

#90-07

0-10-07

**The Effects of the Family Support Act  
on Child Development**

Kristin A. Moore, Nicholas Zill, and Thomas Stief  
Child Trends  
2100 M Street, NW, Suite 610  
Washington, DC 20037

Paper presented at the  
1990 Meetings of the  
Population Association of America

May 1990

## **FIGURE 1:**

### **The Impact of JOBS on Children and Families:**

#### **CURRENT STUDY DESIGN**

- **Data collection at Baseline, 2-year follow-up, and 5-year follow-up**
- **In-person interviews and assessments with mother and child**
- **Children aged 3-5 at Baseline**
- **Data from teacher and school to be collected between time of 2- and 5-year follow-ups**
- **Three sites**
- **Homogeneity in treatments and services across sites**
- **Data will be collected about child outcomes and about intervening processes hypothesized to affect these outcomes**
- **MIS data about services received will be collected**
- **2,570 children at time of Baseline; assuming a 70 percent completion rate, this would yield 1,800 children at the time of the 5-year follow-up**
- **Four types of child outcomes:**
  - **cognitive development and academic achievement**
  - **safety and health**
  - **problem behavior and emotional well-being**
  - **social development**

**TABLE 14: Percent Distribution of Behavior Problems Index (BPI) Scores among First-Born Children Age 4-7 of NLSY Women Who (1) Received AFDC, (2) Were Poor But Did Not Receive AFDC, or (3) Were Not Poor.**

<u>Child's BPI Percentile Score</u>	<u>Mother on AFDC</u>	<u>Mother poor, not on AFDC</u>	<u>Mother not poor, not on AFDC</u>	<u>All children in subsample</u>
3-30	11%	10%	15%	13%
31-50	21	17	18	18
51-70	15	17	20	19
71-90	24	25	31	29
91-100	30	32	17	20
	-----	-----	-----	-----
	101%	101%	101%	99%
Unweighted N	210	136	684	1,030

Tau c = -.073, p < .001

**NOTE:** BPI = Behavior Problems Index; a higher score indicates more problems.

**SOURCE:** Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth, (NLSY). BPI data is from 1986 Child Supplement; mother's poverty and AFDC status are from 1987 survey.

**TABLE 13: Percent Distribution of Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) Scores Among First-Born Children Age 4-7 of NLSY Women by Time on Welfare in the Last Five Years.**

Child's PPVT Percentile Score	<u>Mother on AFDC in 1987</u>		<u>Mother poor, not on AFDC in 1987</u>		<u>Mother not poor, not on AFDC in 1987</u>	
	<u>&gt;3 yrs</u>	<u>&lt;3 yrs</u>	<u>some</u>	<u>no</u>	<u>some</u>	<u>no</u>
	<u>AFDC</u>	<u>AFDC</u>	<u>AFDC</u>	<u>AFDC</u>	<u>AFDC</u>	<u>AFDC</u>
	<u>1983-87</u>	<u>1983-87</u>	<u>1983-87</u>	<u>1983-87</u>	<u>1983-87</u>	<u>1983-87</u>
0-9	48%	21%	44%	21%	26%	13%
10-29	21	29	29	18	21	16
30-49	14	19	18	30	20	23
50-99	17	31	9	31	33	48
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Unweighted N	123	72	38	77	113	511

NOTE: PPVT = Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. Children whose standard score was less than 62 were given a percentile score of 0%.

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth, (NLSY). PPVT data is from 1986 Child Supplement; mother's poverty and AFDC status are from 1987 survey.

**TABLE 12: Percent Distribution of Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) Scores Among First-Born Children Age 4-7 of NLSY Women Who (1) Received AFDC, (2) Were Poor But Did Not Receive AFDC, or (3) Were Not Poor.**

<b>Child's PPVT Percentile Score</b>	<b>Mother on <u>AFDC</u></b>	<b>Mother poor, not on <u>AFDC</u></b>	<b>Mother not poor, not on <u>AFDC</u></b>	<b>All children <u>in subsample</u></b>
0-9	36%	28%	15%	20%
10-29	25	23	17	19
30-49	16	25	22	22
50-99	23	23	46	40
	-----	-----	-----	-----
	100%	99%	100%	101%
 Unweighted N	 200	 118	 641	 959

Tau c = .183, p < .001

NOTES: PPVT = Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. Children whose standard score was less than 62 were given a percentile score of 0%.

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth (NLSY). PPVT data is from 1986 Child Supplement; mother's poverty and AFDC status are from 1987 survey.

**TABLE 11: Percent Distribution of Scores on the HOME Scale  
(Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment)  
Among Children of Women Who (1) Received AFDC, (2) Were  
Poor But Did Not Receive AFDC, or (3) Were Not Poor.**

	Mother on <u>AFDC</u>	Mother poor, not on <u>AFDC</u>	Mother not poor, not on <u>AFDC</u>
<u>HOME Cognitive Subscale Score:</u>			
More than 1 S.D. below mean	27.9	25.5	12.7
Between mean and 1 S.D. below mean	35.3	32.3	25.2
Between mean and 1 S.D. above mean	32.0	30.3	46.8
More than 1 S.D. above mean	4.7	12.0	15.3
Unweighted N	1,107	664	2,836

Tau c = .166, p = 0.11

	Mother on <u>AFDC</u>	Mother poor, not on <u>AFDC</u>	Mother not poor, not on <u>AFDC</u>
<u>HOME Emotional Subscale Score:</u>			
More than 1 S.D. below mean	34.7	22.2	10.7
Between mean and 1 S.D. below mean	33.6	37.1	25.7
Between mean and 1 S.D. above mean	25.1	30.2	45.3
More than 1 S.D. above mean	6.7	10.5	18.3
Unweighted N	1,113	662	2,837

Tau c = .211, p = .011

NOTE: "S.D." means standard deviation.

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth, (NLSY). HOME data is from 1986 Child Supplement; mother's poverty and AFDC status are from 1987 survey.

