

Exploring the Link Between Socioeconomic Factors and Parental Mortality

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This presentation is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. Any views expressed on statistical, methodological, or technical issues are those of the author and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.

Motivation:

- Parents often continue supporting their adult children after they have left the home
 - Monetary transfers (Semyonov and Lewin-Epstein 2001)
 - Assistance with childcare (Goodfellow and Lavery 2003)
 - Emotional support (Cooney and Uhlenberg 1992, Rossi and Rossi 1990)

Motivation:

- Ramifications of the loss of a parent
 - Increases in psychological distress and alcohol consumption, as well as declines in overall physical health (Umberson and Chen 1994)

Research Questions

- What percentage of people in the U.S. have lost one or both parents?
- Are individuals more likely to lose their mother first, or their father?
- What characteristics are linked to the percentage of adults that have lost a parent by a given age?
- How do these socioeconomic factors interact with each other?

Existing Parental Mortality Research

- National Survey of Families and Households: 1987 to 1993 (e.g. Marks et al. 2007)
 - 13,000 adults
 - Research focused primarily on emotional effects of parental loss
- Research in Scandinavian Countries (Martikainen 2009, Palme and Sandgren 2008)

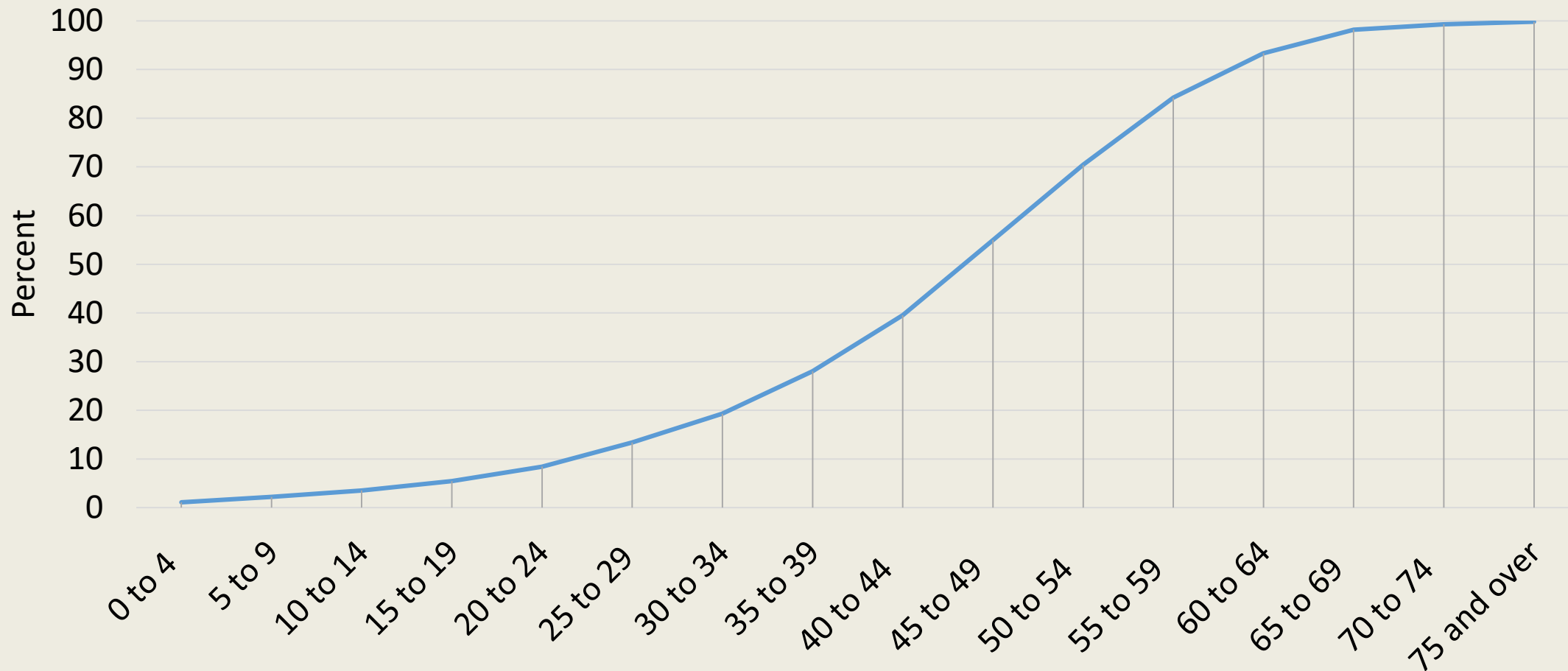
About the SIPP

- Nationally representative panel survey administered by the U.S. Census Bureau
- 2014 panel followed households for four years (initial sample of roughly 30,000 households)
- Variety of topics relating to economic well-being, family dynamics, education, and wealth on an annual basis

