



A Profile of Poverty in Boston

BPDA Research Division

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**boston planning &
development agency**

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Escaping Poverty is First Step in Economic Mobility

Security	Increasing Prosperity	Affluent: Ability to afford majority of market rate owner units & most rental units. Ability to save and accumulate wealth. Mobility Pathway(s) (increased Economic Prosperity)
Self-Sufficiency	Increasing Economic Security	500% of Federal Poverty Line
		Upper Middle Class: Possible ability to buy some market rate housing.
		400% of Federal Poverty Line
		Middle Class: Ability to afford majority of market rate rental units.
Assistance Required	Increasing Economic Self-Sufficiency	Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard: ~300% of Federal Poverty Line
		Lower Middle Class: Ineligibility for most government assistance programs creates gap between cut off of assistance and full self-sufficiency.
		200% of Federal Poverty Line
		Working Poor: Phase out of government programs such as MRVP, SNAP, WIC, Child Tax Credit, and EITC.
		Federal Poverty Line
		Families and Individuals in Poverty: families and individuals in crisis dependent on government assistance programs.

To escape poverty:

- A single individual living alone or in a non-family household needs \$14,580/year
- A family of four (related by blood, adoption, or marriage) needs \$30,000/year

Maximum Income by Family Size				
	1	2	3	4
400-499% Federal Poverty Line	\$72,900	\$98,600	\$124,300	\$150,000
300-399% Federal Poverty Line	\$58,320	\$78,880	\$99,440	\$120,000
200-299% Federal Poverty Line	\$43,740	\$59,160	\$74,580	\$90,000
100-199% Federal Poverty Line	\$29,160	\$39,440	\$49,720	\$60,000
0-99% Federal Poverty Line	\$14,580	\$19,720	\$24,860	\$30,000

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Poverty Thresholds, 2022, BPDA Research Division Analysis

Measurement of Poverty

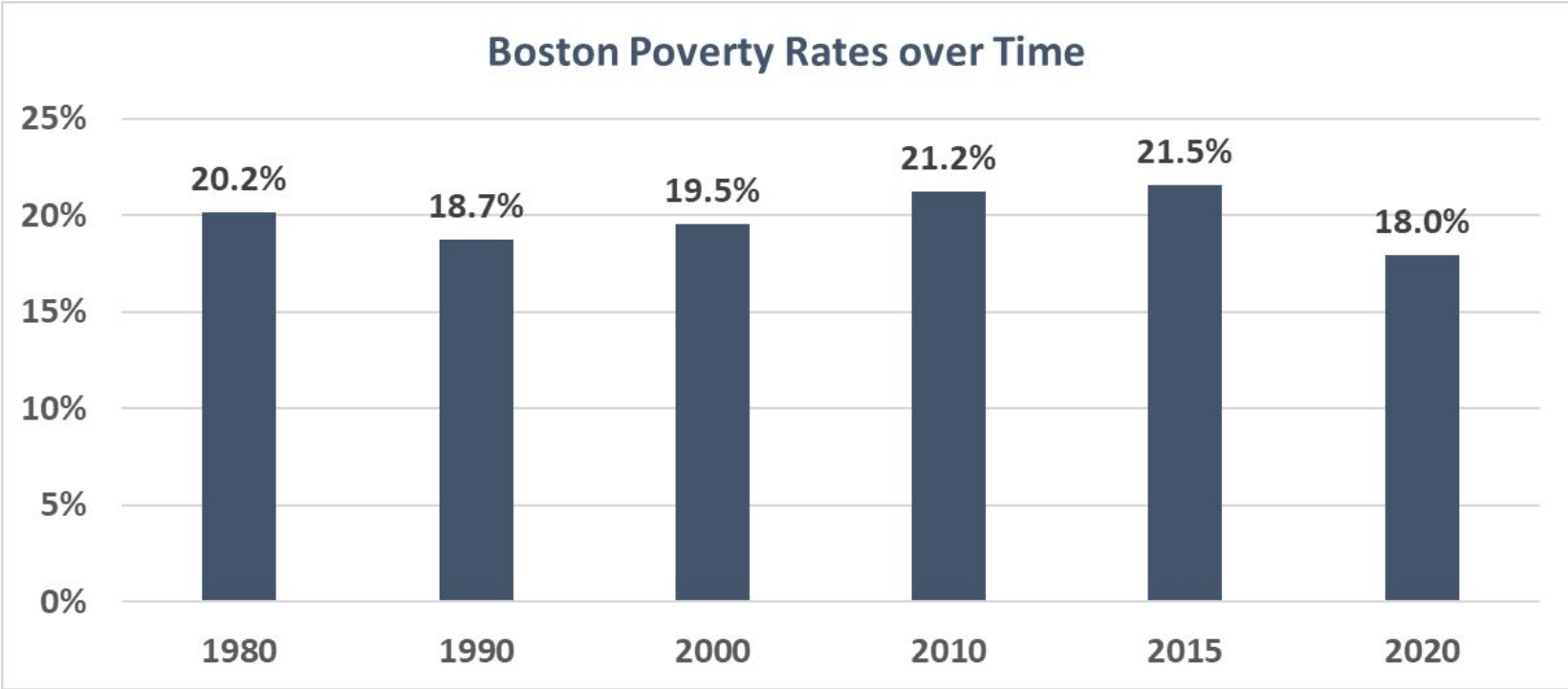
- Official poverty definition uses money income before taxes including social security and public assistance but does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps).
- Official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index
- Poverty thresholds depend on family size and composition
 - Roommates counted separately - assumed to not pool finances as family members do
 - People living in group quarters (such as dorms) do not have a poverty calculation

Citywide Poverty

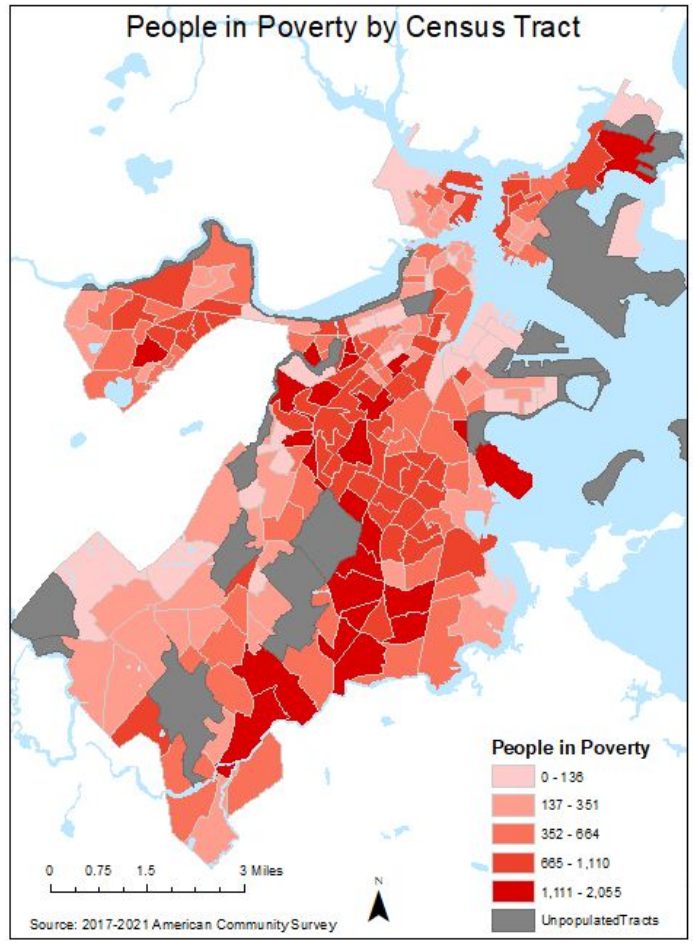
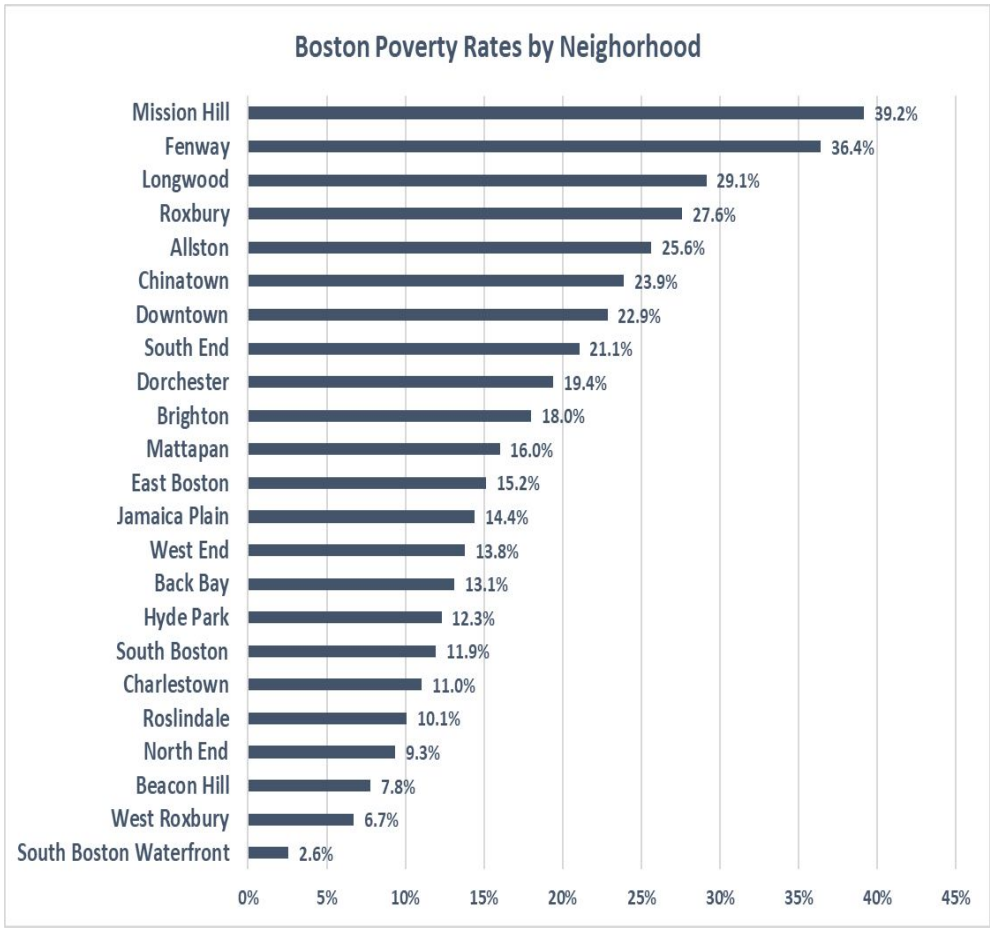


