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Welfare, Work, and Poverty Status of Female-Headed Families with Children: 1987-2013

Updated November 21, 2014

Congressional Research Service
https://crsreports.congress.gov
R41917

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
Committees of Congress

Summary

Eighteen years have passed since repeal of what was the nation's major cash welfare program assisting low-income families with children, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, and its replacement with a block grant of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). This report focuses on trends in the economic well-being of female-headed families with children, the principal group affected by the replacement of AFDC with TANF. Female-headed families and their children are especially at risk of poverty, and children in such families account for well over half of all poor children in the United States. For these reasons, single female-headed families continue to be of particular concern to policymakers. The report details trends in income and poverty status of these families, prior and subsequent to enactment of the 1996 welfare reform law and other policy changes. The report focuses especially on welfare dependency and work engagement among single mothers, a major dynamic that welfare reform and accompanying policy changes have attempted to affect. It also examines the role of programs other than TANF in providing support to single female-headed families with children.

CRS analysis of 27 years of U.S. Census Bureau data shows that there has been a dramatic transformation with regard to welfare, work, and poverty status of single mothers. The period has seen a marked *structural change* in the provision of benefits under a number of programs that contribute to the fabric of the nation's "income safety net." In turn, single mothers' *behavior has changed* markedly over the period; more mothers are working and fewer are relying on cash welfare to support themselves and their children.

In the years immediately preceding 1996 welfare reform, and in the years since, the nation's income safety net has been transformed into one supporting work. Cash-welfare work requirements, the end of cash welfare as an open-ended entitlement by limiting the duration that individuals may receive federally funded benefits, and expanded earnings and family income supplements administered through the federal income tax system have helped to change the dynamics between work and welfare. The transformed system has helped to both reduce single mothers' reliance on traditional cash welfare and reduce poverty among their children.

Poverty under the official U.S. poverty measure, which is based on pre-tax cash income, shows that since 2000, which marked a historical low, the poverty rate among single mothers increased in step with two recessions. By 2010, the official poverty rate for single mothers had reached a post-2000 high, and remained at that level through 2012, before falling somewhat in 2013. In 2013, the official poverty level was still below pre-1996 welfare reform levels, despite two recessions since 1996.

Using a more comprehensive income definition than that used by the official poverty measure indicates that the increase in poverty among single mothers and their children over the past 13 years has been substantially mitigated by Food Stamp/SNAP benefits and work-related refundable tax credits—benefits not captured by the "official" poverty measure. Use of an expanded income poverty measure that includes these benefits highlights effects of congressional action that helped reduce child poverty amidst, and subsequent to, the most severe recession since the Great Depression.

The role of work-conditioned benefits, and the provision of traditional cash welfare, will likely continue to garner attention, in part contingent on the nature and pace of economic recovery, and federal and state budget pressures.

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Introduction

Eighteen years have passed since repeal of what was the nation's major cash welfare program assisting low-income families with children, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, and its replacement with a block grant of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). This report focuses on trends in the economic well-being of female-headed families with children, the principal group affected by the replacement of AFDC with TANF. Female-headed families and their children are especially at risk of poverty, and children in such families account for well over half of all poor children in the United States. For these reasons, single female-headed families continue to be of particular concern to policymakers. The report details trends in income and poverty status of these families, prior and subsequent to enactment of the 1996 welfare reform law and other policy changes. The report focuses especially on welfare dependency and work engagement among single mothers, a major dynamic that welfare reform and accompanying policy changes have attempted to affect. It also examines the role of programs other than TANF in providing support to single female-headed families with children.

Since at least the first White House Conference on Children in 1909 (Conference on the Care of Dependent Children), and the subsequent creation of the Children's Bureau in 1912, the federal government has been concerned with the social conditions of children. The conference was an impetus for states' enactment of state or locally financed mothers' pensions (also referred to as widows' pensions and/or mothers' aid), which provided minimal cash support to mothers made destitute, usually due to a husband's death. Mothers' aid was intended to help keep the mother at home to care for her children, as an alternative to institutionalization or adoption. As part of the Social Security Act of 1935, the federal Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program introduced federal involvement in helping provide financial aid, or "public assistance," to aid dependent children, basically as a supplement to states' mothers' pension programs. Federal involvement in attempting to address the problem of child poverty associated with the loss of parental support grew over the next 61 years, at which point the AFDC program, formerly named ADC, was repealed and replaced by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Two dominant, often conflicting, themes have pervaded public discourse and policy responses to providing public assistance to poor families with children. One has been to help improve the economic and social well-being of children who, through no fault of their own, live in poor circumstances. The other has been reducing welfare dependency. A persistent challenge has been how public policy and programs can address the first theme of reducing child poverty without undermining the second by encouraging welfare dependency. A major goal of social policy, at least since passage of the 1967 Social Security Act welfare amendments, has been to reduce welfare dependency and, as a consequence, child poverty, by encouraging work. This report focuses on the results of efforts to attain these goals, focusing on female-headed families with children.

CRS analysis of 27 years of U.S. Census Bureau data[1] presented in this report shows a dramatic transformation in single mothers' welfare, work, and poverty status over the period. The period

[1] Most data presented in this report are based on CRS analysis of 27 years of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS/ASEC). The CPS/ASEC is the principal source for annual income, poverty, and health insurance coverage estimates issued by the Census Bureau. The annual survey is a supplement to the monthly CPS conducted for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) used in deriving monthly labor force statistics, such as the national unemployment rate. Estimates from the annual supplement, conducted in February through April, represent characteristics at the time of the survey, and income, poverty, and health insurance status in the previous year. The analysis is limited to survey data collected from 1988 through 2014

examined encompasses a fundamental transformation in the provision of income support through cash welfare to a system promoting and supplementing work. The period has been marked by three recessions, one in the pre-welfare reform era (1990-1991), and two after (2001; 2007-2009); the latter was so severe that it has come to be identified by many as "The Great Recession."[2] Policy interventions to both stimulate the economy and protect those most vulnerable in response to the most recent recession are examined in the context of their effects on families headed by single mothers. The 27-year period examined provides for a range of insights about social programs' and policies' effects, under varying economic conditions, on families headed by single mothers—a group at considerable risk of poverty.[3]

A Road Map

The body of the report begins with a brief discussion as to why female-headed families with children are a focus of policy concern. Most directly, children living in such families are many times more likely to be poor than children in married-couple families. Moreover, the families in which they reside have been especially likely to depend on public assistance (i.e., welfare) for at least part of their financial support.

The dual goals of reducing child poverty and breaking the bonds of welfare dependency have proven to be an enduring, and often vexing, policy challenge. The report briefly describes the policy landscape prior to 1996 welfare reform and policy changes that have occurred since—especially those that were undertaken in response to the recent recession. A brief, 100-year historical perspective as to how past policy efforts attempted to address the dual problems of child poverty and welfare dependency is presented in **Appendix A**.

The report then turns to an empirical analysis of trends in single mothers' work, welfare, and poverty status over the 27-year period from 1987 to 2013. Trends in the incidence of poverty and cash welfare receipt and work among single mothers are presented, as are trends in cash welfare receipt (ADC, AFDC, and TANF) and other selected benefits. Particular attention is paid to the role of selected income sources on poverty reduction among single-mother families, overall and by whether or not mothers worked during the year. Some sources of income are not included in the "official" U.S. poverty measure, which is based on pre-tax cash income. The analysis shows that the inclusion of other income sources not included in the official measure, such as Food Stamp or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and refundable federal income tax credits, has a significant effect on poverty reduction among single mothers and their children. The inclusion of such benefits yields a very different picture as to the apparent trend in poverty, especially when viewed in the context of the most recent recession.

A final section of the report offers a concluding discussion. It highlights the transformation from income safety net to work-conditioned support, and cash welfare's resulting residual safety net role. It assesses the effectiveness of income safety net programs in reducing poverty among female-headed families, especially in the context of the recent recession and selected congressional action.

(the most recent available), representing income and poverty status from 1987 through 2013. The CPS/ASEC analysis in this report is limited to the past 27 years due to relative consistency in design and content of the CPS/ASEC over the period.

[2] See, for example, Catherine Rampell, "'Great Recession': A Brief Etymology," *New York Times* (internet edition), March 11, 2009, available at http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/11/great-recession-a-brief-etymology/.

[3] Single fathers and their children have received comparatively little study, nor have they emerged as a matter of policy concern, as have single mothers and their children.

The report contains three appendixes. **Appendix A** provides a brief history of the AFDC program—the precursor to TANF. **Appendix B** examines under-reporting of cash welfare on the CPS/ASEC relative to administrative benchmarks. **Appendix C** provides data underlying the figures presented in the body of the report.

Female-Headed Families with Children—A Policy Concern

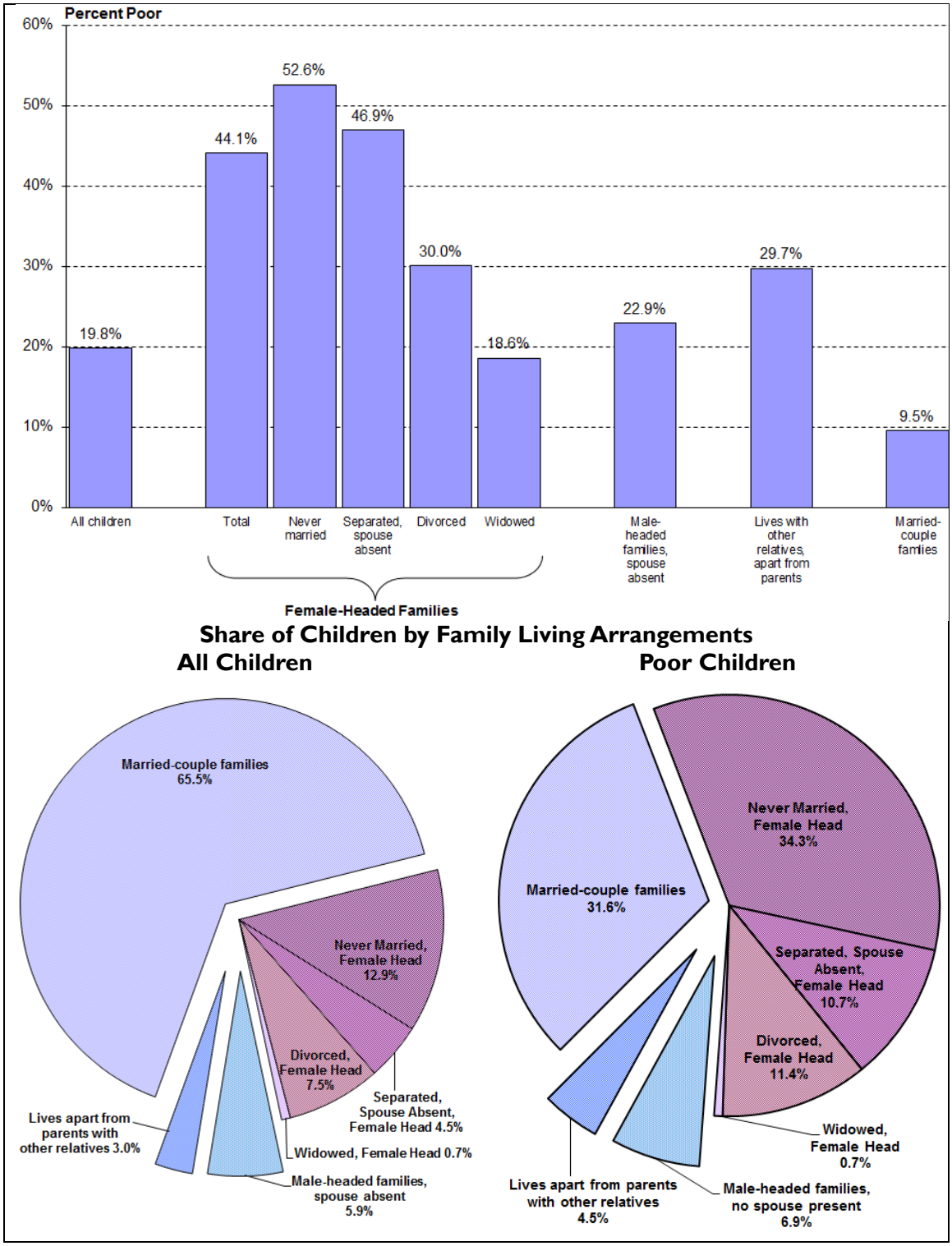
Two dominant, often conflicting, themes have pervaded public discourse and policy responses to providing public assistance to poor families with children. One has been to help improve the economic and social well-being of children who, through no fault of their own, live in poor circumstances. The other has been to reduce welfare dependency and to promote parental responsibility and family self-sufficiency. A persistent challenge has been how public policy and programs can address the first theme of reducing child poverty without undermining the second by encouraging welfare dependency.

Children living in families headed by single mothers with no spouse present are especially at risk of being poor. In 2013, under the official U.S. poverty measure,[4] about one-fifth of all children were poor (19.8%), but among children living in single-mother families, well over two-fifths (44.1%) were poor, compared to about one in ten children (9.5%) living in married-couple families (See **Figure 1**).[5] In 2013, one in four children (25.6%) lived in female-headed families, but children in such families accounted for well over half (57.0%) of all poor children (see bottom panel of **Figure 1**). About one in eight children (12.9%) live in families headed by single mothers who have never been married; about half of all such children were poor in 2013 (52.6%), and they accounted for about one third (34.3%) of all poor children.

[4] The official U.S. statistical poverty measure is based on families' annual pre-tax income relative to family poverty income thresholds, which vary by family size and composition. For example, in 2013, a family consisting of a single mother with one child was considered poor if its annual pre-tax cash income was less than $16,057, and if she had two children, she and her children would be considered poor if her family income was below $18,769. In turn, a married couple with one child would be considered poor if the family's income was less than $18,751, and if they had two children, if its income was less than $23,707.

[5] The definition of "children" used here represents dependent children under the age of 18 who are related to another family member by birth or adoption. It excludes children who are unrelated to other household members, and excludes persons under the age of 18 who, themselves, have a dependent child residing with them.

Figure 1. Children's Poverty Status by Family Living Arrangement, 2013



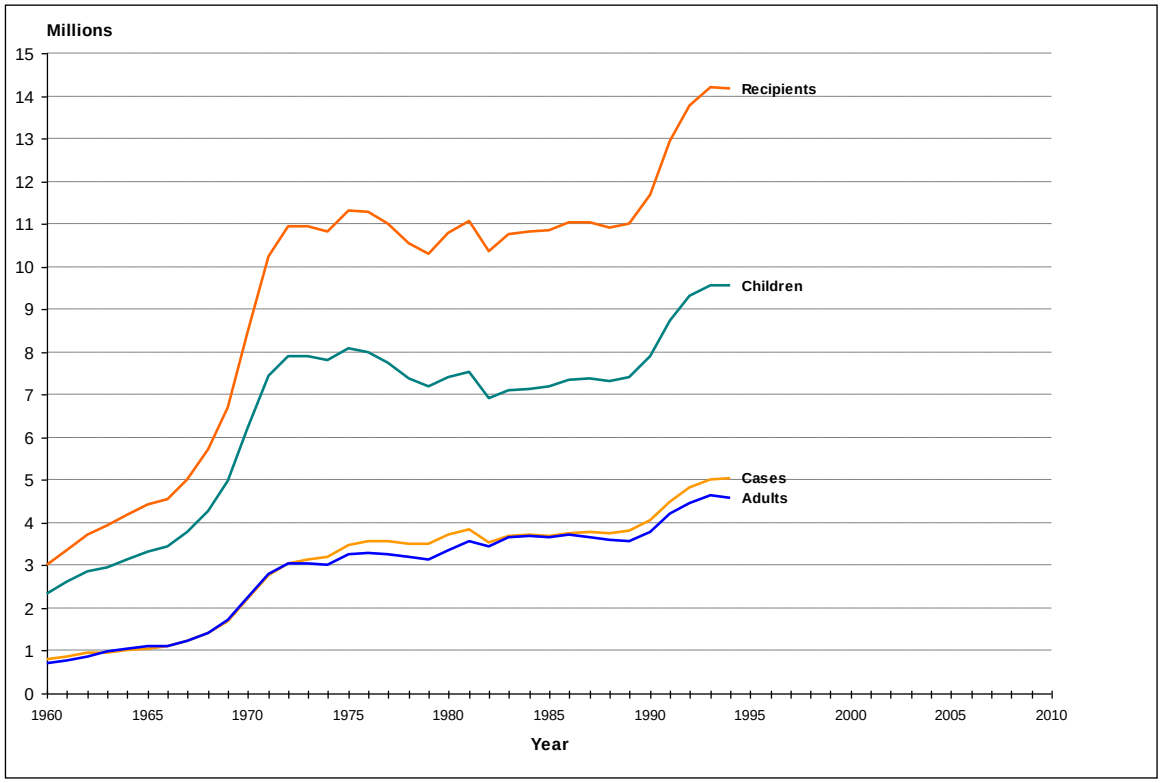
Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Table **C-1** for supporting data.

Figure 2 shows the number of recipients (total, children, and adults) and cases (families, and child-only cases) receiving cash assistance under AFDC (ADC, prior to 1962) from 1960 to 1994, the eve of the 1996 welfare reform debate. The AFDC caseload was comprised almost entirely of women with no husband present and their children.

Figure 2. Number of Recipients and Cases Receiving Cash Assistance Under ADC, AFDC, 1960 to 1994

(Annual monthly average, in millions)



Source: Figure prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Family Assistance (OFA). See **Table C-2** for supporting data.

Note: Includes enrollment in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

The surge in recipients and cases over the course of the 1960s reflects a variety of factors, including the baby boom generation entering adulthood; an increase in the number and share of children living in female-headed families with a high likelihood of being poor; a rediscovery of poverty in the United States and resultant efforts to address its causes and consequences; and outreach efforts by government and organizations to aid the poor by helping to ensure that they were treated fairly and received benefits to which they were entitled. Additionally, during the late 1960s and early 1970s, U.S. Supreme Court rulings overturned a number of state practices that had denied providing assistance to entitled individuals. Thus, AFDC caseload growth over the period reflected both a growth in the number of persons legally entitled to receive benefits and also an increasing likelihood that legally entitled individuals would be granted benefits. From 1966 to 1971, the number of AFDC recipients would more than double, from 4.5 million to 10.2 million persons. By one estimate, by 1971 90% of families eligible to receive AFDC were

participating in the program, compared to only about 33% in the early 1960s.[6] As the AFDC caseload was increasing, Congress began taking action in an attempt to restrict its growth. Among its provisions, amendments to the Social Security Act in 1967 sought to restrict AFDC caseload growth through the establishment of work and training requirements for adult recipients, and an effort to freeze federal matching payments to states with additional caseload growth attributable to cases with an absent parent (i.e., other than widows, or disabled parents). (See **Appendix A** for a brief history of the AFDC program.)

Policy Landscape on the Eve of 1996 Welfare Reform

A variety of welfare reforms were already beginning to be implemented by states in the years preceding the more sweeping reforms that would be allowed under the 1996 welfare reform law. The Family Support Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-485) extended work requirements (which could include work preparation activities such as education and training) for mothers with a child as young as six to mothers with a child as young as three and, at a state's option, extended work requirements to mothers with a child as young as age one. A number of states experimented with changes to welfare policy under waiver authority granted to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).[7] Among the features of state programs tested under waiver authority were efforts to strengthen work requirements, experiments requiring a "work first" approach rather than "training first, followed by work," time limits, strengthened sanctions for noncompliance with welfare rules, and capping of welfare benefits for a new baby conceived or born while a mother was receiving welfare. In addition, eligibility and funding for child care were expanded, helping to make work possible for mothers who otherwise might have difficulty finding affordable child care. The Family Support Act expanded eligibility for child care assistance in the form of transitional child care assistance for families working their way off AFDC, as well as for families "at risk" of qualifying for AFDC. In 1990, federally funded child care assistance was extended to low-income families generally, not just those receiving or at risk of receiving welfare, under the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

The numbers of cases and persons receiving AFDC remained relatively level during the 1970s and most of the 1980s, but began to rise again in 1989 just prior to the onset of an eight-month long economic recession that was marked as beginning in July 1990[8] (see **Figure 2**, above). From 1988 to 1994, the number of persons receiving AFDC would increase by 30%—a much larger increase than might be expected from the recession alone.[9] The caseload increase contributed to new calls for welfare reform—and welfare reform would once again move into the policy spotlight.

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[6] James T. Patterson, *America's Struggle Against Poverty, 1900-1985* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 179.

[7] Section 1115 of the Social Security Act grants the Secretary authority to waive compliance of states with certain sections of the Social Security Act for state experiments or demonstrations that the Secretary judges to promote specific objectives of the act.

[8] Economic recessions are defined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Business Cycle Dating Committee.

[9] For analyses of AFDC caseload growth over this period, see CRS Report 93-7, *Demographic Trends Affecting Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Caseload Growth*, by Thomas Gabe (archived report, available to congressional clients upon request); also, Janice Peskin, Forecasting AFDC Caseloads, with an Emphasis on Economic Factors, Congressional Budget Office Staff Memorandum, July 1993; and, Rebecca Blank, "What Causes Public Assistance Caseloads to Grow?," *Journal of Human Resources*, vol. 36, no. 1 (Winter 2001), pp. 85-118.

Welfare Dependency as a Political Theme

In his January 1992 State of the Union Address before a joint session of Congress, President George H. W. Bush, who would be running for a second term as President, expressed his intention to make it quicker and easier for states to restructure their welfare programs through the federal waiver process:

> Welfare was never meant to be a lifestyle. It was never meant to be a habit. It was never supposed to be passed from generation to generation like a legacy. It's time to replace the assumptions of the welfare state and help reform the welfare system.
>
> States throughout the country are beginning to operate with new assumptions that when able-bodied people receive Government assistance, they have responsibilities to the taxpayer: A responsibility to seek work, education, or job training; a responsibility to get their lives in order; a responsibility to hold their families together and refrain from having children out of wedlock; and a responsibility to obey the law. We are going to help this movement. Often, State reform requires waiving certain Federal regulations. I will act to make that process easier and quicker for every State that asks for our help.[10]

In September 1992, during a presidential campaign speech, candidate William J. Clinton pledged, if elected, to "end welfare as we know it." As reported in the *New York Times*, he stated:

> The changing face of welfare and the changing nature of it, and the enormous barriers of people moving from welfare to a productive life deserve special attention ... Especially now that most people on welfare are young women and their little children.... By the time we're through, we shouldn't have a welfare program in America ... We ought to have a helping hand program followed by a jobs program.[11]

The previous day, the Clinton campaign began airing a campaign ad in which the candidate stated his plan to "end welfare as we know it":

> For so long, Government has failed us, and one of its worst failures has been welfare. I have a plan to end welfare as we know it, to break the cycle of welfare dependency. We'll provide education, job training and child care, but even those who are able must go to work, either in the private sector or in public service.... It's time to make welfare what it should be—a second chance, not a way of life."[12]

Nearly 20 welfare reform bills would be introduced in the 103rd Congress,[13] but it was not until June 1994, before the mid-term elections, that President Clinton would unveil his welfare reform proposal, the Work and Responsibility Act of 1994 (S. 2224, H.R. 4605).

