

Center for Studying Disability Policy

What is the relationship between deprivation and child SSI participation?

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23rd Annual Meeting of the Retirement and Disability Research Consortium

August 5, 2021

Disclaimer

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant from the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) funded as part of the Retirement and Disability Consortium. The opinions and conclusions expressed are solely those of the author(s) and do not represent the opinions or policy of SSA or any agency of the Federal Government. Neither the United States Government nor any agency thereof, nor any of their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of the contents of this report. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation or favoring by the United States Government or any agency thereof.

Preview of findings

- / On average, high correlation between deprivation and child SSI participation before the pandemic**
- / Masks substantial variation in this relationship**
- / Local areas with high deprivation but low SSI participation offer opportunity for outreach**

Goals of this paper

- / Document geographic variation in the relationship between deprivation and child SSI participation**
- / Explore potential drivers that can explain this mismatch**
- / Assess how this relationship affects recent program dynamics during the pandemic**
 - Primary analyses are all conducted before the pandemic
 - There was room for improvement and outreach even before the pandemic, and declines may have exacerbated existing differences

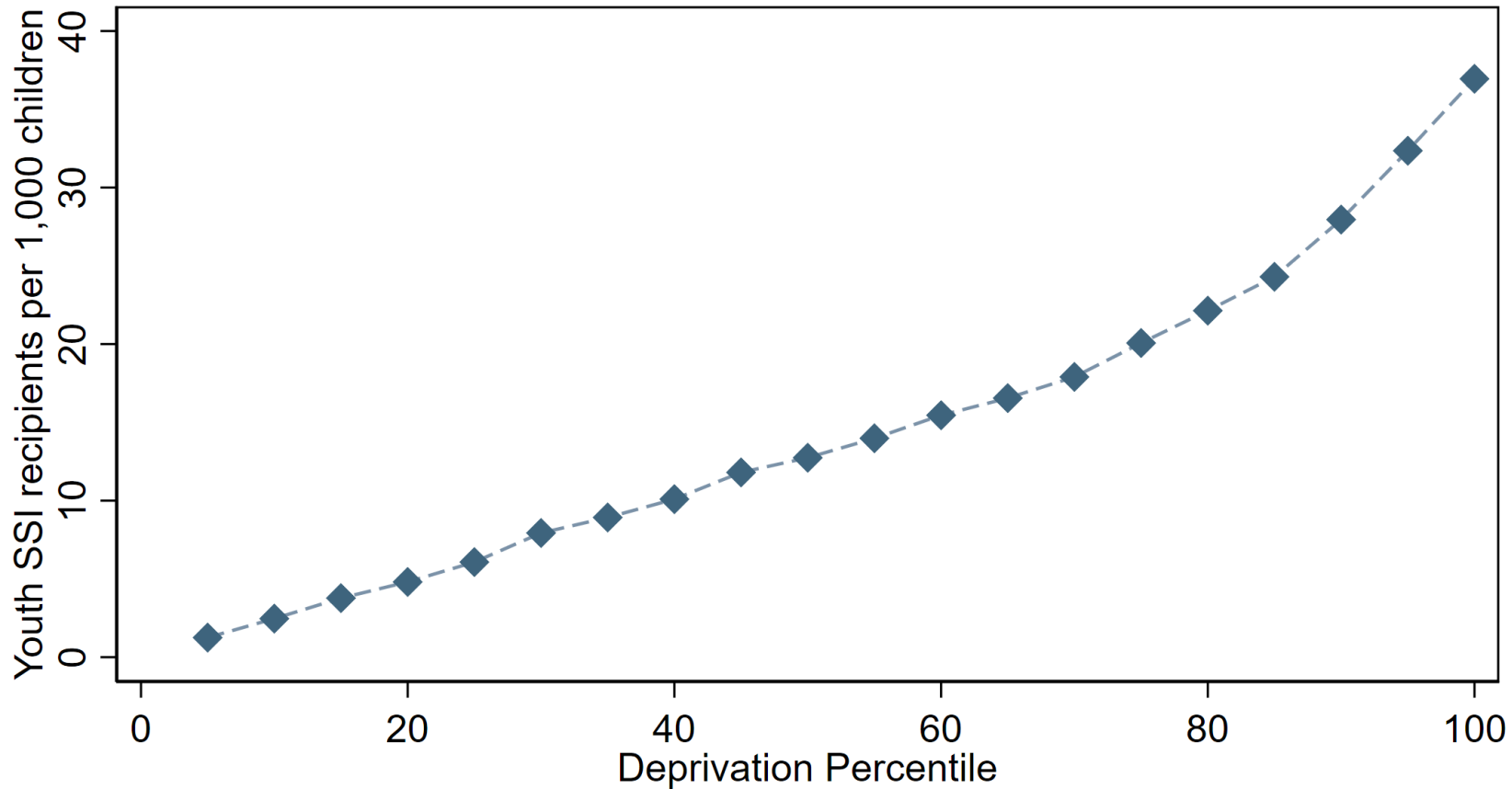
SSI is a key component of the safety net

