Preschool and School Readiness

Experiences of Children with Non-English-Speaking Parents

Jill Cannon

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Why Study Preschool for this Group?

- 20% of California children
- Most likely to be English learners in kindergarten
- Face school readiness gap concerns
- Little known about these children
  - Use of early care and education
  - Relationship to school readiness skills

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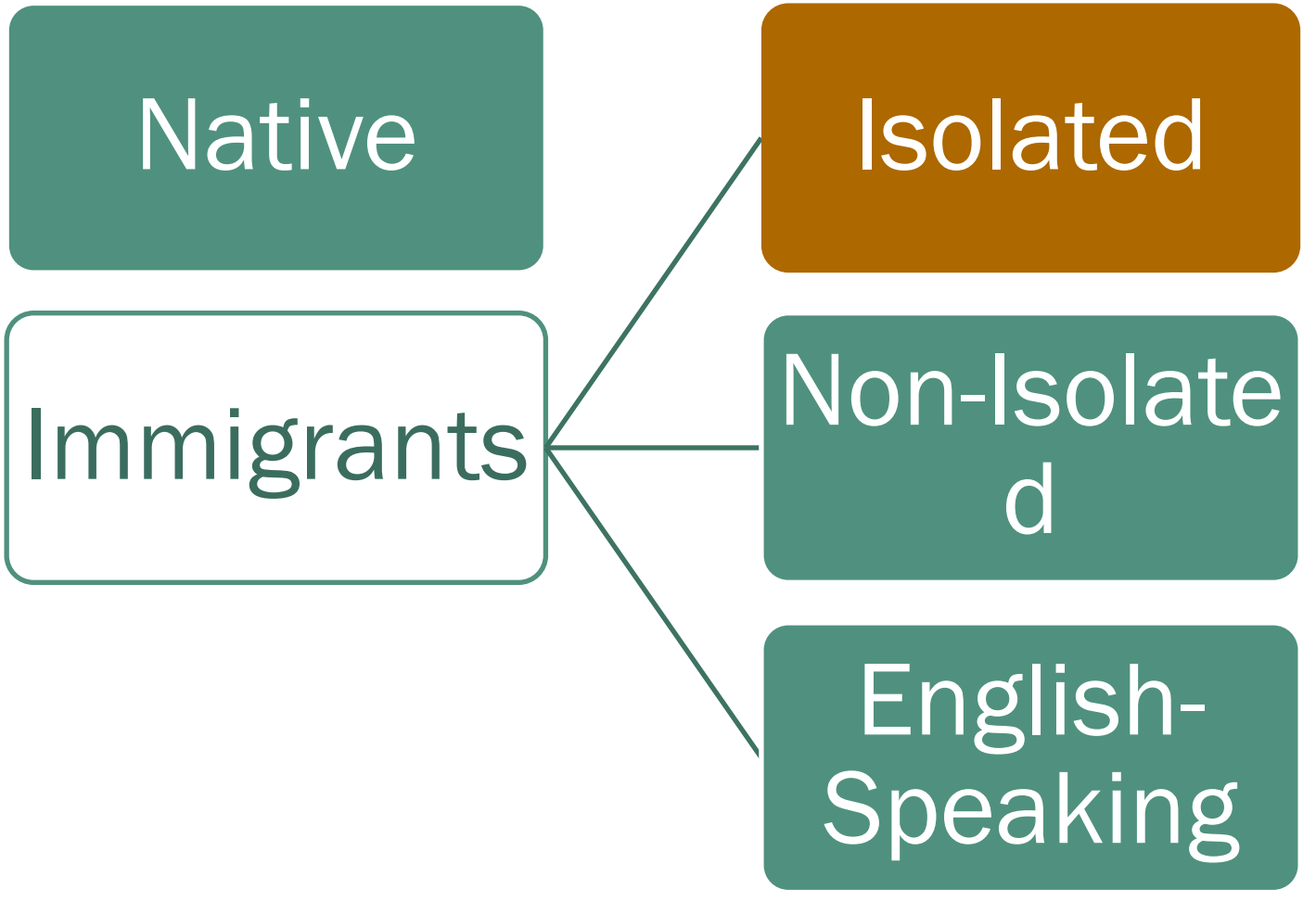
We Focus on Four Subgroups