**TABLE 10: Percent Distribution of Scores on the HOME Scale  
(Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment)  
Among Children of Women Who (1) Received AFDC, (2) Were  
Poor But Did Not Receive AFDC, or (3) Were Not Poor.**

<u>Total HOME Scale Score:</u>	<u>Mother on AFDC</u>	<u>Mother poor, not on AFDC</u>	<u>Mother not poor, not on AFDC</u>
More than 1 S.D. below mean	30.8	24.1	9.1
Between mean and 1 S.D. below mean	40.7	34.7	25.5
Between mean and 1 S.D. above mean	23.7	33.9	47.7
More than 1 S.D. above mean	4.9	7.4	17.6
Unweighted N	1,112	664	2,835

Tau c = .235, p = .011

---

NOTE: A higher HOME score denotes a more stimulating and nurturing home environment. "S.D." means standard deviation.

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth, (NLSY). HOME data is from 1986 Child Supplement; mother's poverty and AFDC status are from 1987 survey.

TABLE 9. Percent Distribution on Self-Esteem and Female-Role Attitudes Scales of Mothers Who Received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in Past Year, Mothers Below Poverty Line Who Did Not Receive AFDC, Mothers Who Were Not Below Poverty Line and Did Not Receive AFDC, and Non-Mothers, U.S. Women Aged 22-30, 1987.

<u>CHARACTERISTIC</u>	<u>AFDC MOTHERS</u>	<u>POOR, NON-AFDC MOTHERS</u>	<u>NON-POOR, NON-AFDC MOTHERS</u>	<u>NON- MOTHERS</u>	<u>ALL WOMEN</u>
Proportion in Population	7%	5%	40%	48%	100%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<u>Self-Esteem Scale</u>					
High Esteem (10-14)	18%	18%	34%	40%	35%
Moderate Esteem (15-19)	32%	38%	35%	36%	35%
Low Esteem (20 or more)	49%	45%	31%	24%	30%
Tau c = -.139, p < .001					
<u>Female Roles Scale</u>					
Traditional (18+)	32%	34%	30%	17%	24%
High Moderate (16-17)	29%	30%	26%	25%	26%
Low Moderate (14-15)	19%	20%	17%	23%	20%
Non-Traditional (<=13)	19%	17%	27%	35%	30%
Tau b = -.149, p < .001					
Unweighted N	597	377	2,157	2,238	5,369

SOURCE: Child Trends, based on public use files from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth (NLSY), 1987 data.



TABLE 8. Frequency of Alcohol-Related Problems and Age At First Use of Marijuana and Other Drugs Among Mothers Who Received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in Past Year, Mothers Below Poverty Line Who Did Not Receive AFDC, Mothers Who Were Not Below Poverty Line and Did Not Receive AFDC, and Non-Mothers, U.S. Women Aged 22-30, 1987.

<u>CHARACTERISTIC</u>	<u>AFDC</u> <u>MOTHERS</u>	<u>POOR,</u> <u>NON-AFDC</u> <u>MOTHERS</u>	<u>NON-POOR,</u> <u>NON-AFDC</u> <u>MOTHERS</u>	<u>NON-</u> <u>MOTHERS</u>	<u>ALL</u> <u>WOMEN</u>
Proportion in Population	7%	5%	40%	48%	100%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<u>Alcohol-Related Problems</u>					
None	74%	84%	88%	77%	82%
One or two	14%	10%	8%	15%	12%
Three or more	12%	6%	4%	7%	6%
					Tau c = .047, p < .001
<u>First Used Marijuana</u>					
Never Used	35%	40%	43%	38%	40%
In Young Adulthood	15%	18%	14%	17%	16%
In Adolescence or Before	49%	42%	42%	44%	44%
					(not significant)
<u>First Used Other Drugs</u>					
Never Used	73%	73%	78%	71%	74%
In Young Adulthood	4%	7%	3%	5%	4%
Before Age 21	23%	20%	19%	24%	22%
					Tau c = -.031, p < .01
Unweighted N	578	365	2,063	2,180	5,186

SOURCE: Child Trends, based on public use files from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth (NLSY), alcohol-related problems and drug use reports as of 1985, welfare receipt, poverty status, and parenthood as of 1987.

**TABLE 7: Proportion of AFDC Mothers, Poor Non-AFDC Mothers, and Non-Poor Non-AFDC Mothers Living with Other Adults and Living with Teens in Their Home (Weighted Percents and Unweighted Ns).**

<u>Persons Other Than the Mother in the Household</u>	<u>AFDC Mothers</u>	<u>Non-AFDC Poor Mothers</u>	<u>Non-AFDC Non-Poor Mothers</u>	<u>Non-Mothers</u>	<u>All Women</u>
One or more persons aged 18-70	50%	61%	91%	82%	82%
One or more females aged 18-70	16	15	11	38	25
One or more persons aged 14-18	5	7	3	6	5
One or more females aged 14-18	3	4	2	3	2
One or more persons aged 16-18	4	1	2	5	4
One or more females aged 16-18	2	1	1	2	2
Unweighted N	597	377	2,157	2,238	5,369

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth (NLSY), 1987.



**TABLE 5. Average AFQT Scores (Standardized) of All Women and AFDC Mothers in Different Occupational Classes and Proportions of AFDC Mothers With Test Scores Similar To Those Of Women In Each Class, U.S. Women Aged 22 - 30, 1987.**

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MEAN AFQT SCORE</u>	<u>RANGE (+/- 1 S.D.)</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF ALL AFDC MOMS WITH TEST SCORES IN OR ABOVE RANGE</u>	<u>MEAN SCORE AND NUMBER OF AFDC MOTHERS WITH JOB EXPERIENCE IN THIS CATEGORY</u>
ALL WOMEN (n = 5,369)	100	85 - 115		
AFDC MOMS (n = 597)	86	71 - 101	84%	90 (n = 232)
<u>OCCUPATIONAL CLASS</u>				
Manual Operatives	91	77 - 105	69%	92 (26)
Household Workers	95	78 - 112	67%	88 (21)
Crafts & Construction	95	80 - 108	63%	94 (13)
Service Occupations	96	81 - 111	60%	85 (90)
Clerical/ Secretarial	101	88 - 114	45%	92 (53)
Sales Workers	104	91 - 117	39%	91 (11)
Management/Adminstrtve	105	93 - 117	35%	97 (7)
Professional/Technical	108	96 - 120	29%	94 (10)

NOTES: AFQT = Armed Forces Qualification Test, converted to standard scores. Occupational class is based on woman's current or most recent job. Examples of "Manual Operatives": clothing ironers, dressmakers, gas station attendants, dry cleaning workers, meat wrappers, sewers. "Household Workers": child care providers, housekeepers, cooks, etc., who are employed in private households. "Crafts & Construction": Dental lab technicians, inspectors, machinists, tailors, telephone installers, tool and die makers, construction workers, garbage collectors, teamsters. "Service Occupations": bartenders, waiters, dental assistants, nursing aides, flight attendants, hairdressers.

