The Employment Retention
and Advancement Project

Results from the Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment (PRIDE) Program in New York City

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Overview

Many states are searching for ways to promote employment among welfare recipients facing serious barriers to work. This report presents interim results from an evaluation of New York City's Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment (PRIDE) program, a large-scale welfare-to-work program for recipients with work-limiting medical or mental health conditions. The PRIDE evaluation is part of the Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) project, which was conceived by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The ERA project is being conducted by MDRC under contract to ACF, with additional funding from the U.S. Department of Labor.

PRIDE operated from 1999 to 2004, serving more than 30,000 people, before it was replaced by a new program that builds on the PRIDE model. PRIDE started with an in-depth assessment of participants' work and education history and their medical conditions. The program's employment services were similar to those in New York's regular welfare-to-work program — emphasizing unpaid work experience, education, and job placement assistance — but, in PRIDE, staff tried to ensure that participants were assigned to activities that took account of their medical conditions (most commonly, orthopedic problems, mental health conditions, asthma, or high blood pressure).

PRIDE is being evaluated using a random assignment research design: More than 3,000 eligible recipients were assigned, through a lottery-like process, to the PRIDE group, which was required to participate in the program in accordance with citywide rules, or to the control group, which was neither required nor permitted to participate in PRIDE but could seek out other services.

Key Findings

- **The PRIDE group was substantially more likely than the control group to participate in work experience and job search activities.** PRIDE was an ambitious program involving complex linkages among several agencies. Despite some operational difficulties, the program identified and engaged a large number of recipients who had previously been exempt from work requirements. At the same time, a large proportion of the PRIDE group — about one-third — was sanctioned (that is, they had welfare benefits reduced) as a penalty for noncompliance, far higher than the control group figure of about 8 percent.

- **PRIDE generated increases in employment.** For example, 34 percent of the PRIDE group worked in a job covered by unemployment insurance within two years after entering the study, compared with 27 percent of the control group. While it is impressive that PRIDE was able to increase employment for a very disadvantaged target group, about two-thirds of the PRIDE group never worked during the two-year period.

- **PRIDE significantly reduced welfare payments.** The PRIDE group received $818 less (about 7 percent less) in cash assistance than the control group over the two years. The reduction was driven partly by the employment gains and partly by the high rate of sanctioning.

MDRC will continue to track both groups and will report longer-term results in the future. These early findings show that it is feasible to operate a large-scale mandatory work program for recipients with health-related employment barriers. Moreover, PRIDE increased employment. However, there are also reasons for caution: Most people in the PRIDE group did not go to work, and many were sanctioned for failing to participate in the program.

Contents

Overview iii
List of Tables, Figures, and Boxes vii
About the Employment Retention and Advancement Project ix
Acknowledgments xi
Executive Summary ES-1

Introduction 1
Overview of the National ERA Project 1
The PRIDE Program 2
About the ERA Evaluation in New York City 9

Implementation of the PRIDE Program 15
The Framework of the PRIDE Program: Structure and Staffing 15
PRIDE's Services 18
Responses to Noncompliance 26
How PRIDE Staff Spent Their Time 26
Services for the Control Group 28

Effects on Program Participation and Service Receipt 31

Effects on Employment and Public Assistance Receipt 37
Effects for Single Parents 37
Effects for Safety Net Recipients Without Dependent Children 47

Appendixes
A: Supplementary Tables for "Introduction" 51
B: Supplementary Tables for "Effects on Employment and Public Assistance Receipt" 55
C: Impacts on Other Outcomes 65
D: Description of ERA Projects 71
E: Notes for Tables and Figures Displaying Results Calculated with Administrative Records Data 75
F: Notes for Tables and Figures Displaying Results Calculated with Responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey 77
G: Time-Study Tables from the NYC PRIDE Program 79
H: ERA 12-Month Survey Response Analysis for the NYC PRIDE Program 83

References 93
Earlier MDRC Publications on the Employment Retention and Advancement Project 95

List of Tables, Figures, and Boxes

Table

ES.1	Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Single Parents	ES-8
1	Selected Characteristics of Sample Members at Baseline, by Target Group	7
2	Information on Health Status, from the ERA 12-Month Survey, Control Group Only	8
3	Sample Sizes for Target Populations and Subgroups Used in the Analysis	13
4	Impacts on Participation in Job Search, Education, Training, and Other Activities for Single Parents	32
5	Impacts on Areas in Which the Respondent Received Help, for Single Parents	35
6	Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Single Parents	38
7	Impacts on Job Characteristics in Current or Most Recent Job, for Single Parents, from the ERA 12-Month Survey	40
8	Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Single Parents, by Type of Assistance	46
9	Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Safety Net Recipients Without Dependent Children	48
A.1	Selected Characteristics of Single-Parent Sample Members at Baseline, by Research Group	52
B.1	Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Single Parents	56
B.2	Impacts on Quarterly UI-Covered Employment for Single Parents	58
B.3	Impacts on Job Retention for Single Parents	59
B.4	Impacts on Job Advancement for Single Parents	60
B.5	Impacts on Quarterly UI-Covered Employment and Welfare Status for Single Parents	61
B.6	Impacts on Quarterly Cash Assistance Receipt and Payments for Single Parents	63
B.7	Impacts on Quarterly Food Stamp Receipt and Payments for Single Parents	64
C.1	Impacts on Household Income and Composition for Single Parents	66
C.2	Impacts on Other Outcomes for Single Parents	67
C.3	Impacts on Health for Single Parents	69

Table

C.4	Impacts on Receipt of Mental Health, Domestic Violence, and Substance Abuse Services	70
D.1	Description of ERA Projects	72
G.1	Extent of Contact Between Case Managers and Clients	80
G.2	Description of Contact Between Case Managers and Clients	81
G.3	Activities or Topics Typically Covered During Client Contacts	82
H.1	Estimated Regression Coefficients for the Probability of Being a Respondent to the ERA 12-Month Survey	87
H.2	Background Characteristics of Survey Respondents Who Were Randomly Assigned from July to December 2002	88
H.3	Comparison of Impacts for the Research, Eligible, Fielded, and Respondent Samples	90

Figure

ES.1	Years 1 and 2, Impacts on Quarterly UI-Covered Employment and Cash Assistance for Single Parents	ES-8
1	Random Assignment Periods	11
2	Participant Flow	19
3	Summary of How PRIDE Case Managers Typically Spend Their Time	28
4	Years 1 and 2, Impacts on Quarterly Employment and Cash Assistance for Single Parents	43

Box

1	After PRIDE: HRA's WeCARE Initiative	27
2	How to Read the Tables in the ERA Evaluation	33
3	Cross-Site Comparison of Control Groups in Year 1	42
H.1	Key Analysis Samples	85

About the Employment Retention and Advancement Project

The federal welfare overhaul of 1996 ushered in myriad policy changes aimed at getting low-income parents off public assistance and into employment. These changes — especially cash welfare's transformation from an entitlement into a time-limited benefit contingent on work participation — have intensified the need to help low-income families become economically self-sufficient and remain so in the long term. Although a fair amount is known about how to help welfare recipients prepare for and find jobs in the first place, the Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) project is the most comprehensive effort thus far to discover which approaches help welfare recipients and other low-income people stay steadily employed and advance in their jobs.

Launched in 1999 and slated to end in 2009, the ERA project encompasses more than a dozen demonstration programs and uses a rigorous research design to analyze the programs' implementation and impacts on research sample members, who were randomly assigned to the study groups. With technical assistance from MDRC and The Lewin Group, the study was conceived and funded by the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; supplemental support comes from the U.S. Department of Labor. Most of the ERA programs were designed specifically for the purposes of evaluation, in some cases building on prior initiatives. Because the programs' aims and target populations vary, so do their services:

- **Advancement programs** focus on helping low-income workers move into better jobs by offering such services as career counseling and education and training.
- **Placement and retention programs** aim to help participants find and hold jobs and are aimed mostly at "hard-to-employ" people, such as welfare recipients who have disabilities or substance abuse problems.
- **Mixed-goals programs** focus on job placement, retention, and advancement, in that order, and are targeted primarily to welfare recipients who are searching for jobs.

The ERA project's evaluation component investigates the following aspects of each program:

- **Implementation.** What services does the program provide? How are those services delivered? Who receives them? How are problems addressed?

- **Impacts.** To what extent does the program improve employment rates, job retention, advancement, and other key outcomes? Looking across programs, which approaches are most effective, and for whom?

A total of 15 ERA experiments are being implemented in eight states: California, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, and Texas.

The evaluation draws on administrative and fiscal records, surveys of participants, and field visits to the sites.

Acknowledgments

Many people contributed to the evaluation of New York City's Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment (PRIDE) program, which is part of the Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) project.

At the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA), former Commissioner Jason Turner was responsible for initiating the study. Joan Randell, Marcia Salovitz, and Swati Desai all played critical roles in the study's implementation. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Larry Andres, Rachel Cahill, Lynn Miyazaki, Audrey Russell, and Premal Shroff. A group of dedicated HRA caseworkers in the Union Square Job Center enrolled thousands of people into the study, and HRA staff also provided insightful comments on a draft of the report.

The four PRIDE vendors played critical roles, hosting site visits and providing data for the evaluation. Space does not permit us to mention all the staff who assisted the study, but the following (some of whom no longer work for the agencies listed) deserve special thanks: Julie Shapiro and Denise Majka (Federation Employment and Guidance Service, or FEGS); Pat Precin and Doris Hohman (Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service); Anthony Wade (Goodwill Industries); and Kim Rosello (Abilities, Inc.).

We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of several New York State agencies that played roles in the PRIDE program: the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities, the Temporary and Disability Assistance Office, and the Department of Labor (DOL). Special thanks go to David Moses at DOL, who prepared automated employment and earnings data files for this analysis.

At MDRC, John Martinez led the operational phase of the PRIDE evaluation and reviewed drafts of the report. David Butler, Stephen Freedman, Barbara Goldman, Gayle Hamilton, and Charles Michalopolous also provided helpful comments. Tojuana Riley and Zawadi Rucks provided excellent research assistance; Natasha Piatnitskaia processed the welfare records; and Diane Singer provided administrative support. Robert Weber edited the report, and Stephanie Cowell prepared it for publication.

Finally, we extend our deep appreciation to the thousands of sample members who participated in the study and gave generously of their time to respond to a survey.

The Authors

Executive Summary

This report presents interim results from an evaluation of New York City's Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment (PRIDE) program, a large-scale welfare-to-work program for recipients who are considered "employable with limitations" owing to medical or mental health conditions. The PRIDE evaluation is part of the national Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) project. Conceived and funded by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the ERA project is testing 15 innovative programs across the country that aim to promote steady work and career advancement for current and former welfare recipients and other low-wage workers. MDRC, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization, is conducting the ERA project under contract to ACF and is producing a similar interim report for each site in the project.

PRIDE operated from 1999 to 2004, serving more than 30,000 people. In 2004, it was replaced by a new program, WeCARE (Wellness, Comprehensive Assessment, Rehabilitation, and Employment) that builds on the PRIDE model. PRIDE has national relevance because many states are looking for effective models to assist the hardest-to-employ welfare recipients, including those with health-related barriers to employment. Such models may be particularly important in the wake of recent changes in federal law that require many states to substantially increase the share of welfare recipients who are engaged in work activities.

Origin and Goals of the PRIDE Program

Work requirements for welfare recipients have existed for many years, but, until the 1990s, a large proportion of recipients were exempted from these mandates. During the past decade, many states have dramatically extended the reach of their welfare-to-work programs. In fact, about a third of states have adopted a "universal engagement" philosophy under which all recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are expected to participate in work-related activities.[1]

New York City has been particularly aggressive in applying work requirements to a very broad share of the welfare caseload. As part of this effort, the city's Human Resources Administration (HRA) — the agency responsible for TANF and a range of other social welfare programs and services — has developed a number of welfare-to-work programs that tailor services to meet the needs of "special populations." PRIDE was one of the earliest and largest of these specialized programs.

[1]LaDonna Pavetti, "The Challenge of Achieving High Work Participation Rates in Welfare Programs," Welfare Reform and Beyond Brief 31 (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2004).

The PRIDE Evaluation

As in the other ERA sites, MDRC is using a random assignment research design to assess the effectiveness of PRIDE. From late 2001 to late 2002, just over 3,000 welfare recipients with work-limiting medical conditions were assigned, at random, to one of two groups: the PRIDE group, which was required to participate in the program in accordance with citywide rules in effect at the time, or the control group, which was neither required nor permitted to participate in PRIDE. In effect, the control group was subject to the policies that existed before PRIDE was created, when recipients with work-limiting medical conditions were exempt from work requirements but could seek out services on their own. Control group members could have been required to participate in work activities during the study period if they were reevaluated and found to be fully employable (that is, if their medical condition improved).

MDRC is tracking both groups using data provided by the City and State of New York that show each individual's monthly welfare and food stamp benefits and any employment in jobs covered by the New York State unemployment insurance (UI) program.[2] Two years of follow-up data are available for each person in the analysis. In addition, a survey was administered to a subset of PRIDE and control group members about one year after they entered the study.

Because individuals were assigned to the PRIDE group or to the control group through a random process, the two groups were comparable at the start. Thus, any significant differences that emerge between the groups during the study's follow-up period can be attributed to the PRIDE program; such differences are known as the *impacts* of PRIDE.

The PRIDE Target Population

PRIDE was designed for recipients who, according to an HRA medical evaluation, were deemed to have medical or mental health conditions that were too severe to allow participation in regular welfare-to-work activities but were not severe enough to make these individuals eligible for federal disability benefits. Officially, this population was deemed "employable with limitations."

Not surprisingly, these recipients were quite disadvantaged. Only about 20 percent of the single-parent study participants worked in a UI-covered job within the year prior to study enrollment. When they were surveyed a year after study entry, 73 percent described their health as "fair" or "poor"; 45 percent were classified as obese; and 46 percent reported that pain interfered with their work "a lot." The most common medical problems were orthopedic ailments,

[2]Certain kinds of jobs — for example, military and other federal government jobs, self-employment, and jobs in other states — are not covered by the New York State UI system. It is also important to note that work experience placements, which are unpaid, are not included in the UI system.

mental health conditions, high blood pressure, and asthma. In addition, staff reported that many participants had very low literacy levels and/or did not speak English.

PRIDE served both recipients of TANF benefits, who are mostly single parents, and childless adults, who receive assistance through the state and locally funded Safety Net program. This report focuses mainly on PRIDE's impacts for single parents.

Key Findings on Program Implementation

- **Despite a number of operational challenges, PRIDE was able to deliver employment services to a large and highly disadvantaged group of welfare recipients who had previously been exempt from work requirements.**

PRIDE was a hugely ambitious program, involving complex linkages among HRA, the state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency, and nonprofit organizations that were contracted to conduct medical evaluations and deliver specialized employment services. PRIDE's implementation exposed important philosophical differences among the partners, particularly the welfare and VR systems.

Because PRIDE targeted a vulnerable population, a complex, multipstep process was used to identify recipients who met the program criteria, assess their medical conditions and other employment barriers, and assign them to appropriate activities. Not surprisingly, there were some bottlenecks, and many PRIDE group members did not start participating in program activities until several months after entering the study. Ultimately, HRA data show that about half the PRIDE group were assigned to a PRIDE employment activity within two years after study entry. Many of the others were later reevaluated and were found to be fully employable (and, presumably, were assigned to regular welfare-to-work activities), while others may have been fully exempted. This pattern of changing statuses reflects the reality of working with individuals whose chronic medical conditions wax and wane over time.

- **The PRIDE group was substantially more likely than the control group to participate in work experience placements and job search activities, two of the main components of PRIDE.**

PRIDE's employment services were generally similar to those provided in New York City's regular welfare-to-work program. The key difference was that, in PRIDE, staff tried to ensure that participants were assigned to activities that took account of their medical conditions and limitations on activities. PRIDE did not provide or monitor medical treatment.

Although there was some variation in assignments, most PRIDE participants were required to work for 20 to 25 hours per week in exchange for their welfare benefits. This activity — known locally as "work experience" — has been a central feature of welfare-to-work programs in New York City for many years, although, in PRIDE, participants were placed in special work experience positions that were appropriate, given their medical conditions. Many PRIDE participants also attended educational activities, such as English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and most received job search assistance in a group or individual format.

According to data from the ERA 12-Month Survey, about 41 percent of the PRIDE group reported that they had participated in a group job search activity, and 33 percent reported that they had worked in a work experience position. The corresponding figures for the control group were 20 percent and 14 percent, indicating that PRIDE substantially increased participation in both types of activity. Interestingly, although educational activities were a core feature of the program, survey respondents in the PRIDE group were no more likely than those in the control group to report that they had attended education or training.

- **A large proportion of the PRIDE group failed to comply with program requirements, and about one-third had their welfare grant reduced at least once as a penalty for noncompliance.**

Program staff reported that recipients frequently did not show up for assigned activities. Indeed, according to HRA's tracking system, about 75 percent of the PRIDE group were considered out of compliance at some point within two years after random assignment. Most of these instances of noncompliance related to PRIDE's requirements, so it is not surprising that the corresponding figure for the control group was much lower, about 10 percent.

A similar pattern is evident with regard to sanctions (penalties for noncompliance). Within two years of random assignment, about 32 percent of the PRIDE group and 8 percent of the control group were sanctioned. (HRA data show that the sanctioning rate for PRIDE clients may have been lower than the rate for the general TANF population during this period.)

Key Findings on Program Impacts

- **PRIDE generated increases in employment throughout the two-year follow-up period. Nevertheless, most people in the PRIDE group did not work, and many of those who did work lost their jobs fairly quickly.**

Table ES.1 shows outcomes on employment and income for single parents in the PRIDE and control groups during Years 1 and 2. The top panel shows that 34 percent of the PRIDE group and 27 percent of the control group worked in a UI-covered job within two years after entering the study. (Work experience placements are not included in these figures.) The

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table ES.1

Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Years 1 and 2				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	33.7	26.5	7.2 ***	0.000
Average quarterly employment	15.7	12.8	2.9 ***	0.004
Employed 8 consecutive quarters	3.2	2.9	0.2	0.725
Income ($)				
Earnings[a]	3,536	2,982	554 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	10,732	11,550	-818 ***	0.000
Amount of food stamps received	6,256	6,386	-130	0.123
Total measured income[a, b]	20,455	21,016	-562 [a]	NA
Year 1				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	23.0	18.7	4.3 ***	0.004
Average quarterly employment	13.1	11.3	1.8 *	0.065
Employed 4 consecutive quarters	5.5	4.7	0.7	0.384
Income ($)				
Earnings[a]	1,330	1,167	163 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	5,806	6,100	-293 ***	0.001
Amount of food stamps received	3,301	3,334	-34	0.395
Total measured income[a, b]	10,396	10,658	-262 [a]	NA
Year 2				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	27.1	22.0	5.1 ***	0.002
Average quarterly employment	18.3	14.3	4.0 ***	0.001
Employed 4 consecutive quarters	9.8	7.9	1.9 *	0.092
Income ($)				
Earnings[a]	2,206	1,815	391 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	4,925	5,450	-525 ***	0.000
Amount of food stamps received	2,956	3,052	-96 *	0.072
Total measured income[a,b]	10,058	10,358	-300 [a]	NA
Sample size (total = 2,648)	1,553	1,095		

(continued)

Table ES.1 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: Estimates were regression-adjusted using ordinary least squares, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics of sample members.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in calculating sums and differences.

A two-tailed t-test was applied to differences between outcomes for the program and control groups. Statistical significance levels are indicated as: * = 10 percent; ** = 5 percent; and *** = 1 percent.

"Years 1 and 2" refers to Quarters 2 to 9. Quarter 1 is the quarter in which random assignment took place.

Dollar averages include zero values for sample members who were not employed or were not receiving TANF or food stamps.

NA = not applicable.

[a]This difference is not tested for statistical significance because the UI earnings data were provided as group averages and the number of groups was too small to provide for a fair test.

[b]This measure represents the sum of UI-covered earnings, cash assistance, and food stamps.

asterisks indicate that the difference, about 7 percentage points, is "statistically significant," meaning that it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. The second and third panels of the table indicate that PRIDE increased employment in both Year 1 and Year 2 of the follow-up period. (Although not shown, PRIDE generated similar employment gains for childless Safety Net recipients.) Survey data (not shown) suggest that PRIDE increased employment both in very low-paying jobs and in relatively good jobs.

While it is impressive that PRIDE was able to increase employment for a very disadvantaged target group, about two-thirds of the PRIDE group never worked in a UI-covered job during the follow-up period. Moreover, the second row of the table shows that only 16 percent of the PRIDE group were employed in a typical quarter, indicating that many of those who worked did not stay employed. These patterns reflect the limited employability of the target group.

Finally, it is also notable that PRIDE's employment impacts for single parents were concentrated among individuals who had received welfare benefits for fewer than 60 months before entering the study. There were no employment impacts for single parents who had received more than 60 months of assistance (results not shown).[3]

- **PRIDE significantly reduced the amount of welfare that families received; this reduction occurred both because the program increased**

[3]Federal law limits most families to 60 months of federally funded assistance, but New York, like several other states, does not impose time limits on benefit receipt. Instead, most families who receive benefits for 60 months are transferred to the state and locally funded Safety Net program. The analysis found that PRIDE did not increase employment for single parents who had transitioned to the Safety Net program before study entry.

employment and because it sanctioned many recipients for failing to comply with program rules.

The top panel of Table ES.1 also shows, under "Income," that the PRIDE group received $818 less (about 7 percent less) in cash assistance than the control group did over the two-year study period. Like the employment gains, the welfare reductions continued throughout the two-year period, as shown in Figure ES.1. At the end of the two-year period (Quarter 9), most of the PRIDE group — 78 percent — were still receiving welfare. However, the figure for the control group was even higher, about 82 percent, and the 4 percentage point difference is statistically significant.

Although the welfare savings were almost certainly driven in part by employment gains, it is important to note that there were welfare reductions for subgroups of single parents who experienced no employment gains — most notably, for single parents who had received more than 60 months of assistance before entering the study. This pattern suggests that the welfare savings are attributable in part to sanctions imposed on recipients who did not comply with PRIDE's requirements.

Although PRIDE had no statistically significant effect on sample members' combined income from earnings and public assistance, it is clear that the reductions in cash assistance payments completely offset any earnings gains; thus, it is unlikely that PRIDE made participants better off financially.

Policy Implications

Many states are searching for ways to promote employment among the hardest-to-employ welfare recipients, including those with health-related barriers to employment. Changes to the TANF program that were passed by Congress in January 2006 may accelerate this trend by pushing states to engage a larger share of recipients in work activities.

The results presented here show that it is possible to mount a large-scale program for recipients with work-limiting medical conditions. PRIDE served large numbers of recipients who had previously been exempt from work requirements, and the program generated modest but sustained increases in employment and substantial welfare savings.

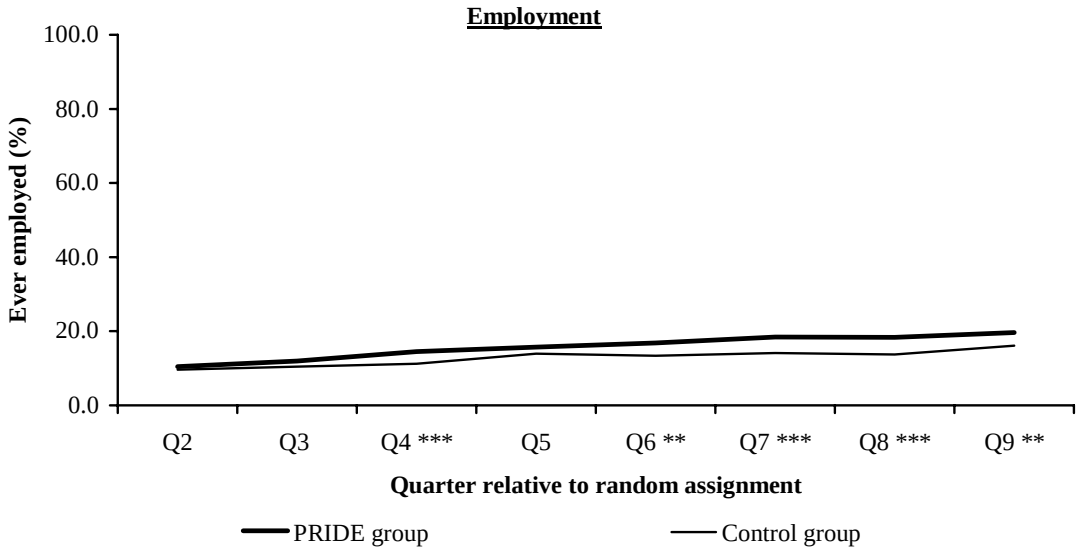
But there are also reasons for caution. Most of the people who were targeted for PRIDE did not work or leave welfare during the study period, and there were no employment gains for those who had the longest histories of welfare receipt. Moreover, the target group was difficult to engage, and at least a portion of the welfare savings were driven by sanctioning, which likely reduced the income of many families. Finally, because PRIDE required highly specialized assessment and employment services and linkages among several state and local agencies, it was

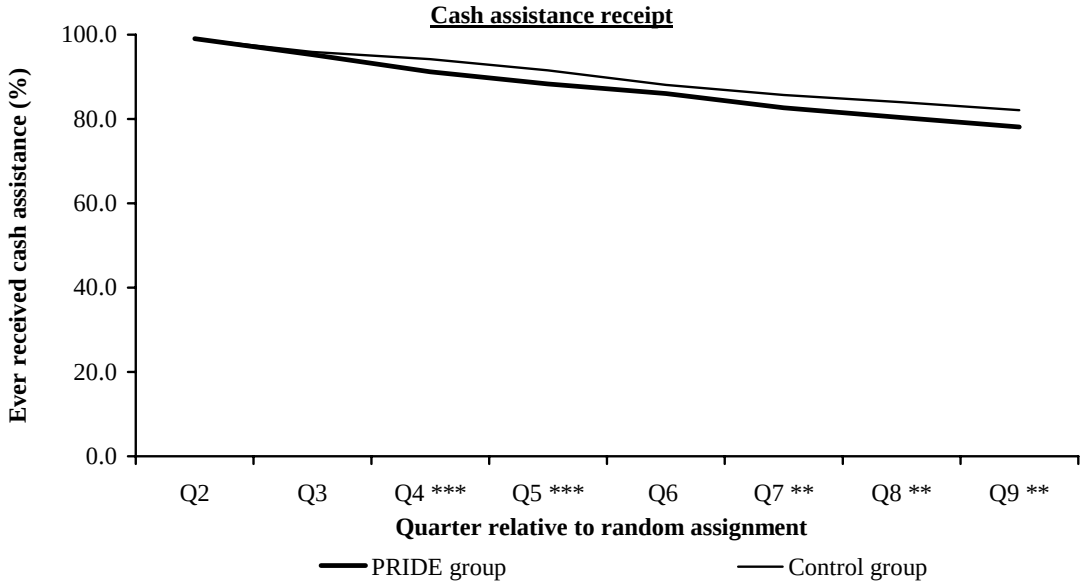
The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Figure ES.1

Years 1 and 2, Impacts on Quarterly UI-Covered Employment and Cash Assistance for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE





(continued)

Figure ES.1 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: Estimates were regression-adjusted using ordinary least squares, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics of sample members.

A two-tailed t-test was applied to differences between outcomes for the program and control groups. Statistical significance levels are indicated as: * = 10 percent; ** = 5 percent; and *** = 1 percent.

Quarters 2 to 5 refer to "Year 1," and Quarters 6 to 9 refer to "Year 2." Quarter 1 is the quarter in which random assignment took place and, therefore, is not included in the figure.

complicated to administer. In 2004, it was replaced by WeCARE, a new program that aims to improve on PRIDE's performance.

The PRIDE results are also of interest because this is the first rigorous evaluation in many years of a welfare-to-work program that heavily used unpaid work experience. However, the study was not designed to isolate the impact of this activity. PRIDE increased participation in both work experience and job search activities, and it is impossible to determine how much each type of activity contributed to the overall results. Previous studies have shown that mandatory job search assistance, by itself, can produce impacts of similar magnitude to those achieved by PRIDE.

Introduction

This report presents interim results from a rigorous evaluation of New York City's Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment (PRIDE) program, a large-scale initiative that provided specialized employment services to welfare recipients with medical problems that limited their employability. PRIDE operated from 1999 to 2004, serving more than 30,000 people.

The PRIDE evaluation is part of the national Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) project. Conceived and funded by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the ERA project is testing innovative programs across the county that aim to promote steady work and career advancement for current and former welfare recipients and other low-wage workers. MDRC, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization, is conducting the ERA project under contract to ACF and is producing a similar interim report for each site in the project.

This introduction provides background on the national ERA project and describes key components of the PRIDE program. It also describes the research design for the evaluation and the characteristics of the study participants.

Overview of the National ERA Project

In the wake of the 1990s welfare reforms — which made long-term welfare receipt much less feasible for families — policymakers and program operators have sought to learn what kinds of services and supports are best able to help long-term recipients find and keep jobs and to help former recipients stay employed and increase their earnings. The ERA project was developed to increase knowledge on effective strategies to help both these groups move toward self-sufficiency.

The project began in 1998, when ACF issued planning grants to 13 states to develop new programs. The following year, ACF selected MDRC to conduct an evaluation of the ERA programs.[4] From 2000 to 2003, MDRC and its subcontractor, The Lewin Group, worked closely with the states that had received planning grants, and with several other states, to mount tests of ERA programs.

Ultimately, a total of 15 ERA experiments were implemented in eight states, including New York. Almost all the programs target current or former recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) — the cash welfare program that mainly serves single mothers and

[4]The U.S. Department of Labor has also provided funding to support the ERA project.

their children — but the program models are very diverse. One group of programs targets low-wage workers and focuses on advancement. Another group (which includes PRIDE) targets individuals who are considered "hard-to-employ" and primarily aims to move them onto a path toward steady employment. Finally, a third group of programs has mixed goals and targets a range of populations, including former TANF recipients, TANF applicants, and low-wage workers in particular sectors. Some of these programs initiate services before individuals go to work, while others begin services after employment. Appendix Table D.1 describes each of the ERA programs and identifies its goals and target populations.

The evaluation design is similar in most of the sites. Individuals who meet ERA eligibility criteria (which vary from site to site) are assigned, at random, to a program group — also called the "ERA group" or, in this case, the "PRIDE group" — or to a control group. Members of the ERA group are recruited for the ERA program (and, in some sites, are required to participate in it), whereas members of the control group are not eligible for ERA services. The extent and nature of the services and supports available to the control group vary from site to site. The random assignment process ensures that the two groups were comparable at study entry. Thus, any differences in outcomes that emerge between the two groups during the follow-up period can be validly tested for the likelihood that they arose because of the program and not by chance variation.

The PRIDE Program

Rules requiring welfare recipients to work or prepare for work have existed for nearly 40 years, but most states did not begin enforcing these requirements until the 1980s. Even then, a large proportion of welfare recipients were exempt from work-related requirements, either because they had young children or because they had health problems that limited their ability to work.

In the 1990s, many states expanded work requirements to a much broader share of the welfare caseload. The federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 accelerated this process by requiring states to ensure that a specific proportion of all recipients were working or preparing for work and by limiting most families to 60 months of federally funded assistance. By 2004, about a third of the states had adopted a "universal engagement" philosophy and taken steps to require all TANF recipients to engage in work activities.[5] Changes to the TANF program that were passed by Congress in January 2006 are likely to put additional pressure on states to deliver employment services to all or most TANF recipients.[6]

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[5]Pavetti (2004).

[6]Under the 1996 law, states were required to ensure that specific percentages of TANF recipients were participating in work activities. However, the required "work participation rates" facing states were reduced by 1 percentage point for each percentage point reduction in a state's TANF caseload. Because caseloads fell dramatically in the late 1990s, most states faced very low required rates. When Congress reauthorized TANF in

(continued)

As states began to work with a larger share of the TANF caseload, and as caseloads declined dramatically, many states began to focus more attention on the substantial barriers to employment facing those recipients who remained on the welfare rolls. Some states began to develop new employment-oriented programs for recipients with mental health problems, drug and alcohol abuse, physical disabilities, and other serious behavioral and health problems. Evaluations of broadly targeted welfare-to-work programs in the 1990s found that such programs were able to increase employment for long-term recipients with low levels of education and work experience but that outcomes for these recipients were much worse than for recipients with fewer employment barriers.[7] Little is known about the effectiveness of the newer, more targeted approaches.

New York City has been particularly aggressive in attempting to ensure that all welfare recipients are engaged in work activities.[8] The city's policies assume that virtually everyone on welfare should either participate in work-related activities, take specific steps to stabilize a medical problem, or apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.[9] As part of this effort, beginning in the late 1990s, the city's welfare agency, the Human Resources Administration (HRA), developed a set of tailored programs for populations facing particularly serious barriers to employment. One of these initiatives, PRIDE, was an ambitious program designed to serve welfare recipients who had medical problems and had previously been exempt from work-related requirements. Another goal in establishing PRIDE was to give recipients who had medical limitations an equal opportunity to obtain employment and move toward self-sufficiency.

The program, started as a pilot in 1998, was a partnership of the TANF and vocational rehabilitation systems — along with several other agencies — and reflected the belief of both systems that even people with serious disabilities can work. The program operated citywide from 1999 to 2004, when it was replaced by a new program, WeCARE, that builds on the PRIDE model. ("WeCARE" stands for the Wellness, Comprehensive Assessment, Rehabilitation, and Employment program.) More than 35,000 recipients were referred to PRIDE while it operated. PRIDE is one of two New York City programs that are being evaluated as part of the ERA project.[10]

Under PRIDE, recipients who reported that they were unable to work due to a medical problem were required to undergo an HRA medical evaluation. If the evaluation determined that the recipient was "employable with limitations," he or she was referred to one of several con-

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2006, it restructured the "caseload reduction credit" so that most states need to significantly increase the number of recipients in work activities or else risk fiscal penalties.

[7]Michalopoulos, Schwartz, and Adams-Ciardullo (2000).

[8]For general information on New York City's welfare reform efforts, see Nightingale et al. (2002) and Besharov and Germanis (2005).

[9]SSI is a federally funded means-tested program that provides cash assistance to needy elderly, blind, or disabled people.

[10]The second program provides case management and services to individuals who have substance abuse problems.

tracted PRIDE service providers (referred to as "vendors"). After additional assessment by vendor staff, recipients were assigned to one of two service tracks: a vocational rehabilitation (VR) track for those with more serious medical problems or a Work-Based Education (WBE) track for those with less severe medical barriers but low literacy or education levels and/or a lack of English language skills. Recipients in both service tracks were required to work in exchange for their welfare benefits — an activity known locally as "work experience" — and many were also required to attend education classes. In addition, in both service tracks, participants were provided with job search and placement assistance as well as employment retention services.

PRIDE's emphasis on work experience reflects New York City's long-running commitment to this activity. In fact, New York is one the few jurisdictions in the United States that has mounted large-scale work experience programs for welfare recipients. There have been few rigorous studies of work experience programs in recent years. Evaluations of less intensive work experience programs in the 1980s found that such programs were generally seen as fair by recipients, but they also cast doubt on whether work experience generates increases in employment and earnings in regular jobs.[11]

Participation in PRIDE was mandatory for recipients who were deemed appropriate for the program. Those who failed to participate were referred back to HRA and could be penalized (sanctioned) by having their welfare grant reduced or closed. Thus, the PRIDE program represented a fairly radical departure from "business as usual" for these clients, mandating participation in work activities and placing them in work experience positions. The hope was that providing these recipients with an extensive assessment of their condition as well as work designed to accommodate that condition would lead to a successful experience in the work experience positions and, ultimately, a transition to unsubsidized employment.

The New York City Context

New York City is the largest city in the nation, with about 8.1 million residents. The city's population makes up over 40 percent of the population of New York State. The city also ranks high in terms of diversity: 45 percent of its inhabitants are white; 27 percent are black; another 27 percent are Hispanic; and 10 percent are Asian.[12] In contrast, the city's public assistance caseload is more heavily weighted toward black and Hispanic families and individuals.

The two key cash assistance programs in New York are the Family Assistance program (New York's TANF program) and the state- and locally funded Safety Net program. (PRIDE served recipients from both programs.) Previously called Home Relief, the Safety Net program

[11]Brock, Butler, and Long (1993).
[12]U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (2000).

serves childless adults and, more recently, Family Assistance recipients who have reached the 60-month time limit on federally funded benefit receipt. Unlike many other states, New York State does not impose time limits on cash assistance receipt for families but, rather, moves cases to the Safety Net program after the 60-month point. In addition, New York does not use full-family sanctions (which cancel a family's entire welfare grant) to enforce work requirements in its TANF program; rather, recipients' grants are reduced in response to noncompliance with work requirements.[13] (Safety Net recipients who do not have children can have their entire case closed in response to noncompliance with work requirements.)

The city's TANF (Family Assistance) caseload has fallen by over 50 percent since 1997, from about 270,000 cases in January 1997 to fewer than 110,000 in fall 2006, the latter number including former TANF cases that had transitioned to the Safety Net program.[14] The traditional Safety Net caseload (consisting of childless adults) has also fallen by nearly half since 1997, although it has increased somewhat in recent years, from 150,000 in 1997 to 77,000 in 2002 to 90,000 in 2006. TANF cases began to reach the 60-month time limit in December 2001, and recent data indicate that about one-fourth of the Safety Net caseload consists of cases that were converted from TANF after reaching the time limit. As of fall 2006, for example, there were 119,000 Safety Net cases, about 29,000 of whom were converted TANF cases.

The PRIDE evaluation began just after September 11, 2001, when New York City's economy was feeling the aftereffects of the attack on the World Trade Center. Although the unemployment rate in New York City has fallen since 2002, it remains slightly above the national average, at 5.6 percent in December 2005, compared with 4.6 percent nationally. Unemployment rates in the entire metropolitan area are somewhat lower than those in the city.[15] Finally, the poverty rate for families in New York City was 18.5 percent in 1999, compared with 12.4 percent nationally.[16]

The Target Population

PRIDE targeted an "in-between" group of TANF and Safety Net recipients: individuals whose medical problems were too severe to allow them to participate in the city's regular welfare-to-work program but were not severe enough to make them eligible for federal disability benefits. Locally, these individuals were referred to as "employable with limitations." Before PRIDE, these recipients were exempt from work requirements.

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[13]Partial sanctions are calculated by removing the adult from the grant calculation. A client's first sanction lasts for up to three months but can be lifted at any time if the client comes into compliance. The second sanction lasts for a minimum of three months, and the third and subsequent sanctions last for a minimum of six months.

[14]New York City Department of Social Services, Human Resources Administration (2005).

[15]U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2006).

[16]U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (2000).

In the evaluation, results for single parents (whether they were receiving TANF benefits or had transitioned to the Safety Net program after 60 months of assistance) are presented separately from results for childless adults. Although data on the sex of the recipients are not available, it is assumed that most single parents are female and that the majority of childless Safety Net recipients are men.

Table 1 presents selected characteristics of both groups of sample members at random assignment, or baseline — the time when individuals entered the study. Most of these data are drawn from welfare agency administrative data. With an average age of 39, the single-parent sample members were considerably older than most samples in the ERA evaluation and in other welfare-to-work studies, which may reflect the higher incidence of health problems with age. Over 40 percent of this group were older than age 41. (The Safety Net childless sample members were even older, with an average age of 47.) Consistent with their age profile, this sample also had older children; most had no children under age 6. They also had more children than the typical recipient family; 30 percent had three or more children. Although not shown, a key difference between the single parents on TANF and those who had moved onto Safety Net is the number of children: Nearly 40 percent of the Safety Net parents had three or more children, compared with 24 percent of the TANF parents. Single parents with several children may have more difficulty working steadily, or they may find the child care costs associated with work prohibitive, resulting in longer stays on welfare.