Three months later, House Republicans announced their *Contract with America* just six weeks before the mid-term elections. The document, unveiled on September 27, 1994, included wide-ranging provisions, including changes to House rules, and legislative proposals to address 10 policy domains ranging from fiscal responsibility, crime, national security, and job creation to

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[10] Available at http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=1992_public_papers_vol1_text&docid=pap_text-79.pdf.

[11] Gwen Ifill, "Clinton Presses Welfare Overhaul, Stressing Job Training and Work," *New York Times*, September 10, 1992, pp. A1, A19.

[12] Richard L. Berke, "The Ad Campaign—Clinton: Getting People Off Welfare," *New York Times*, September 10, 1992, p. A-19.

[13] "House GOP Offers Descriptions Of Bills To Enact 'Contract'." In CQ Almanac 1994, 50th ed., 39-D-52-D. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1995, http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/cqal94-843-25141-1102086.

welfare reform, among others. In the introduction to the welfare reform provisions, the *Contract* viewed the issue as follows:

> Isn't it time for the government to encourage work rather than rewarding dependency? The Great Society has had the unintended consequence of snaring millions of Americans into the welfare trap. Government programs designed to give a helping hand to the neediest of Americans have instead bred illegitimacy, crime, illiteracy, and more poverty. Our *Contract with America* will change this destructive social behavior by requiring welfare recipients to take personal responsibility for the decisions they make. Our *Contract* will achieve what some thirty years of massive welfare spending has not been able to accomplish: reduce illegitimacy, require work, and save taxpayers money.[14]

The *Contract's* welfare proposal, the Work Opportunity Act of 1995, was introduced as H.R. 4 on January 4, 1995, the first day of the 104th Congress.

EITC Expansions—"Making Work Pay"

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), first introduced in 1975, was meant to help offset social security (FICA[15]) taxes paid by workers with lower earnings. Since then, the EITC has become an important policy tool in helping to encourage work. Legislated expansions to the credit over the years have increased the size and scope of the credit, extending its reach to higher earned income levels. As a supplement to families with low earnings, the EITC not only helps offset FICA payroll taxes and federal income taxes families would otherwise pay, but it also helps to offset some of the *"implicit taxes"* families face as public assistance benefits are reduced when their income increases. As a *refundable* tax credit, the EITC provides payments to qualified individuals with no federal income tax liability. Over the period examined in this report, the EITC was expanded both under the George H. W. Bush Administration in 1990 (phased-in in 1991 and 1992), and early in the first term of the Clinton Administration in 1993 (phased-in from 1994 through 1996). By 1996, the expanded EITC was providing a "work bonus" to families with children, amounting to as much as 34 cents on each dollar earned for a low-income family with one child, and as much as 40 cents for a family with two or more. The EITC expansions early in President Clinton's first term were the centerpiece of part of a policy of "making work pay"—that people who work shouldn't be poor—and a critical first step towards the President's campaign promise to "end welfare as we know it" by moving people off public cash assistance and into work.

TANF and Other Policies in the Post-AFDC Era

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), signed into law in 1996 as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA, P.L. 104-193), replaced the 61-year-old Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, a federal entitlement program to low-income families with children. TANF eliminated the federal entitlement to assistance that existed under AFDC, replacing an open-ended matching grant program with a fixed-dollar block grant program (with the possible addition of recession-related contingency funds). States must maintain spending levels equal to 75% of what they spent on AFDC at the time the program was repealed—a provision known as State Maintenance of Effort

[14] "Welfare Reform," in *Contract with America: the bold plan by Rep. Newt Gingrich, Rep. Dick Armey and the House Republicans to change the nation*, ed. Ed Gillespie and Bob Schellhas (New York: Times Books, 1994), p. 65.

[15] Federal Insurance Contributions Act taxes.

(MOE). Adults must be engaged in approved "work activities" within two years of initial TANF receipt, subject to sanction for noncompliance. Under TANF, federal work participation standards (i.e., "work-requirements") apply to states' TANF caseloads. As such, states are required to have 50% of families, and 90% of two-parent families, engaged in "work" or they will be at risk of having their block grant reduced.[16] TANF gives states increased flexibility to design programs to assist needy families with children compared to its predecessor program, but with fixed federal dollars. A major goal of TANF is to end dependence of needy families on government assistance by limiting the time they may receive assistance and by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage. TANF law imposes a maximum five-year lifetime limit on receipt of federally funded assistance,[17] and allows states to impose shorter limits than the maximum.

States have implemented a wide range of policy options and program approaches in the design of their TANF programs. Many of their programs have evolved from approaches first experimented with under federal waiver authority in the pre-TANF era. Cash welfare under the AFDC program was an entitlement, though states were allowed to set income-eligibility levels and the size of cash benefits, which, under the program, varied widely among them. Since passage of TANF, states' cash welfare programs have evolved over time, becoming more complex and diverging from the cash assistance rules in place under AFDC. States' TANF policies vary widely in determining who is eligible for assistance, the benefits they receive, the behavioral requirements recipients must meet, and the duration they may receive assistance. States' cash welfare policies are described elsewhere.[18] Since the passage of TANF, most states have increased financial work incentives for families receiving cash assistance by allowing families to keep more of their cash welfare benefit as their earnings increase.[19] Additionally, as was the case before welfare reform, most states have allowed inflation to substantially erode the real value of welfare benefits over time, diminishing the value of welfare relative to work.[20]

States may use both federal and state MOE dollars for a wide range of activities, other than the provision of "cash assistance."[21] In FY2013, only 28% of total federal TANF and state (MOE)

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[16] A state's work participation requirement may be reduced for specified reasons (e.g., reductions in a state's caseload "caseload reduction credit," or states spent more than that required by TANF's MOE). See CRS Report RL32760, *The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant: Responses to Frequently Asked Questions*, by Gene Falk.

[17] Up to 20% of the TANF caseload can be extended to receive assistance beyond five years due to "hardship," as defined by the states. See CRS Report RL32748, *The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant: A Primer on TANF Financing and Federal Requirements*, by Gene Falk.

[18] See, for example, the Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, on the Internet at http://anfdata.urban.org/wrd/WRDWelcome.cfm.

[19] For a discussion of changes in work incentives under TANF compared to AFDC, see CRS Report RL30579, *Welfare Reform: Financial Eligibility Rules and Cash Assistance Amounts under TANF*, by Craig Abbey (archived report, available to congressional clients upon request).

[20] Maximum TANF benefits available for a family of three in the median state in July 2013 were 42% below the maximum level available to a family under AFDC in July 1988, after adjusting for the effects of price inflation. In July 1988, the maximum benefit level in the median state amounted to 45% of the Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPL), but by 2013, only 26%. In 1988, the maximum benefit ranged from a low of 14.6% of FPL (Alabama) to 82.1% of FPL (California). By 2013, the maximum benefit ranged from a low of 10.4% of FPL (Mississippi) to a high of 48.5% of FPL (New York). Author's calculations based on data from U.S. Congress, House Committee on Ways and Means, *2008 Green Book*, Section 7—Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, 111th Cong., Table 7-22, pp. 49-50, available on the internet at http://waysandmeans.house.gov/media/pdf/110/tanf.pdf; and Erika Huber, David Kassabian, and Elissa Cohen, Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2013, The Urban Institute, Washington, DC, September 2014, Table L5, Maximum Monthly Benefit for A Family of Three with No income, 1996-2013 (July), pp. 224-225 http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/413208-Welfare-Rules-Databook.pdf.

[21] See CRS Report RL32760, *The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant: Responses to*

dollars under the program went toward basic cash assistance. When administrative costs and work activities are added to basic cash assistance—the three spending categories most commonly associated with "welfare"—those expenditures accounted for about two-fifths (41%) of total TANF spending in FY2013. States have also redirected funds previously used to provide cash assistance to pay for child care, either directly or by transferring funds to the child care block grant. In FY2013, 16% of all TANF funds used were either expended on child care or transferred to the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF). TANF is also a major contributor to the child welfare system, which provides foster care, adoption assistance, and services to families with children who either have experienced or are at risk of experiencing child abuse or neglect. It should be noted that among state and federal TANF spending, only those dollars provided as "cash assistance" are included as income for poverty measurement purposes, although dollars expended for other purposes, such as child care, may help to indirectly reduce poverty by making it "affordable" for a parent to work.

Other Federal and State Policies that Encourage Work

In addition to policy changes described above, a variety of other policies implemented at both the federal and state levels have served to reward work. Over the period examined in this report, the minimum wage was increased six times—three times in the pre-welfare reform era and three times since.[22] Moreover, in 31 states (includes the District of Columbia) state minimum wages exceeded the federal minimum wage in one or more years over the period.[23] Many states have implemented state earned income tax credits (SEITC), which piggyback on the federal EITC. In most cases, states structure their SEITC as a percentage of the federal EITC. In tax year 2000, for example, 14 states and the District of Columbia had SEITCs, and in 10 of those jurisdictions, the credit was fully refundable. By tax year 2012, 24 states and the District of Columbia had SEITCs, and in 22 of those jurisdictions the credit was fully refundable.[24]

Child Support Enforcement[25]

The Child Support Enforcement (CSE) program was enacted in 1975 as a federal-state program (Title IV-D of the Social Security Act). The CSE program is funded with both state and federal

Frequently Asked Questions, by Gene Falk.

[22] The federal minimum wage increased from $3.35 per hour to $3.80 per hour, effective April 1990, to $4.25 per hour, effective April 1991, to $4.75 per hour, effective October 1996, $5.15 per hour, effective September 1997, $5.85 per hour, effective July 2007, and $6.65 per hour, effective July 2008. In July 2009, the minimum wage was increased to $7.25 per hour. For an analysis of possible effects of minimum wage increases on welfare participation, see Mark Turner, *The Effects of Minimum Wages on Welfare Recipiency*, paper presented at the National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics, August 1998.

[23] U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, *Changes in Basic Minimum Wages in Non-Farm Employment Under State Law: Selected Years 1968 to 2011*, http://www.dol.gov/whd/state/stateMinWageHis.htm.

[24] For tax year 2012 see *Policy Basics: State Earned Income Tax Credit*, Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, December 2012, http://www.cbpp.org/files/policybasics-seitc.pdf. For earlier tax years, see http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/Content/Excel/state_eitc.xls.

[25] This section is based on CRS Report RS22380, *Child Support Enforcement: Program Basics*, by Carmen Solomon-Fears; CRS Report RL34203, *Child Support Enforcement Program Incentive Payments: Background and Policy Issues*, by Carmen Solomon-Fears (archived report); and CRS Report R41431, *Child Well-Being and Noncustodial Fathers*, by Carmen Solomon-Fears, Gene Falk, and Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara.

dollars. The federal government bears the majority of CSE program expenditures and provides incentive payments to the states for success in meeting CSE program goals.[26]

The CSE program provides seven major services on behalf of children: (1) locating absent parents, (2) establishing paternity, (3) establishing child support orders, (4) reviewing and modifying child support orders, (5) collecting child support payments, (6) distributing child support payments, and (7) establishing and enforcing support for children's medical needs.

The CSE program has the potential to impact more children and for longer periods of time than most other federal programs. In many cases, the CSE program may interact with parents and children for 18 years.

One of the original purposes of the CSE program was to recover from noncustodial parents some of the costs of providing cash welfare to their children's families. Families receiving cash assistance must assign (legally turn over) to the state their rights to child support collections. These collections are split between the federal government and the states to recover the costs of providing cash assistance. States have options to pay some or all of such collections to families directly, but they are not required to do so.

Over the last 10-15 years, the CSE program has expanded its mission beyond its initial welfare cost-recovery goal to focus on providing its clients with more effective and efficient CSE services and fostering parental responsibility. The 1996 welfare reform law established some new systems for tracking down and enforcing the obligations of noncustodial parents to pay child support. It also established a "family first" policy, sending more child support collected on behalf of families that formerly received cash assistance directly to the family. These policy changes, combined with the decline in cash assistance rolls, have resulted in the bulk of CSE collections going directly to families. In FY2013, the CSE program collected $28.0 billion in child support payments from noncustodial parents and served nearly15.6 million child support cases. Of the $28.0 billion collected in child support payments, about 93% went to families, 5% went to state and federal governments, and nearly 2% consisted of medical support payments or fees paid to states.

Policies Addressing Marriage and Childbearing[27]

Among TANF's four stated goals, three relate directly to marriage and childbearing (*italics added below*). States may spend TANF funds on a wide range of activities for cash welfare recipients and other families toward achieving these goals.

[26] The federal government reimburses each state 66% of all allowable expenditures on CSE activities. The federal government's funding is "open-ended" in that it pays its percentage of expenditures by matching the amounts spent by state and local governments with no upper limit or ceiling. The federal government also provides incentive payments to states to encourage them to operate effective programs. Federal law requires states to reinvest CSE incentive payments back into the CSE program or related activities. In addition to state and federal matching funds and incentive payments, states collect child support on behalf of families receiving AFDC/TANF to reimburse themselves (and the federal government) for the cost of AFDC/TANF cash payments to the family. Federal law requires families who receive AFDC/TANF cash assistance to assign their child support rights to the state in order to receive AFDC/TANF. In addition, such families must cooperate with the state if necessary to establish paternity and secure child support. CSE collections on behalf of families receiving AFDC/TANF cash benefits are used to reimburse state and federal governments for AFDC/TANF payments made to the family (i.e., child support payments go to the state instead of the family, except for amounts that states choose to "pass through" to the family as additional income that does not affect TANF eligibility or benefit amounts). Additionally, states may charge application fees and apply recovered costs from non-welfare families to help finance their CSE programs.

[27] For a discussion of issues and policies and programs relating to this topic see CRS Report RL34756, *Nonmarital Childbearing: Trends, Reasons, and Public Policy Interventions*, by Carmen Solomon-Fears.

TANF's Four Goals

"(1) Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;

(2) end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by *promoting* job preparation, work, and *marriage*;

(3) *prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies*; and

(4) *encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families*."

Since TANF became law, a number of federal, state, and local initiatives have been undertaken in the attempt to reduce non-marital childbearing and promote responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage. Policy initiatives seek to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy through abstinence education, comprehensive sex education programs, and youth programs. Other programs focus on promoting healthy marriage, generally through public advertising campaigns on the value of marriage, and more targeted efforts at providing "social skills" education and training (e.g., marriage education, conflict resolution, and relationship skills) to couples interested in marriage or who are already married. Responsible fatherhood programs are intended to connect or reconnect children to their noncustodial parents, with the hope of improving the prospects of children being raised in single-parent families.

Policy Responses to Changing Economic Conditions

It is useful to view the policy changes discussed above in the context of prevailing economic conditions. Over the 27 years examined, the country experienced three economic recessions. The first, lasting eight months (July 1990 to March 1991) and occurring well before welfare reform, was followed by the longest period of economic expansion in the post-World War II era. The expansion ended with a second eight-month recession (March to November of 2001), which occurred well after passage and state implementation of new welfare reform rules. More recently, the economy suffered from what has been marked as the longest and deepest recession in the post-World War II era, lasting some 18 months from its official beginning to end (December 2007 to June 2009). In response, Congress passed a wide range of provisions under economic stimulus and recovery legislation to bolster the economy and to help support low- and middle-income families and individuals.

Tax Rebates, Reductions, and Credits

A number of policy interventions were undertaken in response to the most recent recession to both stimulate the economy and cushion the most economically vulnerable. Under provisions in the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-185), single and head-of-household tax filers, such as single mothers, who had filed federal income taxes in 2007 became eligible to receive a minimum tax rebate in 2008 of $300 ($600 for married joint filers) if their 2007 earned income (plus any Social Security benefits, tier 1 railroad retirement, and veteran's disability payments) was at least $3,000, and up to $600 ($1,200 for married joint filers) to the extent of their 2008 tax liability. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA; P.L. 111-5) provided rebates, under the Making Work Pay (MWP) tax credit, of up to $400 for single and head-of-household tax filers and up to $800 for joint filers in 2009 and 2010 by reducing FICA tax withholding.

Congress legislated a payroll (FICA) "tax holiday" (P.L. 111-312), temporarily reducing the employee share of Social Security taxes from 6.2% to 4.2% for 2011. In 2011, for a single working parent with one child, earning poverty level wages ($15,504), her payroll taxes would be

reduced from $961 to $651, a tax savings of $310. The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-96) extended the tax reduction through 2012.

The Emergency and Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (EESA; P.L. 110-343) included a provision that temporarily lowered the income limit for receipt of the refundable portion of the Child Tax Credit[28] (CTC), which is administered by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) to distinguish it from the nonrefundable portion of the CTC. Refundable credits, such as the ACTC and EITC, extend benefits to tax filers even though they owe no taxes. For the 2008 tax year, EESA effectively lowered the ACTC refundable income limit from $12,050 to $8,500. ARRA further expanded eligibility, temporarily, for the ACTC to tax filers with earnings of $3,000 or more for tax years 2009 and 2010. The refundable income limits set a lower threshold at which tax filers may begin to receive the refundable ACTC. A tax filer with a qualifying child could receive a "refund" amounting to 15 cents on every dollar earned above the refundable income threshold, up to a maximum credit amount of $1,000 per qualifying child. Under the EESA, a single mother with earned income of $12,050 became eligible for an ACTC of $532.50 in 2008, whereas absent the EESA provisions she would have received nothing. In 2009, under the ARRA provisions, a single parent with one child and having annual earnings in excess of $3,000 may have been eligible for the credit, and eligible for the full $1,000 credit once her earned income reached $9,667.[29] Absent the legislative changes noted above, she would not have begun to become eligible for the credit until her earned income exceeded $12,550, and would not have been eligible for the full $1,000 credit until her income reached $19,217.[30]

Under ARRA, certain ACTC provisions were set to expire at the end of the 2010 tax year. Among other things, expiring provisions would have caused the maximum allowable credit to revert from $1,000 to $500 per qualifying child, and for credit refundability to extend only to families with three or more qualifying children. The Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-312) extended the ARRA ACTC provisions through tax year 2012. The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (H.R. 8, as amended by the Senate, and signed into law by the President on January 2, 2013), among other things, extends ARRA's ACTC provisions for another five years, through 2017.

ARRA also temporarily raised the EITC credit rate for tax years 2009 and 2010 from 40% for families with *two or more* qualifying children to 45% for families with *three or m*ore qualifying children. In 2009, for a single parent with three or more children, the maximum available credit under ARRA increased to $5,657, from what would have been $5,028 absent ARRA. The Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-312) extended the ARRA EITC provisions through tax year 2012. The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 extends these provisions through 2017.

Unemployment Insurance Benefits

Unemployment Compensation (UC) under the Unemployment Insurance (UI) system typically provides up to 26 weeks of unemployment compensation covering a portion of lost wages to qualified covered workers who become eligible due to job loss.[31] Under the permanent Extended

[28] For a discussion see CRS Report R41873, *The Child Tax Credit: Current Law and Legislative History*, by Margot L. Crandall-Hollick.

[29] $3,000 + ($1,000/.15) = $9,667.

[30] $12,550 + ($1,000/.15) = $19,217.

[31] For a thorough discussion of the UI system, see CRS Report RL33362, *Unemployment Insurance: Programs and*

Benefits (EB) program, unemployment compensation may be extended for an additional 13 or 20 weeks to workers in qualifying states with high unemployment. Both UC and EB payments to workers are funded jointly through federal and state taxes on employers. Additionally, as in some past recessions, Congress funded a temporary Emergency Unemployment Compensation program (EUC08; P.L. 110-252), which began in 2008.[32] Under the EB and EUC08 programs, Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits have been extended from a maximum of 26 weeks under the UC program to a maximum of 60 to 99 weeks, depending on states' circumstances.

Additionally, ARRA made several changes to Unemployment Compensation (UC) to assist individuals who become unemployed.[33] It provided a temporary supplemental benefit increase of $25 per week under all UC programs (UC, EB, EUC08, and others[34]), payable until July 2010, and excluded $2,400 in UC benefits from gross income under the federal income tax for 2009. ARRA also provided $7 billion in incentives to states to modify their basis for computing UC benefits and for extending benefits to currently ineligible individuals. Two-thirds of the $7 billion available to states is contingent on states first adopting an alternative method of determining eligibility for individuals who do not qualify under the regular method based on their wage and employment history. The states could then be eligible for the remaining two-thirds of the $7 billion if they adopt at least two of the following four provisions:

1. permit former part-time workers to seek part-time work;
2. permit voluntary separations from employment for compelling family reasons, which must include (i) domestic violence, (ii) illness or disability of an immediate family member, and (iii) the need to accompany a spouse who is relocating for employment;
3. provide extended compensation to UC recipients in qualifying training programs for high-demand occupations; or
4. provide dependents' allowances to UC recipients with dependents.

Upon accepting the federal incentive payments, states are required to maintain the adopted changes after the incentive payments expire. The above provisions could especially assist single mothers whose job attachment has been sporadic or limited to part-time employment due to competing family responsibilities.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamp) Benefits

ARRA raised maximum benefit amounts under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp program), effective in April 2009.[35] ARRA effectively increased

Benefits, by Julie M. Whittaker and Katelin P. Isaacs.

[32] EUC08 benefits are fully federally funded out of the federal Unemployment Trust Fund (UTF) and from general funds. Since originally passed into law, authorization for the EUC08 program has been extended a number of times—most recently on December, 17, 2010, when the President signed P.L. 111-312, the Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010, which extended the EUC08 program's authorization until January 3, 2012.

[33] See CRS Report R40368, *Unemployment Insurance Provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, by Julie M. Whittaker; and CRS Report RS21356, *Taxation of Unemployment Benefits*, by Julie M. Whittaker.

[34] Other UC programs include unemployment benefits for former U.S. military service members (UCX program), Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits, workers who lose their jobs because of international competition who receive additional or supplemental support through the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) programs.

[35] See CRS Report R41374, *Reducing SNAP (Food Stamp) Benefits Provided by the ARRA: P.L. 111-226 and P.L. 111-*

maximum monthly SNAP benefits by 13.6%, as a replacement for annual benefit adjustments based on annual food-price inflation. As a result, *average* household benefits (typically less than the maximum) were boosted by more than 15%. ARRA SNAP benefit increases reverted back to annual adjustment based on food-price inflation in November 2013, as specified in SNAP law.