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth (NLSY). Occupation and welfare status as of 1987, AFQT administered in 1980.

**TABLE 4: Standardized AFQT Scores of AFDC Mothers, Non-AFDC Mothers, and Women Without Children, U.S. Women Aged 22-30, 1987.**

	<u>AFDC Mothers</u>	<u>Poor, Not on AFDC</u>	<u>Not Poor, No AFDC</u>	<u>Non- Mothers</u>	<u>All Women</u>
<b><u>Intellectual Achievement</u></b>					
Mean AFQT Score	86	86	99	104	100
Standard Deviation	15	15	14	13	15
<b><u>Percent with scores:</u></b>					
more than 1 SD below mean	47%	43%	15%	9%	16%
within 1 SD below mean	31	34	33	22	27
within 1 SD above mean	21	22	36	44	38
more than 1 SD above mean	2	2	15	25	19
	<u>101%</u>	<u>101%</u>	<u>99%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>
					Tau b = .272, p < .001
Unweighted N	578	365	2,063	2,180	5,186

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth (NLSY). AFQT administered in 1980.

**TABLE 3: Educational Attainment and GED/Diploma Status of AFDC Mothers, Non-AFDC Mothers, and Women Without Children, U.S. Women Aged 22-30, 1987.**

	<u>AFDC Mothers</u>	<u>Poor, Not on AFDC</u>	<u>Not Poor, No AFDC</u>	<u>Non-Mothers</u>	<u>All Women</u>
Number in Population	1.2 mil.	0.8 mil.	6.6 mil.	7.9 mil.	16.5 mil.
Unweighted Number in Sample	597	377	2,157	2,238	5,369
<u>Educational Attainment</u>					
Grade school only	6%	11%	2%	1%	2%
Some high school	29	26	10	3	9
High school graduate	51	50	59	34	45
Some college	13	12	21	28	23
College graduate or more	<1	1	9	33	20
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>101%</u>	<u>99%</u>	<u>99%</u>
				Tau c = .338, p < .001	
<u>GED or High School Diploma</u>					
Neither	36%	40%	13%	4%	12%
GED only	14	9	8	3	6
Diploma	36	38	49	32	39
>12 years education	13	13	30	62	43
	<u>99%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>101%</u>	<u>100%</u>
				Tau b = .386, p < .001	
Unweighted N	587	366	2,129	2,222	5,304

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth (NLSY).

**TABLE 2: Demographic Characteristics of AFDC Mothers, Non-AFDC Mothers, and Women Without Children, U.S. Women Aged 22-30, 1987.<sup>1</sup>**

	<u>AFDC Mothers</u>	<u>Poor, Not on AFDC</u>	<u>Not Poor, No AFDC</u>	<u>Non- Mothers</u>	<u>All Women</u>
<b><u>Current Age</u></b>					
22-23	23%	22%	15%	29%	22%
24-25	27	24	19	29	25
26-27	25	28	28	24	25
28-30	25	26	38	29	28
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>
<b><u>Age at First Birth</u></b>					
< 17	31%	31%	13%	--	9%
18-19	26	26	20	--	12
20-24	38	40	48	--	24
25 or more	5	3	19	--	8
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>53%</u>
<b><u>Number of Children</u></b>					
1	35%	38%	48%	--	23%
2	38	37	40	--	20
3	19	16	10	--	6
4 or more	8	8	2	--	2
	<u>100%</u>	<u>99%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>51%</u>
<b><u>Race/ Hispanic Origin</u></b>					
Black	40%	33%	15	10%	14%
Hispanic	11	6	4	4	6
Non-black, non-Hispanic	49	61	82	86	80
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>101%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>
<b><u>Marital Status</u></b>					
Never married	47%	27%	7%	58%	35%
Separated, Divorced or Widowed	32	47	12	9	13
Married, spouse present	21	26	81	33	52
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>
Unweighted N	597	377	2,157	2,238	5,369

SOURCE: Child Trends, Inc., analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of Youth (NLSY).

<sup>1</sup> AFDC mothers are mothers who reported in 1987 that they were receiving AFDC in 1986; poor mothers reported incomes below the U.S. poverty threshold, as calculated by the Center for Human Resource Research. Mothers with missing data on income are coded as not poor, the modal category.

Table 1: AFDC Mothers by Age of Mother and Age of Youngest Child,  
All States in U.S., Fiscal Year 1987.

MOTHER'S AGE	All Ages	NUMBER OF MOTHERS WHOSE YOUNGEST CHILD IS AGED:						
		Under 1	1-2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12-15	16+
All Ages	3,177,300	459,800	810,600	748,600	465,200	295,100	289,700	108,300
17 or less	31,200	14,100	16,700	400	--	--	--	--
18-19	166,300	64,500	87,600	14,200	--	--	--	--
20-23	604,200	160,500	272,000	153,300	17,800	600	--	--
24-29	1,005,800	142,300	284,300	330,200	180,200	59,000	9,800	--
30-39	1,009,800	71,600	136,700	221,900	218,100	170,200	154,700	36,700
40-64	360,000	6,800	13,300	28,600	49,100	65,300	125,200	71,700

MOTHER'S AGE	All Ages	Total	PERCENT OF MOTHERS WHOSE YOUNGEST CHILD IS AGED:						
			Under 1	1-2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12-15	16+
All Ages	100%	100%	14%	26%	24%	15%	9%	9%	3%
17 or less	1%	100%	45%	54%	1%	--	--	--	--
18-19	5%	100%	39%	53%	9%	--	--	--	--
20-23	19%	100%	27%	45%	25%	3%	--	--	--
24-29	32%	100%	14%	28%	33%	18%	6%	1%	--
30-39	32%	100%	7%	14%	22%	22%	17%	15%	4%
40-64	11%	100%	2%	4%	8%	14%	18%	35%	20%

**NOTES:**

Numbers are rounded to the nearest 100; percents, to the nearest unit.