Most people in both research groups are either Hispanic or black, with the single-parent sample having a higher fraction of Hispanic parents and the childless sample having a higher fraction of black adults. Most also reported living in unsubsidized rental housing, although a substantial share reported living in temporary or emergency arrangements. Finally, few had recent work experience, at least in formal jobs covered by the unemployment insurance (UI) system. Only one-fifth of single parents, for example, worked in a UI-covered job during the year before study entry.

By definition, it was expected that the PRIDE target group would suffer from poor health. Table 2 presents a more detailed look at the health status of the single-parent sample, using data from the ERA 12-Month Survey, which was administered a year after sample members entered the study. (Survey data are not available for the childless sample.) Although the data were measured well after individuals entered the study — and are based on self-reports rather than direct medical evidence — they give some indication of the health barriers faced by the PRIDE population.

Not surprisingly, the majority of survey respondents rated their health as “fair” or “poor.” In addition, 45 percent of respondents were obese, while another 31 percent were classified as overweight. Obesity has been found to be an important deterrent to work and is

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 1

Selected Characteristics of Sample Members at Baseline, by Target Group

New York City PRIDE

Variable	Single Parents	Safety Net Recipients Without Children
Age (%)		
20 years or younger	0.9	0.4
21 to 30 years	17.3	5.5
31 to 40 years	37.6	14.3
41 years or older	44.2	79.8
Average age (years)	39	47
Race/ethnicity (%)		
Hispanic	49.5	37.1
Black	36.6	47.4
White	10.5	12.3
Other	3.4	3.2
Number of children in household (%)		
0	2.7	NA
1	36.7	NA
2	30.7	NA
3 or more	29.8	NA
Average number of children in household	2	NA
Age of youngest child in household (%)		
Less than 3 years	21.3	NA
Between 3 and 5 years	17.1	NA
More than 6 years	61.6	NA
Housing status (%)		
Rent, public housing	17.3	16.7
Rent, subsidized housing	16.1	6.5
Rent, other	48.4	69.8
Owns home or apartment	0.1	0.0
Emergency/temporary housing	17.2	2.7
Other housing arrangements	0.8	4.4
Worked in UI-covered job during year prior to random assignment (%)	20.4	24.3
Sample size	2,648	540

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from the New York Welfare Management System (WMS) and unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 2

Information on Health Status, from the ERA 12-Month Survey, Control Group Only

New York City PRIDE

Outcome (%)	Control Group
Overall health	
Self-rated health	
Excellent	2.5
Very good	5.5
Good	18.6
Fair	47.8
Poor	25.1
Body weight[a]	
Normal weight	21.6
Overweight	30.7
Obese	44.6
Over past month, how much did pain interfere with work?	
None	14.7
A little	38.4
A lot	46.1
Experienced serious psychological distress in the past month[b]	36.5
Specific health conditions at study entry[c]	
Orthopedic problems	63.1
Mental health issues	39.3
High blood pressure	31.7
Asthma	31.4
Diabetes	14.8
Neural conditions	10.0
Other problems	35.6
Sample size	379

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

[a]National Institutes of Health weight categories.

[b]Based on the K6 scale that includes six questions about how often a respondent experienced symptoms of psychological distress during the past 30 days. The response codes (0-4) of the six items for each person are summed to yield a scale with a 0-24 range. A value of 13 or more for this scale is used here to define serious psychological distress. (Web site: http:\\hcp.med.harvard.edu/ncs/k6_scales.php.)

[c]Categories sum to more than 100 percent because many respondents reported more than one health condition.

correlated with being disabled.[17] Nearly half of the respondents also reported problems with pain: 46 percent said that pain interfered "a lot" with their daily work (housework or work outside the home). Finally, over one-third of the sample reported having experienced severe psychological distress in the month prior to the survey, as determined using a well-known diagnostic scale that measures depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions.[18]

The lower panel of Table 2 presents data on the specific health conditions that survey respondents had at the time of study entry. This information is based on respondents' recollection of the medical evaluation that occurred prior to random assignment or on any conditions that they remembered having at the time of random assignment, if they did not recall the details of the evaluation. The most common physical health ailments were orthopedic conditions, such as back pain or herniated disk. The prevalence of these conditions may explain the large proportion of respondents (46 percent) who said that pain interfered with daily life. The next most commonly cited ailments related to mental health, including depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder. Significant fractions of the sample also reported having asthma or high blood pressure.

About the ERA Evaluation in New York City

Research Questions

The ERA evaluation focuses on the implementation of the sites' programs and their effects, or impacts. Key questions addressed in this report include the following:

- **Implementation.** How did HRA and its partners and contractors execute the PRIDE program? What services and messages did the program provide and emphasize? How did staff and case managers spend their time?
- **Participation.** Did the PRIDE program succeed in engaging a substantial proportion of individuals in services? What types of services did people receive? To what extent did the program increase service levels above the levels that would "normally" be received, as represented by the control group's behavior?
- **Impacts.** Within the follow-up period, did the PRIDE program — compared with earlier rules and services for this population — increase employment and employment stability and reduce reliance on TANF?

[17]Cawley and Danziger (2005); Kaye (2003).
[18]Harvard School of Medicine (2005).

The Random Assignment Process

As shown in Figure 1, random assignment of recipients began in December 2001 — about two years after PRIDE was implemented citywide — and lasted for one year.[19] As noted earlier, the first step for HRA was to identify, through a medical evaluation, TANF and Safety Net recipients who were "employable with limitations." These recipients were then required to attend an intake meeting with HRA and PRIDE staff. At the meeting, staff conducted a brief interview to determine whether the recipient was, indeed, eligible to participate in PRIDE — for example, he or she had not experienced a change in medical condition, was not caring for a disabled child, and had child care in place. (Sometimes, recipients were rescheduled and were given help finding child care.) Once a recipient was deemed eligible and ready for PRIDE, staff placed a brief phone call to MDRC, which conducted the random assignment. Recipients were assigned either to the PRIDE group (and were referred to the PRIDE vendor that was most convenient to their residence) or to the control group.[20]

The Counterfactual: What Is ERA Being Compared With?

Recipients who were randomly assigned to the control group — who represent the counterfactual for the study — were not referred to a PRIDE vendor and were told that they were not required to participate in work-related activities; that is, they were treated as they would have been treated before PRIDE began. They were, however, given a list of employment services in the community and were referred back to their HRA caseworker for assistance with other, nonemployment issues. Control group members could have been required to participate in work activities during the study period if their status changed to "nonexempt" (that is, if their medical condition improved) — as would have been the case under prior rules.

Thus, the key differences between the conditions faced by the PRIDE group and the control group were that the PRIDE group members (1) received a more in-depth assessment of their conditions, including literacy and education levels, and (2) were required to work in tailored work experience positions and to participate in other work-related activities or faced the possibility of sanctioning if they did not.

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[19]Random assignment for Safety Net recipients who did not have children was completed in June 2002, while random assignment for single parents continued through December 2002.

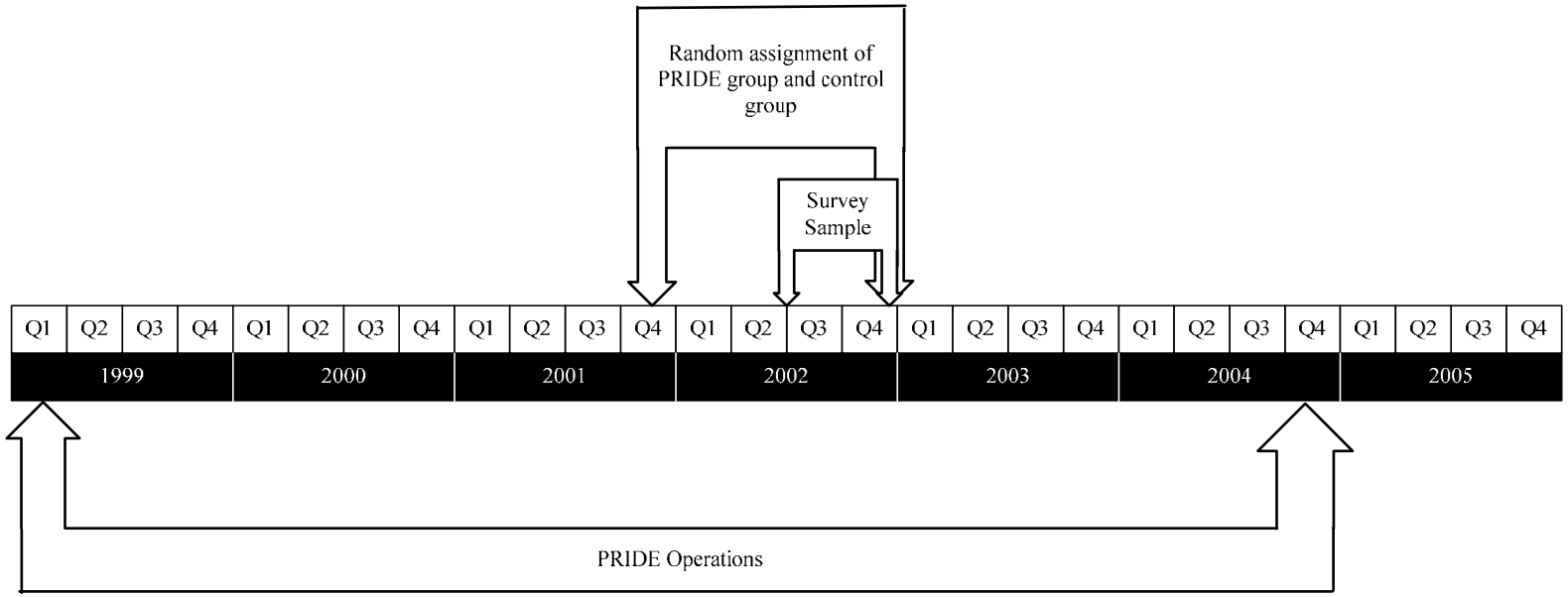
[20]For logistical reasons, only a relatively small subset of the recipients who went through the process described above were targeted for the study. Initially, only one unit of PRIDE intake staff was designated to conduct random assignment. Cases were distributed among intake units in a relatively random manner, so there is no reason to believe that the research sample is not representative of the broader PRIDE population. However, because ACF was particularly interested in results for families with children, the study oversampled parents.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Figure 1

Random Assignment Periods

New York City PRIDE



Data Sources

The data sources for the analyses presented in the report are described below.

Baseline Data: Administrative Records

At the point of study entry, selected demographic data for the sample members were obtained from the New York Welfare Management System (WMS), the automated welfare database. In addition, data on employment and welfare receipt prior to study entry are available from New York State unemployment insurance (UI) records and from TANF and food stamp records. These baseline data are used to describe the sample (as in Table 1) and to identify the key subgroups for whom program effects might differ.

Follow-Up Data: Administrative Records

Effects on employment were estimated using automated UI wage records data. Data on average earnings are shown for descriptive purposes but are not used to estimate program effects.[21] Effects on public assistance receipt were estimated using automated TANF and food stamp administrative records. When the analyses for this report were conducted, two years of follow-up data were available for all sample members.

The ERA 12-Month Survey

Information on sample members' participation in program services and their employment, income, and other outcomes was gathered by the ERA 12-Month Survey, which was administered to a subset of single parents approximately 12 months after random assignment.

Program Participation and Implementation Data

Information on recipients' participation in work-related activities and other services was obtained from the ERA 12-Month Survey. MDRC also conducted a special "time study" of PRIDE staff, tracking their activities over a two-week period. Information on program operations was gathered from interviews with PRIDE and HRA staff and caseworkers and from reviews of participants' case files, conducted during several site visits. Finally, participation data were also obtained from NYCWAY, a database that is maintained by HRA and that tracks all events for a given case.

[21]Earnings data were supplied by the state as averages for groups of sample members, rather than for individuals. The number of group averages is too small to test for program effects.

Sample Sizes

As shown in Table 3, a total of 3,188 people entered the evaluation between December 2001 and December 2002. This includes 2,648 single parents and 540 traditional Safety Net recipients without children. The study focuses mainly on the sample of single parents, which includes 1,615 TANF recipients and 1,033 former TANF recipients (who had reached their time limits and were transferred to the Safety Net program).[22]

A total of 1,043 single parents — a subset of the 1,704 parents who were randomly assigned between July and December 2002 — were targeted for the ERA 12-Month Survey and are called the "fielded sample." Of this group, 759 people responded to the survey (the "respondent sample"), resulting in a response rate of 73 percent.[23]

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 3

Sample Sizes for Target Populations and Subgroups Used in the Analysis

New York City PRIDE

	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Total
Single parents	1,553	1,095	2,648
TANF recipients	945	670	1,615
Safety Net recipients	608	425	1,033
Fielded sample	524	519	1,043
Respondent sample	380	379	759
Safety Net recipients without children	356	184	540

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the New York Welfare Management System (WMS).

[22]Until August 2002, two-thirds of those who went through the random assignment process were assigned to the PRIDE group, and one-third were assigned to the control group. From August to December 2002, one-half of those who went through the process were assigned to each group.

[23]Appendix H presents an analysis of the response bias for the ERA 12-Month Survey.

Implementation of the PRIDE Program

New York City's Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment (PRIDE) was an ambitious program — possibly the first attempt to provide employment services to individuals who had work-limiting medical conditions and to serve them within the context of a large-scale welfare-to-work program with mandatory participation.

The program had a complex organizational and staffing structure that sought to link the welfare and vocational rehabilitation systems, and its implementation exposed important philosophical differences between the two systems. Because the welfare agency had primary responsibility for PRIDE, it is perhaps not surprising that the program looked more like a traditional welfare-to-work program than like a vocational rehabilitation program. Aside from tailoring work activities and job placement services to ensure that participants did not aggravate their health conditions, PRIDE looked similar to New York City's mainstream welfare-to-work programs, with unpaid work experience as the central program activity.

A multistep process was used to identify welfare recipients who were "employable with limitations," to evaluate their medical conditions, and to plan an appropriate set of employment activities. There were some bottlenecks in this process, and many members of the PRIDE group did not start receiving employment services until months after they had entered the study.

Despite these operational issues, PRIDE was able to deliver employment services to a large and very disadvantaged group of welfare recipients who had previously been exempt from working requirements. Ultimately, data from the city's Human Resources Administration (HRA) show that about half the PRIDE group were placed into one of the program's service tracks. Some of those who never entered a track were eventually found to be fully employable and, presumably, were referred to regular employment services. Others were revaluated and were found to be unable to work, illustrating the difficulty of precisely evaluating the employability of large numbers of individuals whose chronic medical conditions wax and wane over time. Finally, a large proportion of the PRIDE group was considered to be out of compliance with HRA work requirements, and many recipients were sanctioned by having their welfare grant reduced or canceled.

The Framework of the PRIDE Program: Structure and Staffing

Organizational Structure

PRIDE was a very large program with a complex organizational structure. The program was developed and managed by a consortium of agencies including the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA), which administers the Temporary Assistance for Needy

Families (TANF) and Safety Net programs in New York City; the New York State Education Department, which houses the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), the state vocational rehabilitation program; and the New York State Department of Labor, which administered the Welfare-to-Work block grant, a key source of funding for PRIDE.[24]

HRA often contracts with other agencies to deliver employment services to welfare recipients, and this was also true in PRIDE. Program services were delivered by four nonprofit organizations that had experience serving individuals with disabilities: Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS), the National Center for Disability Services, Goodwill Industries, and the Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service.[25]

Although these organizations (known as "vendors") worked most directly with HRA, they were under contract to the New York State Education Department. Each of the vendors served participants from a specific geographic area of the city, and each, in turn, worked with other organizations to deliver services to PRIDE participants. The vendors were paid a fixed amount of $750 per client for completing the initial assessment, and then they received an additional payment of $26 per day for each individual actively participating in program services. Performance-based payments were made for job placements as well as for job retention periods of 30, 60, and 90 days.

Finally, an HRA contractor conducted medical evaluations that determined which public assistance recipients were appropriate for PRIDE and identified their work limitations.

Staffing

Three broad groups of staff played key roles in the PRIDE program. First, a specialized unit of *HRA/PRIDE staff* was created to confirm recipients' appropriateness for PRIDE, arrange necessary support services, refer clients to a vendor, monitor their participation, and respond to noncompliance. Although all PRIDE group members were assigned to a case manager in the specialized unit, many were also assigned to a welfare eligibility worker in one of HRA's dis-

[24]Created by Congress in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, the Welfare-to-Work Program provided special funding to serve hard-to-employ welfare recipients.

[25]Established in 1934 by the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, FEGS has evolved into a very large, diverse human service organization with operations in more than 250 locations. The National Center for Disability Services (now known as "Abilities!") was founded in 1952 and is based in Albertson, New York. The Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service was founded in 1866 and provides a range of social services to more than 12,000 people per year. Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey, one of the oldest Goodwill affiliates in the United States, serves 75,000 people per year in a wide range of programs. There was a fifth vendor, Fedcap Rehabilitation Service, but its contract ended around the time this study began. Research sample members who were assigned to this vendor were transferred to one of the others.

trict offices.[26] There was a plan to outstation HRA staff at each of the PRIDE vendors, but this did not occur during the study period.

Second, *PRIDE vendor staff* delivered or arranged the PRIDE vocational services, including assessment, unpaid work experience, education and training, and job search assistance. The specific staffing configuration varied somewhat from vendor to vendor but tended to be quite specialized. The typical organization included (in addition to administrative staff):

- A unit of staff responsible for administering the initial intake and assessment process
- Specialized staff responsible for developing unpaid work experience positions and for matching PRIDE participants with these slots
- Case managers who monitored clients' activities and helped them overcome barriers to participation (Some vendors had separate units of case managers for clients in the two PRIDE service tracks, while others combined the two tracks.)
- A unit of staff responsible for identifying unsubsidized jobs and helping participants with their job search
- A unit of staff specializing in postemployment follow-up of participants who had been placed in unsubsidized jobs
- Instructors for education classes and workshops

Each vendor assigned several dozen staff to PRIDE, and each participant interacted with many people and experienced several "handoffs" as he or she moved through the stages of the program. It is important to note that while all the vendors had organizational experience in serving individuals with disabilities, the line staff who were assigned to PRIDE did not necessarily have such experience.

Third, two or three *VESID vocational rehabilitation counselors* were stationed at each of the vendor sites. These staff determined which PRIDE participants qualified for vocational rehabilitation services, enrolled participants into VESID's management information system, helped the vendor staff develop an Individual Plan for Employment for each person (including, for example, skills training opportunities), and monitored participants' progress. These staff worked closely with PRIDE vendor staff (and less so with PRIDE participants) but reported to supervisors in the VESID field offices.

[26]In some cases, the eligibility worker was stationed in the same building as the case manager.

PRIDE's Services

Overview of Participant Flow

As shown in Figure 2, the main steps involved in identifying and serving PRIDE clients were as follows:

- **Initial identification.** Public assistance recipients who asked to be exempted from work requirements for medical reasons were referred by their caseworker to the HRA contractor for a medical evaluation.

- **Medical evaluation.** After conducting a medical exam focusing on the condition(s) reported by the client, the contractor assigned a Functional Assessment Outcome (FAO) to each client. Some participants were deemed fully employable and were referred to regular welfare-to-work activities; others were temporarily deferred or exempted from work requirements (and, if appropriate, were helped to apply for Supplemental Security Income [SSI]); and still others were deemed "employable with limitations."[27]

- **Screening and referral.** Recipients who were deemed employable with limitations were scheduled for an appointment at the special HRA case management unit.[28] HRA staff there conducted a brief interview with the recipient and determined whether he or she was ready to participate in PRIDE. Those who were considered ready to participate went through the random assignment process.[29] Those who were randomly assigned to the PRIDE group were scheduled for an initial appointment at the PRIDE vendor serving their

[27]There were eight FAO levels: FAO 1 (nonexempt), FAO 2 (nonexempt — limitations), FAO 3 (nonexempt — extensive limitations), FAO 4 (substance abuse), FAO 5 (HIV), FAO 6 (temporary deferral from work activities, for example, during a high-risk pregnancy), FAO 7 (exempt — for an unstable medical condition requiring a "Wellness or Rehab Plan"), and FAO 8 (potential SSI recipient). In general, PRIDE was designed for those who were assigned an FAO 2 or FAO 3.

