

File Behind Action

*200
EPH6TSP*

Contact: Phoebe Cottingham
(212) 869-8500

Draft #4 (8/21/90)

Sandra Silverman
(212) 736-5050

For Release: September 20, 1990

**WELFARE-TO-WORK PROGRAMS NEED TO INTEGRATE
REMEDIAL AND JOB SKILLS**

Rockefeller Foundation Releases Important Study Results

NEW YORK CITY, September 20, 1990...A six-year, \$17 million program of job training for low-income single mothers shows that ~~the~~ model integrating remedial education with job skills is more successful than other, more traditional approaches to moving people into the labor force.

This program, initiated and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, has major implications for a federal effort seeking to train welfare mothers for jobs. The federal government will invest up to \$1 billion annually in Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) for welfare-to-work efforts which are likely to use models that produced no significant impact in the Foundation-supported program.

"We are sounding the alert," said Hugh B. Price, vice president of the Rockefeller Foundation. "Under the 1988 Family Support Act (FSA), state

More...

agencies are now planning extensive education and employment preparation programs. We hope these agencies are willing to seriously consider the way in which their services are to be delivered in light of the findings from our program. This is a perfect opportunity to test in a broader range of settings the model we found so successful."

The study, summarized in More Jobs and Higher Pay, was conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., and examines the outcomes of projects conducted by community-based organizations in four cities: Atlanta (GA), San Jose (CA), Providence (RI) and Washington, D.C. Three of the sites ran traditional programs--remedial education first, followed by job training. The fourth site, the Center for Employment Training (CET) in San Jose, was the only one to integrate remedial education with job training.

"The results in San Jose are dramatic," said Dr. Phoebe Cottingham, Foundation project director for the Minority Female Single Parent Demonstration. "There was a 27% increase in employment and a 47% increase in earning for mothers who were in the program compared to a control group of mothers. In the other cities, there was no significant difference between the success of mothers in or out of the program."

More...

The integrated model used in San Jose and the traditional model used in the other cities differed in some important ways:

- The integrated model focuses employment training on specific jobs open in the local labor market and confines remedial education to the requirements of those jobs. The model also surrounds the training with day care and other much-needed support services for the mothers and their children. Educational achievement testing is not a part of this model.
- The traditional model generally requires participants to complete more general basic education courses and only then enter job-skill training.

"Remediation-first programs take women who have already failed at school and put them right back into the same classroom environment," said Dr. Cottingham. "Too few participants in these traditional programs make it to job skill-training, and those who do often end up getting classroom-based training rather than job-related practical training."

More...

Comprehensive study

During the study phase of the Foundation-supported program, the community-based organizations provided an array of services, including remedial education, job skill and employability training as well as counseling and day care to low-income minority single mothers over a four-year period.

The study gathered data from the programs over three years from a sample of 4,000 applicants who were randomly assigned at each site to either the program or a control groups. The control group mirrored the demographics of the participating mothers but did not receive any of the services. Comparisons of both program and control groups subsequent employment and earning show the impact of the demonstration programs.

The cost per participant for the integrated program in San Jose was about \$350⁰/₁, according to Dr. Cottingham. "That compares favorably with the cost of the traditional model in the study," she said. "In fact, at two of the remediation first sites the cost per participant was higher, yet had no payoff in jobs or higher pay."

More...

Rigorous Evaluation

Mathematica Policy Research (MPR), which conducted the evaluation study, specializes in social policy research, evaluation and data collection. MPR has completed analyses of program operations, program costs and program impacts on the labor-market success of participants during the first 12 months after they filed applications to participate. Future analyses will examine impact on labor-market success and other measures of family well-being at 30 and 60 months after application.

This is the first scientifically rigorous outcome study of remedial education and job training. Evaluation research in the 1980's on work-welfare demonstrations (that helped fortify the employment objectives of the Family Support Act) was limited to less costly job-search training and mandatory community work experience, which found relatively small employment and earnings increases.

The Rockefeller Foundation has long been interested in welfare and employment issues. Other related projects of the Foundation include: