Black Reparations and Child Well-Being: A Framework and Policy Considerations

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide a child-centric framework for reparations and the resulting policy considerations and implications for child descendants of enslaved African Americans. We apply economic theory of human capital integrated with the theories of bioecological developmental systems to illustrate the multilayered aspects of harm from the legacy of slavery and racism and the potential positive ripple effects of a child-centric reparations policy strategy. In addition, we show that, relative to white peers, black children bear more than double the risk in outcomes unfavorable to educational and economic prosperity from birth through young adulthood. We also find that enduring racial wealth differences are larger among households with children than without children, with the child household racial wealth gap in 2019 remaining comparable to that seen 60 years ago. Simulations suggest that a wealth transfer of $130,000 per child during early childhood reduces the black-white gap in high school graduation by 13 percentage points and increases college attendance by 26 percentage points. We review current federal, state, and local reparations initiatives and find that few propose cash or wealth transfers or direct investments in black families or their children. Based on a contemporary survey, black parents with young children express support for reparations in the form of direct cash payments as well as other forms of financial assistance.

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Enslavement of African Americans and the resulting legacy of racism and exclusionary systems has given rise to disproportionate hardship in the lives of black[1] people in the U.S., particularly in the realm of wealth accumulation and economic security (Darity & Mullen, 2022). Black-white differences in outcomes that are not explained by differences in conventional economic prosperity equalizers such as educational completion or income persist across many metrics of health and economic well-being. Resulting policy responses that strive toward achieving goals of racial wealth equity and opportunity range from economic considerations of access to credit, homeownership, and land ownership to human capital considerations of residential and public schooling desegregation. Public and policy debates continue to address the need for reparations and their supplemental role in realizing unfulfilled promises of financial compensation (Darity & Frank, 2003; Darity & Mullen, 2022; Darity, Mullen & Slaughter, 2022) and related federal actions toward redress (e.g., see de Grieff, 2006; Guarin, Londoño-Vélez, & Posso, 2023; Martin & Yaquinto, 2007).[2]

Despite active policy conversation about black reparations, commitment has been incremental, coming primarily from states and localities in the form of task forces and related government resolutions for evaluation. Nevertheless, economic policy arguments for reparations

[1] Despite the shift in writing convention toward capitalizing *Black* when referring to the cultural, racial, or ethnic group, the authors of this manuscript have chosen to lowercase it according to the preference of one of the authors W.A.D. who holds this identity.

[2] Reflecting all sides of the debate, over 100 news and opinion pieces were published in just the small recent window from March to June 2023, according to a Google search performed by the authors.

have yet to be grounded in the perspective of the well-being of black children.[3,4] In this paper, we provide a child-centric framework for reparations and examine the resulting policy considerations and implications for child descendants of enslaved African Americans.[5] As described subsequently, we argue that a child-centric approach to reparations merits distinct consideration from approaches that focus on adults alone.

Child reparations are not without precedent in the U.S. As recently as 2017, 22 lawsuits across federal courts on behalf of more than 80 undocumented migrant children from Mexico made claims for financial payment for the trauma endured from child detention and separation from their parents for longer than the legally approved 72 hours (Flagg & Rodriguez Calderón, 2020). The arguments for these lawsuits hinge on criteria of child human rights violations (i.e., separation characterized as temporary enforced disappearance and torture), a lens that we also bring to our child-centric framework.

This paper has multiple contributions. First, we develop a cross-disciplinary conceptual framework starting with economic theory of human capital and integrating theories from child development, family stress, and principles from conventions of child human rights. This

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[3] When referencing black people throughout this paper, we are referring to individuals who may identify as African American—those who were primarily born in America and are descended from enslaved Africans who survived the trans-Atlantic slave trade—as well as the smaller populations of people living in America who may identify as black African or Afro-Caribbean. *Black* also includes individuals who reported being black alone or in combination with one or more races or ethnicities in their responses to the U.S. Census—for instance, an individual who identifies as black only, as well as someone who identifies as black and white combined or Afro-Latino. Lloyd et al., 2021). However, not all black people are eligible for African American reparations from the United States government. Technically, reparations would most likely only accrue to children who were descendants of slaves.

[4] There are an estimated 10.1 million black children residing in the U.S. as of 2021 who are potential beneficiaries of reparations (Kids Count, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2023); with 2.63 million of the 10.1 million black children aged 0-4 and 3.9 million of the 10.1 million aged 5-11 (Kids Count, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2023). These estimates exclude approximately 3 million children under age 19 who are identified as mixed or multi race in 2021 and who may also qualify as eligible for reparations if at least one parent is eligible.

[5] We do not provide a formal meta-analytic review of the prevalence or impact of low wealth or low income among black households with children nor of black-white differences in income and wealth that have contributed to black-white differences in child well-being.

framework is used to posit mechanisms by which reparations may affect black children's well-being as well as reveal the ripple and feedback effects through the broader family and child ecosystems that also shape black children's development and future economic prospects. Second, we collect and provide several new stylized facts supporting the importance and potential impact of child-centric reparations, including an appraisal of black children's outcomes relative to white peers over the developmental life course, estimates of the child household racial wealth gap, and views about reparations among a national sample of black parents with young children, a group in which returns on parental and social investment can be high. Third, we review federal, state, and local black reparations initiatives, showing a need for further attention to child-centric investments.

Published black-white differences in children's outcomes typically focus on one developmental or policy domain (e.g., educational achievement) or on a particular age or transition (e.g., birth, high school graduation). Our curation of existing estimates across the child life course from birth to young adulthood shows a consistent pattern: Relative to white peers, black children, on average, are more than twice as likely to fare unfavorably in outcomes at every stage of their life course from birth through young adulthood. Enduring racial wealth differences are also larger among households with children than without children; the child household racial wealth gap in 2019 is comparable to that seen 60 years ago. Our estimates suggest that a $130,000 per child wealth transfer during early childhood reduces the black-white gap in high school graduation by 13 percentage points and increases college attendance by 26 percentage points.

Expanding the classical economic human capital model, we demonstrate the utility of a cross-disciplinary framework that informs a three-pronged child-centric reparations policy

approach. The first prong is direct payment as compensation for historical harm; these payments can be deposited in trust funds for each eligible child and made available when the child reaches a predetermined age. The second prong is at the family level, consisting of one-time infusions of wealth to families with eligible children, to minimize potential crowd-out as parents may adjust how much they privately invest in light of a child's potential wealth. The third prong is publicly funded information and education investments as redress and as a course of action for reshaping social norms and beliefs. Our comprehensive review of reparations initiatives shows that few are engaging in any of these three prongs. A few states and localities are in the early stages of disbursing conditional financial payments in the form of postsecondary educational scholarships or housing assistance as named reparations policy. Some of these reparations initiatives propose to include, or have already included, formal apologies. Although these activities can have positive spillovers for black children's well-being and make progress toward reducing racial gaps in outcomes, direct wealth transfers and public education and information investments, as outlined in our framework, are likely to have broader positive impact on the future welfare of black children while honoring the obligations intended by reparations.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. We begin by examining differences in black and white children's developmental outcomes that support the need for further investment to reduce racial gaps. We then present a cross-disciplinary framework for reparations to children, beginning with classical economic theory and incorporating more recent work on bioecological factors and family stress. We show how these factors driven differential trends in racial gaps for households with and without children, supporting the need for a three-pronged approach to reparations, which we detail at the child, family, and system levels. Finally, we

present an overview of the current reparations landscape and results of a survey examining black parents' views on reparations, followed by discussion and conclusion.

BLACK-WHITE DIFFERENCES IN CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES

Differences in outcomes between black and white children embody numerous possible explanations attributed to individual and family level current and historical experiences as well as factors related to communities and systems. We do not adjust these findings for explanatory factors such as levels of prior or current wealth, for two reasons. First, we treat the unadjusted outcomes as representative of lost opportunity at the child-specific level, illustrative of an all-else-equal counterfactual as captured via indicators of parental self-reported child race. Second, data limitations preclude many adjustments such as wealth. Thus, the estimates are not adjusted for confounding characteristics such as household income or parental education that might explain some or all of the variance in black-white differences but also are difficult to causally parse out. Estimates may overstate the variance in outcomes accounted for by race (as opposed to income, wealth, education, etc.).

Figure 1 presents the black-white differences across several markers of child and youth well-being. In all, we considered 25 outcomes, divided into broad categories: 20 individual-level outcomes, such as asthma rates or reading scores, and 4 system-level outcomes, such as foster placement or school suspension rates. Individual-level outcomes are further divided by developmental period: infancy, middle childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. Data sources and descriptions of each outcome are provided in Appendix A. For each outcome, we used the latest year of pre-pandemic data available; we did not use outcomes observed during the pandemic to avoid the confounding the effects of COVID-19. Black-white gaps in several outcomes are likely exacerbated since the onset of the pandemic, given that COVID-19's

economic, physical, and emotional effects were disproportionately concentrated among black communities, including black parents and their children (e.g., Monte & Perez-Lopez, 2021).

Black-white differences are scaled relative to the outcome measures for white children. Therefore, each estimate represents the percentage difference for black children relative to white children. To ease interpretation, all outcomes were negatively scaled. For example, an estimate of −1.22 for breastfeeding initiation indicates that black children were 22% less likely to be breastfed than white children.

As indicated by Figure 1, black-white differences are consistently negative; outcomes are uniformly worse for black relative to white children. Regardless of the developmental period considered, black children from infancy to adolescence have worse outcomes in comparison to their same-aged white peers (the one exception was feelings of sadness or hopelessness in adolescence). In infancy, for example, babies born to black mothers, relative to those born to white mothers, were 16% more likely to be born preterm and 55% more likely to be born with low birth weight.[6] White mothers were more than twice as likely to initiate prenatal care in the first trimester; black mothers were twice as likely to receive late or no prenatal care.

In middle childhood, math and reading score gaps were large, with white children being more than twice as likely as black children to be proficient in reading and math. Beyond academic achievement, black children in middle childhood had worse outcomes in terms of health (e.g., obesity rates and prevalence of asthma) and behavioral well-being (e.g., prevalence of ADHD or a severe behavioral difficulty). In adolescence, black teenagers, relative to white

[6] These estimates do not consider the implications of hypodescence (i.e., the categorization of people with multirace status to a lower-status racial group) and thus the possibility of white mothers birthing black children (Young et al., 2021) as estimates are based on the identity of the mother.

teenagers, were 50% more likely to drop out of high school, 180% more likely to attempt suicide, and 214% more likely to have a teen birth. Reading and math scores in for black 8th graders lagged behind their white peers. In young adulthood, blacks exhibited lower levels of human capital attainment, as they were less likely to graduate from high school or attend college.

Figure 1b also shows large differences in representative outcomes co-determined with services and systems.[7] Black infants are more than twice as likely to die at birth in hospitals, compared with white infants. Black children also have more than double the rate of foster placement (a representative outcome of child protective services), rate of school suspensions (a representative outcome of public school disciplinary policies), and odds of being arrested as a teen (a representative outcome of the criminal justice system).

These estimates do not capture costs of harm from slavery,[8] nor do they isolate the causal impact of slavery, discrimination, or structural inequality. Race as societal stratification and indicator of a group is crude and represents a host of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. For example, research shows that differences in performance on standardized tests between black and white children prior to entry into 1st grade are no longer present when controlling for household income and that the black-white gap in schooling outcomes grows as children progress through formal schooling (Fryer et al., 2004). Black students complete more years of schooling and earn more educational degrees than comparable white students from

[7] See Love and Hayes-Greene (n.d.) for comparable estimates across domains such as receipt of home loans, and recent coverage from Vox and Capital B (see Collins & Ramirez, 2023) synthesizing published literature showing racial differences in outcomes such as car ownership.