About the SIPP

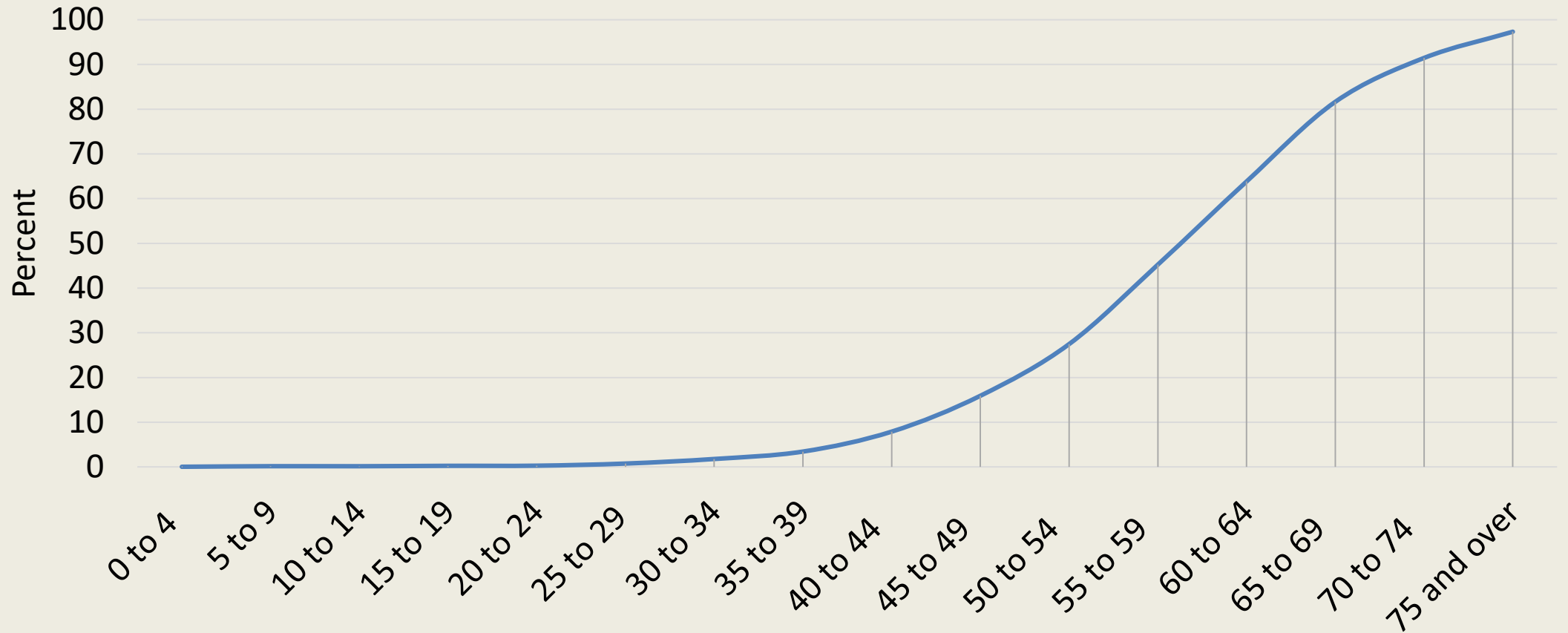
- 2014 panel included a series of questions regarding parental mortality for the first time
- This research relies on Wave 1 data from the 2014 SIPP
 - Month 12
 - Only asks about biological parents

Percent of Persons with *One or Both* Deceased Biological Parents by Age of Child



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

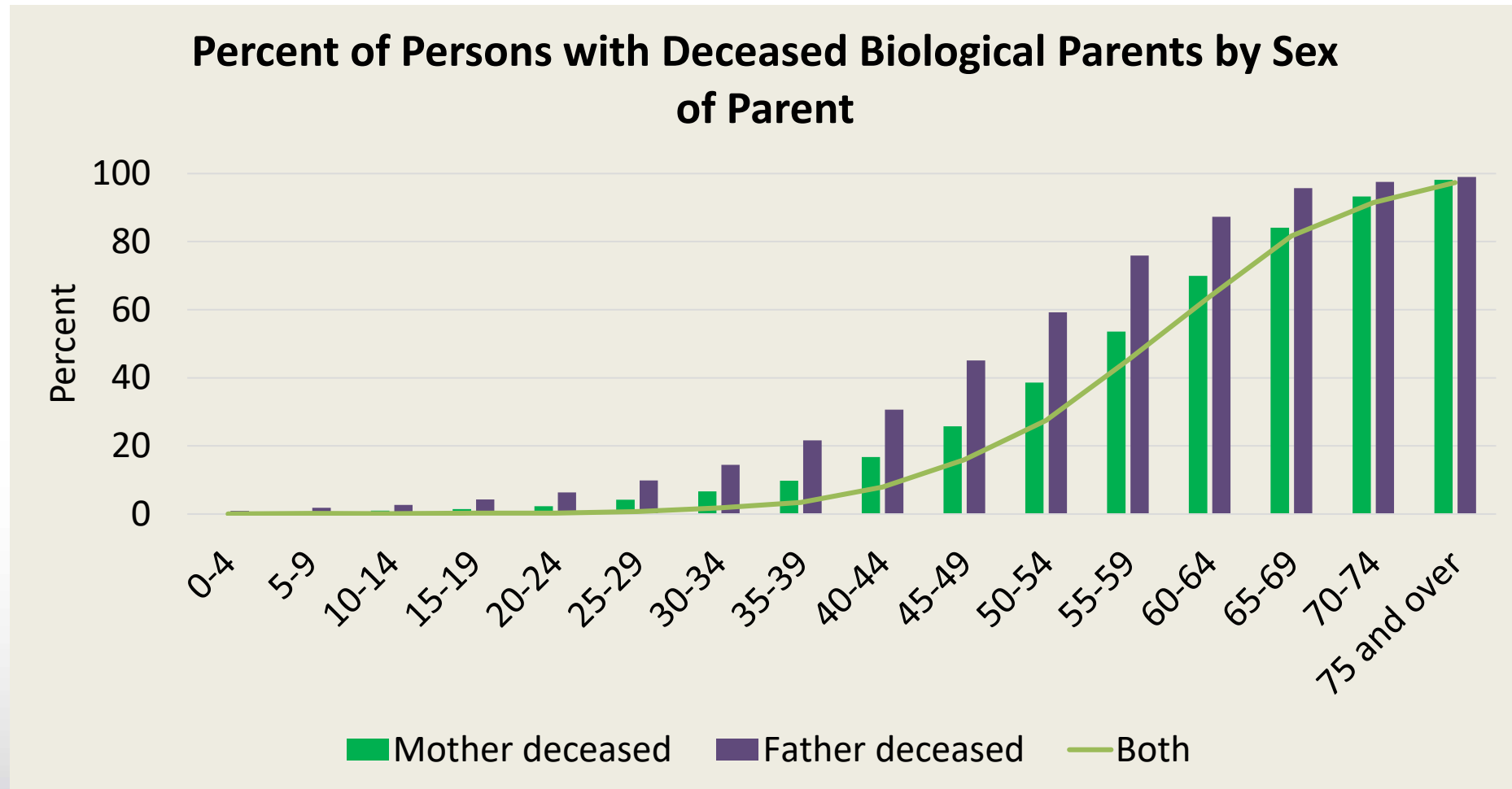
Percent of Persons with *Two* Deceased Biological Parents by Age of Child



