



**THE
INVISIBLE
DREAM**

**CREATING A NEW CONVERSATION ABOUT
THE AMERICAN DREAM**

NEW RESEARCH RELEASE
OCTOBER 1, 2012

WHY ARE WE HERE?

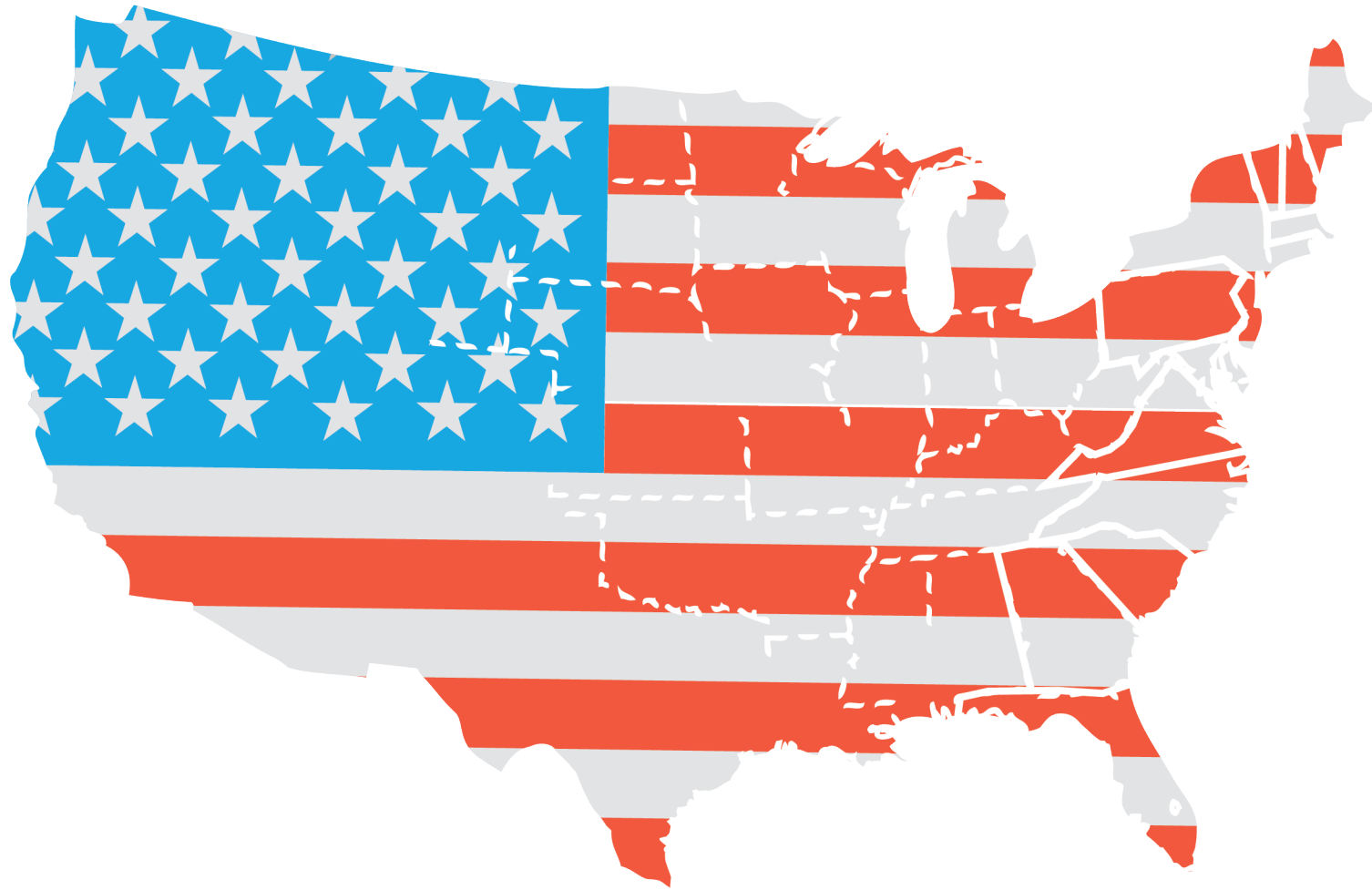


THE 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION COULD COME DOWN TO A REFERENDUM ON THE AMERICAN DREAM, WHAT IT MEANS AND HOW PEOPLE ACHIEVE IT.

