

Raising the Next Generation

Research with Black Parents and Caregivers

MARCH 2021

CONDUCTED FOR THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

PREPARED BY PERRYUNDEM

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

— BACKGROUND

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's vision is a Culture of Health, where everyone in America has a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being. Through its work for healthy children and families, the Foundation sponsored this national survey with diverse parents and caregivers to hear directly from them about their aspirations for their children, the challenges they face, and what enables their families to thrive. PerryUndem, with guidance from GMMB and Betty&Smith, conducted the survey and analysis.

As America rapidly evolves into a more racially and ethnically diverse country, we see the future in today's generation of children. This survey was designed to give equal voice to parents from different backgrounds. It includes parents rarely included in national studies to explore their attitudes, perceptions, and experiences. For more information about this project, please visit: *EveryFamilyForward.org*.

— QUALITATIVE WORK

Qualitative work was used to inform the survey design.

Research methods

37 interviews with parents (<250% FPL) (February-March 2019; April-September 2020)

30 focus groups with parents (<250% FPL) (April-November 2019)

5 focus groups with service providers working with families (December 2019-January 2020)

Topics covered

Parents' optimism about their children's future

Feelings about parenting

Perceptions of inequity in America

Feelings about their neighborhoods / communities

Factors that impact children's ability to thrive

Challenges their children will likely experience

Positive experiences their children will likely have

Worries about children experiencing discrimination

Parents' experiences with discrimination

How discrimination has impacted parents' opportunities

What enables families to thrive

Reports on the qualitative work are available at EveryFamilyForward.org.

Study participants

Most have incomes <250% FPL (about \$54,000 for a family of three):

Alaska Native parents

Arab parents

Black parents

Chinese parents

Indian parents

Indigenous parents

Korean parents

Latino parents

LGBTQ parents

Native Hawaiian parents

Southeast Asian parents

Vietnamese parents

White parents

All participants were compensated for their participation.

Research conducted in...

Arabic

Cantonese

English

Korean

Mandarin

Spanish

Vietnamese

Study locations

In-person interviews and focus groups conducted in...

Albuquerque, NM

Anchorage, AK

Bismarck, ND

Buffalo, NY

Colorado Springs, CO

Fresno, CA

Honolulu, HI

Houston, TX

Irvine, CA

Newark, NJ

New York, NY

Pearl, MS

San Francisco, CA

Savannah, GA

Seattle, WA

Tulsa, OK

During COVID-19, 21 online interviews have been conducted with low-income parents living in cities, suburbs, small towns, and rural areas in...

Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Texas

— SURVEY DETAILS

We conducted a national survey of 2,023 racially and ethnically diverse parents and caregivers raising children 0-17 years old.

The survey included roughly equal samples of Asian American Pacific Islander (417), Black (400), Indigenous (406), Latino (400) and white (400) parents and caregivers.

This report focuses on the 400 Black parents and caregivers who participated in this survey. The sample size for this segment limits what subgroups we can analyze.

The margin of sampling error for the survey of Black parents is: +/- 8.2 percentage points.

More details on the survey methodology are available on [EveryFamilyForward.org](https://www.EveryFamilyForward.org).

Key Findings.

— Optimism

Seven in 10 (72%) Black parents say they are optimistic about the future for their children.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “I am optimistic about the future of this country for my children.”

	TOTAL Agree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Total	72	39	33	15	12
Moms	73	44	29	14	11
<250% FPL	73	43	30	13	12
Non-college	73	40	33	13	13
>250% FPL	70	34	36	17	12
Dads	70	30	39	15	13
Parents of children 0-5	69	31	37	19	10
College+	68	35	33	18	10

Case sizes: <250% FPL (N=200); >250% FPL (N=200); Dads (N=172); Moms (N=228); Non-college (N=164); College+ (N=235); Parents of children 0-5 (N=118)

Total MOE: +/- 8.2 percentage points

— Opportunity

Lower-income Black parents and parents of young children are the most likely to strongly agree that America does not offer every child the same opportunity.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “I try to give my children everything for them to succeed, but I worry that America doesn’t offer every child the same opportunities?”