Children categorized by parent nativity-language status



We Study Children in California and Nationwide

- RAND California Preschool Study
  - Representative of four-year-olds, 2007
- Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)
  - Nationally representative, children born 2001
  - Follows children into kindergarten

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This Study Addresses Four Major Issues

- Demographic characteristics
- Patterns of nonparental care
  - Are Isolated children more or less likely to use center-based care?
- Characteristics of center-based settings
- Associations between center-based care and improvements in early academic skills

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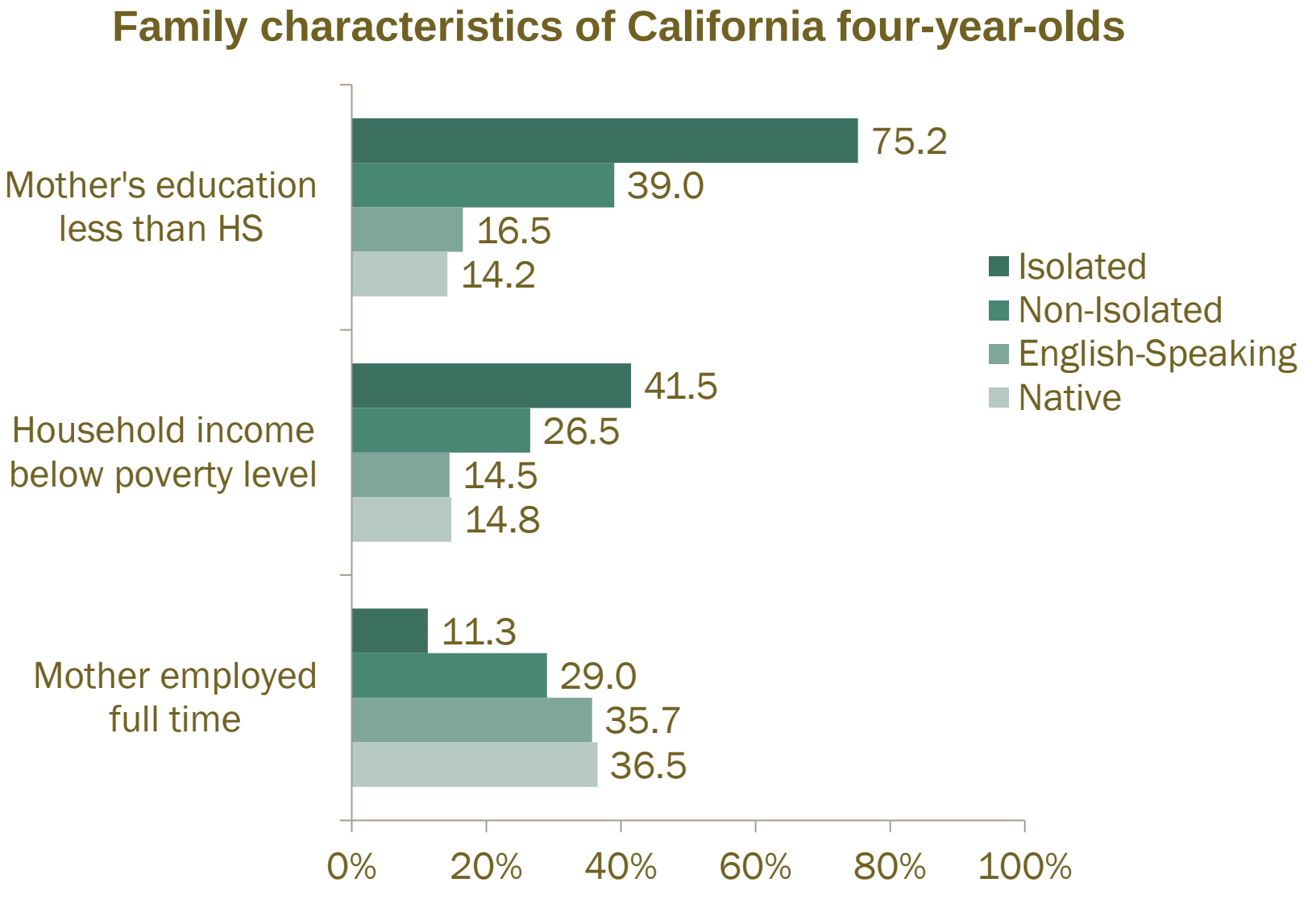
Outline

