OPRE

2020-2025 Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network (FSSRN)

FSSRN
Family Self-Sufficiency & Stability Research Network

Introduction

The Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network (the FSSRN) supports independent researchers working to enhance family self-sufficiency research at the state and local levels. The FSSRN promotes productive partnerships between social science scholars (the grantee's Principal Investigators, or PIs) and state or local human services agencies. As such, PIs have a partnership with one or more state or local human services agency responsible for administering benefits or programming to support family self-sufficiency, including the agency responsible for administering the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, as an integral part of their research plan. In addition to supporting the PI to pursue their individual programs of rigorous and relevant research, the grantees also participate in a multidisciplinary learning community by collaborating with the other members of the FSSRN. The current cohort of FSSRN grants were awarded in January 2020 for a 60-month project period. The projects are summarized in the chart below.

FSSRN Grantee Summary Chart

GRANTEE INFORMATION			PROJECT INFORMATION		
FSSRN Grantee	**Project Title**	**Principal Investigator**	**Project Aims**	**Primary Methods**	**Partner(s)**
University of California, Berkeley School of Social Welfare	Racial Equity in the TANF Service Delivery Path to Family Stability and Self-Sufficiency	Yu-Ling Chang, Ph.D.	This project aims to: 1. understand the racial disparities in access, services and treatments, and outcomes TANF participants experienced in a context of state-level reforms of the work-first approach, and 2. examine the racial impact of county-level welfare-to-work (WTW) service orientations on family stability and self-sufficiency outcomes.	Primary methods are currently being revised. However, at the time of this publication, they are as follows: • This project will leverage client-level data from the Research and Development Enterprise Project and regression analysis to examine racial disparities in access, services, treatments, and outcomes. • Additionally, the researchers will use the county-level CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) data and regression analysis with propensity score weighting to test the racial impact of counties' WTW service orientations on TANF outcomes.	California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

GRANTEE INFORMATION			PROJECT INFORMATION		
FSSRN Grantee	**Project Title**	**Principal Investigator**	**Project Aims**	**Primary Methods**	**Partner(s)**
Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy	Local Criminal Justice Reform Efforts: Effects on Employment, Self-Sufficiency, and Family Well-Being	Anna Gassman-Pines, Ph.D.	This project will examine: 1. how drivers' license reinstatement affects individuals' employment and self-sufficiency, and 2. the additional benefits of drivers' license reinstatement on family functioning and child well-being.	• This study will evaluate a local program that waives the fees of those who have a suspended license due to failure to pay to determine whether having a drivers' license improves employment and self-sufficiency. The sample is made up of those who are eligible for the program. • Those who are eligible for the program are randomly assigned to receive court-fee relief at different times. Analyses will compare those who have already received fee relief to those who have not yet received court-fee relief through the program. • Data is being gathered via in-depth qualitative interviews with individuals eligible for the program.	Durham County Department of Social Services
Rutgers University The Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy	Family and Economic Stability: Examining TANF as a Supportive Program	Andrea Hetling, Ph.D.	This project aims to: 1. identify the challenges low-income mothers face in achieving financial and family stability, and in what ways the TANF program addresses or fails to address those challenges, and 2. examine the potential impacts of New Jersey's Supportive Assistance to Individuals and Families (SAIF) program, which provides an additional year of benefits for those who have reached the 60-month federal time limit for TANF.	• This project relies on a mixed methods approach that combines administrative data and qualitative data collected from caseworkers and TANF recipients. • The administrative data analysis will examine demographic characteristics, program participation, and service receipt, comparing experiences among low-income mothers with different lengths of time on TANF, using an equity lens. • The qualitative data portion of the project includes interviews and focus groups to deepen our understanding of program and community factors that relate to participant experiences and outcomes.	New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Family Development

GRANTEE INFORMATION			PROJECT INFORMATION		
FSSRN Grantee	**Project Title**	**Principal Investigator**	**Project Aims**	**Primary Methods**	**Partner(s)**
Wayne State University School of Social Work	TANF Program and Policy Implementation in Michigan: Building State Capacity for Program Assessment to Promote Family Self-Sufficiency	Kristina Nikolova, Ph.D.	This project has two aims: 1. determine why Michigan has the highest rate of rejection of welfare applications and how the process can be improved to better address the barriers faced by families, and 2. examine the effect COVID-19 policy changes in the administration of TANF has on families' economic self-sufficiency.	• This project includes both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The qualitative component of the project involves a content analysis of policy, procedural, and assessment documents used in Michigan, as well as interviews and focus groups with program administrators and case workers. • The quantitative component will include an evaluation of cross-program administrative data to compare employment outcomes and how families use multiple benefit sources.	Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
Oregon State University College of Public Health, School of Social and Behavioral Health Sciences	Paid Family Leave and Family Self-Sufficiency: Evidence from Oregon	David Rothwell, MSW, Ph.D.	This project has three aims: 1. estimate families' economic security around birth, 2. explore the processes and choices that families make around work and safety net participation before and after birth, and 3. assess the effect of Oregon's Paid Family Leave policy on self-sufficiency.	• This study will use linked administrative data from birth records, wage/earnings records, and TANF/safety net program participation records, as well as primary qualitative data collection with low-income parents to address the three project aims.	Oregon Department of Human Services, Oregon Employment Department, the Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative, and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

2020-2025 Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network (FSSRN)

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**.** This summary and other reports sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation are available at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/.

Follow OPRE on Twitter
@OPRE_ACF

Sign-up for OPRE News

Like OPRE on Facebook
facebook.com/OPRE.ACF

Follow OPRE on Instagram
@opre_ACF