The symbol "--" indicates a number below 50 or a percent less than 0.5%.

The NIQCS data does not distinguish between children who are under one year of age and those between one and two years. In the tables above, the number under one year is estimated as 51% of all those under two years; the remainder is added to the number of two-year-olds to produce the next column. (This percentage was determined from Current Population Survey figures.)

Because the "mother" in the data file in some cases may actually be the grandmother or an adult sister, cases in which the age difference between the "mother" and the youngest child is less than 13 or greater than 45 have been dropped.

**SOURCE:**

Child Trends, Inc. Calculated from tabulations prepared by ASPE Technical Support Staff, based on public use files from the National Integrated Quality Control System's random sample of each state's AFDC case-load, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



## REFERENCES

- Adler, Michele. 1988. "Health and disability status of AFDC families." Paper presented at the ASA Annual Meetings, Social Statistics Section.
- Alvarez, William F. 1985. "The meaning of maternal employment for mothers and their perceptions of their three-year-old children." *Child Development* 56: 350-360.
- Baker, Paula C., and Frank L. Mott. 1989. NLSY child handbook, 1989. A guide and resource document for the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1986 child data. Columbus, OH: Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University.
- Clarke-Stewart, K. Alison. 1989. "Infant day care: Maligned or malignant?" *American Psychologist* 44: 266-273.
- Duncan, Greg J., and Saul D. Hoffman. 1990. "Teenage welfare receipt and subsequent dependence among black adolescent mothers." *Family Planning Perspectives* 22: 16-20.
- Furstenberg, Frank F., Jr., J. Brooks-Gunn, and S. Phillip Morgan. 1987. *Adolescent mothers in later life*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Haskins, Ron. 1989. "Beyond metaphor: The efficacy of early childhood education." *American Psychologist* 44: 274-282.
- Hayes, Cheryl D., and Sheila B. Kamerman (eds.). 1983. *Children of working parents: Experiences and outcomes*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Hoffman, Lois Wladis. 1989. "Effects of maternal employment in the two-parent family." *American Psychologist* 44: 283-292.
- Kamerman, Sheila B., and Cheryl D. Hayes (eds.). 1982. *Families that work: Children in a changing world*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Moore, Kristin A., and Nancy Snyder. 1990. "School progress of young mothers and child development." Paper prepared under grant N01-HD-23286 from the Center for Population Research, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family Support Administration, Office of Family Assistance, Office of Policy & Evaluation. 1986. 1983: Recipient characteristics and financial circumstances of AFDC recipients. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

attendance, behavior in school, and achievement levels, permitting a rigorous assessment of whether children's school attainment is different for the children of experimentals and controls.

Another data collection effort that the Department of Education seems very likely to fund is achievement testing of mothers at the time of random assignment and again two years later. This will enable researchers to examine the effects on the mothers of the human capital development activities to be conducted as a part of JOBS. It will also enable us to examine the effects for children of having mothers participate in education and training activities. As was clear from the descriptive analyses, mothers on AFDC tend to have quite low achievement scores. The impact of JOBS on mother's scores and the indirect effect of achievement gains on children are important to examine. Because maternal achievement levels will be assessed both prior to participation in JOBS and again after participation and because mothers will be randomly assigned as either experimentals or controls, this will be a unique opportunity to examine the effects on children of enhancing the human capital of mothers.

Data collection will take place in three sites that are currently being selected. We anticipate that these sites will include white, black, and Hispanic mothers, and that study members may speak either English or Spanish. Since we plan to merge data from the three child impact sites, we will attempt to select sites that are as homogeneous as possible in terms of the JOBS program they plan to implement, how stringent they intend to be in enforcing the mandate on mothers, in the supply of child care available in the community, and in the type of educational services that will be offered.

At the present time, we are designing the baseline questionnaire for the mother and selecting assessment instruments to use with the children. Since survey interviewers will be administering these assessments in the home setting, special consideration must be given to the feasibility of particular instruments. Reliable and practical measures seem to exist for the measurement of the pre-school child's ability or achievement level, health and behavior problems. The measurement of social development among pre-schoolers is more difficult. Data on demographic, employment and family characteristics will be obtained during the interview with the mother, and an event history calendar will be completed. The data for this study will be placed in an archive so that others may also analyze the data, and we welcome the suggestions of other researchers, as well as other interested persons, regarding the study design or measures to be included.

Current plans call for random assignment of 2,570 child/mother pairs to either an experimental group in which the mother is assigned to participate in JOBS or a control group in which the mother does not receive JOBS services. There are two services which mothers in the control group can receive; these are Medicaid and transitional child care authorized under the Family Support Act; but mothers in the control group will have to obtain employment and seek child care services on their own initiative without the assistance of the JOBS staff.

It is currently planned that data collection will occur at three points in time: baseline, 2 years after the baseline, and 5 years after the baseline. The baseline data collection would occur in the home of the AFDC recipient as soon after random assignment as is possible. At the time of random assignment, children would be aged 3, 4 or 5. If the woman has more than one child in this age group, one child would be selected randomly to be the focal child for the study. However, some data will be collected about all children.

Data collection is expected to take about an hour and a half. Perhaps an hour of this time will be spent interviewing the mother about herself and about her child. The remaining time will be spent conducting assessments of the child. As the children become older, some questions can be directed at the child; but initially the mother will have to be the primary informant.

Four types of child outcomes will be assessed:

- cognitive development and academic achievement;
- safety and health
- problem behavior and emotional well-being; and
- social development.

We will of course compare outcomes for the control group and the experimental group in these several domains. We also intend, though, to compare outcomes for important sub-groups, such as the children of mothers in the experimental group who prefer not to be employed and children of mothers in the control group who prefer not to be employed. In addition, we plan to collect detailed information on family social and demographic characteristics and on the education, welfare, fertility, child care, marital, household structure, and employment experiences of the mothers so that it will be possible to conduct multivariate analyses of the processes underlying outcomes for children.

We anticipate that data collection will also be conducted in the schools attended by study children just prior to the five-year follow-up. If this part of the study goes forward, which seems likely, it will be funded by the Department of Education. This part of the study will provide important information from an independent and relatively reliable source on the child's

JOBS leads to the child being enrolled in good-quality child care and education programs, the effects of JOBS could be positive for children (Haskins, 1989).