Other Social Policies

ARRA also included provisions that added a new temporary "emergency contingency fund" under TANF for FY2009 and FY2010, which allowed states receiving extra federal grants to cover 80% of increased recession-related costs in those two years.[36] Recession-related costs are defined as increased basic assistance (for states with increased basic assistance caseloads), non-recurrent short-term benefits, or subsidized employment expenditures.

Other ARRA provisions may also directly help single mothers.[37] For example, expanded funding for child care for low-income working families might help single mothers secure and retain employment, and increased federal incentive payments to states to run effective child support enforcement programs may help states' efforts to establish and maintain absent parents' child support obligations.

Welfare, Work, and Poverty Status of Female-Headed Families with Children

A dramatic transformation in single mothers' welfare, work, and poverty status has occurred over the 27-year period examined in this report. The period has seen a marked *structural change* in the provision of benefits under a number of programs that contribute to the fabric of the nation's "income safety net." In turn, single mothers' *behavior has changed* markedly over the period, in part a response to structural changes to income "safety net" programs, with more mothers working and fewer relying on cash welfare to support themselves and their children in the post-welfare reform era.

Figure 3 completes the administrative data series presented earlier (**Figure 2**) through 2013. The figure shows a dramatic decline in the number of recipients (total, adults and children) receiving AFDC/TANF after having reached a historical peak in 1993. In 1993, 14.2 million persons were receiving AFDC in the average month; by 2008, the number receiving TANF had fallen to 4 million, a decline of 10.2 million persons from 2003—6.5 million fewer children and 3.7 million fewer adults. In 2008, the number of persons receiving cash aid under TANF was the lowest since 1963, when 3.9 million received assistance under AFDC. Reflecting the effects of the most recent recession, the number of persons receiving TANF has increased from 4.0 million in 2008 to 4.6 million in 2010. Accompanying the economic recovery, the number of recipients has fallen slightly since 2010, reaching 4.0 million in 2013—the same level as its 2008 pre-recession low.

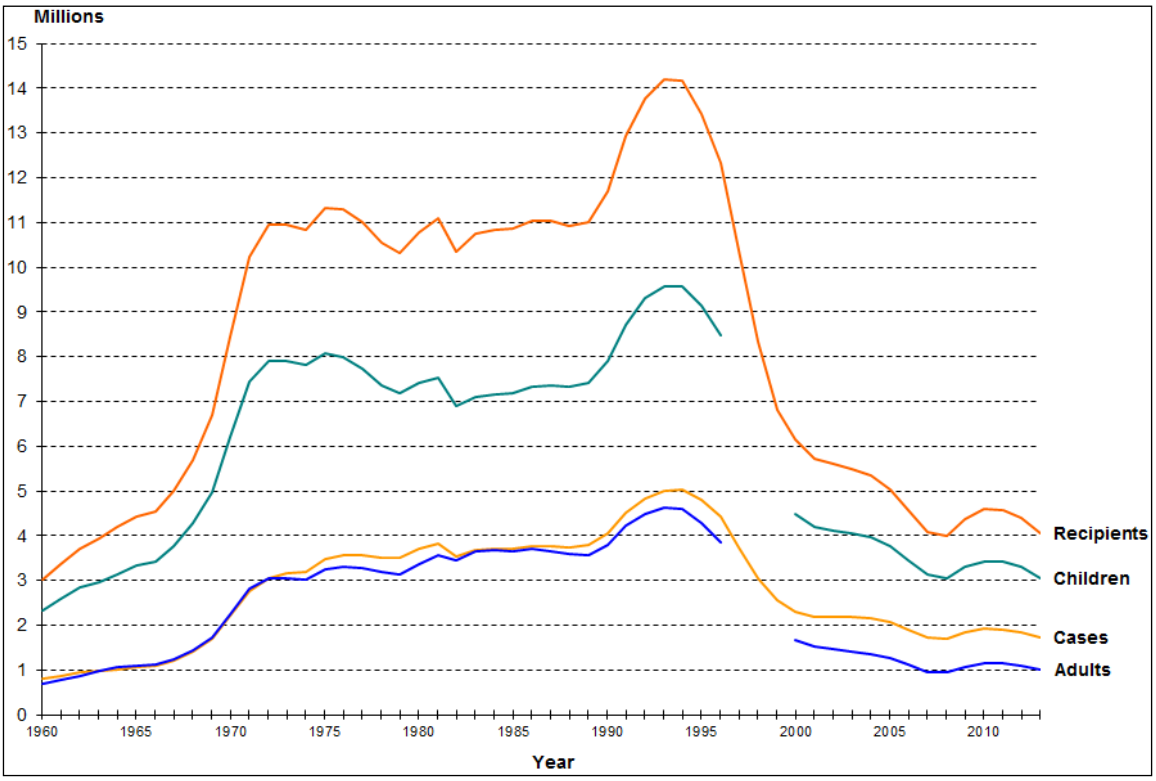
296, by Randy Alison Aussenberg, Jim Monke, and Gene Falk (archived).

[36] CRS Report R40211, *Human Services Provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*, by Gene Falk et al. (archived). Also see CRS Report R41078, *The TANF Emergency Contingency Fund*, by Gene Falk.

[37] CRS Report R40211, *Human Services Provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*, op. cit.

Figure 3. Number of Recipients and Cases Receiving Cash Assistance Under ADC, AFDC, and TANF, 1960 to 2013

(Annual Monthly Average, in Millions)



Source: Figure prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) from Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Family Assistance (OFA). See **Table C-2** for supporting data.

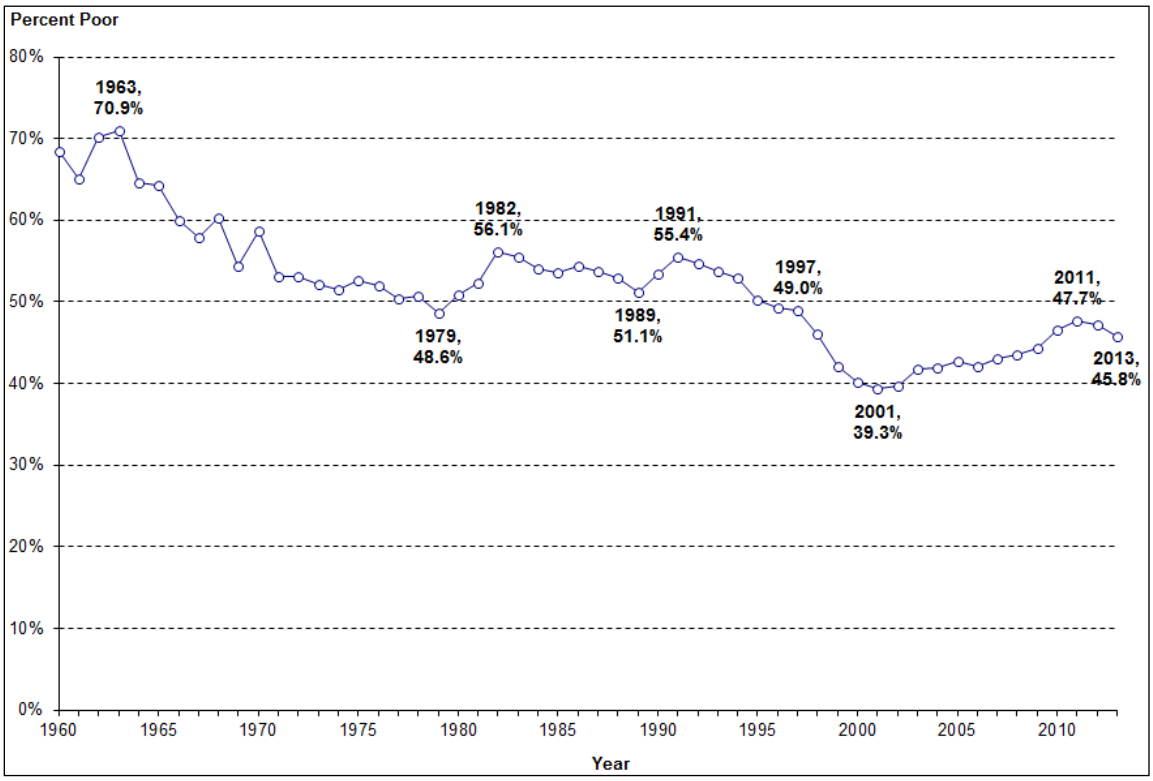
Note: Includes enrollment in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Separate estimates for children and adults are not available from 1997 to 1999 due to changes in state reporting requirements during the transition from AFDC to TANF. From 2001 and later, includes enrollment in Separate State Programs (SSP) under state Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements.

Moreover, since welfare reform, poverty among children living in female-headed households[38] has also fallen significantly. **Figure 4** shows that the incidence of poverty among children in female-headed households fell from 55.4% in 1991 to 39.3% by 2001, which represents the largest 10-year decline in poverty among such children since that which commenced in the early 1960s. The poverty rate of children in female-headed families has risen consequent to two recessions since 2001, reaching a recent high of 47.7% in 2011,and since falling to 45.8% in 2013—still well above its 2001 low of 39.3%. Since 1996 welfare reform, progress appears to have been largely sustained in both reducing welfare dependency and poverty among children in female-headed families, in spite of the recent recession.

[38] Estimates are for children in female-headed "households," which differs somewhat from the CRS definition of female-headed "families" used later in this report based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Figure 4. Poverty Rate of Children Under Age 18 in Female-Headed Households (No Spouse Present), 1960 to 2013

(Percent poor)



Source: Figure prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on U.S. Census Bureau historical series, available at http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/people.html, "Table 10. Related Children in Female Householder Families, by Poverty Status." See **Table C-3** for supporting data.

Notes: Estimates are for children in female-headed "households," which differs somewhat from the CRS definition of female-headed "families" used later in this report based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

The remainder of this report focuses primarily on single mothers, as single mothers have been a primary focus of social policy. Untangling the effects of demographic factors, the economy, welfare policy, and other policy interventions on single mothers' work behavior, welfare receipt, income, and poverty status is beyond the scope of this report. Others have attempted to parcel out these effects with mixed success and differing conclusions as to the relative impacts of each.[39] In contrast to these efforts, the remainder of this report provides a descriptive analysis of U.S.

[39] See, for example Council of Economic Advisors, *Technical Report: The Effects of Welfare Policy and the Economic Expansion on Welfare Caseloads: An Update*, A Report by the Council of Economic Advisors, Washington, DC, August 1999; James P. Ziliak, David N. Figlio, and Elizabeth E. Davis, et al., "Accounting for the Decline in AFDC Caseloads, Welfare Reform or the Economy?," *The Journal of Human Resources*, vol. XXXV, no. 3, pp. 570-586; Robert A. Moffitt, "The Effect of Pre-PRWORA Waivers on AFDC Caseloads and Female Earnings, Income, and Labor Force Behavior," in *Economic Conditions and Welfare Reform*, ed. Sheldon Danziger (Kalamazoo, Mich.: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 1999); June E. O'Neill and Anne M. Hill, *Gaining Ground? Measuring the Impact of Welfare Reform on Welfare and Work*, Manhattan Institute, Civic Report No. 17, New York, New York, 2001; Caroline Danielson and Jacob Alex Klerman, "Did Welfare Reform Cause the Caseload Decline," *Social Service Review*, vol. 82, no. 4 (December 2008), pp. 703-730.

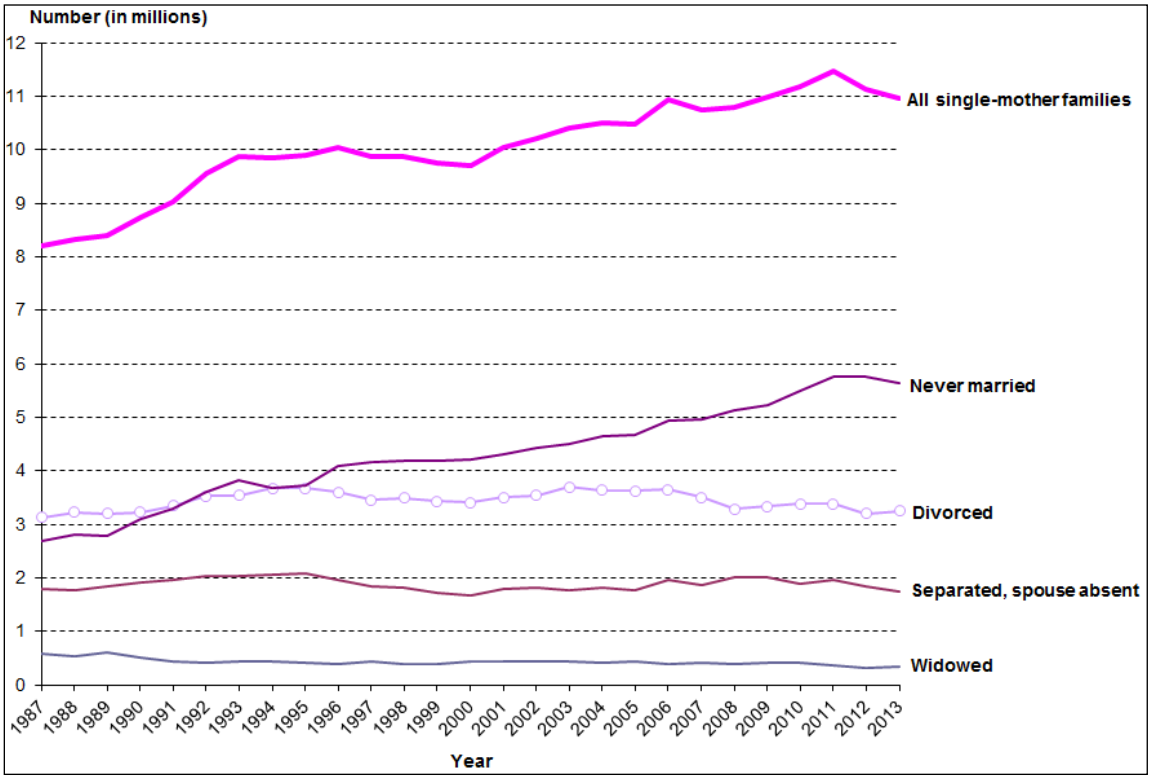
Census Bureau CPS/ASEC data, with the goal of increasing understanding of changes in single mothers' welfare, work, income, and poverty status that have occurred over the past 27 years.

Number of Families Headed by Single Mothers

Over the 27-year period examined, the number of single-mother families increased from 8.2 million in 1987 to a peak of 11.5 million in 2011, falling somewhat since, to 11.0 million in 2013 (**Figure 5**). The total number of single mothers increased from 8.4 million in 1989 to about 9.9 million in 1993, an increase of 1.8 million, or 17%. From 1993 through 2000, the number of single mothers remained fairly stable, ranging between 9.7 million and 10.1 million. From 2000 to 2011, the number of single mothers increased by 1.5 million (from 9.7 million to 11.5 million, respectively). (The number of single mothers fell somewhat in 2013, to 11.0 million.) The overall increase in single-mother families has largely been due to an increase in single mothers who have never been married. From 1987 to 2011, the number of never-married single mothers more than doubled, increasing from 2.7 million to 5.8 million over the period. The number of single mothers in 2013, 5.6 million, was only slightly below its 2011 peak of 5.8 million. In contrast, the number of separated mothers (no spouse present), and the number of divorced mothers in 2013, was only slightly above their 1987 number, while the number of widowed mothers in 2013 was well below the number in 1987. Moreover, in 2013 the number of married-couple families with children was just slightly below their number in 1987 (not shown in the figure, see **Table C-4**).

Figure 5. Number of Single-Mother Families, by Mothers' Marital Status, 1987 to 2013

(Number in millions)



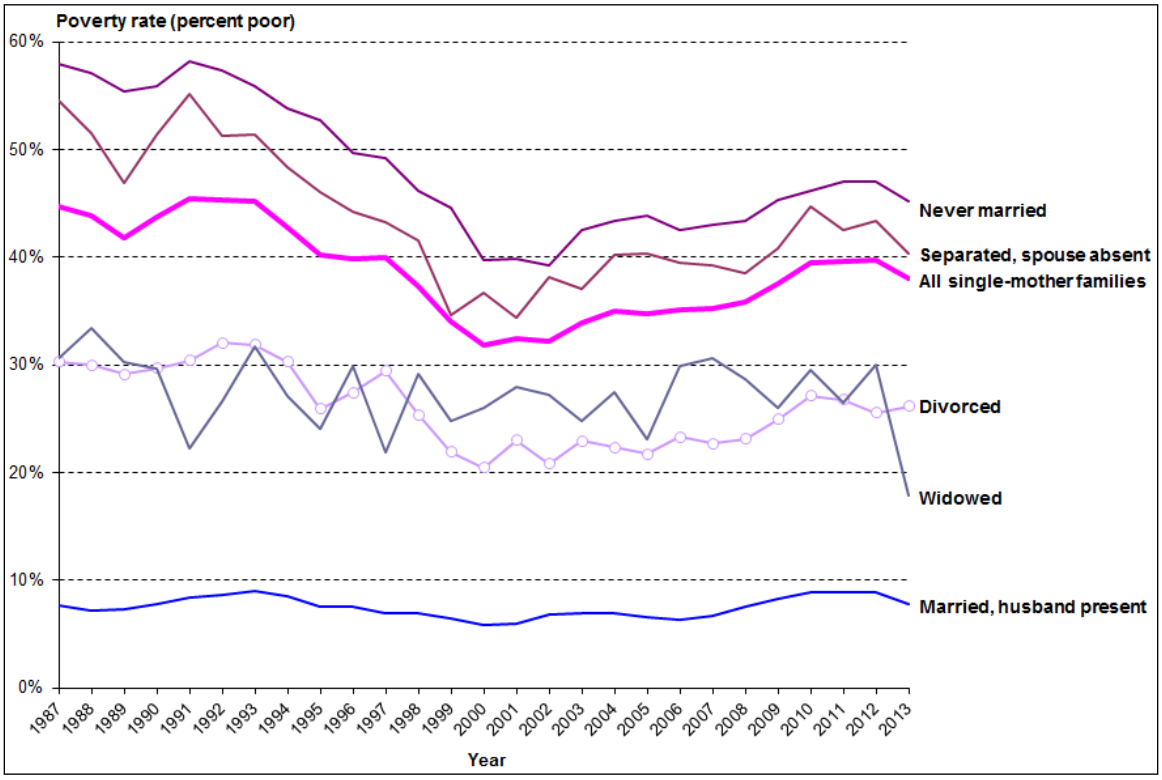
Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-4** for supporting data.

Incidence of Poverty by Mothers' Marital Status

The incidence of poverty among families headed by single mothers fell substantially from a peak of 45.4% of all single-mother families in 1992 and 1993 to a historical low for the 27-year period of 31.8% in 2000 (**Figure 6**). Since 2000, poverty rates for single mothers have increased, but they still remain well below levels of the early 1990s. The poverty rate among single-mother families rose to 34.9% by 2004, consequent to an eight-month recession (March to November 2001), and continued to drift upwards until increasing more sharply, to 39.5% in 2010, consequent to a deep 18-month recession (December 2007 to June 2009). The poverty rate for single-mother families fell from 39.8% in 2012 to 38.0% in 2013. Poverty rates are highest among never-married mothers, followed by separated mothers (no spouse present) and widowed and divorced mothers. Poverty rates of single mothers are several times that of married mothers. Poverty rates for never-married, separated, and divorced mothers fell substantially over the 1990s, reaching historical lows by the beginning of the next decade. (Note: the wide variability in the poverty rate among widowed mothers over the period reflects sample variation relating to the comparatively small sample of such mothers represented on the CPS/ASEC.)

Figure 6. Poverty Rates by Mothers' Marital Status, 1987 to 2013

(Percent poor)



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-4** for supporting data.

Poverty and Cash Welfare Receipt among Single Mothers

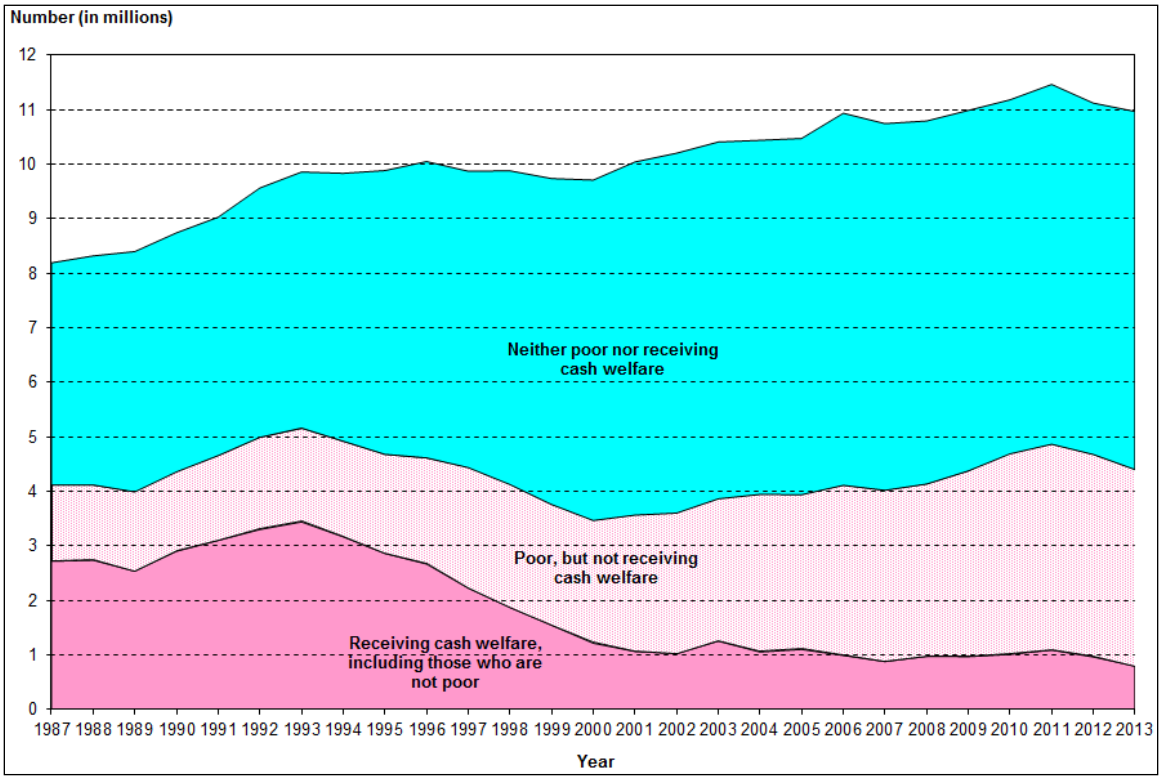
CPS data show an increase in cash welfare receipt (AFDC, TANF, or General Assistance (GA)[40]) among single mothers during the late 1980s and early 1990s and a decrease in the mid- to late-1990s. The CPS data generally correspond to the caseload's rise and fall, documented by administrative program data, but underestimate the caseload statistics to some extent.[41] **Figure 7** shows that the number of single mothers in families reporting receipt of cash welfare on the CPS increased from 2.5 million in 1989 to 3.4 million in 1993, an increase of 900,000, or 36%, over the four-year period. Compared to 1993, the peak year of welfare receipt, the number of single mothers reporting cash welfare was down to 795,000 in 2013—77% below that of 1993 (the bottom-shaded portion of the figure).[42] The CPS/ASEC data show very little if any take-up in receipt of cash welfare by single mothers in response to the most recent recession, and little if any take-up in cash welfare in response to the one preceding it. This differs from the administrative data presented earlier (**Figure 3**), which showed a modest increase in the TANF caseload from 2008 to 2010, no increase from 2010 to 2011, and a slight decline from 2011 to 2013. From 1993 to 2013, the number of *poor* single mothers who reported *receiving no cash welfare* increased from 1.722 million in 1993 to 3.605 million in 2013, more than doubling over the period (the middle-shaded area of the figure).

