



Healthy Places North Carolina

Health and Economic Mobility

Families that live at or near the poverty line are more likely to live in neighborhoods that isolate them from access to fresh food and quality health care and also lack opportunities for children to play safely outside. In addition, living at or near the poverty line can mean a family has to choose between seeing a doctor or buying medication and paying the rent or buying food.

Health and wealth are positively correlated in most societies. In the United States, the income and health of one generation dictates the economic mobility of the next generation. Parental income and their health—physical health, access to healthy food, and access to health services and insurance—can affect the likelihood that a child will experience health problems at an early age, as well as determine health conditions and their economic security in adulthood. In our society, stalled upward mobility means we see a disproportionate number of people stuck at the lower end of the income distribution. (Those who start at the higher end tend to stay where they begin, too.) Children growing up in low-income families in North Carolina, in rural and urban areas, are likely to have low incomes as adults, just as children growing up in high-income families are likely to have higher incomes in adulthood, thereby repeating the cycle of inequitable mobility for *their* children. In a report by the Urban Institute,¹ the lower socioeconomic status of parents is often linked to adult children's:

- Restricted participation in the labor force
- Reduced savings due to lack of or underinsurance
- Poor health early in life that results in adverse effects on later earning (i.e. negatively affecting cognition or educational attainment)
- Food insecurity, which can signal stress, anxiety, or family disorganization and influence social skills

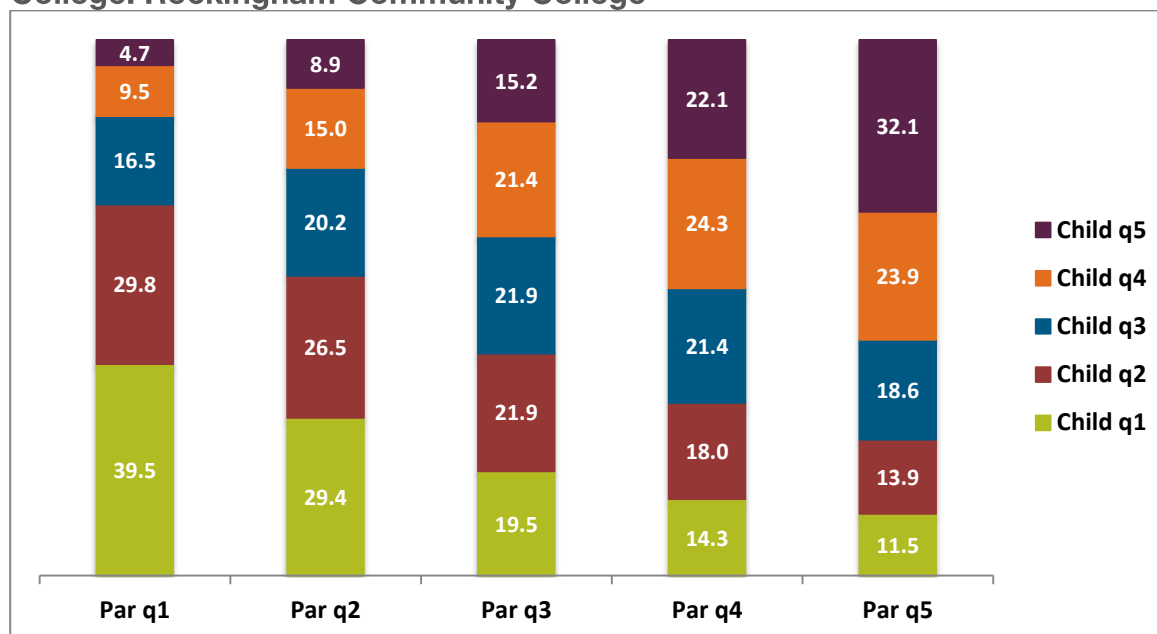
While there are several factors that contribute to inequitable income distribution, most are related to a pattern of isolation of in the systems in which we interact every day. Creating a culture of health in a community means doing business differently and realigning partnerships that are built for health—and including organizations from all the systems people interact with on a daily basis, like housing, education, and employment. Community colleges are uniquely positioned to affect the health of their communities because of their open enrollment policies, community reach through continuing and adult education, and direct connection to employers.

