

DOWNLOAD PDF SIX YEARS LATER, HOW ARE FORMER WELFARE RECIPIENTS FARING IN THE LABOR MARKET?

Chapter 1 : Unemployment benefits - Wikipedia

Contents. Moving from Welfare to Work; Six Years Later, How Are Former Welfare Recipients Faring in the Labor Market? Up the Ladder, Down the Ladder, or Stuck on the Same Rung?

European unemployment insurance Each Member State of the European Union has its own system and in general a worker should claim unemployment benefits in the country where they last worked. For a person working in a country other than their country of residency a cross-border worker , they will have to claim benefits in their country of residence. Additionally, there are non-union unemployment funds. The former requires a degree and two years of full-time work. The latter requires participation in training, education, or other employment support, which may be mandated on pain of losing the benefit, but may be paid after the regular benefits have been either maxed out or not available. In order to be considered unemployed, the seeker must register at the TE-keskus as unemployed. If the jobseeker does not have degree, the agency can require the jobseeker to apply to a school. If the individual does not qualify for any unemployment benefit he may still be eligible for the housing benefit asumistuki from Kela and municipal social welfare provisions toimeentulotuki. They are not unemployment benefits and depend on household income, but they have in practice become the basic income of many long-term unemployed. Unemployment benefits in France France uses a quasi Ghent system , under which unemployment benefits are distributed by an independent agency UNEDIC in which unions and Employer organisations are equally represented. Employers pay a contribution on top of the pre-tax income of their employees, which together with the employee contribution, fund the scheme. The maximum unemployment benefit is as of March In claimants received the allowance for an average days. Germany has two different types of unemployment benefits. Unemployment benefit I[edit] The unemployment benefit I in Germany is also known as the unemployment insurance. The insurance is administered by the federal employment agency and funded by employee and employer contributions. Participation and thus contributions are generally mandatory for both employee and employer. Since , certain previously excluded workers have been able to opt into the system on a voluntary basis. The system is financed by contributions from employees and employers. The contribution level was reduced from 3. Contributions are paid only on earnings up to the social security ceiling The system is largely self-financed but also receives a subsidy from the state to run the Jobcenters. Unemployed workers are entitled to: Living allowance known as unemployment benefit Help in finding work Training Unemployed benefit is paid to workers who have contributed at least during 12 months preceding their loss of a job. The allowance is paid for half of the period that the worker has contributed. The maximum benefit is therefore Euros in In the federal Work Agency had revenues and expenses of For those under the age of 50 who have not been employed for more than 30 months in a job which paid into the social security scheme, full unemployment benefit can be received for a maximum period of 12 months. Note how the duration of eligibility is variegated in Germany to account for the difficulty older people have re-entering the job market. Unemployment benefit II[edit] Main article: Hartz concept If a worker is not eligible for the full unemployment benefits or after receiving the full unemployment benefit for the maximum of 12 months, he is able to apply for benefits from the so-called Arbeitslosengeld II Hartz IV programme, an open-ended welfare programme which ensures people do not fall into penury. A person receiving Hartz IV benefits is paid EUR a month for living expenses plus the cost of adequate housing including heating and health care. Couples can receive benefits for each partner including their children. Additionally, children can get "benefits for education and participation". People who receive Hartz 4 are obligated to seek for jobs and can be forced to take part in social programs or Mini jobs in order to receive this Hartz 4 money. Most of these programs and Mini jobs oblige the employee to work the same hours as a normal full-time job each day, 5 days a week. The self-employed do not qualify, and neither do those with other sources of income. Eligibility since 1 January , has been further constrained in that one applying for unemployment benefits for a second or more time, must not have received more than the

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equivalent of days of such benefits during the last four years since the last time one had started receiving such benefits; if one has received unemployment benefits in this period for more than days then there is no eligibility while if one has received less, then one is only eligible for at most the remaining days up until the maximum of days is reached. When receiving benefits an individual cannot be earning money from a self-employed profession. If the income increases the fixed amount, a tax authority must issue a certificate that explains that the individual has "interrupted the exercise of the profession", which must be done within 15 days. In order to receive a grant the individual must not be receiving an income from the previous liberal profession. Under the European Commission , liberal professions are professions that require specialized training and that are regulated by "national governments or professional bodies". After the expiration of the month period an application towards long-term unemployment benefits must be submitted in the first 2 months. Long-term unemployment can only be granted if the individual can be found registered under the OAED unemployment registrar. In the most recent financial quarter, In Section 1, Articles grant trade unions the right to organize and negotiate with employers over fair wages for its members as well as representation for their members in the event of workplace conflicts. Basic unemployment benefits can cover both wage-earning and self-employing individuals for the first half-month 10 days after they lose their job, whereas income-linked benefits can cover wage-earning and self-employing individuals for up to three months based on a set salary index and length of employment. Both are paid by the Department of Social Protection and are nicknamed "the dole". Unemployment benefit in Ireland can be claimed indefinitely for as long as the individual remains unemployed. Payments can be increased if the unemployed has dependents. There are more benefits available to unemployed people, usually on a special or specific basis. This condition does not apply to Jobseekers Benefit which is based on Social Insurance payments. More information on each benefit can be found here:

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Chapter 2 : Immigrants in the United States, | Center for Immigration Studies

This book, tapping into the quantitative and qualitative evidence gathered in the Women's Employment Study (WES), offers insights into the lives of women in an urban Michigan county who left welfare for work and the role their family decisions play in their labor market decisions. In and

