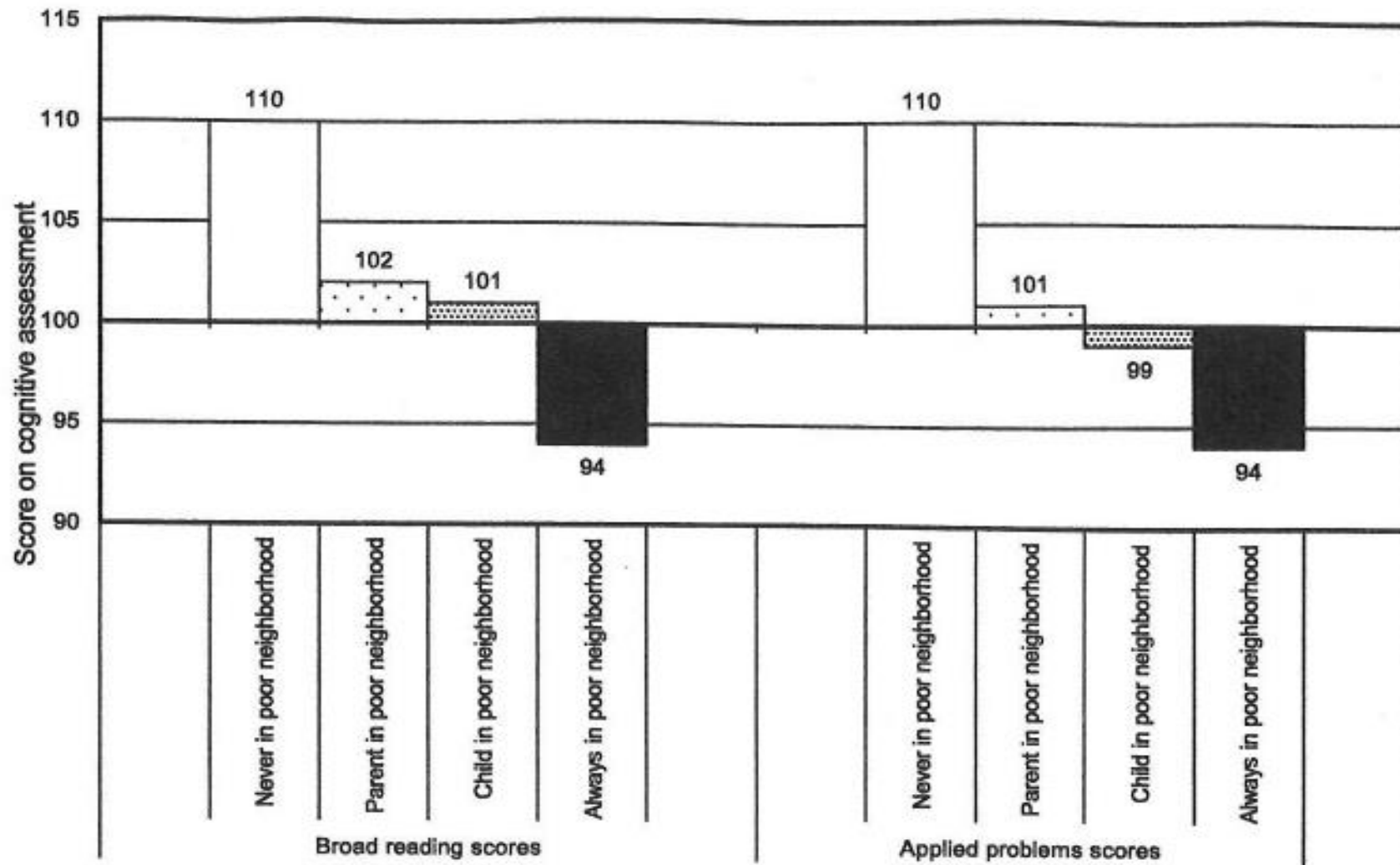
- When half a student body is poor, all students' achievement will be depressed
- When 75% are poor, all students' achievement will be seriously depressed
- A district with more than 60% poor children can no longer rely solely on its own internal efforts to avoid failure

Puma, M. et al, 1997; PPRAC

[http://www.prrac.org/pdf/annotated\\_bibliography\\_on\\_school\\_poverty\\_concentration.pdf](http://www.prrac.org/pdf/annotated_bibliography_on_school_poverty_concentration.pdf) ;

When both students and their  
parents grow up in concentrated  
neighborhood poverty,  
the impact on school success  
is magnified.





**Figure 5.1.** Raw average scores on tests of broad reading skills and applied problems skills, by neighborhood poverty status over two generations.

What are some of the mechanisms through which concentrated neighborhood poverty impacts student and school success?

Students who live in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty attend school less frequently. They have higher rates of absenteeism and chronic absenteeism.