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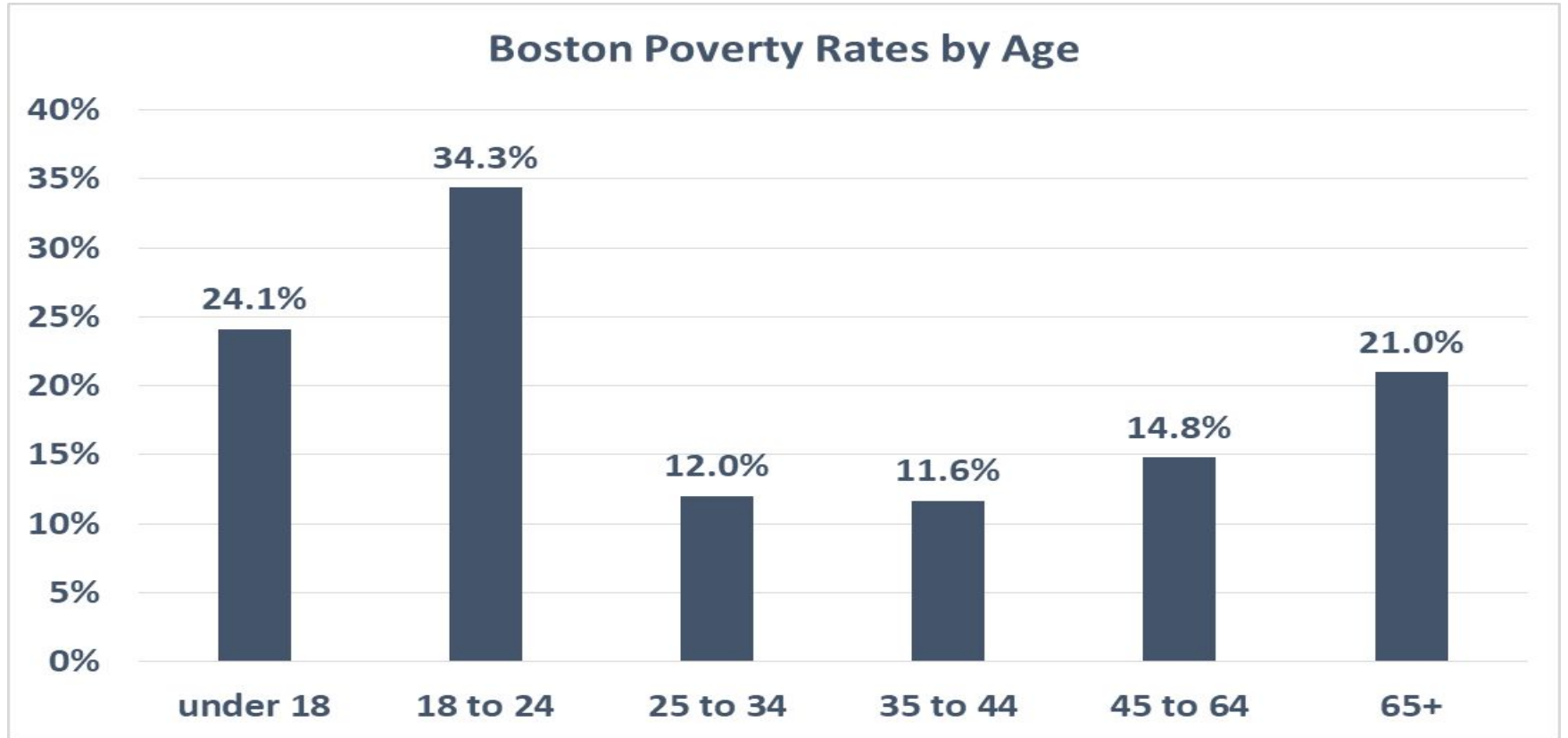
Poverty rates since 1980 have remained relatively stable



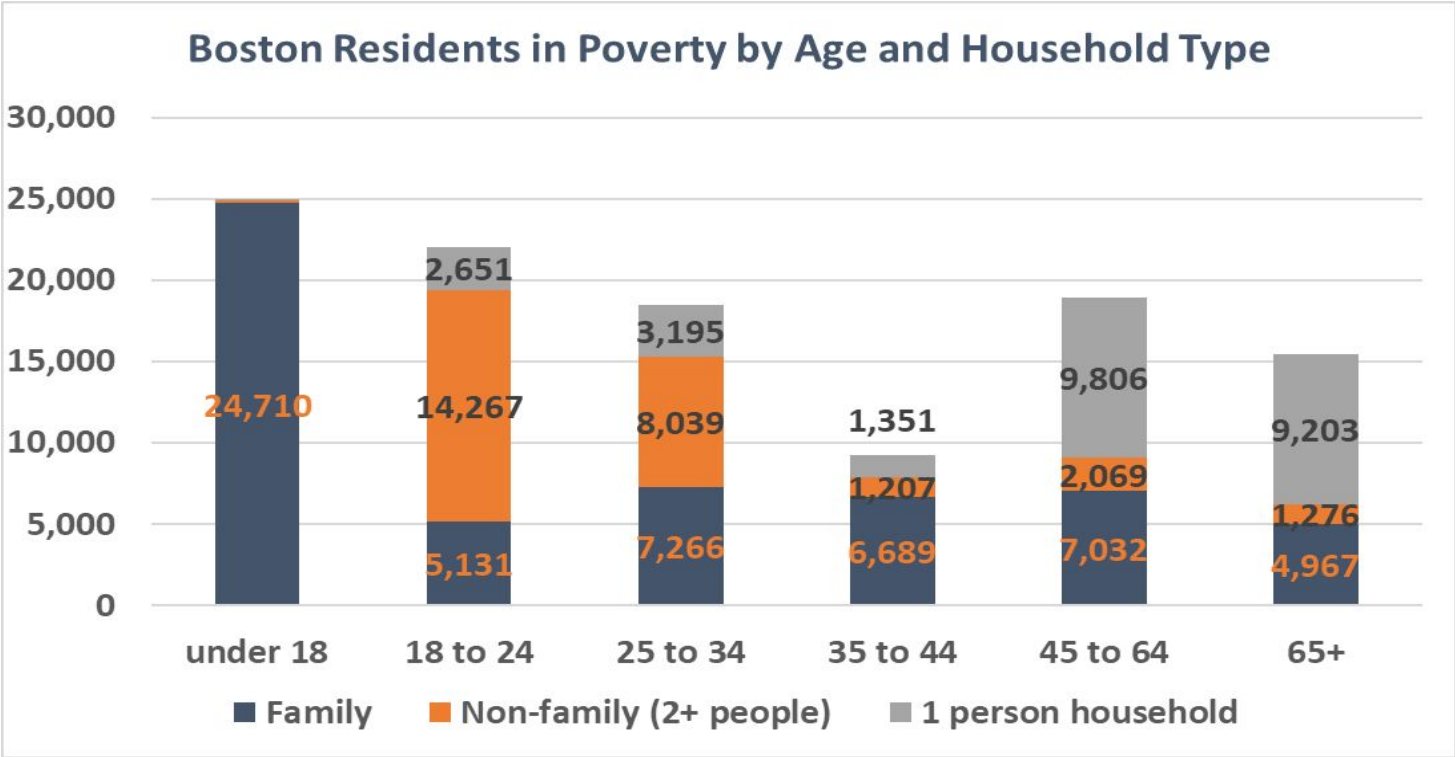
Source: , 1980, 1990, 2000 Decennial Census, 2006-2010, 2011-2015 & 2016-2020, American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis