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

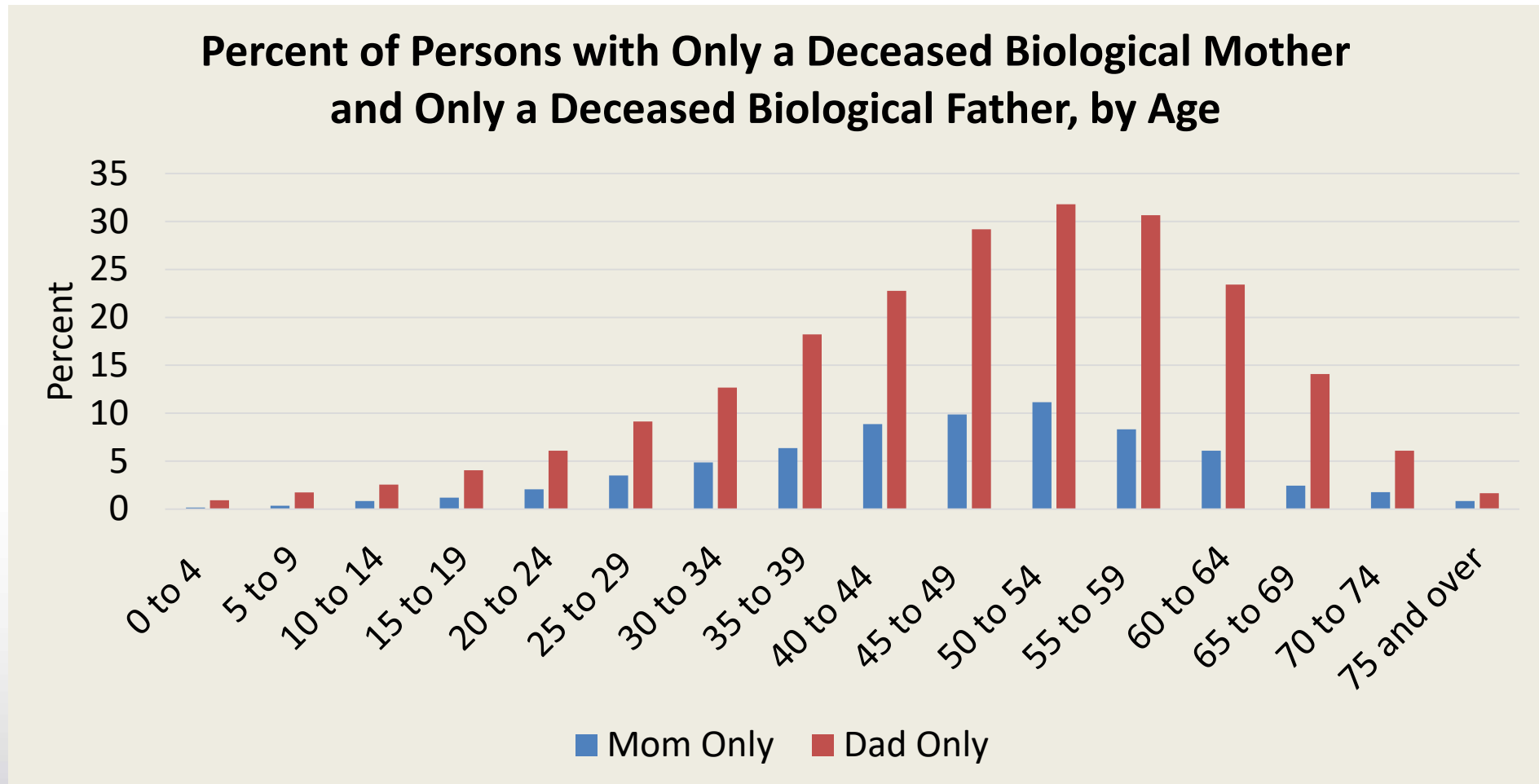
**Do people tend to lose their
mother or father first?**