- / For youth with disabilities, eligibility includes limited income and assets for the family**
 - Part of parents' income is deemed to child
- / Offers cash benefits and health insurance coverage to families of eligible youth**
- / For families that have low-income, benefits can help free up time to help manage the additional needs of their child**

Economic deprivation

- / Income is often not sufficient to fully capture a family's needs**
- / We use a measure of economic deprivation developed by Singh (2003) and Kind et al. (2014)**
- / Deprivation reflects income and poverty, as well as employment, education, housing, and other factors**
- / Given the means test, assumed correlation between deprivation and SSI participation**

On average, high correlation between deprivation and child SSI participation

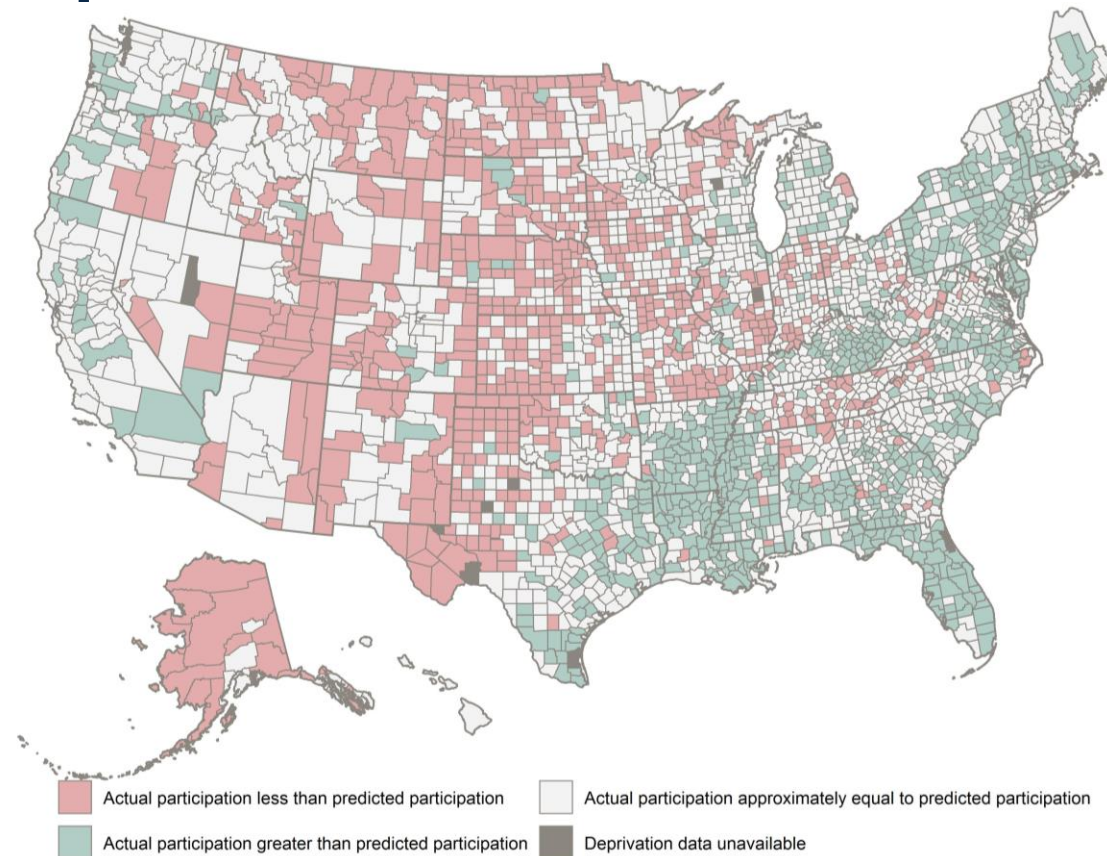


Note: Characterizes census tracts by their level of deprivation and the number of youth SSI recipients per 1,000 people under age 18 in that tract.