[8] The cost of economic harm from slavery and its legacy as informing the financial value of reparations is not the same as the societal costs of racism. Estimates of the latter show that over a 20-year period since 2000, the societal costs of racism including considerations of the wealth gap, homeownership, access to higher education and lending practices are upward of $16 trillion (Peterson & Mann, 2020). The American Academy of Pediatrics (Trent et al., 2019) explicitly declare racism's impact on children's health—physically and psychologically—as having long-reaching negative impacts on future economic productivity.

households with similar levels of income (Mangino, 2010, 2012). Further, maternal characteristics such as education, which are sometimes used to proxy family financial resources in economics research and are shown in child development research to have a protective effect on children's outcomes (Magnuson, 2007), do not show similar patterns for black children. For example, the black-white difference in infant mortality is most striking among highly educated mothers, and infant mortality for children born to the most highly educated black mothers is higher than that of children born to lower educated black mothers (Smith et al., 2018).

A CROSS-DISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORK FOR BLACK REPARATIONS TO CHILDREN

By delineating mechanisms related to family time and resource investments contemporaneously and across generations, classical economic human capital theory is very constructive. However, human capital theory alone is inadequate for capturing the multidimensional ways in which black reparations may impact children's well-being. Thus, we expand views from classical economic theory (and scholarship on intergenerational transmission of resources) to include family science, human development, and theories of trauma from psychology as well as principles from a child rights legal perspective, all within a bioecological child developmental framework. Figure 2 presents our cross-disciplinary framework of reparations for black children.

Classical Economic Theory: Family Investment

Economic theory of human capital has long been a driver of economics research in generating hypotheses about the mechanisms that affect children's outcomes, and how family economic resources affect these mechanisms (Attanasio et al., 2022, for a thorough recent review). Of the three elements of human capital theory—the technology or production of human

capital, initial endowments, and information constraints—the production of human capital and resulting theories of family investment relate most directly to our arguments related to reparations as they illuminate the implication of differential resources available to children as a result of parental investments, perceptions, or beliefs.

More formally, this technology or production function capturing family behavior is a useful starting point for representing the process of human development across various observable inputs *X*, considering initial endowments *H*, where inputs and endowments can shift temporally for child *i* at age *a*, and respond to unobserved inputs or shocks ε (as shown in Attanasio et al., 2022, equation 1, p. 858):

$$H_{i,a} = F_z\left(H_{i,a-1}, H_{i,a-2}, \ldots . H_{i,0}, X_{i,z}\, X_{i,a-1}, X_{i,a-2}, \ldots . , X_{i,0}, \varepsilon_{i,a}\right)$$

It follows that family investment behavior is affected by preferences that can be shaped by social norms and beliefs and also by financial or informational constraints. The interdependent and temporal nature of this model is especially relevant in the context of reparations in two ways: first, by capturing the cumulative historical and future impacts of the legacy of slavery and racism on the well-being of children, and second, by acknowledging the sensitivity of those impacts relative to children's developmental age or stage.

The production function underlying the theory of family investment informs how parents allocate their time and money resources, influencing the quantity and quality of material goods that will shape children's development. This theory has informed empirical research examining the impacts of parenting skills and early childhood interventions (Barr & Gibbs, 2022; Garcia & Heckman, 2023), effects of poverty and poverty reduction, various income support and safety net programs in the U.S. (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2019; Shah

and Gennetian, 2023), and the impacts of wealth (Bleakley & Ferrie, 2016; Gibson-Davis & Hill, 2021).

Economic theories of family investment also inform related empirical work on the effects of place-based poverty and neighborhood-level resources on children's future outcomes including earnings. Indeed, a multidecade follow-up of the Moving to Opportunity randomized control study of a housing voucher program estimates that the impact of families moving to a lower poverty neighborhood translated to substantial increases in subsequent earnings among the children who were the youngest at the time of the move (Chetty et al., 2016).

Theories of intergenerational mobility fit in this stylized model by incorporating credit constraints and expected lifetime resources and their influence on parental investment inputs or the availability of children's financial endowments. Parental expected lifetime resources affect children's future success relative to expected or actualized income or wealth at different ages of children's development (Eshaghnia et al., 2022). Tominey et al. (2021) corroborates that pre-existing household wealth in early childhood has a stronger correlation with improved outcomes than an equal level of wealth introduced later in life. Place of birth in the U.S. predicts future economic mobility (Chetty & Hendren, 2018). While many of these studies point to social and human capital development as mechanisms by which wealth is transferred across generations, one study shows that most wealth transference occurs in the form of direct financial transfers (Black et al., 2022).

These models of human capital economic theory illuminate mechanisms to guide policy. However, across key arenas of positive social policy investment for children, black children do not experience the same returns as peers of other races (Aizer et al., 2022), as we also show via the curation of estimates in Figures 1a and 1b. In the realm of social policy, examinations of food

stamp benefits hypothesized to support families' food consumption during times of monthly economic scarcity are associated with higher disciplinary infractions among black and brown students in Chicago public schools than among white students (Gennetian et al., 2016) and lower achievement (Gassman-Pines & Bellows, 2018). A recent study concluded that black and Hispanic mothers are less likely to accumulate net worth, are at greater risk of experiencing poverty, and, for black mothers specifically, are less likely to transfer income to their children (Lee & Sun, 2020).

Economic theory alone is not sufficient to cover the spectrum of reasons for differential returns by racial or ethnic group. First, as scholars note, structural constraints outside of the realm of credit and information constraints matter. Critiques of Head Start and related early intervention strategies—shown to have short-term and long-term beneficial impacts on children (e.g., see Barr & Gibbs, 2022, on intergenerational impacts)—point out that exclusionary and white-centric curriculum development and implementation reduced the potential benefits to black children (Bruno & Iruka, 2022). Administrative exclusions and burdens may be efficient as screening mechanisms but also impose differential costs on income-eligible families with children who might benefit the most from these social programs (Heinrich et al., 2022). For example, studies on welfare reform demonstrate that African Americans are subject to greater compliance costs in the form of stricter, more punitive policy rules, and states with a greater share of African Americans on TANF enacted stricter family cap rules and time limits.

Second, while the stylized human capital economic model leaves room for considering mechanisms related to the formation of parental beliefs, social reference points, and perceptions of returns on investments, these are still treated as parents' strategic choices under the assumption of full agency and equal opportunity. The costs of racism can be implicit and

internalized in ways that can be harmful to well-being yet appear to be rational choices. The subsequent effects of internalized racism (and adaptive strategies) can also ripple through a wide array of children's eco-systems beyond the family system.

Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Model and Its Contemporary Adaptations

Bronfenbrenner's model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) offers a complementary perspective to economic models of human capital theory by situating children as embedded in nested systems, starting with the family system, and viewing these systems as dynamically affecting children's perceived and real experiences, which in turn shape their development. Sameroff (2010) expanded on the static nature of the original bioecological model to consider diversity of human experience across time.

The original Bronfenbrenner model did not actively address either the positive or negative effects of culture, history, or concurrent and intergenerational dynamics shaped by unequal political and economic power. Contemporary scholars have infused these adaptations. Mistry et al. (2016) and Vélez-Agosto et al. (2017) extend the Bronfenbrenner model by incorporating culture as a dynamic process, composed of daily practices and the historical legacy of communities, and thereby considerations of culturally defined acceptable developmental processes and outcomes. More recently, Iruka et al. (2022) directly infuse the role of racism into the bioecological model, demonstrating the interconnected impacts of interpersonal and systemic racism at both the child and family levels of the ecosystem and thereby showing how the long arm of racism impacts both financial and cultural wealth (Cooper et al., 2022).[9]

[9] Racial literacy in parenting as cultivation of black identities has also been studied in ethnographic research of interracial families (Twine & Steinberger, 2006).

The bioecological model is instructive. First, the bioecological model extends the notion of children's sensitivity to familial and community-level contexts based on age and developmental influences, a conditionality not made explicit in human capital theory. This expands the discussion of reparations to acknowledge the implicit embeddedness of children in larger contexts, and how dynamic cultures and histories may result in economic harm. Second, the human development life course perspective proposes that trajectories of children's futures hinge on timing and the ripple effects of certain age-based developmental milestones. Cumulative interactive effects of interventions over more than one age period are harder to express in the economic stylized model, particularly with co-consideration of ages of siblings or other children in the household.[10] Providing $10,000 to a family whose oldest child is age 3 may have differential future impacts on that child and subsequent children in the family than providing the same amount to a family whose youngest child is 16 years old. Wealth endowed to a child may differ in impacts from wealth endowed to adults who make decisions about that wealth allocation. Third, while adults are decision-making agents (explicitly as parents in the stylized economic model), children are also conceptualized as active agents via transactional and feedback effects with adult caregivers and the broader ecosystem, particularly the legal and regulatory system that co-shapes decision-making authority and child agency. Examples include the legal age to drop out of high school or secure a driver's license, age eligibility to vote, aging out of foster care, and age of consideration as a juvenile or adult in the criminal justice system. Finally, the bioecological model contributes to stylized economic models of intergenerational transmission by looking beyond transmission of financial resources to consider also the

[10] This human development perspective has informed economist James Heckman's "skills beget skills" hypotheses and theories of change (The Heckman Equation, n.d.).

transmission and toll of current and prior trauma as well as the transmission of psychological strengths (resilience and love) and their effects on parenting and caregiver mental health.

Family Stress

Family and health sciences offer new insights on the specific mechanism of stress within the family system not captured in economic models or explicitly described as a "system" in bioecological models. Murry et al. (2018) revisit the family stress pathway for black families (McLloyd, 1990, 1998), acknowledging how internalization of prior trauma shapes and informs current parenting practices and how protective parenting strategies driven by fear and safety (e.g., black children being taught code-switching strategies) can and do clash with styles of parenting supported by parenting literature. In these ways, racism and discrimination have a lasting toll through parenting and family stress on the emotional and physical health of black Americans (Ganzel et al., 2010; Green & Darity, 2009; Geronimus et al., 2010; Goosby et al., 2018; McEwen, 2013).

Guiding Principles from Conventions on the Rights of the Child

In addition to economic and bioecological systems theory, the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC) provides a human rights and legal framework not typically incorporated in economic arguments. The CRC asserts clear child-centric principles on rights with respect to recognition of harms as well as access to reparative resources that, further, are in the best interests of the child and evolving capacities of the child (Miano, 2013, p. 28). Age, child gender and cultural context inform and shape the parameters and strategies of said reparations (Miano, 2013). Notably, the CRC recognizes cultural context alignment with communities and systems as a component of remedy and collective responsibility for violations and harm (that is consistent with bioecological model systems theories).

The CRC's five components—restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantee of nonrepetition—of reparations (Table 1) are useful to adapt as guiding rubrics for grounding its application to child descendants of African Americans. Harm, broadly encapsulated, is inclusive of psychological and the real costs of trauma, the loss of economic and social opportunity, and the ongoing challenges of stigma and victimization. The temporal component of the CRC framework also has relevance as a complement to economic theory in understanding the intergenerational implications of African American slavery in the contemporary lives of black children.

BLACK-WHITE WEALTH AMONG HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN: TRENDS AND POTENTIAL KEY DRIVERS

Contemporary racial wealth disparities among households with children are staggering. In 2019, among households with at least one resident child under age 18 (e.g., child households), white households had median wealth levels of $63,828, whereas black households had median wealth levels of $808. Expressed as a ratio, these estimates indicate that, at the median, for every dollar of white child household wealth, black child households had less than one cent (Gibson-Davis & Hill, 2021). Wealth disparities among child households exceed those for income and are larger than racial wealth disparities among the general population (Gibson-Davis & Hill, 2021).