Executive Summary Using the latest Census Bureau data from and , this paper provides a detailed picture of the more than 50 million immigrants legal and illegal and their U. Moreover, many immigrants make significant progress the longer they live in the country. But even with this progress, immigrants who have been in the United States for 20 years are much more likely to live in poverty, lack health insurance, and access the welfare system than are native-born Americans. The large share of immigrants arriving as adults with relatively little education partly explains this phenomenon. Overall Numbers The number of immigrants legal and illegal in the country hit a new record of 40 million in , a 28 percent increase over the total in Of top sending countries, the largest percentage increase in the last decade was for those from Honduras 85 percent , India 74 percent , Guatemala 73 percent , Peru 54 percent , El Salvador 49 percent , Ecuador 48 percent , and China 43 percent. Labor Force In March of , the share of working-age 18 to 65 immigrants holding a job was the same as natives 68 percent. Immigrant men have higher rates of work than native-born men, while immigrant women have lower rates. While immigrants tend to be concentrated in certain jobs, natives comprise the majority of workers in virtually every occupational category. For example, natives comprise 52 percent of maids, 73 percent of janitors, 66 percent of construction laborers, and 65 percent of butchers and meat processors. Poverty In , 23 percent of immigrants and their U. Immigrants and their children accounted for one-fourth of all persons in poverty. The children of immigrants account for one-third of all children in poverty. Among the top sending countries, poverty is highest for immigrants and their young children from Mexico 35 percent , Honduras 34 percent , and Guatemala 31 percent ; and lowest for those from Germany 7 percent , India 6 percent , and the Philippines 6 percent. Welfare Use In , 36 percent of immigrant-headed households used at least one major welfare program primarily food assistance and Medicaid compared to 23 percent of native households. Among the top sending countries, welfare use is highest for households headed by immigrants from Mexico 57 percent , Guatemala 55 percent , and the Dominican Republic 54 percent ; and lowest for those from Canada 13 percent , Germany 10 percent , and the United Kingdom 6 percent. Health Insurance Coverage In , 29 percent of immigrants and their U. New immigrants and their U. Among the top sending countries, the highest rates of uninsurance are for those from Guatemala 46 percent , Honduras 44 percent , El Salvador 44 percent , and Mexico 41 percent ; and lowest for those from Canada 9 percent , Japan 8 percent , and Germany 5 percent. Public Schools There are Of these students, 78 percent speak a language other than English at home. Overall, one in four public school students now speaks a language other than English at home. Homeownership Of immigrant households, 53 percent are owner-occupied, compared to 68 percent of native households. Rates of home ownership are highest for immigrants from Italy 83 percent , Germany 75 percent , and the United Kingdom 73 percent ; and lowest for those from Guatemala 30 percent , Honduras 28 percent , and the Dominican Republic 24 percent. Housing Overcrowding In , 13 percent of immigrant households were overcrowded, compared to 2 percent of native households. Immigrant households account for half of all overcrowded households. Entrepreneurship Immigrants and natives have very similar rates of entrepreneurship 68 percent. Among the top sending countries, self-employment is highest for immigrants from Korea 26 percent , Canada 24 percent , and the United Kingdom 17 percent. It is lowest for those from Haiti 6 percent , Honduras 5 percent , and Jamaica 3 percent. Educational Attainment Of adult immigrants 25 to 65 , 28 percent have not completed high school, compared to 7 percent of natives. The large share of immigrants with relatively little education is one of the primary reasons for their lower socioeconomic status, not their legal status or an unwillingness to work. At the same time immigration added significantly to the number of less-educated workers, the share of young, less-educated natives holding a job declined

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significantly. The decline began well before the current economic downturn. Progress Over Time Many immigrants make significant progress the longer they live in the country. However, on average even immigrants who have lived in the United States for 20 years have not come close to closing the gap with natives. The poverty rate of adult immigrants who have lived in the United States for 20 years is 50 percent higher than that of adult natives. The share of adult immigrants who have lived in the United States for 20 years who lack health insurance is twice that of adult natives. The share of households headed by an immigrant who has lived in the United States for 20 years using one or more welfare programs is nearly twice that of native-headed households. The share of households headed by an immigrant who has lived in the United States for 20 years that are owner occupied is 22 percent lower than that of native households. Legal Status We estimate that 28 percent of all immigrants are in the country illegally. Roughly half of Mexican and Central American and one-third of South American immigrants are here illegally. Impact on Population Size and Age New immigration legal and illegal plus births to immigrants added If the nearly 14 million immigrants who arrived in or later are excluded, it raises the average age in the United States in from State Data Among top immigrant-receiving states, poverty among immigrants and their children is highest in Arizona 37 percent , North Carolina 29 percent , and Minnesota 29 percent. It is lowest in Massachusetts 17 percent Maryland 13 percent , and New Jersey 13 percent. Among top immigrant-receiving states, welfare use by immigrant households is highest in Minnesota 48 percent , New York 41 percent , and Texas 45 percent. It is lowest in Virginia 20 percent , Georgia 30 percent , and Nevada 25 percent. Among top immigrant-receiving states, home ownership for immigrant households is highest in Florida 61 percent , Illinois 61 percent , and Maryland 59 percent. It is lowest in California 48 percent , Massachusetts 47 percent , and Minnesota 46 percent. Among top immigrant-receiving states, the share of adult immigrants who have not completed high school is highest in Texas 46 percent , Colorado 41 percent , and North Carolina 36 percent. It is lowest in Virginia 15 percent , Massachusetts 15 percent , and Florida 16 percent. First, immigrants and their minor children now represent one-sixth of the U. Moreover, understanding how immigrants are doing is the best way to evaluate the effects of immigration policy. Absent a change in policy, between 12 and 15 million new immigrants legal and illegal will likely settle in the United States in the next decade. And perhaps 30 million new immigrants will arrive in the next 20 years. Immigration policy determines the number allowed in, the selection criteria used, and the level of resources devoted to controlling illegal immigration. The future, of course, is not set and when formulating immigration policy, it is critically important to know the impact of recent immigration. It is difficult to understate the impact of immigration on the socio-demographics of the United States. New immigration plus births to immigrants added more than 22 million people to the U. The large share of immigrants who arrive as adults with relatively few years of schooling is the primary reason so many live in poverty, use welfare programs, or lack health insurance, not their legal status or an unwillingness to work. Despite the fact that a large share of immigrants have few years of schooling, most immigrants do work. In fact, the share of immigrant men holding a job is higher than native-born men. Moreover, immigrants make significant progress the longer they reside in the United States. This is also true for the least educated. While many immigrants do very well in the United States, on average immigrants who have been in the country for 20 years lag well behind natives in most measure of economic well-being. At the same time that immigration policy has significantly increased the number of less-educated immigrants, there has been a dramatic deterioration in the labor market position of less-educated natives. Comparing data from the beginning of this decade shows a huge decline in the share of young and less-educated natives holding a job “ from two-thirds to just under half. The decline in work among the young and less-educated natives began well before the Great Recession. It is difficult to find any evidence of a shortage of less-educated workers in the United States. Some may argue that immigrants only do jobs that American do not want, but an analysis by occupations shows that the vast majority of workers in almost every job are U. A central question for immigration policy is: Should we continue to allow in so many people with little education “ increasing potential job competition for the poorest American workers and the population in need of government