[28]Initially, the PRIDE caseload also included recipients who were receiving help applying for SSI benefits. Individuals in this category were not included in the evaluation.

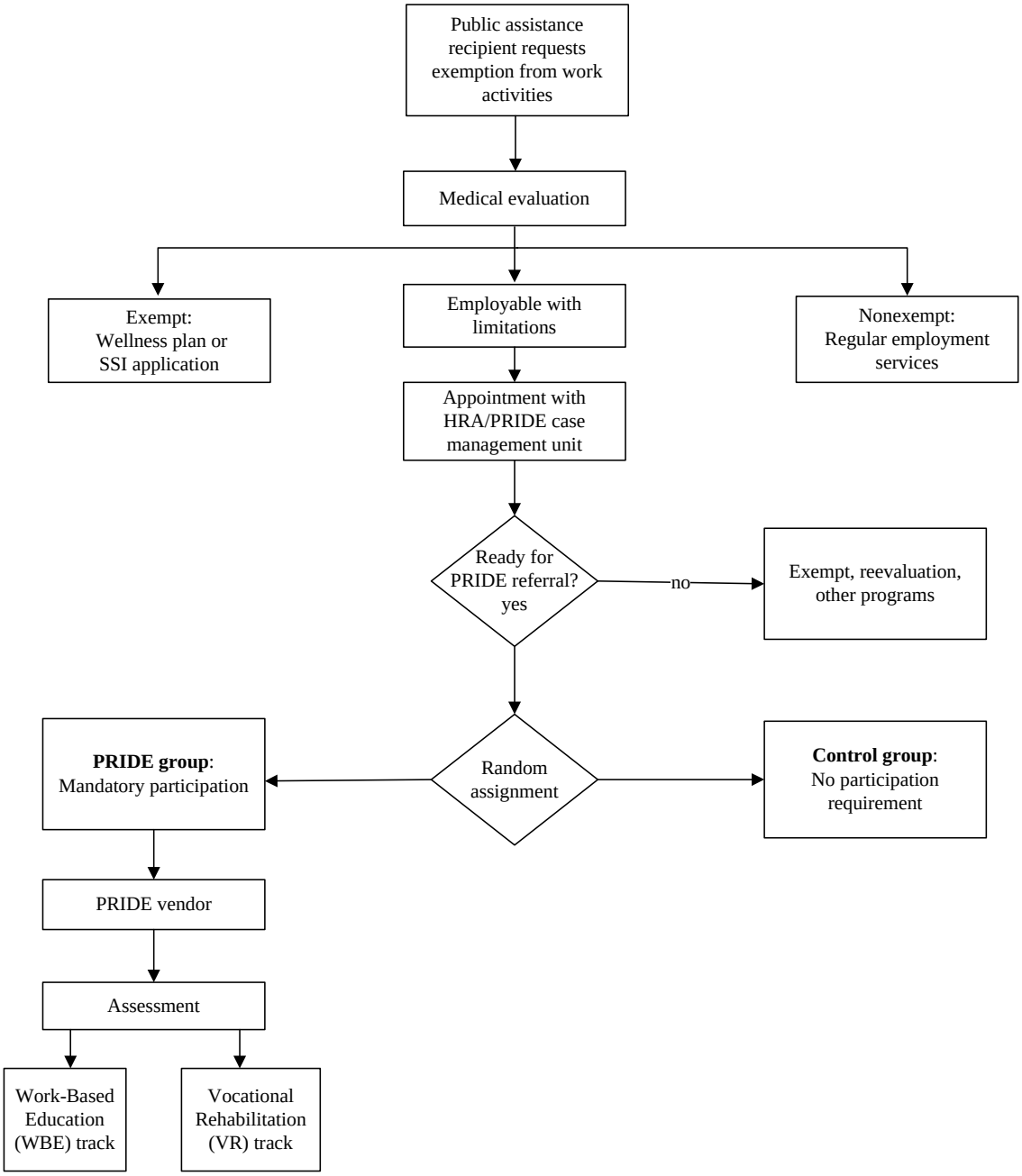
[29]If the only reason an individual was not ready for referral was child care issues, the individual was randomly assigned and was provided with assistance to address child care needs if assigned to the program group (control group members could also obtain assistance if requested). If there were other reasons the individual was not ready to be referred, the worker would determine with the individual how to resolve the issues and would schedule a return appointment.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Figure 2

Participant Flow

New York City PRIDE



borough.[30] Control group members were informed that they were excused from work requirements.

- **Assessment and track assignment.** Once the recipient showed up at the PRIDE vendor, staff conducted another assessment to determine whether she or he would be assigned to the Work Based Education (WBE) or the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) track.

- **Preemployment services.** Individuals in the WBE track were generally assigned to unpaid work experience three days per week and to a classroom-based education activity two days per week. Those in the VR track were also assigned to unpaid work experience, but their other activities were more individualized. Once considered "job-ready," participants in both tracks got help looking for jobs.

- **Postemployment services.** Vendor staff attempted to follow up with participants for six months after placement in an unsubsidized job.

A vendor could refer a participant back to HRA at any point if the person failed to attend required activities or if there was a significant change in his or her medical condition. As discussed further below, this may help to explain why many participants did not complete the vendor assessment process.

As shown near the bottom of Figure 2, the evaluation design measures the effectiveness of PRIDE by placing the point of random assignment just prior to the time when individuals were referred to a vendor. However, as discussed further below, being "employable with limitations" is not necessarily a static condition. After entering the study, some people in both groups were subsequently revaluated as being fully employable and were referred to regular (non-PRIDE) employment services; others were reevaluated as being fully exempt.

Intake and Assessment

PRIDE was intended to serve an "in-between" group of welfare recipients — those whose medical problems were too serious to allow participation in regular work activities but not serious enough that the recipient would qualify for SSI benefits. Thus, the first tasks were to identify recipients who were employable with limitations, to determine the type and severity of their medical problems, and to craft an appropriate set of employment services.

[30] A sophisticated automated system managed the scheduling process. HRA workers would check the system to see whether any intake slots were available in the near future at the provider serving the participant's borough of residence. If not, the recipient would be referred to another provider.

As summarized above, HRA developed a three-step process to identify and assess PRIDE clients. MDRC did not collect detailed information about the first two steps in this process (the medical evaluation and the appointment with HRA/PRIDE staff), since these occurred before individuals entered the study, but it did focus in some depth on the third step: the vendors' assessment of participants.

The Assessment Process

The assessment process worked somewhat differently at each vendor, but typically recipients began by attending a group orientation, taking a reading and math skills assessment test (for example, the Tests of Adult Basic Education [TABE]), and providing information on their education and work history. Based on information from the medical evaluation (if available) and an interview by vendor staff, recipients whose medical conditions were clearly less serious were assigned to the WBE track.[31] Those with more serious medical problems began the VESID eligibility determination process, since participants who were assigned to the VR track needed to meet state requirements for vocational rehabilitation services. The entire assessment process was supposed to be completed within 60 days.

According to VESID rules, in order to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, individuals must have a "medically diagnosed physical, developmental, or emotional disability" that creates "significant impediments" to the person's ability to work. In addition, there must be a "reasonable expectation" that VESID services will enable the individual to work, and VESID services must be "required" to enable him or her to work. Vendor staff, with assistance and guidance from the outstationed VESID counselors, prepared the required application packet.

Assessment Outcomes

Data from HRA's citywide tracking system show that a large proportion of the PRIDE group never completed the vendor assessment process. Within two years after random assignment, only about half the PRIDE group members were ever placed in one of the PRIDE service tracks, and the average time between random assignment and placement was about six months.

A case file review conducted in 2002 tells a similar story. This review followed about 100 cases for four to five months after random assignment, using a variety of data sources. It found that about 90 percent of the sample members who were referred from the case management unit to a PRIDE vendor actually showed up at the vendor's. However, only about one-third of the 100 cases completed the vendor assessment and were assigned to a service track

[31]Some vendors reported that they occasionally fast-tracked PRIDE participants directly into job search activities instead of assigning them to one of the two tracks.

within four to five months.[32] Most of the sample members who were not assigned to a track were referred back to HRA, either because the recipient failed to comply with the assessment process or because the vendor felt that the recipient was not employable.

These data do not necessarily mean that only half the PRIDE group received any employment services through HRA. First, at least two of the PRIDE vendors scheduled participants for job readiness workshops during the assessment period. Second, 55 percent of the PRIDE group became nonexempt at some point within two years after random assignment, and these individuals may have participated in employment activities outside the program. Overall, 76 percent of the PRIDE group *either* were assigned to a PRIDE service track *or* became nonexempt.[33]

Nevertheless, field research conducted by MDRC found that there were some significant bottlenecks in the assessment process. First, vendor staff consistently complained about the medical evaluations, asserting that they frequently arrived late, were out of date, or were of poor quality. Further, staff reported that many of the evaluations were superficial or "cookie-cutter" templates and did not provide useful guidance on job-related limitations. Finally, they noted that many recipients reported medical conditions that were not mentioned in the evaluation report. While acknowledging that some recipients were "playing the system" by reporting different medical problems to different people, vendor staff were understandably reluctant to place recipients in work activities without definitive and detailed information on their medical conditions. In many cases, the vendors directed recipients to obtain medical statements from their personal physicians — a step that could add weeks or even months to the assessment process — even though the HRA medical evaluation was supposed to take precedence over such statements.

Second, the vendors reported that many recipients did not fully comply with the assessment process. It was straightforward to deal with recipients who did not show up at the vendor's at all (they were referred back to HRA), but partial compliance — for example, missed appointments and missed deadlines — could cause significant delays.

Third, it was clear that some cases fell through cracks in the vendors' complex intake processes, and some of the vendors reported that there were not enough VESID staff on-site to handle the volume of applications.

To some extent, these bottlenecks and operational issues may be attributed to the sheer volume of clients coming into the PRIDE program, as well as to the program's unusually rapid

[32]As noted above, about half the PRIDE group were assigned to a PRIDE service track within two years after random assignment. The case file review followed cases for only four to five months, finding that about one-third were placed in a track during that shorter period.

[33]Within the two-year follow-up period, about 80 percent of the PRIDE group were either placed in a track, reevaluated as being nonexempt, or sanctioned for failing to comply with program rules.

startup. PRIDE started very quickly in 1999, targeting 21,000 welfare recipients who had been deemed temporarily exempt from work requirements. Some vendors reported that they were overwhelmed by the large number of referrals and that they never fully recovered.

More generally, however, the problems reflect the complexity of the task at hand. By their nature, many chronic medical conditions tend to wax and wane and are difficult to diagnose with precision. Going a step further, to specify how these conditions affect the kinds of work that a person can do, can be even more difficult. Doing so in the context of a very large, mandatory welfare-to-work program serving recipients who have asked to be exempted from work activities is daunting.

Employment and Education Services

Although PRIDE was designed to serve recipients who had work-limiting medical conditions, the core employment activities — built around unpaid work experience — were similar to those in New York City's regular welfare-to-work system. PRIDE did not provide clinical services. The program was designed explicitly for recipients whose medical conditions were stable, and the vendors were not expected, for example, to check whether participants were taking their medications or were keeping their appointments with physicians.

The Service Tracks

HRA's data show that from 60 percent to 65 percent of the PRIDE group members who completed the vendor assessment process were assigned to the WBE track and that the remainder were assigned to the VR track. Vendor staff reported that many WBE participants had relatively mild medical conditions but very low literacy levels and/or limited English language proficiency. Participants in the VR track had more severe medical problems.

The WBE track was highly structured. All recipients were required to participate in activities for seven hours per day, five days per week, for up to six months (with a second six-month period if necessary). Typically, three days were spent in an unpaid work experience position, and the other two days were spent in an education activity, usually adult basic education or English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. In some cases, WBE clients could participate in short-term skills training courses instead of education.

Recipients in the VR track were required to participate for as few as 25 hours per week. Under VESID rules, each participant developed an Individual Plan for Employment. Outside of PRIDE, the plan for a VESID client might include a wide range of activities. In PRIDE, consistent with HRA's emphasis, clients were expected to participate in unpaid work experience as their central activity. Vendor staff were not able to provide specific information about the other activities in which VR clients participated. Some mentioned training opportunities, but very few

respondents to the ERA 12-Month Survey reported participating in any vocational training. It appears that the most common activity, apart from unpaid work experience, was individual or group job search or job readiness activities.

Both VESID and vendor staff spoke frequently about the sharp differences in philosophy between the welfare and the vocational rehabilitation systems. The VR system, which grew out of a 1920 federal law funding employment services for disabled war veterans, typically serves individuals who come forward seeking help, offers a broad menu of possible services, and is able to work with individuals for long periods. In contrast, the welfare system — in New York as in many other places — makes work mandatory, allows a fairly narrow set of services, and pushes for quick outcomes.

As a result, VESID staff reported that the VR track in PRIDE looked very different from typical VESID services delivered outside the program. They also noted that typical PRIDE participants did not necessarily have more serious medical conditions than typical VESID clients but, not surprisingly, tended to be much less motivated and to have more nonmedical problems, such as family crises and unstable child care.

In the end, many provider staff reported that, other than the differing number of required hours of participation, there was not a sharp distinction between the services provided in the WBE and VR tracks; both tracks typically involved a mix of unpaid work experience and educational activities, along with job placement assistance. As noted earlier, all the vendors mixed WBE and VR participants in work experience sites, and two of the four mixed the two tracks within the caseloads of individual case managers.

Work Experience

New York is one of the few large municipalities in the country that makes heavy use of unpaid work experience, and it has done so since at least the 1980s. This activity is designed to serve several purposes: to assess how recipients function in a work environment, to help recipients build their résumés, and to enforce the notion that welfare is a mutual obligation.

Each of the PRIDE vendors developed a set of work experience positions geared to the program's specialized population. The PRIDE slots — separate from the pool of work experience positions for the general welfare population — were designed for individuals with medical problems. For example, there were slots that did not require heavy lifting that might aggravate back problems and slots that did not require the use of chemicals that might cause problems for people with respiratory conditions. There were also slots for participants who did not speak English; for example, one vendor had several slots geared to monolingual Spanish and Cantonese speakers. Three of the four vendors reported that they had 100 or more slots available in all,

generally in nonprofit organizations. At least two of the vendors maintained work experience slots within their own agencies.

Most of the vendors had specialized staff who were responsible for identifying work-site placements for both WBE and VR participants. (There were not separate slots for recipients in each track.) These staff also matched participants with available work sites, considering such factors as geography, work limitations, language barriers, and career interests.[34] Some work-site supervisors interviewed participants before "hiring" them, while others did not. Generally, once a participant had been placed on a site, it was up to the case manager to monitor his or her attendance and performance. Work sites agreed to report on participants' attendance and progress, and it appears that vendor staff were able to track participants' attendance fairly closely.

Education and Training

As noted above, almost all WBE participants and some VR participants enrolled in education activities. All the PRIDE vendors offered classes to prepare for the General Educational Development (GED) exam as well as classes in adult basic education (often called "pre-GED") and English as a Second Language (ESL). Scores on the initial reading and writing tests administered during the intake process were used to place participants at the appropriate level. More advanced participants who were interested in clerical jobs could also enroll in computer classes that taught them how to use basic office software. Three of the vendors employed instructors for the education courses, while one subcontracted with another organization to operate its classes. Observations by MDRC staff suggest that the education activities were well run but generally were typical of adult education programs that one might find in the community.

Job Development and Job Placement

All the PRIDE vendors had a mechanism for identifying participants who — based on their performance in work experience and/or education — were deemed "job-ready." In most cases, this was a subjective decision made by case managers and other staff, but several vendors said that they started to consider job readiness after participants had been at a work site for one to two months. Once considered job-ready, the participant began working with a group of vendor staff specializing in job development and job placement. The specific activities included a mix of one-on-one meetings with job developers, who would refer participants to specific jobs, and group classes or workshops focusing on job search skills, including how to develop a résumé and how to interview for a job. As with unpaid work experience, the vendors aimed to identify and place participants in jobs that were appropriate, given their medical conditions.

[34]Some vendors allowed participants to identify their own work sites, for example, by contacting local nonprofit organizations that were looking for volunteers.

Postemployment Services

PRIDE followed up with participants for at least six months after placement in a job, to try to promote employment retention. MDRC's field research suggests that the vendors' post-placement components were not very well developed; the key goal was to verify that participants were still employed.

Responses to Noncompliance

Vendor staff reported that PRIDE participants frequently failed to show up for assigned activities. If follow-up letters and phone calls failed to engage such a recipient, the vendor would initiate the enforcement process by notifying HRA. According to HRA's database, about three-fourths of the PRIDE group had at least one instance of "failure to comply," and most such infractions related to the program's requirements. Unlike in PRIDE's successor program — WeCARE — the PRIDE vendors were not expected to reach out to noncompliant recipients. ("WeCARE" stands for the Wellness, Comprehensive Assessment, Rehabilitation, and Employment program; see Box 1.)

Vendor staff frequently complained that, in their view, PRIDE's participation mandate had "no teeth," because recipients who were sent back to HRA as noncompliant were frequently referred to the same vendor and were not sanctioned. HRA staff reported that they followed up on noncompliance according to the agency's regulations, which include due process protections for recipients. In fact, sanctioning was quite frequent: About 32 percent of the PRIDE group were sanctioned within two years after random assignment. (Sanctions are common throughout New York City's TANF program. In fact, HRA data show that, during the study period, the sanctioning rate for TANF clients in PRIDE was lower than the rate for the general TANF population.)

How PRIDE Staff Spent Their Time

To better understand the nature of case management in employment retention and advancement programs, MDRC administered a staff "time study" in most of the ERA sites. The study collected detailed information on the nature of staff-client interactions and on the topics covered in those interactions. In addition, the study collected information on how ERA case managers typically spend their time each day. The PRIDE time study was administered in July 2003; all four PRIDE vendors participated, and 38 case managers completed the study.

The PRIDE vendors' case managers had an average caseload of 42 participants during the period when the time study was administered. Over half the case managers had caseloads of between 41 and 60 clients, and very few reported larger caseloads. As expected, given the design of the intervention, few participants were working in unsubsidized employment.

Box 1

After PRIDE: HRA's WeCARE Initiative

In 2004, PRIDE was phased out and replaced by the WeCARE (Wellness, Comprehensive Assessment, Rehabilitation, and Employment) program, an even larger and more ambitious initiative. WeCARE serves a similar population — welfare recipients with work-limiting medical or mental health conditions — but is structured differently than PRIDE. Under the new program, a wider set of services and populations are brought under one roof by two main vendors (each with a number of subcontractors), each serving particular boroughs of the city. Recipients who report that they have a medical condition that prevents them from participating in regular work activities are referred directly to one of the vendors, which conducts a comprehensive "biopsychosocial assessment" that includes a medical exam. Unless the recipient is found to be fully employable, she or he remains with the vendor, which provides a range of services. The vendor develops a "wellness plan" for individuals with untreated or unstable medical conditions, performs diagnostic vocational evaluations to assess functional limitations, provides tailored employment services and intensive case management, and provides assistance with the SSI application process when appropriate. HRA estimated that 45,000 people would be referred to the WeCARE vendors each year.

Figure 3 shows that 39 percent of PRIDE case managers' time was spent in contact with clients; this is relatively high, compared with the other programs in the ERA project. Time not spent with clients was typically spent on administrative duties, like general paperwork (23 percent of total time), and on monitoring clients' participation in services (7 percent of total time) and attending staff meetings (6 percent of total time).