## **A Better Picture of Poverty: What chronic absenteeism and risk load reveal about NYC's lowest income elementary schools**

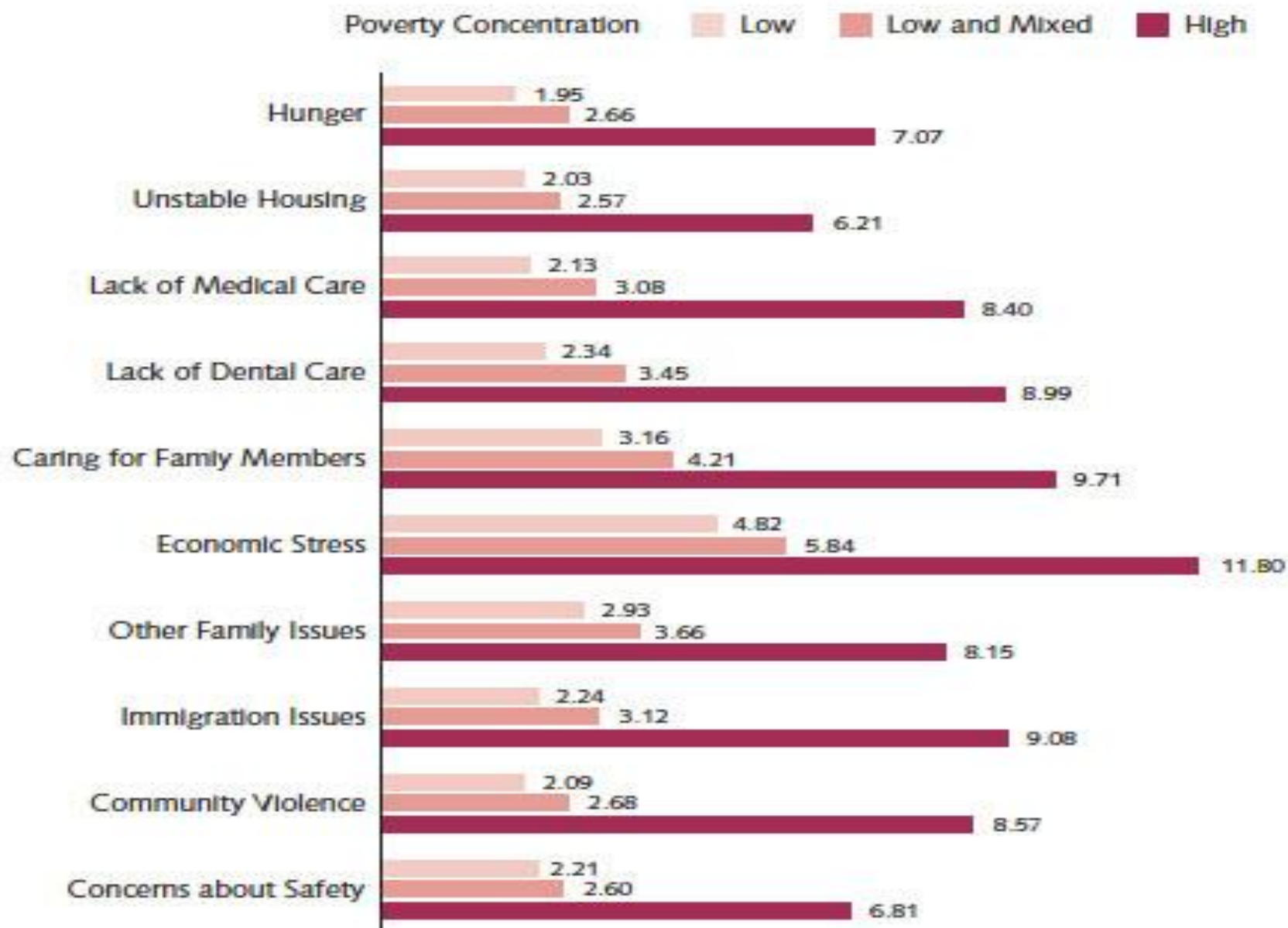
- Found 130 elementary schools in NYC in which *more than one-third* of the children were chronically absent for five years in a row.
- These schools have very low levels of academic achievement as measured by standardized tests.
- Chronic absenteeism correlates with deep poverty--high rates of homelessness, child abuse reports, male unemployment, and low levels of parental education.
- In fact, the report states, chronic absenteeism is a much better index of poverty than the traditional measure of the number of children eligible for free lunch.

Chronic stress associated with living in poverty has been shown to adversely affect children's concentration and memory which may impact their ability to learn.

(American Psychological Association)

The number of students being distracted and stressed by out-of-school struggles is 2-to-3 times higher in areas of concentrated poverty and reaches a level where it can impact the whole class (8-10 students or more in a class).

Figure 1. Economic and social stressors (number of students affected in a typical class)



# Concentrated Poverty Leads to Less Learning Time in School

- UCLA Institute for Democracy conducted a statewide survey in California in November and December of 2013
- 783 California high school teachers completed 30-40-minute online survey
- 3-5 teachers nested within 193 high schools
  - Low-concentration poverty school - 0-25%
  - Low- and mixed-concentration poverty schools - 0-50%
  - High-concentration poverty schools - 75-100%

# Concentrated Poverty Leads to Less Learning Time

- The lack of qualified substitutes
- Insufficient access to school libraries or computers
- Extra time spent on testing
- Emergency lockdowns
- Disrupted days for non-instructional assemblies
- More likely to be interrupted during class

Rogers, J. & Mirra, N., 2014



# Concentrated Poverty Leads to Less Learning Time

- Lose 5 minutes on average in every instructional period compared to low-poverty schools (30 minutes per day)
- In total, high-poverty schools lost 12.4% of their instructional days for these reasons, compared to 7% in low-poverty schools
- Also higher rates of teacher absenteeism (which led to higher rates of teachers providing class coverage, instead of preparing for their classes or giving students extra help)

Rogers, J. & Mirra, N, 2014

# Schools that Serve Neighborhoods of Concentrated Poverty Also...

- Have higher suspension and expulsion rates
- Have higher principal and teacher turnover
- Are often staffed by less-experienced principals and teachers

As a result, greater student need is met with transient and less-experienced adults.