Over the past six decades, racial wealth disparities among child households have generally exceeded those for the general population. To illustrate, we analyze historical trends in wealth accumulation contained in the Survey of Consumer Finances Plus (SCF+). The SCF+ consists of the Survey of Consumer Finances data set, a triannual wealth survey administered by the Federal Reserve, merged with historical wealth data by Kuhn et al. (2020). Using modified

code from Derenoncourt et al. (2022),[11] we quantify the differences in black-white median wealth accumulation for households with and without children. Estimates are presented triennially between 1962 and 2019 (data for 1986 were not available),[12] with differences averaged over three waves. All estimates were weighted, using weights provided by Kuhn et al. (2020). We first present the white-black gap in wealth, and then decompose wealth gaps into difference by assets and then debts.

Since 1995, child household race disparities are larger than those for non-child households (Figure 3). The racial wealth gap among child households has fluctuated over time, steadily decreasing between 1962 and 1989 and then generally increasing after that. Notably, since the Great Recession (2007–2009), the increase in the racial wealth gap among child households has accelerated, such that child household racial wealth gap in 2019 is comparable to that seen 50 years ago. The gaps in assets and debts (Figures 4a and 4b) suggest that fluctuations over time in the child household racial disparity gap are driven by changes in assets (Figure 4a). Racial differences in debt among child households (Figure 4b), after narrowing considerably in the 1960s, have remained relatively stable for the past 50 years. Racial disparities in assets for child households, however, have varied over time (Figure 4a), with the gap narrowing during certain periods (early 1990s) and widening over others (early 2000s). In the 2010s, in the wake of the Great Recession, the asset gap increased, accounting for the widening wealth gap.

[11] In contrast to Derenoncourt et al., but consistent with others (Gibson-Davis et al., 2021; Wolff, 2022), we excluded the value of vehicles as vehicles typically have a high consumptive value (e.g., are necessary transportation for work) and cannot realistically be converted to cash. Robustness checks that included vehicles were substantially similar as to those presented here. We also adjusted wealth by the square root of household size, prior to generating the smoothed averages over three waves.

[12] The SCF+ data began in 1950. Because of data anomalies and outliers, however, we present results beginning in 1962. Including the 1950s does not change substantive findings, as racial gaps among child households were as wide or wider in the 1950s as they were in the 1960s.

The origins of black-white disparities in wealth among the general population are well understood. They reflect long-standing and entrenched patterns of structural inequality and institutional racism that have impeded wealth acquisition for black Americans (see Darity & Mullen, 2022, for a recent discussion). Policies and institutional forces have interfered with wealth accumulation among families of color, which, when compounded by the historical legacies of Jim Crow, have led to racism-related barriers to credit markets and asset acquisition (Massey, 2015; Oliver & Shapiro, 1995). However, relatively less is understood about the processes and contexts that lead to the black-white wealth gaps among child households. In this section, we return to four potential explanations that build on the key mechanisms previously described (see expanded model in Figure 5).

First, wealth inequality in prior generations means that black and white children have differential wealth endowments and thus an "unequal starting position" (Pfeffer & Killewald, 2019). Grandparent wealth is an important stock of resources that parents can use as a source of investment for their children. Yet grandparents of black children have lower levels of wealth than the grandparents of white children, resulting in racial disparities in grandparent-to-grandchild wealth transfer. Grandparent wealth can benefit children through inheritances; 21% of white child households report receiving an inheritance, compared with 3% of black child households (Gibson-Davis & Hill, 2021). More commonly, though, living grandparents transfer their wealth to parents to facilitate the purchase of educational goods and homeownership (Pfeffer & Killewald, 2018). Grandparent wealth can also play a compensatory role, in that it can serve as a backstop for childhood resource provision, should parental economic resources be disrupted (Hällsten & Pfeffer, 2017). Grandparent wealth predicts a grandchild's educational attainment and the grandchild's wealth and income levels as adults (Toney & Robertson, 2021),

demonstrating that racial inequities in prior generations matter for future generations' economic well-being.

Second, structural racism in employment and labor market experiences likely translate into lower levels of wealth available for black parents to invest in the family. For working-age adults (an age likely to characterize parents), jobs serve as a primary mechanism for asset and savings accumulation, both instrumentally (e.g., higher earnings facilitate savings) and structurally (e.g., providing access to savings plans, retirement accounts, and credit markets). Black adults, however, are less likely to have the kinds of jobs that facilitate wealth accumulation: the lower-skilled occupations in which black workers are disproportionately concentrated tend not to offer access to wealth-enhancing benefits, such as pension plans or insurance coverage. Racial discrimination in wages (at the median, black workers earn 24% less per hour than white workers; Wilson & Darity, 2022) also means that black parents who are employed are likely to have lower levels of disposable income to be applied to asset accumulation (Lloyd et al., 2021). Additionally, black workers are more likely than white workers to be unemployed or underemployed (Cajner et al., 2017; Ford 2023); weak labor market attachments disrupt the flow of income necessary to accrue assets and can lead to debt accumulation.

Third, the real and perceived costs of raising children have risen over time, likely widening racial gaps in parental investments. The current era of "intensive parenting"—in which parents feel normative pressure to provide their children with enhanced home and school environments—has led to increases in the amount of resources parents direct to their children (Kornrich & Furstenberg, 2013; Schneider et al., 2018). At the same time, goods considered essential for child well-being (e.g., housing, health care, and education) have increased in price.

The rise costs of housing and education, in particular, mean that parents may need to take on more debt than they once did (Bandelj & Grigoryeva, 2021). Racially biased practices in credit markets may lead black parents to take on more debt, and/or more debt at less favorable rates, than white parents to obtain the same quality of goods.

Finally, high rates of incarceration and low rates of marriage have undercut the ability of African American families to build wealth. Black people are incarcerated at five times the rate of white people (Nellis, 2021); these incarcerations—most often of men in their prime working age years—can lead families to sell assets or take on debt in order to survive economically (Tyner, 2020). Legal financial obligations—fees associated not only with incarceration but also with minor infractions, such as traffic violations—are disproportionately targeted toward African Americans and are a significant source of debt (Horowitz et al., 2022; Martin et al. 2018). Black children are about half as likely as white children to live with two married parents (Anderson et al., 2022), with attendant consequences for familial wealth. Married parent families have higher levels of wealth than do cohabiting or lone parent families (Percheski & Gibson-Davis, 2022), in part because the "enforceable trust" of marriage (Cherlin, 2004) makes wealth-building behaviors less risky. The strong normative tie between marriage and home ownership also encourages married parents to buy homes at higher rates than unmarried parents; home ownership is the primary asset among families with children (Gibson-Davis & Hill, 2021; Percheski & Gibson-Davis, 2022).

A THREE-PRONGED APPROACH FOR BLACK REPARATIONS TO CHILDREN

The cross-disciplinary theoretical framework gives rise to a three-pronged child-centric reparations strategy: (1) direct payment as compensation for historical harm, deposited in trust funds for each eligible child to be available upon the age of assent; (2) a family-level one-time

infusion of wealth, to minimize crowd-out of parental investments in children; and, (3) redress via publicly funded information and education investments to shape social norms and beliefs and support sustainability of effects.

Remuneration as Restitution of Child Income

The clearest form of remuneration, or restitution, from a child-centric lens is a one-time lump sum payment per eligible child, in an amount informed by the projected wealth gap.[13] The lump sum payment would be transferred into a trust in the name of the eligible child at birth. The trust would be held in a government-owned account (or private interest-bearing account or mutual fund), available for withdrawal beginning when the child reaches the age of maturity (18 or 21). Up to 25% of initial payments could be withdrawn annually without penalty with no conditions on use of funds. Any withdrawals would be exempt from taxes. Eligible recipients would have up to 5 years to claim their lump sum after reaching the age of maturity.[14] Examples of government-hosted child trust accounts that already exist include the Alaska Permanent Income Dividend Fund (described in Appendix E), the newly established California HOPE trust for children placed in foster care due to COVID-19 (California State Treasurer's Office, n.d.), and proposals for Baby Bonds (described in Appendix E). Examples from child-based individual development accounts, and trust and related compensatory accounts established by the U.S.

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[13] A strict interpretation of the conceptual framework would imply that child-level adjustments of payment could be also adjusted based on inter-generational consequences hinging on timing of the descendant's experience of slavery. If a descendant was born into slavery or raised by enslaved parents or adult caregivers, then a lump sum payment would be adjusted as $X/generation × Z generations since the birth or relative age of the descendant, thus acknowledging inter-generational transmission of psychological and economic harm. To the best of our knowledge, however, only one person living today, 104-year-old Hortense McClinton, had a father who was born into slavery. **Bless Hortense.**

[14] The Alaska dividend fund gives children until age 20 to claim any dividends that were unclaimed through childhood.

federal government for compensation from harm from nuclear testing, are also relevant examples.[15]

Remuneration as Restitution of Family-Level Wealth

An important companion to child-specific reparation is remuneration that directly targets the family system through a one-time unconditional wealth transfer to families with any child qualifying as an African American descendant. (Caregivers or parents may also be independently eligible for any adult-centric reparation strategy, irrespective of having children or qualifying children.) The distinction between child-level and family-level remuneration is important because child-level wealth infusions alone may crowd out to some extent within-family future or contemporaneous parental investments and inputs (i.e., parents may adjust how much they privately invest in light of a child's potential wealth, though parents may also use the funds in other ways). Given racial segregation and concentration, a family-level strategy may also potentially uplift entire multigenerational households and communities if multiple residents are eligible to also receive wealth infusions, and presuming minimal out-migration, that collective increase in community resources spills over to other types of public and private investments. This family-level wealth infusion could be adjusted according to the number of adopted or biological children of the resident head of household. Funds would be disbursed into an unrestricted savings account. The recipient eligible household head must have proof of U.S.

[15] SEED for Oklahoma Kids, offering $1,000 per child placed into a state-owned 529 account at time of birth, was evaluated through a randomized control study (Marks et al. 2014). Findings from randomized control studies are mixed; however, summaries of findings from in-depth interviews with parents collectively describe impacts on wealth and savings at the family and community level as well as increased parent self-esteem and parent beliefs and prospects for the future of their children (Sherraden et al., 2010). For more on the U.S. federal government response and compensation due to displacement, and ongoing physical and economic harm, related to nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands between 1946 and 1958 see Atomic Heritage Foundation (n.d.).

citizenship, and this wealth transfer would be exempt from taxes and ineligible for counting against other types of government benefits or services.

Remuneration as Systemic Redress

To address the embedded nature of children's lived experiences (as illustrated in Figure 2), reparations could also be made in the form of remuneration at the systems level. For example, child-level redress could include biographical documentation of each child's ancestry, paid for by the federal government and sent directly to the child. Redress at the school-level could include public funding of trips for students to ports of entry or to monuments or museums devoted to the history and legacy of slavery. System-level redress could include federally endorsed acknowledgments of the history and legacy of racism posted in or near monuments, buildings, and institutions built on the history of U.S. slavery. The federal government can also play a role by funding the work of scholars and institutions to generate accessible historical accounts and curricula for children in early education through secondary high school (similar to, for example, the Facing History initiatives that aim to codify genocide and holocausts into K–12 education curricula). These actions can be further leveraged to generate private support of communal reinvestment. Pick.Click.Give, for example, enables recipients of Alaska Permanent Income Fund Dividends to contribute a portion of their annual disbursements to restorative justice efforts (see State of Alaska Department of Revenue, 2021, p. 16).

CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPE OF BLACK REPARATIONS AND PROJECTED BENEFITS TO CHILDREN

Federal and local commitments focused on black reparations in the U.S. widely vary. Appendix C offers a summary[16] based on information available in the public sphere on programs specifically described as black reparations as of June 2023. The last column of the table notes which of the initiatives indirectly affect children or families with children (under age 19). The majority of these initiatives are at the stage of task force, committee, statement, or resolution to form a committee or task force. Few have made public statements as a formal apology. None propose disbursement of unconditional financial payments or equivalent forms of direct wealth transfers as implicated in the child-centric framework we propose here (and as many others describe from a more general black reparations perspective, e.g., Darity & McMullen, 2022). Some reparations initiatives have gone as far as committing to disbursing conditional financial payments in the form of postsecondary educational scholarships or housing assistance, though actual disbursement has not begun and the scope of eligible recipients is limited. None of the described initiatives directly target children or families with children under age 19.

State and local proposals include housing subsidies and postsecondary schooling scholarships. Extrapolating benefits to children from these proposals is challenging. Inferences from the Moving to Opportunity housing voucher studies suggest returns of $3,477 for children who moved before age 13, in terms of increased income in their mid-twenties, which is a 31% increase relative to the control group mean of $11,270, and a 2.5 percentage point increase in college attendance between ages 18–20 (a 16% increase relative to the control group mean attendance rate of 16.5%). The magnitude of these effects may be applicable to housing reparations such as those proposed in Detroit if such subsidies result in similar types of moves

[16] These government initiatives do not include black individuals' claims of land loss to eminent domain (Fullilove, 2015) or loss of agricultural land (Francis et al., 2022).

from higher- to lower-poverty neighborhoods. Proposals to spur entrepreneurial activity to generate earnings, such as that in Providence, Rhode Island, are also complicated in that estimates of effects of parental work on children's development hinge closely on the quality of jobs (though autonomy is one characteristic aligned with entrepreneurship), child care, and wage growth, and none of these elements are addressed in the Providence proposal, at least not in the near term.

Direct wealth transfers as proposed here represent a feasible strategy and potentially the most impactful. Simulating the impact of a wealth transfer on children's well-being is challenging because few data sets have enough joint detail on economic measures and children's longitudinal outcomes, and few are nationally representative. We offer a simulation with the available data, using 1999 to 2019 waves of Panel Study of Income Dynamics on a sample of children followed from birth through age 20. Specifically, we show the impact of wealth infusion on two markers of human capital attainment: high school graduation and college attendance. We first estimated how a percentile change in wealth during early childhood (when a child was 0 to 4 years old) would change the predicted likelihood of graduating from high school or attending college by age 20. Based on these models, we then estimated how a given percentile change in wealth (corresponding to a given dollar increase in wealth) would change the predicted likelihood of outcomes (additional details on the simulation are found in Appendix B).

Results indicate that, all else being equal, if black children received an additional $103,000 to $122,000 during early childhood, their likelihood of graduating from high school would increase by 13 percentage points, and the likelihood of attending college would increase by 26 percentage points. The 13 and 26 percentage point increases in high school graduation and college attendance, respectively, would close the black-white gap in these outcomes.

VIEWS FROM BLACK PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

People's views about black reparations widely vary. A 2021 poll conducted by Pew Research Center found that 68% of U.S. adults say that descendants of enslaved people should be repaid in some way; however, these reports mask variation with some of the biggest differences by race, with 18% of U.S. white adults agreeing versus 77% black U.S. adults (Cox & Edwards, 2022). Recent media coverage, in 2023 alone, of black reparation proposals and initiatives demonstrate mixed and conflicting views on black reparations, and typically these mixed views are rooted in disagreements about success and failures of historical and current U.S. policy approaches, some that address discriminatory practices and others that would be considered anti-poverty.[17] Politically motivated versions of these arguments typically do not center on the role of redistributive policies (e.g., involving the tax system) that may affect wealth transfers or accumulation. It is rare for these perspectives and debates to be framed from the perspective of the well-being of black children or families and the long-run returns on racial and economic justice.

We sought to elicit perspectives about reparations from black parents with young children, a segment of black families of particular importance given the social returns on investments during early childhood (e.g., Garcia & Heckman, 2023). Questions about reparations were inserted in a survey that had a broader objective of collecting information about birthing, health, and early childhood program experiences of a nationally representative sample of approximately 1,000 black parents. The questions on reparations replicated those used in the

[17] For example, Darity (2021) explains why reparations are needed to close the racial wealth gap by drawing on the wealth implications of the legacy of slavery; this approach differs from perspectives of discrimination and equitable opportunity.

2021 Pew Research Center study (Cox & Edwards, 2022). More details about the survey findings, survey administration, and respondent sample are available in Table 2 and Appendix D.

First, as context, the problem of racism at the individual- and systems-level is front and center on the minds of the black parents we surveyed. When asked about what is the important source of racism facing black children today, half of black parents reported individual experiences, one-third reported that racism in U.S. laws is the biggest problem, and 16% said it was racism in schools and communities. These patterns on experiences of racism by source mimic reports by black adults collected by Pew in 2021 (Cox & Edwards, 2022). Two percent of black parents surveyed said that there is no racial discrimination in the U.S. today, and 8% were not sure how to answer the question.

Connection of racism and black children's outcomes with the legacy of slavery is also high: 85% of black parents surveyed responded that the legacy of slavery affects the position of black people and black children in American society today. This estimate is strikingly comparable to the view of black adults more generally (84%; Cox & Edwards, 2022).

Finally, the majority of black parents surveyed reported support for reparations for descendants of people enslaved in the United States, consistent with national findings from Pew Research Center (73% of black parents vs. 77% of all black adults surveyed by Pew Research Center; Cox & Edwards, 2022). Among black parents of young children, 73% of people who support reparations reported that cash payments would be extremely or very helpful, and 79% reported that financial assistance for children coming of age would be extremely or very helpful. Black parents equivalently reported that financial assistance for education, housing, and related public investments would also be extremely helpful.

These perspectives do not substantively differ by parent gender or parents' level of education completed or by region of the United States. We found that 72% of black mothers support reparations, compared with 75% of black fathers; 71% of black parents with a high school diploma or lower compared with 76% of black adults with some college or an associate's degree support reparations; and 70% of black adults with a bachelor's degree or higher support reparations.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Economically meaningful differences persist in children's outcomes between black and white children at nearly every key developmental transition over the life course from infancy through young adulthood. From 1962 to 2019, wealth among black households with children was lower than that of white households with children, in magnitudes unchanged in the prior 50 years. U.S. policies, from civil rights legislation to safety-net programs and public school investments, have endeavored to address these racial inequities and support equitable economic opportunity. In this paper we provide a child-centric framework and describe the resulting policy considerations for reparations for child descendants of enslaved African Americans.

Two of the three prongs in our framework point to direct wealth transfers as components of a child-centric reparations strategy. Indeed, we quantify that the magnitude of the effect would reduce the black-white child household wealth gap; thus, direct wealth transfers may be one reasonable approach toward quantifying this remuneration for eligible children, in addition to one-time infusions at the family level. Establishing trusts or compensatory funds to earmark federal resources (or resources from state or local government levels) is feasible from an implementation perspective, as suggested by historical and contemporary U.S. cases of remuneration related to harm or distribution of dividends from state-owned resources to eligible

citizens. The third prong broadly considers system-level redress, which can take many forms from public acknowledgement through apology to public education and information investments. These three prongs may have large collective and enduring impact, and, importantly, they dovetail with views from black parents. Black parents of young children report racial discrimination as problematic at individual, school, community, and legal levels. The majority of respondents state support for direct cash payment as a form of reparation but also support other forms of financial assistance. Journalistic accounts as recent as 2023 echo related themes of lack of wealth as well as lack of wealth-building opportunity: “For our family and others, it’s not just about the taking of the land, it’s about the taking of our ability to build wealth,” said Michael Jones, 63, the youngest of five brothers and sisters (Burch, 2023).

Scholars may differ on the types and scope of policy investment to unravel ongoing racist effects of systems and structures in the U.S. In this paper, we make the case for a three-pronged approach to black reparations as a policy investment consideration to meet objectives of improving intergenerational economic equity, but also to deliver what is owed to descendants of enslaved African Americans.

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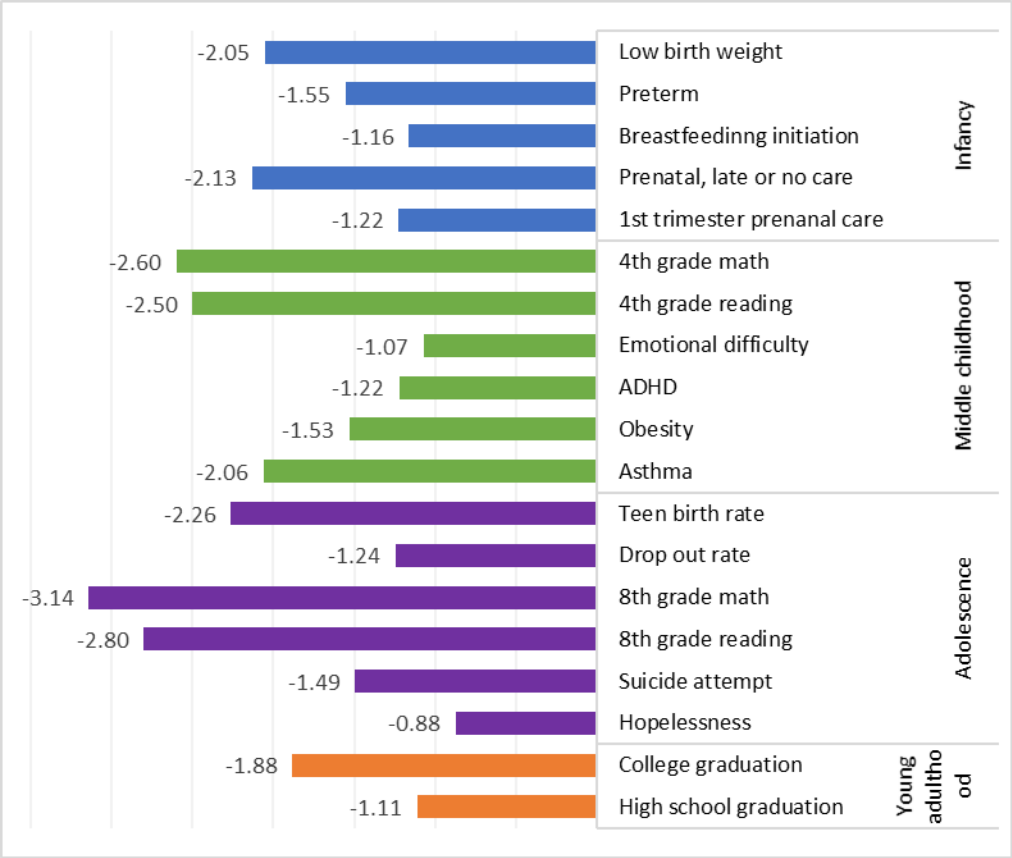
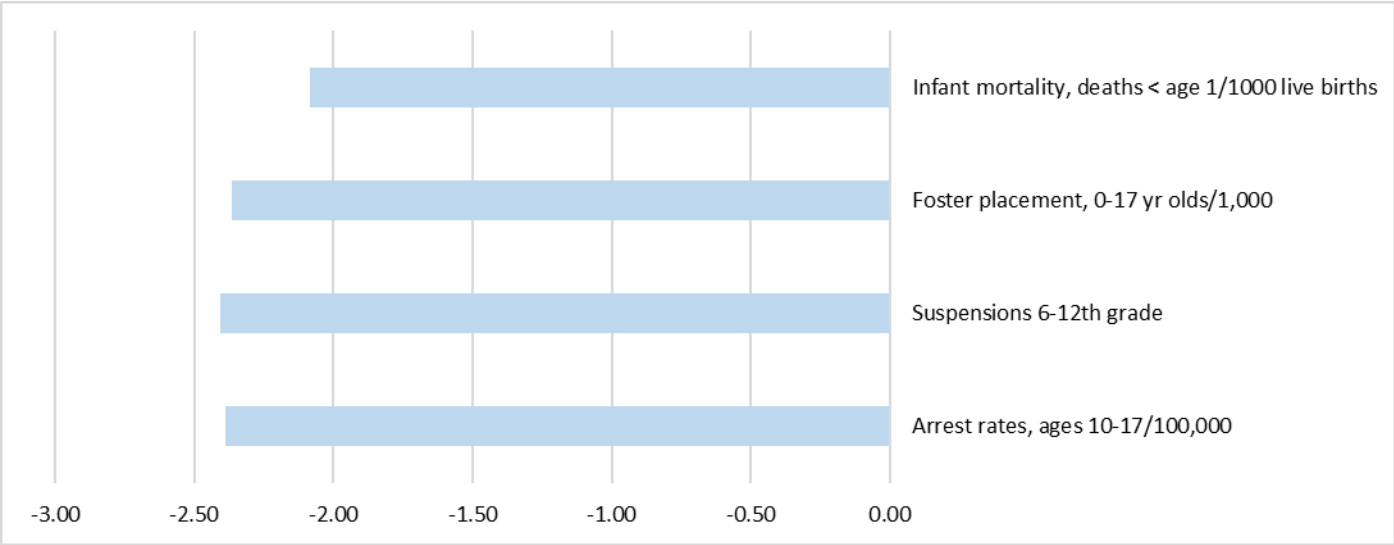
Figure 1a. Black-white gaps in children's developmental outcomes across the life course