Also, if maternal participation in JOBS leads to improvements in the mother's life such that her income improves, her self-esteem increases, or her depression lessens, there could be positive secondary effects for the child (Hoffman, 1989).

It bears mentioning, though, that the JOBS program is intended to affect outcomes for mothers. It is not an intervention focused directly on children, as is a program such as Head Start. Therefore, the impacts on children will be indirect and they may be small. Of course, if they are so small they cannot be measured reliably with a large sample, then it is probably reasonable to argue that they are not policy relevant or socially important impacts. The single most important result of this study could be, in fact, a finding that among the pre-school children of JOBS participants, JOBS has little impact on their children's development, in particular that they are not harmed by the mandatory involvement of their mothers in job training, education, and employment.

### Study Design

The JOBS program, as the centerpiece of the Family Support Act, is the vehicle for enhancing the employability of welfare parents. It places a major emphasis on education, both basic education and job training. It extends the mandate to participate to women whose youngest child is age three and provides an option for states to include women with children down to age one. The impact of this program among AFDC recipients is being examined in a series of studies. The study of child impacts is embedded in a larger study being conducted by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation -- MDRC -- in New York City. MDRC is designing parallel longitudinal, experimental studies of the impact of the JOBS program on educational, employment, and welfare outcomes among the mothers. Child Trends, as the sub-contractor for MDRC, is developing the study of the impact of the JOBS program on children and their families. Both studies are funded by the Department of Health and Human Services. Additional funds from the Department of Education are likely to support a study of the impact of JOBS on the educational achievement of mothers and to supplement the study of the educational outcomes of children.

An overview of the study of child outcomes is provided in Figure 1. This description reflects our initial plans and some aspects of the study may change. For example, if additional funds are obtained, data on child care quality will be collected.

school." AFDC children, as assessed by their mothers in the Behavior Problems Index, tend to exhibit more problem behavior than do children as a whole (Table 14). Thirty percent of the welfare group fall into the most problematic group, as compared to 20 percent of all the children. However, being in poverty seems to be a more important factor in predicting disruptive behavior than does AFDC reciprocity -- the percentages for children whose mothers are poor but not on AFDC display almost the same distribution (32% in the 91st percentile or higher.)

## **CURRENT PLANS FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE JOBS PROGRAM ON THE CHILDREN OF AFDC RECIPIENTS**

### **Hypotheses**

Our examination of the impact of JOBS on children is motivated by contrasting hypotheses from two very different literatures -- the literature on maternal employment and that on pre-school education programs.

One hypothesis regarding the impact of the JOBS program among the children of AFDC mothers arises from a concern about the well-being of the very young children of mothers who are now subject to an employment and training mandate. For decades, concerns have been raised about the consequences of maternal employment for the young children of employed mothers. While existing research does not show strong or universal negative effects, there are concerns about some sub-groups of children, such as children who receive low-quality or inconsistent child care and children whose mothers are employed but not by choice (see Kamerman & Hayes, 1982; Hayes & Kamerman, 1983; Clarke-Stewart, 1989; Hoffman, 1989; and Alvarez, 1985). That is, studies have found that children tend to do just fine when their mothers work out of choice, but that negative outcomes are more likely when mothers are not working by choice but due to necessity. Since AFDC mothers are being mandated -- that is, required -- to work or enter training whether they want to or not, the question arises as to whether or not a negative situation will develop for some children. Also, since AFDC mothers are a low-income population, the possibility exists that they will not be able to afford optimal child care arrangements, particularly after the 12-month transitional child care assistance is no longer being provided. Hence, the possibility needs to be examined that there may be negative effects of JOBS for at least some sub-groups of children due to low-quality or inconsistent child care.

On the other hand, the literature on the effects of early childhood education suggests that if maternal participation in

In Table 11, the components of the HOME scale are broken into two subscales -- cognitive and emotional. Again, children in AFDC families are the least likely to live in homes rich in cognitive stimulation. Children in non-poor, non-AFDC families are considerably more likely to live in cognitively stimulating homes, with poor, non-AFDC children falling in between, but toward the low end.

In terms of emotional stimulation, children in AFDC families are also at a disadvantage compared with poor, non-AFDC children, and particularly compared with children whose families are neither poor nor on AFDC.

Cognitive achievement. Table 12 shows the distribution of scores for different groups of first-born children of NLSY mothers on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), a measure of cognitive achievement. Differences between children whose mothers receive AFDC and other children are striking. Thirty-six percent of the AFDC group have scores which fall below the tenth percentile, as compared to 20 percent of all the children in the sample. Only 23 percent of the AFDC children lie in the highest-ability group, compared with 40 percent of all the children. Because this table and the two which follow are based on the 1986 child-mother supplement to the NLSY, a sample which is known to over-represent disadvantaged children, all of these distributions are lower than one would find in a random sample of children.

Further analysis reveals an association between the child's PPVT score and time spent on welfare during the last five years (Table 13). Children whose mothers reported in 1987 received AFDC in 1987 are broken down into those who had been on welfare for more than three years versus those who had received AFDC for a shorter time. Over twice as many long-term welfare recipients fall into the lowest-scoring group (48% versus 21%). Of the shorter-term recipients, a substantial proportion -- 31% -- are in the fiftieth percentile or above. Differences of similar magnitude exist among poor children who did not receive AFDC in 1987, when comparing those who had received some amount of welfare payments in the last five years to those who had received none. Again, among children whose mothers were neither poor nor on welfare in 1987, those whose mothers were ever on welfare during the preceding five years had lower scores. At this time, it can not be said whether these associations are the result of differential selection into welfare, to the effects of poverty and other experiences associated with going on and being on welfare, or to some aspect of being on welfare in and of itself.