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assistance? The primary goal of this paper is to better inform that debate. In some cases, for state-specific information, we combine the March and CPS to get statistically robust results. In this report, the terms foreign-born and immigrant are used synonymously. Immigrants are persons living in the United States who were not American citizens at birth. This includes naturalized American citizens, legal permanent residents green card holders, illegal immigrants, and people on long-term temporary visas such as foreign students or guest workers. First, the more than 50 million immigrants and their minor children now comprise one-sixth of U. The future, of course, is not set and when deciding on what immigration policy should be, it is critically important to know what impact the immigration flow has had in recent decades. There is no one answer to the question of whether the country has been well served by its immigration policy. To evaluate the effect of this immigration it is necessary to draw on the available data. This paper uses the latest Census Bureau data to provide readers with information so they can make sound judgments about the effects of immigration on American society and on what immigration policy should be in the future. They are not mutually exclusive, but they are distinct. The key assumption underlying this perspective is not so much how immigrants are doing relative to natives, but rather how they are doing given their level of education, language skills, and other aspects of their human capital endowment. This approach also tends to emphasize the progress immigrants make over time on their own terms and the benefit of migration to the immigrants themselves. The immigrant-centric view is the way most, but not all, academic researchers approach the issue. The other way of thinking about immigration can be called the national perspective, which is focused on the impact immigration has on American society. This approach emphasizes that immigration is supposed to benefit the existing population of American citizens; the benefit immigrants receive by coming here is less important. So, for example, if immigration adds significantly to the population living in poverty or using welfare programs, this is seen as a problem, even if immigrants are clearly better off in this country than they would have been back home and are no worse than natives with the same education. This approach is also focused on possible job competition between immigrants and natives and the effect immigration has on public coffers. In general, the national perspective is the way the American public thinks about the immigration issue. When thinking about the information presented in this report, it is helpful to keep both perspectives in mind. There is no one best way to think about immigration. By approaching the issue from both points of view, the reader may arrive at a better understanding of the complex issues surrounding immigration. Data Sources and Methods Data Sources. In some cases, for state-specific information we combined the March and CPS to get a larger, more statistically robust sample. This includes naturalized American citizens, legal permanent residents green card holders, illegal aliens, and people on long-term temporary visas such as foreign students or guest workers who respond to the ACS or CPS. The ACS is of particular value because it the first ACS weighted to reflect the results of the decennial census. The decennial census itself no longer includes any immigration-related questions.

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Chapter 3 : "Working After Welfare: How Women Balance Jobs and Family in the Wake o" by Kristin S. Se

2 Six Years Later, How Are Former Welfare Recipients Faring in 15 the Labor Market? Overview of the Women's Employment Study

A New Paradigm for Welfare Policy: With it, a new emphasis was established to move public assistance recipients from welfare to work. While a laudable goal, rather than engaging recipients in productive activities that lead to self-sufficiency, the reform instituted tough requirements and restrictions on eligibility including time limits, work requirements, and participation rates. The law gave states discretion to structure programs, as long as they met basic requirements. It also impelled them to enforce strict sanctions. Although reform has been moderately successful at moving some families from welfare to work, poverty rates remain high and many former recipients struggle to earn a livable wage. Support services critical to the successful transition from welfare to work, such as child care, transportation, job training, continuing education, and counseling, have been inadequate or unavailable. In this examination, the Commission evaluated the law against new executive and legislative proposals for reauthorization. It did so because women and people of color are disproportionately affected by public assistance policies, and the Commission wants to ensure that civil rights protections are built into welfare reform. A significant complicating factor is that many families are just beginning to reach the five-year limit on benefits, therefore, a true evaluation of the reform has not been made. The Commission found that the proposals not only ignore some of the negative outcomes of the reform, but potentially magnify the disparate impact of the law. It concludes that, without civil rights protections in the legislation, welfare reform cannot lift all Americans out of poverty. This examination offers recommendations for each of the major provisions of the bill, some of which are summarized here. Necessary Civil Rights Safeguards Neither the law nor the current proposals adequately define the applicability of civil rights laws to welfare recipients, and there does not appear to be any movement to ensure that the civil rights laws are appropriately enforced in the delivery of welfare services. Numerous studies show that welfare reform did little to lift people out of poverty and that it has perpetuated a system wrought with discrimination. People of color have encountered insults and disrespect as they have attempted to navigate the welfare system. Women have been subjected to sexual inquisitions at welfare offices and sexual harassment at job activities. Individuals with limited English proficiency have encountered language barriers. Immigrants are often turned away because of misconceptions about their eligibility status. Caseworkers, who have great discretion in connecting recipients with available services, often discriminate, whether intentionally or not, in the services they offer. Numerous studies have found that white recipients are more likely to be encouraged to pursue an education, are less likely to be sanctioned, and are more likely to receive child care subsidies than other groups. Other studies have found that welfare agencies are least helpful to blacks in providing job-readiness skills and more helpful to whites, Hispanics, and Asian Americans. They are also least likely to provide basic academic skills, enrichment, or tutoring services to black recipients. Individuals who do not speak English face another disadvantage because often they are unable to communicate with caseworkers and cannot access available programs and services—a violation of federal civil rights laws. Welfare agencies often do not address employment barriers specific to language minority communities and fail to provide specialized training or literacy assistance. Institutional racism and discriminatory practices constitute significant barriers to job security and mobility, and hence earning potential. Unlike other employees, welfare workers who experience discrimination often do not have recourse options. The cost for filing a discrimination complaint is much higher for welfare-dependent and other low-wage workers because of the fear that if they file a complaint, they will lose employment and subsequently their other benefits. Congress should take the reauthorization of welfare reform as an opportunity to clarify and strengthen the applicability of civil rights and labor laws to participants in TANF activities and to reiterate the legal requirements of state agencies and employers. Congress should allocate funding for stronger enforcement of civil rights laws, improved training

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of caseworkers, and outreach to employers of welfare recipients. Congress should give the Office for Civil Rights at the Department of Health and Human Services the resources necessary to investigate allegations of discrimination and monitor the activities of state welfare offices to ensure adherence to federal civil rights statutes. Data should also be disaggregated by subpopulations, particularly with respect to immigrant welfare recipients, so that state and local agencies can assess usage patterns and better determine the unique needs of various communities. HHS should conduct regular audits of state welfare agencies. States must be required to adopt grievance procedures. States should be required to develop a plan for dealing with noncompliance with federal civil rights laws, submit it to HHS, and be monitored for a set number of years until the problem is resolved and the compliance goals are met.

Immigrant Eligibility The law prohibited states from supporting legal immigrants with TANF funds until they have resided in the United States for at least five years. As a result of these restrictions, many immigrants have left the rolls, and the living conditions of these poor families continue to decline. Today, significantly fewer legal immigrants, although eligible, receive TANF assistance, food stamps, and Medicaid. The changes to eligibility had a significant effect on children of immigrant parents; even the participation of U. Immigrants often face additional barriers—low educational attainment and limited English—that will be compounded by stricter work requirements and definitions of what qualifies as a work activity. Many of the non-cash services, such as counseling, training, English instruction, and education, would benefit new immigrants and help lift them out of low-paying jobs. Further, there is great variation within immigrant communities and among those who receive public assistance, raising the concern that state and local infrastructures may not be equipped to address the distinct needs of each group. Congress should immediately restore full benefits to legal immigrants, regardless of date of entry to the United States. Benefits should not be contingent on the financial resources of their sponsors, who may be unable or unwilling to help, especially in times of economic hardship. Congress should also allow access to certain public assistance programs to undocumented immigrants, such as health care, education, and food stamps. For the well-being of these families, particularly their children, all immigrants should have access to the basic human necessities, at the very least.