[40] The CPS/ASEC data groups any General Assistance individuals or families may have received with AFDC and TANF. GA programs are financed and administered at the state, county, or local level, and are generally used to meet the needs of people who are ineligible for federally funded cash assistance (e.g., AFDC/TANF, SSI) or are awaiting approval for such benefits. In 1998, 35 states and the District of Columbia had GA programs. See L. Jerome Gallagher, Cori E. Uccello, and Alicia B. Pierce, et al., *State General Assistance Programs 1998*, The Urban Institute, Assessing the New Federalism, Discussion Paper 99-01, Washington, DC, April 1999, http://www.urban.org/publications/409066.html.

[41] See **Appendix B**, which compares CPS estimates to AFDC/TANF caseload counts.

[42] Administrative caseload statistics show the caseload as peaking in March 1994, with nearly 5.1 million cases. In December 2007, at the onset of the recession, the caseload stood at 1.691 million, or only about one-third the level of its March 1994 peak. By December 2010, the caseload had increased somewhat from that of two years earlier, to 1.936 million, a 14.3% increase. In December 2011, the caseload was down slightly from a year earlier, at 1.862 million, and in December 2013, down further, to 1.654 million.

Figure 7. Single Mothers: Poverty and Cash Welfare Receipt, 1987 to 2013



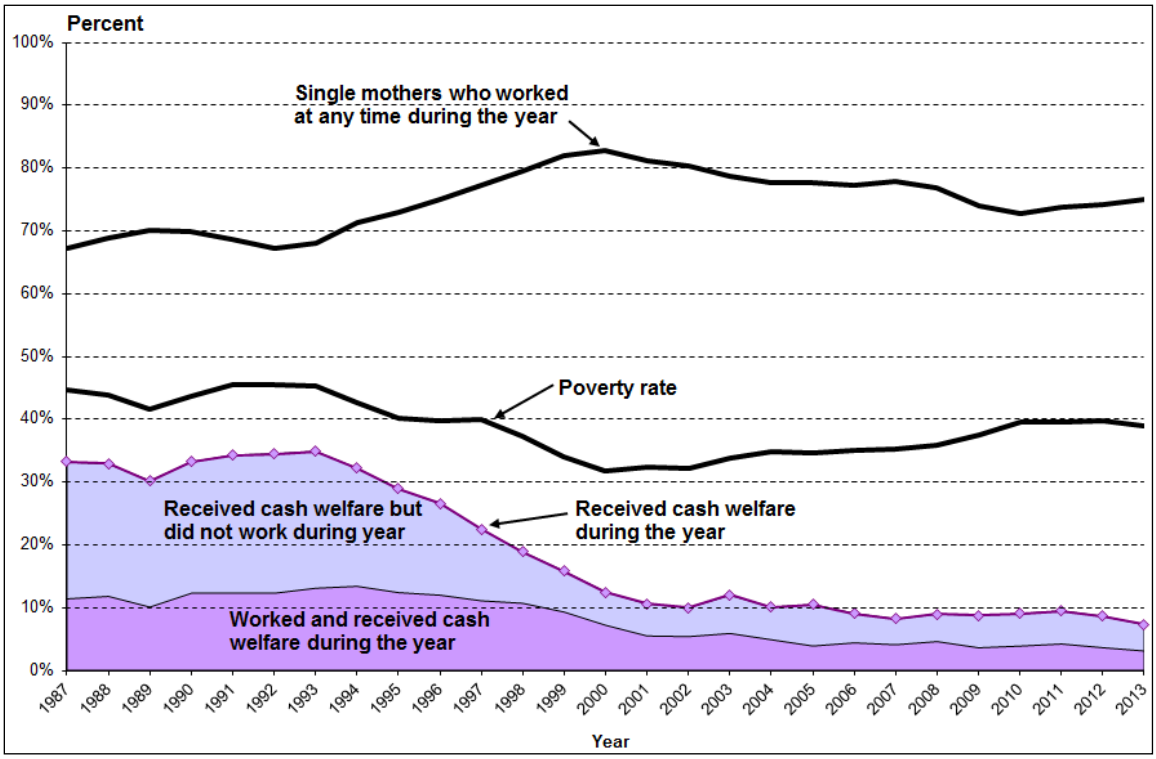
Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-5** for supporting data.

Note: Welfare is cash welfare in the form of AFDC, TANF, or state General Assistance.

Work, Poverty, and Cash Welfare Receipt of Single Mothers

Figure 8 provides an overview of single mothers' welfare, work, and poverty status from 1987 to 2013. The figure shows that since 1993, the share of single mothers who worked at some time during the year has increased markedly, and that the share who received cash welfare (AFDC, TANF, or GA) has declined significantly, as has the share who are poor under the official poverty definition. The figure illustrates that while both cash welfare recipiency rates and poverty rates for single mothers have generally fallen since 1993, single mothers' welfare recipiency rate has fallen faster than their poverty rate. More recently, since 2000, the poverty rate of single mothers has increased, but cash welfare receipt has not—a growing share of single mothers are poor under the official poverty measure but receive no cash welfare assistance. This suggests that TANF and other policies implemented in the mid-1990s (e.g., EITC expansion) may have had a lasting behavioral impact on reducing the incidence of cash welfare receipt among families headed by single mothers.

Figure 8. Welfare, Work, and Poverty Status Among Single Mothers, 1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-6** for supporting data.

Note: Welfare is cash welfare in the form of AFDC, TANF, or state General Assistance.

Single Mothers' Employment

While welfare receipt has declined, dramatic gains in single mothers' employment have occurred since 1993. **Figure 9** shows employment rates of single and married mothers by age of youngest child in March, from 1988 to 2014. The chart shows that gaps that had existed between single and married mothers' employment have been virtually eliminated in recent years, with single mothers now being as, and in some cases more, likely than their married counterparts to be working.

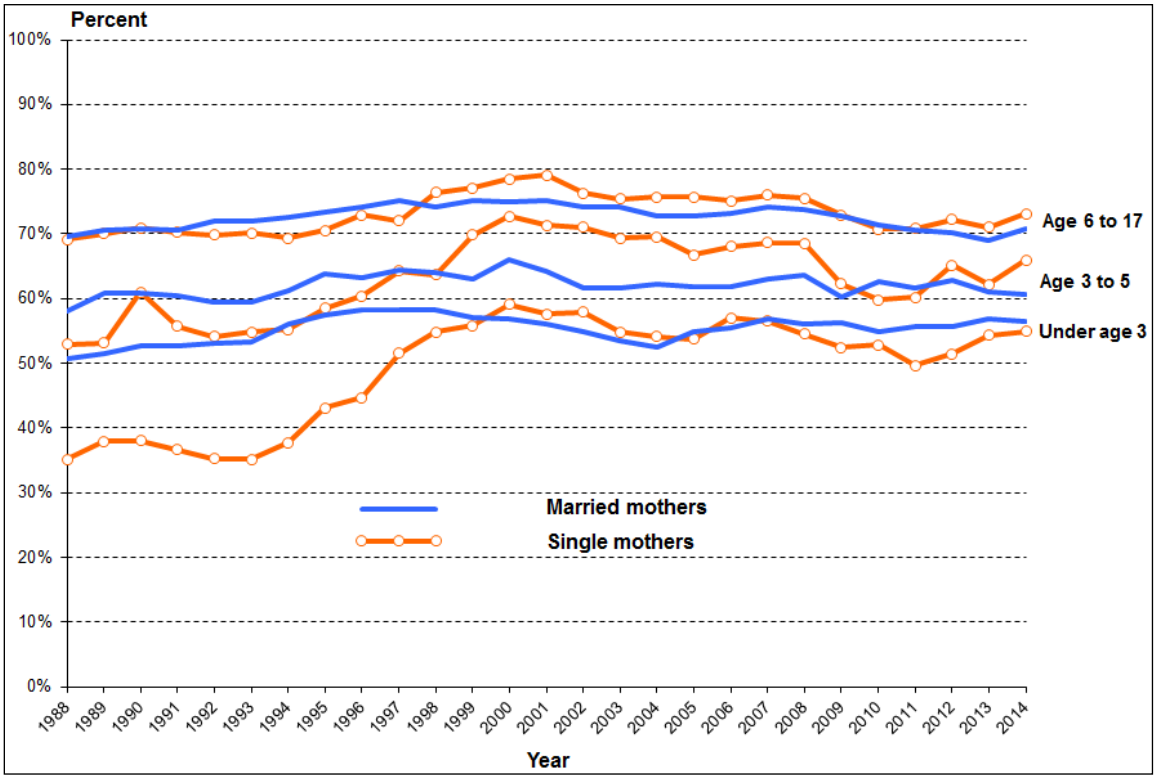
Over the period, the increase in employment among single mothers with young children has been most dramatic. Among mothers with a child under the age of 3, their employment rate increased from a low of 35.1% in March 1993 to a high of 59.1% in March 2000, a 24 percentage point increase over the period. Their employment rate fell to 53.7% in March 2005 but rebounded to 57.0% in March 2006, marking a recent high; it fell to a recent low of 49.6% in March 2010, and in March 2014 stood at 54.9%.

Single mothers with a youngest child age 3 to 5 also experienced marked employment gains over the mid-to-late 1990s. Their employment rate grew from a low of 54.1% in March 1992 to 72.7% by March 2000, an 18.6 percentage point increase over the period. In March 2008, their employment rate stood at 68.5%, but fell to a recent low of 59.7% in March 2010—13.0 percentage points below its March 2000 peak, with over two-thirds of the decline having occurred

since March 2007. By March 2014, the employment rate for this group of single mothers had rebounded to 66.0%.

Single mothers whose youngest child was of school age (age 6-17) had employment rates about equal to those of their married counterparts over the 1988-2014 period. In March 2014, the employment rate of single mothers with school-age children stood at 73.0%—6.1 percentage points below a peak employment rate of 79.1% in 2001.

Figure 9. Employment Rates of Single and Married Mothers, by Age of Youngest Child, March 1988 to March 2014



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-7** for supporting data.

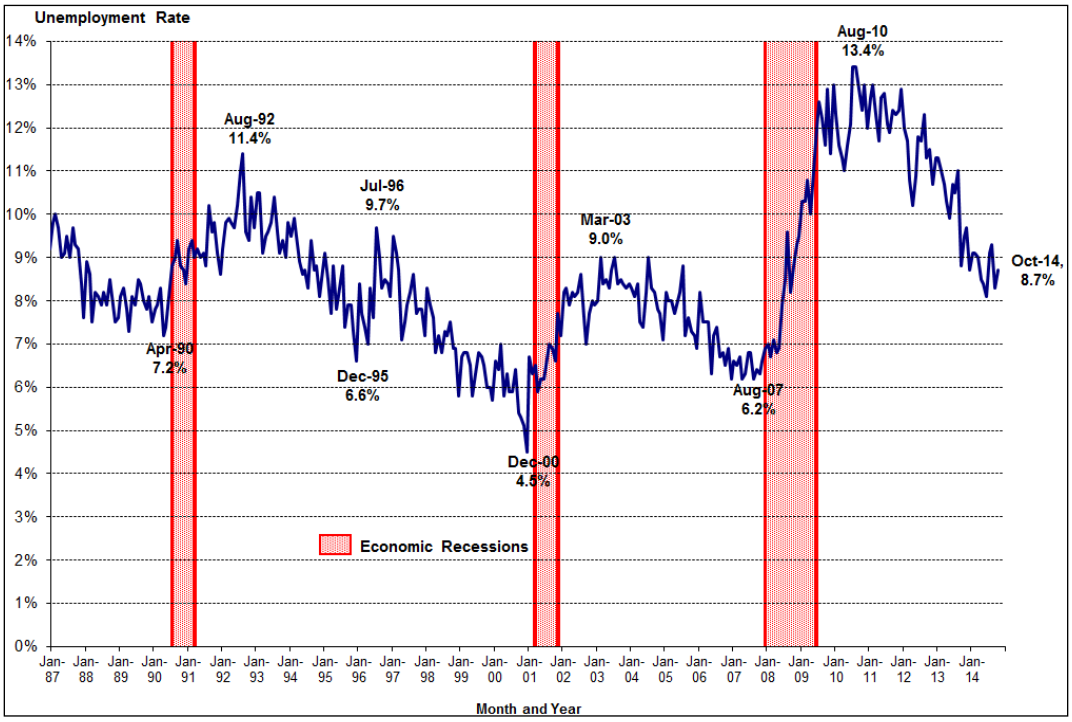
Unemployment Rates Across the Business Cycle

Based on Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the unemployment rate of women maintaining families has increased from a recent low of 6.2% in August 2007, just prior to the recession's onset, to 11.7% in June 2009, the recession's official end date (see **Figure 10**). Over a year past the recession's end, the unemployment rate of women maintaining families rose further, reaching a high of 13.4% in July and August 2010. The annual average unemployment rate for women maintaining families was 12.3% in 2010, and 12.4% in 2011, and the poverty rate among single mothers essentially leveled off over those two years. Since then, their annual average unemployment rate has fallen, to 11.4% in 2012, and 10.5% in 2013. Comparing the most recent unemployment statistics for women maintaining families, their annual average unemployment rate for the first 10 months of 2014 (8.8%) is well below that of the same period in 2013 (10.5%), providing encouragement that the poverty rate for single mothers and their children will show

continued improvement in 2014, when estimates become available in late summer 2015. However, given the pace of economic recovery, official poverty among single mothers and their children may be expected to remain above pre-recession levels for some years to come.

Figure 10. Unemployment Rate of Women Maintaining Families, January 1987 through October 2014

(Rates not seasonally adjusted)



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data. See **Table C-8** for supporting data.

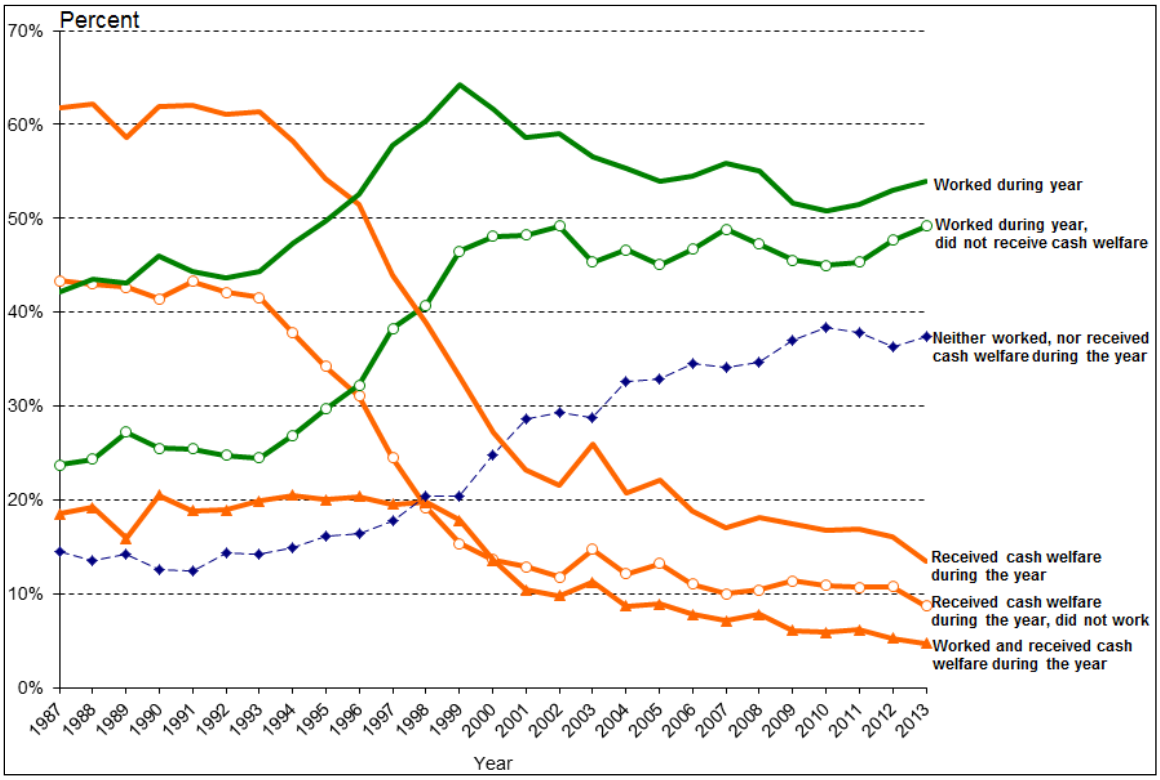
Notes: Economic recessions: July 1990 to March 1991, March to November 2001, and December 2007 to June 2009. Economic recessions are defined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Business Cycle Dating Committee.

Poor Single Mothers' Work and Welfare Status

There is a greater likelihood today than in years past that a *poor* single mother will be working rather than receiving welfare. Changes in poor mothers' participation in work and welfare status first became evident in the early-to-mid 1990s, with rates of employment increasing after 1992 (solid green line, **Figure 11**) and rates of welfare receipt declining after 1993 (solid orange line, **Figure 11**). A crossover point was reached by 1996, when the chances that a poor single mother would be working exceeded the chances that she would be receiving welfare. The initial decline in welfare receipt and increase in work among poor single mothers coincides with an economy recovering from recession, a phasing-in of expanded EITC benefits that encouraged work (1994-1996), increased experimentation among states attempting to transform their cash welfare programs through the Section 1115 waiver process, and increased political messaging that national welfare was looming on the horizon. The trend of declining welfare receipt and increased work intensified further after passage of national welfare reform legislation in 1996.

Figure 11 shows that the share of poor single mothers who received cash welfare at any time during the year fell from just over 60% in the 1987-1993 period to 17% in 2010. Welfare receipt among poor single mothers began to decline significantly after 1993, and even more so after 1996. Similarly, the share of poor single mothers who were working at any time during the year increased from around 44% in 1992 to a peak of 64% in 1999, but in 2010 had dropped to 51%, a full 13 percentage points below its 1999 peak. In 2014, 54% of poor single mothers worked at some time during the year.

Figure 11. Poor Single Mothers: Work and Welfare Status During the Year, 1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-9** for supporting data.

The share of poor single mothers who relied on cash welfare without working dropped from a peak of 43% in 1991 to a low of 9% in 2013 (one-fifth its 1991 rate), and has shown little change since, despite the recession. The share who worked without relying on cash welfare increased from a recent low of 25% in 1993 to a recent pre-recession high of 49% in 2007—essentially doubling over the period—after which the share fell to 45% in 2010 and 2011 consequent to the recession. The share has since rebounded in 2012 (48%) and 2013 (49%). The share of poor single mothers who combined work and welfare over the year has fallen by nearly three-quarters, from about 20% in 1996 to about 5% in 2013—one quarter of its 1996 level.

Poor single mothers who reported that they neither worked nor received cash welfare during the year (the dashed blue line in **Figure 11**) has increased from a low of about 12% in 1991 to 37% in 2013, tripling over the period. This surprising combination may reflect a mix of circumstances, including income support from unrelated household members (which is not included in the official poverty measure), including cohabiting partners, and other means of support from outside

the household not captured on the CPS. It may also reflect income reporting problems on the CPS, especially with regard to welfare income.[43]

Receipt of Selected Benefits by "Earnings Poor" Female-Headed Families with Children

As shown above, cash welfare receipt among female-headed families with children has dramatically declined in the post-1996 welfare reform era, with the decline having begun in the years just prior to the passage and subsequent implementation of reform. **Figure 12** shows recipiency rates among female-headed families with children with *earnings* below their families' poverty thresholds for six income "safety-net" program categories: AFDC, TANF, or General Assistance (GA); Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Unemployment Insurance Benefits; Food Stamp/SNAP benefits; the EITC; and the refundable portion of the Child Tax Credit, the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC). The analysis is restricted to *"earnings poor"* families, as earnings are the primary means by which most families with working-age members support themselves. Earnings (along with other income) deemed insufficient to provide for a family's basic needs (i.e., poverty level income) and the reasons associated with insufficient earnings (or other income) are often used in determining eligibility for need-tested and other programs.

Over the 27-year period examined, there has been a marked change in the provision of benefits among the six programs, reflecting a structural change in aspects of the "income safety net." It is important to note that the "official" U.S. poverty measure does not include in-kind benefits, such as Food Stamp/SNAP benefits, nor does it include tax transfers, in the form of the EITC or ACTC, or taxes paid (e.g., federal and state income taxes, FICA payroll taxes). Among the six program categories examined, only AFDC/TANF/GA, SSI, and UI are included in the "official" poverty measure. As will be shown later, this has important implications for how one assesses the role of income support policies, especially in the post-1996 welfare reform era and over the course of the most recent recession and recovery.