The following charts will give you a glimpse into intergenerational mobility in your region. As you look through the data, consider the health challenges of the families in the lowest income bracket. Consider how your community is affected by the constrained health and economic outcomes of students and families struggling to make ends meet and how your Healthy Places NC project can change the trajectory of their children.

¹ Kronstadt, Jessica. "Health and Economic Mobility." The Urban Institute, 2008. Web. Feb. 2017.
<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/1001161-Health-and-Economic-Mobility.PDF>

What are the chances a child raised in a given quintile of the income distribution will move to another quintile as an adult in the Greensboro commuting zone?

College: Rockingham Community College

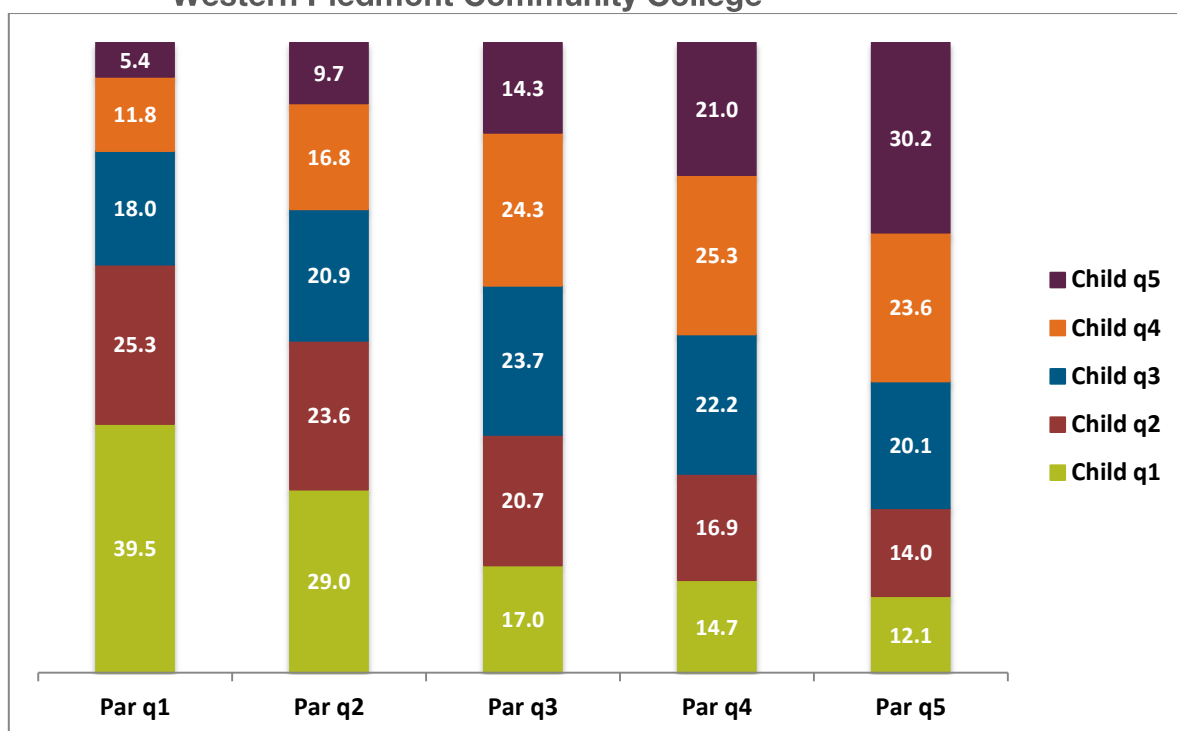


Source: *The Equality of Opportunity Project, Income Quintile to Quintile Transitions, 2014*

- Children born to parents with the very highest and very lowest incomes are likely to remain in the same quintile in adulthood.
 - Children born to parents with income in the lowest quintile (Par q1) of the national income distribution (poorest) have a 39.5 percent chance of remaining in that income quintile (Child q1) as adults.
 - Children born to parents with income in the highest income quintile (Par q5) of the national income distribution (richest) have a 32.1 percent chance of remaining in the highest income quintile (Child q5) as adults.
- Children born to parents in the lowest quintile (poorest) are very unlikely to end up in the highest income quintile as adults; they have a 4.7 percent chance (Par q1, Child q5) chance of rising to the top.
- Children born to parents in the highest quintile (richest) are very unlikely to end up in the lowest income quintile as adults; they have an 11.5 percent chance of falling to the bottom (Par q5, Child q1).

