Immigrant Children: Formidable Promise, Uncertain Futures

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Foreign-Born as % of Total and % of Children with Foreign-Born Parents, 1900 – 2010 (with projections to 2050)

- 28.9% (1900)
- 7.1% (1960)
- 24.6% (2008)
- 34.1% (2050)
- 14.8% (1910)
- 5.1% (1970)
- 13.6% (2008)
- 19.0% (2050)
What’s New?

- Population Aging
- Geographic Dispersal
- Rapid Population Diversification
- High Levels of Inequality
- Fiscal Retrenchment
Risks and Opportunities

- Educational underachievement
  - Invest in early education for scholastic success and global competitiveness
- Language diversity
  - Mastery of English in early grades
- Obesity and physical wellbeing
  - Expand health insurance coverage for youth
English Mastery for Educational Success

- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- Humanities

English Proficiency → Academic Achievement → English Mastery
Sensitive Period for Second Language Acquisition

Source: Knudsen, E. et. al. 2006. “Economic, Neurobiological, and Behavioral Perspectives on Building America’s Future Workforce.” PNAS
Challenges for Youth Policy in an Aging Society

- Language of Investments vs. Expenditures
  - Education and Health Care $\rightarrow$ human capital

- Federal and State Coffers
  - Funding structure favors elderly

- AARP for youth?

- Assume leadership in English Language Instruction