Deviation between predicted and actual SSI participation

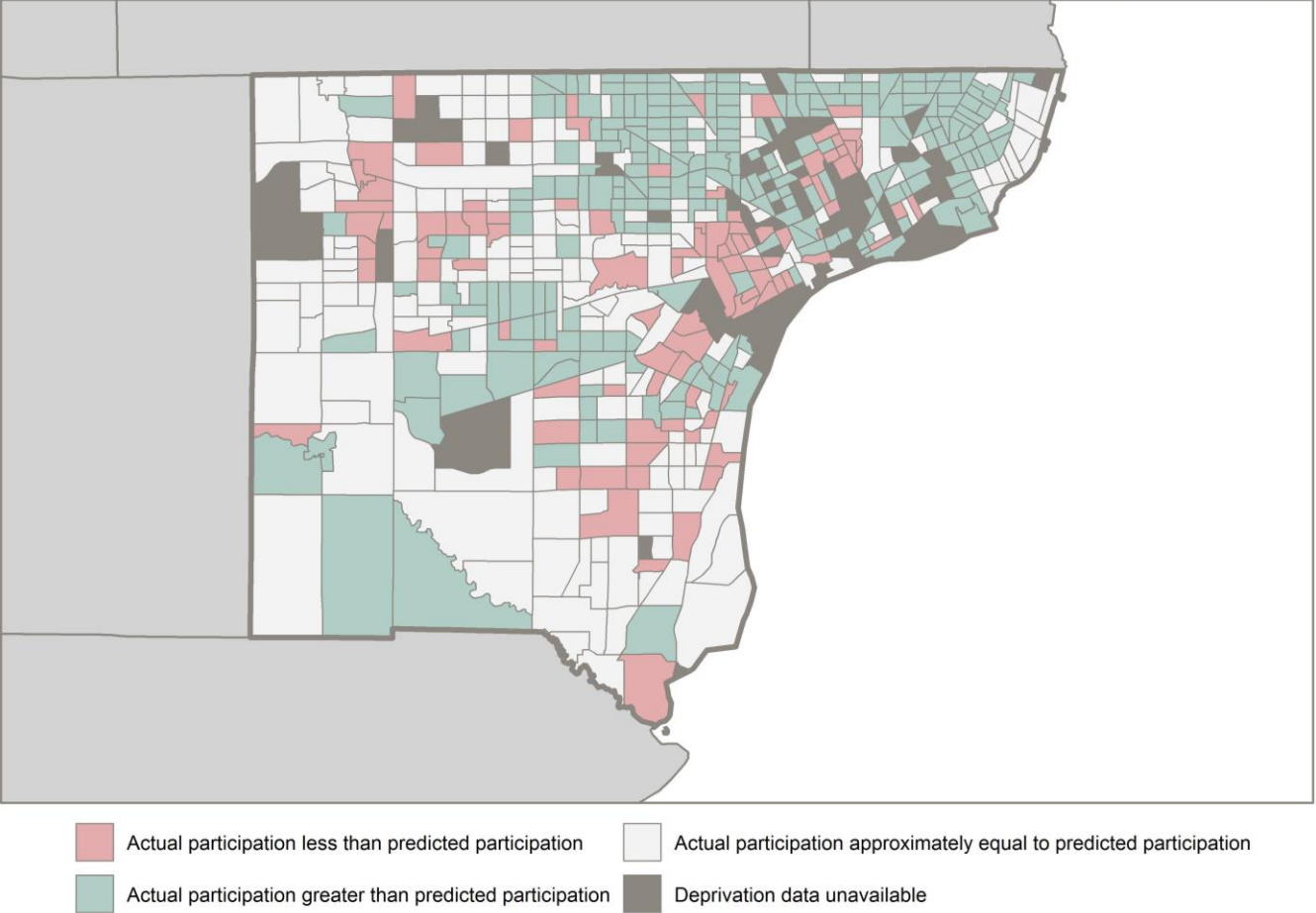
- / **Estimate a simple linear regression between deprivation and child SSI participation using all 74,000 Census tracts**
- / **Predict child SSI participation based on deprivation**
- / **Calculate “deviation” as the difference between the actual and predicted**
 - Negative values = actual participation less than predicted participation