As shown in Appendix Table G.2, the majority of client contacts (60 percent) were in person and, as expected, were almost all office visits. The lower rows of the table show that most client contacts (67 percent) were initiated by staff rather than by clients.

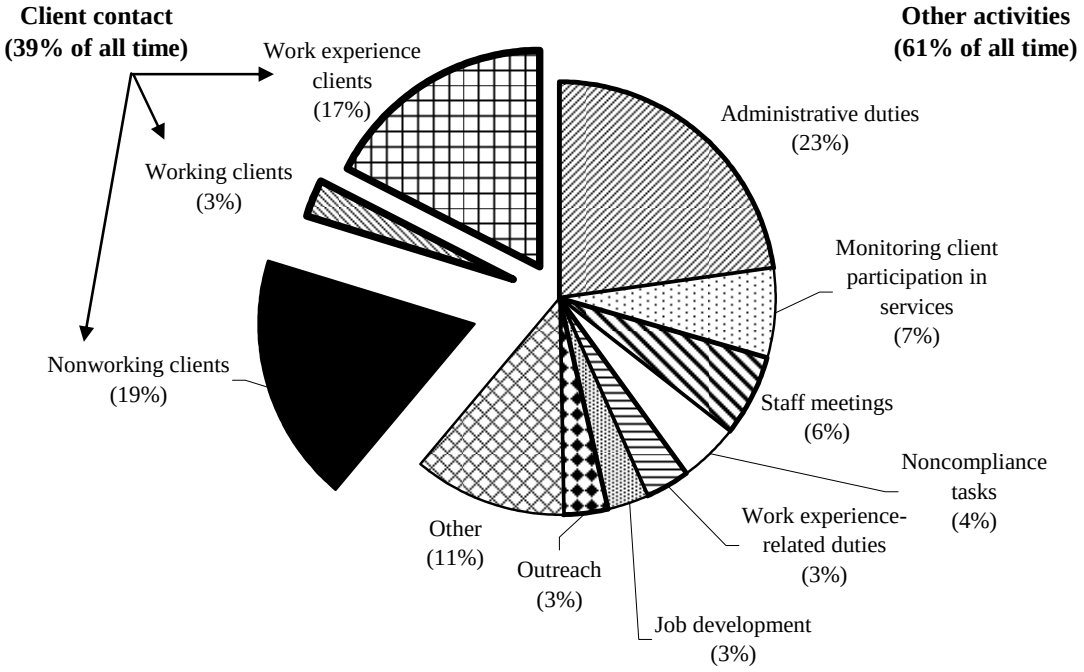
Finally, as shown in Appendix Table G.3, during all client contacts, the most common topics addressed were participation and sanctioning issues (33 percent of all contacts), general check-ins (22 percent), personal or family issues (18 percent), and assistance with reemployment (16 percent).

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Figure 3

Summary of How PRIDE Case Managers Typically Spend Their Time

New York City PRIDE



SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the ERA time study.

Services for the Control Group

Recipients who were assigned to the control group were treated as they would been treated before PRIDE was created. They were not referred to a PRIDE vendor, and they were exempt from participation in work activities unless their medical status changed.

For much of the study period, control group members were assigned to one of a few designated HRA caseworkers who understood the control group status. Immediately after random assignment, recipients assigned to the control group met with one of these caseworkers, who explained the meaning of the assignment and gave the individuals a list of community agencies that offered employment services that might meet their needs. As noted above, how-

ever, individuals in the control group were not required to participate in these (or any) services unless their status changed to "nonexempt."

HRA staff created a special code to prevent the data system from automatically generating introductory letters or scheduling control group members for appointments related to work activities. Although this system did not work perfectly (perhaps because caseworkers did not code all cases correctly), the tracking system shows that less than 2 percent of control group members were placed in a PRIDE service track within one year after random assignment and that less than 5 percent were so placed within two years after random assignment. (As noted above, about half the PRIDE group were placed in a service track within two years.)

Although very few control group members were erroneously served by PRIDE, about 33 percent of the control group became nonexempt at some point within two years after random assignment. (As noted above, the corresponding figure for the PRIDE group was even higher: 55 percent became nonexempt at some point.)[35] These individuals were probably scheduled for work activities through HRA's regular welfare-to-work program — as would have occurred in the absence of PRIDE. The control group ceased to exist in September 2005. At that point, control group members who were still receiving welfare and were still considered employable with limitations were integrated into HRA's new WeCARE initiative. (See Box 1.)

[35]MDRC does not have detailed information on the process used to reevaluate clients' exemption statuses. However, it is notable that individuals in the PRIDE group were substantially more likely to have had their status changed to nonexempt during the study period. It seems likely that their exposure to PRIDE's requirements may have triggered more frequent reevaluations.

Effects on Program Participation and Service Receipt

This section presents the effects of New York City's Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment (PRIDE) program on program participation and the receipt of support services. The analysis uses data from the ERA 12-Month Survey and from the automated tracking system of the city's Human Resources Administration (HRA). Because the follow-up survey was limited to the single-parent sample, the findings reported here pertain only to that group.

- **Survey respondents in the PRIDE group were substantially more likely than those in the control group to participate in work activities (primarily job search and work experience) but not in education or training.**

Table 4 presents data on participation in employment-related activities, as reported on the 12-month survey. (Box 2 explains how to read the tables in the ERA evaluation.) A substantial proportion of the control group respondents reported participating in work activities. This pattern probably reflects the fact, discussed in the preceding section, that about one-third of control group members became nonexempt during the follow-up period and were required to participate in regular HRA work activities.

Nevertheless, PRIDE substantially increased participation in both job search activities and work experience — two core program components. For example, 33 percent of respondents in the PRIDE group reported unpaid work/subsidized employment, compared with about 14 percent of respondents in the control group. Overall, including those who did not participate in this activity, the PRIDE group had almost three times as many weeks of participation in work experience as did the control group (7.7 weeks versus 2.8 weeks). Among survey respondents in the PRIDE group who participated in work experience, the average time spent in these positions was nearly six months (not shown).

There was a similarly large difference between the two groups in their participation in group job search/job club activities, which were provided by all the PRIDE vendors. More than 40 percent of the PRIDE group respondents reported participating in such activities — more than double the figure for the control group.

The PRIDE program had no statistically significant effect on participation in education or training among the survey respondents. This is somewhat surprising, given that recipients who were assigned to the Work Based Education (WBE) track were expected to spend two days per week in education activities. However, it is notable that respondents in both groups were fairly likely to report participating in education and training; more than one-fourth of the control group and nearly one-third of the PRIDE group reported such participation, with adult basic education and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses being most prevalent. It may be

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 4

Impacts on Participation in Job Search, Education, Training, and Other Activities for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)		P-Value
Ever participated in any activity[a] (%)	65.9	49.7	16.2	***	0.000
Participated in any employment-related activity[b] (%)	58.7	40.1	18.5	***	0.000
Participated in a job search activity (%)	51.3	36.2	15.1	***	0.000
Group job search/job club	41.4	20.0	21.4	***	0.000
Individual job search	34.2	26.9	7.3	**	0.028
Participated in an education/training activity (%)	31.4	26.3	5.1		0.128
Adult basic education/GED classes	14.6	11.7	2.9		0.236
English as a Second Language (ESL) classes	10.4	9.1	1.3		0.545
College courses	5.7	3.8	2.0		0.204
Vocational training	8.4	7.4	1.0		0.601
Participated in unpaid work/subsidized employment (%)	33.0	13.7	19.3	***	0.000
Average number of weeks participating in:					
Job search activities	10.3	4.8	5.5	***	0.000
Education/training activities	6.4	4.5	1.9	*	0.071
Unpaid work/subsidized employment	7.7	2.8	4.9	***	0.000
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379			

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

[a] "Any activity" includes employment-related activities, education/training activities, life skills, and other types of activities.

[b]Employment-related activities include job search activities, unpaid jobs, and on-the-job training.

that control group members, without work requirements, were more likely to enter education or training activities on their own, thereby offsetting the increase in such activities that is attributable to the WBE requirements.

- **Respondents in the PRIDE group were more likely than those in the control group to receive help accessing benefits and other supportive services and help with job preparation.**

Table 5 presents data on the types of services that sample members received, as reported by respondents to the 12-month survey.

Box 2

How to Read the Tables in the ERA Evaluation

Most tables in this report use a similar format, illustrated below, which shows a series of outcomes for the PRIDE group and the control group. For example, the table shows that 65.9 percent of PRIDE group members and 49.7 percent of the control group members have ever participated in any program activity.

Because individuals were assigned randomly either to the PRIDE group or to the control group, the effects of the program can be estimated by the difference in outcomes between the two groups. The "Difference" column in the table shows the differences between the two research groups' participation rates — that is, the program's *impacts* on participation. For example, the impact on participation in any employment-related activity can be calculated by subtracting 58.7 percent from 40.1 percent, yielding an 18.5 percentage point impact.

Differences marked with asterisks are "statistically significant," meaning that it is quite unlikely that the differences arose by chance. The number of asterisks indicates whether the impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent, 5 percent, or 10 percent level (the lower the level, the less likely that the impact is due to chance). For example, as shown below, the PRIDE program had a statistically significant impact of 7.3 percentage points at the 5 percent level on participation in individual job searches. However, PRIDE had no statistically significant effect on participation in an education/training activity (there are no asterisks next to the difference of 5.1 percentage points). The p-values show the exact levels of significance.

Impacts on Participation in Job Search, Education, and Training Activities

Outcome (%)	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)		P-Value
Ever participated in any activity	65.9	49.7	16.2	***	0.000
Participated in any employment-related activity	58.7	40.1	18.5	***	0.000
Participated in a job search activity	51.3	36.2	15.1	***	0.000
Group Job search/job club	41.4	20.0	21.4	***	0.000
Individual job search	34.2	26.9	7.3	**	0.028
Participated in an education/training activity	31.4	26.3	5.1		0.128

Access to the PRIDE program led to changes in the types of help received, and most of the changes are related to the increased emphasis on work. One of the largest effects on help received was in job preparation (see the middle of Table 5): 36.5 percent of respondents in the PRIDE group reported receiving help in this area, compared with 18.6 percent of respondents in the control group. Consistent with the goals of the program, more respondents in the PRIDE group reported that they had received help finding a job that took into account their health problems (though it is notable that only about one-fifth of the PRIDE group reported receiving such help).

The program also led to notable increases in help finding or paying for child care and transportation, both of which are work-related supports. Finally, the program led to an increase in assistance getting Medicaid and food stamps, consistent with families thinking about moving off welfare and making sure that they would continue to receive other benefits for which they were eligible. The next section explores whether this effect was driven by a reduction in welfare and an increase in work.

- **Members of the PRIDE group were much more likely than those in the control group to be identified as noncompliant, and they were more likely to be sanctioned for failure to comply with program rules.**

According to HRA's tracking system, about 65 percent of the PRIDE group were considered out of compliance with HRA rules at some point within one year after random assignment; over a two-year period, the figure was nearly 76 percent. Most of these instances of noncompliance related to PRIDE's requirements, so it is not surprising that the corresponding figures for the control group are much lower, about 16 percent and 24 percent, respectively.

A similar pattern is evident with regard to sanctioning. Within one year of random assignment, 20 percent of the PRIDE group and 3 percent of the control group had their grant reduced for noncompliance. Within two years, the figures were 32 percent for the PRIDE group and 8 percent for the control group. Further analysis (not shown) found that there were few differences in the characteristics of sample members who were sanctioned and those who were not.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 5

Impacts on Areas in Which the Respondent Received Help, for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome (%)	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Received help with support services	32.7	16.3	16.3 ***	0.000
Finding or paying for child care	22.1	12.9	9.2 ***	0.001
Finding or paying for transportation	21.4	8.9	12.5 ***	0.000
Received help with basic needs	57.0	51.3	5.6	0.125
Solving housing problems	27.8	24.1	3.7	0.256
Getting access to medical treatment	45.3	41.1	4.2	0.257
Handling a financial emergency	17.8	16.2	1.6	0.549
Received help with public benefits	58.7	51.7	7.1 *	0.053
Getting Medicaid	55.5	47.3	8.2 **	0.026
Getting food stamps	56.0	45.4	10.6 ***	0.004
Received help with job preparation	36.5	18.6	17.8 ***	0.000
Enrolling in job readiness or training	27.9	12.9	14.9 ***	0.000
Looking for a job	28.3	13.3	15.1 ***	0.000
Finding clothes, tools, or supplies for work	7.8	6.1	1.7	0.372
Received help with retention and advancement	12.7	7.1	5.6 ***	0.010
Finding a better job while working	4.3	3.1	1.2	0.389
Enrolling in life skills classes while working	2.1	1.8	0.3	0.797
Getting a career assessment	10.0	4.2	5.8 ***	0.002
Dealing with problems on the job	3.6	2.5	1.1	0.368
Received help with barriers to employment	31.8	27.8	4.0	0.240
Addressing a personal problem that makes it hard to keep a job	4.2	2.4	1.8	0.163
Addressing a health problem that makes it hard to find/keep a job[a]	24.8	22.6	2.2	0.486
Finding a job that takes into account health problems	19.4	10.1	9.3 ***	0.000
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

[a] This measure includes other activities, such as life skills and child development classes.

Effects on Employment and Public Assistance Receipt

This section presents the effects of New York City's Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment (PRIDE) program on employment, employment retention, cash assistance receipt, and food stamp receipt in the first two years after random assignment. Administrative records data are used to compare outcomes for the PRIDE and control groups among single parents and for Safety Net recipients without dependent children. The tables and figures present effects on summary measures. Effects on the full set of outcomes are shown in Appendix B.

Effects for Single Parents

- **On average, the PRIDE program increased employment and employment stability among single parents. The effects persisted throughout the two-year follow-up period.**

The upper panel of Table 6 summarizes the impacts of PRIDE on employment that was covered by unemployment insurance (UI) and on public assistance receipt for the two-year follow-up period, and the middle and lower panels of the table show each of the two years separately. Note that off-the-books jobs and unpaid work, such as work experience placements, are not captured by the UI system.[36] As shown, a larger percentage of the PRIDE group was "ever employed" in UI-covered jobs at some point during the follow-up period. Table 6 shows that 33.7 percent of the PRIDE group versus 26.5 percent of the control group worked at some point during the two-year period, for an increase of 7.2 percentage points.[37] However, the low employment levels for both groups are noteworthy. About two-thirds of the PRIDE group and almost three-fourths of the control group did not work in a UI-covered job during the two-year follow-up. Furthermore, only 15.7 percent of the PRIDE group and 12.8 percent of the control group worked during a typical quarter during this period.[38] These patterns reflect the limited employability of the PRIDE target group: Individuals who have physical and mental health barriers have lower rates of employment than the general population. (See Box 3.)

The middle and bottom panels of Table 6 and the top panel of Figure 4 show employment rates and effects over time. These data show that the employment impacts persisted

[36]Other jobs not covered by the UI system include federal, out-of-state, and military jobs and self-employment.

[37]The employment, public assistance, and survey impacts are estimated in a regression framework, which also controls for a range of background characteristics, including race/ethnicity, number of children, age of children, service provider, intake period, prior food stamp receipt, prior employment, and prior TANF receipt.

[38]The average quarterly employment rate is calculated as total quarters employed divided by 8 (the number of quarters in the follow-up period), expressed as a percentage.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 6

Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Years 1 and 2				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	33.7	26.5	7.2 ***	0.000
Average quarterly employment	15.7	12.8	2.9 ***	0.004
Employed 8 consecutive quarters	3.2	2.9	0.2	0.725
Income ($)				
Earnings[a]	3,536	2,982	554 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	10,732	11,550	-818 ***	0.000
Amount of food stamps received	6,256	6,386	-130	0.123
Total measured income[a, b]	20,455	21,016	-562 [a]	NA
Year 1				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	23.0	18.7	4.3 ***	0.004
Average quarterly employment	13.1	11.3	1.8 *	0.065
Employed 4 consecutive quarters	5.5	4.7	0.7	0.384
Income ($)				
Earnings[a]	1,330	1,167	163 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	5,806	6,100	-293 ***	0.001
Amount of food stamps received	3,301	3,334	-34	0.395
Total measured income[a, b]	10,396	10,658	-262 [a]	NA
Year 2				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	27.1	22.0	5.1 ***	0.002
Average quarterly employment	18.3	14.3	4.0 ***	0.001
Employed 4 consecutive quarters	9.8	7.9	1.9 *	0.092
Income ($)				
Earnings[a]	2,206	1,815	391 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	4,925	5,450	-525 ***	0.000
Amount of food stamps received	2,956	3,052	-96 *	0.072
Total measured income[a, b]	10,058	10,358	-300 [a]	NA
Sample size (total = 2,648)	1,553	1,095		

(continued)

Table 6 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

[a]This difference is not tested for statistical significance because the UI earnings data were provided as group averages and the number of groups was too small to provide for a fair test.

[b]This measure represents the sum of UI-covered earnings, cash assistance, and food stamps.

throughout the follow-up period. The pattern suggests that PRIDE may continue to have an employment effect beyond Year 2.

Employment stability can be examined based on the percentage working for several quarters consecutively. As shown in Table 6, employment stability was low for both research groups. About 3 percent of the sample members in each group worked for eight consecutive quarters in a UI-covered job during the entire follow-up period. Nevertheless, PRIDE increased employment stability during Year 2, as seen by the increase in the percentage of sample members employed for four consecutive quarters. Over the two-year period, PRIDE group members earned $3,536, on average, while control group members earned $2,982. Note that this difference was not tested for statistical significance.[39]

Data from the ERA 12-Month Survey provide additional information on employment and job characteristics for single parents.[40] The first panel of Table 7 shows the percentage of sample members in each research group who were employed since random assignment and their employment status at the time of the survey interview. Similar to the administrative record results, the survey shows that the PRIDE program increased the percentage of single parents who worked during Year 1, although there was no effect on employment at the time of the survey.[41] The remaining rows of the table display the characteristics of respondents' current or most recent job at the time of the survey. Note that when the percentages for the categories are summed, they add up to the percentage of sample members who worked since random assignment.

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[39]Earnings impacts were not estimated because New York State did not provided MDRC with earnings data for each individual but, instead, provided average earnings for groups of individuals; the groups were defined by research status, assistance type, and quarter of random assignment. It was determined that the number of groups (16) was too small to provide for a fair test.

[40]Safety Net recipients without dependent children were not surveyed.

[41]No difference in employment was found when UI-covered employment was measured at a point in time (the survey interview date), which is indicative of fairly unstable employment. As shown in Appendix Table B.2, the UI-covered employment in Quarter 5 — which is the time when many survey respondents were interviewed — shows a sudden decrease when compared with other quarters. Furthermore, since the survey respondent sample was limited to only a few months of intake, a "cohort effect" may have been introduced. As shown in Appendix Table H.3, the effects on employment for the respondent sample were smaller than the effects for the full research sample. (See Appendix H for further information.)

