Restoring the American Dream by Leveraging the Power of Place

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How Can We Restore the American Dream?

We use big data to study how to increase upward mobility

Analyze a broad range of interventions, from childhood to adulthood

Starting point: sharp local differences in rates of upward mobility
The Geography of Upward Mobility in the United States
Average Income at Age 35 for Children whose Parents Earned $27,000 (25th percentile)

Source: Chetty, Friedman, Hendren, Jones, Porter 2018
Two Americas: The Geography of Upward Mobility For Black vs. White Men
Average Individual Earnings at Age 35 For Men Whose Parents Earned $27,000 (25th percentile)

Note: Blue = More Upward Mobility, Red = Less Upward Mobility
Source: Chetty, Hendren, Jones, Porter 2018
Two Americas: The Geography of Upward Mobility For Black vs. White Women
Average Individual Earnings at Age 35 For Women Whose Parents Earned $27,000 (25th pctile)

Note: Blue = More Upward Mobility, Red = Less Upward Mobility
Source: Chetty, Hendren, Jones, Porter 2018
The Geography of Upward Mobility in the United States

Average Income at Age 35 for Children whose Parents Earned $27,000 (25th percentile)

Note: Blue = More Upward Mobility, Red = Less Upward Mobility

Source: Chetty, Friedman, Hendren, Jones, Porter 2018
The Geography of Upward Mobility in New York
Average Income at Age 35 for Children whose Parents Earned $27,000 (25th percentile)
Income Gain from Moving to a Better Neighborhood
By Child’s Age at Move

Average Income at Age 35

$27.0K
$23.7K
$20.3K
$17.0K

Age of Child when Parents Move

2
10
20
28

Van Dyke Houses
Nehemiah Houses
Income Gain from Moving to a Better Neighborhood
By Child’s Age at Move

- Move at age 2 from Van Dyke to the Nehemiah Houses
  → average earnings of $25,000
Income Gain from Moving to a Better Neighborhood
By Child’s Age at Move

Nehemiah Houses

Van Dyke Houses

Age of Child when Parents Move

Average Income at Age 35

$27.0K

$23.7K

$20.3K

$17.0K

$17.0K

$20.3K

$23.7K

$27.0K
Income Gain from Moving to a Better Neighborhood
By Child’s Age at Move

![Graph showing the income gain from moving to a better neighborhood by child's age at move. The graph plots the age of the child when parents move against the average income at age 35. The data points are shown for two neighborhoods, Nehemiah Houses and Van Dyke Houses. The graph indicates a downward trend, with higher income gains at younger ages and lower gains at older ages. The average income at age 35 ranges from $27.0K to $17.0K, with a decrease as the age of the child at the time of the move increases.]
Characteristics of High-Mobility Neighborhoods

- Lower Poverty Rates
- More stable family structure
- Better school quality
- Greater social capital
How Big Is a “Neighborhood”?  
Spatial Decay in Association Between Poverty Rates and Upward Mobility

Poverty rates more than 0.6 miles away from a block have no impact on upward mobility there.
Economic Opportunity in the COVID-19 Pandemic
Employment Changes by Wage Quartile

Change in Employment (%) Relative to January 2020

Top Wage Quartile (> $29)
Third Quartile ($18-29)
Second Quartile ($13-18)
Bottom Wage Quartile (< $13)

Note: dashed lines are forecasts based on Kronos time sheet data and Paychex employment data for workers on weekly pay cycles.
Changes in Small Business Revenue from January to April by ZIP Code

New York
Changes in Employment Rates During COVID-19 Pandemic by ZIP Code
January to April 15, New York
Effects of COVID-19 on Educational Progress by Income Group
Math Lessons Completed on Zearn Online Platform

Change in Math Lessons Completed (%)
Relative to January 2020

Top Income Quartile
Bottom Income Quartile

SUMMER BREAK

Change in Math Lessons Completed
-1.8%
-19.9%
From Jasmine, 7 years old, whose family moved to a high-opportunity area in Seattle in the Creating Moves to Opportunity study