

REPORT SUMMARY

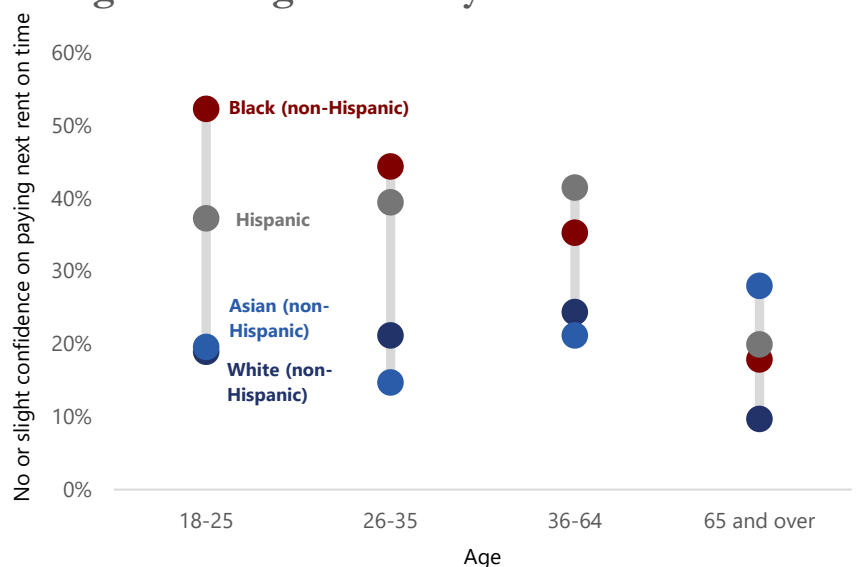
Untold Stories: Young Adult & Racial Dimensions of COVID-19

Researchers at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and Howard University conducted a study to examine previously untold stories of the COVID-19 pandemic among young people. They focused particularly on food and housing insecurity, mental health, and the racial dimensions of those adversities. The researchers analyzed a large, nationally representative dataset available through the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey, which has collected data over the course of the pandemic.

FINDINGS

Young adults reported alarming levels of food and housing insecurity during the pandemic, with the greatest hardships experienced by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) young people. Approximately 4.9 million young adults ages 18-25 have had too little to eat at a given time during pandemic on average. Approximately 3.8 million had little to no confidence in their (or their household's) ability to pay the next month's rent; about 1.3 million had no confidence. Black young adults reported food insecurity at about twice the rate of their White peers. Among respondents in single adult households, Hispanic young adults were about twice as likely, and Black young adults almost three times as likely, as White young adults to have little or no confidence in their ability to pay next month's rent.

Black young adults face especially high housing insecurity

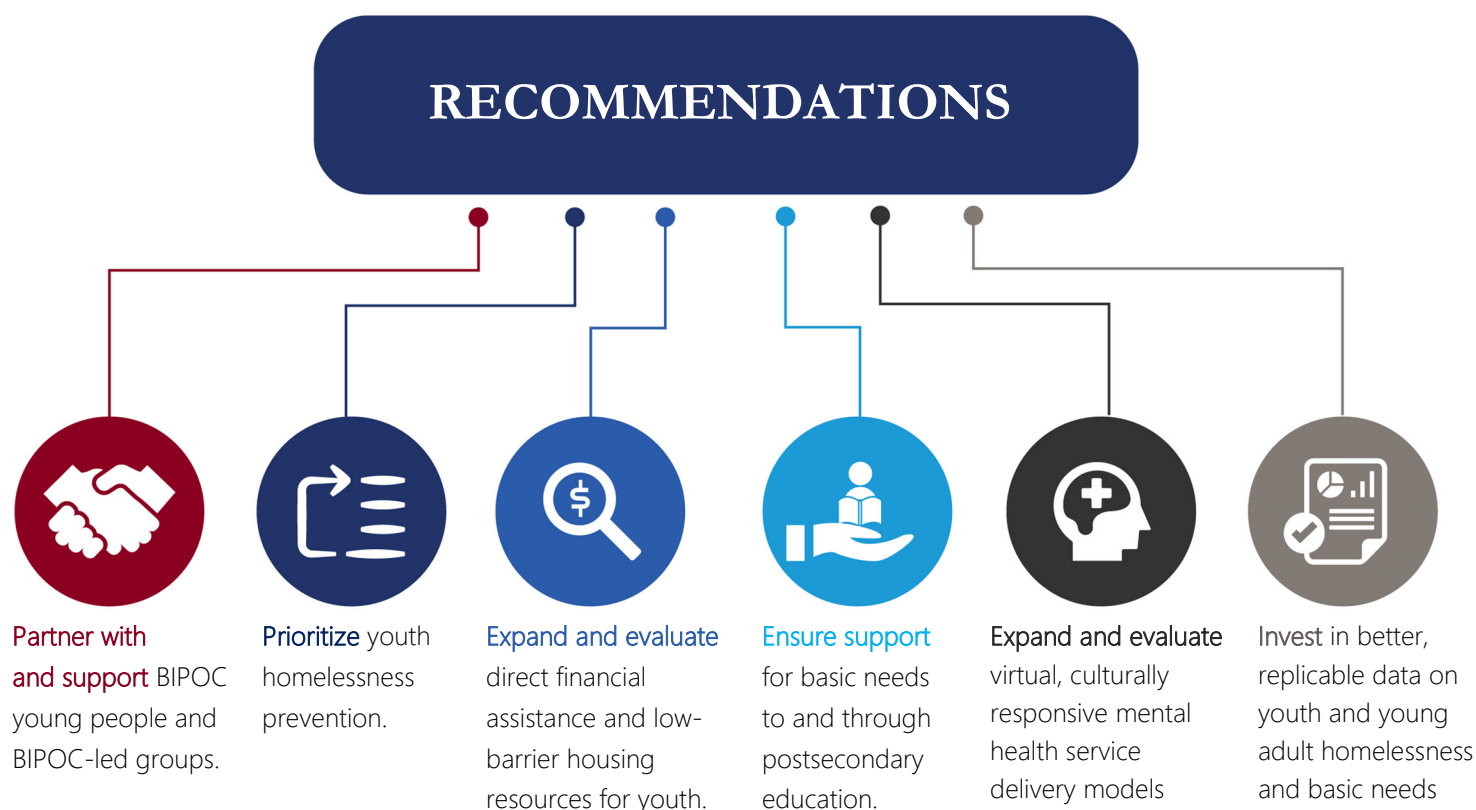


Note: Summary statistics are weighted using person level weights and Phases 2-3 (Oct. 28, 2020–Dec. 21, 2020). These graphs include respondents in single adult renting households only.

Young people reported very concerning levels of psychosocial challenge. More than half (54%) of young adults reported symptoms indicative of anxiety or depression disorders during the pandemic. Rates of mental health difficulties among young adults significantly exceeded those of any other adult age group. BIPOC young adults did not necessarily report higher rates of mental health difficulties compared with White peers, which could relate to both resilience factors and underreporting of mental health difficulties.

IMPLICATIONS

This analysis reveals alarming levels of food and housing insecurity among young adults, especially BIPOC young people. These adversities have important implications for young people's healthy development and positive transitions to adulthood. Recommendations based on these findings include the following:



Recommended Citation

Morton, M. & Daniels, G. (2021). *Untold Stories: Young Adult & Racial Dimensions of COVID-19*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

Statement of Independence and Integrity

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Established in 1985, Chapin Hall's areas of research include child welfare systems, community capacity to support children and families, and youth homelessness. For more information about Chapin Hall, visit www.chapinhall.org or @Chapin_Hall.