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 7

Impacts on Job Characteristics in Current or Most Recent Job, for Single Parents, from the ERA 12-Month Survey

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Employment status (%)				
Ever employed since random assignment	33.4	24.4	9.0 ***	0.005
Currently employed	15.6	12.9	2.7	0.276
No longer employed	17.5	11.5	6.0 **	0.019
Characteristic of current/most recent job (%)				
Working status				
Full time	22.8	16.4	6.4 **	0.022
Part time	10.3	7.9	2.3	0.270
Employed at a "good job"[a]	7.9	3.7	4.2 **	0.012
Hours				
Average hours per week	10.6	7.8	2.8 **	0.012
Total hours per week (%)				
Less than 30	10.3	7.9	2.3	0.270
30-34	2.9	2.7	0.2	0.850
35-44	15.5	11.4	4.1 *	0.098
45 or more	4.5	2.4	2.1	0.111
Average hourly wage (%)				
Less than $5.00	9.3	6.0	3.4 *	0.080
$5.00 - $6.99	7.3	5.6	1.7	0.336
$7.00 - $8.99	7.8	5.9	1.9	0.308
$9.00 or more	8.7	6.9	1.8	0.368
Average hourly wage among those employed ($)	*6.82*	*6.98*	*-0.17*	*NA*
Earnings				
Average earnings per week ($)	73	55	19 **	0.044
Total earnings per week (%)				
Less than $200	18.1	11.1	7.0 ***	0.006
$201-$300	6.4	8.4	-2.0	0.286
$301-$500	6.3	3.5	2.8 *	0.077
$500 or more	2.4	1.3	1.0	0.303
Average weekly earnings among those employed ($)	*215*	*202*	*13*	*NA*

(continued)

Table 7 (continued)

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Impact	P-Value
Benefits (%)				
Employer-provided benefits				
Sick days with full pay	6.1	6.0	0.0	0.979
Paid vacation	7.6	6.4	1.2	0.505
Paid holidays other than Christmas and New Year	6.6	6.8	-0.2	0.903
Dental benefits	4.8	4.9	-0.1	0.967
A retirement plan	3.7	3.4	0.3	0.823
A health plan or medical insurance	6.8	5.6	1.2	0.480
Schedule[b] (%)				
Regular	18.2	11.6	6.7 ***	0.010
Split	0.6	0.2	0.4	0.448
Irregular	1.8	1.1	0.6	0.463
Evening shift	2.1	3.2	-1.1	0.344
Night shift	1.5	0.9	0.6	0.443
Rotating shift	1.7	2.2	-0.5	0.641
Other schedule	0.0	1.3	-1.3 **	0.030
Odd job	7.0	3.6	3.4 **	0.036
Job skills index (%)				
Percentage reporting that the job requires each at least monthly:				
Reading and writing skills	19.9	14.6	5.4 **	0.047
Work with computers	7.4	7.1	0.3	0.865
Arithmetic	11.7	9.4	2.2	0.309
Customer contact	25.7	20.9	4.8	0.107
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

[a]This definition of a good job is adapted from Johnson and Corcoran (2003). A "good job" is one that offers 35 or more hours per week and either (1) pays $7.00 or more per hour and provides health insurance or (2) pays $8.50 or more per hour and does not provide health insurance.

[b]A split shift is defined as one consisting of two distinct periods each day. An irregular schedule is defined as one that changes from day to day. A rotating shift is one that changes regularly from days to evenings to nights.

The PRIDE program increased average hours worked per week and weekly earnings. The program also increased the percentage of sample members in "good jobs"[42] and the percentage

[42]As defined by Johnson and Corcoran (2003), a "good job" is one that offers 35 or more hours per week and either (1) pays $7.00 or more per hour and offers health insurance or (2) pays $8.50 or more per hour and does not provide health insurance.

Box 3

Cross-Site Comparison of Control Groups in Year 1

The PRIDE program targeted a population with health problems thought to limit their employability. This box compares the PRIDE control group with other welfare recipients in the ERA evaluation to shed light on the extent to which the PRIDE group can be considered "hard-to-employ." Note that the other ERA programs targeted different populations. The Minnesota program targeted long-term TANF recipients who were unable to find jobs through the standard welfare-to-work services. The Portland program targeted individuals who cycled back onto TANF and who were unemployed. Finally, the Houston, Corpus Christi, and Fort Worth programs served both welfare recipients and applicants. (See Appendix Table D.1 for further information on the ERA sites.) The comparisons suggest that the PRIDE group was more disadvantaged relative to these other groups. The PRIDE control group fared worse in terms of employment and earnings outcomes. Also, compared with the other control group samples, cash assistance receipt fell at a much lower rate for the PRIDE control group. This reflects the limited employability of the PRIDE target group.
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ERA Site	Ever Employed (%)	Earnings ($)	Average Quarterly Employment (%)	Cash Assistance Receipt in Quarter 5 (%)
Minnesota	56.6	3,892	37.9	69.4
NYC PRIDE	18.7	1,167	11.3	91.6
Portland	49.6	2,740	31.3	60.3
Houston	63.6	3,863	43.4	47.7
Corpus Christi	74.0	3,593	49.8	41.4
Fort Worth	67.3	4,283	47.3	47.7

of sample members in low-paying jobs.[43] Note that most of the employment increase appears to have been in jobs that paid less than $200 per week.[44]

- **The PRIDE program reduced cash assistance receipt and payments among single parents.**

[43]Some fraction of the new employment also appears to have been in jobs paying $5.00 or less per hour. For some respondents, the reported wage may be only a rough measure of hourly earnings. In many cases, for example, wages on the survey are not reported per hour but are calculated using weekly or monthly earnings, divided by usual hours per week or month. In other cases, respondents were reporting earnings from informal jobs or odd jobs — such as piecemeal work or baby-sitting, for example — that may pay less than the minimum wage.

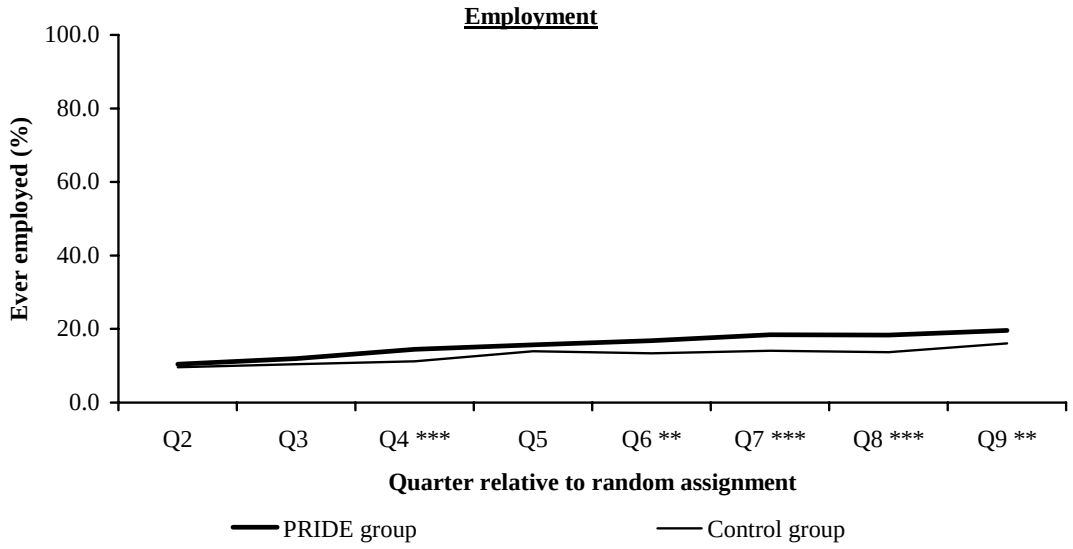
[44]Appendix Tables B.3 and B.4 provide additional information on job retention and advancement for survey respondents.

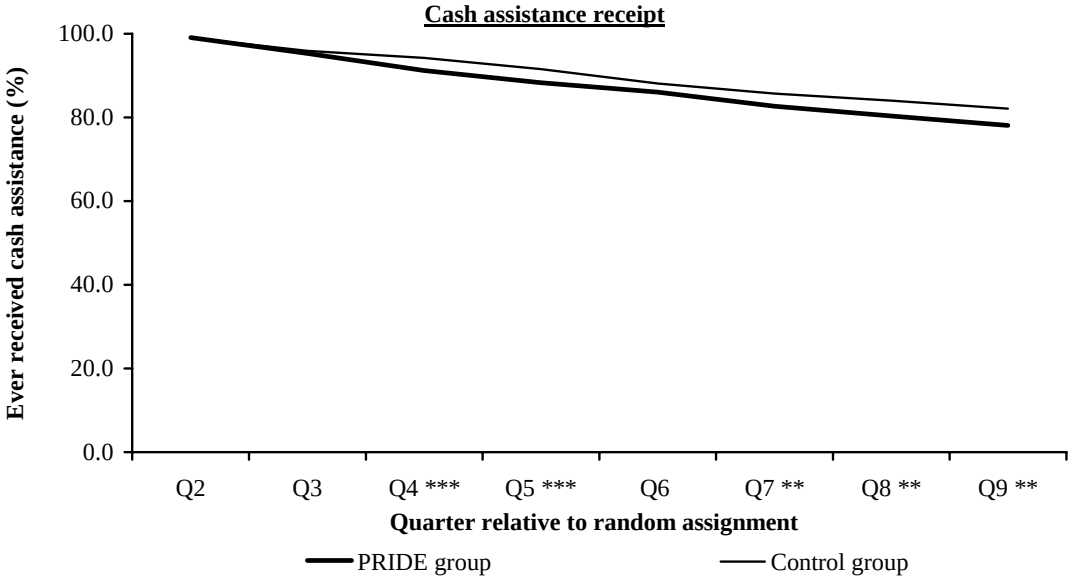
The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Figure 4

Years 1 and 2, Impacts on Quarterly UI-Covered Employment and Cash Assistance for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE





SOURCES: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

PRIDE produced a significant reduction in cash assistance receipt and payments. Table 6 shows that the program reduced welfare payments by $293 during Year 1 and by $525 during Year 2. There was also a small reduction in food stamp receipt during Year 2.[45]

During the two-year follow-up period, the PRIDE group received an average of 20 months of cash assistance, compared with 21 months for the control group, for a significant difference of -1 month (Appendix Table B.1). The lower panel of Figure 4 shows that the difference in cash assistance receipt grew over time. At the end of the two-year follow-up period, 78.1 percent of the PRIDE group, compared with 82.1 percent of the control group, received cash assistance, for a 4.0 percentage point difference (Appendix Table B.6).

The decreases in cash assistance payments were driven by a combination of lower receipt rates and lower amounts per recipient — the results of an increase in employment and an increase in sanctioning. Going to work can make an individual eligible for a reduced grant amount or no longer eligible for any assistance.[46] The program increased the number of sample members who were employed and not receiving cash assistance (Appendix Table B.5), which shows that some PRIDE group members exited welfare as they found work. However, there is also evidence that some sample members who did not find employment had their grants reduced.

A reduction in cash assistance receipt and grant amounts without an increase in earnings may be the result of an increase in sanctioning. As noted earlier, a sanction would result in reduction of an individual's welfare grant. There is some evidence that the program decreased cash assistance through increased sanctioning among the PRIDE group. First, the program decreased cash assistance payments among subgroups that did not have an increase in employment (see Table 8). Second, an examination of participation data shows that about 32 percent of the PRIDE group were sanctioned during the two-year follow-up period, compared with only about 8 percent of the control group (see the preceding section).

Finally, Table 6 shows that the PRIDE program did not increase measured income, defined as the sum of earnings, cash assistance, and food stamps. Any increases in earnings appear to have been more than offset by reductions in cash assistance.

- **The employment impacts generated by PRIDE were concentrated among sample members who had received assistance for fewer than 60 months.**

[45]The reduction in food stamp receipt is also evident in responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey. (See Appendix Table C.1.)

[46]In New York State, the monthly earnings limit for continued TANF eligibility for a single parent with two children in 2003 was $1,067 (U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means, 2003).

Table 8 present impacts for single parents who were still receiving TANF at study entry, compared with those who had already been moved into the Safety Net program.[47] All the employment increase for single parents was concentrated among TANF recipients. The PRIDE program increased employment for TANF recipients by 10.9 percentage points, and this effect persisted through the end of the follow-up period. For example, within this group, 23.6 percent of the PRIDE group, compared with 18.5 percent of the control group, were employed in a UI-covered job during Quarter 9, for a statistically significant difference of 5.2 percentage points (not shown). Although the earnings effects were not tested for statistical significance, the data suggest that the program may have increase earnings for this group, showing a fairly sizable difference of $873 over the two-year period.

In contrast, the program did not significantly increase employment among single parents receiving Safety Net assistance. Recall that this group consists of long-term recipients who had not found jobs and who had reached their 60-month TANF limit prior to entering the study. This group may have been at a greater disadvantage in finding employment. The differences in the employment impacts between the two subgroups are statistically significant.

Although the program increased employment only for the subgroups of TANF recipients, PRIDE significantly decreased cash assistance payments and receipt (not shown) for all single parents, both TANF and Safety Net recipients. This decrease may reflect the fact that the sanctioning rate was higher for the PRIDE group than for the control group.[48]

- **The PRIDE program had no effect on disability income receipt or on health outcomes.**

PRIDE did not affect the percentage of sample members who reported receiving disability income. According to the ERA 12-Month Survey, 21.8 percent of PRIDE households received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or disability income at the time of the interview, compared with 19.1 percent of the control group (Appendix Table C.1). The survey results also show that the program had no effect on the rate of application for disability benefits (not

[47]Impacts were estimated for other subgroups, including subgroups defined by type of physical or mental disability, race/ethnicity, number of children, age of children, age of participant, and service provider (not shown). These results show no or few consistent statistically significant differences in impacts between these PRIDE member subgroups and their control group counterparts. One exception is for recipients younger than age 41. The PRIDE program led to a larger reduction in cash assistance payments.

[48]No differences were found between the sanctioning rates of the TANF and the Safety Net recipients (not shown).

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 8

Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Single Parents, by Type of Assistance

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value	P-Value for Difference
TANF recipients					
Employment (%)					
Ever employed	39.6	28.7	10.9 ***	0.00	0.028
Average quarterly employment	18.8	14.7	4.1 ***	0.00	0.267
Employed 4 consecutive quarters	4.2	3.5	0.7	0.50	0.725
Income ($)					
Earnings	4,514	3,641	873 [a]	NA	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	9,889	10,721	-832 ***	0.00	0.042
Amount of food stamps received	5,908	6,074	-165	0.15	0.527
Total measured income[b]	20,311	20,435	-124 [a]	NA	NA
Sample size (total = 1,615)	945	670			
Safety Net recipients					
Employment (%)					
Ever employed	24.4	22.6	1.8	0.48	
Average quarterly employment	10.9	9.7	1.2	0.39	
Employed 4 consecutive quarters	1.6	1.9	-0.3	0.70	
Income ($)					
Earnings	2,145	1,703	442 [a]	NA	
Amount of cash assistance received	12,087	12,854	-767 ***	0.00	
Amount of food stamps received	6,797	6,890	-93	0.44	
Total measured income[b]	21,029	21,448	-419 [a]	NA	
Sample size (total = 1,033)	608	425			

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

[a]This difference is not tested for statistical significance because the UI earnings data were provided as group averages and the number of groups was too small to provide for a fair test.

[b]This measure represents the sum of UI-covered earnings, cash assistance, and food stamps.

shown). As noted in the implementation section of this report, individuals who were initially assessed to be likely candidates for SSI were not included in the research sample.

Given that the program took into account the sample members' health limitations for their work placements, PRIDE may have had positive effects on their health status. As shown in Appendix Table C.3, however, the health outcomes for both research groups were similar, showing no effects of the program. For example, the majority of sample members in both groups had experienced bodily pain at the time of the survey interview.[49]

Effects for Safety Net Recipients Without Dependent Children

- **The PRIDE program increased employment among Safety Net recipients without dependent children.**

Table 9 shows the effects of PRIDE on UI-covered employment and public assistance for Safety Net recipients without dependent children. The program increased the percentage of Safety Net recipients who worked in a UI-covered job at some point during the two-year follow-up period, and it also led to a small increase in employment stability at the end of the period. Like single parents, however, Safety Net recipients without dependent children also had very low employment rates, regardless of research group.

The program did not have an overall effect on public assistance receipt or payments for Safety Net recipients without dependent children. Participation data suggest that these results may be due to relatively low sanctioning rates among this group. As noted above, among single parents, 32 percent of the PRIDE group and 8 percent of the control group were sanctioned during the two-year follow-up period. Sanctioning rates were lower among the Safety Net recipients: 19 percent of the PRIDE group and 7 percent of the control group were sanctioned. By the end of the follow-up period, however, the percentage of Safety Net recipients in the PRIDE group who were receiving public assistance was lower than the percentage in the control group. In Quarter 9, 57.8 percent of the PRIDE group received benefits, compared with 64.6 percent of the control group (not shown). The difference of 6.8 percentage points just misses statistical significance ($p = 0.11$).

[49]Impacts on noneconomic outcomes, such as child care and household composition, can be found in Appendix C. Except for child care use, the program did not have effects on these outcomes.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Table 9

Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Safety Net Recipients Without Dependent Children

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Years 1 and 2				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	25.4	18.9	6.4 *	0.074
Average quarterly employment	12.3	8.3	4.0 *	0.052
Employed 8 consecutive quarters	2.2	1.8	0.4	0.744
Income ($)				
Earnings	2,603	1,573	1,030 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	5,427	5,418	10	0.972
Amount of food stamps received	2,854	2,834	20	0.867
Total measured income[b]	10,884	9,825	1,060 [a]	NA
Year 1				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	20.2	12.8	7.4 **	0.021
Average quarterly employment	11.1	7.0	4.0 **	0.037
Employed 4 consecutive quarters	3.1	1.8	1.3	0.356
Income ($)				
Earnings	884	525	358 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	3,114	2,995	120	0.355
Amount of food stamps received	1,521	1,481	40	0.466
Total measured income[b]	5,519	5,001	518 [a]	NA
Year 2				
Employment (%)				
Ever employed	19.6	14.6	5.1	0.123
Average quarterly employment	13.5	9.6	4.0	0.113
Employed 4 consecutive quarters	8.8	4.9	3.9 *	0.097
Income ($)				
Earnings	1,719	1,047	672 [a]	NA
Amount of cash assistance received	2,313	2,423	-110	0.513
Amount of food stamps received	1,333	1,353	-20	0.791
Total measured income[b]	5,366	4,824	542 [a]	NA
Sample size (total = 540)	356	184		

(continued)

Table 9 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

[a]This difference is not tested for statistical significance because the UI earnings data were provided as group averages and the number of groups was too small to provide for a fair test.

[b]This measure represents the sum of UI-covered earnings, cash assistance, and food stamps.

Appendix A

Supplementary Tables for "Introduction"

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table A.1

Selected Characteristics of Single-Parent Sample Members at Baseline, by Research Group

New York City PRIDE

Variable	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Total
Age (%)			
20 years or younger	0.8	1.0	0.9
21 to 30 years	17.1	17.5	17.3
31 to 40 years	37.4	37.9	37.6
41 years or older	44.7	43.5	44.2
Average age (years)	41	41	41
Race/ethnicity (%)			
Hispanic	50.9	47.5	49.5
Black	35.1	38.7	36.6
White	10.8	10.2	10.5
Other	3.2	3.6	3.4
Number of children in household (%)			
0	2.9	2.5	2.7
1	36.7	36.7	36.7
2	30.2	31.5	30.7
3 or more	30.3	29.3	29.8
Average number of children in household	2	2	2
Average size of household	3	3	3
Age of youngest child in household (%)			
Less than 3 years	20.2	22.7	21.3
Between 3 and 5 years	16.9	17.4	17.1
More than 6 years	62.8	59.9	61.6
Average age of youngest child in case	8	8	8
Housing status (%)			
Rent, public housing	17.2	17.5	17.3
Rent, subsidized housing	16.6	15.4	16.1
Rent, other	48.7	48.0	48.4
Owns home or apartment	0.1	0.1	0.1
Emergency/temporary housing	16.6	18.2	17.2
Other housing arrangements	0.8	0.8	0.8

(continued)

Appendix Table A.1 (continued)

Variable	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Total
Provider (%)			
Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS)	20.5	21.3	20.8
Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service	31.4	31.9	31.6
National Center for Disability Services	30.3	31.1	30.7
Goodwill Industries	17.3	15.4	16.5
Fedcap Rehabilitative Service	0.5	0.3	0.4
Sample size	1,553	1,095	2,648

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from the New York Welfare Management System (WMS).