On average, paternal death precedes maternal death



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

On average, paternal death precedes maternal death

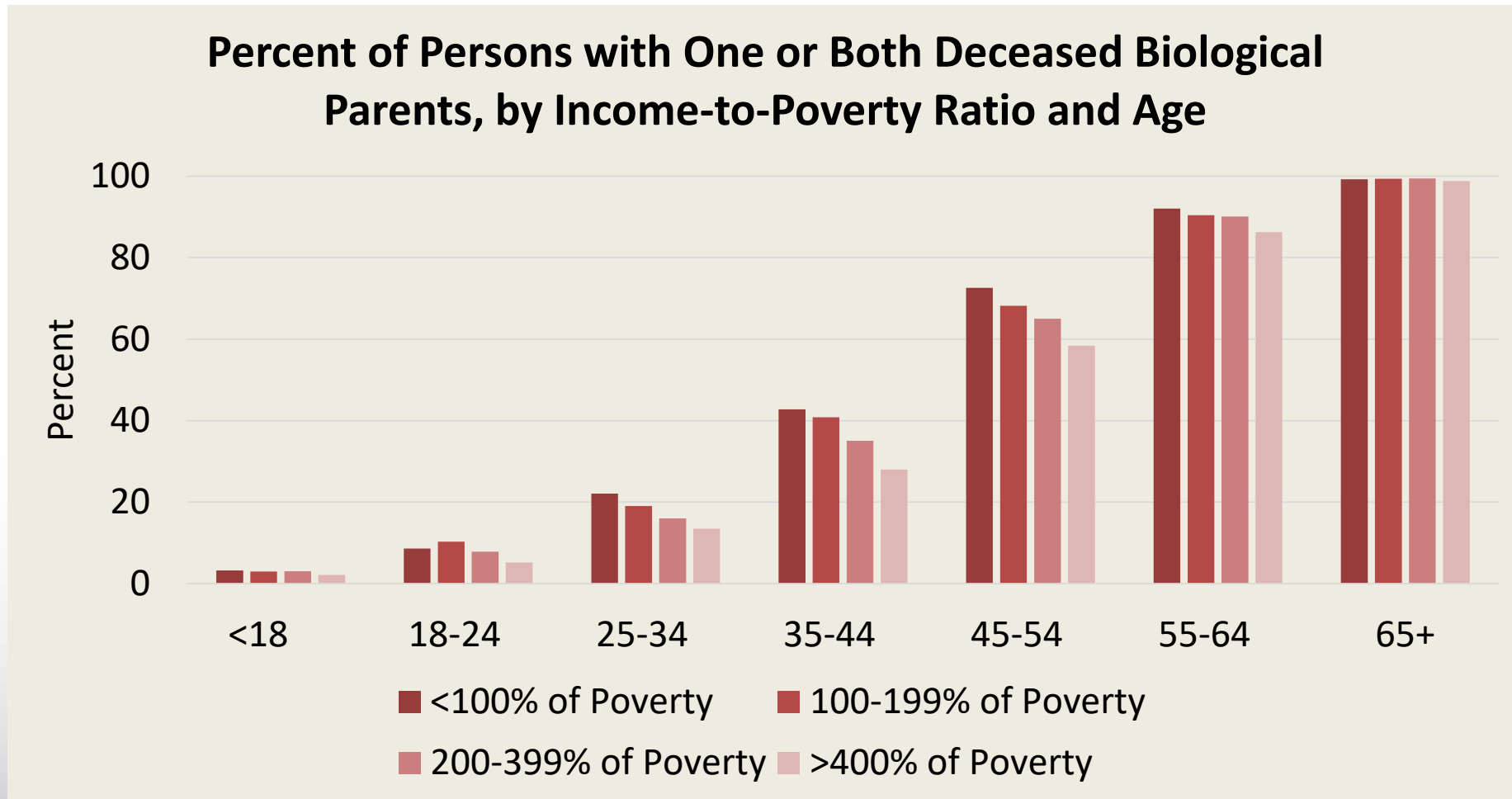


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

Linkages between Socioeconomic Factors and Parental Mortality

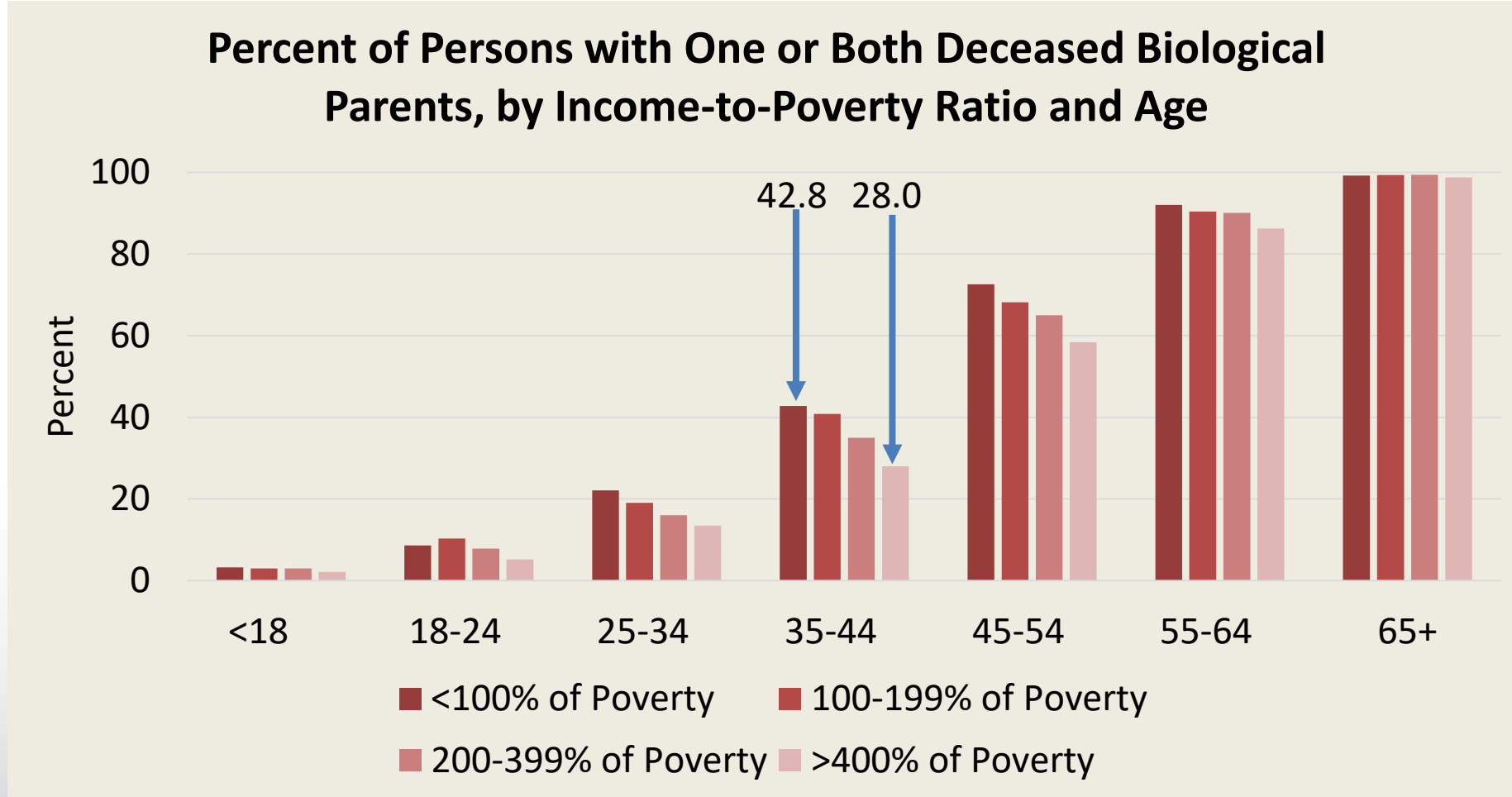
How is poverty linked to parental mortality?