Note. See Appendix A for details of the outcome measures.

Figure 1b. Black-white gaps in children's developmental outcomes as manifestations of systems



Note. See Appendix A for details of the outcome measures.

Figure 2. A cross-disciplinary framework of reparations for black children.

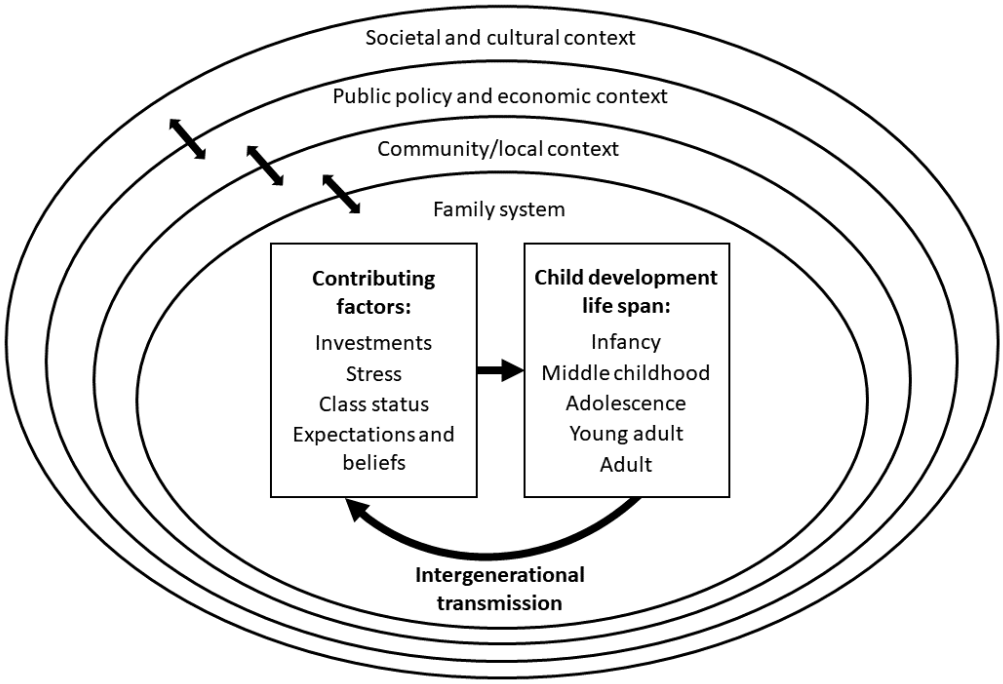


Figure 3. Black-white wealth gap in child households compared with households with no children (median), 1971–2019

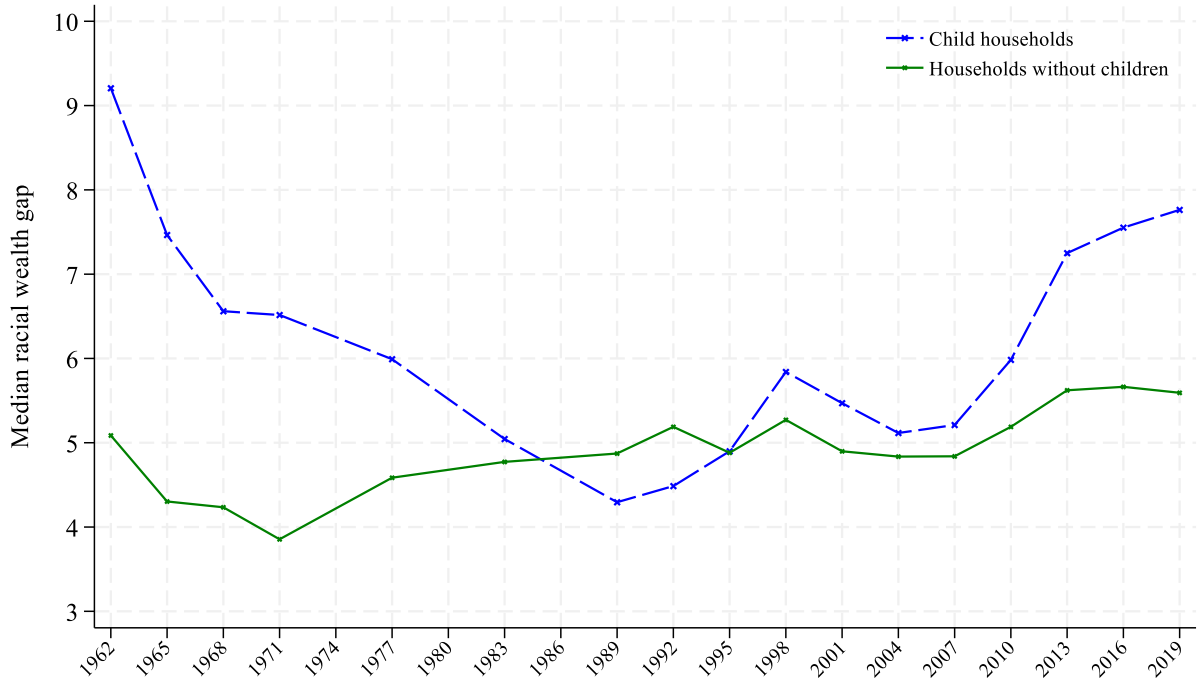


Figure 4a and 4b. Black-white gaps in assets and debt among child households compared with households with no children (median), 1950–2019

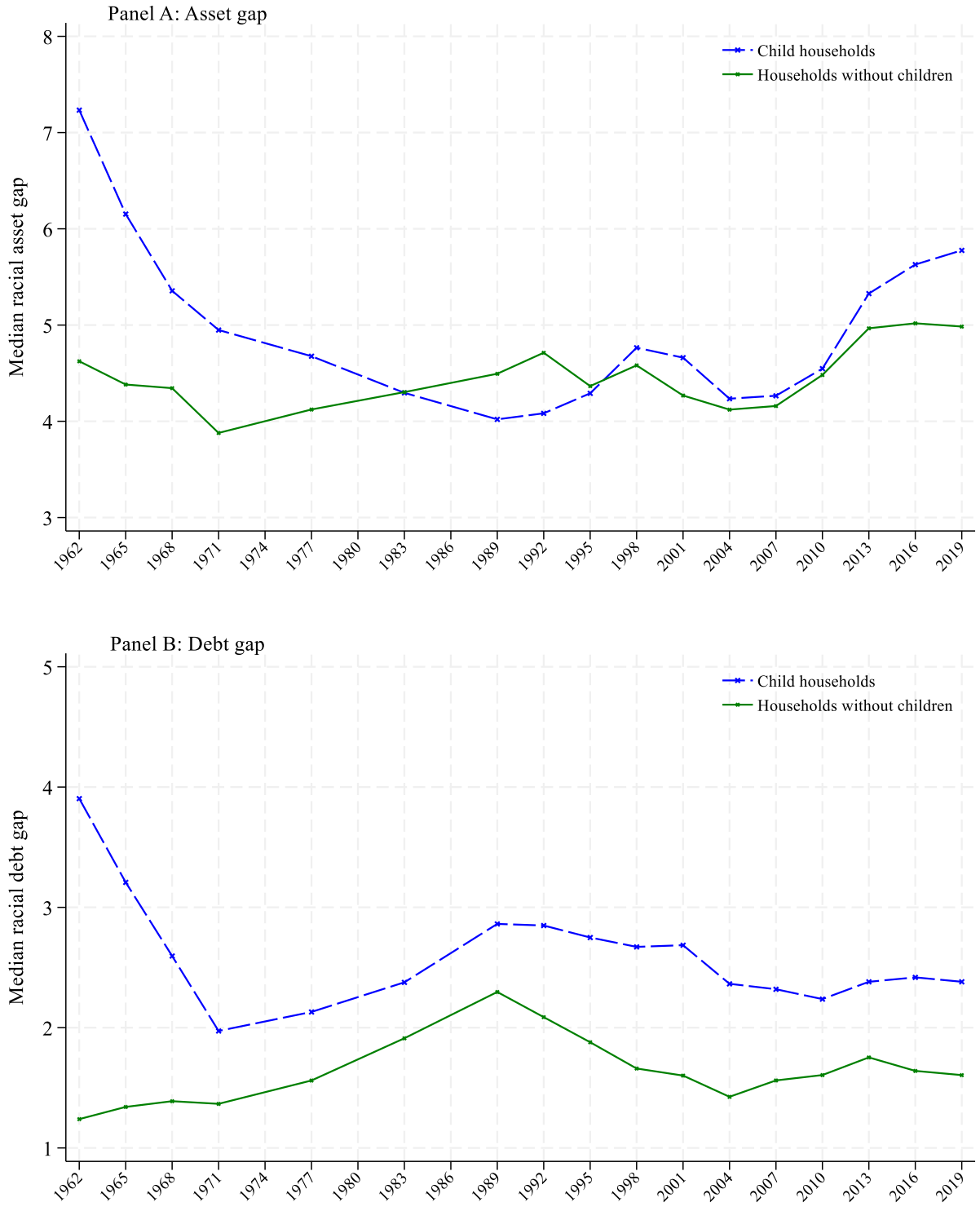


Figure 5. A cross-disciplinary framework of reparations for black children: Mechanisms of black-white wealth disparities.