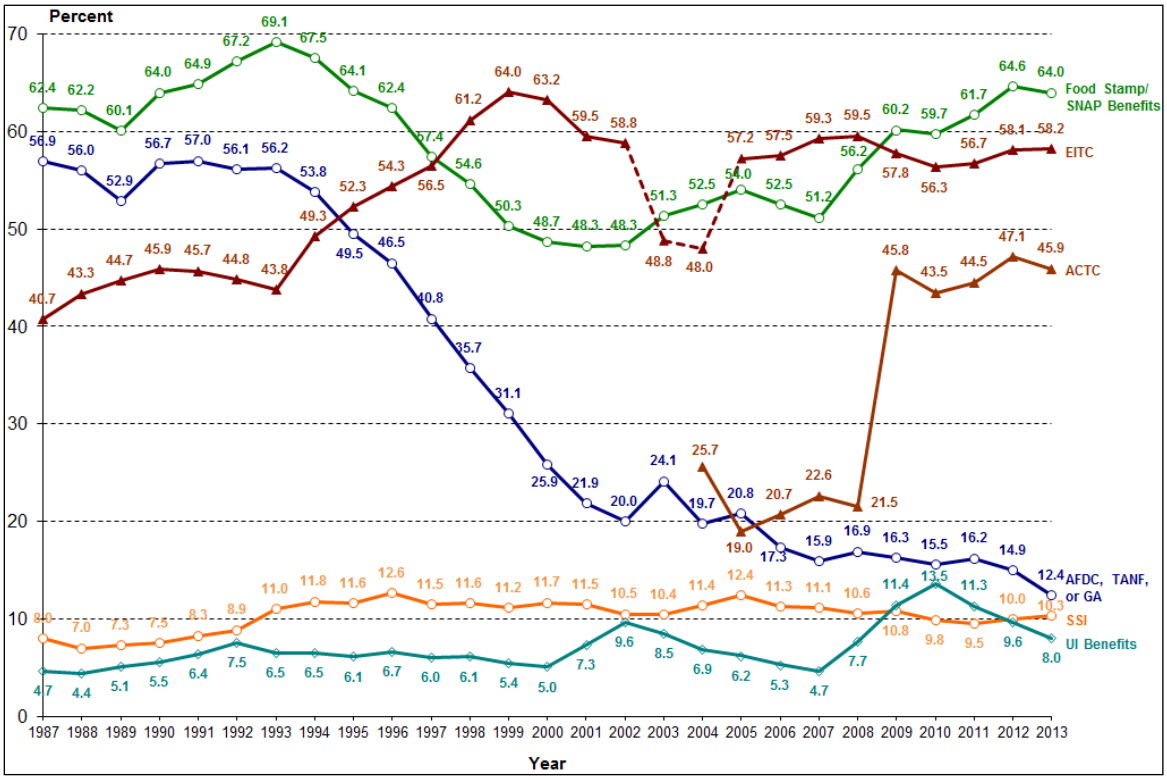
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Figure 12 shows a substantial increase in EITC from 1993 to 1999, as mothers with comparatively low earnings prospects turned away from cash public assistance toward work. In 1993, about 44% of "earnings poor" female-headed families with children were estimated to have received the EITC; by 1999, 64% of such families were estimated to have received it. In contrast, over the same period, cash welfare receipt in the form of AFDC, TANF, or GA fell from about 56% to 31%. EITC benefit increases that phased in between 1993 and 1996 may have served to lure some single mothers away from welfare, in part evidenced by increased work seen earlier in **Figure 9**. Additionally, states' use of AFDC waivers to strengthen work requirements and sanctions for noncompliance in the pre-welfare reform years may have served to increase work participation and consequent EITC receipt. TANF's provisions further encouraged work and accompanying EITC eligibility over welfare. *The figure shows a marked decrease in estimated EITC receipt in 2003 and 2004, and then a rebound in 2005—these years are marked by a dashed-line; caution should be exercised in attempting to interpret this phenomena, as it appears to be an aberration that is not readily explainable.*[44]

[43] See **Appendix B** on CPS under-reporting.

[44] Email exchanges with Census Bureau contacts, relaying the author's findings, have not resulted in an attributable

Figure 12. Receipt of Selected Benefits by "Earnings Poor" Female-Headed Families with Children, 1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-10** for supporting data.

Notes: "Earnings poor" families are those whose annual earned income is below their poverty income threshold. Other sources of income received by these families might subsequently lift their total income above poverty.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Receipt of SSI among families headed by single mothers increased over the first half of the 1990s, as shown in **Figure 12**. In 1988, 7% of "earnings poor" families headed by single mothers reported receiving SSI; by 1996, 12.6% of such families were reporting SSI receipt. The populations served by AFDC and SSI overlap somewhat. Some persons may be eligible for both programs, but individuals cannot receive benefits under both, although families can.[45] In contrast to AFDC and TANF, individuals applying for SSI must pass an often strict and lengthy disability

explanation for the sudden dip and recovery of EITC receipt among this subgroup of the population. EITC receipt is not directly reported on the CPS/ASEC. The Census Bureau estimates the EITC and other tax variables on the CPS/ASEC using a tax model. Beginning with the 2004 CPS, the Census Bureau implemented a new tax model, providing new tax estimates for income year 2003. It's uncertain whether model changes may have contributed the sudden aberration in trend of estimated EITC receipt.

[45] For example, a disabled child might qualify for SSI, while the parent could potentially qualify for AFDC, or vice versa if the parent were disabled. For a discussion, see David C. Stapleton, David C. Wittenburg, and Michael E. Fishman, et al., "Transitions from AFDC to SSI Before Welfare Reform," *Social Security Bulletin*, vol. 64, no. 1 (2001), pp. 84-114.

determination process in order to qualify. SSI benefits are higher than those available under AFDC and TANF. Additionally, SSI benefits are fully federally funded, though some states provide supplementary benefits on top of the federal SSI benefit. In contrast, AFDC benefits were jointly funded by states and the federal government, through federal matching dollars and under TANF through a fixed-dollar federal block grant. As such, if all other things were equal, both individuals and states would do better financially by shifting persons potentially eligible for TANF to SSI, assuming the person was unlikely to be able to become gainfully employed. Several administrative changes to SSI made it easier for children to be ruled eligible for the program during the early 1990s,[46] which could have contributed to increased SSI receipt among families, including those headed by single mothers.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefits

Receipt of Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits among families headed by "earnings poor" single mothers has risen concurrent and consequent to the three economic recessions that occurred over the 27-year period examined (**Figure 12**). With each recession, UI receipt among these families has increased over that of the previous recession. For example, in the aftermath of the 1990-1991 recession, 7.5% of all "earnings poor" single mother families reported UI receipt in 1992; following the 2000 recession, 9.6% reported UI receipt in 2002; and in the most recent recession, 11.4% reported UI receipt. The higher incidence of UI receipt in 2002 than in 1992 most probably reflects a higher incidence of UI eligibility in the more recent period, due to increased employment of single mothers, as the two recessions were of equal length, and the unemployment rate among women maintaining families was slightly lower in 2002 than in 1992 (see **Figure 10**, shown earlier). UI receipt increased markedly after 2007, consequent to the recession. In 2007, 4.7% of "earnings poor" single mothers reported receiving UI benefits; by 2010, the share had increased by nearly three times, with 13.5% reporting UI receipt. The unemployment rate among earnings-poor single mothers has since dropped to 8.0%, in 2013. The higher incidence of UI receipt among these mothers consequent to the most recent recession reflects both the severity of the recession and congressional response to it, whereby the duration for which the unemployed may receive UI benefits had been extended through the end of 2013.[47] Increased employment among single mothers subsequent to 1996 welfare reform likely led to more mothers being covered in UI in the most recent recession than in previous ones.

Food Stamp/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits

Food Stamp/SNAP benefit receipt is depicted by the green line in **Figure 12**. The figure shows that Food Stamp/SNAP receipt reached a historical peak among "earnings poor" single mother families in 1993 (69.3%), subsequent to the 1990-1991 recession. Food Stamp receipt for this group of families reached an historical low in 2002, with 48.3% reporting benefit receipt. The comparatively low rate of Food Stamp receipt in 2002, compared to earlier periods, may in part be attributable to the decline of such families on AFDC/TANF, as persons who enrolled in those programs were generally enrolled in Food Stamps automatically through administrative processes. The figure shows a modest rise in Food Stamp receipt from 2002 to 2005, subsequent to the 2000 recession, and a more substantial rise from 2007 to 2009, consequent to the most recent recession. Still, the SNAP benefit receipt rate among the depicted families in 2009 (60.2%)

[46] Ibid., p. 86.

[47] For further discussion, see CRS Report RL34340, *Extending Unemployment Compensation Benefits During Recessions*, by Julie M. Whittaker and Katelin P. Isaacs.

was nearly identical to that of Food Stamps in 1989 even though economic conditions in 2009 were much worse. By 2013, 64.0% of "earnings poor" single-mother families received SNAP benefits—12.8 percentage points above its pre-recession low (51.2% in 2007).

Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC)

Finally, the figure shows estimated receipt of the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) among depicted families.[48] Census Bureau estimates of ACTC receipt on the CPS are first available in 2004. As discussed earlier (in "Tax Rebates, Reductions, and Credits"), the Emergency and Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (EESA; P.L. 110-343) temporarily lowered the income threshold for receipt of the ACTC in tax year 2008. There appears to be no discernible effect of the provision from 2007 to 2008 in the CPS/ASEC estimates for depicted families. However, the figure shows that estimated ACTC receipt more than doubled from 2008 (21.5%) to 2009 (45.8%). This large increase in ACTC eligibility reflects changes in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA; P.L. 111-5), which lowered the ACTC income threshold to $3,000, first taking effect in 2009. In 2013, estimated receipt of ACTC by "earnings poor" single-mother families, at 45.9%, remained well above its pre-ARRA level.

As shown earlier in **Figure 6**, single mothers' poverty status has improved since 1993. Changes in the economy and changes in welfare policy and other programs, such as the EITC, have both direct and indirect effects on income and poverty. However, the official U.S. poverty measure counts only family pre-tax cash income (excluding capital gains and lump sum or one-time payments) against families' poverty thresholds (which vary by family size and composition) to determine whether a family is counted as poor. The "official" U.S. poverty definition does not include the value of in-kind benefits, such as Food Stamp/SNAP benefits, or public housing subsidies, nor does it include the effects of taxes or tax credits such as the EITC and the ACTC. Inclusion of in-kind benefits and refundable tax credits, net of taxes families pay, provides a more comprehensive income definition than the official poverty income definition. Failing to include them can have important implications for how one assesses the role of income support policies, especially in the post-1996 welfare reform era and over the course of the most recent recession and recovery. Additionally, other unrelated household members may contribute to the family's economic well-being, but determining the extent to which resources are shared among unrelated household members is difficult.

Anti-Poverty Effects of Cash Income, Taxes, and Transfers on Poverty—Female-Headed Families with Children

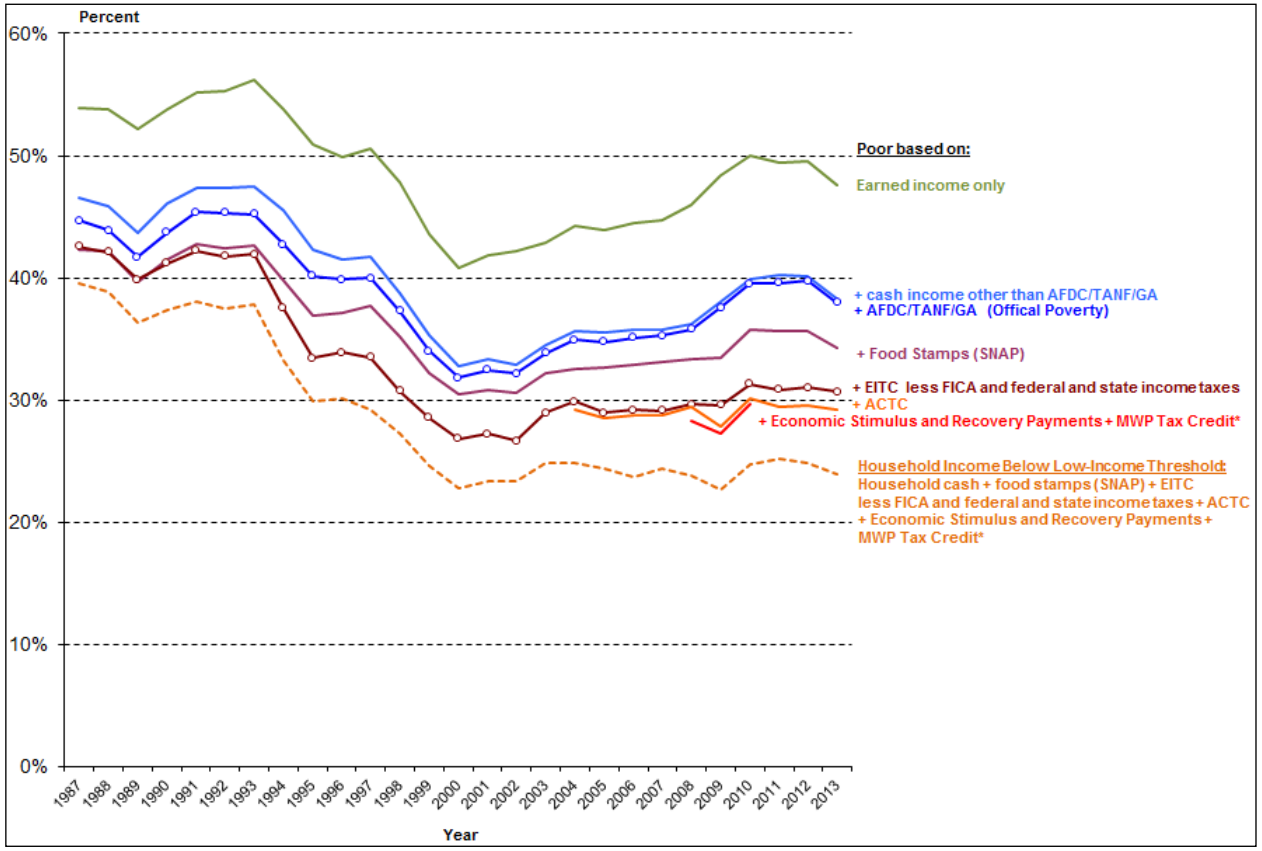
Figure 13 shows the marginal effects of income from a number of sources on poverty. Components of family income are sequentially added and measured against families' poverty thresholds, as one moves from the top line of the chart to subsequent lines below.[49] Starting with the top line, the effect on poverty of family earnings alone is depicted. Poverty measures based on earned income alone give an indication of the labor market's effect on poverty, in the context of other sources of income individuals, families, and households might receive. Moving to the second line down, the effect of earnings plus all other cash income other than cash welfare

[48] As with the EITC, ACTC estimates are Census Bureau model-based estimates.

[49] The order in which income components are added can influence the measured marginal effect of each.

(AFDC, TANF, or state General Assistance) is shown. Adding cash welfare, the third line down, to those income sources shown above, completes the accounting of pre-tax cash income that is used under the "official" U.S. poverty definition.

Figure 13. Effects of Earnings, Transfers, and Taxes on Family Poverty and Household Low-Income Status of Single Mothers, 1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-11** for supporting data.

* Census Bureau estimates of Economic Stimulus Payments received in 2008, Economic Recovery Payments received in 2009, and Making Work Pay (MWP) tax credits received in 2009 and 2010.

Addition of Income from Sources Not Included in the "Official" U.S. Poverty Measure

As noted above, the "official" U.S. poverty definition is based on families' pre-tax cash income. It excludes a number of benefits families receive, such as Food Stamp/SNAP benefits, and refundable tax credits, such as the EITC and ACTC, and it does not take into account taxes families might pay in the form of federal payroll (FICA) taxes and federal and state income taxes. In this section, some of the weaknesses of the current "official" poverty measure are addressed, by sequentially adding a number of other income sources to, and subtracting selected taxes from, cash income to develop a more comprehensive income measure for assessing poverty than that offered by the "official" poverty income measure. For example, the market value of Food Stamp/SNAP benefits is added to pre-tax cash income, to assess their antipoverty effects. Next, the EITC is added in, net of any FICA, federal, and state income taxes (including state refundable tax credits). The poverty reducing effect of the ACTC is then assessed, followed by economic stimulus and recovery payments families may have received in 2008 and 2009, respectively, and the Making Work Pay (MWP) tax credit in 2009 and 2010.

> A cautionary note is in order with regards to assessing the effects tax credits such as the EITC and ACTC have on family income and poverty. The effects of the credits shown in the CPS/ASEC are estimates of the amount of the EITC and/or ACTC benefits families would have been eligible to receive based on their calendar year (i.e., tax year) income. However, while the tax credits' effects are shown for the depicted year in which the credits are earned, families would not actually receive the credits until early in the following year, after filing their federal income tax forms.

Finally, the bottom-most line of **Figure 13** shows the effects of counting all income in the household in which the single mother lives, not just that of her related family members, and compares it to "household low-income thresholds." The household low-income thresholds used here are scaled the same way as Census Bureau family income poverty thresholds, but are based on household (rather than family) size and composition. It is important to note that official poverty measurement is based on a family concept, which assumes that family members share income and economies of scale that result from shared living arrangements. It is generally agreed among researchers that assumptions regarding income sharing and shared economies of scale among related family members, who have ties based on blood, marriage, and adoption, do not apply to the same extent among unrelated household members. Consequently, these estimates of household low-income status likely overstate the effect of household income on reducing poverty among families headed by single mothers.

Effect of Earnings and Other Non-welfare Cash Income on Poverty

Figure 13 shows that between 1993 and 2000, single mothers' poverty, based on family earnings alone (*top line*), fell from 56.2% to 40.8%, reaching a historical low for the 27-year period. Their "earned-income poverty rate" rose consequent to two recessions, reaching 44.3% in 2004, and rose again from 44.7% in 2007 to 50.1% in 2010. Adding other cash income, except cash welfare (*second line down*), to family earnings reduces poverty in 1993 from 56.2% (*top line*) to 47.4% (*line 2*), and in 2013 from 47.6% to 38.3%.

Effect of Cash Welfare on Poverty

Cash welfare benefits have only a small impact on the poverty rate, as these benefits generally are not sufficient, even when combined with other cash income, to lift families above the federal poverty threshold. In the vast majority of states, the level of earnings or other cash income at which states' cash welfare benefits under AFDC/TANF become unavailable for a family are well below the poverty line. For example, in July 2013, in only six states could a single mother with two children have earnings at or above the poverty line and still continue to receive TANF cash assistance after one year of benefit receipt.[50] Consequently, cash welfare benefits have little impact on the poverty rate. The addition of cash welfare (*line 3*, representing the official income definition for measuring poverty) reduces poverty only slightly: from 47.4% (*line 2*) to 45.2% (*line 3*) in 1993, and from 38.3% to 38.0% in 2013. Nonetheless, cash welfare benefits can have a significant impact on the level of poor families' incomes, affecting the degree to which their incomes fall below the poverty income standard. This impact is not captured by changes in the poverty rate as shown in **Figure 13**.

The Invisible Safety Net—Effect on Poverty of Counting Selected Income Sources Not Included in the "Official" Poverty Measure

As noted above, the "official" U.S. poverty measure counts only families' pre-tax cash income for purposes of poverty determination. Inclusion of selected benefits, such as food assistance (in the form of Food Stamp/SNAP benefits), the refundable EITC, and the partially refundable ACTC, allows for a more comprehensive assessment of the role of government policy in addressing vulnerable families' income needs.

Effect of Food Stamp/SNAP Benefits on Poverty

SNAP benefits played a substantively larger role in reducing poverty among single mothers and their families in the wake of the recent recession, than in any previous period. The fourth line from the top in **Figure 13** shows the effect on the poverty rate of single mothers by counting the value of Food Stamp/SNAP benefits. The line shows that Food Stamps/SNAP reduced the poverty rate of single mothers by about 2 to 3 percentage points over most of the period (compare the reduction in poverty from *line 3* to *line 4*). In 2009, SNAP benefits nearly offset the rise in pre-tax cash income poverty (i.e., the "official" poverty measure) from 2008. Whereas on a pre-tax cash-only basis, poverty among single mothers and their families increased from 33.8% in 2008 to 37.6% in 2009 (*line 3*), SNAP benefits, when added to cash income, caused the poverty rate of single mothers to remain essentially level over the two years (33.% in 2008, and 33.5% in 2009). In 2010, SNAP benefits continued to play an important role in reducing poverty among single mothers and their families, reducing poverty from 39.5% under the "official" measure to 35.8% when SNAP benefits are added to family cash income. However, unlike 2009, SNAP benefits in 2010 and 2011 did little to alter the trend toward increased poverty being driven by unemployment's effect on earned-income poverty (*top line).* After counting SNAP benefits, the poverty rate among single mothers increased from 33.5% to 35.8% from 2009 to 2010, where it

[50] Alaska, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Minnesota, and Virginia. See. Erika Huber, David Kassabian, and Elissa Cohen, Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2013, The Urban Institute, Washington, DC, September 2014, Table IV.A.6, Maximum Income for Ongoing Eligibility for a Family of Three, July 2013, pp. 176-177 http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/413208-Welfare-Rules-Databook.pdf.

essentially remained unchanged for the next two years. In 2013, single mothers' post-SNAP benefit poverty rate fell to 34.3%,

The increased role of SNAP benefits in addressing the rising cash income deficiency of single mothers in the wake of the recent recession reflects not only an increase in the take-up rate of SNAP benefits by low-income families headed by single mothers, seen earlier in **Figure 12**, but also the legislatively enacted increase of SNAP benefit payments to needy households under ARRA. As noted earlier (in "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamp) Benefits"), ARRA SNAP provisions resulted in an average 15% increase in monthly SNAP benefits going into effect in April 2009 and remaining in place through October 2013.

Net Effect of the EITC on Poverty

The EITC has had a comparatively large poverty-reducing effect on single mothers and their families since legislative expansions to the credit from 1993 took effect. The poverty reducing effect of the EITC[51] is shown net of FICA, federal, and state income taxes (including refundable state tax credits) (*line 5*), when added to family cash income and Food Stamp/SNAP benefits (*line 4*). As discussed earlier (in "EITC Expansions—"Making Work Pay""), a major expansion of the EITC, passed by Congress in 1993 and phased in between 1994 and 1996, increased the amount of the EITC work bonus families might receive. The anti-poverty effectiveness of the EITC net of taxes was nearly six times greater in 2013 than in 1993.[52] As receipt of the EITC is conditioned on earnings, the growing impact of the EITC in part reflects the rise in work rates among single mothers. Among those who are working and poor (before counting the EITC), the EITC helps lift the income of some above the poverty line. Although the EITC expansion provided additional income to low-income families who were already working, it may also have helped induce increased employment among family heads with low to moderate earnings potential, and thus contributed to the lower levels of poverty based on earned income alone that have been evidenced since 1993 (shown as the top line in the chart).

Note, too, that to the extent that changes in cash welfare programs in recent years have encouraged work (such as work requirements and increased earnings disregards), these changes may have had a direct effect on poverty by increasing the incidence of work (earnings), which in turn resulted in expanded EITC receipt among single mothers.

Effect of the ACTC on Poverty

The Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC; the refundable portion of the Child Tax Credit) can provide a refund to tax filers with one or more qualified children, even if they have no federal income tax liability. Overall, tax filers may receive a Child Tax Credit (CTC) up to $1,000 per qualifying child. If the CTC is greater than the amount of income tax owed, the tax filer may be eligible to claim the ACTC. As noted earlier (in "Tax Rebates, Reductions, and Credits"), The Emergency and Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (EESA; P.L. 110-343) reduced the ACTC's refundable income limit from $12,050 to $8,500 for 2008. ARRA (P.L. 111-5) further reduced the credit's refundable income limit from a scheduled $12,550 in 2009 to $3,000 for 2009 and 2010, and P.L. 111-312, extended the ACTC's reduced refundable income limit for another two years,

[51] Note that the value of the EITC on the CPS is based on Census Bureau imputations, rather than actual reported tax credits. Also, the EITC is different from most sources of income, as most families receive the EITC as a lump sum refund at the beginning of year following that in which income used in determining the credit was earned.