What are the chances a child raised in a given quintile of the income distribution will move to another quintile as an adult in the Morganton commuting zone?

**Colleges: McDowell Technical Community College
Western Piedmont Community College**

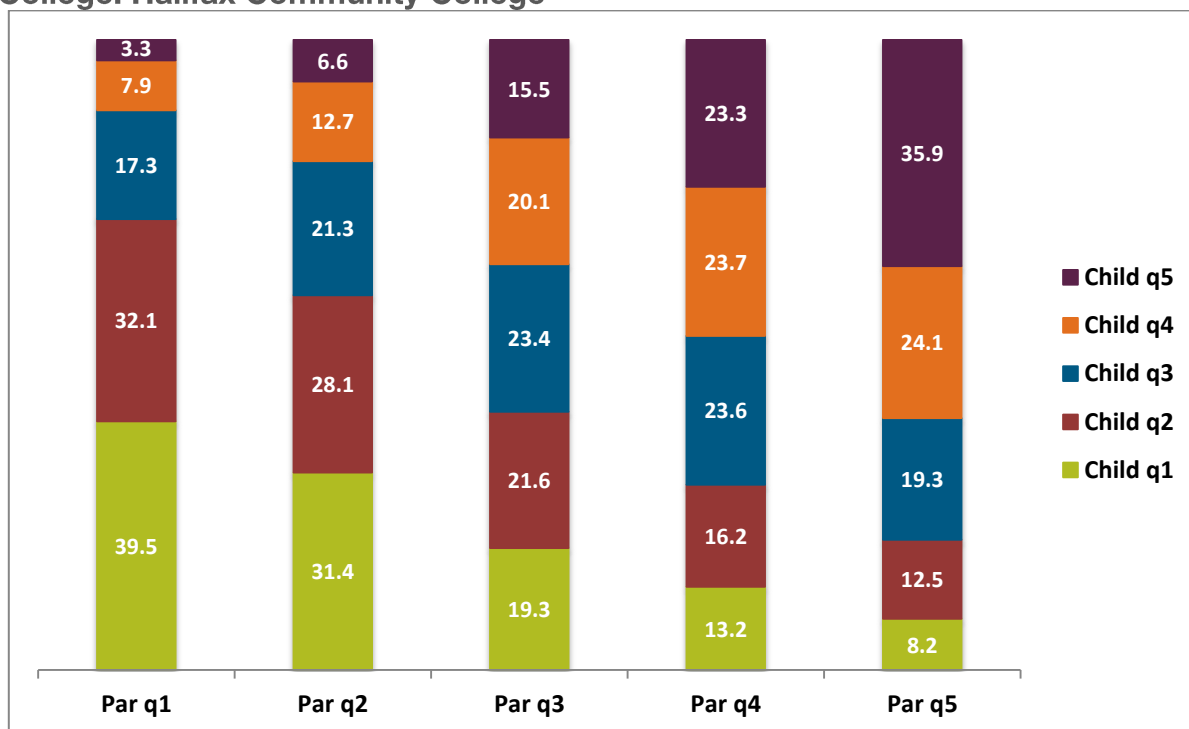


Source: *The Equality of Opportunity Project, Income Quintile to Quintile Transitions, 2014*

- Children born to parents with the very highest and very lowest incomes are likely to remain in the same quintile in adulthood.
 - Children born to parents with income in the lowest quintile (Par q1) of the national income distribution (poorest) have a 39.5 percent chance of remaining in that income quintile (Child q1) as adults.
 - Children born to parents with income in the highest income quintile (Par q5) of the national income distribution (richest) have a 30.2 percent chance of remaining in the highest income quintile (Child q5) as adults.
- Children born to parents in the lowest quintile (poorest) are very unlikely to end up in the highest income quintile as adults; they have a 5.4 percent chance (Par q1, Child q5) chance of rising to the top.
- Children born to parents in the highest quintile (richest) are very unlikely to end up in the lowest income quintile as adults; they have a 12.1 percent chance of falling to the bottom (Par q5, Child q1).