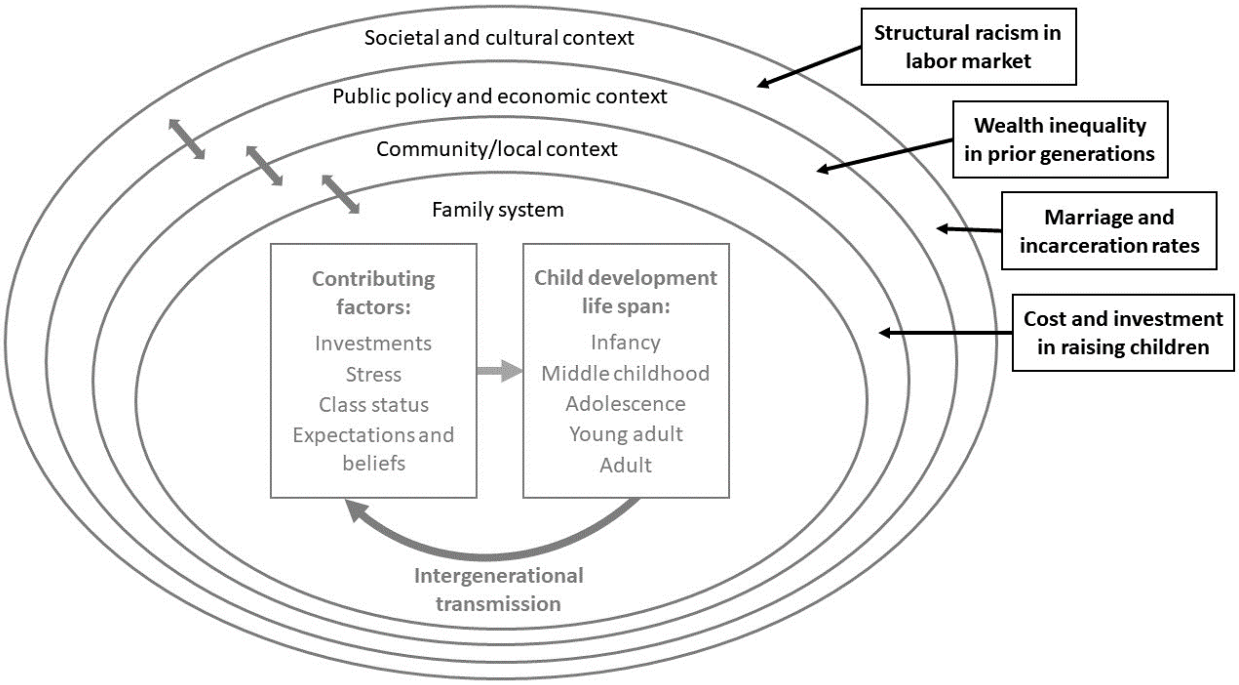


Table 1. Rubric translating Conventions on the Rights of the Child principles to reparations to black children

Principle	**Definition**	**Interpretative application to child descendants of African Americans**
Restitution	Restoring to original situations	Black-white differences in children's developmental outcomes are one contemporary evaluative metric of restitution. How to apply economic value to a lost infant life? How to apply economic value to lower performance on a math assessment? Restoring lost wealth is only one part of restitution.
Compensation or recompense	Direct transfusion of economic resources	Trust funds are one mechanism of ensuring children's rights to their own income accessible at age of assent or consent. How to do so without inciting resentment? Considerations include gender norms and capacity to deploy resources. Would compensation consist of direct transfers or compensation for long-term consequences: education, training, health services (i.e., compensation for lost opportunities)?
Rehabilitation	(Re)building of healthy and whole lives; functional life; capacity to resume life and living in a peaceful society	Redress and support psychological coping in response to experiences, to help people move forward as contributing members of society. Inclusive of services, community healing models, and investment in public goods.
Satisfaction	Acknowledging responsibility for past abuses and the suffering of victims	Establishing historical accounts, commitment to respect rights, memorializing of victims, judicial or administrative punishment. Representation in children's books and curricula; punishment of racial crimes; removing or adjusting public memorability (statues, confederate flag).
Guarantee of nonrepetition (to prevent future violation)	Transitional justice; prevention of reoccurrence	Similar to satisfaction, with the addition of precedent set through establishment of federal-level reparations policy.

Table 2. Perspectives from black parents of young children (n=970, survey fielded in May 2023)

	All	Women (mothers)	Men (fathers)	High School diploma or less	Some post-secondary	Bachelor's or higher	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
What is the biggest problem when it comes to racism against Black children (%)										
Racism in our laws	0.29	0.29	0.30	0.28	0.31	0.27	0.29	0.31	0.28	0.30
Racism by individuals	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.48	0.46	0.40	0.44	0.43	0.46	0.44
No discrimination	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.03
Racism in schools and communities	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.12	0.17	0.21	0.18	0.19	0.15	0.18
Not sure/Prefer not to say	0.08	0.08	0.06	0.11	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.09	0.05
How much does legacy of slavery affect Black people and children (%)										
Fair amount/great deal	0.84	0.83	0.86	0.77	0.87	0.86	0.81	0.85	0.84	0.80
Prefer not to say	0.06	0.06	0.03	0.08	0.05	0.04	0.07	0.04	0.05	0.08
Should child descendants be repaid in some way (%)										
Yes (%)	0.72	0.72	0.75	0.71	0.76	0.68	0.72	0.74	0.73	0.64
Not sure	0.14	0.16	0.08	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.16	0.14	0.12	0.22
The following payment would be extremely to very helpful (%):										
Cash payments	0.62	0.63	0.59	0.60	0.67	0.55	0.66	0.64	0.61	0.59
Financial assistance for a child when they come of age	0.70	0.71	0.68	0.72	0.71	0.66	0.69	0.68	0.71	0.67
Financial assistance for home	0.70	0.72	0.65	0.67	0.74	0.67	0.67	0.68	0.72	0.66
Financial assistance for business loans	0.71	0.73	0.67	0.70	0.74	0.67	0.70	0.66	0.72	0.74
Financial assistance for educational scholarship	0.80	0.82	0.74	0.76	0.84	0.77	0.80	0.78	0.80	0.77

APPENDIX A: OUTCOME MEASURES

Estimates for black-white disparities came from published reports or papers that used either administrative or nationally representative data. Unless otherwise noted, all data are from 2019.

Prenatal care. We used two measures of prenatal care: whether the mother received any care in the first trimester and whether the mother received late care (in the third trimester) or no care. Estimates were taken from the annual Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report on births, which is based on birth certificate data collected by the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) and includes information on all live births in the US. (Martin et al. 2021).

Breastfeeding initiation. Breastfeeding initiation also comes from NVSS birth certificate data and was taken from a report issued by the CDC (Chiang et al. 2021). It refers to whether the infant was breastfed between the time of birth and the time of hospital discharge.

Adverse birth outcomes. Two variables assessed adverse birth outcomes: preterm births and low birth weight births. A birth was considered preterm if the child was born at less than 36 weeks of gestation. A birth was considered low birth weight if the child was born weighing less than 2,500 grams. Data came from the CDC's annual report on births (Martin et al. 2021).

Reading and math scores. Fourth and eighth grade reading and math scores come from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Report Card (Nation's Report Card, 2022a, 2022b). Reading and math scores come from assessments of a nationally representative sample of fourth and eighth graders. Estimates represent the share of students whose scores were judged to be at a proficient level of higher, based on the NAEP's classification of scores into three categories (basic, proficient, or advanced).

Emotional difficulty. Data on whether a child has a serious behavioral or emotional difficulty come from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) analysis of National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) data (NCHS, 2019a). The measure comes from a one-item question, asked of the child's parent or knowledgeable adult for children age 0 to 18, as to whether the child has problems with "emotions, concentration, behavior, or being able to get along with other people." Data are from the years 2016 to 2018.

Asthma. The indicator for asthma comes from NHIS data reported by the NCHS (2019a). Children's experiences of asthma are self-reported by the parent or guardian and are obtained for children age 0 to 18. Data are from the years 2016 to 2018.

Obesity. Obesity data are derived from third-party measurements of a child's weight and height. A child is considered to be obese if their body mass index is at or above the 95th percentile for their age and sex (percentiles come from the CDC). The item is obtained for children age 2 to 18. Estimates are from data collected between 2015 and 2018.

ADHD. Data on whether a child has attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) come from the NHIS data (NCHS, 2019b). The measure comes from a one-item question, asked of the child's parent or knowledgeable adult, as to whether a doctor has ever indicated the child

"had attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or attention deficit disorder (ADD)." Data are from the years 2016 to 2018.

Dropout rates. Data on dropout rates come from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2022b). The dropout rate measures, among young adults age 16 to 24, the percentage who are not currently enrolled in high school and do not have a high school diploma or the equivalent.

Teen birth rates. Estimates of teen births come from the CDC's analysis of NVSS data (CDC, 2022a). The teen birth rate is the number of births per 1,000 females age 15 to 19.

Adolescent mental health. Two measures of adolescent mental health—feelings of hopelessness and sadness and attempt of suicide—come from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) survey (CDC, 2022b). The YRBS, administered by the CDC, is a biannual survey of health and well-being asked of a nationally representative sample of 9th through 12th graders. Feelings of sadness or hopelessness is a one-item variable that asked students if they felt sad or hopeless "almost every day for two or more weeks in a row so they stopped doing some usual activities." Suicide attempts reflected those students who indicated that they "actually attempted suicide."

Graduation rates. High school and college graduation rates come from the NCES. The high school graduation rate is the share of the 9th grade students who graduate within four years (adjusting for student migration flows and death) (NCES, 2022c). The high school graduation rate is for the 2018–2019 school year. The college graduation rate estimates the share of first-time, full-time bachelor's-degree-seeking students at four-year colleges who graduate within four years. Data are presented for the cohort entering college in 2014, indicating that they would have graduated in the 2018–2019 school year (NCES, 2022a).

Infant mortality rates. Infant mortality rates come from birth and death certificate data collected by the CDC (Ely & Driscoll, 2021). Infant mortality reflects the death of any child under the age of 1. The rate is the number of deaths per every 1,000 live births.

Foster care rates. The foster care rate is the number of children age 0 to 17 entering foster care for the first time per 1,000 children in that age range (Children's Bureau, 2021).

Suspensions/expulsions. Suspensions/expulsions are the share of students in grades 6 through 12 who have ever been suspended or expelled. Data come from the NCES (2022d).

Arrest rates. Arrest rates are the number of arrests of individuals age 10 to 17 per every 100,000 people age 10 to 17. Data are provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2022).

APPENDIX B: PREDICTIONS OF WEALTH AND HUMAN CAPITAL FROM THE PANEL STUDY OF INCOME DYNAMICS DATA

Data come from the 1999 to 2019 waves of Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), the longest-running U.S. household data set. The PSID is one of only a few data sets that contains information on wealth and early human capital attainment. Beginning in 1968, the PSID surveyed respondents annually until 1997, before switching to biannual data collection in 1999.

Our analytical sample consists of two cohorts of children who were first observed between ages 0 and 4 and then followed until age 20 (N=1,810). Children first entered the sample in either 1999 or 2001 and were observed until 2019 or age 20, whichever came first. We used a five-year age range at first observation to maximize sample size, as restricting the sample to a smaller age range (e.g., 0–2) yielded too few observations. Likewise, we used two cohorts rather than one to increase sample size (95% of the sample entered in 1999). We used the 1999 cohort as it was the earliest observed cohort for which wealth data was collected at every wave (prior to 1999, the PSID collected wealth data sporadically, and we could not calculate spells for these cohorts). Our sample includes children born between 1995 and 2000.