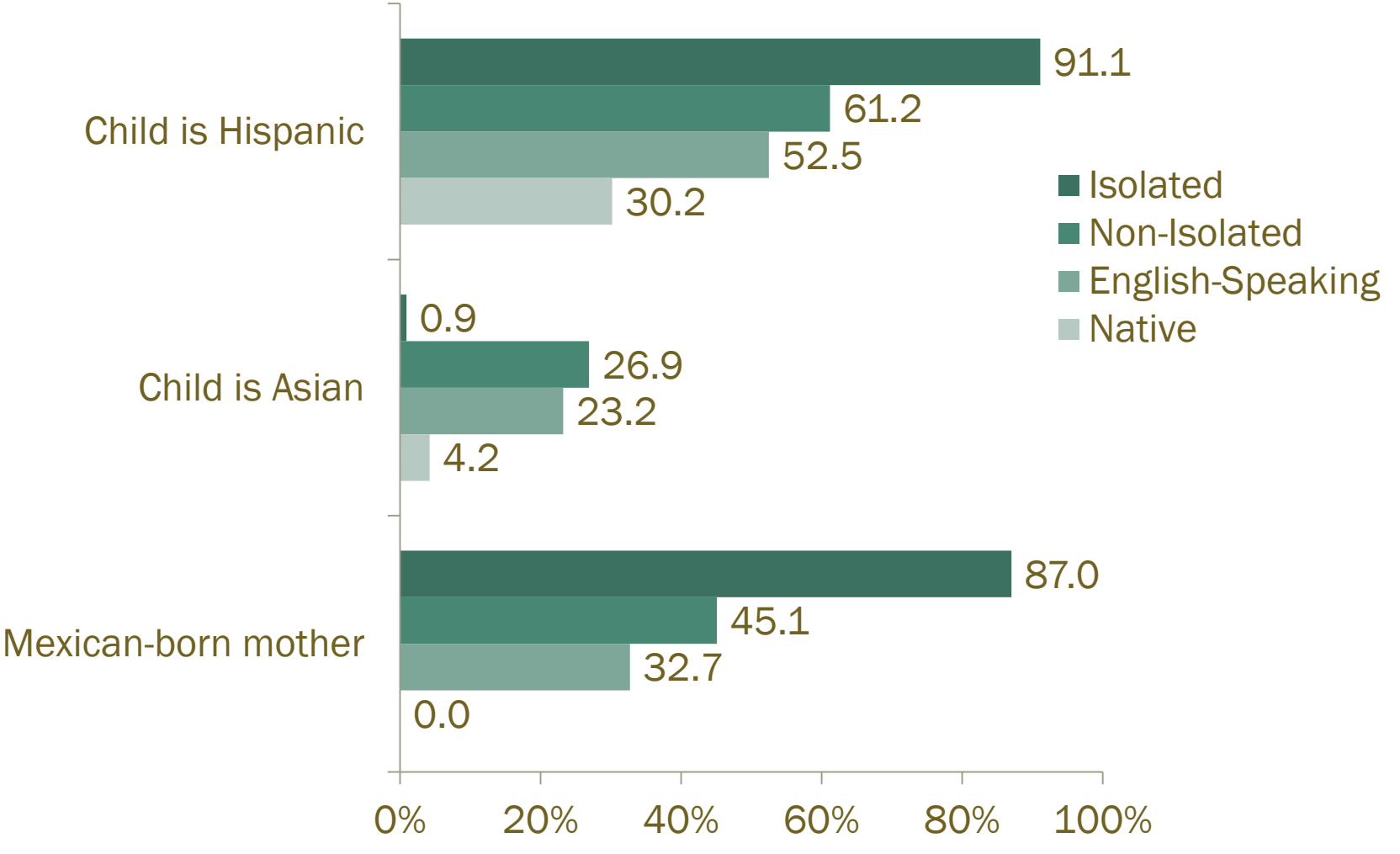
- Portrait of Isolated children
  - Child and family characteristics
  - Early care and education arrangements
- Relationship of preschool use with school entry skills
- Policy implications