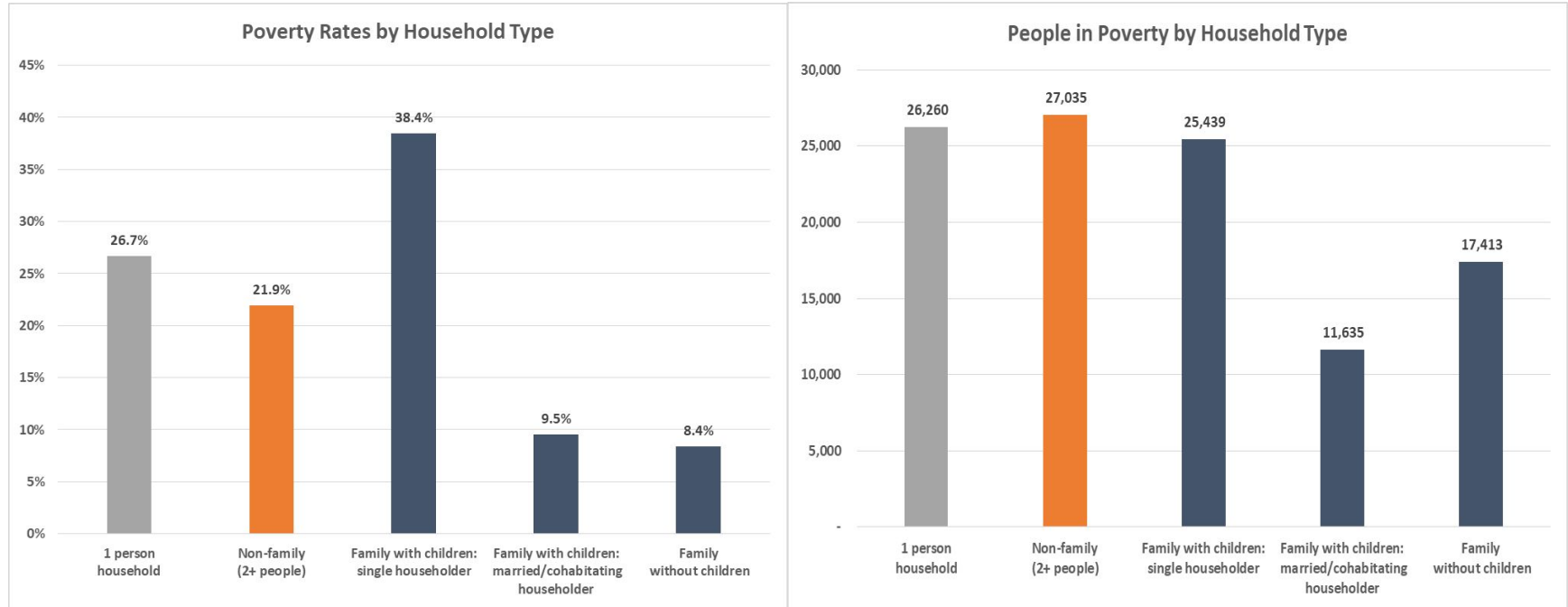
Poverty Rates are highest among Children and Young Adults



Approximately 112,000 Boston residents live in poverty, including ~25,000 children and ~15,000 seniors



Poverty rates are highest for people living in families with children and a single householder

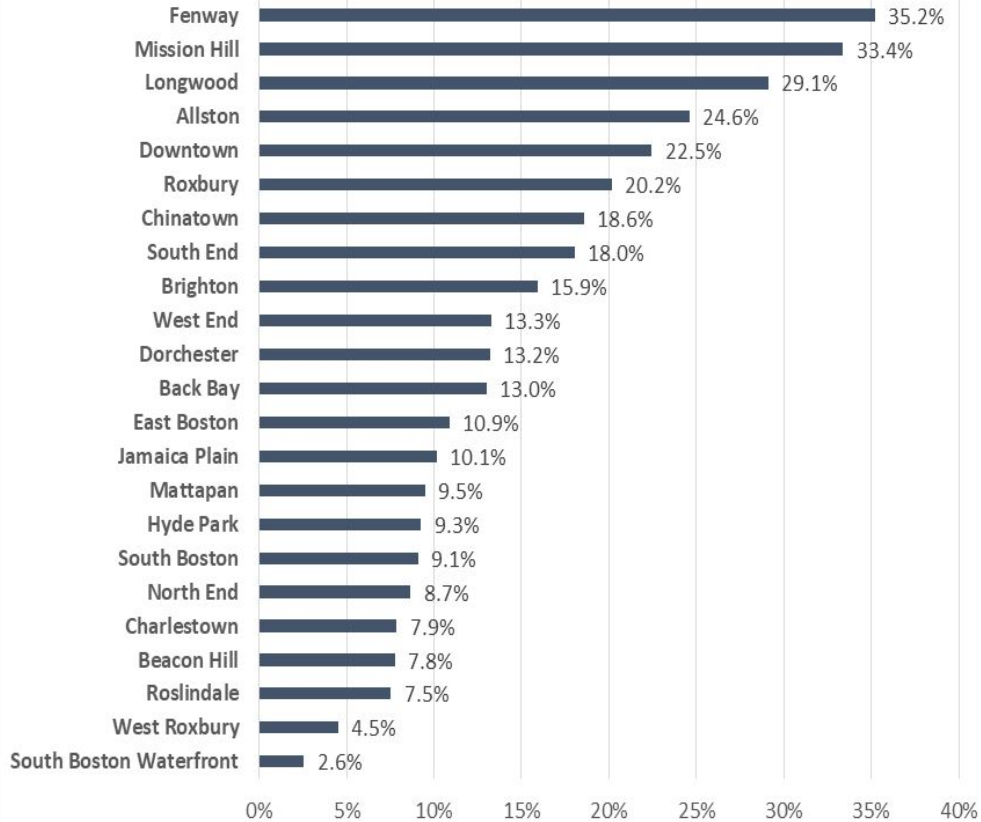


Note: household type does not include group quarters population

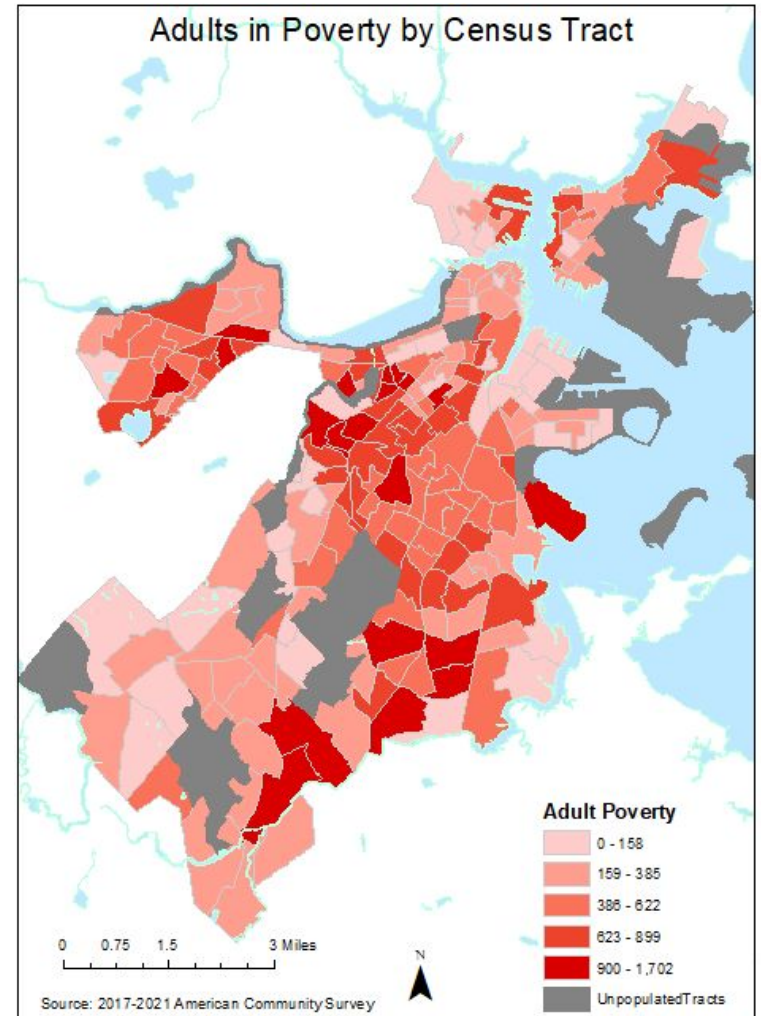
Source: 2017-2021 American Community (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