What are the chances a child raised in a given quintile of the income distribution will move to another quintile as an adult in the Roanoke Rapids commuting zone?

College: Halifax Community College

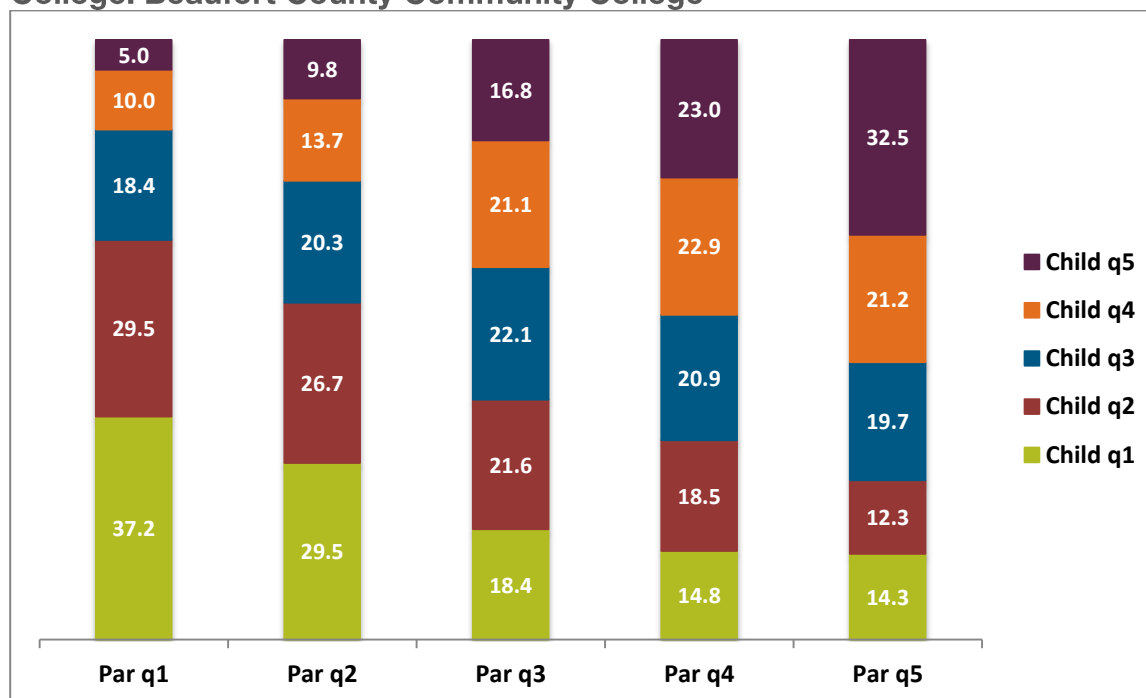


Source: *The Equality of Opportunity Project, Income Quintile to Quintile Transitions, 2014*

- Children born to parents with the very highest and very lowest incomes are likely to remain in the same quintile in adulthood.
 - Children born to parents with income in the lowest quintile (Par q1) of the national income distribution (poorest) have a 39.5 percent chance of remaining in that income quintile (Child q1) as adults.
 - Children born to parents with income in the highest income quintile (Par q5) of the national income distribution (richest) have a 35.9 percent chance of remaining in the highest income quintile (Child q5) as adults.
- Children born to parents in the lowest quintile (poorest) are very unlikely to end up in the highest income quintile as adults; they have a 3.3 percent chance (Par q1, Child q5) chance of rising to the top.
- Children born to parents in the highest quintile (richest) are very unlikely to end up in the lowest income quintile as adults; they have an 8.2 percent chance of falling to the bottom (Par q5, Child q1).

What are the chances a child raised in a given quintile of the income distribution will move to another quintile as an adult in the Washington commuting zone?