NOTES: In order to assess differences in characteristics across research groups, Chi-Square tests were used for categorical variables, and T-tests were used for continuous variables. Statistical significance levels are indicated as: * =10 percent; ** = 5 percent; and *** = 1 percent.

No statistically significant differences were found between the groups.

Appendix B

Supplementary Tables for
"Effects on Employment and Public Assistance Receipt"

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table B.1

Years 1 and 2, Impacts on UI-Covered Employment and Public Assistance for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Years 1 and 2				
Ever employed (%)	33.7	26.5	7.2 ***	0.000
Average quarterly employment (%)	15.7	12.8	2.9 ***	0.004
Employed 8 consecutive quarters (%)	3.2	2.9	0.2	0.725
Earnings[a] ($)	3,536	2,982	554 [a]	NA
For those employed in Years 1 and 2:				
Average quarterly employment (%)	*46.6*	*48.3*	*-1.6*	*NA*
Average earnings per quarter employed ($)	*5,622*	*5,823*	*-200*	*NA*
Ever received cash assistance (%)	99.4	99.3	0.0	0.901
Number of months on cash assistance	20	21	-1 ***	0.003
Amount of cash assistance received ($)	10,732	11,550	-818 ***	0.000
Ever received food stamps (%)	99.4	99.0	0.4	0.293
Number of months on food stamp receipt	22	22	0 *	0.084
Amount of food stamps received ($)	6,256	6,386	-130	0.123
Total measured income[a, b] ($)	20,455	21,016	-562 [a]	NA
Year 1				
Ever employed (%)	23.0	18.7	4.3 ***	0.004
Average quarterly employment (%)	13.1	11.3	1.8 *	0.065
Employed 4 consecutive quarters (%)	5.5	4.7	0.7	0.384
Earnings[a] ($)	1,330	1,167	163 [a]	NA
For those employed in Year 1:				
Average quarterly employment (%)	*57.2*	*60.5*	*-3.2*	*NA*
Average earnings per quarter employed ($)	*2,530*	*2,584*	*-54*	*NA*
Ever received cash assistance (%)	99.3	99.3	-0.1	0.789
Number of months on cash assistance	11	11	0 ***	0.006
Amount of cash assistance received ($)	5,806	6,100	-293 ***	0.001
Ever received food stamps (%)	99.0	98.8	0.2	0.698
Number of months of food stamp receipt	11	11	0	0.253
Amount of food stamps received ($)	3,301	3,334	-34	0.395
Total measured income[a, b] ($)	10,396	10,658	-262 [a]	NA

(continued)

Appendix Table B.1 (continued)

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Year 2				
Ever employed (%)	27.1	22.0	5.1 ***	0.002
Average quarterly employment (%)	18.3	14.3	4.0 ***	0.001
Employed 4 consecutive quarters (%)	9.8	7.9	1.9 *	0.092
Earnings[a] ($)	2,206	1,815	391 [a]	NA
For those employed in Year 2:				
Average quarterly employment (%)	*67.5*	*65.0*	*2.5*	*NA*
Average earnings per quarter employed ($)	*3,013*	*3,170*	*-156*	*NA*
Ever received cash assistance (%)	88.0	90.7	-2.7 **	0.029
Number of months on cash assistance	10	10	0 ***	0.008
Amount of cash assistance received ($)	4,925	5,450	-525 ***	0.000
Ever received food stamps (%)	93.5	94.3	-0.8	0.381
Number of months of food stamp receipt	10	11	0 *	0.071
Amount of food stamps received ($)	2,956	3,052	-96 *	0.072
Total measured income[a, b] ($)	10,058	10,358	-300 [a]	NA
Sample size (total = 2,648)	1,553	1,095		

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance from New York City.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

[a]This difference is not tested for statistical significance because the UI earnings data were provided as group averages and the number of groups was too small to provide for a fair test.

[b]This measure represents the sum of UI-covered earnings, cash assistance, and food stamps.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table B.2

Impacts on Quarterly UI-Covered Employment for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Ever employed (%)				
Quarter 1	8.0	6.5	1.4	0.131
Quarter 2	10.4	9.6	0.8	0.450
Quarter 3	11.9	10.4	1.5	0.210
Quarter 4	14.5	11.2	3.3 **	0.010
Quarter 5	15.7	13.9	1.8	0.187
Quarter 6	16.8	13.4	3.4 **	0.013
Quarter 7	18.4	14.1	4.3 ***	0.003
Quarter 8	18.4	13.7	4.7 ***	0.001
Quarter 9	19.6	16.1	3.5 **	0.018
Total earnings[a] ($)				
Quarter 1	128	98	30.5	NA
Quarter 2	230	165	64.7	NA
Quarter 3	291	262	29.2	NA
Quarter 4	365	328	36.6	NA
Quarter 5	444	412	32.3	NA
Quarter 6	518	397	121.3	NA
Quarter 7	545	454	90.7	NA
Quarter 8	548	467	81.4	NA
Quarter 9	595	497	97.9	NA
Sample size (total = 2,648)	1,553	1,095		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the state of New York.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

[a] The difference (impact) is not tested for statistical significance because the UI earnings data were provided as group averages and the number of groups was too small to provide for a fair test.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table B.3

Impacts on Job Retention for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Ever employed in Year 1 (%)	29.8	22.6	7.2 **	0.020
Average months employed in Year 1	1.8	1.4	0.4 *	0.098
Total months employed in Year 1 (%)				
Less than 4	11.7	8.0	3.7 *	0.092
4 to 7	6.5	6.4	0.1	0.964
8 to 10	4.9	3.0	1.9	0.177
More than 10	6.7	5.2	1.5	0.367
Worked during Months 1 to 3 and worked for: (%)				
Fewer than 6 consecutive months	4.9	4.9	0.0	0.997
6 or more consecutive months	9.4	8.0	1.5	0.474
Number of jobs in Year 1 (%)				
0	70.2	77.4	-7.2 **	0.020
1	25.4	18.9	6.5 **	0.029
2 or 3	4.4	3.5	0.9	0.505
4 or more	0.0	0.3	-0.2	0.392
Ever worked for 1 employer for 6 months or more (%)	12.8	9.6	3.2	0.160
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table B.4

Impacts on Job Advancement for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Advancement and wage growth				
Employed in first 6 months and at interview (%)	9.4	7.5	1.9	0.338
Among those employed in first 6 months and at interview:				
Weekly earnings (%):				
Increased	3.9	3.5	0.4	0.775
By less than 20 percent	0.5	1.3	-0.8	0.248
By 20 percent or more	3.4	2.2	1.2	0.316
Decreased	1.3	0.6	0.7	0.353
Stayed the same	4.3	3.4	0.9	0.535
Average weekly earnings at interview ($)	*291*	*258*	*33*	*NA*
Hours worked (%):				
Increased	2.3	2.4	-0.1	0.950
By less than 20 percent	0.2	0.6	-0.3	0.495
By 20 percent or more	2.1	1.9	0.3	0.810
Decreased	1.5	1.4	0.0	0.955
Stayed the same	5.6	3.6	1.9	0.206
Average hours worked at interview	*40.4*	*29.1*	*11.3*	*NA*
Hourly pay (%):				
Increased	4.4	3.5	0.9	0.548
By less than 20 percent	1.6	1.3	0.3	0.762
By 20 percent or more	2.8	2.2	0.6	0.609
Decreased	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.449
Stayed the same	4.0	3.4	0.6	0.677
Average hourly pay at interview ($)	*7*	*9*	*-2*	*NA*
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table B.5

Impacts on Quarterly UI-Covered Employment and Welfare Status for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome (%)	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Employed, not receiving cash assistance[a]				
Quarter of random assignment	0.0	0.0	0.0 ***	0.000
Q2	0.2	0.3	-0.1	0.648
Q3	1.8	1.1	0.6	0.190
Q4	3.1	1.7	1.4 **	0.021
Q5	4.6	3.0	1.6 **	0.034
Q6	5.0	4.4	0.5	0.516
Q7	6.7	4.9	1.8 *	0.058
Q8	7.3	5.9	1.5	0.133
Q9	8.7	6.1	2.6 **	0.013
Employed, receiving cash assistance				
Quarter of random assignment	8.0	6.5	1.4	0.131
Q2	10.2	9.3	0.9	0.401
Q3	10.1	9.3	0.9	0.448
Q4	11.4	9.6	1.8	0.119
Q5	11.1	11.0	0.2	0.876
Q6	11.8	9.0	2.9 **	0.017
Q7	11.8	9.2	2.6 **	0.035
Q8	11.0	7.8	3.2 ***	0.005
Q9	10.9	10.0	0.9	0.436
Not employed, receiving cash assistance				
Quarter of random assignment	91.9	93.5	-1.6 *	0.099
Q2	88.8	89.7	-0.9	0.439
Q3	85.2	86.6	-1.5	0.276
Q4	79.8	84.6	-4.8 ***	0.001
Q5	77.2	80.6	-3.5 **	0.029
Q6	74.2	79.2	-4.9 ***	0.003
Q7	71.0	76.6	-5.6 ***	0.001
Q8	69.3	76.2	-6.9 ***	0.000
Q9	67.2	72.1	-5.0 ***	0.006
Not employed, not receiving cash assistance				
Quarter of random assignment	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.204
Q2	0.7	0.7	0.1	0.892
Q3	2.9	3.0	0.0	0.948
Q4	5.7	4.1	1.6 *	0.070
Q5	7.1	5.5	1.6 *	0.091
Q6	9.0	7.5	1.5	0.165
Q7	10.7	9.4	1.3	0.279
Q8	12.4	10.2	2.2 *	0.082
Q9	13.2	11.8	1.5	0.268
Sample size (total =2,648)	1,553	1,095		

(continued)

Appendix Table B.5 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

[a]This table includes only employment in jobs covered by New York unemployment insurance (UI) programs. It does not include employment outside New York or in jobs not covered by unemployment insurance (for example, "off the books" jobs, some agricultural jobs, and federal government jobs).

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table B.6

Impacts on Quarterly Cash Assistance Receipt and Payments for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Ever received cash assistance (%)				
Quarter of random assignment	99.9	100.0	-0.1	0.204
Q2	99.1	99.0	0.0	0.916
Q3	95.3	95.9	-0.6	0.470
Q4	91.2	94.2	-3.0 ***	0.004
Q5	88.3	91.6	-3.3 ***	0.006
Q6	86.0	88.1	-2.1	0.119
Q7	82.7	85.7	-3.0 **	0.034
Q8	80.3	84.0	-3.7 **	0.015
Q9	78.1	82.1	-4.0 ***	0.010
Amount of cash assistance received ($)				
Quarter of random assignment	1,654	1,623	31	0.104
Q2	1,578	1,582	-4	0.834
Q3	1,484	1,547	-63 ***	0.009
Q4	1,396	1,506	-110 ***	0.000
Q5	1,348	1,464	-116 ***	0.000
Q6	1,292	1,417	-124 ***	0.000
Q7	1,239	1,380	-141 ***	0.000
Q8	1,208	1,343	-134 ***	0.000
Q9	1,186	1,311	-125 ***	0.000
Sample size (total = 2,648)	1,553	1,095		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table B.7

Impacts on Quarterly Food Stamp Receipt and Payments for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Ever received food stamps (%)				
Quarter of random assignment	98.6	99.0	-0.4	0.319
Q2	98.3	98.4	-0.1	0.795
Q3	96.8	96.7	0.0	0.976
Q4	95.0	96.0	-1.0	0.199
Q5	93.5	94.0	-0.6	0.534
Q6	91.7	92.7	-1.0	0.336
Q7	90.1	91.6	-1.5	0.173
Q8	88.7	90.6	-1.9	0.113
Q9	87.1	88.8	-1.7	0.181
Amount of food stamps received ($)				
Quarter of random assignment	855	854	1	0.955
Q2	848	842	5	0.564
Q3	829	839	-10	0.364
Q4	822	832	-10	0.415
Q5	802	821	-19	0.153
Q6	777	797	-20	0.150
Q7	740	766	-26 *	0.067
Q8	720	745	-25 *	0.092
Q9	719	744	-25	0.105
Sample size (total = 2,648)	1,553	1,095		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from food stamp records from New York City.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

Appendix C

Impacts on Other Outcomes

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table C.1

Impacts on Household Income and Composition for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Household income (%)				
Percentage with each income source				
Own earnings	17.8	15.7	2.1	0.431
Earnings of other members	12.0	13.0	-1.0	0.676
Child support	14.2	16.6	-2.4	0.369
Public assistance	91.1	96.6	-5.5 ***	0.002
Cash assistance	55.0	53.6	1.3	0.717
Food stamps	89.6	94.4	-4.8 **	0.015
SSI or disability income	21.8	19.1	2.8	0.335
Total household income in prior month ($)	863	847	16	0.742
Percentage of household income that is respondent's	81.2	79.7	1.5	0.529
Household composition				
Number in household	3.8	3.8	0.1	0.512
Ever married (%)	44.3	48.7	-4.4	0.196
Living with partner (%)	6.1	8.4	-2.3	0.221
Current marital status (%)				
Married and living with spouse	8.2	9.8	-1.6	0.427
Separated or living apart from spouse	20.8	22.9	-2.1	0.491
Divorced	12.9	14.6	-1.7	0.490
Widowed	2.5	1.5	1.0	0.337
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table C.2

Impacts on Other Outcomes for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Health care coverage (%)				
Respondent has health care coverage[a]	97.2	97.2	0.0	0.990
Publicly funded	95.4	95.7	-0.3	0.846
Publicly funded and not on cash assistance or SSI	5.4	3.3	2.0	0.174
Privately funded	5.1	3.9	1.3	0.407
All dependent children have health care coverage	91.0	92.4	-1.3	0.505
All dependent children have health care coverage, and respondent is not covered by cash assistance or SSI	8.3	7.0	1.3	0.501
Respondent and all children have health care coverage	89.6	91.4	-1.8	0.407
Respondent and all children have health care coverage, and respondent is not covered by cash assistance or SSI	5.9	4.2	1.7	0.291
Child care (%)				
Ever used any child care in Year 1	28.8	21.2	7.6 **	0.010
Used any informal child care	7.8	3.3	4.5 ***	0.007
Child care expenses	17.9	13.7	4.1	0.107
Paid entirely by respondent	2.9	1.3	1.6	0.131
Paid partly by respondent	3.6	3.5	0.1	0.938
Not paid by respondent	11.4	8.9	2.4	0.258
Child care was a barrier to school, job training, or work	6.9	5.2	1.7	0.332
Quit job, school, or training because of child care problems	6.1	4.7	1.5	0.365
Missed work because of child care problems	0.8	1.1	-0.3	0.672
Transportation				
Owns car, van, or truck (%)	11.7	8.3	3.3	0.120
Commuting time (minutes)	*44.7*	*42.1*	*2.6*	*NA*
Transportation costs per week ($)	*26*	*20*	*6*	*NA*
Method of transportation to work (%)				
Car	1.4	0.7	0.7	0.386
Bus or other mass transportation	22.2	16.1	6.1 **	0.028
Gets a ride	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.603
Walks	3.5	4.2	-0.7	0.636
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379		

(continued)

Appendix Table C.2 (continued)

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

[a]Measures of health care coverage combine data from the survey's sections on employment, health care coverage, and income and from administrative records on public assistance receipt. A respondent could be receiving both public and private health care coverage.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table C.3

Impacts on Health for Single Parents

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Average Body Mass Index[a]	30.6	30.1	0.5	0.383
Underweight (%)	1.5	1.1	0.4	0.623
Normal weight	24.5	21.6	2.9	0.350
Overweight	25.5	30.7	-5.2	0.112
Obese	45.2	44.6	0.6	0.873
Missing BMI	3.3	2.0	1.3	0.256
Self-rated health (%)				
Excellent	2.8	2.5	0.3	0.834
Very good	4.5	5.5	-1.0	0.520
Good	22.0	18.6	3.5	0.236
Fair	42.6	47.8	-5.3	0.146
Poor	27.4	25.1	2.3	0.461
Physical Functioning Scale[b]	4.4	4.5	-0.1	0.548
Role Physical Scale[c]	3.3	3.4	0.0	0.749
Experience bodily pain (%)				
Not at all	13.5	14.7	-1.3	0.608
A little bit, or moderately	37.3	38.4	-1.1	0.754
Quite a bit, or extremely	49.0	46.1	2.9	0.421
Psychological Distress Scale (K6)[d]	11.7	11.8	-0.1	0.783
Experienced serious psychological distress in the past month[e] (%)	32.8	36.5	-3.7	0.274
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

[a]National Institutes of Health weight categories.

[b]This score is the sum of two items related to how health limits work or daily activities. The range of this score is 2 to 6 (where 2 = "No, you are not limited at all," and 6 = "Yes, you are limited a lot").

[c]This score is the sum of two items related to how pain interferes with work. The range of this score is 2 to 4 (where 2 is the most favorable score and 4 is the least favorable score).

[d]Based on the K6 scale that includes six questions about how often a respondent experienced symptoms of psychological distress during the past 30 days. The response codes (0-4) of the six items for each person are summed to yield a scale with a 0-24 range. A value of 13 or more for this scale is used here to define serious psychological distress. (Web site: http://www.hcp.med.harvard.edu/ncsk6_scales.php.)

[e]An individual is identified as having a severe mental illness if she scores 13 or higher on the K6 scale.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table C.4

Impacts on Receipt of Mental Health, Domestic Violence, and Substance Abuse Services

New York City PRIDE

Outcome (%)	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	P-Value
Received mental health services	37.0	32.6	4.4	0.207
Respondent	27.6	23.3	4.4	0.172
Family member	18.7	16.1	2.7	0.337
Received domestic violence services	10.3	7.9	2.4	0.251
Respondent	8.8	6.8	2.0	0.301
Family member	3.4	3.2	0.2	0.896
Received substance abuse services	4.2	4.5	-0.3	0.854
Respondent	3.2	3.1	0.1	0.969
Family member	1.3	1.6	-0.3	0.696
Sample size (total = 759)	380	379		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey.

NOTES: See Appendix F.

Appendix D

Description of ERA Projects

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table D.1

Description of ERA Projects

New York City PRIDE

State	Location	Target Group	Primary Service Strategies
Advancement projects			
Illinois	Cook (Chicago) and St. Clair (East St. Louis) Counties	TANF recipients who have worked at least 30 hours per week for at least 6 consecutive months	A combination of services to promote career advancement (targeted job search assistance, education and training, assistance in identifying and accessing career ladders, etc.)
California	Riverside County Phase 2	Newly employed TANF recipients working at least 20 hours per week	Test of alternative strategies for promoting participation in education and training activities
Placement and retention (hard-to-employ) projects			
Minnesota	Hennepin County (Minneapolis)	Long-term TANF recipients who were unable to find jobs through standard welfare-to-work services	In-depth family assessment; low caseloads; intensive monitoring and follow-up; emphasis on placement into unsubsidized employment or supported work with referrals to education and training, counseling, and other support services
Oregon	Portland	Individuals who are cycling back onto TANF and those who have lost jobs	Team-based case management, job search/job readiness components, intensive retention and follow-up services, mental health and substance abuse services for those identified with these barriers, supportive and emergency services

(continued)

Appendix Table D.1 (continued)

State	Location	Target Group	Primary Service Strategies
Placement and retention (hard-to-employ) projects (continued)			
New York	New York City PRIDE (Personal Roads to Individual Development and Employment)	TANF recipients whose employability is limited by physical or mental health problems	Two main tracks: (1) Vocational Rehabilitation, where clients with severe medical problems receive unpaid work experience, job search/job placement and retention services tailored to account for medical problems; (2) Work Based Education, where those with less severe medical problems participate in unpaid work experience, job placement services, and adult basic education
New York	New York City Substance Abuse (substance abuse case management)	TANF recipients with a substance abuse problem	Intensive case management to promote participation in substance abuse treatment, links to mental health and other needed services
Projects with mixed goals			
California	Los Angeles County EJC (Enhanced Job Club)	TANF recipients who have been required to search for employment	Job search workshops promoting a step-down method designed to help participants find a job that pays a "living wage"
California	Los Angeles County (Reach for Success program)	Newly employed TANF recipients working at least 32 hours per week	Stabilization/retention services, followed by a combination of services to promote advancement: education and training, career assessment, targeted job development, etc.
California	Riverside County PASS (Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency program)	Individuals who have left TANF due to earned income	Intensive, family-based support services delivered by community-based organizations to promote retention and advancement

(continued)

Appendix Table D.1 (continued)

State	Location	Target Group	Primary Service Strategies
Projects with mixed goals (continued)			
Ohio	Cleveland	Low-wage workers with specific employers making under 200% of poverty who have been in their current jobs less than 6 months	Regular on-site office hours for counseling/case management; Lunch & Learn meetings for social support and presentations; newsletter for workers and employers; and Supervisory Training for employer supervisors
Oregon	Medford and Eugene	Employed former TANF recipients	Stabilization/retention services, followed by a combination of services to increase enrollment in education and training and promote advancement through "work-based" strategies
Oregon	Salem	TANF applicants	Job search assistance combined with career planning; once employed, education and training, employer linkages to promote retention and advancement
South Carolina	6 rural counties in the Pee Dee Region	Individuals who left TANF (for any reason) between 10/97 and 12/00	Individualized case management with a focus on reemployment, support services, job search, career counseling, education and training, and use of individualized incentives
Texas	Corpus Christi, Fort Worth, and Houston	TANF applicants and recipients	Individualized team-based case management; monthly stipends of $200 for those who maintain employment and complete activities related to employment plan

Appendix E

Notes for Tables and Figures Displaying Results Calculated with Administrative Records Data

“Employment and earnings in jobs” does not include employment outside New York or in jobs not covered by unemployment insurance (UI), for example, “off-the-books” jobs, some agricultural jobs, self-employment, and federal government jobs.