[52] In 1993, the after-tax poverty rate (counting Food Stamps/SNAP) among single mothers dropped from 42.7% (line 4) to 41.9% (line 5), a 0.8 percentage point (1.8%) reduction. In 2013, the EITC reduced poverty from 34.3% to 30.7%, a 3.6 percentage point (10.5%) reduction.

through 2011. (As noted earlier, the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 extends these provisions through 2017.)

As shown above (**Figure 13**), the lowered ACTC refundable income limit for 2009 through 2013 reduced the poverty rate of single mothers and their families by 1.7 percentage points in 2009, 1.1 percentage points in 2010, 1.3 percentage points in 2011, 1.4 percentage points in 2012, and 1.5 percentage points in 2013 (*6th, compared to 5th, line down*). Prior to the legislative changes discussed above, most poor families were beyond the credit's reach.

Effect of Federal Economic Stimulus and Recovery Payments and Making Work Pay Tax Credits on Poverty

In addition to the changes to the EITC and ACTC made as part of legislative action to stimulate the economy, the Census Bureau provides estimates of economic stimulus payments families may have received in 2008, and economic recovery payments in 2009, and MWP tax credits in 2009 and 2010 (see earlier discussion in "Tax Rebates, Reductions, and Credits"). The effects of economic stimulus and economic recovery payments and MWP tax credits on single mothers' poverty status for 2008 through 2010 are shown together on *line 6* above (**Figure 13**). Economic stimulus/recovery payments and MWP tax credits reduced the poverty rate among single mothers by 1.1 percentage points in 2008, and by 0.6 percentage points in 2009 and 2010.

Effect of Unrelated Household Members' Income on Poverty

The household low-income line (*bottom line*, **Figure 13**) shows that if all household members' income is counted, as though shared equally among household members, the poverty rate among single mothers would drop by at most 3 to 5 percentage points over the 1987 to 2013 period. Using the household, as opposed to the family, as the economic unit for determining poverty reduces the post in-kind transfer, post-tax poverty rate in 2013 from 29.2% to 24.0%. Again, this is most likely an overstatement of the possible effect that shared household living arrangements might have on single mothers' poverty status because of the uncertainty about the extent to which such income is actually shared.

Comparison of the Effects of Earnings, Transfers, and Taxes on Poverty, by Single Mothers' Work Status

The analysis above examines the effects of earning, transfers, taxes, and other income on families headed by single mothers. Here, the effects are broken out by whether or not mothers worked at any time during the year. There is a stark contrast in the incidence of poverty among single mothers who worked at any time during a year, and those who did not. Moreover, selected income "safety-net" programs have quite different effects in reducing poverty among the two groups, as shown in **Figure 14** and **Figure 15**, respectively. The figures show, for example, *that mothers who worked* at any time during the year were less likely to be poor based on their *earnings alone* than *mothers who did not work* based on *total household income*.

In comparing across the two figures, it should be noted that the scale shown in **Figure 14** ranges from 0% to 50%, while that of **Figure 15** ranges from 50% to 100%, as if it were stacked above in **Figure 14** (i.e., the two figures' scales are the same with regard to relative range of their vertical axes, but the levels at which those axes start differ).

Several observations follow.

Single Mothers Who Worked During the Year—Figure 14

Effects of Selected Cash Income Sources on Poverty

- Among single mothers who worked during the year, their incidence of poverty based on earned income alone was at a low in 2000, and has increased markedly since 2005 (*top line*).
- Cash income from sources other than UI and cash welfare (*second line down*) has had a relatively consistent effect of reducing their poverty rate from that measured by earnings alone, ranging from 6 to 8 percentage points over the 27-year period.
- In correspondence with the past recession, UI benefits in 2009 through 2012 reduced their poverty rate by about 1 percentage point, which was about the same as in 2002, the previous peak year of UI poverty reduction which also corresponded with a recession.
- Adding in SSI benefits has little effect on poverty reduction among this group, largely by virtue that mothers worked during the year, and were consequently unlikely to have had an SSI qualifying disability (although other members of their family might).
- AFDC, TANF, and GA have very little impact on poverty reduction among single mothers who worked in recent years, but had more measurable effects in the first part of the 27-year period, when poor mothers were more likely to combine work with welfare (refer back to **Figure 11**).

Based on the "official" poverty measure, which takes into account most sources of pre-tax cash income families receive, the poverty rate among single mothers in 2013 was 3.9 percentage points higher than in 2001—a historical low for the period.

Effects on Poverty of Selected Income Sources Not Included in the "Official" Poverty Measure

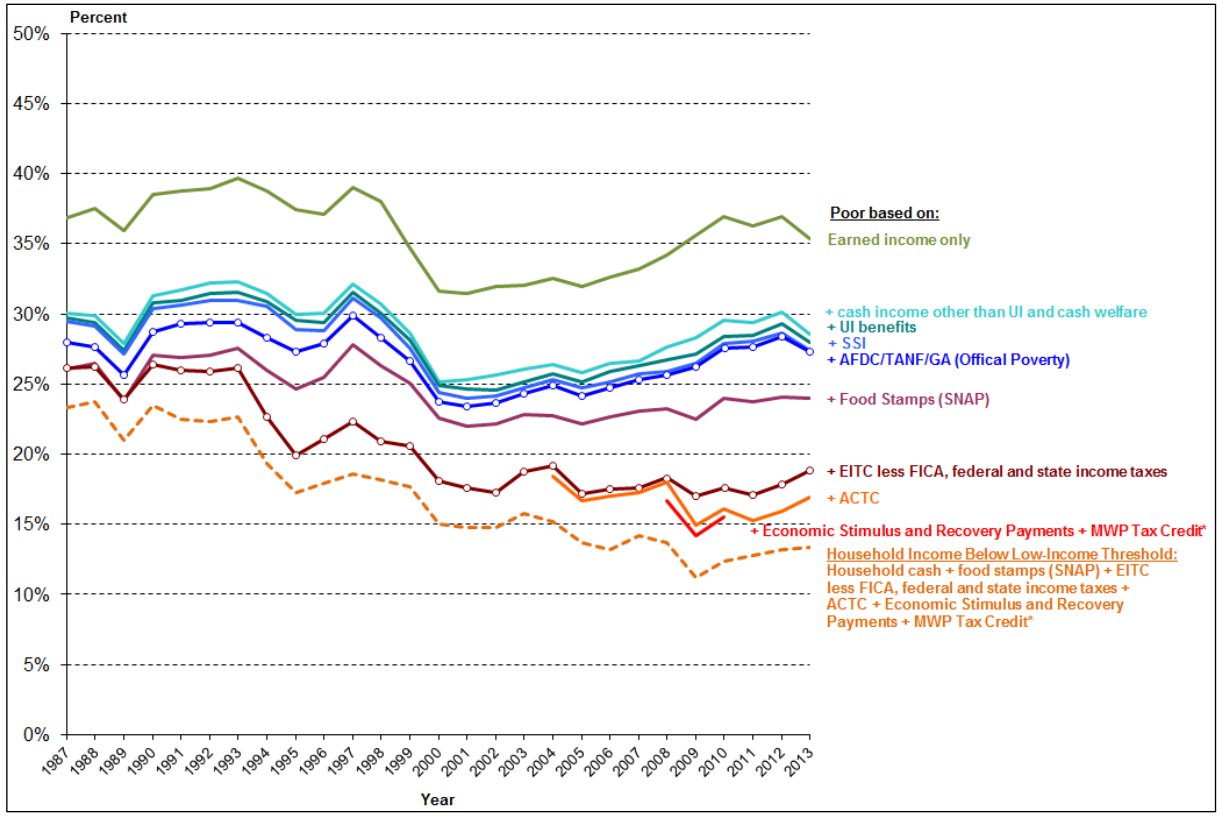
- Food Stamp and SNAP benefit receipt have had a sizeable effect on poverty reduction, reducing the poverty rate among working single mothers by 3.3 percentage points in 2013.
- The EITC (net of FICA and federal and state income taxes) has contributed to substantial reductions in poverty among working single mothers, especially after 1993 legislated expansions to the credit began taking effect. In 2013, net EITC among working single mothers reduced their post SNAP benefit poverty rate by 5.2 percentage points, from 24.0% to 18.8%.
- ARRA's reduction of the ACTC's refundable income limit to $3,000, effective in 2009, is readily apparent by the substantially larger decrease in poverty resulting from the credit, than in earlier years. After including the ACTC, the incidence of poverty among single mothers with any work during the year reached a historical low in 2009 (14.9%). In 2009, the ACTC accounted for an additional 2.1 percentage point reduction in poverty beyond that of the post-EITC poverty level in 2009, compared to a 0.3 percentage point reduction in 2008, before the

reduction in the credit's refundable income limit. In 2013, the post-ACTC poverty rate was 16.9%—2 percentage points above its 2009 historical low.

- Economic Stimulus payments received in 2008, reduced poverty among single mothers who worked during the year by 1.3 percentage points. Combined Economic Recovery Payments and Making Work Pay (MWP) tax credits helped reduce poverty among working single mothers by 0.7 percentage points in 2009, and in 2010, the MWP tax credit reduced poverty among this group by 0.6 percentage points.
- If the income of all unrelated household members is included as income, the poverty rate among working single mothers is estimated at 13.3% in 2013, which compares to an "official" poverty rate of 27.3%.

Note that working mothers could also incur work-related expenses (e.g., child care, transportation, uniforms) that are not accounted for here. Inclusion of such expenses, if available, would result in somewhat higher poverty rates than those shown here.

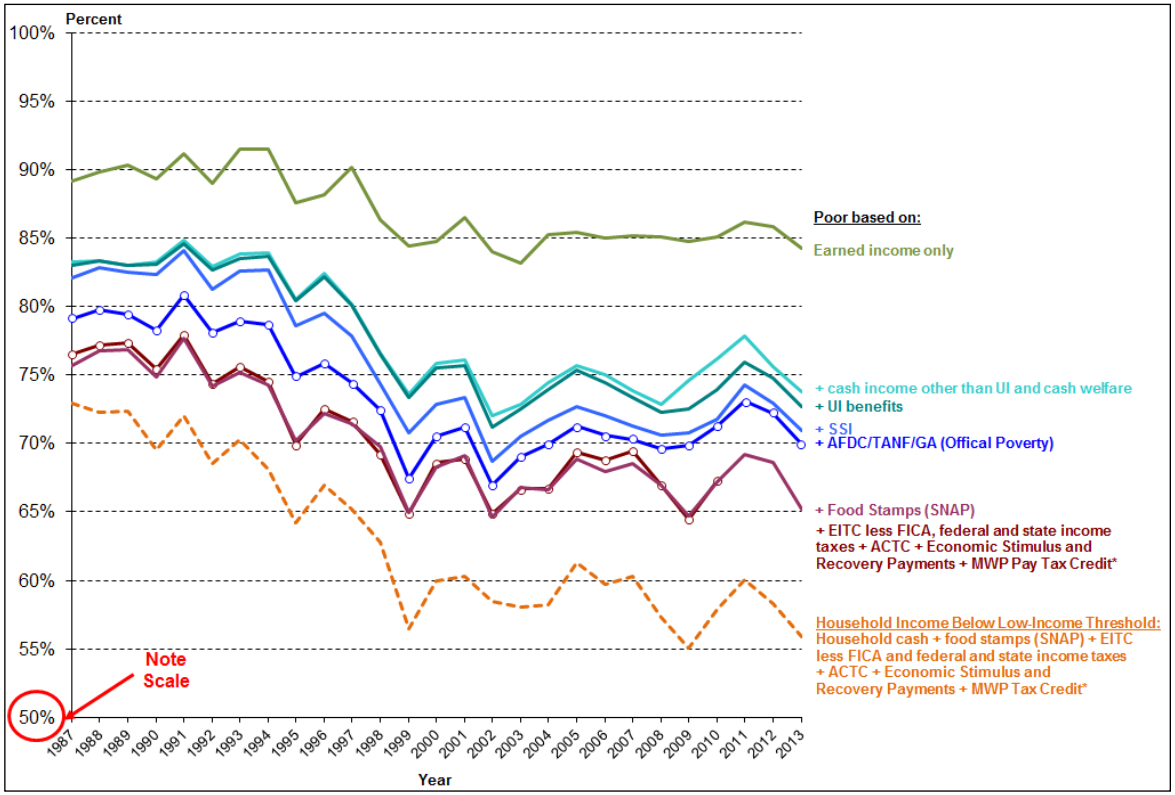
Figure 14. Single Mothers Who Worked at Any Time During the Year: Effects of Earnings, Transfers, and Taxes on Family Poverty and Household Low-Income Status, 1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-12** for supporting data.

* Census Bureau estimates of Economic Stimulus Payments received in 2008, Economic Recovery Payments received in 2009, and Making Work Pay (MWP) tax credits received in 2009 and 2010.

Figure 15. Single Mothers Who Did Not Work During the Year: Effects of Earnings, Transfers, and Taxes on Family Poverty and Household Low-Income Status, 1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-13** for supporting data.

* Census Bureau estimates of Economic Stimulus Payments received in 2008, Economic Recovery Payments received in 2009, and Making Work Pay (MWP) tax credits received in 2009 and 2010.

Single Mothers Who Did Not Work During the Year—Figure 15

As a precautionary reminder, the reader should note that the origin of the vertical axis begins at a poverty rate of 50%.

Effects of Selected Cash Income Sources on Poverty

- The top-most line indicates that even though single mothers themselves did not work during the year, and thus had no earnings, other related family members may have worked, accounting for an "earnings-only" poverty level around 90% in the pre-welfare reform era (1996 and earlier), and around 85% since 2000.
- The next line down, which includes most all other sources of income other than UI benefits and cash welfare, shows a somewhat greater reduction in poverty in the TANF era (about 10 percentage points), than in the pre-welfare reform era (about 5 percentage points). In part, this may be due to a somewhat greater tendency of nonworking single mothers to be living in "extended" families (i.e., living with family members other than just their children) in the post-welfare reform era, than before. For example, in 1996, 24% of nonworking single mothers lived in extended family settings, but by 2000, 33% were living in such settings.[53]
- The figure shows UI benefits, when added to earnings and other cash income from the line above, accounted for a 2 percentage point reduction in poverty over the 2009-2011 period—over twice the effect in 2002, the previous peak year of UI poverty reduction for this group.
- Comparing the relative effects of SSI and TANF/AFDC/GA on poverty over the period, SSI has assumed a greater role in poverty reduction among nonworking single mothers in the TANF era, than in the pre-TANF era, and the role of TANF in reducing poverty among this group is substantially less than what it was under AFDC.
- Examining just the trend in "official" poverty among nonworking single mothers, their poverty rate in the post-welfare reform era has averaged 8 percentage points below what it was under AFDC. In 2002, which marked a historical low poverty rate for this group, their poverty rate (66.9%) was nearly 14 percentage points below their peak rate of 80.8% in 1991. In 2013, 70.0% of nonworking single mothers were poor—still well below their pre-welfare reform levels.

Effects on Poverty of Selected Income Sources Not Included in the "Official" Poverty Measure

- Food Stamp/SNAP benefits appear to have had a somewhat smaller effect on poverty reduction among nonworking single mothers in the post-welfare reform era (2.9 percentage point reduction, on average) than earlier (about 3.6 percentage point reduction, on average, in the pre-welfare reform era). However,

[53] CRS estimates from the CPS/ASEC. About 25% of nonworking single mothers, on average, lived in extended families in the pre-TANF era (1987-1996), compared to about 28% in the TANF era.

in 2009, reflecting ARRA's SNAP benefit provisions, discussed earlier ("Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamp) Benefits"), SNAP benefits reduced poverty for this group from the "official" poverty rate of 69.9%, to 64.7%, a 5.2 percentage point reduction; in 2010, SNAP reduced poverty among this group by 4.1 percentage points, by 3.9 percentage points in 2011, 3.6 percentage points in 2012, and 4.8 percentage points in 2013, the last year in which the ARRA SNAP benefit expansions were in effect.[54]

- In that these mothers did not work during the year, the figure shows refundable and partially refundable tax provisions have had very little measurable effect on poverty reduction for this group; nor did economic stimulus or recovery payments. In fact, the after-tax poverty line is at times above the Food Stamp/SNAP line, indicating that some poor families had members with a tax liability, net of any credits.

If the income of all unrelated household members is included as income, the poverty rate among nonworking single mothers is estimated at 66.1% in 2013. Counting unrelated household members' income reduced poverty among nonworking single mothers by 10.2 percentage points in 2013, compared to 3.6 percentage points in 1987. This largely reflects what has been a growing tendency of nonworking single mothers to be living with other unrelated household members. In 2013, for example, 21% of nonworking single mothers were living with other unrelated family members, of which nearly nine out of ten were designated as "cohabiting partners" (see **Table C-14**). In comparison, about 9% of nonworking single mothers lived with unrelated family members in 1987.[55]

Trend in Poverty among Children in Female-Headed Families under Selected Income Measures

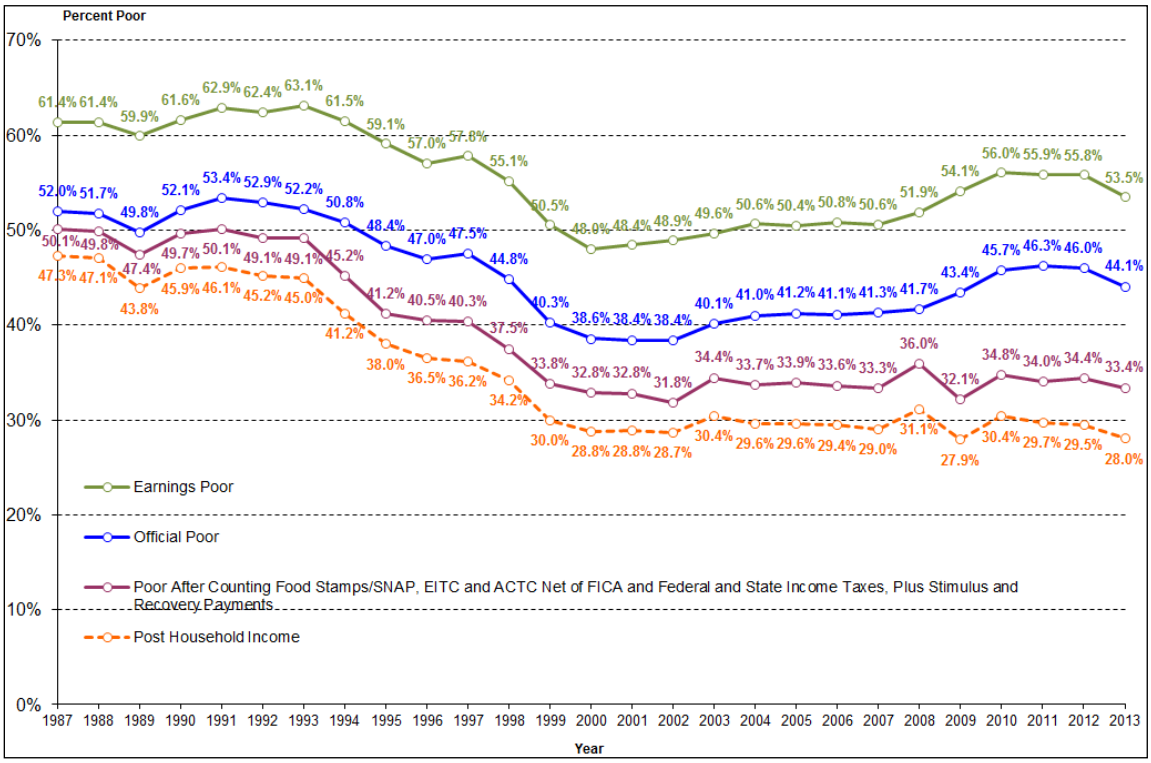
Figure 16 depicts the trend in poverty among children in female-headed families under four of the selected income measures applied to single mothers, above—earnings only poverty, pre-tax cash income poverty (the official poverty measure), post-tax and Food Stamp/SNAP benefit poverty, and total household post-tax post-transfer income poverty. The figure shows, for example, that the official poverty rate among children in female-headed families increased from 41.3% in 2007 to 46.3% in 2010—a 5.2 percentage point increase, commensurate with a 5.3 percentage point increase in "earnings only" poverty over the period resulting from the recession. In contrast, under a more comprehensive income definition that includes tax credits net of payroll taxes and Food Stamp/SNAP benefits (the third line down), their poverty rate over the same period rose by just under one percentage point, from 33.3% in 2007 to 29.7% in 2010. The official poverty rate among children in female-headed families fell to 44.1% in 2013, but remains 5.7 percentage points above its historical low of 38.4% in 2001. In contrast, under a more comprehensive accounting of income that includes the effects of tax credits net of payroll taxes and SNAP benefits, the corresponding child poverty rate in 2013 was 33.4%, compared to an official rate of 44.1%, and was only 1.6 percentage points above its historical low of 31.8% in

[54] The ARRA SNAP benefit expansion reverted to pre-ARRA levels November 1, 2013.

[55] CRS estimates from the CPS/ASEC. Beginning with the 2007 CPS/ASEC cohabiting couples are identifiable based on self-report. In earlier years, cohabiting couples are identifiable indirectly by inference. The method used here, for CPS/ASEC years before 2007 is based on households with two unmarried adults, who are unrelated and of the opposite sex, and no other adults reside in the household.

2002. When all household income is included (the bottom-most line), the child poverty rate was estimated at 28.0%—essentially at a statistically tied historical low.

Figure 16. Poverty Among Children in Female-Headed Families Under Alternative Measures, 1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-16** for supporting data.

Discussion/Conclusion

CRS analysis of 27 years of U.S. Census Bureau data presented in this report shows a dramatic transformation in single mothers' welfare, work, and poverty status over the period. The period has seen a marked *structural change* in the provision of benefits under a number of programs that contribute to the fabric of the nation's "income safety net." In turn, single mothers' *behavior has changed* markedly over the period, with more mothers working, and fewer relying on cash welfare to support themselves and their children, in part in response to structural changes to income "safety-net" programs.

Progress towards achieving the often elusive and conflicting dual goals of reducing child poverty and cash welfare dependency is only partially apparent under the official U.S. poverty measure, but much more so under an alternative, more comprehensive income measure.

Poverty under the official U.S. poverty measure, which is based on pre-tax cash income, shows that since 2000, which marked a historical low, the poverty rate among single mothers increased in step with two recessions. By 2010, the official poverty rate for single mothers had reached a post-2000 high, and remained at that level through 2012, before falling somewhat in 2013. In

2013, the official poverty level was still below pre-1996 welfare reform levels, despite two recessions since 1996.