Geographic variation in relationship between deprivation and child SSI



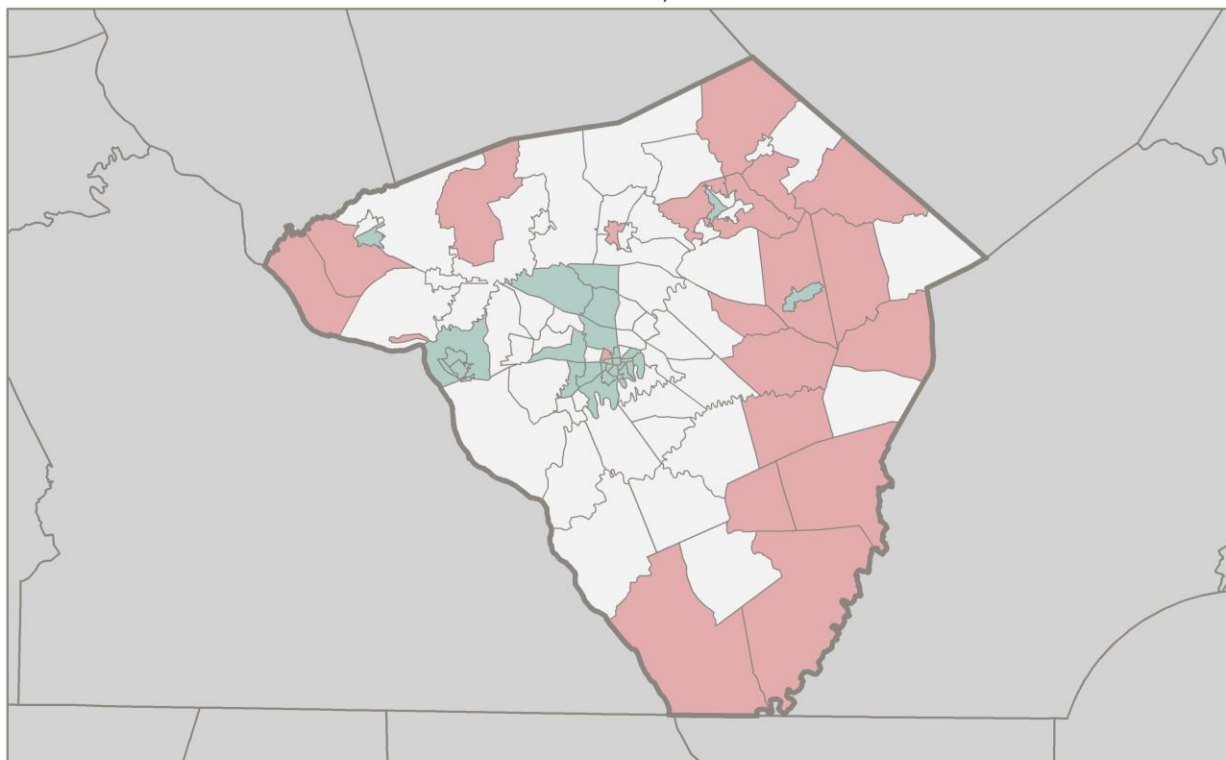
Note: Uses Social Security Administrative data on youth SSI participation in 2019. Predicted participation is generated from a regression of actual participation on economic deprivation, which is calculated from American Community Survey 5-year statistics from 2015-2019.

Geographic zoom-in: Detroit, MI



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Geographic zoom-in: Lancaster, PA



- Actual participation less than predicted participation
- Actual participation approximately equal to predicted participation
- Actual participation greater than predicted participation

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Local factors correlated with deviation

Characteristic	Relationship with deviation	Relative magnitude, tract (standardized coefficient)	Relative magnitude, county (standardized coefficient)
Percentage of population that is non-White	+	0.332	0.538
Percentage of population with a disability	+	0.215	0.409
Population density	+	0.009	0.148
Economic deprivation	-	-0.205	-0.057
Social capital	+	n.a.	0.139
Region (omitted: Midwest)			
Northeast	+	0.161	0.172
South	+	0.064	0.072
West	-	-0.165	-0.299

Youth SSI applications during the pandemic

- / **Youth SSI applications declined by 17 percent in 2020**

- Lots of reasons for potential reduction, plans to study in a future paper

- / **Counties with higher deprivation had slightly larger declines in SSI applications**

- / **Counties with lower “deviation” saw less declines in SSI applications in 2020**

- Areas that already had low applications cannot go lower

Conclusions

- / Deprivation is related to youth SSI participation, yet some local areas with high deprivation have low SSI**
 - Factors like race, disability prevalence, social capital are related to mismatch
- / Deviation measures could be an effective tool for policymakers to consider in conducting outreach**
 - Census tract analysis allows potential to precisely target areas