

Coronavirus Hits Black & Hispanic Children

By Shlomo Maital



“It is what it is”. That statement by President Trump, about America’s massive death toll from COVID-19, [160,000 persons so far and rising by 1,000 or more a day, every day since April 1] raised the blood pressure of a lot of people. So did his blatantly false statement that children are “totally immune”, modified to “virtually immune”.

But what was truly upsetting was not Trump’s lies, but medical facts, reported in the journal Pediatrics, and described in a CNN report. *Black children, Hispanic children, poor children – all suffer far far more from the virus than others.* The virus has swept over society like a tsunami, but it has hit hardest the racial and income groups who always get hit hardest by everything. It is unfair, immoral, unacceptable. Black lives matter. Hispanic lives matter. Children’s lives matter. ALL lives matter. And no, it is NOT what it is. What it is, is – White House officials and the President are tested daily, and get the results within hours. For the rest of America – the wait can be many days. The inequality starts right at the very top.

Here is a summary of the report in Pediatrics:

- * Coronavirus infection rates in the United States are significantly higher among children of minority race and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, according to a new study
- * *The study examined 1,000 child patients tested between March 21 and April 28 in Washington DC. Only 7.3% of White children tested positive for coronavirus, in contrast to 30% of Black children and 46.4% of Hispanic children, the study found.*
- * Three times as many Black children reported known exposure to the virus as White children, the researchers reported.
- * The test site collected basic demographic information for all patients; the research team then used survey data to estimate family income based on home addresses.

Of the 1,000 people tested, 207 were positive for coronavirus. About 9.7% of those in the highest income quartile were infected, while 37.7% in the lowest quartile tested positive, the team found.

*** Of the patients tested, about one third were Black and about a quarter were Hispanic. The team found that the inequities existed even after they adjusted for age, sex and median family income.**

The data speak for themselves. Blacks, Hispanics, the poor, lower-income groups, all suffer disproportionately. Why? They have to go to jobs with little social distancing, just to survive, and they have far poorer medical care and far less access to quality care.

I hope we will NOT go back to the good old days. They weren't so good. A great many things need fixing, and the virus has swept away the topsoil and revealed all the rot beneath.