Behavior. Table 14 presents data for the first-born children of NLSY mothers aged 22-30 in 1987 on the Behavior Problems Index, a widely-used parent report measure of child behavior, such as whether the child "acts without thinking," "has a strong temper and loses it easily," and "is disobedient at

percent were more middle-of-the-road, but leaning toward the traditional orientation. About 38 percent either espoused non-traditional views about maternal employment, or leaned in that direction (Table 9, bottom panel). Poor, non-AFDC mothers showed a similar distribution of attitudes, even though, as a group, they were more likely to have been employed regularly during the previous five years. The majority of non-poor mothers also endorsed or leaned toward traditional attitudes, though less so than the welfare and poverty groups. The majority of non-mothers endorsed or leaned toward acceptance of maternal employment and other non-traditional roles for women.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHILDREN IN AFDC FAMILIES

In 1986, the children of women who are NLSY respondents participated in a series of developmental assessments designed to shed light on the childrearing practices of these young mothers and on the cognitive and social development of their children. Assessments were completed in the child's home by especially trained interviewers. All children in a family were assessed. Analyses completed on the data thus far suggest that the quality of the data collected is high (Baker and Mott, 1989; Moore and Snyder, 1990).

Stimulation and Nurturance in the Home. One of the measures included in the NLSY-Child Supplement is the HOME (Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment) Scale. Some of the items are questions addressed to the mother, such as whether the child gets special lessons, owns books, how many toys the child has, and how the child is punished, while others are interviewer observations, such as whether the interior of the home is dark and monotonous and whether the mother slapped or spanked the child during the interview. Since different items were asked for children of different ages, a standardized scale was produced. Table 10 depicts the proportion of children falling within one standard deviation above the mean (a positive environment), above one standard deviation (a very positive environment), within one standard deviation below the mean (a negative environment), and more than one standard deviation below the mean (a very negative environment).

A clear and statistically significant pattern is found, such that children whose families received AFDC are more likely to live in homes that lack stimulation and nurturance. Low income children from families that do not receive AFDC are also relatively likely to live in more negative environments and less likely to live in very positive environments. Hence, not just AFDC receipt but also poverty seem to be related to the adequacy of the home environment.

Although NLSY questions about drug use were less detailed than those about drinking, there was an item about the age at which the respondent first used marijuana and another about age at first use of other illicit drugs. AFDC mothers were somewhat more likely than other mothers to report having first used marijuana in adolescence and less likely to report never having used it, but the differences are not striking. Nearly half of the AFDC mothers and 42 percent of non-poor mothers had first used marijuana as adolescents; 35 percent of the AFDC mothers -- as opposed to 43 percent of the non-poor mothers -- had never used it. The marijuana use of poor, non-AFDC mothers was similar to that of the non-poor mothers, whereas the non-mothers, like the AFDC mothers, were slightly higher in early marijuana use.

Nearly one-quarter of the AFDC mothers reported using other illicit drugs before the age of 21; 73 percent said they had never used such drugs. As with marijuana, non-mothers and AFDC mothers tended to report earlier use and greater overall use than non-poor mothers, but differences were slight.

Self-esteem and depression. Nearly half of all AFDC mothers show low self-esteem, as do 45 percent of mothers below poverty who have not received welfare in the last year. Self-esteem is defined as the degree of expressed approval toward oneself. Low self-esteem refers to feelings of disapproval or unworthiness. An example of an agree-disagree item from the Rosenberg self-esteem scale included in the NLSY is: "At times I think I am no good at all." (The scale is scored such that higher scores indicate lower self-esteem.)

Data from the NLSY using the Rosenberg scale show that 18 percent of AFDC mothers were high in self-esteem, 32 percent had intermediate scores, and 49 percent showed low self-esteem (see Table 9). Poor, non-AFDC mothers also showed a preponderance of low self-esteem cases, whereas non-poor mothers showed a more balanced distribution on the scale, similar to that for all women. The bulk of the non-mothers felt good about themselves, coming out high-to-moderate in self-esteem.

Analysis of data from another source show that welfare mothers are also prone to depression. Mothers in Wave I of the National Survey of Children conducted in 1976 were asked: "How often do you have days when you feel sad and blue?" One-third of single mothers on AFDC reported feeling this way "fairly" or "very often" (not shown). By contrast, only 8 percent of married mothers not on AFDC reported such frequent feelings of depression.

Attitudes about appropriate roles for women with children. Data from the NLSY show that nearly one-third of AFDC mothers held traditional (i.e., negative) attitudes about women with young children being employed outside the home. Another 29



mothers had also been welfare recipients at some point in the previous five years. Most of these women had received AFDC for 2 years or less. A total of 13 percent of all women in the NLSY sample had received welfare for some time during the preceding five years.

About one in six AFDC mothers in the NLSY -- 17 percent -- reported receiving government-sponsored vocational training during one or more of the preceding five years. This compares with 11 percent of poor, non-AFDC mothers, 4 percent of non-poor mothers, and 5 percent of non-mothers.

Presence of other household members. Interestingly, one half (50 percent) of the AFDC recipients have at least one other person aged 18-70 living in their household (Table 7). Since 21 percent of AFDC mothers were found to be married with husband present (see Table 2), spouses clearly account for nearly half of these other adults. While the proportion with one or more other adults in the household is not nearly as large as the corresponding figure for non-AFDC non-poor women (91 percent), such a substantial proportion nevertheless suggests the potential for in-home child care for AFDC mothers in training or employment development activities. The actual availability and willingness of these adults to help with child care is not known. It bears mentioning that 16 percent of AFDC mothers live with another adult female aged 18-70, who might assist with child care.

Because other adults are likely to be employed outside of the house, the proportion of households with teens was also obtained for each comparison group. Only 5 percent of the AFDC mothers live with a person who is 14 to 18 years old -- a figure not much higher than that for the non-AFDC non-poor group (3 percent); this represents a small proportion from the point of meeting child care needs.

Alcohol-related problems and drug use. Data from the NLSY show that more than a quarter of the mothers on AFDC in 1987 reported one or more alcohol-related problems in 1985, when a series of questions about drinking and drug use were asked. This was significantly higher than the proportion for poor, non-AFDC mothers and more than twice the proportion found among non-poor mothers (Table 8). An alcohol-related problem was defined as an affirmative response to the following type of question: "Has drinking ever interfered with your work on a job?"; "During the past year, have you awakened the next day not being able to remember things you had done while drinking?".

Interestingly, non-mothers in the NLSY also showed a relatively high proportion of alcohol-related problems. This may be both because the non-mothers tended to be younger than the mothers, and because non-mothers are more likely to take part in events where alcoholic beverages are consumed in quantity.

administrative workers and 108 for holders of professional and technical positions (see Table 5).