– MARK HALPERIN, TIME MAGAZINE

THE AMERICAN DREAM, UNITED OR DIVIDED?

THE
INVESTIBLE
DREAM



ABOUT THE RESEARCH



Conducted focus groups across the country.

Nationally representative survey study of 2041 adults.

Conducted online interviews between August 15 and August 29, 2012.

Data collected by Harris Interactive Service Bureau (HISB).

HISB was responsible for data collection only.

Public Agenda & the GALEWILL Center designed survey and analyzed data.



WHICH IDEA BEST CAPTURES THE AMERICAN DREAM?

28%



The American Dream is the opportunity for people from modest beginnings to live in a secure, middle class life

9%

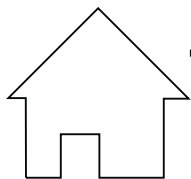


The American Dream is the opportunity for people from modest beginnings to achieve great wealth and fame

51%



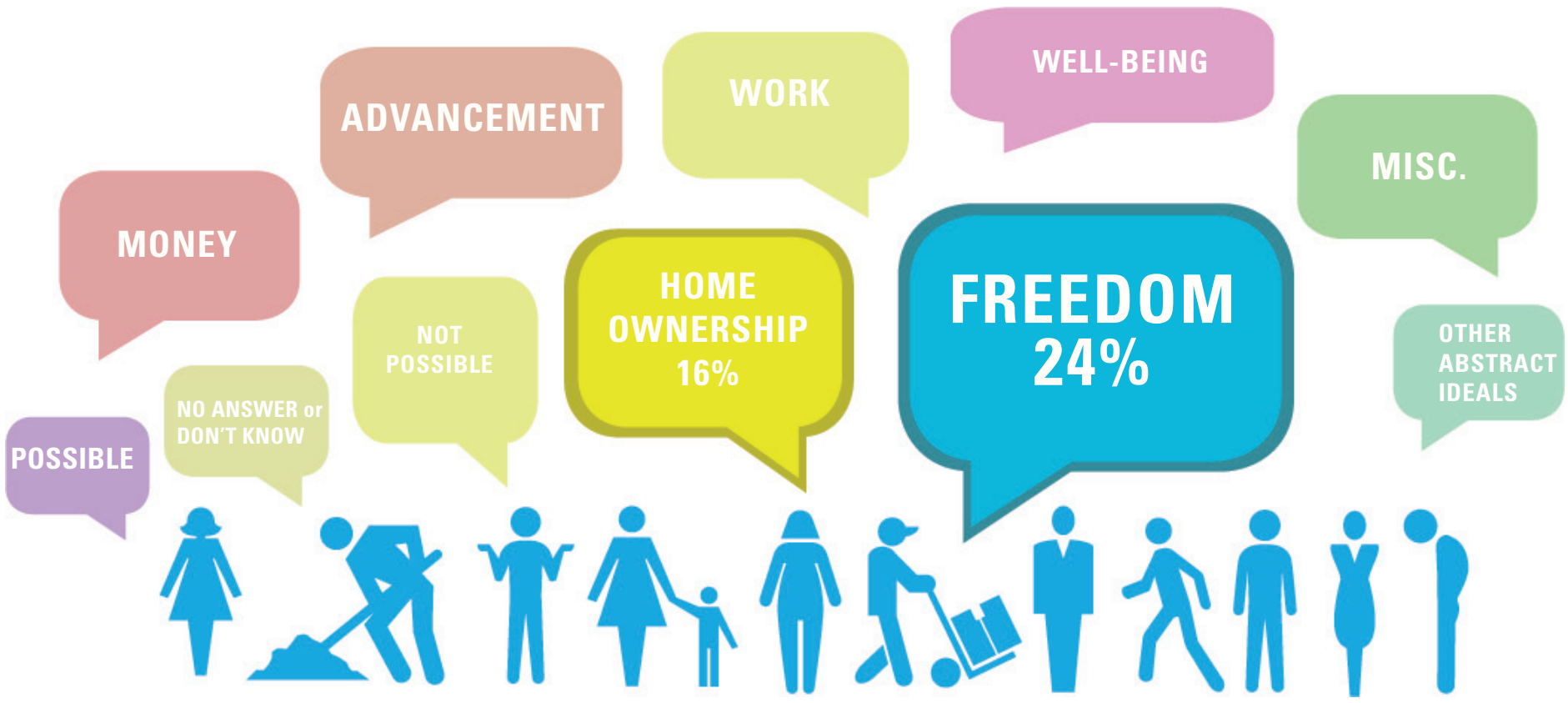
Both of these ideas



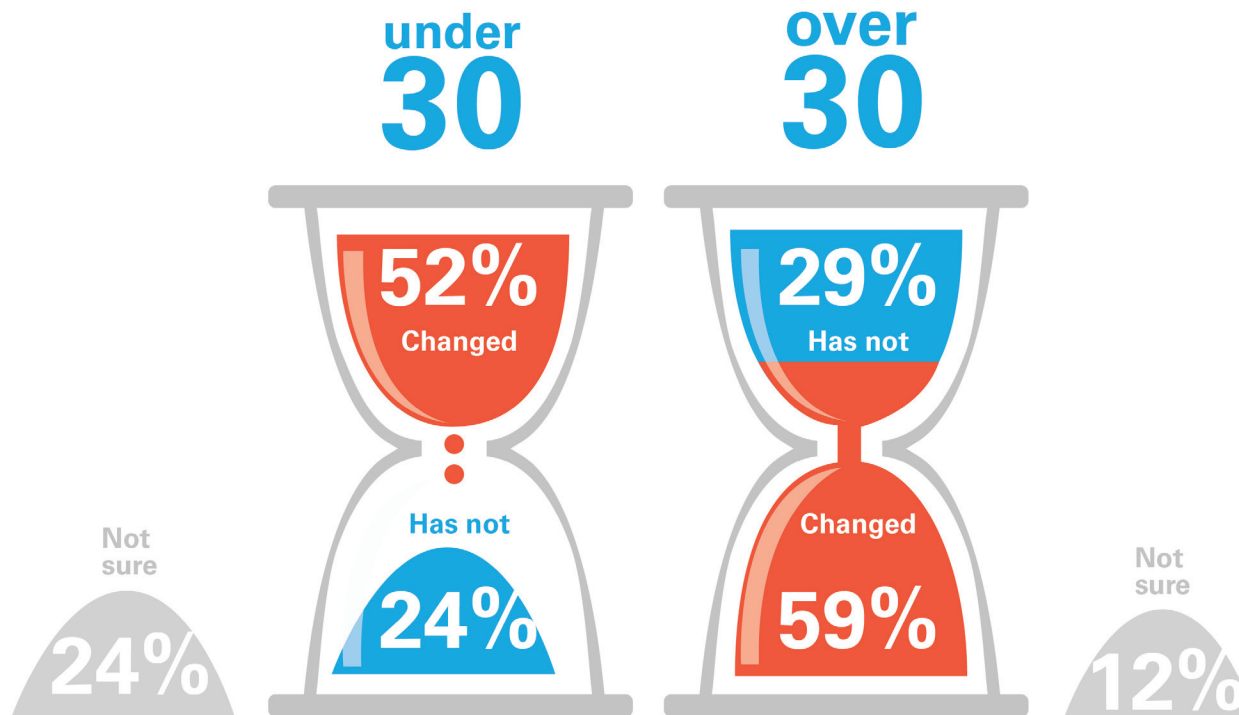
12%

Neither of these ideas

WHAT ONE WORD DESCRIBES THE AMERICAN DREAM?