College: Beaufort County Community College

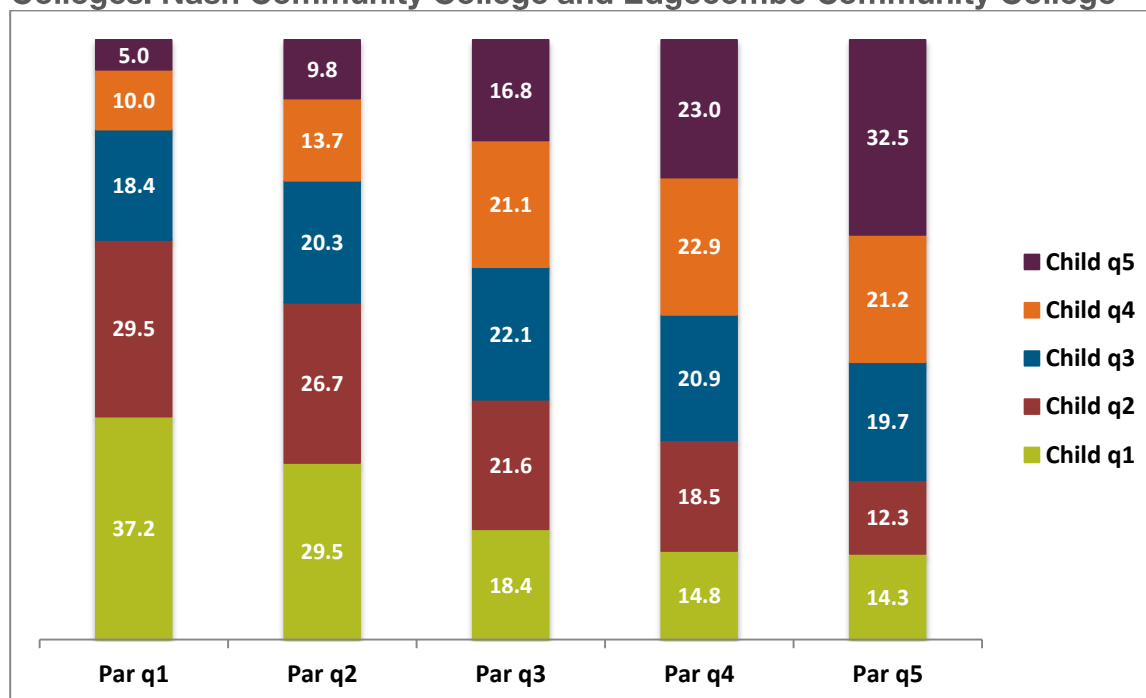


Source: *The Equality of Opportunity Project, Income Quintile to Quintile Transitions, 2014*

- Children born to parents with the very highest and very lowest incomes are likely to remain in the same quintile in adulthood.
 - Children born to parents with income in the lowest quintile (Par q1) of the national income distribution (poorest) have a 37.2 percent chance of remaining in that income quintile (Child q1) as adults.
 - Children born to parents with income in the highest income quintile (Par q5) of the national income distribution (richest) have a 32.5 percent chance of remaining in the highest income quintile (Child q5) as adults.
- Children born to parents in the lowest quintile (poorest) are very unlikely to end up in the highest income quintile as adults; they have a 5.0 percent chance (Par q1, Child q5) chance of rising to the top.
- Children born to parents in the highest quintile (richest) are very unlikely to end up in the lowest income quintile as adults; they have a 14.3 percent chance of falling to the bottom (Par q5, Child q1).

What are the chances a child raised in a given quintile of the income distribution will move to another quintile as an adult in the Wilson commuting zone?

Colleges: Nash Community College and Edgecombe Community College



Source: *The Equality of Opportunity Project, Income Quintile to Quintile Transitions, 2014*

- Children born to parents with the very highest and very lowest incomes are likely to remain in the same quintile in adulthood.
 - Children born to parents with income in the lowest quintile (Par q1) of the national income distribution (poorest) have a 39.8 percent chance of remaining in that income quintile (Child q1) as adults.
 - Children born to parents with income in the highest income quintile (Par q5) of the national income distribution (richest) have a 31.2 percent chance of remaining in the highest income quintile (Child q5) as adults.
- Children born to parents in the lowest quintile (poorest) are very unlikely to end up in the highest income quintile as adults; they have a 3.2 percent chance (Par q1, Child q5) chance of rising to the top.
- Children born to parents in the highest quintile (richest) are very unlikely to end up in the lowest income quintile as adults; they have a 10.7 percent chance of falling to the bottom (Par q5, Child q1).