Using a more comprehensive income definition than that used by the official poverty measure indicates that poverty among single mothers and their children in 2009, rather than having increased since 2000, was at or near a 27-year low when Food Stamp/SNAP benefits and work-related refundable tax credits are taken into account. In particular, congressional action in response to the recession, which increased SNAP benefits and extended the reach of refundable tax credits, contributed to a decline in poverty among single mothers and their children in the midst of the recession. (See **Figure 13** and **Figure 16**, for example).

The Invisible Safety-Net—Benefits not Officially Counted Toward Poverty Reduction

While the provision of cash welfare has fallen dramatically under TANF, poor and lower-income families with earnings are more likely to receive assistance in the form of supplemental nutrition assistance, or refundable income credits administered through federal and state tax systems. Neither in-kind benefits, such as those provided through Food Stamps/SNAP, nor refundable credits, such as the EITC, or partially refundable ACTC, are counted as income under the official U.S. poverty measure, yet these three programs are among the 10 largest, in terms of federal spending for people with low income.[56] Clearly, these programs constitute important strands in the nation's income safety-net, yet they generally are not taken into account when assessing its strengths and weaknesses. Under an alternative, more comprehensive, measure of poverty than the official one, which includes the net effects of refundable tax credits and Food Stamp/SNAP benefits, a quite different assessment of the effects of the safety net on poverty among single mothers and their children emerges.

Transformation of Income Safety-Net Programs Toward Work-Conditioned Support

Since the eve of 1996 welfare reform, work-conditioned requirements for individuals' receipt of government assistance have become more prevalent. Prior to 1996 welfare reform, federal law (The Family Support Act of 1988; P.L. 100-485) had extended work requirements (which included work preparation activities, such as education and training) to mothers receiving AFDC to mothers with a child as young as three, and at state option, to mothers with a child as young as age one. Child care funding was increased to make it possible for mothers to go to work. A number of states experimented with changes to their welfare programs under waivers of federal rules, granted by DHHS. Among the features tested under waiver authority were efforts to strengthen work requirements, experiments to test models of facilitating the transition from welfare to work, and the use of sanctions for noncompliance with welfare rules, among others. Expansions to the EITC, under both President George H. W. Bush, and President Clinton, increased the financial rewards of work, through earnings supplements administered through the tax system. The EITC helped to offset the welfare income loss, or implicit tax, that mothers might face as they moved from welfare to work.

[56] CRS Report R41625, *Federal Benefits and Services for People with Low Income: Programs, Policy, and Spending, FY2008-FY2009*, by Karen Spar.

The 1996 welfare reform law repealed the 61-year-old AFDC program, replacing it with TANF. TANF ended the entitlement of low-income families with children to federal assistance. It limits the provision of federal assistance under the program to five years[57]—states are allowed to set shorter time limits. Under TANF, states no longer receive an open-ended federal matching grant, as they did under AFDC, but rather a fixed dollar block grant (with the possible addition of recession-related contingency funds). Adults must be engaged in approved "work activities" within two years of initial TANF receipt, subject to sanction for noncompliance. Under TANF, federal work participation standards (i.e., "work-requirements") apply to states' TANF caseloads, and adult recipients are required to be engaged in work, or work-related activities after two years of benefit receipt. TANF has provided states increased flexibility and limited federal requirements, compared to AFDC, but with fixed federal dollars.

Since 1996 welfare reform, cash welfare support for "earnings poor" mothers and their children has contracted, whereas work-based support has increased. The EITC, for example, has a direct effect on poverty reduction, by encouraging work, increasing earnings, and reducing reliance on cash welfare. One estimate suggests that single mothers' employment in 1996 was 7 percentage points higher than it would have been otherwise, absent the EITC.[58] This "work/earnings inducing" effect of EITC among single mothers is captured in official poverty statistics, as part of families' earnings, but the credit itself—the earnings supplement which induces work and earnings—is not. Likewise, the ACTC may also have a potential work inducing effect among single mothers, but, like the EITC, the effects of the credit itself on poverty reduction are not measured under the official poverty income definition. Additionally, through earnings, working individuals not only gain potential access to tax benefits, such as the EITC and ACTC, which with full-time work exceeds cash welfare assistance they might have received by not working, but also earn credit towards insurance coverage under Unemployment Insurance, as well as Social Security retirement, disability, and death benefits for themselves, their dependents, and survivors.

The report shows that receipt of cash welfare (AFDC, TANF, or General Assistance) has declined substantially among single mothers since the passage of TANF, and their engagement in work has increased (**Figure 8**). The transformation from welfare dependency to work appears to have begun in the years immediately preceding 1996 welfare reform, as the economy prospered, and as a number of work supports (e.g., EITC, and child care assistance) were strengthened. Moreover, under the official U.S. poverty measure, the poverty rate of single mothers (**Figure 6**), and that of their children (**Figure 4**), has consistently been lower since welfare reform, than before. Prior to TANF, *poor* single mothers were more likely to be receiving cash welfare (AFDC or GA) than to be working; after passage of TANF, just the opposite was true: *poor* single mothers were more likely to be working than receiving cash welfare (TANF or GA) (**Figure 11**).

TANF and other work-promoting policies have helped to reduce poverty among single mothers and their children through increased earnings. Based on earnings alone, poverty among single mothers who worked reached a historical low for the period, in 2000 (**Figure 14**), as did their poverty rate based on total pre-tax cash income, under the "official" U.S. poverty measure. Following the 2000 recession, poverty among working single mothers increased slightly, and much more so since 2007, in step with, and consequent to, the 2007-2009 recession.

[57] Up to 20% of the TANF caseload can be extended to receive assistance beyond five years due to "hardship," as defined by the states. See CRS Report RL32748, *The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant: A Primer on TANF Financing and Federal Requirements*, by Gene Falk.

[58] Bruce D. Meyer and Dan T. Rosenbaum, "Welfare, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and the Labor Supply of Single Mothers," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. CXVI, no. 3 (2001), pp. 1163-1114.

Cash Welfare's Residual Safety-Net Role

Welfare reform ended the provision of cash assistance as an entitlement, by replacing AFDC with a fixed dollar block grant for the provision of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Under TANF, a greater share of funds goes toward services (child care, social services) either directly, or through transfers to other programs (CCDBG, Title XX Social Services) than towards direct cash support. While many of these services may help to reduce dependency, and promote self-sufficiency through work, receipt of cash assistance has shrunk markedly in the TANF era. While TANF caseloads increased modestly in 2009 and 2010 in response to the recession, they are at a fraction of what they were at their peak, just prior to 1996 welfare reform, and reflect levels not seen in over 40 years.

The marked decline in cash welfare caseloads since the eve of 1996 welfare reform reflects an apparent behavioral shift among many single mothers with respect to work and welfare, with more selecting the former than the latter. A restructuring of income safety-net programs to support work is likely to have contributed to single mothers' changed behavior. The EITC appears to be an important component of the restructured safety net, as it encourages work, even among mothers whose earnings prospects at initial job entry are low. In most states, full time work at the minimum wage provides income sufficient for a mother to work her way off of cash welfare. In lieu of cash welfare, a single mother working full time at the minimum wage will receive the EITC. Additionally, in 2009 through 2017, due to legislative changes relating to the recession and recovery, she would be eligible for the ACTC, which provides additional income support for her children.

Living Arrangements as an Alternative to Welfare

Cash welfare receipt and poverty among single mothers is lower since TANF's enactment than before. Some of this effect appears to be due to an increase in work among single mothers. However, even among *nonworking* mothers, their receipt of cash assistance and incidence of poverty under the official measure is lower since welfare reform. It appears that other family members' earnings and other cash income has contributed to the lower poverty rates of *nonworking* single mothers in the post-AFDC era (see the earlier discussion, **Figure 15**).

In spite of policies to increase work among single mothers, not all single mothers work, and lack of work contributes significantly to the likelihood that they and their children will be poor. However, *poor* non-working single mothers are much *less likely* to be receiving cash welfare assistance under TANF than they did under AFDC (**Figure 11**). In the post-AFDC era, nonworking single mothers are somewhat more likely to live in extended family settings than before.[59] It appears that living with other relatives helps to reduce their reliance on welfare and incidence of poverty under the official poverty measure. Moreover, nonworking single mothers are considerably more likely (more than twice as likely) to live with other unrelated family members in the post-AFDC era than before, although income of these unrelated household members is not taken into account in determining poverty status.[60]

[59] On average, 25% lived in extended family settings in the 1987 to 1996 period. Just following welfare reform, the share living in extended families increased to 29% in 1998 and 33% in 1999, and then to an average of 28% from 2000 to 2013. (Based on CRS estimates from U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 CPS/ASEC data. See **Table C-14** for supporting data.)

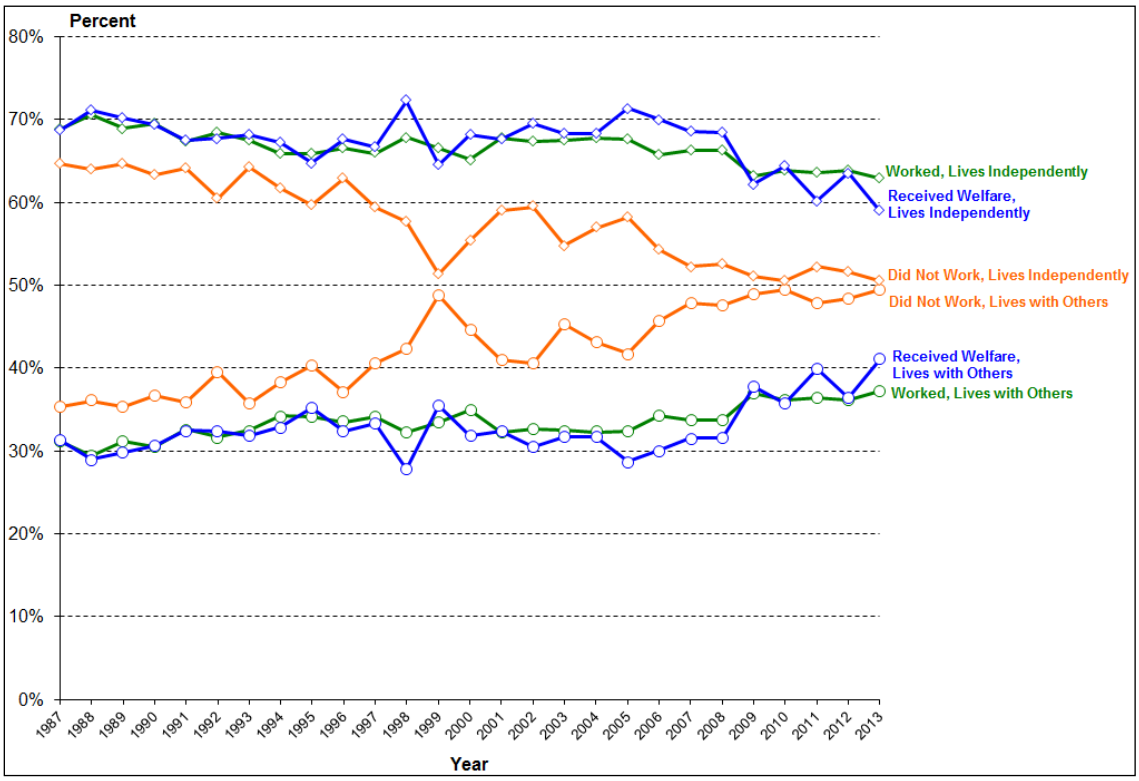
[60] In 2013, for example, 21% of nonworking single mothers were living with other unrelated family members, of whom nearly nine out of ten were designated as "cohabiting partners." In comparison, about 9% of nonworking single mothers lived with unrelated family members in 1987. (Based on CRS estimates from U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 CPS/ASEC data.)

These alternative living arrangements might help provide an alternative to cash welfare receipt for some single mothers. **Figure 17** suggests that this statement has some bearing. The figure depicts single mothers by their work and welfare status, according to whether they live independently with just their children, or whether they live with others, either in an extended family household with other family members than just her children, or with one or more other, unrelated, persons, including a cohabiting partner. The figure shows that among mothers who worked, or received welfare during the year, the majority (roughly 65% to 70%) lived independently over the period; a minority (roughly 30% to 35%) lived with others (extended family and/or one or more unrelated persons). Interestingly, both mothers who worked, as well as those who received welfare, were about equally as likely to live independently, as not, over the period.

In contrast, nonworking single mothers, as a group, are less likely than their working counterparts to live independently than mothers who work or receive welfare during the year. In the pre-1996 welfare reform era, nonworking single mothers were slightly less likely to live independently (roughly 65% to 60%), than their working counterparts (roughly 70% to 65%) or those who received welfare (also, roughly 70% to 65%). Note that some of these nonworking mothers may also have received cash welfare during the year, as evidenced earlier in **Figure 8**. Welfare receipt among nonworking single mothers may have contributed to their ability to live independently, apart from other relatives or nonrelatives. While many single mothers selected work as an alternative to welfare in the years immediately following 1996 welfare reform, others appear to have found alternative living arrangements instead. In 1996, 62% of nonworking single mothers were living independently, three years later, only 52% were. Most of this change in living arrangements was due to an increase in nonworking single mothers' increased tendency to live in extended family households, with other relatives (see **Table C-14**), with the share increasing from 24% in 1996, to 33% by 1999, and then ebbing to 27% by 2001. In more recent years, at least since 2005, nonworking single mothers have shown a greater tendency to be living with other nonrelatives, of which most are cohabiting partners (see **Table C-14**). Whereas in 1987, 65% of nonworking single mothers were living in independent households, by 2013, only about half (51%) were. In part, cash welfare in the pre-welfare reform era may have helped some single mothers to live in independent family settings. Stricter requirements and time limits in the post-reform era may have contributed to some mothers' consideration of living arrangements as an alternative to cash welfare receipt.

Figure 17. Single Mothers' Living Arrangements, by Mothers' Work and Welfare Status

1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-14** for supporting data.

Illness or Disability Among Nonworking Single Mothers

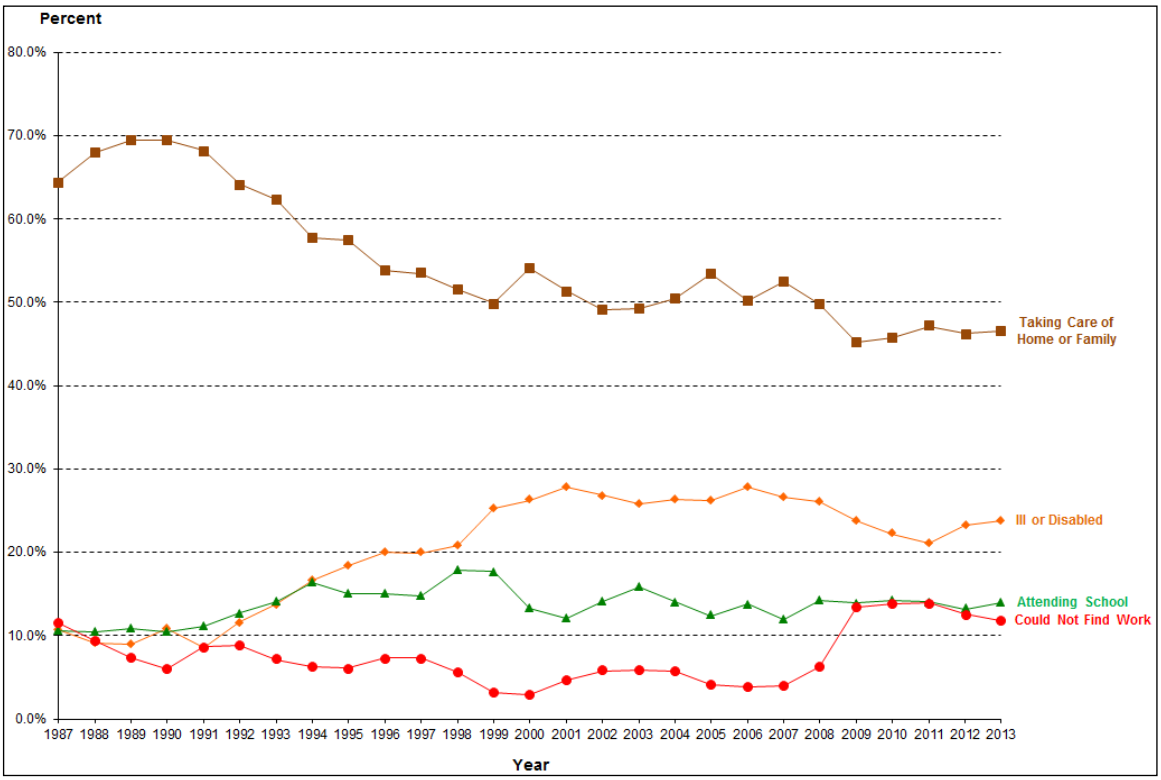
Nonworking single mothers are much more likely to attribute illness or disability as the reason for not working in the post-welfare reform era, than before. This is consistent with the somewhat greater role of SSI relative to other cash welfare (AFDC/TANF/GA) since welfare reform. One conjecture is that single mothers who are most able to work, are doing so in the post-welfare reform era, and that with support from the EITC, even those with comparatively low earnings capacity (e.g., "earnings poor") have sought work over welfare. Those remaining, who are not engaged in work, may be less able to work, as indicated by a higher self-reported incidence of illness or disability. In the pre-welfare reform era, roughly 10% of nonworking single mothers reported "illness or disability" as the primary reason for not working during the year (**Figure 18**), and roughly 70% reported "taking care of home or family" as the primary reason.[61] In the post-welfare reform era, the share of nonworking single mothers who self-reported "illness or disability" as the reason for not working is about three times higher than before welfare reform; the share who reported "taking care of home or family" as the primary reason for not working has fallen from roughly 70% to about 50% since welfare reform. From 2007 to 2009, the share of

[61] The self reporting of "illness or disability" on the CPS/ASEC as the reason for not working may also be suspect if, as a greater share of mothers have gone to work, the attribution of "taking care of home or family" as the reason for not working has become less socially acceptable for not working, especially among mothers who receive welfare benefits.

nonworking single mothers who reported that they "could not find work" more than tripled, from 4.0% to 13.4%, and has remained well above its 2007 pre-recession low since (11.9% in 2013). Nonetheless, reported "illness or disability" still ranks second, only to "taking care of home or family," as the primary attributed reason of single mothers for not having worked during the year.

Figure 18. Single Mothers Who Did Not Work During the Year, by Self-Reported Reason for Not Working

1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-15** for supporting data.

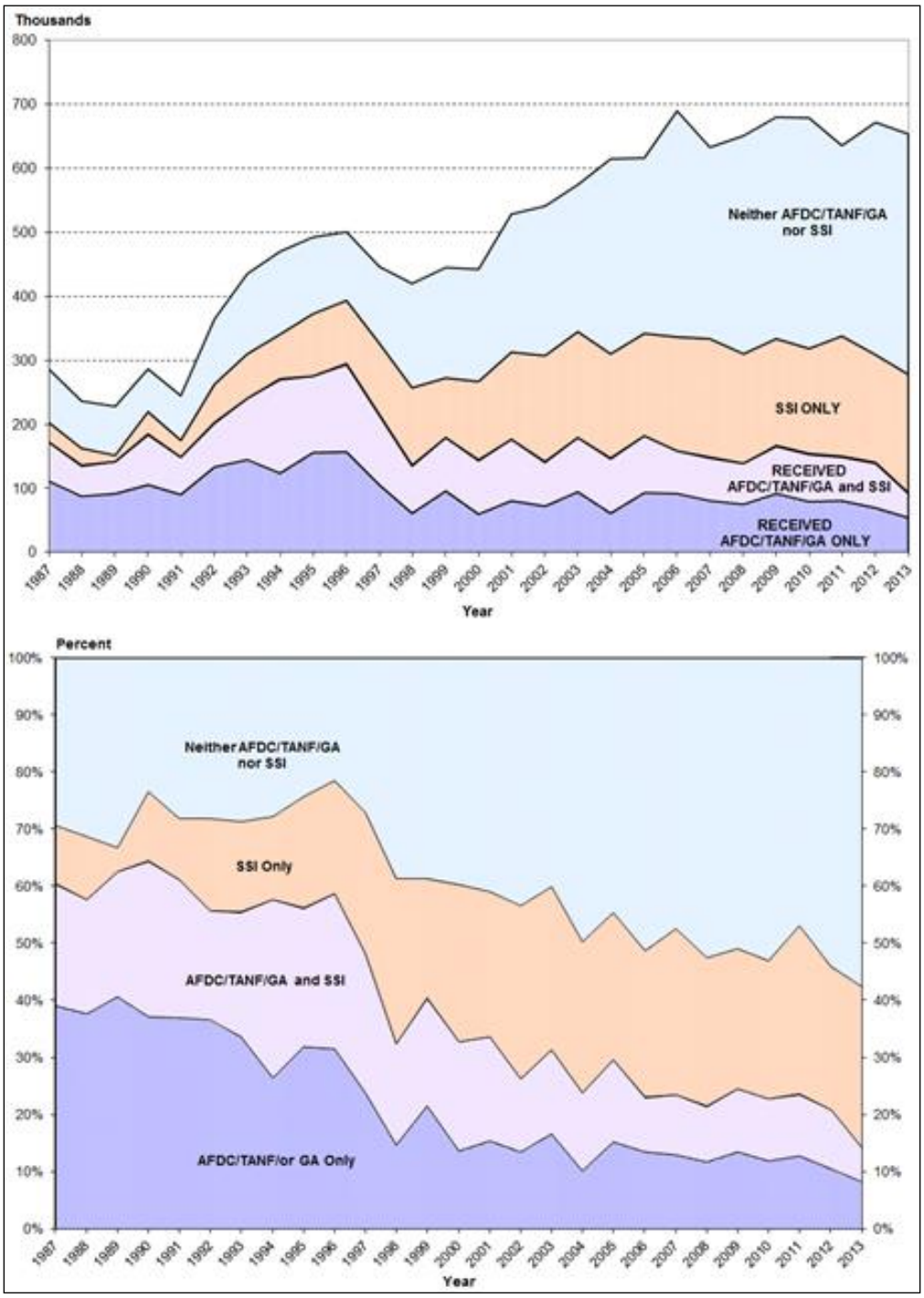
Cash Welfare Receipt among Ill or Disabled Nonworking Single Mothers

Whereas nonworking single mothers have a greater tendency to report illness or disability as the primary reason for having not worked during the year, cash safety-net programs in the form of AFDC/TANF and SSI appear to be assisting a smaller share of such mothers in the post-welfare reform era, than before. Moreover, the number of single mothers reporting illness or disability in 2013 has more than doubled since 1987 (see **Figure 19**). In the pre-welfare reform era, roughly 70% to 80% of nonworking single mothers who reported illness or disability as the reason for not working were being assisted by AFDC, SSI, or both—in 2013, 42% were. The SSI program taken alone (not counting in combination with AFDC/TANF receipt) accounts for a considerably larger share of nonworking ill or disabled single mothers in the post-welfare reform era (roughly double) than before. In turn, the share reporting receipt of AFDC/TANF, either alone, or in combination with SSI, has fallen by nearly two thirds since welfare reform, with about 60% reporting AFDC in the pre-welfare reform era, and about 14% reporting TANF in 2013.