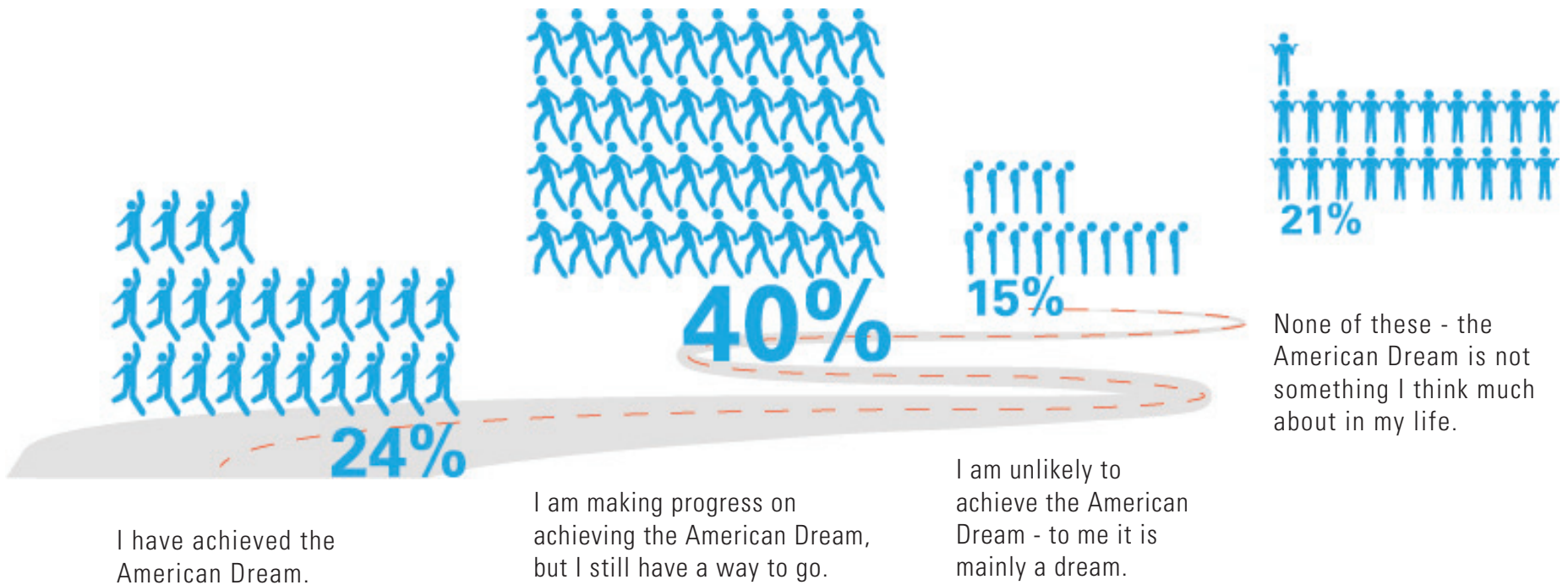
DOES THE AMERICAN DREAM CHANGE OVER TIME?



Under 30s say their idea of the American Dream is different from the previous generation's

Over 30s say their ideas about the Dream have changed since they were younger

WHERE DO AMERICANS BELIEVE THEY ARE IN ACHIEVING THE AMERICAN DREAM?



I have achieved the American Dream.