Those in poverty tend to experience parental death earlier in life than those at higher levels of relative income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

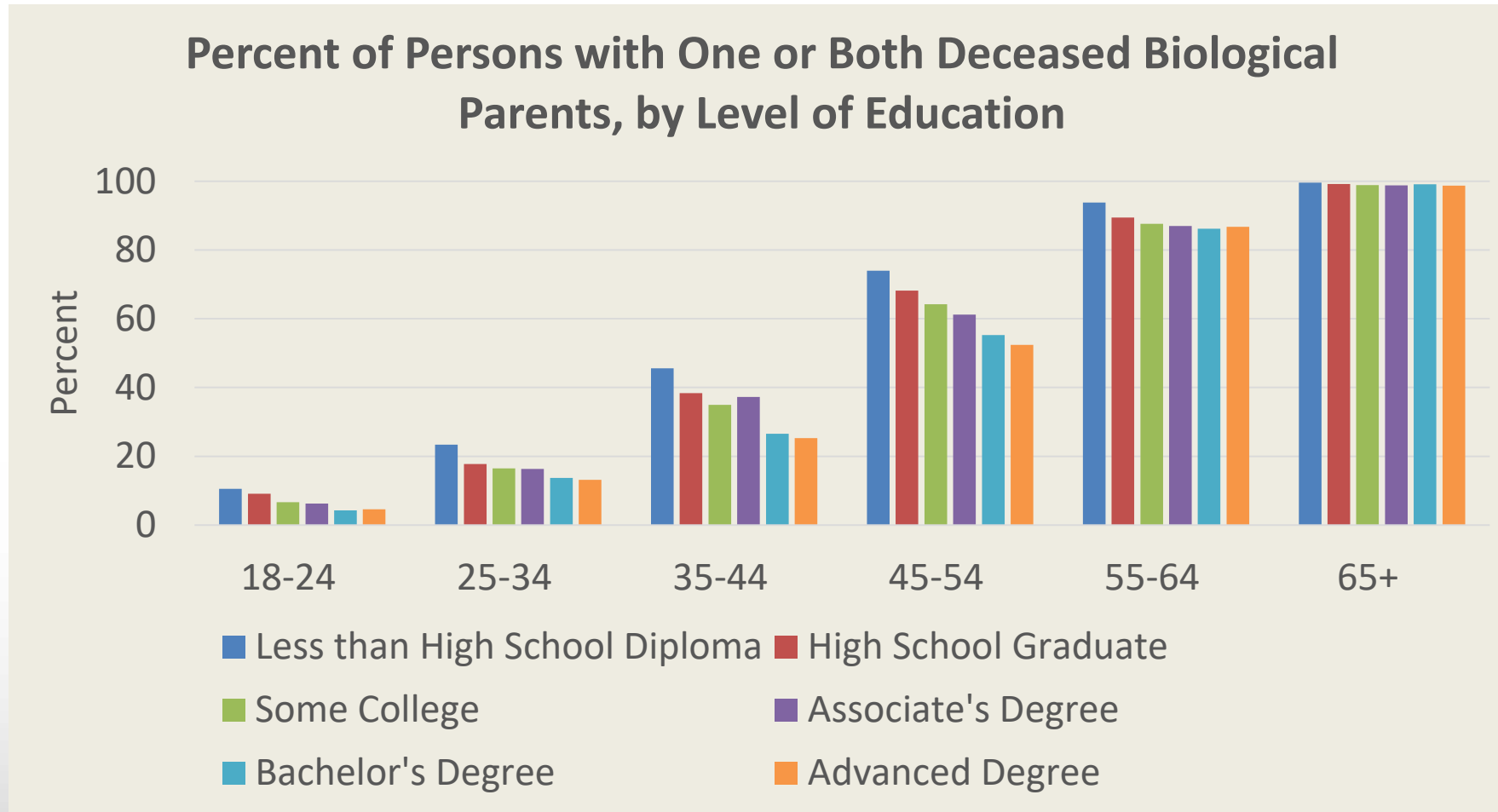
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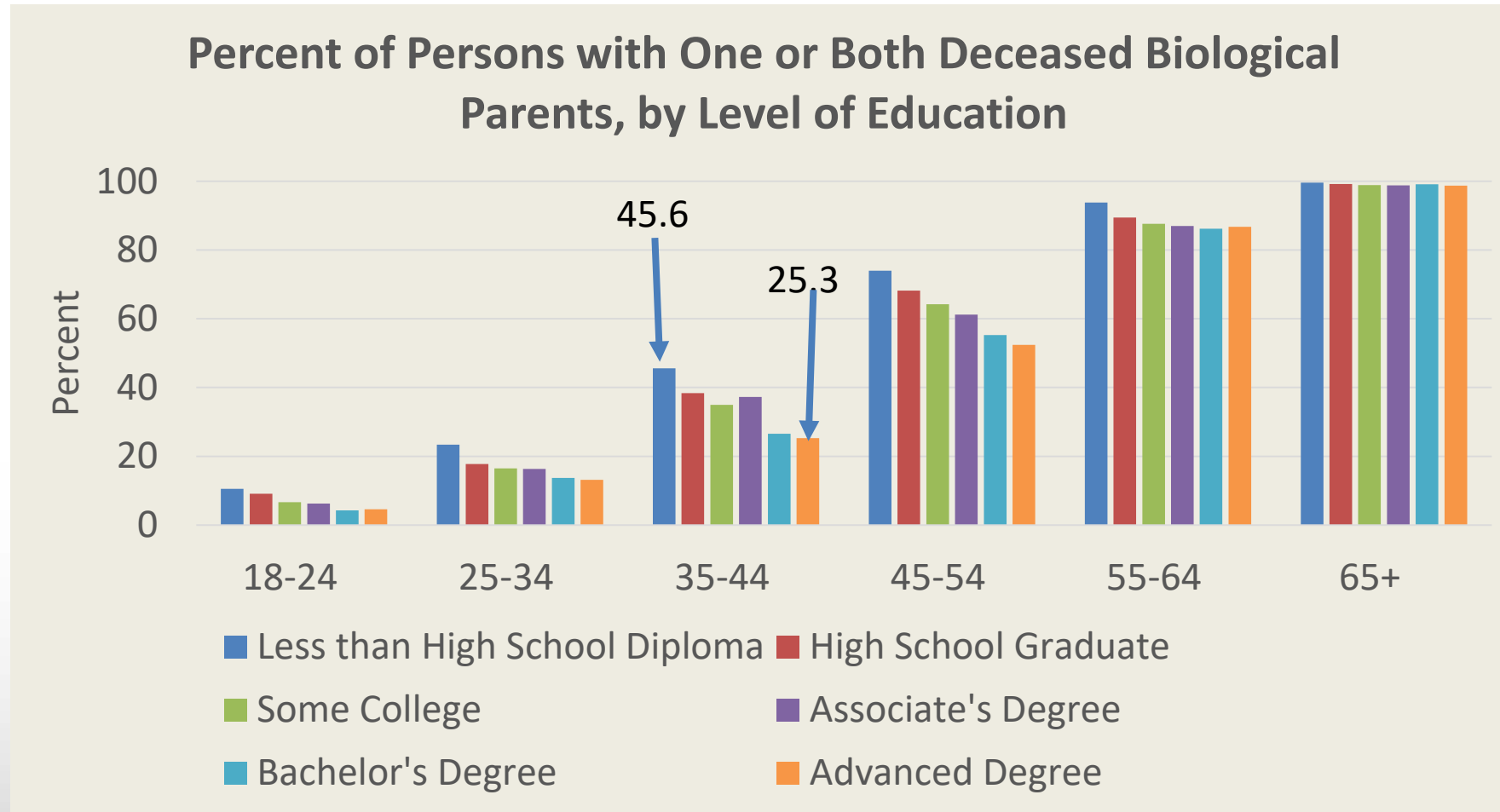
How is educational attainment linked to parental mortality?