The AFQT scores that lay one standard deviation below and one standard deviation above the mean for each occupational class were also calculated. Based on NLSY data on the distribution of AFQT scores for AFDC mothers, estimates were made of the proportion of welfare mothers who had AFQT scores that fell in or above the -1 S.D. to +1 S.D. range for each occupational class. These proportions can be thought of as the proportion of AFDC mothers who "qualify" for a given type of job, based on their AFQT scores. These proportions ranged from 69 percent for manual operatives, to 60 percent for service occupations, to 45 percent for clerical and secretarial jobs, down to 29 percent for professional and technical occupations.

The number of AFDC mothers who had recent employment experience in each of the occupational classes was also determined, and the mean AFQT score for these women was calculated. Only a minority of the AFDC mothers (232 of 597, in unweighted numbers) had such experience, with most of the workers falling into the service and clerical-secretarial categories. Not surprisingly, the mean AFQT score of the AFDC mothers with work experience (90) was higher than the mean for those without work experience. Generally, the average AFQT score for welfare mothers with work experience in a given occupational class fell within the +/- 1 S.D. range for that class. The AFQT means tended to fluctuate from class to class, however, rather than paralleling the pattern observed for all women workers. This is to be expected, given the small number of AFDC cases in most of the occupational categories.

Work, welfare, and vocational training experience. Because respondents in the NLSY participate in annual interviews, a detailed record of employment experience is available. The majority of the mothers in the NLSY who were on AFDC during 1986 had had some work experience in the previous five years, but not much (Table 6). The mean number of weeks worked was 59. Only 20 percent had worked for the equivalent of 2 years or more during the interval. By comparison, 43 percent of the poor, non-AFDC mothers, 71 percent of the non-poor mothers, and 90 percent of the non-mothers had had 2 years or more of employment. About 57 percent of the welfare mothers had worked less than a year in the last five years, and 27 percent had not worked at all.

Nearly half of the AFDC mothers -- 46 percent -- were long-term welfare recipients; i.e., they had received AFDC during more than three of the preceding 5 years. Twenty-one percent had received welfare for a year or less.

It is worth noting that about 30 percent of the currently poor, non-AFDC mothers and 10 percent of the currently non-poor

AFDC mothers with high school diplomas is higher than often assumed.

These results reflect the general increase in educational attainment in the U.S., especially among blacks, as well as an increasing proportion of youth who complete GED requirements rather than acquiring a high school diploma the traditional way. Only 36 percent of AFDC mothers graduated after completing high school, while 14 percent obtained a GED. This is a higher proportion with a GED than is found in other groups of young women (though some of that difference may occur because these other women may be more likely to continue with their schooling after completing a GED). AFDC mothers are clearly the most likely group of young women to hold a terminal GED or a terminal high school diploma of any kind.

Intellectual achievement. Youth participating in the NLSY were given a battery of cognitive tests that are a sub-set of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Inventory. This test is called the Armed Forces Qualifying Test, or AFQT. As shown in Table 4, the performance of the AFDC mothers on the AFQT was well below average. Indeed, the mean score of the AFDC mothers -- 86 -- was nearly one full standard deviation below the mean for all women in the NLSY. (The overall standard mean score was 100, with a standard deviation of 15.) Non-AFDC mothers in poverty, however, had the same average AFQT scores as AFDC mothers. By contrast, the mean score for non-poor, non-AFDC mothers -- 99 -- was just slightly below average, and the score for non-mothers -- 104 -- was above average. Stated another way, 47% of AFDC mothers scored 1 standard deviation or more below the mean, as did 43% of non-AFDC mothers in poverty, 15% of other mothers, and 9% of non-mothers. These results suggest that moving AFDC mothers into employment that will bring them out of poverty will be a challenging task.

Women in the NLSY sample (including AFDC recipients) who had employment experience were classified according to the occupational class of their current or most recent job (as of the 1987 survey). The major categories of the 1970 Census occupational classification system were used, with slight modifications. This resulted in the women's jobs being divided into eight categories: manual operatives; household workers; crafts and construction workers; service occupations; clerical and secretarial; sales workers; management and administrative; and professional and technical occupations. (See notes to Table 5 for examples of these occupational classes.)

The mean standardized AFQT score for women with jobs in each of these occupational classes was determined. The means ranged from 91 for manual operatives and 95 for household workers and crafts and construction workers up to 105 for management and

Current age and age at first birth. The demographic characteristics of the AFDC mothers in the 1987 wave of the NLSY are shown in Table 2. Since the NLSY is a longitudinal survey of persons aged 14-21 in 1979 (who were 22-30 in 1987), it represents only a particular U.S. age cohort and not the entire population. However, the richness of the NLSY and the longitudinal nature of the data provide a particularly informative view of young women who receive AFDC compared with those who do not.

The AFDC group is fairly evenly distributed across the 22-30 age-range of the NLSY sample, being younger, on average, than non-AFDC mothers, and older than the non-mothers. This would be expected given the association between teen motherhood and welfare status. Fifty-seven percent of these AFDC mothers aged 22-30 had their first child before the age of 20, compared with 36 percent of the non-AFDC mothers.

Family size. It is relatively rare for AFDC mothers to have very large families nowadays (Family Support Administration, 1983). This change is illustrated by data from the NLSY. Among women 22-30, only 8 percent have 4 or more children. (It is possible, of course, that some of these women will have more children later in life.) However, family sizes are significantly larger for women on AFDC than for non-AFDC mothers. Whereas 27 percent of the AFDC mothers had 3 or more children, only 14 percent of the non-AFDC mothers had this many children.

Ethnic composition and marital status. Just over half of the AFDC mothers are black and Hispanic, with 40 percent being black and 11 percent Hispanic. In the overall sample of women in the NLSY, 14 percent are black and 6 percent Hispanic (weighted percents). In terms of marital status, the never-married comprised the largest subgroup, making up 47 percent of AFDC women. About a third were separated, divorced, or widowed, and about 20 percent were married with a spouse present (not necessarily the father of the children). By contrast, more than three-quarters of the non-AFDC mothers were married with the spouse present, 15 percent were separated, divorced, or widowed, and only 9 percent were never-married.