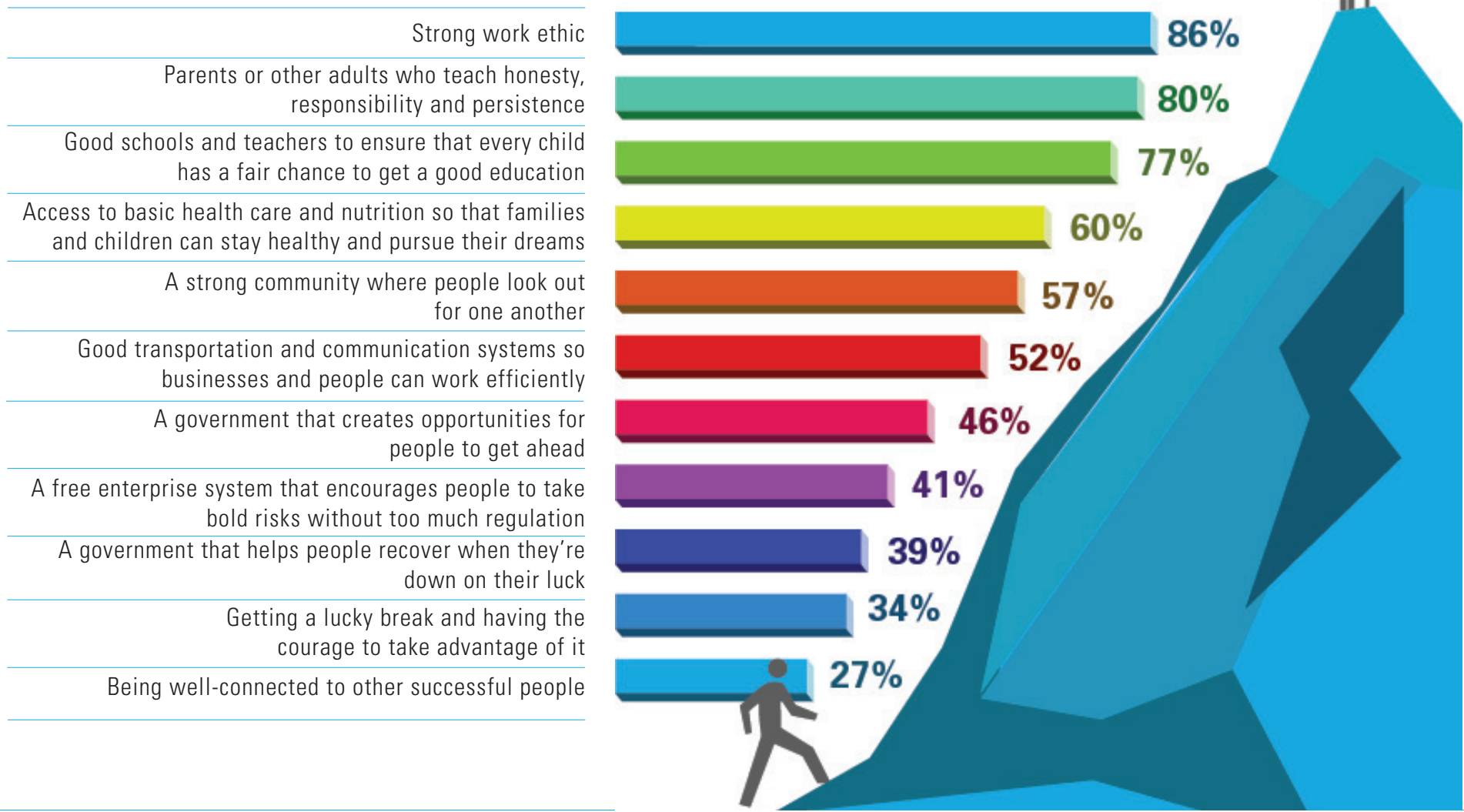
I am making progress on achieving the American Dream, but I still have a way to go.

I am unlikely to achieve the American Dream - to me it is mainly a dream.

None of these - the American Dream is not something I think much about in my life.

WHAT IS ESSENTIAL TO ACHIEVING THE AMERICAN DREAM?

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WHICH CHILD IS MORE LIKELY TO ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM?

19%



■ A 5-year-old with good health care but poor neighborhood schools.

81%

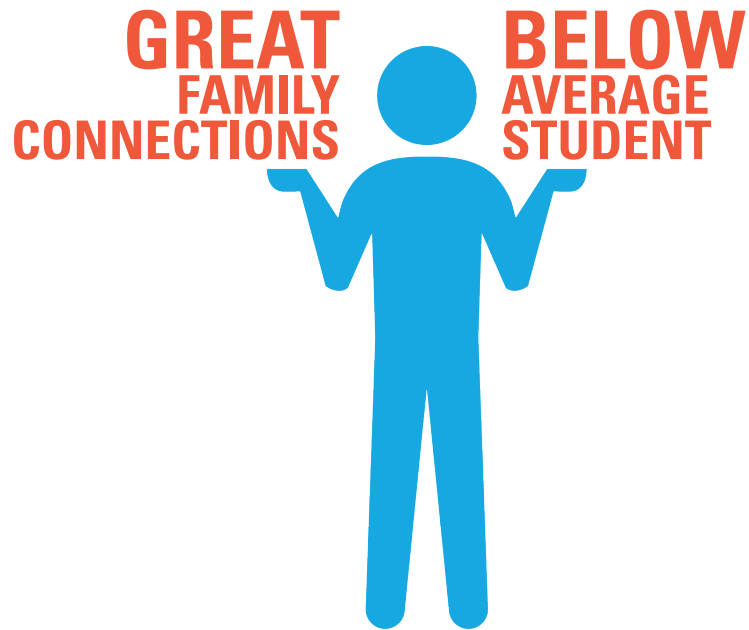


■ A 5-year-old with great neighborhood schools but no health care.