	TOTAL Agree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Total	94	75	19	4	2
Moms	96	77	19	2	2
<250% FPL	95	82	13	3	2
Non-college	95	77	18	3	2
Parents of children 0-5	93	81	12	6	1
>250% FPL	93	67	26	4	2
College+	92	71	21	5	3
Dads	91	73	19	6	2

— Positive Experiences during Childhood

Most Black parents think it is likely their children will have strong role models, a quality K-12 education, a chance to go to college, a strong social network, and a safe neighborhood to grow up in.

Q: Now let me ask you about other experiences your children might have. How likely do you think it is that your children will experience the following during their childhood and teen years?

	TOTAL Very/ somewhat	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all
Strong, positive role models	99	77	22	1	0
A quality K-12 education	98	72	26	1	1
Have a chance to go to college, vocational, or trade school after high school	97	77	20	3	0
More opportunity to succeed and thrive than you had	97	73	24	2	1
A strong social support network	97	70	27	2	0
A safe neighborhood to grow up in	95	66	29	3	2

Total MOE: +/- 8.2 percentage points

— Challenges

Black parents feel it is likely their children will also have negative experiences growing up like racism, harassment by law enforcement, bullying, and unfair discipline from teachers during their childhood and teen years.

Q: How likely do you think it is that your children are or will experience (the following/any of these) during their childhood and teen years?

	TOTAL Very/ somewhat	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all
Racism	91	66	25	3	5
Harassment and profiling by law enforcement	90	51	39	7	3
Bullying	77	34	43	13	10
Unfair discipline from teachers/administrators	73	27	46	18	9
Anxiety	71	29	42	20	9
Discrimination on the basis of their gender, gender identity, sex, or sexual orientation	67	33	34	13	20
Depression	63	18	45	23	14
Gun violence	45	17	28	30	25

Total MOE: +/- 8.2 percentage points

— Place to Raise Children

Most Black parents say their communities have places to buy healthy foods, their neighborhoods are good places to raise children, and they have parks and playgrounds for outdoor activities. But, one-third (33%) consider their neighborhoods unsafe and 1 in 5 (19%) say their neighborhoods have brown/unsafe water.

Q: Now think about where you live, your home and community. How well does each describe where you live?

	TOTAL Very/ pretty	Very well	Pretty well	Not too well	Not well at all
Has places to buy healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables nearby	93	66	27	5	2
A good place to raise children	86	43	43	10	4
Has good quality schools	80	36	44	13	7
Has parks, playgrounds, and safe places for outdoor activities	76	49	27	17	7
Racially and culturally mixed	64	27	37	27	9
Has a good relationship between residents and law enforcement	64	24	40	29	6
Unsafe	32	13	19	25	41
Has brown water or unsafe water	19	11	8	13	65

Total MOE: +/- 8.2 percentage points

— Effects of Racism and Discrimination on Children

Three-quarters (73%) of Black parents are concerned racism will limit their children’s opportunities to get a quality education, go to college, or get a good job.

Q: How concerned are you that racism and discrimination will limit your children's opportunities to get a quality education, go to college, or get a good job when they are an adult?

	TOTAL Very/ somewhat	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not too concerned	Not concerned at all
Total	73	41	32	20	7
<250% FPL	76	48	28	18	6
Non-college	75	47	29	19	5
Moms	75	44	32	19	5
Parents of children 0-5	70	48	22	20	10
>250% FPL	69	32	38	24	7
Dads	69	37	32	22	9
College+	66	24	31	23	11