Rules and Requirements for Recipients Partly for the reasons already discussed and partly for specific reasons discussed below, unduly restrictive rules for work requirements, participation rates, countable work activities, and time limits place many women at a disadvantage, making it difficult for them to sustain productive employment. In addition, the provisions disproportionately affect people of color, individuals with disabilities, and those with limited English proficiency.

Work Requirements The law created a work requirement of 30 hours per week for most recipients, and 20 hours for mothers with children under 6 years of age. The current proposal to increase the requirement to 40 hours per week for all welfare recipients is six hours longer than the nationwide average for working mothers with young children. This requirement would hold single mothers who are welfare recipients to stricter standards than their non-welfare counterparts and as such is both unrealistic and unfair. Further, many single mothers are employed in low-paying jobs with little room for advancement, and thus they remain in poverty. Imposing stricter work requirements on mothers with small children would prevent them from engaging in other meaningful and necessary activities. Reduced work requirements are especially necessary given that funding for child care is inadequate. Only individuals with severe limitations are eligible for Supplemental Security Income; many others are forced to rely on other forms of public assistance, such as welfare. Between 20 and 40 percent of those who have left the rolls but are not working are unemployed because of a disability or illness. Of those, many lost eligibility because of failure to comply, which was directly related to a disability or illness. Increased work requirements, without needed supports, will place these individuals at an even greater disadvantage and make it more likely that they will be forced off the rolls for noncompliance. Given that many of those remaining on the rolls are the hardest to employ and that current economic conditions do not favor full-time employment for many, Congress should not increase work requirements, and in some cases reduction, perhaps to 20 hours per week, should be considered for individuals such as single parents of young children, persons with disabilities, and those with other extenuating

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circumstances. Requiring only part-time work while providing assistance will better enable these recipients to pursue education and job training. Funding for support services, especially appropriate child care, must also be increased, particularly if Congress increases work requirements. Congress should ensure that the TANF program provides adequate economic incentives to enable people to leave welfare for work. Financial support programs, such as expanded Earned Income Tax Credit, expanded state tax credits, and cash payments to supplement earnings should be addressed in the legislation. The federal government should also provide tax incentives to employers that offer family-friendly work environments, including programs such as on-site day care, flexible hours, and unscheduled leave. States should be encouraged to develop community-based programs to assist individuals with disabilities in finding work. Time limits should be eliminated for individuals with disabilities who have insurmountable barriers to employment, and these individuals should not count against state exemptions for extreme hardship cases.

Participation Requirements Considering that many of the remaining welfare recipients are the hardest to employ because of low education levels, limited English proficiency, health issues, and disabilities, states will find it difficult to meet increased participation requirements and will be forced to decide whether or not to support these individuals entirely with state funds. Discontinuation of such funding could extinguish hope within a recipient of achieving self-sufficiency. States might alternatively respond by creating low-paying, limited-future jobs instead of advancing self-sufficiency through education and training. Congress should refocus the implementation of TANF from caseload reduction to poverty reduction. State bonuses should be based on progress in reducing poverty, not moving people to poverty-sustaining jobs. Thus, Congress should do away with participation rate minimums.

Defining Work Activities The proposals call for tougher work requirements without providing the help recipients need to find decent employment and benefits. Rather than affording individuals the opportunity to obtain skills and experiences that have the potential to move them into better, living-wage jobs, this approach requires individuals to take low-wage jobs without room for advancement, simply to comply with the definition of work activity. The restriction on the number of people in each state who can count education as a work activity has prevented states from allowing many welfare recipients to pursue education. This is a disturbing trend considering the proven relationship between education and income. Studies have found that TANF recipients who are not working have significantly lower levels of education than those who are working. State policies that do not allow college courses to count toward work requirements have resulted in significantly lower college enrollment for these women. In addition, the training and education programs states offer are often inappropriate for the needs of individual recipients. Frequently, states take a one-size-fits-all approach to training. Congress should include a broader range of educational programs that meet the work-related activities requirement, such as adult basic education, literacy training, English as a second language classes, GED preparation, and postsecondary education. Congress should not place restrictions on the length of time education can be counted toward work, so that welfare recipients have realistic opportunity to move through education programs that will result in better jobs. Nor should Congress restrict the proportion of state recipients enrolled in postsecondary or vocational education, thus forcing states to limit this opportunity to a select few. Individual needs assessments should be conducted and a tailored plan developed for each recipient prior to training or employment assignments. Plans must be reviewed for progress on a quarterly basis and revised if necessary.

Time Limits While it is still too soon to determine the true impact of the initial five-year limit, as many are just now reaching that point, there is widespread concern that many of the individuals who will be forced off the rolls due to time limits are the hardest to employ, those with disabilities, and those for whom the system has failed. Researchers further predict that the five-year limit will have a disparate impact on minority recipients, with black women and Hispanic women considerably more likely than white women to spend at least five years on welfare. Negative and discriminatory treatment of individuals on welfare is likely to affect their ability to succeed off the rolls, through job retention and increased earnings, which is especially critical in an era of time-limited benefits. Congress should abolish the mandatory month time limit for participation in the TANF program, and recipients should be evaluated for eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

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Alternatively, Congress could allow extensions of time limits based on assessments of the needs of those perennially on the rolls, who are likely to be among the hardest to employ. If a time limit is imposed, Congress should require states to temporarily suspend participation for recipients who are employed, regardless of whether that employment is full time or part time. Congress should allow states the discretion to extend time for all recipients who face hardships such as a disability, taxing family responsibilities, or loss of employment. Many tribes have established independent requirements that reflect the unique economic and social conditions among tribal communities. However, despite efforts to stimulate economic development, tribal communities remain poor, and unemployment remains high. Geographic isolation and lack of education and job skills have hampered economic growth on reservations. Furthermore, many tribes lack the infrastructures and expertise to develop programs that will adequately serve the needs of their populations and have received little assistance from either state or federal government. Congress should provide resources and technical assistance to tribal TANF offices to assist them in the development of programs and infrastructures. Congress should provide to tribes capacity building and technical assistance grants, similar to those provided in state programs, so they can improve the administration of their own welfare assistance programs. Tribal TANF programs are not eligible to receive performance incentives currently available to states.

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Chapter 4 : Experimentation and Social Welfare Policymaking in the United States | MDRC

In "Working after Welfare," we experience the day-to-day struggles that single mothers face and the reasons they tend to remain in low-wage, dead-end jobs.