AGE 5

WHICH CHILD IS MORE LIKELY TO ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM?

38%



■ A 12-year-old whose family has great connections, but is a below average student.

62%



■ A 12-year-old who is an honor roll student, but whose family can't afford college.

AGE 12

WHICH CHILD IS MORE LIKELY TO ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM?

30%

STRONG
FAMILY



LITTLE
AMBITION

■ A 15-year-old with a strong family, but who does not have a lot of ambition.

AGE 15

70%

ABUSIVE
PARENTS



STRONG
WORK ETHIC

■ A 15-year-old with a strong work ethic, but who has abusive parents.

HOW IS THE AMERICAN DREAM ACHIEVED?



39 %

Aided by Society



42 %

Individual Effort



19 %

Neither of those statements reflect my views.

It's crucial for the government and communities to take steps so every child has a fair chance at achieving the American Dream.

Achieving the American Dream is mainly something people do for themselves - what government and communities do doesn't matter.

WHAT IS PLACING THE AMERICAN DREAM IN DANGER?



43%

Hard Workers Shut Out



43%

Decline of Work Ethic



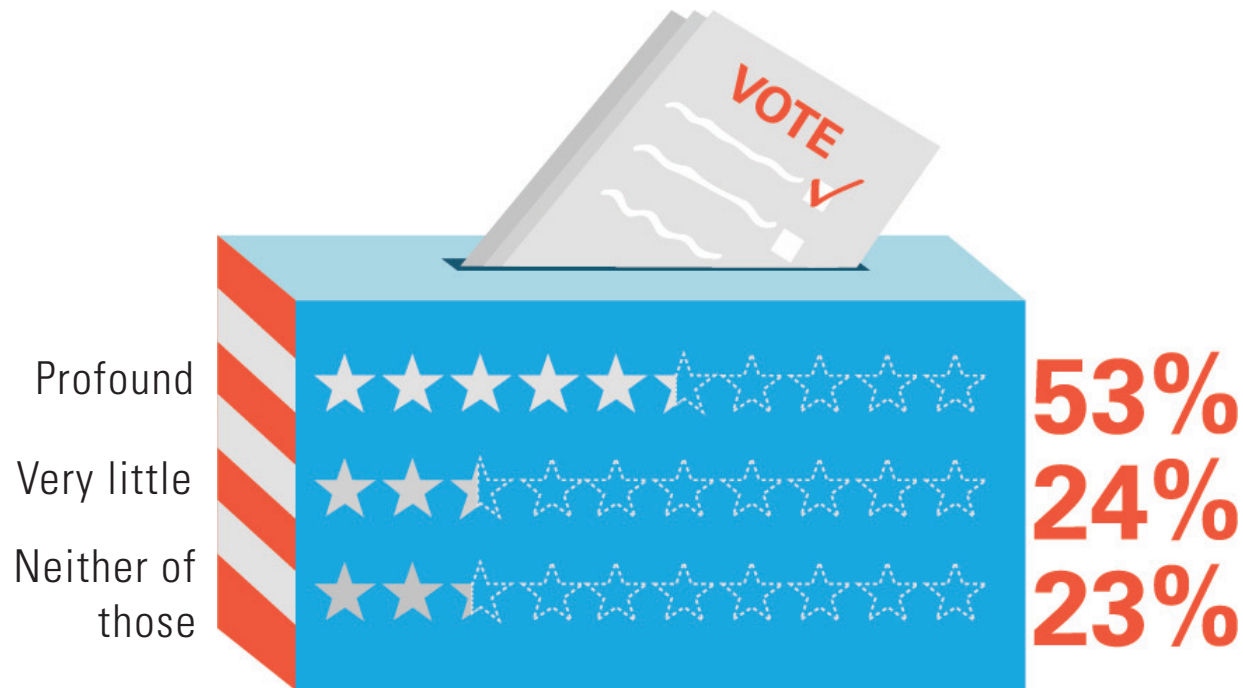
14%

Neither of those statements reflect my views.