Educational attainment. Half of the AFDC recipients in the 1987 NLSY had completed high school, and an additional 14 percent had some college or other post-high school education. Hence, nearly two-thirds completed high school. However, less than one percent were college graduates.

To be sure, the educational attainment of AFDC recipients is significantly lower than that of other women. Thus, 84 percent of non-AFDC mothers, and 95 percent of non-mothers in the sample, had completed high school or more, compared with two-thirds of AFDC mothers (Table 3). Nevertheless, the proportion of young

training, and supportive services. We do not attempt to resolve this debate -- in fact, some of the data supports each perspective. Rather, we seek to provide additional and richer information regarding the characteristics of the welfare population. We think our results show AFDC recipients to be a disadvantaged yet a varied group. The heterogeneity of the welfare population has received increasing recognition over the past decade; but the ways in which AFDC recipients differ from and are similar to mothers who are not recipients have received little systematic attention.

To fill this gap, Child Trends has been conducting descriptive analyses comparing AFDC recipients with other mothers and with non-mothers on a wide variety of characteristics, ranging from scores on a test of ability to reported drug use to the characteristics of the home environment that parents provide for their children. Analyses are being conducted on data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), the AFDC Quality Control Survey (QCS), the Child Health Supplement to the National Health Interview Survey, the Current Population Survey, and the National Survey of Children. At present, we have results from the QCS and the NLSY. Reporting the results of these analyses represents the first part of this presentation. In the second part, we will provide an overview of our current plans for a longitudinal experimental study to evaluate the impact of JOBS on the children of AFDC recipients.

#### **CHARACTERISTICS OF MOTHERS WHO ARE AFDC RECIPIENTS COMPARED WITH THOSE OF OTHER WOMEN**

Age of mother and age of youngest child. Table 1 is based on data from the AFDC Quality Control Survey (QCS). This survey collects information about persons who receive AFDC. While it does not represent the U.S. population as a whole, it does provide data on a large sample of welfare recipients.

As Table 1 shows, more than half of all the mothers who receive AFDC are in their twenties. About 200,000 are teenagers; a million are in their thirties; and another 360,000 are 40 or older. Only about 1 in 5 AFDC mothers have a youngest child who is 9 or older. About two-thirds of the women on AFDC have at least one child age 5 or younger. Until now these women have been exempt from work and training requirements. The Family Support Act has changed this by mandating education, training, or job search for mothers whose youngest child is aged 3-5. Given widespread interest in the consequences of this momentous change, children aged 3-5 will be the primary focus of the study of the impact of JOBS on children. The data in Table 1 indicate that about 750,000 women fall into this newly-eligible category.

Enforcement program by requiring automatic withholding of child support from the wages of absent parents, use of state guidelines in making child support awards, and increases in the establishment of paternity. The law also compels all states to provide AFDC to low-income, two-parent families in which the principal wage earner is unemployed.

One component of the Family Support legislation requires an evaluation of the impact of the JOBS program. These evaluations are being funded by the Family Support Administration and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, DHHS. The government held a competition to decide who should conduct this large and lengthy evaluation, and the award was made October 1, 1989 to the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) and its sub-contractor Child Trends. MDRC has overall charge of designing and implementing the evaluation. Child Trends has responsibility for designing the evaluation of the impact of the JOBS program on the children of AFDC mothers. JOBS is to be implemented by the states by October 1, 1990, so the process of site selection, study design, and instrument selection is moving forward rapidly.

#### Overview of Paper

Both to inform this impact evaluation and to inform state and federal policy makers who are currently working to implement the complex provisions of the Family Support Act, Child Trends is conducting a related project to describe the characteristics of the AFDC population. This project is funded by the Foundation for Child Development and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, DHHS.

We know some characteristics of the welfare recipients on the basis of reports issued regularly by the Family Support Administration based on the AFDC Quality Control Survey. Our knowledge is also enhanced by analyses conducted by researchers across the country (e.g., Furstenberg et al., 1987; Duncan and Hoffman, 1990). However, a large and important gap has existed in our knowledge of the characteristics of recipients because government publications provide only a limited number of cross-tabulations on a limited set of demographic variables, while academic researchers almost never make description the central focus of their research.

Opinions about the characteristics of AFDC recipients are common, however. Some hold that welfare mothers lack motivation and have negative attitudes about work. This perspective suggests that individuals are selected into welfare because of negative personal characteristics. Others argue that welfare recipients are victims of poverty, discrimination, poor economic opportunities, and a lack of work experience. This perspective frequently concludes that welfare recipients need education, job

## INTRODUCTION

### The Changing Character of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program

The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program was inaugurated in the Social Security Act of 1935 in order to help widows remain in the home to raise their children. In the intervening half-century, numerous social and demographic changes have combined to alter the nature of the program, and the characteristics of AFDC recipients have changed dramatically. Widows now comprise only a small minority of AFDC recipients, with only 1.8 percent of the children receiving AFDC being eligible because their fathers have died. Today, fifty percent have unmarried parents, and another 35 percent have divorced or separated parents. Thus, never-married mothers and divorced and separated mothers now constitute 85 percent of all recipients (Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, 1989).

In addition, as the proportion of mothers who are employed has risen dramatically, the premise of a program designed to help some mothers stay home to raise their children at the taxpayer's expense, while other mothers juggle home and family, has come under scrutiny and attack. In an environment in which all government programs were candidates for cutting, as was very much the case in the 1980s, the AFDC program was particularly the focus of attention. The issue was the form of change more than whether change would occur. The law that was passed, the Family Support Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-45), represents a compromise between several viewpoints and marks a major change in the philosophy underlying the provision of welfare assistance to poor families with children in the United States.

### Provisions of the Family Support Act

The Family Support Act makes numerous changes in the AFDC program and in the Child Support Enforcement program. The intent of these changes is that public assistance should be a means for helping parents move from welfare dependency to self-sufficiency, rather than a source of long-term support for indigent families. Self-sufficiency is to be attained through the paid employment of welfare parents, including those with young children, and through the establishment and enforcement of the child support obligations of absent parents.

The law creates a new program of education, training, and employment-related services for AFDC recipients, The Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training program, or JOBS. It extends Medicaid coverage and underwrites the cost of child care for one year for families that stop receiving AFDC because of increased earnings. The law bolsters the Child Support