Isolated Children Are More Disadvantaged…



...and Are Predominantly Hispanic

Child and maternal characteristics of California four-year-olds



Outline

- Portrait of linguistically isolated children
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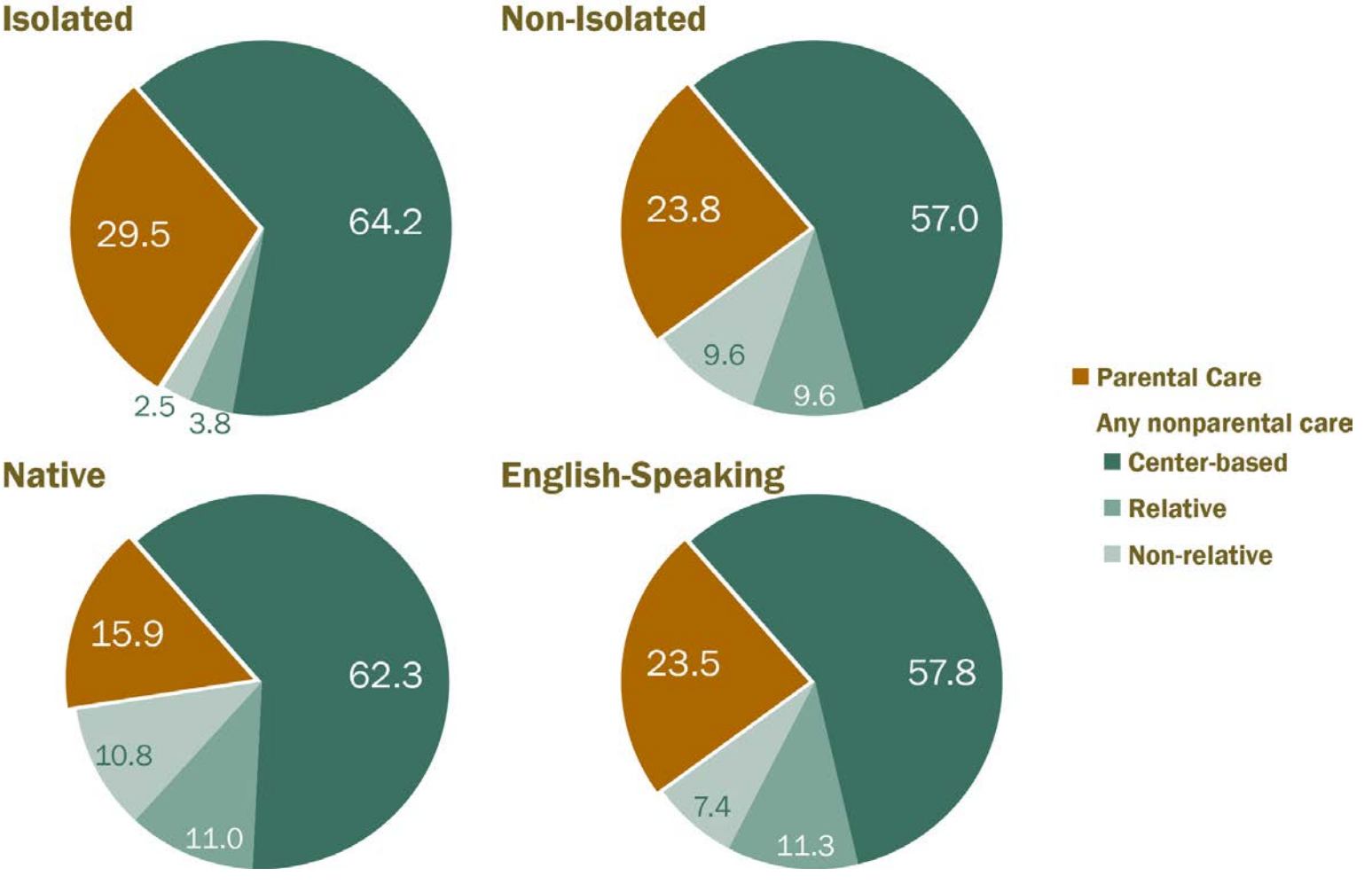
Families Have Different Care Choices