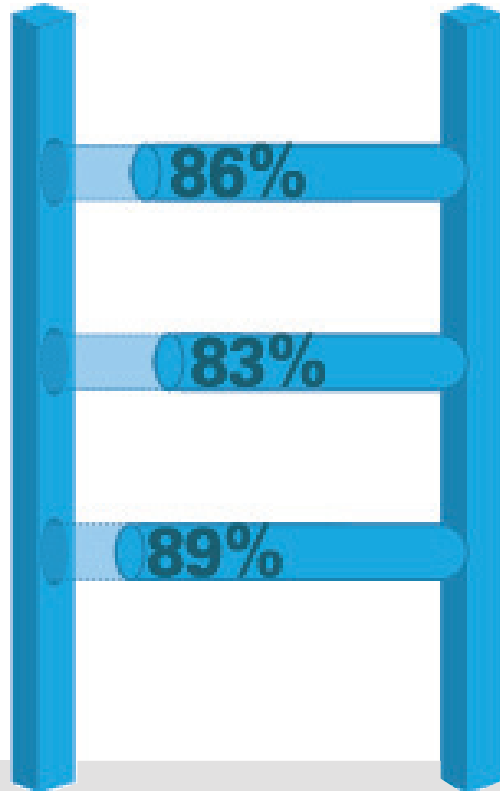
Even people with a strong work ethic and good values are becoming increasingly shut out from achieving the American Dream.

One of the major dangers to the American Dream is the decline of the a strong work ethic and values like honesty.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT OF THE ELECTION ON THE AMERICAN DREAM?



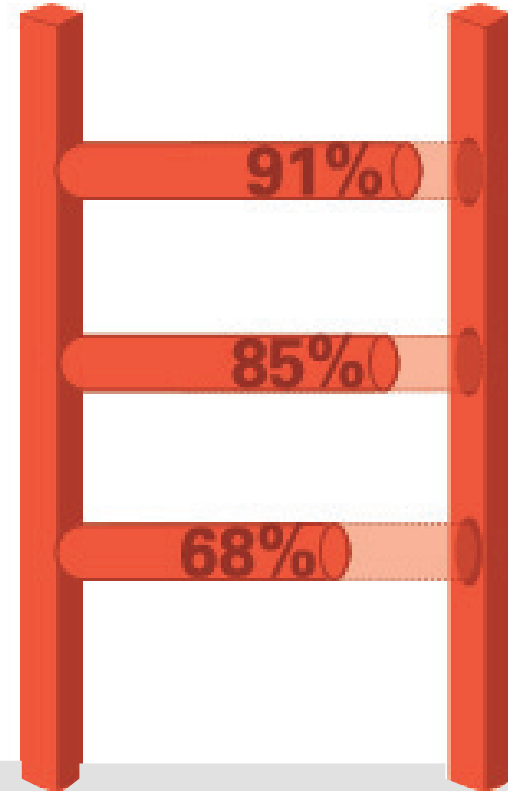
WHAT ESSENTIALS FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM UNITE DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS?



A strong work ethic

Parents, family members or other adults who teach values like honesty, responsibility and persistence

Good schools and teachers to insure that every child has a fair chance to get a good education