Adult Poverty

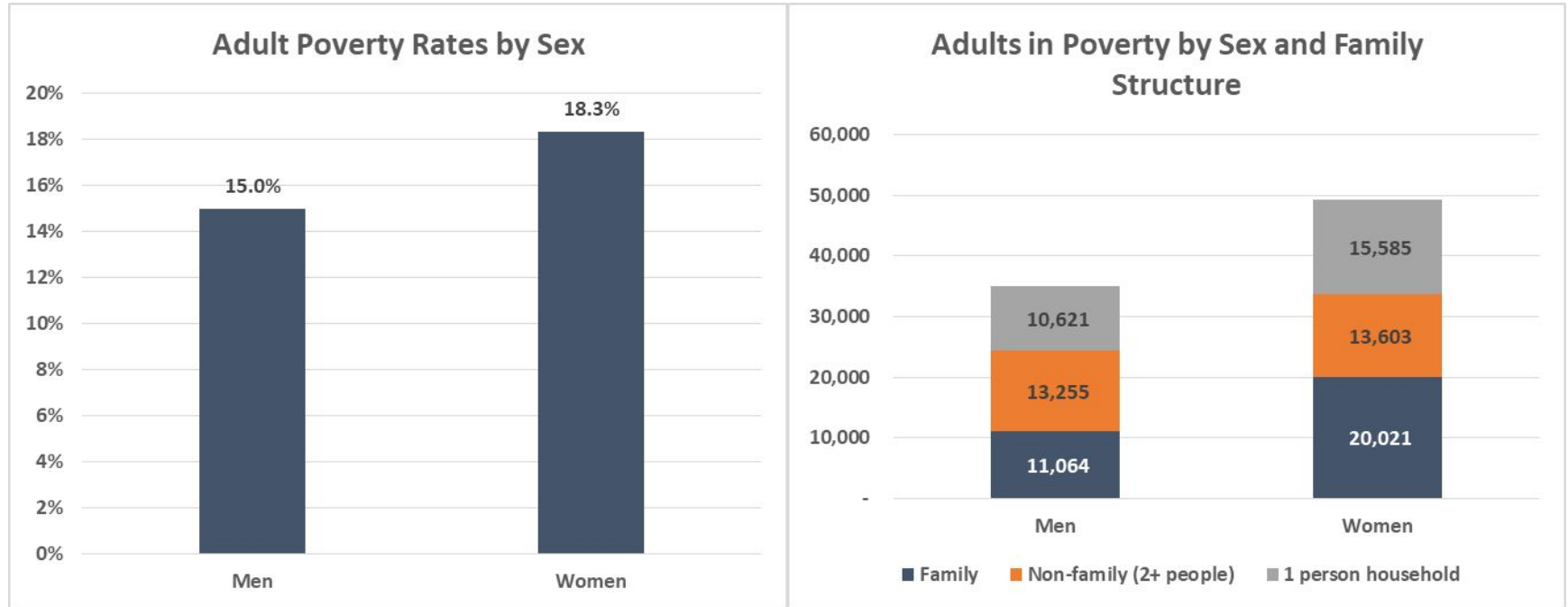
Adult Poverty Rates by Neighborhood



Adults in Poverty by Census Tract



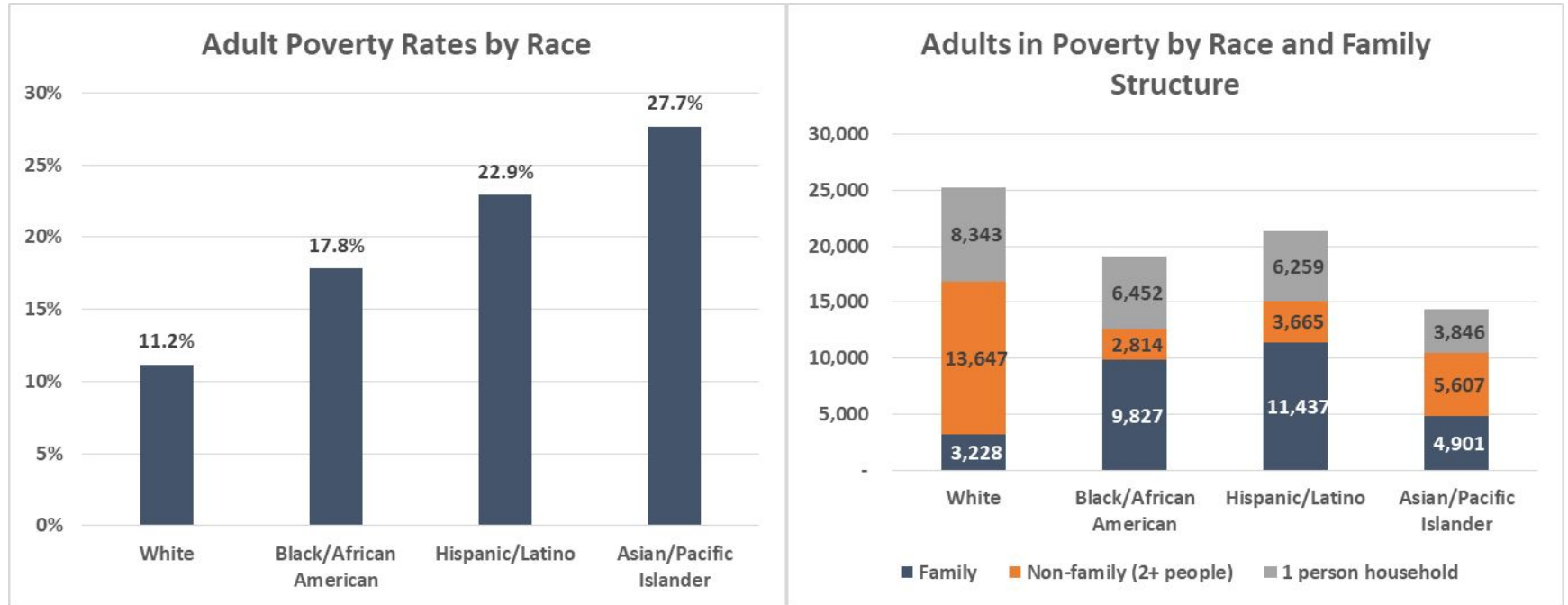
Women have higher rates of poverty, and women make up almost two thirds of poor adults in family households



Note: family structure does not include group quarters population

Source: 2017-2021 American Community (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

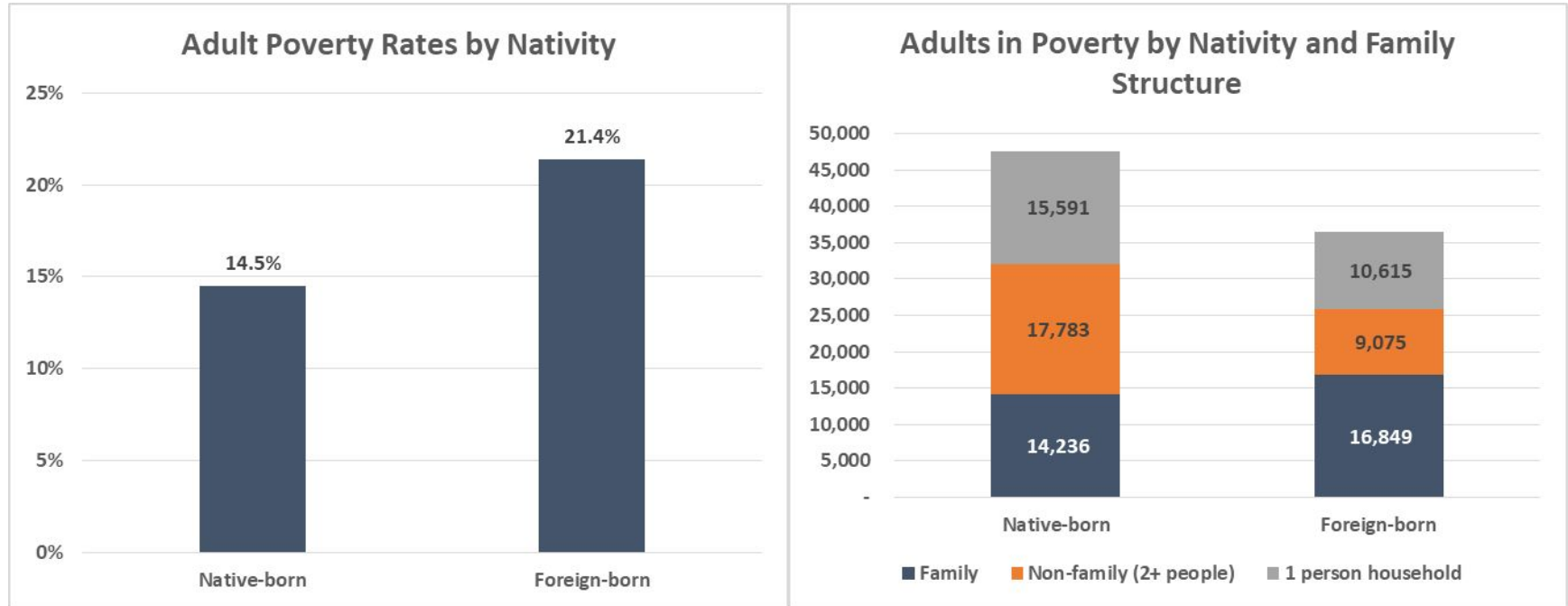
Asian adults have the highest rates of poverty, but the majority of poor adults living in family households are Black or Hispanic



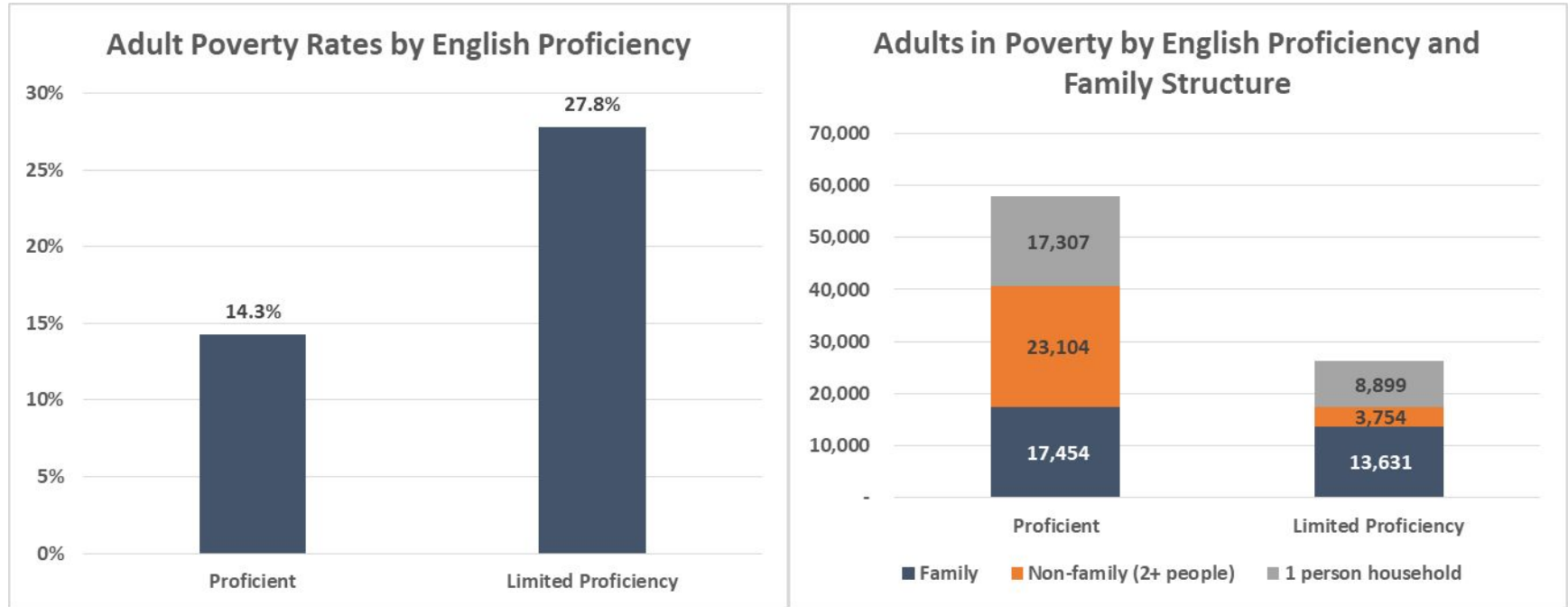
Note: Hispanics can be of any race, but are reported separately in this analysis.

