

Fragile Families and Welfare Reform, 2000-2003

Overview

The Fragile Families and Welfare Reform project looked at the conditions and capabilities of vulnerable mothers and fathers in the years following enactment of PRWORA and examined the complex relationships between this new legislation and families' economic and non-economic well-being. The project estimated the composition of the actual and eligible welfare caseload, how unwed mothers combine various forms of support including government benefits, and how well families fare.

This project addressed the following questions: (1) What are the conditions and capabilities of welfare recipients, those who have been diverted from cash assistance, and recent welfare leavers? (2) What is the ability of fathers to support their children? (3) How do conditions and capabilities differ across cities and States with different administrative procedures? (4) What types of programs are being utilized? (5) How are they being combined? (6) What is the relative reliance on welfare, child support, other government programs, employment and social networks? (7) How does the relative reliance on different sources of support vary across States with different administrative policies?