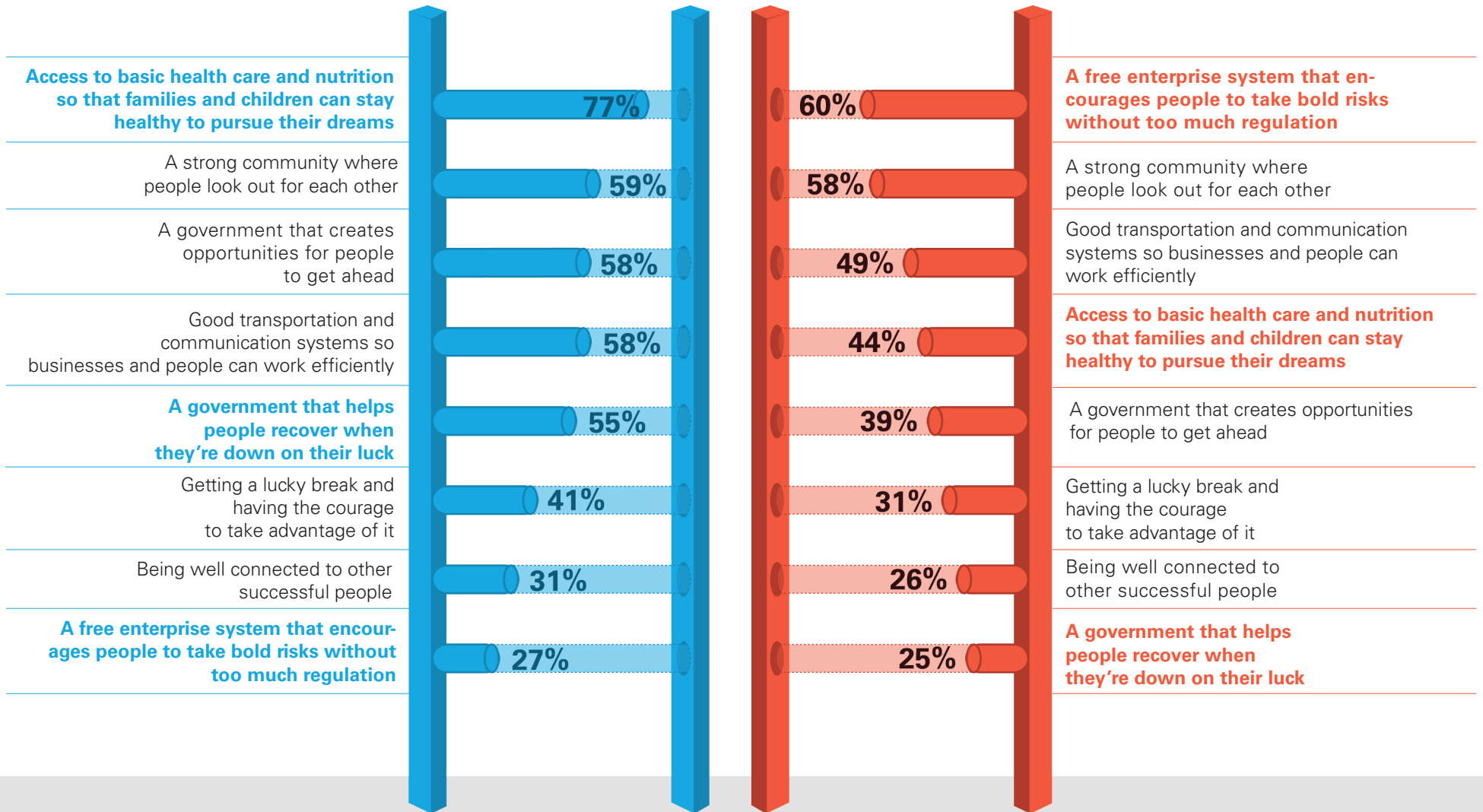


91%

85%

68%

WHAT ESSENTIALS FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM DIVIDE DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS?



HOW DO OTHER GROUPS COMPARE?

UNITED
GEOGRAPHY
EMPLOYMENT
EDUCATION
PARENTS



DIVIDED
GENDER
AGE
INCOME

WHAT'S NEXT?

LET'S MEET OUR PANEL

JUAN WILLIAMS, MODERATOR

FOX NEWS POLITICAL ANALYST AND CONTRIBUTOR TO THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

ROBERT SAMUELSON

COLUMNIST FOR THE WASHINGTON POST,
AUTHOR OF THE GREAT INFLATION AND ITS AFTERMATH: THE PAST AND FUTURE
OF AMERICAN AFFLUENCE

ISABEL SAWHILL

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, CO-AUTHOR OF CREATING AN OPPORTUNITY SOCIETY

HEDRICK SMITH

PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING FORMER NEW YORK TIMES REPORTER AND AUTHOR OF
WHO STOLE THE AMERICAN DREAM

QUESTIONS?



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