Source: 2017-2021 American Community (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

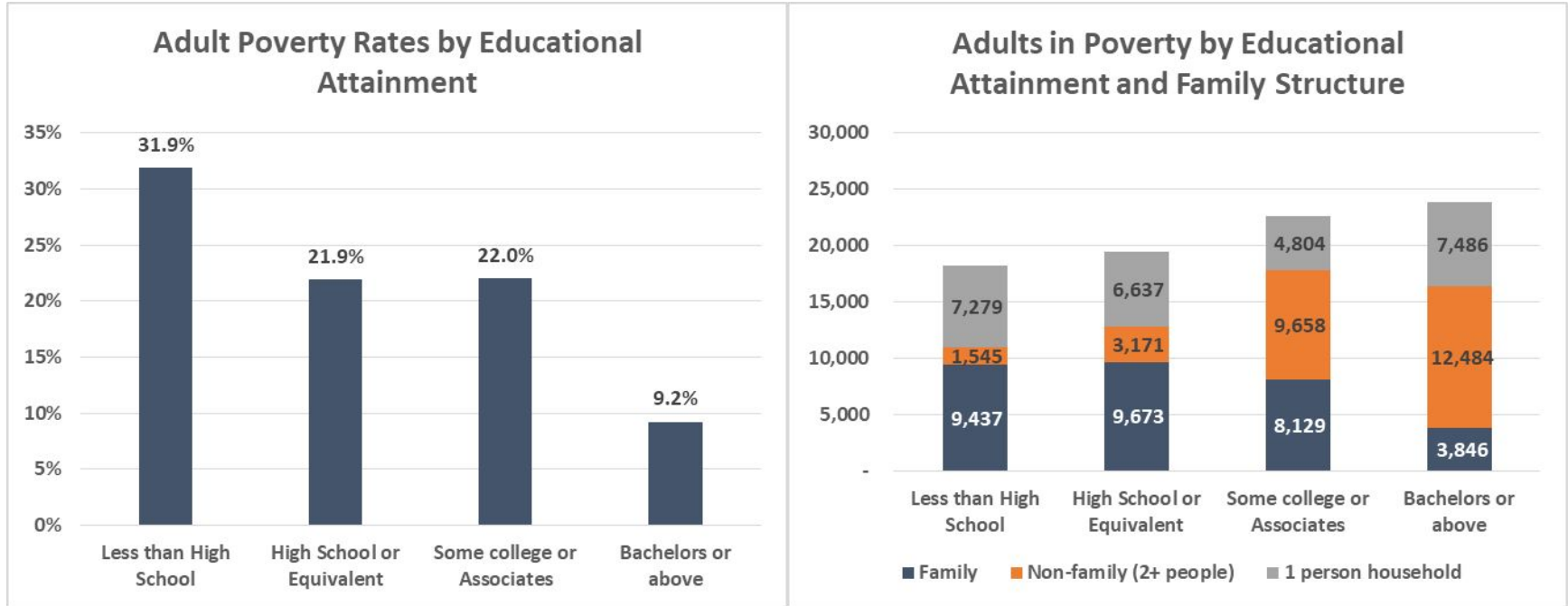
Foreign-born adults have higher rates of poverty, although most poor adults are native born



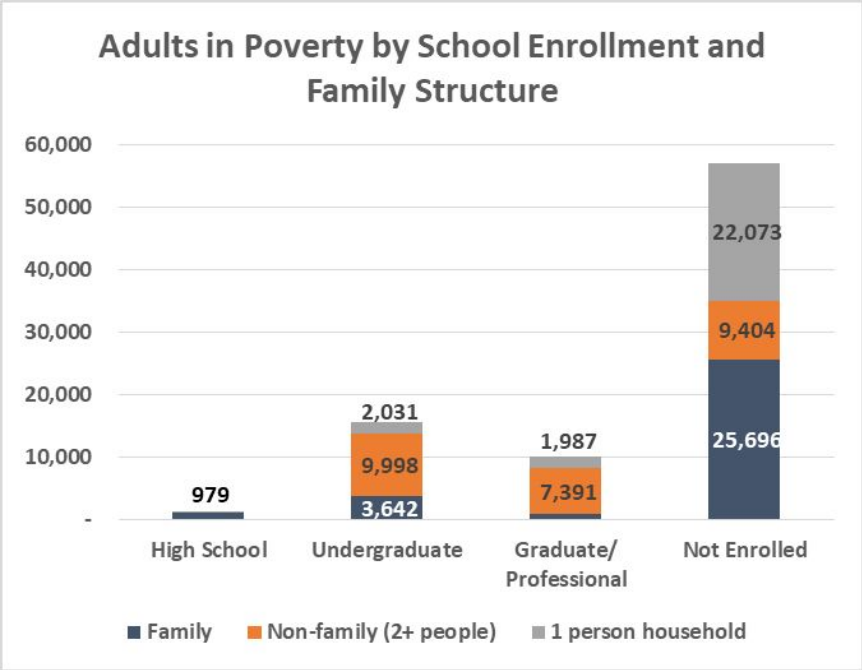
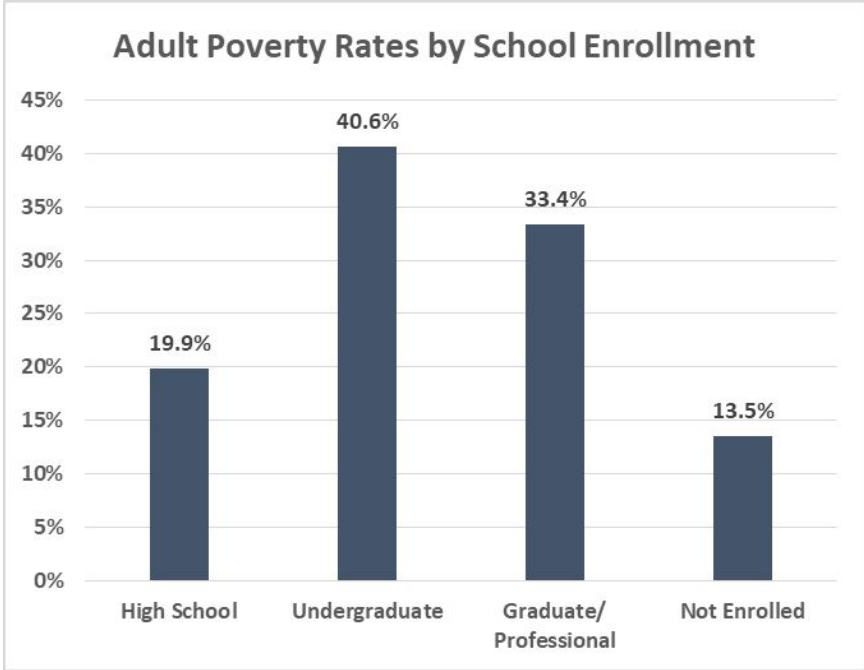
Adults with limited English proficiency are more than twice as likely to live in poverty



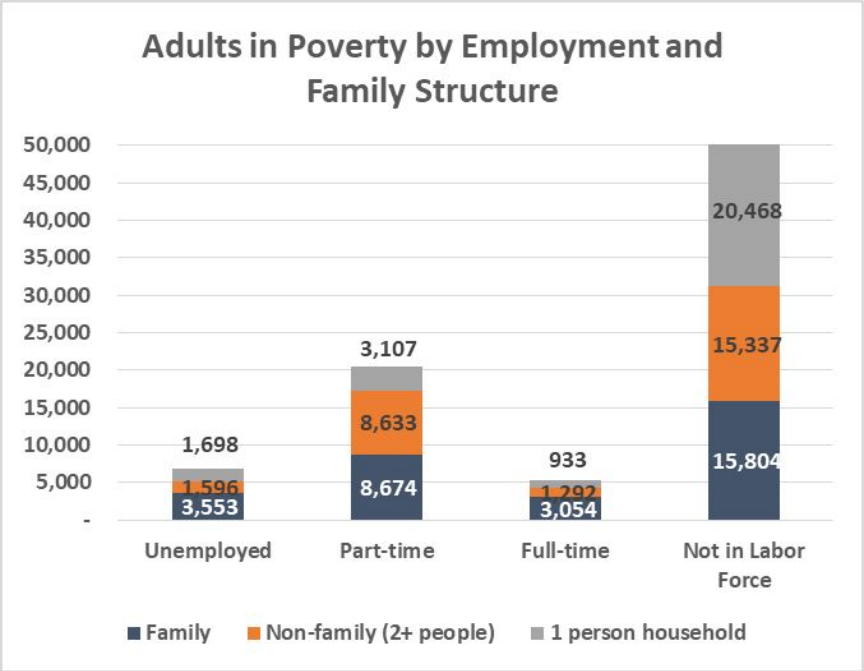
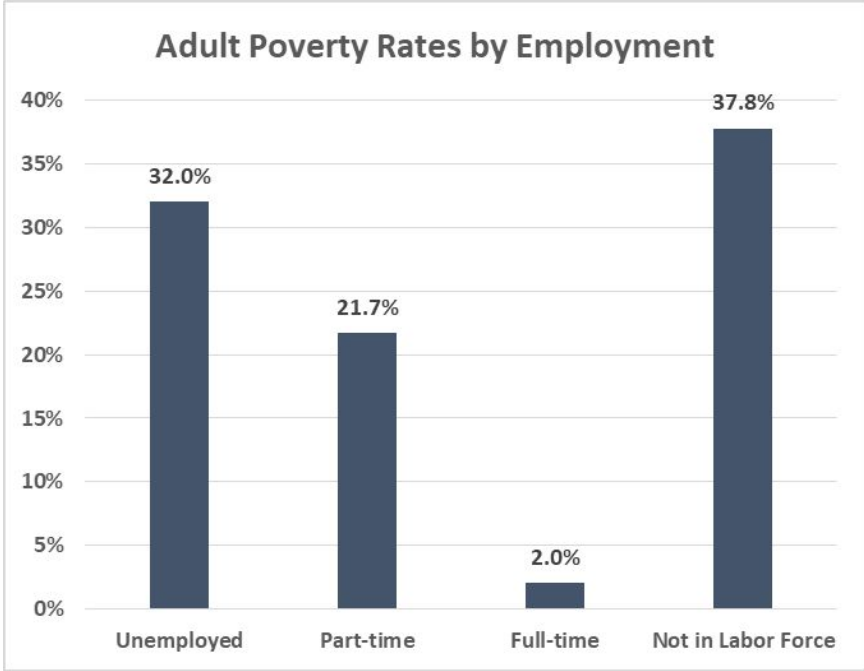
Adults with less than a highschool education have high rates of poverty, but many poor adults have college degrees