- Families use three types of nonparental care
  - Center-based
  - Home-based
    - Relative care
    - Non-relative care
- Complex early care and education system
  - Public and private
  - Child development or parent work focus
  - Subsidies vary

Isolated Children Use Center-Based Care at High Rates

Primary care arrangements of California four-year-olds



We Also Looked at Isolated Children Nationwide

- Similar child and family characteristics
- Similar rates of nonparental care use
- Less likely to use center-based care

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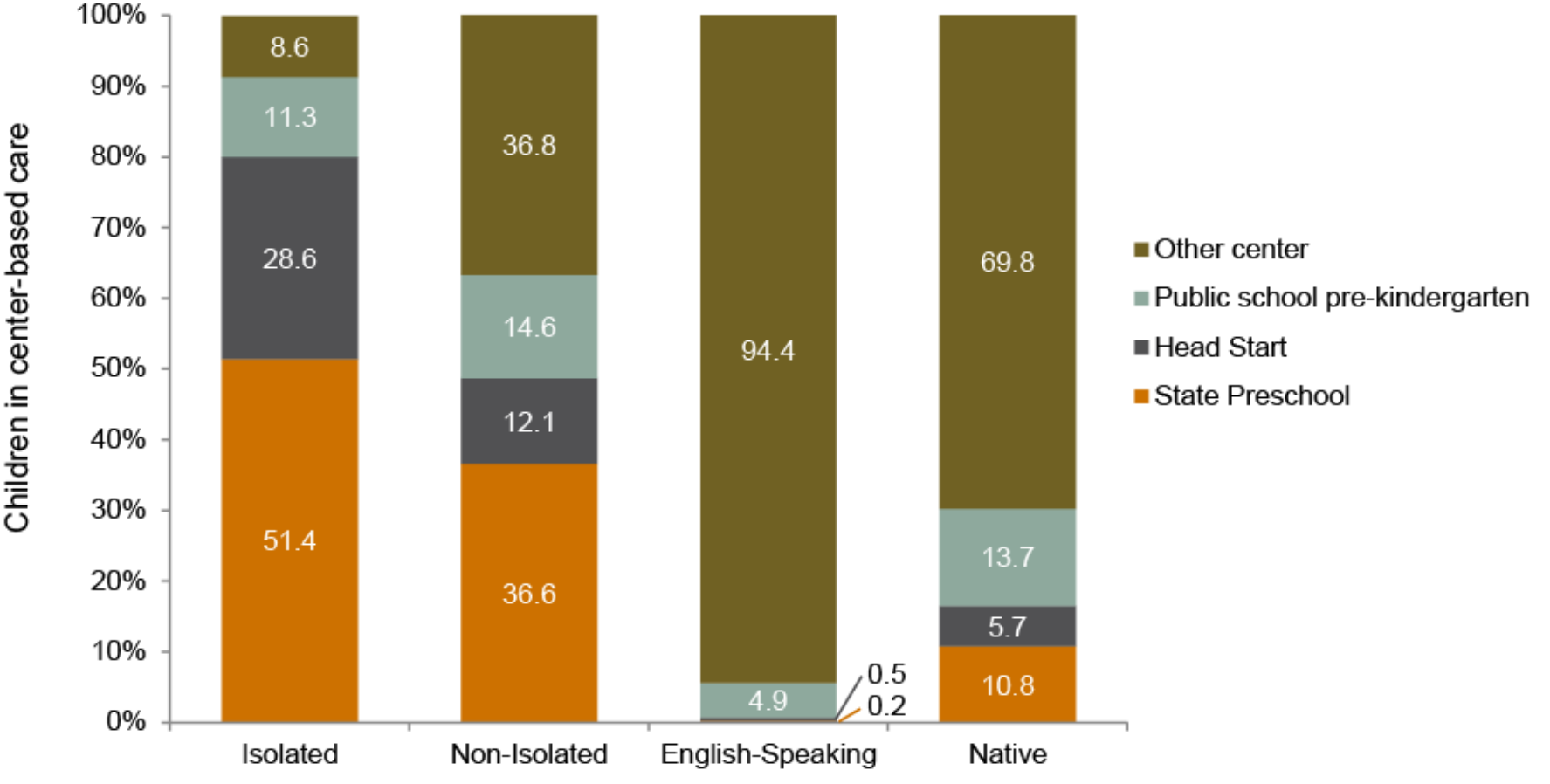
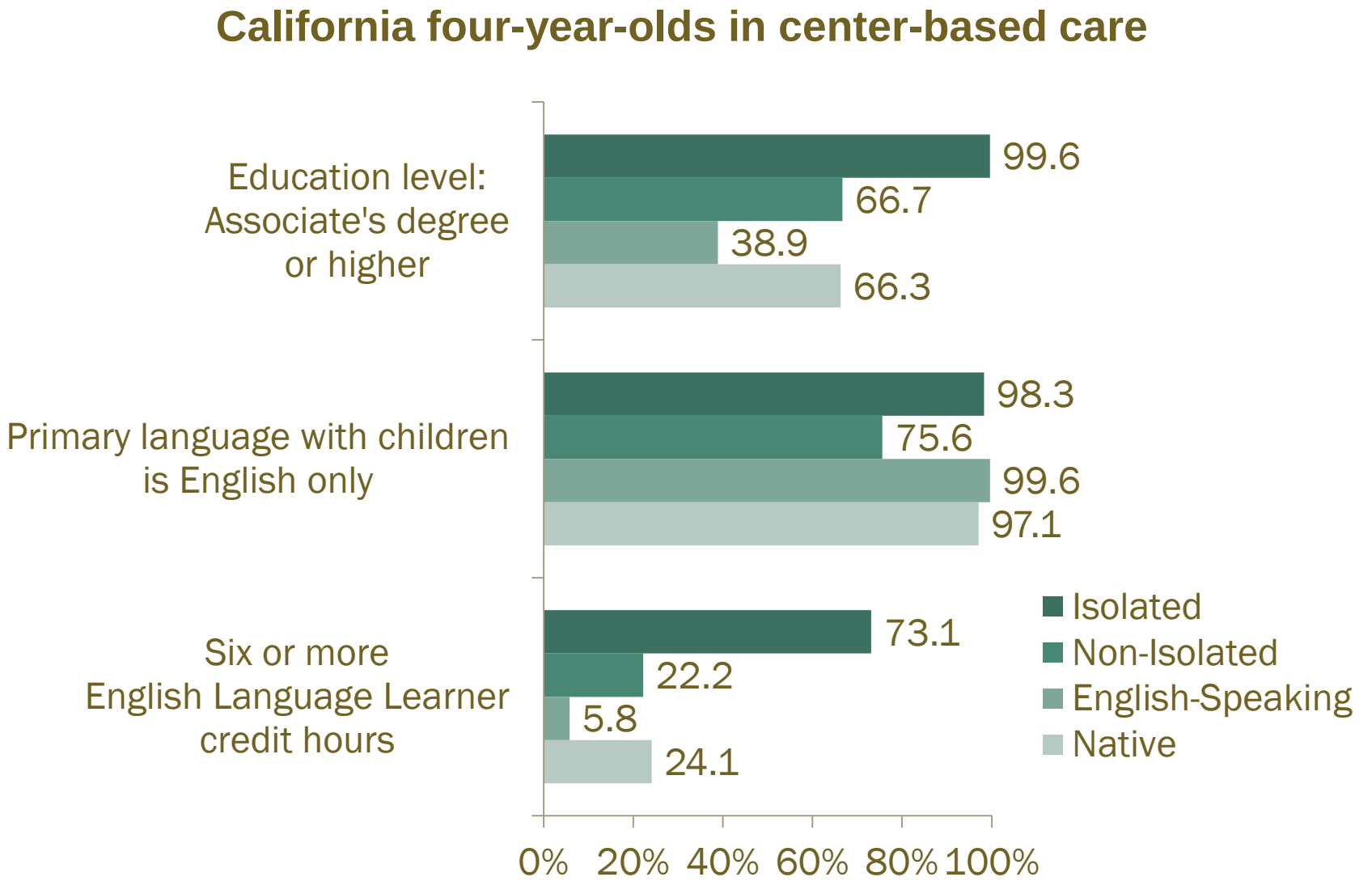
Isolated Children Have Very Different Enrollment Patterns

California four-year-olds in center-based care



In Centers, Teacher Characteristics Vary



Center Quality Doesn't Vary Across Groups

- CLASS and ECERS-R measures
- Similar mean scores across subgroups
- Potential concern over low instructional support score