Those at lower levels of educational attainment tend to experience parental death earlier in life



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

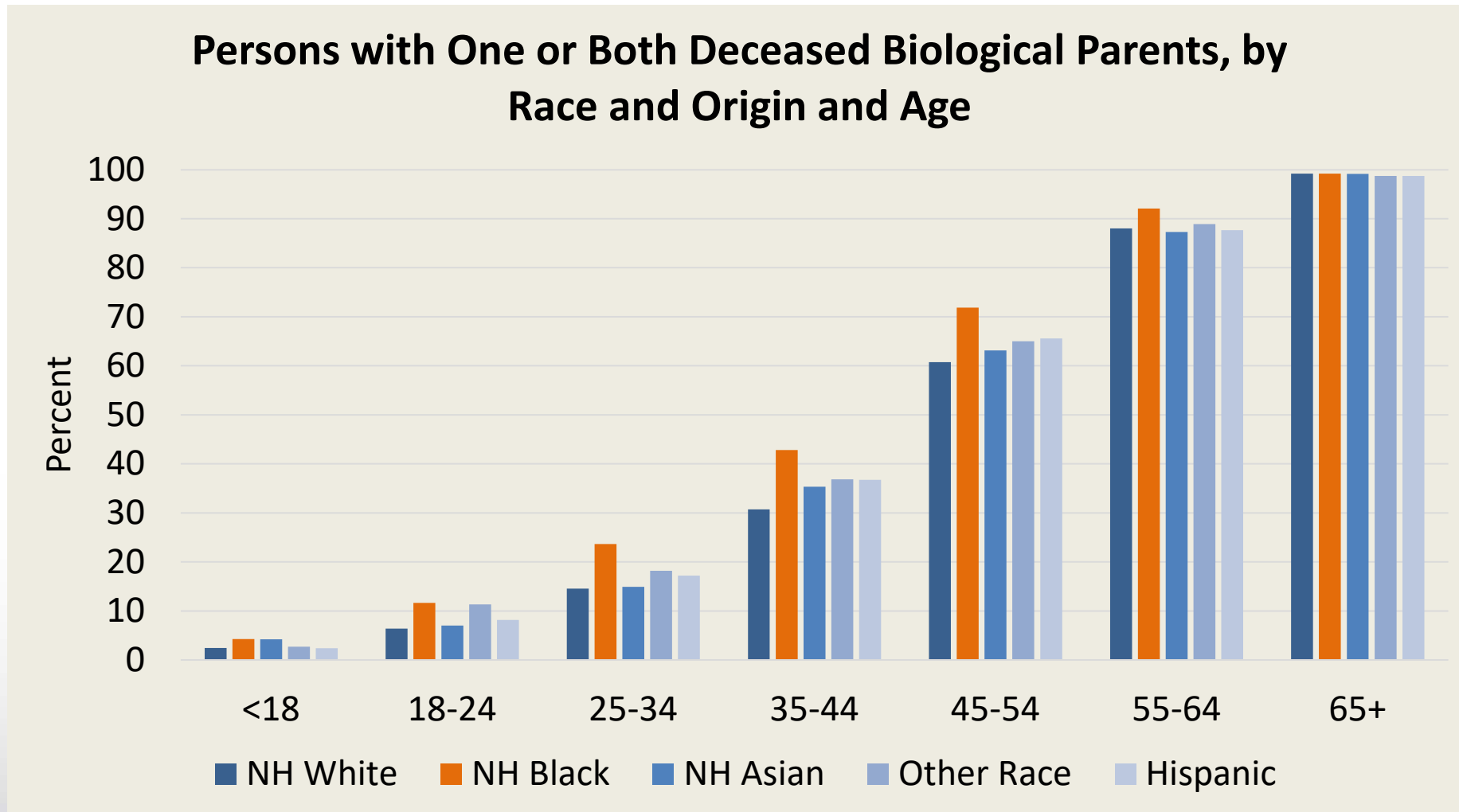
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