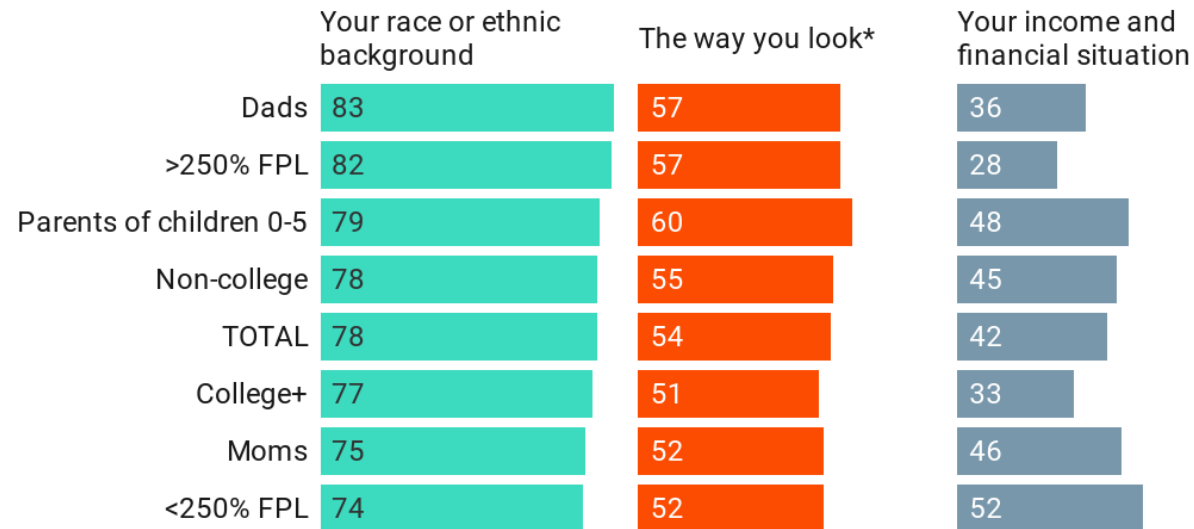
Total MOE: +/- 8.2 percentage points

— Experiences with Racism and Discrimination

Lower-income Black parents are more likely than higher-income parents to say they have faced discrimination based on their financial situation.

Q: Have you ever felt discriminated against or treated unfairly because of any of the following?

PERCENT WHO SAY "YES"



Full question options: Your race or ethnic background; Your gender; Your gender identity; Your income and financial situation; You are an immigrant; Your sexual orientation; Your religious or faith belief; The language you speak; The way you look

*For example, your hair length or style, the shape of your body, the clothes you wear

Total MOE: +/- 8.2 percentage points

— Effects of Racism and Discrimination

Three in four (74%) Black parents say racism has limited their own opportunities, with dads and lower-income parents most likely to feel this way.

Q: What effect, if any, has racism or discrimination had on your opportunities in life? Has racism and discrimination...

	TOTAL A lot/ Some	Limited your opportunities a lot	Limited your opportunities some	Did not limit your opportunities
Total	74	17	57	25
Dads	79	21	58	21
>250% FPL	79	12	67	20
Non-college	76	21	55	23
Parents of children 0-5	74	20	54	26
Moms	71	14	56	28
<250% FPL	70	21	49	29
College+	69	7	62	31

— Systemic Racism

A majority (93%) of Black parents agree that systemic racism can make it harder for someone like them to thrive.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Systemic racism and discrimination can make it harder for someone like me to get a good paying job, live in a safe community, attend quality schools, and get good medical care.”

	TOTAL Agree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Total	93	71	22	4	3
Moms	95	76	19	3	2
<250% FPL	95	74	21	3	2
Non-college	94	72	22	4	2
>250% FPL	91	66	24	5	4
Parents of children 0-5	90	66	24	7	3
College+	90	67	23	5	6
Dads	90	62	28	5	4

Total MOE: +/- 8.2 percentage points

— Emotions

Most Black parents feel lucky to be a parent, that they provide their children with everything they need to be successful, and are supported by friends and family.

Q: As a parent or guardian of a child, how often do you feel _____. Would you say frequently, sometimes, hardly ever, or never?

	TOTAL Frequently/ sometimes	Frequently	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Lucky to be a parent	99	85	14	0	1
That you provide your children with everything they need to be successful in life	99	80	19	1	0
Supported by family and friends	89	58	31	9	2
That you don't have enough time for your family	71	26	45	17	12

— Factors to Thrive

Black parents say a number of qualities and factors are very important in helping them get through hard times. Most important is a strong work ethic, creative problem-solving, and feeling they can change their family’s situation.

Q: How important is each of the following in helping your family get through hard times and to succeed:

	TOTAL Very/ somewhat	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not important at all
A strong work ethic	100	92	8	0	0
Creativity in how you solve problems	99	80	19	0	0
A feeling you have the power to change your family’s situation	96	85	11	3	1
A willingness to ask for help when you need it	95	72	23	4	0
Cultural traditions you share as a family and with others	95	61	34	4	1
Family and friends nearby who can help out	93	59	34	5	1
Strong faith and spiritual beliefs	88	71	17	9	2
Close connections to neighbors and others in your community	81	34	47	14	6

Total MOE: +/- 8.2 percentage points

**For more information or
further details about this
project, visit
EveryFamilyForward.org.**