Estimates were regression-adjusted using ordinary least squares, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics of sample members.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in calculating sums and differences.

A two-tailed t-test was applied to differences between outcomes for the program and control groups. Statistical significance levels are indicated as: * = 10 percent; ** = 5 percent; and *** = 1 percent.

Italics indicate comparisons that are nonexperimental. These measures are computed only for sample members who were employed. Since there may be differences in the characteristics of program group and control group members who were employed, any differences in outcomes may not necessarily be attributable to the ERA program. Statistical tests were not performed.

“Year 1” refers to Quarters 2 to 5. “Year 2” refers to Quarters 6 to 9. Quarter 1 is the quarter in which random assignment took place.

Dollar averages include zero values for sample members who were not employed or were not receiving TANF or food stamps.

NA = not applicable.

Appendix F

Notes for Tables and Figures Displaying Results Calculated with Responses to the ERA 12-Month Survey

Estimates were regression-adjusted using ordinary least squares, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics of sample members.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in calculating sums and differences.

A two-tailed t-test was applied to differences between outcomes for the program and control groups. Statistical significance levels are indicated as: * = 10 percent; ** = 5 percent; and *** = 1 percent.

Italics indicate comparisons that are nonexperimental. These measures are computed only for sample members who were employed. Since there may be differences in the characteristics of program group and control group members who were employed, any differences in outcomes may not necessarily be attributable to the ERA program. Statistical tests were not performed.

NA = not applicable.

Appendix G

Time-Study Tables from the NYC PRIDE Program

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table G.1

Extent of Contact Between Case Managers and Clients

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	All Case Managers
Percentage of work time spent in contact with (%):	
Any client	38.8
Working clients	2.8
Nonworking clients	18.6
Work experience clients	17.4
Average number of client contacts per day per case manager with:	
Any client	7.8
Working clients	0.4
Nonworking clients	3.8
Work experience clients	3.6
Average number of minutes per contact with:	
Any client	162.9
Working clients	11.9
Nonworking clients	78.0
Work experience clients	73.0
Number of case managers time-studied	38

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA time study.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table G.2

Description of Contact Between Case Managers and Clients

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	All Case Managers
Percentage of all client contacts that were:	
In person	59.6
Office visit	56.0
Home visit	0.0
Employer visit	0.2
Visit elsewhere	3.4
Not in person	40.4
Phone contact	26.9
Written contact	9.0
Other type of contact	4.4
Percentage of all client contacts, over a 2-week period, that were initiated by:	
Staff person	66.5
Client	32.1
Other person	1.4
Number of case managers time-studied	38

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA time study.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table G.3

Activities or Topics Typically Covered During Client Contacts

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	All Case Managers
Percentage of all client contacts that included the following topics:[a]	
Initial client engagement[b]	4.8
Supportive service eligibility and issues	6.3
General check-in	21.8
Screening/assessment	4.7
On-the-job issues/problems	1.6
Personal or family issues	18.2
Specific employment and training options	10.1
Career goals and advancement	8.3
Assistance with reemployment	15.8
Issues related to financial incentives or stipends	0.4
Schedule/referral for work experience position	7.4
Enrollment in government assistance and ongoing eligiblity issues	1.1
Assistance with the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)	0.4
Participation/sanctioning issues	32.5
Schedule/referral for screening/assessment	2.5
Schedule/referral for job search or other employment services	6.6
Schedule/referral for education or training	5.4
Schedule/referral for services to address special or personal issues	4.3
Addressing on-the-job issues/problems in work experience placement or discussing why client/customer lost or left work experience placement	8.5
Number of case managers time-studied	38

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from responses to the ERA time study.

NOTES: [a]These percentages add up to more than 100 percent because more than one activity category or topic could be recorded for each client contact.

[b]Each client contact may cover one or more topic activities but is counted only once per activity category.

Appendix H

ERA 12-Month Survey Response Analysis for the NYC PRIDE Program

This appendix assesses the reliability of impact results for the ERA 12-Month Survey. It also examines whether the impacts for the survey respondents can be generalized to the impacts for the research sample. First, the appendix describes how the survey sample was selected. Second, it discusses the response rates for the survey sample for the three research groups. Next, the appendix examines differences in background characteristics between survey respondents and survey nonrespondents, and then it analyzes differences among survey respondents according to research group. Finally, the appendix compares the impacts on employment, earnings, and receipt of public assistance across the survey samples and the research sample, as calculated using administrative records data.

This appendix concludes, with some caution, that the PRIDE survey is reliable and that the survey respondent sample can be generalized to the research sample. Survey respondents and nonrespondents do not differ in key pre-random assignment characteristics. Among the respondents, no systematic differences were found between research groups, except for the month of sample intake. The impacts on welfare receipt for respondents are similar to the impacts for the research, survey-eligible, and fielded samples (defined below). However, the employment impacts for the research sample are larger and statistically significant, whereas the impacts for the other samples are not statistically significant.

Survey Sample Selection

As noted in the Introduction of this report, the *research sample* includes 3,188 sample members who were randomly assigned between December 4, 2001, and December 31, 2002.

MDRC used a two-step process to select the sample for the ERA 12-Month Survey. First, the *survey-eligible sample* was selected. It includes 1,704 single-parents who were randomly assigned from July through December 2002, were age 18 or older at the time of random assignment, and were able to speak English or Spanish. The random assignment period for the survey-eligible sample covers half the entire sample intake period, which raises some concern about the generalizability of the findings.

Next, MDRC randomly selected 1,043 survey-eligible sample members to be interviewed. This sample is referred to as the *fielded sample*, and it includes 524 PRIDE group members and 519 control group members.

Box H.1

Key Analysis Samples

Research sample. Single-parents randomly assigned between December 2001 and December 2002.

Survey-eligible sample. Sample members in the research sample who were randomly assigned from July through December 2002 and who met the criteria for inclusion.

Fielded sample. Sample members who were randomly selected from the survey-eligible sample to be interviewed for the survey.

Respondent sample. Sample members in the fielded sample who completed the ERA 12-Month Survey.

Nonrespondent sample. Sample members in the fielded sample who were not interviewed because they were not located or they refused to be interviewed or because of other reasons.

Survey Response Rates

Sample members who completed the ERA 12-Month Survey are referred to as "survey respondents," or the *respondent sample,* while sample members who were not interviewed are known as "nonrespondents." or the *nonrespondent sample.* Approximately 73 percent of the fielded sample, or 759 sample members, completed the survey. The response rates were identical between the research groups. Almost two-thirds of the nonrespondent sample refused to be interviewed or could not be located.[50]

A response rate of nearly 80 percent inspires confidence that findings calculated from survey responses may be generalized to all members of the research sample. However, response bias may occur even with a relatively high response rate — typically, when respondents from different research groups vary in background characteristics that may affect employment and welfare receipt. In addition, survey results would be less reliable if a large proportion of members of a key subgroup did not complete an interview.

[50]The remaining third of the nonrespondent sample were not interviewed because they were incapacitated or institutionalized or were located after the fielding period expired.

Comparison of Respondents and Nonrespondents Within the Survey Sample

In order to examine whether there are systematic differences between those who responded to the survey and those who did not, an indicator of survey response status was created, and then multivariate analysis was used to identify which pre-random assignment characteristics are significantly related to the indicator.

Appendix Table H.1 shows the estimated regression coefficients for the probability of being a respondent to the ERA 12-Month Survey. As can be noted from this table, besides background characteristics such as race/ethnicity, age, employment history, and other measurable qualities, a research status indicator was included in the model. The first column of the table provides the parameter estimates that indicate the effect of each variable on the probability of completing the survey. The asterisks and p-values show whether each relationship is statistically significant.

In general, the results show no consistent differences in background characteristics between survey respondents and nonrespondents. A few measures predict greater or smaller likelihood of responding, and they attain statistical significance — for example, having a child age 6 or older and history of food stamp receipt. However, the R-square statistic suggests that only approximately 4 percent of variance is explained by these significant factors, meaning that knowing a fielded sample member's background characteristics would not help much in predicting whether that individual would respond to the survey.

Comparison of the Research Groups in the Respondent Sample

Random assignment designs minimize the possibility of potential biases in a study's results. However, the possibility remains that the characteristics of the respondent sample in each research group differ due to the nonrespondent sample. If this is true, the impact estimates for the respondent sample may be affected.

Appendix Table H.2 shows baseline characteristics of the ERA (PRIDE) group and control group members. In general, differences between the groups are relatively small and are not statistically significant. The only exception to this finding is that a larger percentage of PRIDE group members received Section 8 housing. MDRC ran a more rigorous test of differences in background characteristics, using ordinary least squares (OLD) regression, and a similar finding was obtained (not shown).

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table H.1

Estimated Regression Coefficients for the Probability of Being a Respondent to the ERA 12-Month Survey

New York City PRIDE

	Survey Sample	
Outcome	Parameter Estimate	P-Value
ERA group	-0.004	0.885
Age	0.002	0.385
Age of youngest child in household	-0.008	0.153
Youngest child age 3 to 5 years old	0.089 *	0.054
Youngest child age 6 or older	0.069	0.274
Number of children	-0.011	0.644
Black, non-Hispanic	0.226	0.157
White	0.057	0.731
Hispanic	0.221	0.164
Provider: Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service	-0.032	0.377
Provider: Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS)	0.018	0.647
Provider: Goodwill Industries and Fedcap	0.033	0.501
Rents and lives in a public housing development/complex	0.221	0.110
Rents apartment/house and receives subsidized housing/Section 8	0.163	0.243
Rents apartment/house and does not live in public housing	0.170	0.212
Lives in emergency or temporary housing	0.146	0.291
Average number of people in household	0.005	0.819
Family assistance	-0.049	0.117
Employed in the prior year	-0.026	0.597
Employed in the prior quarter	-0.032	0.590
Employed 2 quarters prior	0.082	0.176
Ever employed in past 3 years	0.038	0.377
Number of quarters employed in prior 3 years	0.010	0.170
Received food stamps in the prior year	0.156 **	0.040
Received ADC in the prior year	-0.048	0.647
Relative month of random assignment	-0.007	0.408
R-square (0.0452)		
F-statistic (1.85)		
P-value of F-statistic (0.006)		
Sample size	1,043	

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from the New York Welfare Management System (WMS) and unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTE: Employment and earnings in jobs does not include employment outside New York or in jobs not covered by unemployment insurance, for example, “off the books” jobs, some agricultural jobs, and federal government jobs.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table H.2

Background Characteristics of Survey Respondents Who Were Randomly Assigned from July to December 2002

New York City PRIDE

Outcome (%)	PRIDE Group	Control Group
Age		
20 years or younger	1.3	0.5
21 to 30 years	23.2	19.3
31 to 40 years	33.9	39.1
41 years or older	41.6	41.2
Race/ethnicity		
Hispanic	54.0	52.1
Black	40.7	41.0
White	5.3	5.8
Other	0.0	1.1
Age of youngest child in household (%)		
Less than 3 years	23.7	19.7
Between 3 to 5 years	21.5	18.7
More than 6 years	54.8	61.6
Receiving family assistance	57.9	56.5
Average size of household	3.1	3.1
Housing status (%)		
Rent, public housing	21.1	19.0 *
Rent, subsidized housing	18.9	13.7
Rent, other	44.5	45.1
Emergency/temporary housing	14.7	21.4
Other housing arrangements	0.8	0.8
PRIDE provider		
Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service	36.6	30.9
Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS)	22.6	23.2
Goodwill Industries/Fedcap	10.5	12.4
National Center for Disability Services	30.3	33.5
Employed during the quarter prior to random assignment	10.8	10.3
Employed during the year prior to random assignment	27.6	28.2
Employed during the 3 years prior to random assignment	51.1	53.6
Number of quarters employed in the prior 3 years	2.4	2.7
Sample size (total = 759)	379	380

(continued)

Appendix Table H.2 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations from the New York Welfare Management System (WMS) and unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the State of New York and public assistance records from New York City.

NOTES: In order to assess differences in characteristics across research groups, Chi-Square tests were used for categorical variables and T-tests were used for continuous variables. Significant levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

Employment and earnings in jobs does not include employment outside New York or in jobs not covered by unemployment insurance, for example, "off the books" jobs, some agricultural jobs, and federal government jobs.

Comparison of the Respondent Sample with the Fielded Sample, the Survey-Eligible Sample, and the Research Sample

Using administrative records data, this section discusses whether respondents' impacts can be generalized to the fielded, survey-eligible, and research samples. Consistency of impact findings among the samples is considered to be the best result, suggesting that impacts on measures calculated from survey responses can be generalized to the research sample. Survey results may be considered unreliable because of response bias when impacts for survey respondents that are calculated with administrative data differ in size and direction from results for all other samples. Other patterns of inconsistency point to additional problems with the survey findings. Limiting sample selection to certain months of sample intake may introduce a "cohort effect" — a pattern of impacts that also occurs in the fielded and survey-eligible samples but that differs from the pattern when all members of the research sample are included. Alternatively, an unlucky sample draw may be inferred when impacts for the respondent sample resemble results for the fielded sample but when findings for both samples vary from findings for the eligible and research samples from which they were drawn.

Appendix Table H.3 shows the adjusted means and impacts on employment and welfare outcomes for the research sample, fielded sample, and respondent sample during the first year of the follow-up period.[51] This comparison is useful in assessing whether the story changes when using the different samples. The analysis found that the employment and employment stability impacts for the research sample are larger than for the other samples and are statistically significant. With one exemption, impacts on receipt and payments of public assistance for the respondent sample are similar to the impacts for the research, survey-eligible, and fielded samples. The PRIDE program led to a reduction of food stamp receipt for the fielded and respondent samples, whereas the program did not have a significant effect for the survey-eligible or research samples. It is important to note that although the magnitude of the impacts may be slightly larger and statistically significant, the direction of the impacts across the samples remains the same.

[51]All the impacts within each sample are regression-adjusted, to control for differences in background characteristics, prior employment, prior public assistance, PRIDE provider, and period of sample intake.

The Employment Retention and Advancement Project

Appendix Table H.3

Comparison of Impacts for the Research, Eligible, Fielded, and Respondent Samples

New York City PRIDE

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)
Quarters 2-5			
Ever employed (%)			
Research sample	23.0	18.7	4.3 ***
Eligible sample	22.0	19.5	2.5
Fielded sample	21.0	20.1	0.9
Respondent sample	22.1	20.9	1.2
Average quarterly employment (%)			
Research sample	13.2	11.3	1.9 *
Eligible sample	12.3	12.0	0.2
Fielded sample	11.4	12.5	-1.1
Respondent sample	11.9	12.6	-0.7
Employed 4 consecutive quarters (%)			
Research sample	5.5	4.7	0.8
Eligible sample	5.3	5.2	0.1
Fielded sample	4.6	5.2	-0.6
Respondent sample	4.2	4.5	-0.2
Number of quarters employed			
Research sample	0.5	0.5	0.1 *
Eligible sample	0.5	0.5	0.9
Fielded sample	0.5	0.5	0.0
Respondent sample	0.5	0.5	0.0
Employed Quarter 5 (%)			
Research sample	15.7	13.9	1.8
Eligible sample	15.5	15.1	0.4
Fielded sample	13.6	15.1	-1.5
Respondent sample	14.2	15.1	-0.9
Ever received TANF (%)			
Research sample	99.3	99.3	-0.1
Eligible sample	99.1	99.5	-0.4
Fielded sample	99.0	99.5	-0.5
Respondent sample	99.2	99.8	-0.7
Amount of TANF received ($)			
Research sample	5,806	6,100	-293 ***
Eligible sample	5,850	6,141	-290 ***
Fielded sample	5,833	6,214	-381 ***
Respondent sample	5,990	6,298	-308 **

(continued)

Appendix Table H.3 (continued)

Outcome	PRIDE Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)
Ever received food stamps (%)			
Research sample	99.0	98.8	0.1
Eligible sample	98.7	99.2	-0.5
Fielded sample	98.9	99.0	-0.2
Respondent sample	99.0	99.2	-0.2
Amount of food stamps received ($)			
Research sample	3,299	3,336	-37
Eligible sample	3,356	3,430	-74
Fielded sample	3,353	3,456	-103 *
Respondent sample	3,354	3,525	-171 **

SOURCE: Administrative records from NYC PRIDE.

NOTES: See Appendix E.

The research sample includes 2,648 sample members; PRIDE group: 1,553; control group:1,095

The eligible sample includes 1,704 sample members; PRIDE group: 939; control group: 765.

The fielded sample includes 1,043 sample members; PRIDE group: 524; control group: 519.

The respondent sample includes 759 sample members; PRIDE group: 380; control group: 379.

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About MDRC

MDRC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social and education policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve the well-being of low-income people. Through its research and the active communication of its findings, MDRC seeks to enhance the effectiveness of social and education policies and programs.

Founded in 1974 and located in New York City and Oakland, California, MDRC is best known for mounting rigorous, large-scale, real-world tests of new and existing policies and programs. Its projects are a mix of demonstrations (field tests of promising new program approaches) and evaluations of ongoing government and community initiatives. MDRC's staff bring an unusual combination of research and organizational experience to their work, providing expertise on the latest in qualitative and quantitative methods and on program design, development, implementation, and management. MDRC seeks to learn not just whether a program is effective but also how and why the program's effects occur. In addition, it tries to place each project's findings in the broader context of related research — in order to build knowledge about what works across the social and education policy fields. MDRC's findings, lessons, and best practices are proactively shared with a broad audience in the policy and practitioner community as well as with the general public and the media.

Over the years, MDRC has brought its unique approach to an ever-growing range of policy areas and target populations. Once known primarily for evaluations of state welfare-to-work programs, today MDRC is also studying public school reforms, employment programs for ex-offenders and people with disabilities, and programs to help low-income students succeed in college. MDRC's projects are organized into five areas:

- Promoting Family Well-Being and Child Development
- Improving Public Education
- Raising Academic Achievement and Persistence in College
- Supporting Low-Wage Workers and Communities
- Overcoming Barriers to Employment

Working in almost every state, all of the nation's largest cities, and Canada and the United Kingdom, MDRC conducts its projects in partnership with national, state, and local governments, public school systems, community organizations, and numerous private philanthropies.