Plotnick, Irwin Garfinkel, Sara S. DP A simple model of fatherhood and marriage choice implies that stricter child support enforcement will tend to reduce nonmarital childbearing by raising the costs of fatherhood. We investigate this hypothesis by examining nonmarital childbearing during , a period when child support policy and enforcement underwent enormous changes. We use a sample of women from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, to which we add information on state child support enforcement. We examine childbearing behavior between the ages of 15 and 44, both before marriage and during periods of nonmarriage following divorce or widowhood. Discrete-time hazard models of nonmarital childbearing provide evidence that women living in states with more effective child support collection were less likely to bear children when unmarried. The findings suggest that policies that shift more costs of nonmarital childbearing to men may reduce this behavior.

Racial Disparities in Criminal Justice: DP This report draws on national, state, and local-level data on imprisonment rates of African Americans and whites in Wisconsin, particularly in Dane and Milwaukee Counties. The very high contribution of drug crimes to imprisonment rates is striking. Arrest and prosecution of these crimes has disproportionately affected blacks but is unlikely to accurately reflect differences in actual offending. A difference in imprisonment rates between racial groups does not prove discrimination. Factors such as family disruption, unemployment, and poverty are important influences on rates of offending as well as on rates of arrest and sentencing. In addition, policies and practices of the criminal justice system contribute to racial disparities, even without conscious prejudice or discriminatory intent. Over this period, the CPS shows a drop in the proportion of New York City households receiving public assistance, from The proportion getting at least one benefit public assistance, Food Stamps, Medicaid, or SSI stayed about the same over the period, mainly because most households losing public assistance retained their Medicaid coverage. The decline in public assistance receipt was significantly greater among Hispanic households than among blacks. Among Hispanics, the greatest rate of decline was among Puerto Ricans. The proportion of the at-risk population with earnings increased from 62 percent to 70 percent, but the proportion combining public assistance and earnings increased very little. The proportion of at-risk households with earnings rose more for Hispanics by Among the entire at-risk group, there were significant increases in household earnings, money income, and "comprehensive" income including the money value of in-kind benefits for Hispanics 38 percent, 27 percent, and 18 percent, respectively , but none for blacks or non-Hispanic whites and others. Differences between Hispanics and blacks can be described as "gap-closing," in that Hispanic rates of welfare receipt, earnings, and income converged on those of blacks. An examination of WIC takeup by eligible households using SIPP shows that takeup is lower for pregnant women than for infants, and that it is lower still for children 1 to 4. Our estimates suggest that there is substantial scope for expanding participation by eligibles, which would have significant budgetary implications for the program. A more detailed analysis of WIC participation using state-level administrative data, SIPP, and the CPS suggests that WIC participation is not strongly correlated with state-level economic indicators such as poverty and unemployment rates. Participation is correlated with program rules. States with stricter rules have lower participation, but a striking degree of state-to-state variation in participation rates remains unexplained. Demographic characteristics are predictive of participation. For example, conditional on income and eligibility, it is the less well educated who are most likely to participate. These estimates are of interest given the paucity of information about the effects of WIC on children, and the fact that children have the lowest participation rates of any categorically eligible WIC group.

Holzer, Steven Raphael, and Michael A. DP In this paper, we analyze the effect of employer-initiated criminal background checks on the likelihood that employers hire African-Americans. We find that employers who check criminal backgrounds are more likely to hire African-American workers,

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especially among men. This effect is stronger among those employers who report an aversion to hiring those with criminal records than among those who do not. We also find similar effects of employer aversion to ex-offenders and their tendency to check backgrounds on their willingness to hire other stigmatized workers, such as those with gaps in their employment history. Such discrimination appears to contribute substantially to observed employment and earnings gaps between white and black young men. DP This paper documents the characteristics, economic circumstances, and concurrent use of food stamps among single mothers using food pantries in Wisconsin in Single mothers who seek emergency food assistance have strong ties to the labor force, with almost half employed and most of the others having been employed during the past year. Most of these women use food pantries as an alternative, rather than a supplement, to food stamps, despite appearing to meet income criteria for food stamps. Concurrent food stamp use is more common among mothers with weaker employment ties, more recent welfare involvement, and greater levels of need. Single mothers who use food pantries and live in counties which have experienced large food stamp declines in the welfare reform years are less likely themselves to receive food stamps, despite high levels of need. Food Insecurity or Poverty? DP We examine the extent to which food insecurity questions and the standard poverty measure are correlated with various dietary and physiologic outcomes. Our findings suggest that the correlations vary tremendously by age. We find that the food insecurity questions are correlated with the dietary outcomes of older household members, but that they are not consistently related to the diets of children. In contrast, poverty predicts dietary outcomes among preschoolers. Among adults, both poverty and food insecurity questions are good predictors of many dietary outcomes. DP The black-white inequality in health status in the United States has persisted despite large increases in life expectancy and improvements in the health status of both races. Our objective is to examine the inequality in health status between black and white women and to explore the extent to which such differences are associated with observed dissimilarities in characteristics such as insurance status, utilization of care, and socioeconomic status. We use data from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey to estimate reduced-form health production functions. Based on results of a "Chow-type" test, separate models are estimated for the black and white samples. To account for the endogeneity of medical care utilization, we employ a Murphy-Topel two-step econometric method; a Hausman test rejects the exogeneity hypothesis. According to our medical care utilization estimation, those who are both poor and uninsured are less likely to use physician services. Controlling for observed factors, including prior health status, our estimation of the health production function shows that greater use of medical care and higher educational levels increase the likelihood of being healthy, while lower incomes and being overweight reduce that likelihood. In this paper we question the utility of this prescription on practical and theoretical grounds. Instead we distinguish among welfare cases in South Carolina on the basis of expected case duration ECD in the absence of reform. We find that when evaluated on this basis, the caseload is indeed diverse, but no natural division, tripartite or otherwise, is apparent. To the extent that comparisons are possible, our results appear consistent with many other studies of welfare leavers, although no other studies differentiate on an ECD basis. Among all leavers, those who would have been expected to leave welfare fastest appear on average to be most vulnerable to incidents of food deprivation. We address problems of selection by restricting our sample to children in families in which at least one child participates in the NSLP. Results suggest that food insecurity is associated with behavioral problems, but not health or cognitive difficulties, among children. Additionally, after adjusting for selection, participation in the NSLP does not significantly impact child outcomes; the exception is for children in families experiencing child hunger, for whom participation is associated with reduced behavioral problems. DP Many urban theorists, notably W. Wilson, hypothesize that rates of male joblessness in low-income urban neighborhoods have increased since the s. No comprehensive study examines this claim, and case studies that consider it do not adjust for changes in rates of school enrollment and the size of the old-age population. This paper tabulates male employment trends in census tracts in 49 metropolitan areas from to and models causes of these trends. The results show a marked decline in the employment of working-age men in low-income black tracts, both in absolute terms and relative to the employment rates of

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male residents of other types of tracts. By , more than 40 percent of working-age black men in low-income tracts were not employed, about two-thirds of whom were adults between the ages of 25 and Models indicate that declining urban manufacturing employment contributed to the declining rates of work for black men in low-income neighborhoods, but they do not support explanations based on spatial mismatch, suburbanization, or black out-migration. The paper concludes that Wilson is right to focus on the employment problem of low-income black neighborhoods, and that black male joblessness in low-income neighborhoods in reached crisis levels. Holzer and Paul Offner Full Text: DP In this paper, we present evidence that the employment and labor force participation rates of less-educated young black men declined in the s and the s, despite the very strong economic conditions of the latter period. The secular decline among young black men is much stronger than among other less-educated young men and stands in sharp contrast to the improving employment rates of young black women during the s. Trends in real wages are also considered. Although several factors such as rising school enrollment rates and the shrinkage of blue-collar jobs in the labor market appear to have contributed to the declining employment of young black men, much of the decline remains unexplained at this time. DP The objective of this paper is to measure the effect of participation in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children WIC after the birth of a child on one important health behavior, the initiation and persistence of breastfeeding. The study is based on linked data on mothers and children from the Children of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. Baseline, two-stage least squares, and fixed-effects model estimates show a negative effect of WIC participation on some forms of breastfeeding. The findings demonstrate that the WIC program faces a difficult challenge in encouraging low-income mothers to breastfeed while also providing needed infant formula to formula-fed infants. Robertson, and Emily A. DP We conducted the first cost-benefit analysis of a federally financed, comprehensive early childhood program. The Title I Chicago Child-Parent Centers are located in public schools and provide educational and family support services to low-income children from ages 3 to 9. Using data from a cohort of children born in who participate in the Chicago Longitudinal Study, findings indicated that the measured and projected economic benefits of preschool participation, school-age participation, and extended program participation exceeded costs. Economic benefits to the general public, exclusive of individual earnings, also exceeded costs for all three levels of program participation. Findings demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of public early childhood programs. Before and after TANF: Meyer, and Barbara Wolfe Full Text: DP Welfare caseloads have fallen dramatically in the last several years, raising questions about the economic well-being of former participants. We use administrative data from Wisconsin to provide information on the employment, earnings, and income of those who left welfare. We offer a context for understanding postwelfare well-being by making two comparisons. First we compare outcomes for welfare leavers under early Wisconsin reforms with outcomes for those who left under the later, more stringent TANF program. We find substantially higher rates of exit in the later cohort. Leavers in the later cohort are slightly more likely to be employed, with 84 percent employed during the year after exit, compared with 81 percent in the first cohort. Earnings are lower in the second cohort, which we find to be related to its members having human capital and labor market characteristics associated with lower earnings. We measure postexit personal income by adding earnings, cash assistance, Food Stamps, and the estimated EITC available to leavers and subtracting estimated payroll and income taxes. We find that leavers have substantially higher earnings than they did prior to exit, but on average the decline in benefits outweighs these increases, and as a result total measured net income in the year following exit is lower. We also make this pre-post comparison using an estimate of the family income of leavers. Although this measure reduces the rates of poverty postexit, the poverty rates of leavers are quite high, with recent leavers more likely to be poor. These results provide valuable information on outcomes for welfare recipients as reform efforts have evolved.

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Chapter 5 : Project MUSE - Working after Welfare

Taps into the quantitative and qualitative evidence gathered in the Women's Employment Study (WES), offering insights into the lives of women in an urban Michigan county who left welfare for work and the role their family decisions play in their labor market decisions.

Terminology[edit] The term "welfare dependency" is itself controversial, often carrying derogatory connotations that the recipient is unwilling to work. Instead of focusing on how to tackle the root causes of poverty, people focus on attacking the supposed poor character of the recipient. To describe a person as welfare dependent can therefore be interpreted as "blaming the victim," depending on context. Welfare, long-term reliance, and policy[edit] There is a great deal of overlap between discourses of welfare dependency and the stereotype of the welfare queen, in that long-term welfare recipients are often seen as draining public resources they have done nothing to earn, as well as stereotyped as doing nothing to improve their situation, choosing to draw benefits when there are alternatives available. This contributes to stigmatization of welfare recipients. While the stereotype of a long-term welfare recipient involves not wanting to work, in reality a large proportion of welfare recipients are engaged in some form of paid work but still cannot make ends meet. Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan argued that in the wake of the Civil Rights Act, urban Black Americans would still suffer disadvantage and remain entrenched in poverty due to the decay of the family structure. From to , both the percentage of families headed by single-parent mothers and reliance on welfare payments increased. At the same time, research began indicating that the majority of people living below the poverty line experienced only short spells of poverty, casting doubt on the notion of an entrenched underclass. Ellwood used the Panel Study of Income Dynamics to examine the duration of spells of poverty defined as continuous periods spent with income under the poverty line, looking specifically at entry and exit. They found that while three in five people who were just beginning a spell of poverty came out of it within three years, only one-quarter of people who had already been poor for three years were able to exit poverty within the next two. A small but significant group of recipients remained on welfare for much longer, forming the bulk of poverty at any one point in time and requiring the most in government resources. On the other hand, entry into poverty that was the result of a woman becoming head of household lasted on average for more than five years. Children born into poverty were particularly likely to remain poor. The federal government had been urging single-parent mothers with children to take on paid work in an effort to reduce welfare rolls since the introduction of the WIN Program in , [9] but in the s this emphasis became central to welfare policy. Emphasis turned toward personal responsibility and the attainment of self-sufficiency through work. Conservative views of welfare dependency, coming from the perspective of classical economics, argued that individual behaviors and the policies that reward them lead to the entrenchment of poverty. The Social Obligations of Citizenship argued that American welfare was too permissive, giving out benefit payments without demanding anything from poor people in return, particularly not requiring the recipient to work. Mead viewed this as directly linked to the higher incidence of social problems among poor Americans, more as a cause than an effect of poverty: The recipients seldom have to work or otherwise function to earn whatever income, service, or benefit a program gives; meager though it may be, they receive it essentially as an entitlement. Their place in American society is defined by their need and weakness, not their competence. This lack of accountability is among the reasons why nonwork, crime, family breakup, and other problems are much commoner among recipients than Americans generally. His book *Losing Ground* was also highly influential in the welfare reforms of the s. Overall, four in five exits from poverty could be explained by an increase in earnings, according to their data. The idea of combining welfare reform with work programs in order to reduce long-term dependency received bipartisan support during the s, culminating in the signing of the Family Support Act in . A lack of resources, particularly in relation to financing and case management, stymied JOBS. However, in , expansion of the