Outcomes were two binary measures of human capital attainment: if the respondent graduated from high school or attended college. Both variables were asked at every wave; we assessed these measures when the respondent turned 20 (or the closest wave to their 20th birthday). High school completion was defined as completing 12 years of education or obtaining a high school diploma or GED. College enrollment was defined as enrolling in any type of post-secondary education institution, including two-year or four-year colleges or universities, vocational schools, or technical institutions. Respondents could be measured as attending college even if they reported not graduating from high school.

Wealth came from the PSID's imputed wealth variable. This variable includes assets such as vehicles, stocks, real estate, and checking and savings accounts; it also includes a broad range of debt, including medical, legal, student, family loan, and credit card debt. We converted wealth to 2019 dollars using the Consumer Price Index.

To derive predictions, we began by calculating, for either 1999 or 2001, the percentile wealth distribution for all PSID families with a child younger than age 18 in the household. We then estimated, for the children in our sample, their household's wealth place in this distribution, using either the 1999 or 2001 distribution as appropriate. Then, limiting the sample to black children, we regressed their measure of percentile wealth on either high school graduation or college attendance, controlling for cohort membership (e.g., either 1999 or 2001). We next predicted the likelihood of graduating from high school or attending college at the 25th and 75th percentiles. Finally, based on the wealth amounts that correspond to these two percentiles, we calculated how a wealth increase associated with moving from the 25th to 75th percentile (either $103,000 or $122,000, depending on year) changed predicted likelihoods in outcomes.

APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF BLACK REPARATION PROPOSALS NOTING SPECIFIC ATTENTION TO CHILDREN, AS OF JUNE 2023

Program Title	Program Site	Latest Status	Date of Latest Status	Summary of Program	Specific Attention to Children
H.R. 40	Federal Government	Voted out of House committee	4/14/21	Congressional committee to study the possibility of reparations	None
California Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans	California (State)	Interim report published; eligibility criteria decided; now preparing to work on the final report	6/1/22	State committee investigating history of oppression against black Americans to provide broad recommendations and proposal for a California reparations plan	Contingent on implementation details
Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans, with a Special Consideration for African Americans Who are Descendants of Persons Enslaved in the United States	California (State)	Passed	9/30/20	Task force to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans	None
LA Reparations Advisory Commission	Los Angeles, California	Unclear	6/18/21	Commission to study reparations and provide recommendations for a reparations pilot program	None
Sacramento Mayor joins MORE Group	Sacramento, California	Unclear	6/23/21	Mayor of Sacramento pledged to implement a pilot reparations program	None

San Francisco African American Reparations Advisory Committee	San Francisco, California	Unclear	7/11/22	Committee examining racial wealth gap in San Francisco formed and what kinds of reparations the city could implement	None
Santa Monica Right to Return Pilot Program	Santa Monica, California	Applications for program closed	2/22/22	100 former residents of Santa Monica, or their descendants, who were displaced by the construction of Interstate 10, are eligible for higher priority in Santa Monica's Below Market Housing affordable housing program.	Indirect via housing assistance to families with children
Denver Metro Down Payment Assistance Social Equity Program	Denver, Colorado	Program implemented	5/9/22	$15,000-$25,000 interest-free, three-year forgivable loans to people/descendants of people who lived in redlined neighborhoods in Denver	Indirect via housing assistance to families with children
An Act Establishing a Connecticut Reparations Task Force	Connecticut (State)	Referred to Joint Committee on Government Administration and Elections	1/19/23	Task force to study effects of slavery throughout American history	None
Resolution No. 20-080	Wilmington, Delaware	Fact-finding	12/4/22	City Council Reparations Taskforce to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans, with a Special Consideration for African Americans Who are Descendants of Persons Enslaved in the United States and recommend the form of compensation to be awarded	None
Athens Justice and Memory Project	Athens, Georgia	Committee meeting still, no major updates since the	6/15/22	Resolution passed promising recognition of historic injustices against the former residents of	None

		resolution was passed February 16, 2021		Linnentown; committee formed to study reparations	
Fulton County Reparations Task Force	Fulton, Georgia	Funded, fact-finding	6/1/23	Created and established Fulton County Reparations Task Force to research the feasibility of slavery reparations for black people living in Fulton County, Georgia	None
A Resolution creating the House Study Committee on Research and Development of Reparation Proposals for the Institution of Slavery for African Americans; and for other purposes	Georgia (State)	House Second Readers (on 3/1/2023)	2/27/23	Task force to research the feasibility of slavery reparations for black people living in Fulton County, Georgia	None
Call for Establishment of Chicago Descendants of Enslaved Africans Reparations Commission	Chicago, Illinois	Passed, stasis	2/28/23	Commission tasked with ensuring equity, growth, and economic justice for African American communities in Illinois; reviews policy and develops vocational center	None
Evanston Local Reparations Restorative Housing Program	Evanston, Illinois	First wave of housing grants released	5/1/22	Housing assistance (down payment assistance (funding), mortgage assistance (funding), and stipends for home repairs to black residents of Evanston who are descendants (consideration is given to ancestors, direct descendants, and African Americans experiencing housing discrimination with priority given in that order)	Indirect via housing assistance to families with children
Resolution No. 20-228 Iowa City Ad Hoc Truth and Reconciliation Commission	Iowa City, Iowa	Funded, fact-finding,	7/21/22	Truth and reconciliation commission; reliance on	Indirect (children as representing "community

		community engagement		international and human rights law precedent	members of color”)
African Heritage Reparation Assembly and the Reparations Stabilization Fund	Amherst, Massachusetts	Commitment to allocate $2 million to a stabilization fund over approximately 10 years	6/27/22	Task force and fund to eventually implement proposals	None
A Resolution Affirming the Town of Amherst’s Commitment to End Structural Racism and Achieve Racial Equity for Black Residents	Amherst, Massachusetts	Funded	12/7/20	Resolution affirming the town’s commitment to end structural racism and achieve racial equity for black residents	None
Resolution Number 2094	Greenbelt, Maryland	Seeking appointments	8/7/21	Resolution of the city council for a referendum on whether to establish a Greenbelt Commission to study and develop local reparations proposals	None
For Legislation to Create Reparations for the Descendants of American Slavery and Piloting Universal Basic Income	Massachusetts (State)	House concurred (on 2/16/2023)	2/16/23	Excise tax imposed on applicable educational institution for the taxable year equal to 3% of the aggregate fair market value of the assets of the institution at the end of the preceding taxable year	Indirect via families with children and children who may receive returns from excise tax
Legacy of Slavery Fund	Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts	Report outlining involvement with slavery; $100 million endowment for improving education opportunities for black students	4/26/22	Report and endowment, partnership with HBCUs	Indirect/unclear as postsecondary educational benefits

Resolution To Acknowledge, Condemn, And Apologize for the Role Played by The City of Boston in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the Ongoing Detrimental Impacts Experienced by the Black People of Boston	Boston, Massachusetts	Debate on formation of commission to study reparations	6/16/22	Resolution apologizing for slavery and racial inequality and promise to enact some form of reparations	None
An Ordinance Creating a Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans	Boston, Massachusetts	Fact-finding	12/14/22	Created a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans	None
Detroit Reparations Task Force	Detroit, Michigan	City ordinance drafted	5/27/22	A task force (not yet formed) to investigate and propose recommendations for a reparations policy in Detroit, Michigan	None
Detroit Pilot Program Initiative	Detroit, Michigan	$25,000 disbursed to three of ten recipients (as of May 2022)	5/19/22	Nonprofit accepting donations, termed “reparative transfers,” to be repurposed into $25,000 housing grants to descendants of formerly enslaved people currently residing in Detroit	Indirect via housing assistance to families with children
Washtenaw County Reparations Council	Washtenaw, Michigan	Passed	2/15/23	Aims to address county policies historically and continually harming lives of black people, including redress in homeownership, access to affordable housing, business ownership and career opportunities, and financial equity	None
St. Paul Community Reparations Commission	St. Paul, Minnesota	Recommendation to form long-term	4/1/22	Resolution issued, apologizing for slavery and consequences; advisory	None

		Community Reparations Commission		committee for recommendations on long-term committee to study reparations	
Kansas City Mayor Joins MORE Group	Kansas City, Missouri	Unclear	6/21/21	Mayor pledged to implement a pilot reparations program	None
Authenticated Ordinance 220966 CS	Kansas City, Missouri	Passed	1/12/23	Apology on behalf of the city and intent to make amends for participation in the sanctioning of the enslavement of black people; encourages groups to seek reparatory justice	None
St. Louis Reparations Fund and Midwest Land Development Fund	St. Louis, Missouri	Funds created on April 30, 2022	6/10/22	One fund is focused on developing specific city blocks, and another for broader purpose, each managed by the city's comptroller; St. Louis residents can donate to the funds by overpaying on a water, personal property, or real estate tax bill	Indirect/unclear
Asheville Community Reparations Commission	Asheville, North Carolina	Commission formed; public meetings have been held	6/6/22	City commission to provide recommendations for local reparations	None
Carrboro Racial Equity Commission	Carrboro, North Carolina	Commission is meeting regularly	6/22/22	A committee to provide recommendations for eliminating racial inequality in Carrboro	None
Resolution for the One High Point Commission to Explore Community Reparations for the African American Citizens of High Point, North Carolina	High Point, North Carolina	Fact-finding	2/7/22	A committee to study the institution of slavery in High Point, North Carolina, and the lingering effects of it on living African Americans in High Point	None
New Jersey Reparations Task Force	New Jersey (State)	Introduced, referred to	1/11/22	Task force to conduct research and develop reparatory proposals to	None

		Assembly State and Local Government Committee (on 1/11/2022)		address the generational harms caused by New Jersey's role in America's institution of slavery and its legacy of systemic racial discrimination	
An Act to acknowledge the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the city of New York and the state of New York…	New York (State)	Referred to Finance	1/10/23	Establishes New York state community commission on reparations remedies	None
Tullahassee Reparations Advisory Commission	Tullahassee, Oklahoma	Unclear	11/10/21	A committee to study reparations for Tullahassee	None
Task Force on Reparations for Oregonians of African-American Descent	Oregon (State)	Referred to Ways and Means by prior reference (on 3/24/2023)	1/19/23	Establishes task force on reparations and directs task force to study and develop proposals for financial and nonfinancial reparations	None
Providence Municipal Reparations Commission	Providence, Rhode Island	Commission to study reparations formed, and meeting regularly	7/5/22	Research completed on history of racism in Providence and Rhode Island, for the sake of truth and reconciliation; a commission to study reparations was then formed	None
Austin Resolution	Austin, Texas	University of Texas backed out of research partnership, delaying completion of city manager's report	6/17/22	Resolution issued apologizing for racism and directing the city manager of Austin to study the economic impacts of discrimination and begin planning creation of a black resource and cultural center to encourage black entrepreneurship	None
Burlington Reparations Task Force	Burlington, Vermont	Historical research in process	4/11/22	Task force researching the history of slavery and racism in Burlington and Vermont	None

Wealth Redistribution for Black People in Vermont	Vermont (State)	Now defunct; exact date uncertain	4/22/21	A grassroots effort, organized by two individuals, urging white residents of Vermont to redistribute money to black residents of Vermont	Indirect (via proposed financial assistance to adults who are caregivers for Black children)
Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for the Institution of Chattel Slavery	Vermont (State)	Read first time and referred to the Committee on General and Housing	3/1/23	An act relating to establishing a task force to study and develop reparation proposals	None
Preferred Admissions Status for Descendants and the Descendants Truth & Reconciliation Foundation	Georgetown University, Washington, DC	Admissions policy enacted and implemented; foundation formed, and money pledged	3/25/22	Preferred admissions status to applicants descended from one of the 272 enslaved persons the university sold in 1838; donations to foundation focused on promoting "racial healing," improving educational outcomes for the descendants, and providing financial support to elderly/infirm descendants	Indirect/unclear (educational benefits for postsecondary schooling)
Reparations Foundation Fund and Task Force Establishment Act of 2023	Washington, DC	Introduced	5/19/23	Bill 25-152 would require the commissioner of the Department of Insurance, Securities, and Banking to establish a database of slavery-era records and would establish a reparations task force	None

APPENDIX D: SURVEY OF BLACK PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

The survey of black parents with young children (Duke IRB 2022-0115) is a collaboration with Jane Leer, Imari Smith and Zoelene Hill, designed to capture perspectives and experiences with birthing and maternal health and prenatal, birth, and postnatal services and supports. The survey was implemented through the Prime Panels online platform directed by CloudResearch. Respondents needed to be 18 years of age or older, reside in the U.S., identify as black, and have at least one child 3 years old or younger or be an expectant parent or pregnant. The survey consisted of a total of 42 single, multiple-choice and open-ended questions and took approximately 15 minutes for completion. To increase validity of responses, the survey included a number of verification and attention checks, with two of four violations deemed exclusion: (1) respondent spent less than 2 seconds per question, (2) demonstrated evidence of flat-lining or repeated similar categorical response on four or more scales, or (3) failing at two or more of the four attention checks distributed throughout the survey; participants who wrote gibberish or illogical answers in response to open-ended questions were also excluded. Survey fielding started on May 8 and ended on May 24, achieving the goal of n=1,097 completed responses that met eligibility criteria and passed verification and attention checks. Questions about reparations were included at the end of the survey.

