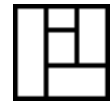
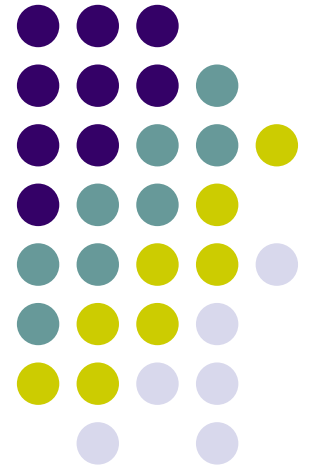


Housing Policy Tools for Combating Concentrated Poverty

Margery Austin Turner



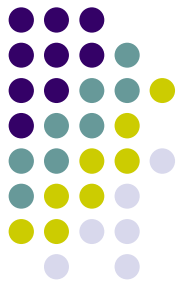
The Urban Institute





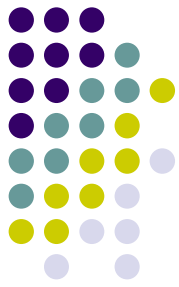
Neighborhoods Matter

- Quality of local services
- Social norms and controls
- Peer influences
- Social networks
- Exposure to crime and violence
- Physical isolation



Evidence of Effects

- Infants and young children
 - Not a lot of research so far
- Adolescents
 - Many – but not all – studies find bad effects of living in high-poverty
- Adults
 - Tentative evidence of bad effects on employment and health



Caveats

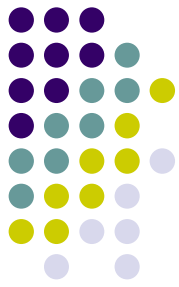
- Direction of causality
 - Neighborhood “choice”
- Importance of individual and family influences
 - Resiliency and vulnerability

Concentrated Poverty Isn't “Natural”



- Racial discrimination and segregation
 - Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid*
- Role of public policy
 - Public housing
 - FHA mortgage insurance
 - Local “exclusionary” zoning
- Poor whites are widely dispersed

Complimentary Housing Strategies



- Replace obsolete/substandard housing with high-quality, mixed-income development
 - HOPE VI
- Help low-income families move to lower-poverty neighborhoods
 - Housing vouchers
 - Gautreaux and MTO experiments

Key Lessons: Assisted Housing Mobility



- Feasibility
 - Families volunteer & succeed in relocating
- Big gains in neighborhood quality
 - Safety
- Improved physical and mental health
 - Women and girls but not boys
- Mixed results for education and employment
 - Low-poverty doesn't guarantee good schools or job proximity

Challenges for the Next Generation of Policy



- Who's ready to move?
- What makes a neighborhood a good destination?
- Staying there, not just getting there
- Affordable rentals in opportunity neighborhoods