Students enrolled in higher education may have high rates of poverty while in school. Poor college/graduate students often live with roommates.

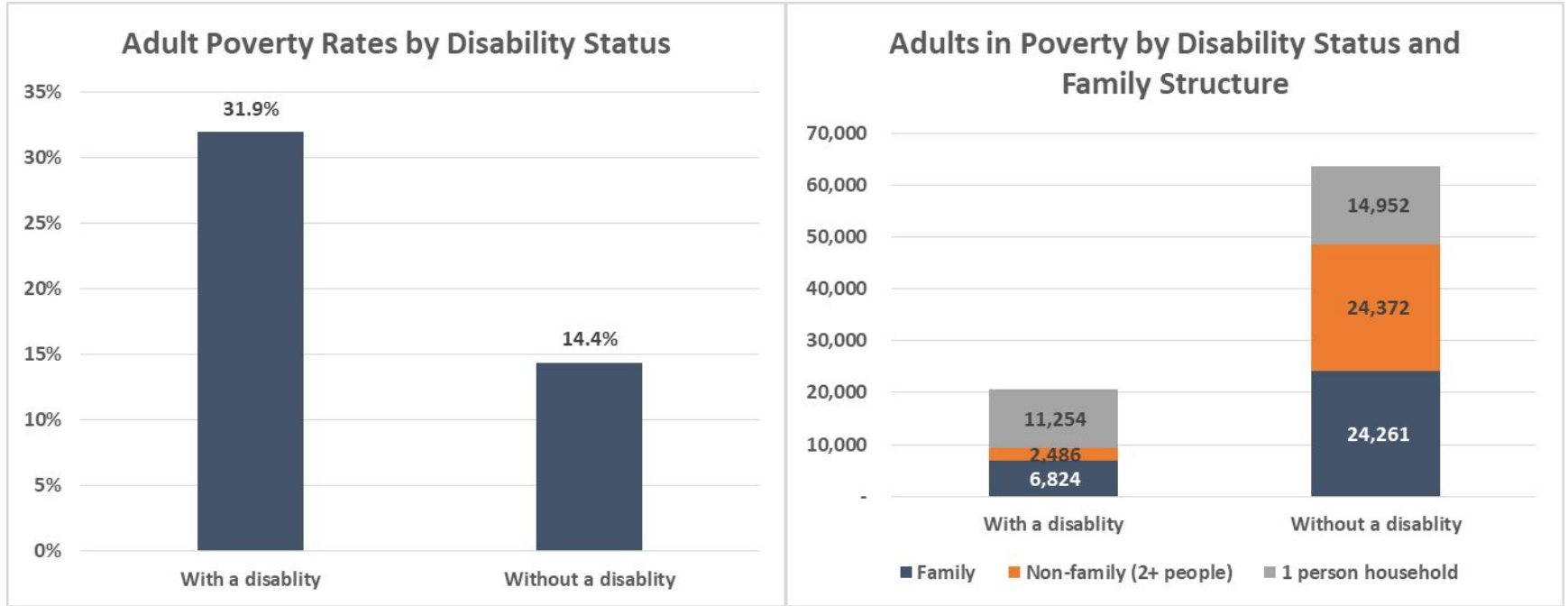


Non-working adults have high poverty rates, but many poor adults work part-time



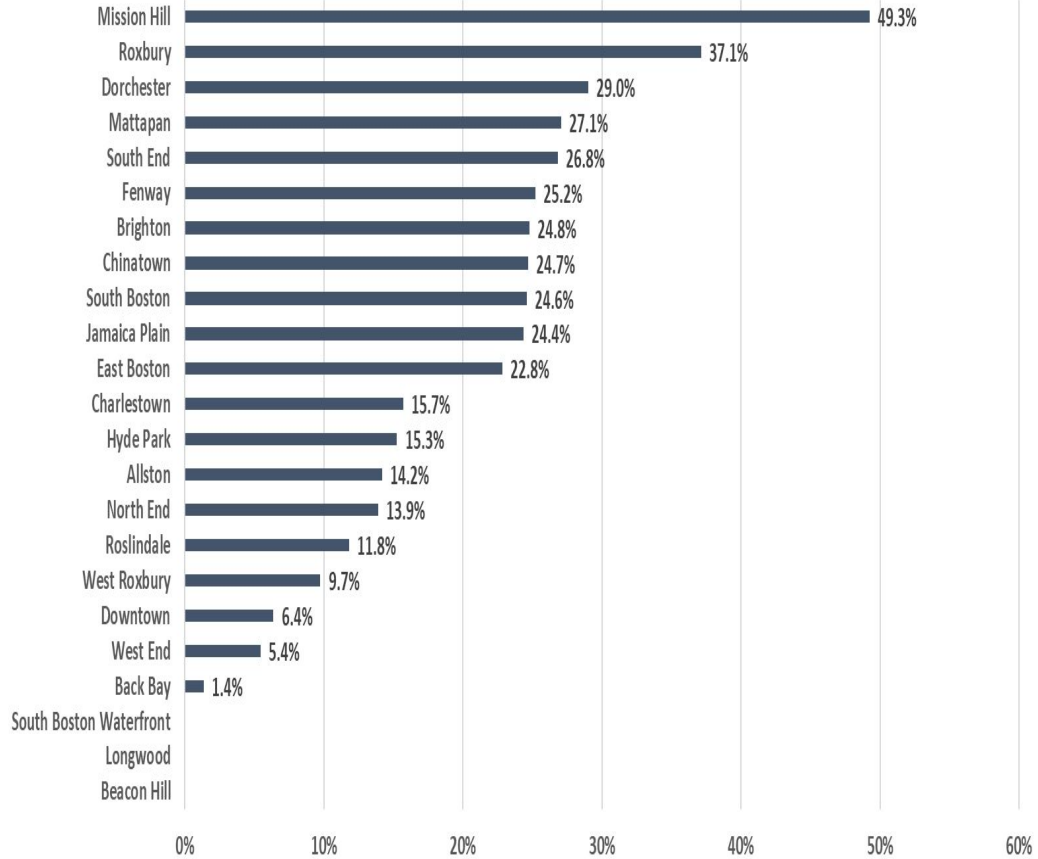
Note: People who worked fewer than 35 hours a week or fewer than 48 weeks a year are considered part-time workers.

Almost 30% of adults with a disability live in poverty and almost half of poor adults living alone have a disability