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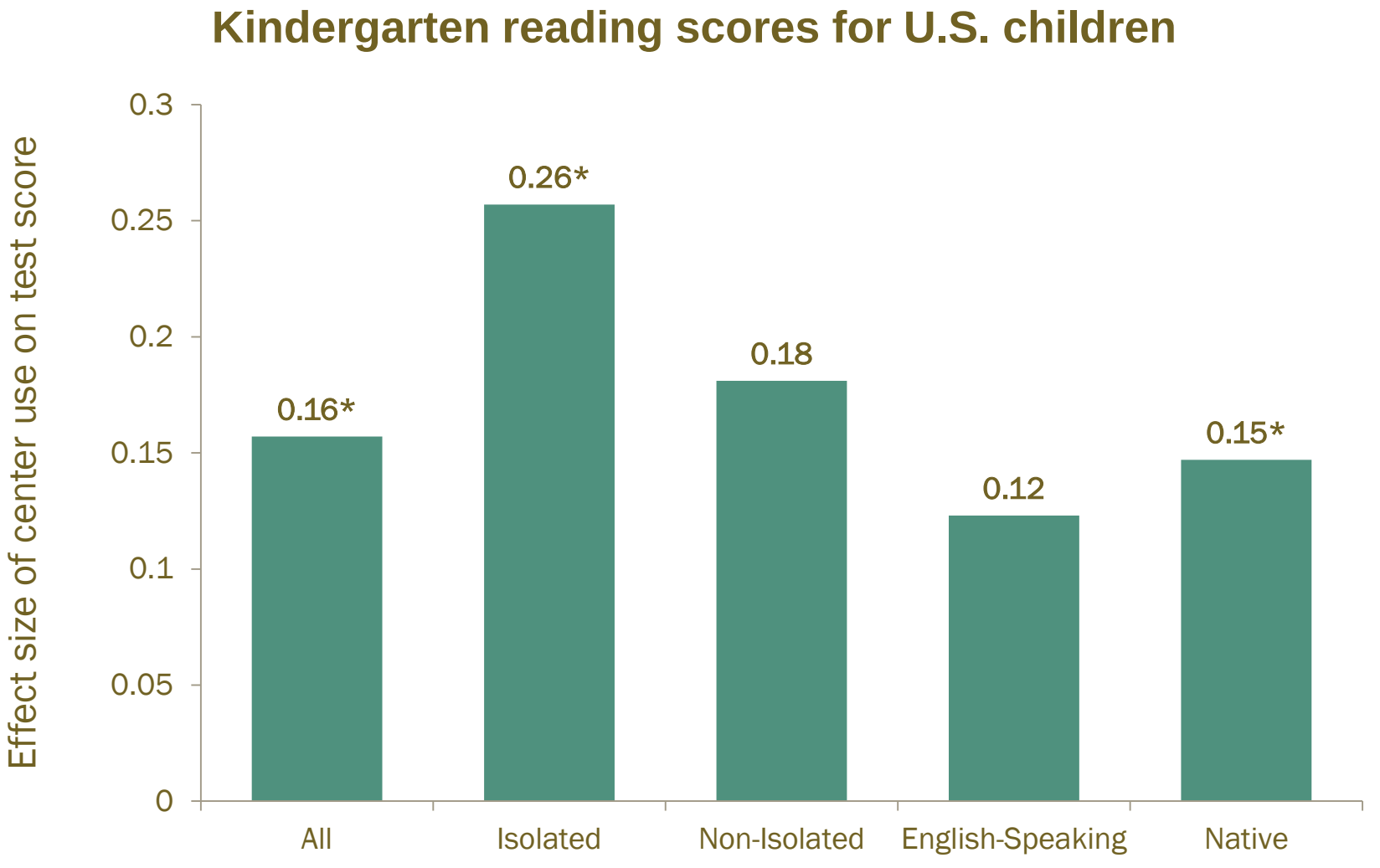
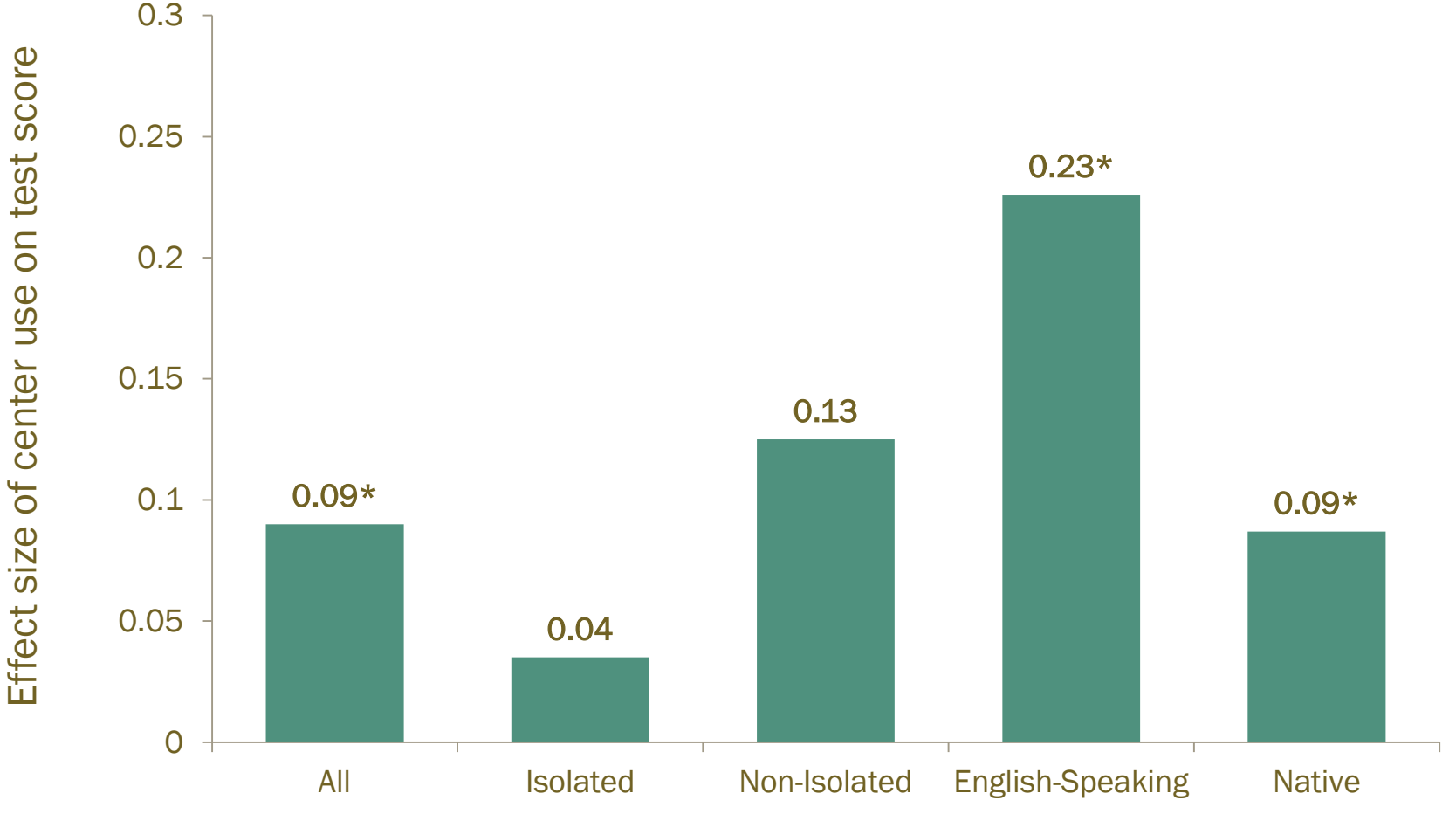
Isolated Children Benefit in Reading…



*Denotes effect size within group is statistically significant at the 5 percent level

...But Not in Math

Kindergarten mathematics scores for U.S. children



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Center Quality Doesn't Predict School Entry Skills

- No significant associations between higher-quality care and kindergarten scores
- Measure may not capture differences in quality associated with cognitive outcomes

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Policy Implications

- Overall, good progress in California
- But…
  - One-third of children not enrolled in centers
  - Missed opportunity for mathematics
- Quality measurement an issue

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Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.

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