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Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), first enacted in 1975, offered working poor families with children an incentive to remain in work. Also in that year, federal legislation aimed at providing child care to families who would otherwise be dependent on welfare aided single-parent mothers in particular. Such measures were intended to decrease welfare dependence: The House Ways and Means Committee stated that the goal of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act was to "reduce the length of welfare spells by attacking dependency while simultaneously preserving the function of welfare as a safety net for families experiencing temporary financial problems. TANF was administered by individual states, with funding coming from federal block grants. However, resources were not adjusted for inflation, caseload changes, or state spending changes. Even though working could make a woman eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, the amount was not enough to make up for the rest of her withdrawn welfare benefits. Work also brought with it related costs, such as transportation and child care. Without fundamental changes in the skill profile of the average single-parent mother on welfare to address structural changes in the economy, or a significant increase in pay for low-skilled work, withdrawing welfare benefits and leaving women with only work income meant that many faced a decline in overall income. Sociologists Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein interviewed mothers on welfare in Chicago, Charleston, Boston, and San Antonio, and found that while working mothers generally had more income left over after paying rent and food than welfare mothers did, the former were still worse-off financially because of the costs associated with work. Degree of Dependence, which can be measured by the percentage of total income from means-tested benefits. Receipt of Means-Tested Assistance and Labor Force Attachment, or what percentage of recipients are in families with different degrees of labor force participation. Rates of Participation in Means-Tested Assistance Programs, or the percentage of people eligible for welfare benefits who are actually claiming them. Dependence Transitions, which breaks down recipients by demographic characteristics and the level of income that welfare benefits represented for them in previous years. Program Spell Duration, or for how long recipients draw the three means-tested benefits. Welfare Spell Duration with No Labor Force Attachment, which measures how long recipients with no one working in their family remain on welfare. In 1996, the Department estimated that 3. In general, measures of welfare dependence are assessed alongside the statistics for poverty in general. If such benefits were excluded from calculations, the dependency rate would be lower. At the time of the Moynihan Report, approximately one-quarter of Black households were headed by women, compared to about one in ten White households. In 1996, official statistics stated that This trap can be eliminated through the addition of work subsidies. This is in large part due to fundamental inequalities in the quality of public education, which are themselves traceable to class disparities because school funding is heavily reliant on local property taxes. Meanwhile, low-skilled jobs have decreased within the city, moving out toward more economically advantageous suburban locations. Under the spatial mismatch hypothesis, reductions in urban welfare dependence, particularly among Blacks, would rely on giving potential workers access to suitable jobs in affluent suburbs. Without appropriate jobs, it can be argued using rational choice theory that welfare recipients would make the decision to do what is economically advantageous to them, which often means not taking low-paid work that would require expensive childcare and lengthy commutes. However, a large proportion of welfare recipients are also in some form of work, which casts doubt on this viewpoint. The persistence of racism[edit] One perspective argues that structural problems, particularly persistent racism, have concentrated disadvantage among urban Black residents and thus caused their need to rely on long-term welfare payments. Economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s did not alleviate poverty, largely because wages remained stagnant while the availability of low-skilled but decent-paying jobs disappeared from American urban centers. Poverty could be alleviated by better-targeted economic policies as well as concerted efforts to penalize racial discrimination. However, William Julius Wilson, in *The Truly Disadvantaged*, urges caution in initiating race-based programs as there is evidence they may not benefit the poorest Black people, which would include people who have been on welfare for long periods of time. Cultural[edit] Oscar Lewis introduced a theory of a culture of poverty in the late 1950s, initially in the context of anthropological studies in Mexico. However, the idea gained currency and influenced the Moynihan Report.

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There are both liberal and conservative interpretations of the culture of poverty: Cutting the number of individuals receiving welfare payments does not mean that poverty itself has been proportionally reduced, because many people with incomes below the official poverty line may not be receiving the transfer payments they may have been entitled to in previous years. For example, in the early s there was a particularly large discrepancy between the official poverty rate and the number of AFDC recipients due to major government cuts in AFDC provision. While official welfare rolls were halved between and , many working poor families were still reliant on government aid in the form of unemployment insurance, Medicaid , and assistance with food and childcare. Whereas in the s and much of the s discussions of problems with welfare centered on dependency, the focus in more recent years has come to rest on working poverty. Poverty rates in the United States have risen since the implementation of welfare reform. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. The Department of Work and Pensions has released a report claiming that Disability Living Allowance , the main payment given to people who are severely disabled, "can act as a barrier to work" and causes some recipients to become dependent on it as a source of income rather than looking for a suitable job. The New Deal programs, targeted towards different groups of long-term unemployed people such as lone parents, young people, disabled people, and musicians, gave the government the ability to stop the benefit payments of people who did not accept reasonable offers of employment.

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Chapter 6 : Welfare dependency - Wikipedia

Using five waves of data from a study of former and current welfare recipients in Michigan, this study examines how the extent of work participation and welfare receipt over the period