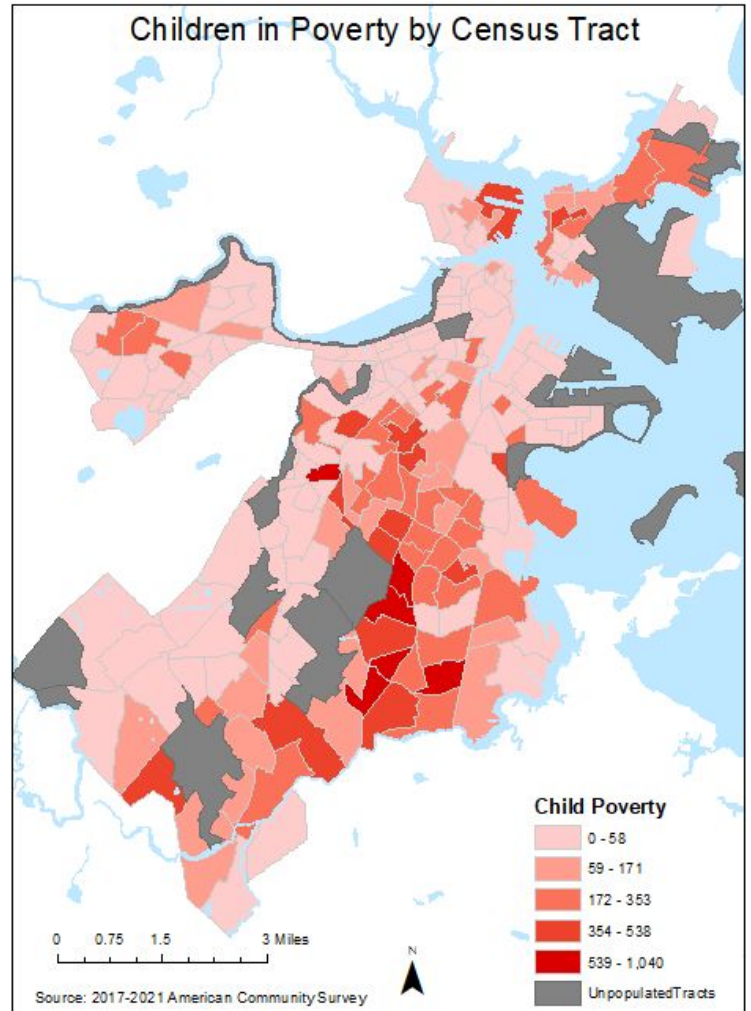


Child Poverty

Child Poverty Rates by Neighborhood

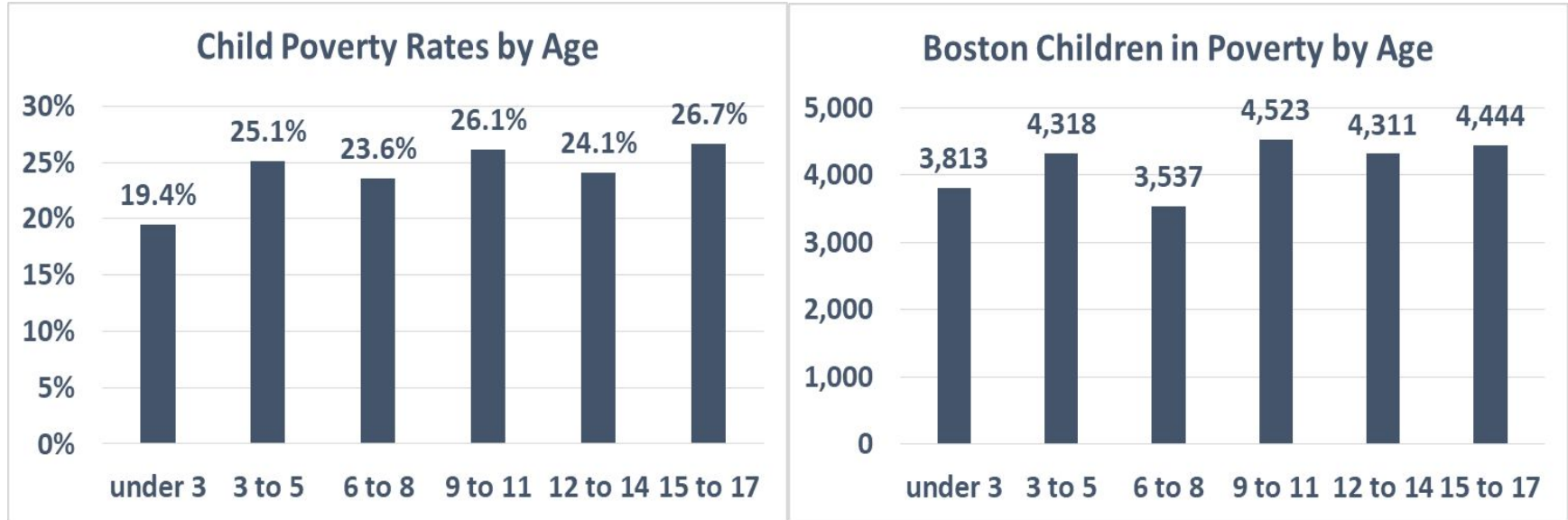


Children in Poverty by Census Tract

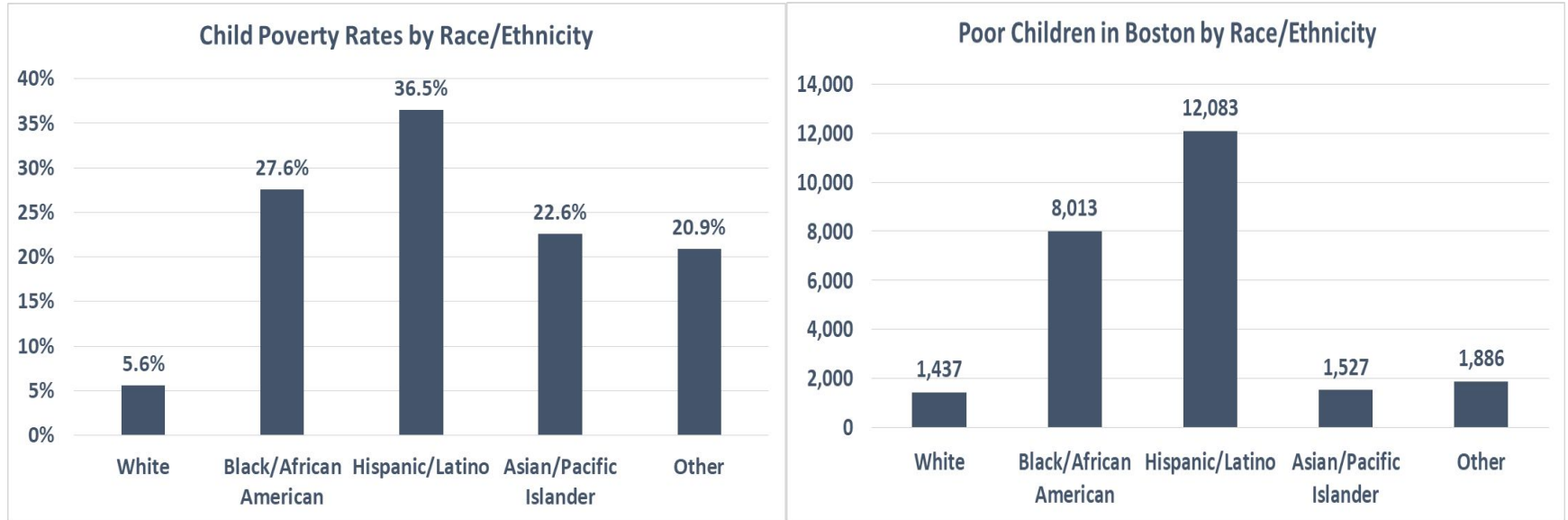


Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis

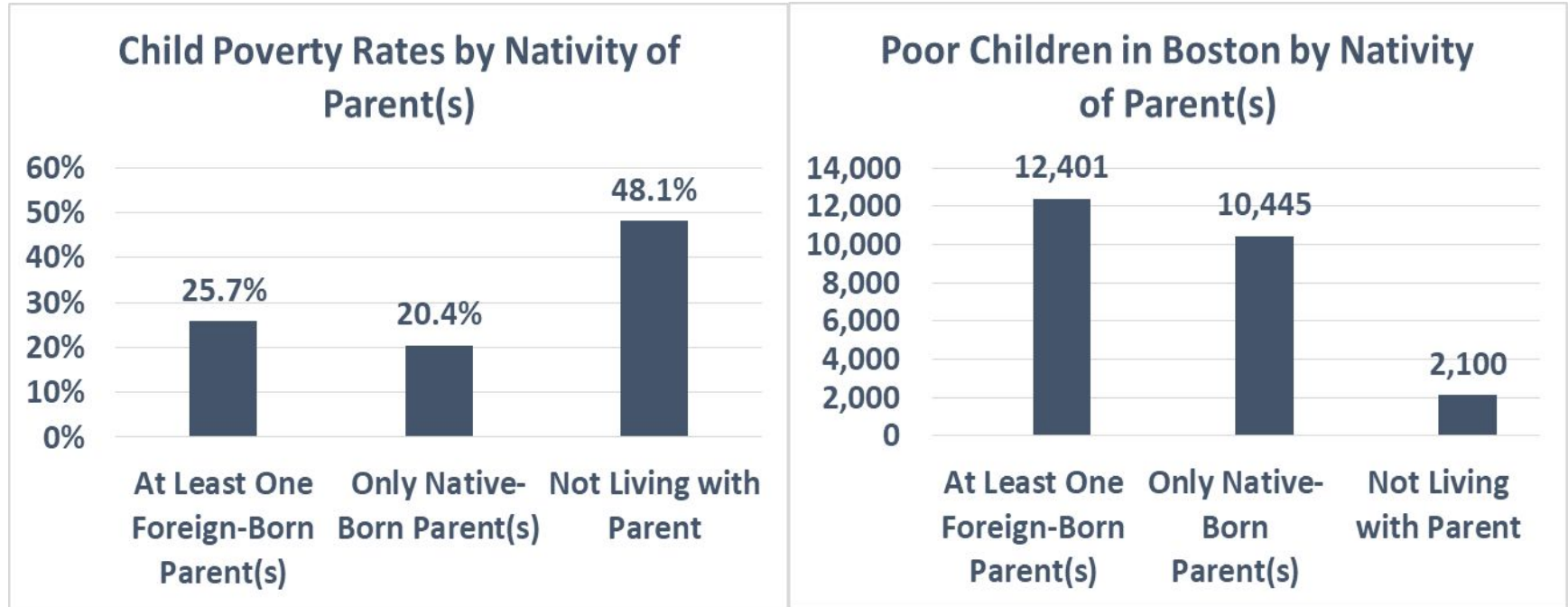
Child poverty rates are higher for children 3 and older