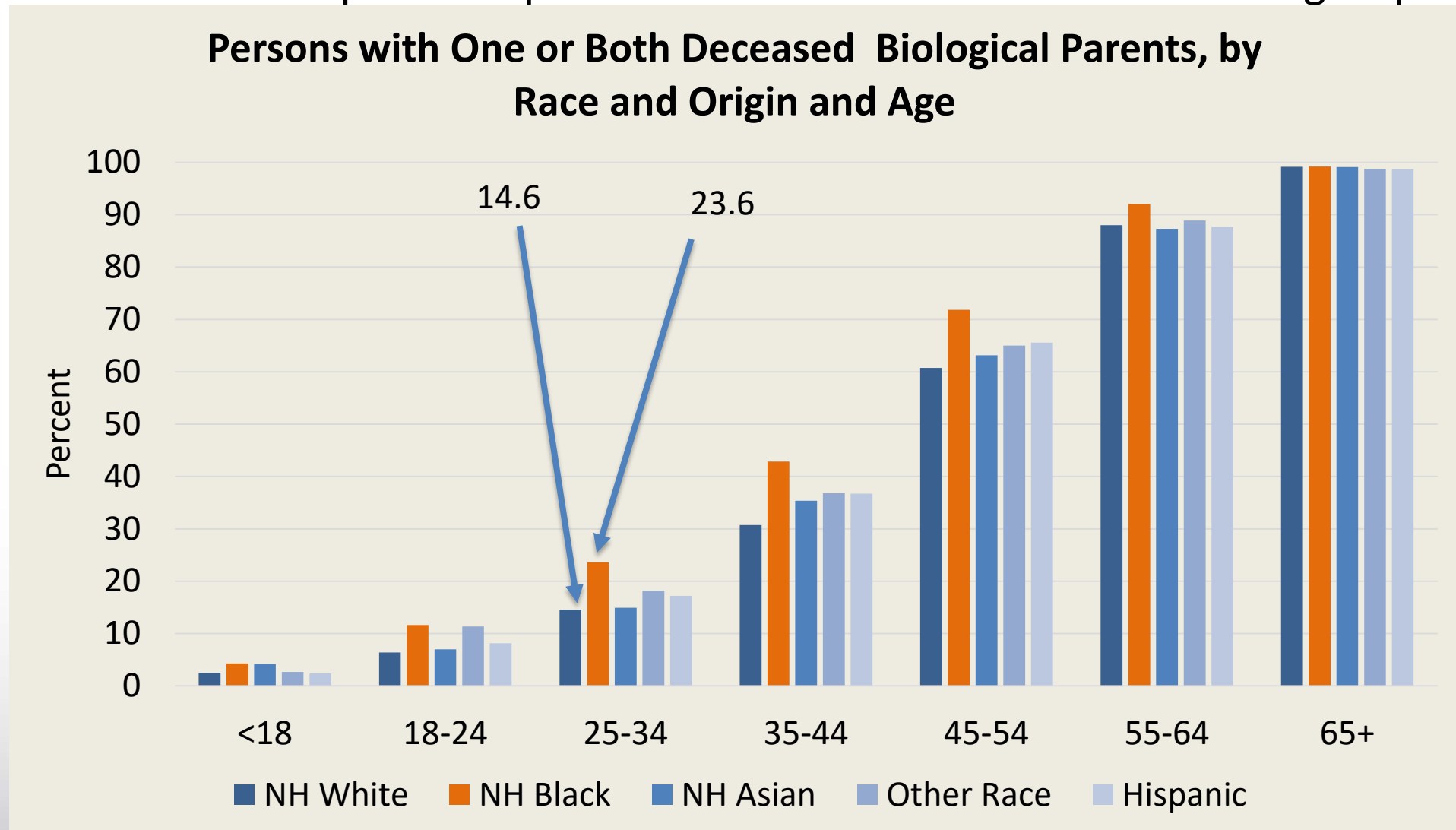
How are race and origin linked to parental mortality?

Blacks tend to experience parental death earlier in life than other groups



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

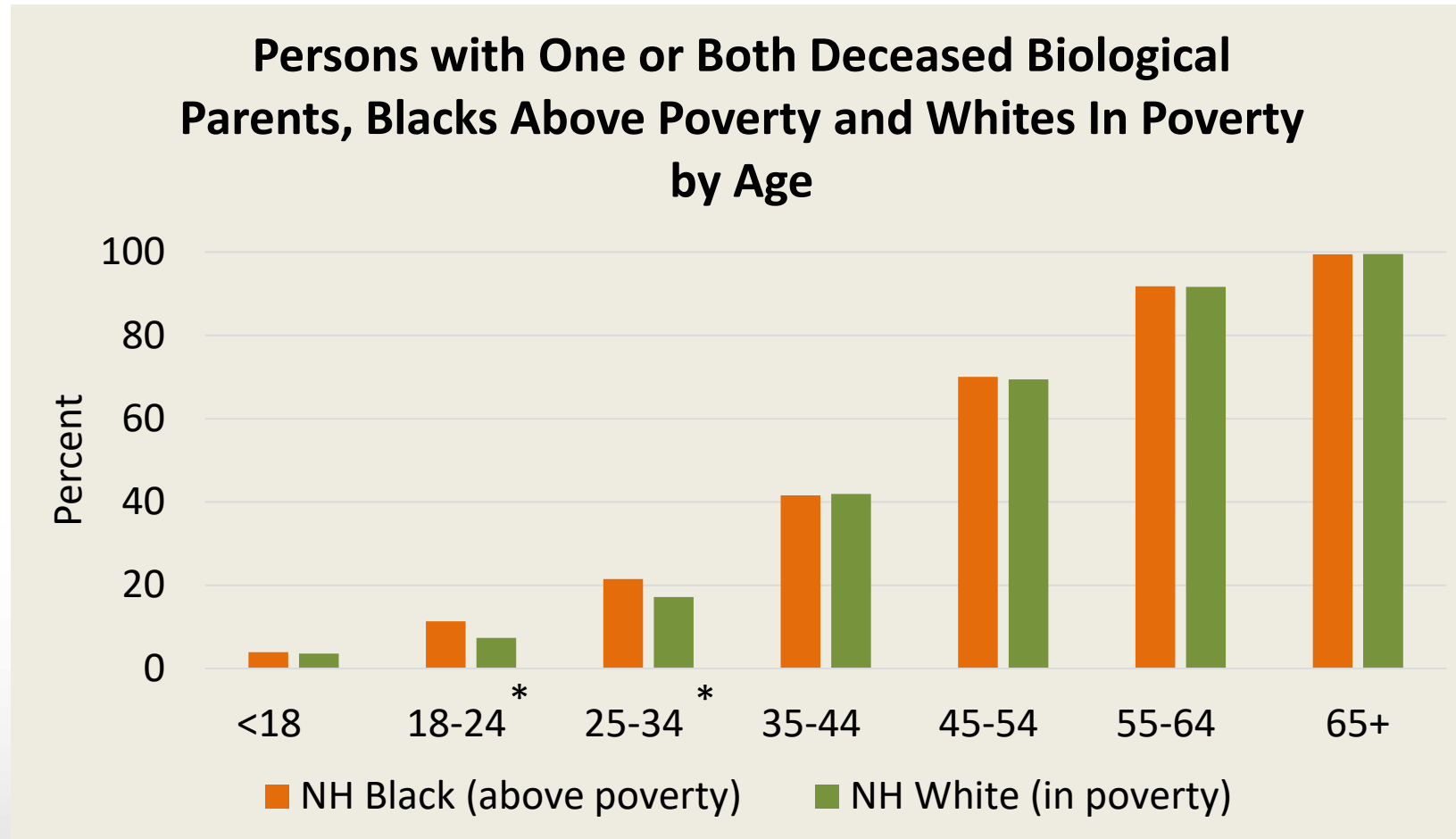
Blacks tend to experience parental death earlier in life than other groups