It is an honor to be a part of this historic meeting of leaders committed to developing, designing, and experimenting with new approaches to help the unemployed reenter the labor market. As an American, it is also a humbling experience. France has been a trailblazer in social welfare policy: While I have been invited to share the U. Our countries share many of the same social policy goals. We want to help parents support their families and children, and we want to assist both citizens and newcomers to succeed in the labor market. But we begin from very different places. France has a much more comprehensive social welfare system than the U. And our labor markets differ in important ways. Instead, I want to describe how we have used social policy experimentation to tackle employment and welfare problems. It is a remarkable story. But only you can decide the relevance of that story for France. To help you appreciate the role that experimentation has played and is playing in the U. Let me begin by previewing my conclusions: Social experimentation can be a powerful tool for bringing about change, but it works best when conditions are ripe for change and when there is a widely shared commitment to learn both what works “ and what does not. Experimentation is seldom a panacea: But the alternative “ failing to build a record of what works and what does not “ leaves one to make policy on the basis of anecdote and ideology, and thus to repeat past mistakes. Experimentation leaves its greatest legacy when it builds both reliable evidence about what works and the program capacity to deliver effective services. MDRC is a nongovernmental organization that was created by a consortium of federal government agencies and a private foundation. It was founded in , a time when American policymakers wanted better evidence that social programs actually worked and that the benefits of these programs exceeded their costs. The idea was to design, develop, and test new program ideas, using rigorous research methods to learn whether programs worked before making them national policy. Our goal was twofold: We wanted to build infrastructure “ by which I mean the capacity to implement programs in multiple locations and at scale. And we wanted to build reliable evidence about what worked. To build evidence, MDRC and its colleagues had to answer several questions: What difference did the program make? How and why did it work? If a program did not work, knowing why was critical to designing a better one. If a program did work, knowing how was crucial to replicating the intervention on a larger scale. But reliably determining whether a program is effective is challenging. To know whether a particular program caused a change in employment, we have to know what would have happened if the program did not exist. Did someone leave public assistance and take a job because of the program or because they would have done so anyway? To determine the net difference a program makes, one needs a counterfactual, a comparison or control group of similar people that shows us what would have happened in the absence of the program. Random assignment uses a lottery-like process to create two groups that do not differ systematically “ except that one is eligible for the new program and one is not. By identifying a pool of eligible people, and then randomly assigning them to a program group that is eligible for the new services or to a control group that is not, any subsequent difference in outcomes between the two groups “ say, employment rates “ can be confidently attributed to the effects of the program. Random assignment designs are fair “ everyone has an equal chance to participate in the program. They are also ethical when: Informed consent to join the study is usually required. The results from random assignment studies have the virtue of being simple to understand, and, when implemented well, such studies are seldom challenged. While random assignment can sometimes be controversial, American researchers have shown that it is feasible to implement. For example, MDRC has conducted at least 40 large-scale randomized controlled trials in more than communities in the past 30 years, involving more than , people. And such social policy experiments are not just a U. In the past years, large random assignment studies have been successfully undertaken in Canada, Mexico, and the United Kingdom. Why this

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preoccupation with evidence? In the starkest terms, if you want to make the world a better place, public policy has to actually do things that make a positive difference. Let me illustrate some of the opportunities and challenges of social policy experimentation by describing how the U. A new program called Aid to Families with Dependent Children was established to provide cash assistance to widows so they would not have to work and could stay home with their children. The program remained small for nearly 30 years, and then suddenly, in the s, rates of out-of-wedlock childbearing began rising, the welfare rolls began to grow rapidly, and welfare costs began to increase. At the same time, many more women were entering the labor market. By the mids, more than half of all mothers with children were working. This situation raised questions about basic fairness: Why should some work for a living, while others got help from the government? The right maintained that the welfare system was anti-work and anti-marriage and was hurting families more than it was helping; the left countered that every family was entitled to a basic level of income and support. Conservatives wanted to restrict eligibility for welfare; liberals favored higher benefits. The poor themselves preferred work and also despised welfare; it intruded in their lives and society looked down on them. The system was ripe for change that would better align social welfare policy with the bedrock American values of work, independence, responsibility, and family. Somewhat surprisingly, a group of conservative and liberal leaders including President Ronald Reagan and then-Governor Bill Clinton supported legislation that gave states the right to reform welfare rules “ in return for welfare benefits, recipients would have to prepare to find work, but the system would also offer new employment services and other supports to help them do so. The federal government provided the funding and the flexibility, and states and localities provided the program structure to deliver services. But two key elements were missing from this political consensus for reform: MDRC secured a grant from the Ford Foundation and support from federal research agencies to work with the states in developing and evaluating these new reforms. In return for participating, states received: In some cases, funding to help support their programs and offset data collection costs. Technical assistance from experienced MDRC staff. The opportunity to meet with and learn from their counterparts from other states. Formative feedback about their programs as the evaluation progressed. It was the beginning of an extraordinary long-term partnership between government and nonprofit service agencies seeking to reform welfare and researchers attempting to assess the effectiveness of their new programs. Eventually, 11 research and demonstration projects were begun, involving the random assignment of about 65, people to program groups that would receive the new services or to control groups that would not. Now the philosophy and the focus began to shift “ the goal was to help people make the transition from welfare to work. The programs tried a wide range of approaches singly and in combination, including intensive job search, temporary public jobs, and short-term education and training. They also offered a range of support services, including counseling, child care, and other supports. Participation was mandatory for able-bodied welfare recipients whose children were six years of age or older. What did we learn? It was feasible to operate these programs at scale, but participation levels varied across the sites. Participants thought the work requirements were fair, and most said they preferred work to welfare. The programs were cost effective: There was no evidence that children were harmed when their mothers went to work. Income generally did not increase; in these programs, welfare recipients traded a welfare check for a paycheck. Although the programs did not help everyone, these findings combined with those from studies begun by other organizations had a profound impact on the political debate about welfare reform. Now both the right and the left had to argue within the bounds of the evidence. And the evidence challenged long-held beliefs of both groups. Conservatives learned that social programs could work and that the benefits could exceed the costs. Liberals learned that work mandates and requirements could produce positive effects, that children were not harmed by welfare-to-work programs, and that participants thought the programs were fair and preferred work to welfare. No longer could policy be based only on anecdote and ideology. After two decades of failed attempts to reform the welfare system, this new consensus “ based on experience and evidence “ led to passage of federal legislation, the Family Support Act. As a Congressional staffer explained at the time: In all the years I worked on welfare reform, we never had a body

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of data that showed what workedâ€¦For the first time, we could characterize reform as an investment. Importantly, while the results of experimentation told the nation what worked, it also showed what did not work, and what we still did not know. Remarkably, the welfare reform law included funding for a next generation of experiments that would use random assignment research methods. These and related experiments answered such questions as: What would help people with employment barriers who were left behind? Would more investment in education and training help people get better jobs? What would happen if the government supported people when they worked by supplementing their low wages? Over the next decade, a new round of experiments was launched to answer these questions. Because it is so central to your objectives, I want to briefly summarize what we have learned about the third question, providing support for people when they work. Three experiments with earnings supplements two in the U. What would happen if we built supports around work rather than non-work? All three provided work incentives in the form of monthly cash payments to supplement the earnings of low-wage workers. Nearly 15, people participated in the three experiments; all used random assignment research designs. Despite differences in program rules and differences in local labor markets and economies, results across the three projects were nearly identical:

Chapter 7 : Newsletter - The Center for Rural PA

-- Peeking inside the "black box" of employment transitions -- What working mothers want -- Challenges to advancement among former welfare recipients -- Policies to bring work and family back into balance. Working after welfare: how women balance jobs and family in the wake of welfare reform Electronic books en USA.

Chapter 8 : IRP Discussion Paper Abstracts -

Relatedly, the analysis shows that classifying recipients into two groups is a useful predictor of labor market potential: short-termers who participate in welfare only occasionally and for short periods, and all others.

Chapter 9 : Recommendations to Congress on the Reauthorization of PRWORA

This study analyzes the employment patterns of current and former welfare recipients over a 6â€•year period to examine who works in temporary jobs, the dynamics of temping, and the training and links to regular jobs that temping provides.