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the completed sample (n=1,031) (that passed the verification checks above) of black parents represent several characteristics of a nationally representative sample of black adults in the U.S. (Moslimani et al., 2023). Ninety-two percent of surveyed black parents self-identify as black only (and not as Hispanic or Latino or white); 75% identify as female, and 92% stated that both parents are U.S. born. Approximately one-third of respondents (27%) were expecting, and 16% reported being pregnant. The mean age of respondents is 32 years, with 2.35 children on average. One-third reported having a high school degree or equivalent (slightly lower than the national average of 42%), and 28% reported having completed some post-secondary education though without a degree (substantively similar to the national average of 32%). Thirteen percent reported less than $10,000 in annual income, and 42% reported less than $40,000 (compared with median income for a nationally representative sample of black Americans at $46,400). Eighty percent reported receiving at least one government benefit (primarily from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program at 47% and the Women, Infant and Children program at 31%). The geographic distribution of the sample maps onto a nationally representative sample, with 58% from the south and otherwise equally distributed across U.S. regions (11% west; 16% Midwest; 14% east) with expected distribution across U.S. states with higher representation from California, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, New York, and Texas).

Questions on reparations are from the Pew Research Center (Cox & Edwards, 2022) as follows:

When it comes to racism against Black children in our country today, which do you think is the bigger problem?

Racism in our laws
Racism by individual people

Racism in schools and communities
There is no discrimination against Black people in our country today
Not sure/Prefer not to say

How much, if at all, do you think the legacy of slavery affects the position of Black people and opportunity for Black children in American society today?

A great deal
A fair amount
Not much
Not at all
Not sure/Prefer not to say

Do you think child descendants of people enslaved in the U.S. should be repaid in some way, such as given land or money? Yes/ No/ Not sure/ Prefer not say

How helpful do you think each of the following types of repayment would be for child descendants of people enslaved in the U.S.? Answers: 1=not at all helpful, 2=a little helpful, 3=somewhat helpful, 4=very helpful, 5=extremely helpful; and not sure/prefer not to say

Cash payments
A financial account that the child can access when they come of age
Financial assistance for buying or remodeling a home
Financial assistance for starting or improving a business
Educational scholarships

APPENDIX E: FEASIBILITY INSIGHTS FROM THE ALASKA PERMANENT INCOME DIVIDEND FUND AND BABY BOND PROPOSALS

The Alaska Permanent Income Dividend Fund

In 1969, the sale of an oil lease in the North Slope of Alaska generated $900 million in state revenue subsequently allocated toward a variety of infrastructure projects (Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation [APFC], n.d.-a). A 1076 constitutional amendment ensured that 25% of oil and mineral royalties would be set aside in a permanent fund (APFC, n.d.-b). In 1980, Governor Jay Hammond signed a bill creating the APFC, a state government agency responsible for managing the fund (APFC, n.d.-c).[18] This act created the basic income structure that is still in place today, and it came after a four-year debate on whether to turn the fund into an investment portfolio or an economic development bank. The first dividend payment of $1,000 was distributed in 1982 (APFC, n.d.-a). Over $26 billion was disbursed from 1982 to 2021, with upwards of 640,000 applications paid in 2021 (and around this amount annually). Estimates suggest that $360 million was specifically disbursed to Alaska children in 2015 (176,831 children under age 18). Funds are maintained in a state-run savings trust until children reach age 18, with conditions set out for children who are in foster care or adopted.[19]

When polled, 80% Alaskan voters reported that the dividends made at least some difference in their lives over the past five years (Harstad Strategic Research, 2017), with 79% of voters agreeing that the funds represent an important source of income for their communities (Harstad Strategic Research, 2017). The dividend program has positive effects on voter turnout (Loeffler, 2023). A more recent empirical literature has sought to capitalize on eligibility, timing, and size of dividend fund payments to estimate impacts on various outcomes by applying quasi-experimental techniques with most of this curated by The Cash Transfer lab, directed by Sarah Cowan at New York University.

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[18] The Fund is made up of two parts: the Principal, which cannot be distributed, and the Earnings Reserve, which is available to distribute (APFC, n.d.-a,b,c). The AFPC, a quasi-independent state agency, continues to manage the fund. The Permanent Fund Dividend Program, part of the Department of Revenue, is responsible for distributing dividends annually to eligible Alaskans (APFC, n.d.-a,b,c). All Alaskans, regardless of age or income, are eligible to receive payments if they have resided in the state for at least one year, making the fund very similar to a universal basic income program. Individuals are required to apply annually to receive the payments, and dividend payments usually arrive each October (Marinescu, 2018). The size of the payments is based on the average investment returns of the Fund in the previous five years, so the amount varies yearly (Watson et al., 2020).

[19] Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend Resource families do not apply for the dividend for the children in their home. The caseworker is responsible for applying for the foster child's Alaska Permanent Fund dividend check for every year the child is in care. The money is held in trust for the child until the child emancipates from foster care or until custody is returned to the birth parents or to a permanent placement. For children who are adopted, dividends are held in trust and released directly to the child on the child's 18th birthday, or a court order from the judge during the adoption hearing can release the dividend to the adoptive parents directly.

Examinations of labor market behavior show that the dividend payments increased part-time work and had no impact on the employment-to-population ratio in Alaska when compared with other states (Jones & Marinescu, 2022). Bibler et al. (2023) further find an increase in the probability of employment for men in the months following the distribution and small reductions in hours worked by women with small children. When families receive the payment and throughout the first quarter following the payment, there is an increase in consumption of nondurables and services. Looking across a variety of health outcomes mortality appears to increase in the weeks following dividend payments (Evans & Moore, 2011); yet, suicide rates were much lower in the first decade after the Fund's establishment (Lee et al., 2022). Dividend payments vary year to year, and larger payments increased short-term fertility when compared with smaller payments (Cowan & Douds, 2022). The dividend payments increased substance abuse crimes by 10% but decreased property crimes by 8% in the weeks following the payment distribution with no changes in violent crime rates during this period and larger payments reduced crime levels (Dorsett, 2021; Watson et al., 2020).

Baby Bonds

Originally formulated as a strategy to address black-white wealth gaps starting at birth, baby bonds were envisioned as federally managed trusts for babies born into low net worth families with eligibility based on falling below the national median for wealth. At age 18, recipients can access the accounts for "some asset-enhancing endeavor," including home ownership or entrepreneurship (Darity & Hamilton, 2012, p. 83).

At the federal level, Cory Booker proposed the American Opportunity Accounts Act first in 2018 and then again in 2021 to establish a federal baby bonds program. The act would provide a savings account for each child born in the U.S. with an initial amount of $1,000 (Kliff, 2018). The government would deposit funds up to $2,000 into the account each year depending on the child's family income (Kliff, 2018). The funds would be housed in a low-risk account managed by the Department of Treasury with the objective of achieving at least a real return of 1% (Kliff, 2018). The child could access the account on their 18th birthday and use the funds for allowable expenses, including purchasing a home, education expenses, or retirement savings (Kliff, 2018). Basing the eligibility and contribution amount on family income rather than actual wealth is what distinguishes Booker's proposal from the earlier proposal of Darity and Hamilton.

In Connecticut, a law passed in 2021 calls for automatic contribution of up to $3200 into interest bearing accounts for all babies from Medicaid eligible families (Brown et al., 2023; CT.gov, n.d.). When the child turns eighteen, they are eligible to claim the funds as long as they are used for purchasing a home in CT, starting or investing in a CT-based business, higher education costs, job training, or saving for retirement (CT.gov, n.d.). The program was slated to begin in July of 2023; however, as of January 2023, the governor's office has announced a two-year delay (Caffrey, 2023). Washington, D.C. city politicians voted in favor of the Child Wealth Building Act in 2022 affecting children in Medicaid-eligible households whose family incomes are 300% below the federal poverty line, automatically enrolling them in a Child Trust Fund (Austermuhle, 2021). The government would initially deposit $5000 into every account with an annual contribution of up to $1000 depending on household income (Austermuhle, 2021). This

bill has not yet been codified and is expected to be effective in March of 2023 (Child Wealth Building Amendment Act, 2022). California passed a law that creates savings accounts for children who lost a parent or caregiver during the pandemic or children in the foster care system (Brown et al., 2023). Other states with legislation introduced for potential baby bond programs include New Jersey, New York, Wisconsin, Washington, Delaware, Nevada, and Massachusetts (Brown et al., 2023). Evidence on baby bonds programs closing the racial wealth gap is mixed. the program would reduce the black-white racial wealth gap from a factor of almost 16 to 1.4 for individuals at the median of the program (Zewde, 2018), though some researchers express concerns that using measures of median wealth overstates the effect of the baby bond program on closing the racial wealth gap (Bruenig, 2019).

Insights from the Alaska Permanent Dividend Fund and Baby Bond Proposals

The Alaska permanent dividend fund provides insights on what a black reparations fund may look like by way of criteria and mechanism of disbursement for black individuals and specifically for children (State of Alaska Department of Revenue, n.d.), including criteria for eligibility confirmation, systems for fraud detection, and mode of electronic disbursement of funds. Furthermore, the resulting research on the Alaska dividend fund offers previews on potential immediate to longer-term impacts including areas of risk in the context of sudden wealth shocks, and few negative consequences (by way of labor market reductions, crime, or expenditures on temptation goods); moreover, the results suggest positive spillover in several health outcomes and in citizen trust and engagement. Despite lack of current political commitment at the federal and state level (as one exception, see Booker, 2023) the proposals for baby bonds also offer insights on similar mechanisms of establishing a trust available to children at age 18, though in the case of some baby bond proposals the money must be spent on certain assets. Feasibility of options for disbursement schemes of funds to children may also be from drawn from the establishment of minor's trust funds for casino revenues generated from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians[20], and other tribes.

[20] See for example, https://www.cherokee.org/our-government/gaming-commission/frequently-asked-questions/.