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

How do race and poverty intersect?

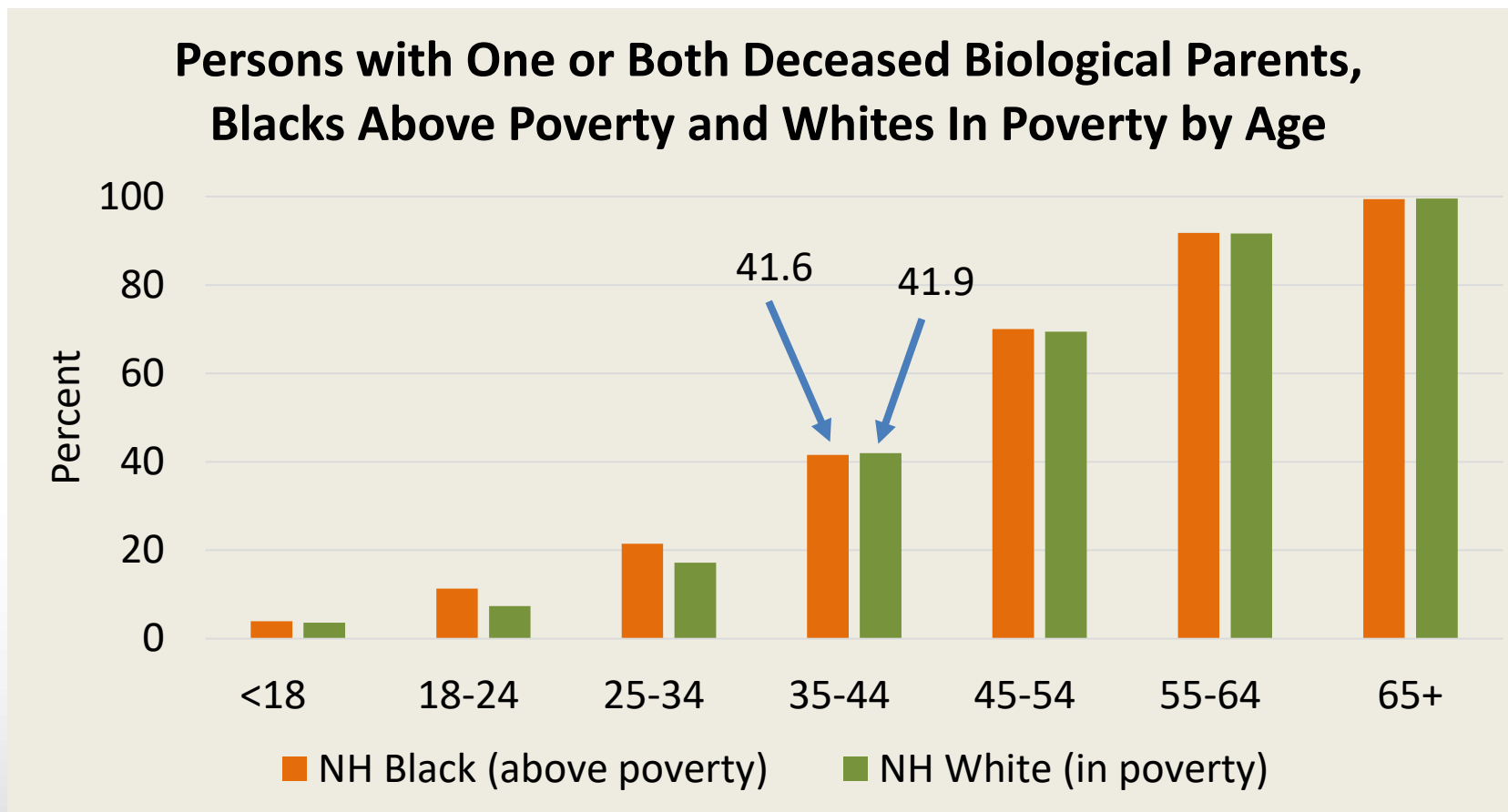
Blacks don't tend to lose their parents later in life than Whites who are in poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

* Estimates for blacks above poverty are only higher than estimates for whites in poverty for these age groups

Blacks don't tend to lose their parents later in life than Whites who are in poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 panel, Wave 1.

Conclusion

- New SIPP data provide nationally representative estimates of parental mortality by age
- The age pattern of parental mortality varies according to socioeconomic characteristics such as poverty, race, and educational attainment
- Future research: Are adults more likely to live with a parent when only one parent is still alive?

Thank you!

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