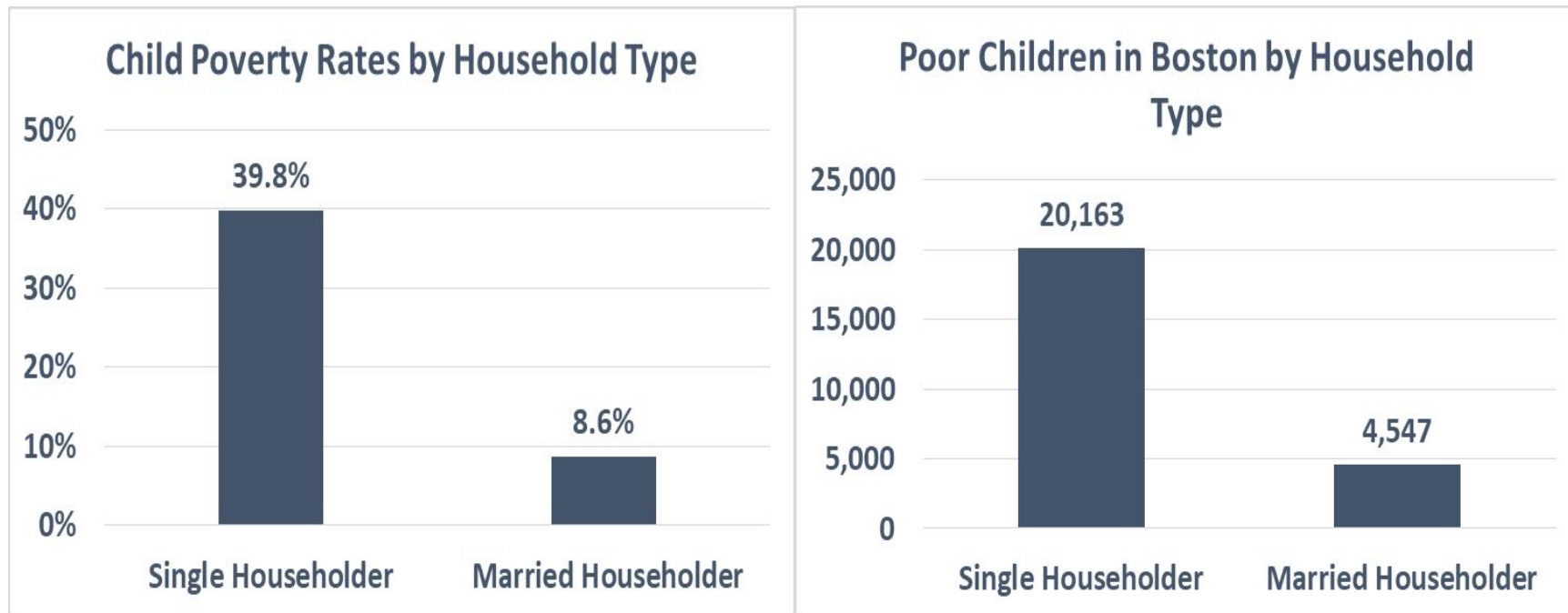
Hispanic children have the highest poverty rates and make up the largest group of poor children



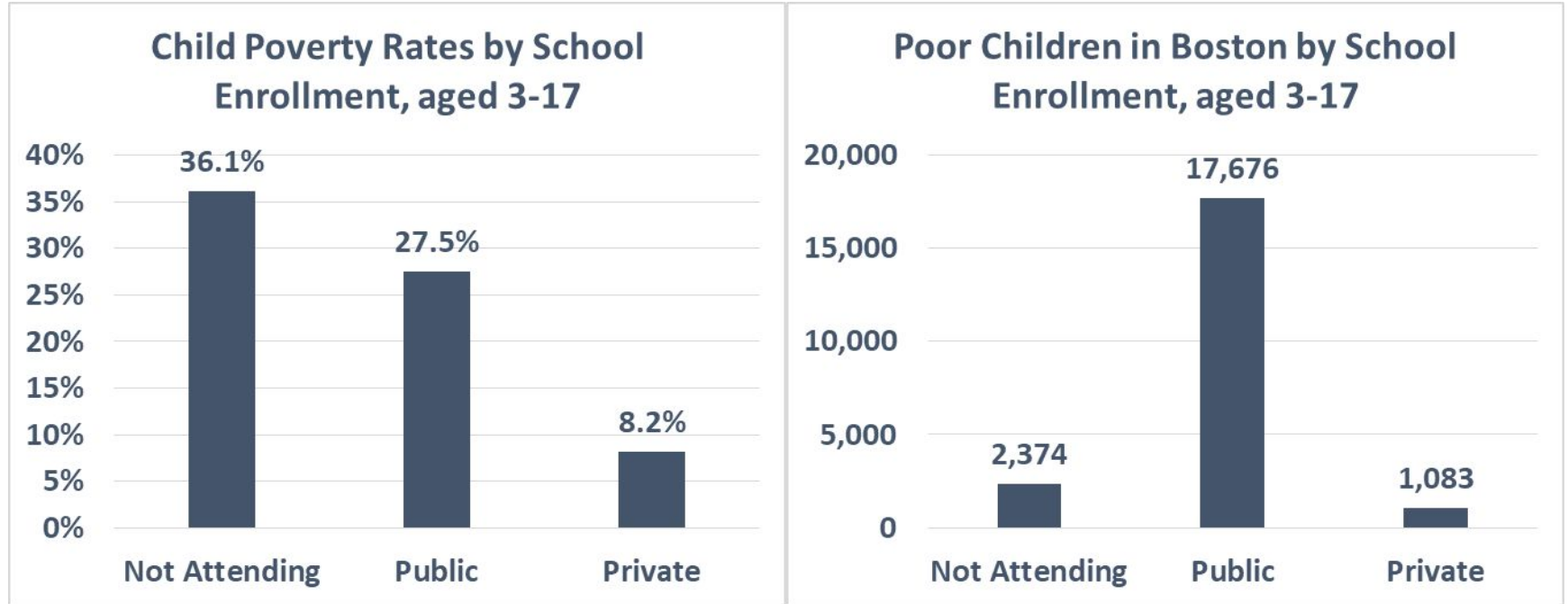
Children living with at least one foreign-born parent or not living with a parent have higher rates of poverty.



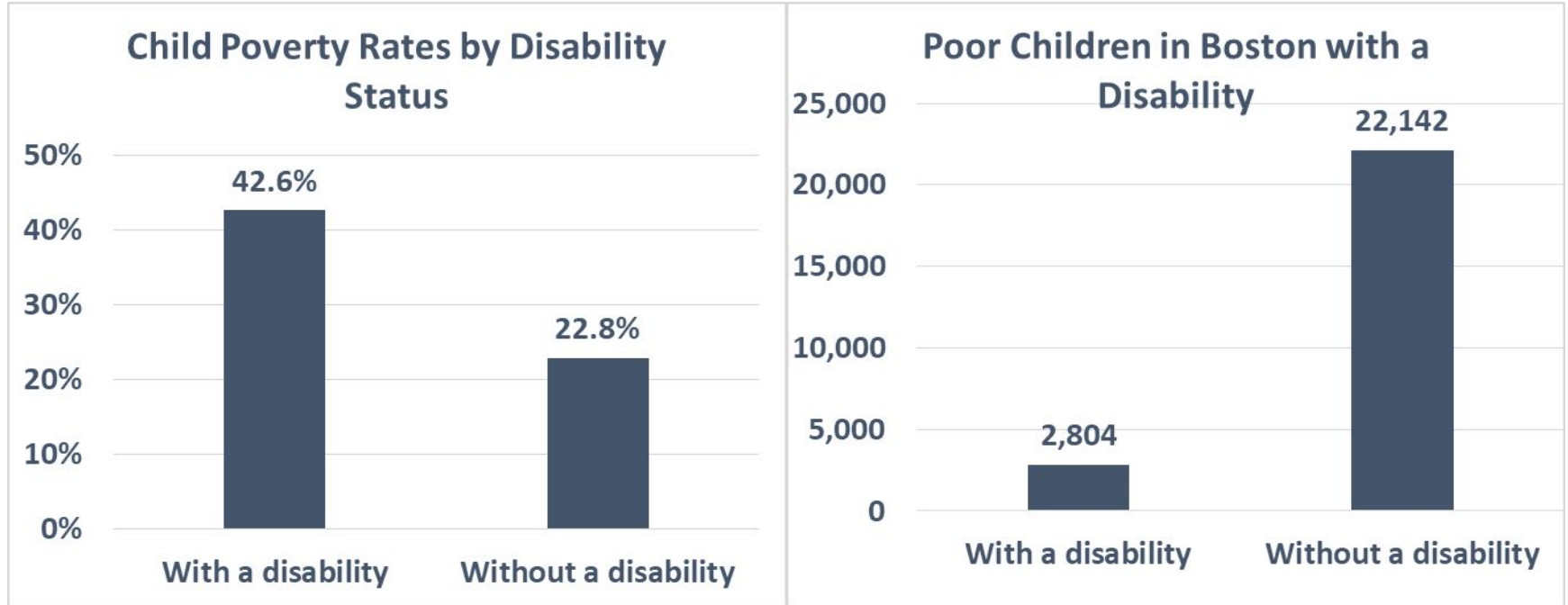
Children living in households with a married householder have lower rates of poverty



Children not enrolled in school or attending public schools are more likely to live in poverty



41% of children with a disability live in poverty



Summary Profile of Boston Residents in Poverty

	Residents in Poverty	Age & Sex	Race/Ethnicity & Nativity	Education, English Proficiency, & Disability Status
Living in Families	55,795	36% are adult women; 44% are children	32% are Black, 42% are Hispanic; 54% of adults are foreign born	62% of adults have a high school education or less; 44% of adults have limited English proficiency
Living in Non-family (2+ people)	27,035	83% are aged 18-34	51% are White; 66% are native born	46% have a Bachelor's degree; 64% have enrolled in college/university
Living Alone	26,260	37% are 45-64; 35% are 65+ 59% are women	32% are White; 59% are native born	53% have a high school education or less; 66% are English proficient; 43% with a disability