While a larger share of single mothers who are able to work appear to be engaged in work or looking for work in the post-welfare reform era than before, among the smaller residual who are not, a greater share report illness or disability as the primary reason for being out of the labor market. In 2013, of the 654,000 single mothers who reported no work during the year due to illness or disability, well over half (376,000) reported neither receiving SSI nor TANF/GA assistance. The nature of these mothers' reported illness or disability is not known, nor is it known whether they have sought and been denied government assistance. Whether and how these mothers might be falling through cracks in the income safety-net is a question of policy interest, and possible concern.

Figure 19. Nonworking Single Mothers with Self-Reported "Illness or Disability" as the Primary Reason for Not Working, by Cash Welfare Recipiency Status

1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-15** for supporting data.

The Work-Based Income Safety Net in Times of Recession and Recovery

By the official measure, poverty among single mothers reached a historical low in 2000 (31.8%), but has since increased in step with two recessions, reaching a recent peak in 2012 (39.8%)—the same level as that of 1996, when welfare reform was signed into law, but lower than previous years. Single mothers' poverty rate began to show signs of improvement, falling to 38.0% in 2013, but it is still well above its historical low. An improved economy, contributing to a falling unemployment rate among mothers maintaining families (**Figure 10**, shown earlier) suggests that their official poverty rate will likely continue to fall in 2014, but it will remain above its pre-recession level, and well above its 2000 historical low.

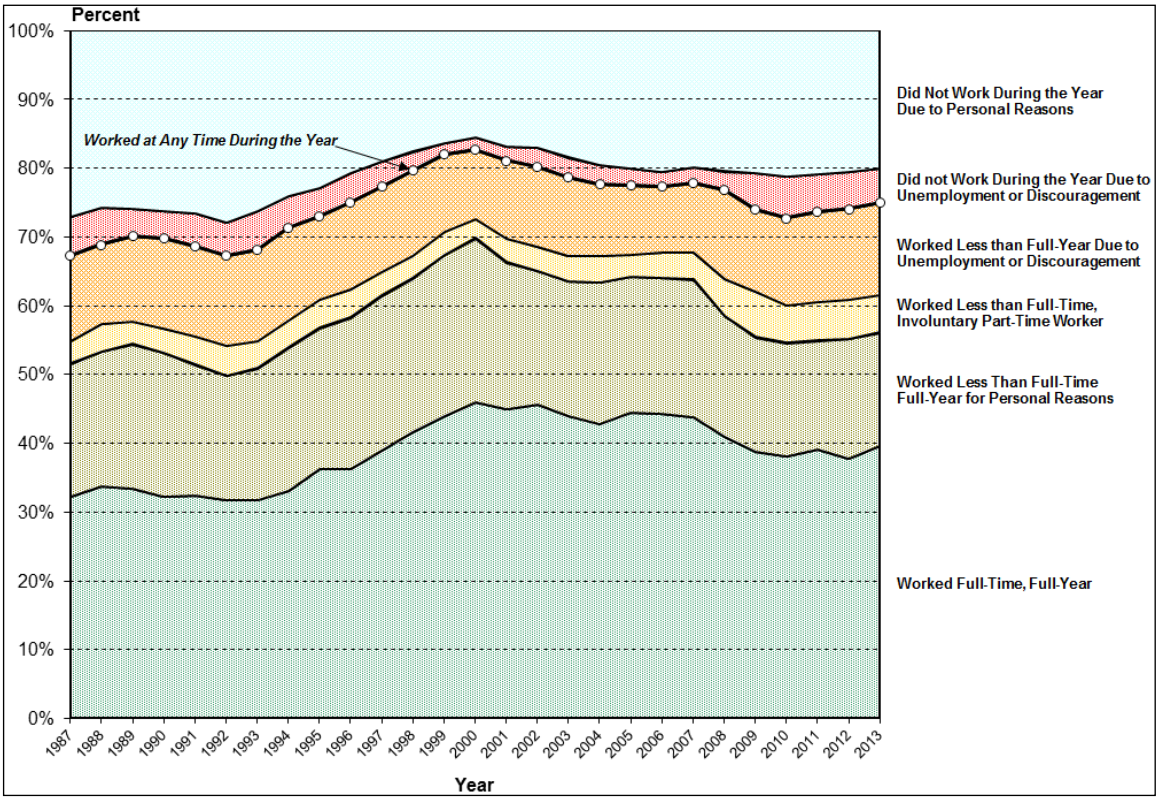
The official U.S. poverty measure provides little insight as to how the transformed work-based income safety net has performed since the expansions to EITC in the early 1990s, and 1996 welfare reform, in reducing poverty. As shown in the body of this report, a very different story from the one offered by the official poverty measure emerges by using an expanded income measure that includes the EITC, and more recently, the ACTC, refundable tax credits, and Food Stamp/SNAP assistance.

Single Mothers' Attachment to the Work-Based Safety Net

With an increased share of single mothers engaged in the labor market since welfare reform, the availability of work, and especially full-time work for those who want it, is of special concern, given the past recession and pace of recovery. Full-time, full-year work among single mothers peaked in 2000, and has fallen twice since, in response to two recessions (2000, and 2007-2009) (see **Figure 20**). A high-water mark was reached in 2000 when over four-fifths (83%) of single mothers had a job at some point during the year. By 2010, the share of single mothers with some attachment during the year had fallen to about three-quarters (73%), and was only slightly above that level in 2013 (75%). In 2000, 46% worked full-time full-year in 2000, whereas only two-fifths (40%) did so in 2013. The share of single mothers who were marginally employed during the year for economic reasons—they had a job at some time during the year, but for fewer hours or weeks than they desired—rose from 13% of all single mothers in 2000, to 18% in 2008, and to 19% over the past three years (2011-2013). Among this group are those who were unemployed (i.e., without a job for part of the year and looked for work) as well as "discouraged" workers (i.e., those who were without a job for part of the year and did not look for work because they believed no jobs were available); it also includes mothers who worked less than full-time, but desired full-time work.

In 2013, three quarters (75%) of single mothers had some attachment to a job, and thus potentially had some connection to the work-based safety net. All of these mothers—those who worked full-time full-year, those who were marginally employed for economic reasons, and mothers who worked less than full-time full-year for personal reasons (i.e., taking care of home or family, going to school, ill or disabled, or retired/other)—might potentially benefit from the EITC, or the ACTC, depending on their annual earnings. Among those who worked for part of the year, but experienced a period of unemployment, some might qualify for UI benefits, depending on their work history and the conditions under which they separated from a job. In addition to the 75% of mothers with some job attachment, another 5% of single mothers were unemployed for the entire year, or without a job and did not work because they believed no work was available. Some of these mothers might also qualify for UI benefits depending on their circumstances.

Figure 20. Single Mothers' Job Attachment,1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. See **Table C-17** for supporting data

Notes: Persons who worked for 50 weeks or more, and 35 or more hours per week, are designated as full-time, full-year workers. The unemployed are persons who were without a job and searched for work. Discouraged workers are persons who were without a job but did not search for work because they believed no jobs were available. Personal reasons for not working during the year, or working less than full-time, full-year, include taking care of a home or family, attending school, illness or disability, retired, or other.

The Work-Based "Safety Net" and the Role of Traditional Welfare

A work-based income safety net depends upon a strong economy and available jobs for those who are able and willing to work. The EITC, as an earnings supplement, and the ACTC, as a family income supplement, are only available to working individuals. Work-based safety-net programs may still help those who were without a job for part of the year, or who have a job, but work fewer hours than they would like. However, as support programs, income benefits from the EITC and ACTC are provided as a lump sum refund at the beginning of the year following that in which they were earned. As such, the EITC and ACTC may not help a family meet its immediate income needs due to job loss, or limited work hours. UI benefits are available only to those with an established work history and who lose a job for qualifying reasons. Work-based safety-net benefits are of no use to individuals who have not recently held a job, and cannot find one.

Absent available jobs, single mothers may turn to the traditional cash welfare system (i.e., TANF), food assistance (SNAP), relatives and friends, for basic income support. In part contingent on the nature and pace of economic recovery, and federal and state budget pressures, funding for traditional welfare programs, as well as their structure (e.g., time limits,

work/participation requirements, education and training, and subsidized employment) may garner increased attention.

Appendix A. From Mothers' Pensions to TANF—A Brief History

TANF, signed into law in 1996 as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) (P.L. 104-193), replaced the 61-year-old Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, a federal entitlement program to low-income families with children. The precursor program which TANF replaced, AFDC, had its beginnings in the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program, part of the 1935 Social Security Act, which introduced federal involvement in helping provide financial aid, or "public assistance," to aid dependent children.

Mothers' Pensions to Aid to Dependent Children[62]

Since at least the first White House Conference on Children in 1909 (Conference on the Care of Dependent Children), and the subsequent creation of the Children's Bureau in 1912, the federal government has been concerned with social conditions of children. The conference was an impetus for states' enactment of state or locally financed mothers' pensions (also referred to as widows' pensions and or mothers' aid), which provided minimal cash support to mothers made destitute, usually due to a husband's death. Mothers' aid was intended to help keep mothers at home to supervise and care for their children, as an alternative to sending children to orphanages and/or putting them up for adoption, which was a common practice of the time.[63] Mothers' pensions largely went to widows, and payments were limited and restrictive (e.g., many states imposed rigid requirements as to the "character" of parents to assure that the child was living in a "suitable home" before granting aid; mothers were required to prove destitution,[64] and to agree to cease or limit employment upon receipt of a pension[65]). Prior to the Social Security Act of 1935, most states had adopted mothers' pension laws.[66]

As part of the Social Security Act of 1935, the federal Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program introduced federal involvement in helping provide financial aid, or "public assistance," to aid dependent children. The ADC program essentially provided federal dollars to help support states mothers' pension programs, that nearly all states had established. Under the 1935 act, a "dependent child" was defined as "a child under the age of sixteen who has been deprived of parental support or care by reason of the death, continued absence from the home, or physical or mental incapacity of a parent," and is living with one or more relatives in his or their own home.[67]

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[62] For summary of the legislative history of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children, see http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/policy/legisum.htm. Also, CRS Report 84-546 EPW, *Brief legislative History of Title IV-A of the Social Security Act: Grants to States for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)*, by Vee Burke, February 24, 1984 (archived report, available to congressional clients upon request).

[63] Mark H. Leff, "Consensus for Reform: The Mothers'-Pension Movement in the Progressive Era," *The Social Service Review*, vol. 47, no. 3 (September 1973), pp. 397-417.

[64] See Jane M. Hoey, "Aid to Families with Dependent Children," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Appraising the Social Security Program*, vol. 202 (March 1939), pp. 76-78

[65] Mark H. Leff, op. cit., p. 402.

[66] Missouri and Illinois were the first states to establish mothers' pensions, in 1911. By 1913, 20 states had mothers' pensions, and by 1919, 39 states and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii had mothers' pensions. In 1931, every state except for Georgia and South Carolina had mothers' pensions. See Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1996), p. 133.

[67] See Legislative History, Social Security Act of 1935, on the Internet at http://www.ssa.gov/history/35activ.html.

The ADC program provided payments to states for aid to dependent children with approved state plans; federal payments at the time were one-third of the sums expended by the state up to a capped monthly expenditure amount per dependent child.[68] The federal program had no provision for assisting a parent or other relative in the household, although this changed over time.[69] In 1950, the federal government began to share in the maintenance costs of the parent or other caretaker relative. In 1962, support of a second parent in a family who was incapacitated or unemployed was allowed, and the program's name was changed to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

Under state administration, ADC, as well as the mothers' pension programs which preceded it, favored children of widows over others. Early evidence from the program indicated that over half of all children assisted were dependent because of the death of a parent, with most living with their widowed mother; most of the remainder were living with mothers who were "deserted, divorced, or separated," or were living in other settings in which the mother was not present; about 2% were living with an unmarried mother.[70] The comparatively small share of unmarried mothers receiving ADC assistance in part reflected a program preference to serve widows, and some unmarried mothers were denied assistance by failing to meet "suitable home requirements." However, children of unmarried mothers at the time represented a relatively small share of all fatherless children in the early years of the ADC program. In 1938, children of unwed mothers represented an estimated 3.8% of all children in female-headed households in the U.S.[71] Social Security Act Amendments of 1939, extending Social Security benefits to widows and surviving children of deceased workers covered by the program, would have the effect of reducing the number of widows and their children from needing ADC, resulting in the program coming to primarily serve families in which fathers were absent due to divorce or abandonment. By 1961, widowed families would comprise only 7.7% of the ADC caseload, down from 43% in 1937.[72]

Increased Federal Involvement

In 1938, three years after enactment of the ADC, eight states were still not participating in the program.[73] In 1939, the federal payment rate was raised from one-third to one-half of a raised maximum payment amount per child, effective January 1940. With increasing federal dollars, the federal government would help assure state participation in the program, while at the same time gaining greater leverage in influencing the provision of assistance at the state level.[74] By June 1940, all states, the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico were participating in programs providing child welfare services under the Social Security Act.[75] Over time, the federal

[68] The federal maximum payment amounted to $6 per month for the first child in a family, plus $4 per month for each additional child. The federal matching rate of state AFDC expenditures would grow over time.

[69] See U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *A Brief History of the AFDC Program,* available on the Internet at http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/AFDC/baseline/1history.pdf.

[70] Jane M. Hoey, "Aid to Families with Dependent Children," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Appraising the Social Security Program,* vol. 202 (March 1939), pp. 76, 78.

[71] Linda Gordon, *Pitied But Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare, 1890-1935* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), p. 21.

[72] Mimi Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy form Colonial Times to Present* (Boston: South End Press, 1988), p. 321.

[73] Ibid., p. 76.

[74] For an in depth discussion, see for example: Martha Derthick, *The Influence of Federal Grants, Public Assistance in Massachusetts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).

[75] See http://www.ssa.gov/history/1940.html.

share of AFDC expenditures would increase, reaching a minimum of 50% and a permitted maximum of 83% of total AFDC expenditures by 1965, effective January 1966, for states with an approved plan for medical assistance programs under Title IXX of the Social Security Act (i.e., Medicaid).[76]

In 1961, the federal Bureau of Public Assistance (BPA), which ran the ADC program, issued a directive against states' and localities' use of "suitable home" rules, that had traditionally been used to keep children of unwed mothers out of the program. In 1966, the Bureau of Family Services, which had replaced the BPA in 1962, ordered that state plans for determining eligibility for AFDC "respect the rights of individuals ... .and not result in practices that violate the individual's privacy or personal dignity, or harass him, or violate his constitutional rights." Implicitly, states that did not comply could risk losing federal matching funds.[77]

Legal Challenges to Restrictive State Welfare Practices

Greater federal involvement and regulation of AFDC gave petitioners greater legal standing in federal court to challenge restrictive state welfare policies. While AFDC was an entitlement to eligible individuals, as defined by federal law, states still retained control in administering the program, which included determining eligibility of families applying for assistance. Although AFDC was an entitlement, practices of granting eligibility for the program varied widely among states and localities, as had been the case under the mothers' pensions in the pre-ADC era. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-452), the centerpiece of President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty," focused national attention and federal assistance in helping to combat poverty. Among its provisions was the establishment of an Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which administered a number of programs under the act. Community Action Programs (CAP) were among OEO's programs, under which Community Action Agencies (CAAs) took root in local communities to help promote "maximum feasible participation" of the poor, intended to engage the poor in seeking solutions to poverty in their communities. OEO also set up legal services to aid the poor in local communities. At the same time, a burgeoning National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO), independently began to advocate for the rights of the poor.[78] Growing political empowerment of the poor, combined with legal advocacy helped to overturn a number of restrictive state welfare policies by the U.S. Supreme Court. Such policies included "man-in-the-house" rules (King v. Smith, 392 U.S. 309 (1968)); long-term residency requirements (Shapiro v. Thompson, 394 U.S. 618 (1969)), and termination of assistance without a fair hearing (Goldberg v. Kelly, 397 U.S. 254 (1970)), among others. By one estimate, elimination of the residency requirements alone added some 800,000 persons to the AFDC rolls by 1970.[79]

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[76] Under 1958 amendments to the Social Security Act, federal ADC payments to states were no longer based on individual assistance payments, but on total state expenditures, which were matched within an average payment per recipient. The federal matching percent could be no less than 50% and no greater than 65%. Under 1965 amendments to the act, the federal matching rate grew to a minimum of 50% and a maximum of 83% of expenditures, which varied by state, depending on an inverse relationship of state per capita income relative to U.S. per capita income. See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/policy/legisum.htm.

[77] James T. Patterson, *America's Struggle Against Poverty, 1900-1985* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 181.

[78] Francis Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements, Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), pp. 264-361.

[79] Abramovitz, op. cit., p. 335.

Federal Efforts to Stem Rising Public Assistance Caseloads

Figure 2 depicts the number of recipients (children and adults) and welfare cases receiving assistance under AFDC (and ADC) from 1960 to 1994, the eve of the programs' repeal. While some federal efforts served to expand assistance caseloads, such as regulations and enforcement activities to promote states' administration of the program's individual entitlement provisions, and increasing federal matching payments to states, which shifted more of the financial burden of providing assistance from states to the federal government, other efforts would seek to restrain caseload growth and its underlying causes.

Expanding welfare caseloads were beginning to contribute to what some would refer to as a "welfare crisis," by the mid-1960s.[80] Contributing to the "crisis" was a *growing number of families potentially eligible* for cash assistance, as the baby-boom generation began entering adulthood, as well as changing social behavior relating to marriage, divorce, and childbearing. As noted earlier, in 1961 families headed by widowed mothers accounted for only about 8% of ADC families; from 1961 to 1967, the share of families receiving AFDC who were headed by never-married mothers would increase from 21% to 28%.[81] In addition to an increasing number of *potentially* eligible families, an increasing share of such families applied for and were granted assistance during the 1960s, with the *participation of eligible families* in AFDC increasing "from perhaps 33 percent in the early 1960s to more than 90 percent in 1971.[82]"

The Rise (and Fall) of Social Services as an Answer to Reducing Welfare Dependency

The 1939 extension of social benefits to widows and surviving children of deceased covered workers had the effect of reducing the number of widows and their children needing assistance under ADC, resulting in the program coming to primarily serve families in which fathers were absent due to divorce or abandonment. Changing social trends regarding marriage, divorce, and childbearing in the post World War II era, contributed to the ADC program's growth. Under 1956 amendments to the Social Security Act (P.L. 84-880), Congress permitted federal funding to reimburse states for 50% of the costs of providing social services to public assistance recipients. Among the legislation's stated purpose was to enable states to "furnish financial assistance and other services ... to needy dependent children and the parents or relatives with whom they are living to help maintain and strengthen family life and ... attain the maximum level of self-support and personal independence."

Under 1962 amendments, funding for social services was expanded, and the federal matching rate was increased to 75%. Expanded funds for social services and training of skilled welfare workers marked the advent of the "casework approach" for addressing the multiple problems that many public assistance recipients faced. In his statement at the signing of the 1962 amendments, President Kennedy described it as "a new approach-stressing services in addition to support, rehabilitation instead of relief, and training for useful work instead of prolonged dependency ... [the] objective is to prevent or reduce dependency and to encourage self-care and self-support to maintain family life where it is adequate and to restore it where it is deficient."[83]

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[80] See for example, Daniel P. Moynihan, *The Politics of a Guaranteed Income: The Nixon Administration and the Family Assistance Plan* (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 25.

[81] Ibid., p. 334.

[82] Patterson, op. cit., p. 179.

[83] John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, Statement by the President Upon Approving the Public Welfare Amendments

Increased case supervision by social workers was intended to identify and address problems aid recipients faced, leading to their "rehabilitation" and helping to move them toward self-sufficiency. A major premise was that the provision of social services could break the bonds of dependency many welfare families faced, by addressing their underlying problems. Consequent to the increased emphasis on social services, income maintenance workers often came to serve the dual function of eligibility technician and social caseworker. In implementing the law, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), set caseload and supervisory standards to assure smaller workloads and time for workers to deal with clients.[84] The amendments also provided additional funds for training welfare personnel in assuming the additional casework functions associated with identifying clients' need for services, as well as brokering and/or providing those services. Provision of social services became an integrated function with the provision of cash aid. States provided a panoply of services within a broad, somewhat ill-defined, range of service categories (e.g., educational or vocational training, health care, improved financial functioning, maintaining family life and improving family functioning, maintaining and improving social relationships and community life, self-care services, self-support services). In order to receive reimbursement at the 75% federal matching rate, a case had to be considered a "service case" and had to be part of a caseload of designated size. States faced a financial incentive to provide social services as a result of the comparatively high federal matching rate, which contributed to burgeoning federal spending on social services in the early 1970s.[85]

AFDC caseloads continued to rise through the course of the 1960s, in spite of increased funding for the provision of rehabilitative services. In 1972, HEW issued a mandate to states to separate the provision of services from the administrative function of determining eligibility for aid.[86] Under the mandate, social services would still be provided at the families' request, rather than on a routine basis. The 1974 Social Security Amendments created a new Title XX, which expanded eligibility for free or subsidized social services to the non-poor, but with a spending cap, rather than an open-ended matching grant. Title XX further severed the provision of social services from the provision of cash aid.

Federal Efforts to Constrain AFDC Caseload Growth Due to Absent Fathers

Under 1967 Social Security Act amendments, Congress attempted to restrain AFDC caseload growth resulting from children's fathers continued absence from the home. States were required to establish programs to determine paternity and to locate absent parents and secure support from them.[87] Additionally, Congress imposed a "freeze" on federal matching payments for AFDC, which would limit the availability of federal matching funds for children who were receiving AFDC due to continued absence of a parent from the home.[88] Under the provision, federal

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Bill, July 26, 1962, The American Presidency Project [online]. Santa Barbara, CA. Available on the Internet at http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=8788.

[84] A case worker was to carry no more than 60 cases and no supervisor to have more than five workers. President's Commission on Income Maintenance Programs, *Background Papers*, 1970, pp. 299-309.

[85] See Martha Derthick, *Uncontrollable Spending for Social Services Grants* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1975).

[86] For a brief discussion of the separation of social services from income maintenance, see Mark E. Courtney et al., "Comparing Welfare and Child Welfare Populations: An Argument for Rethinking the Safety Net," in *Child Welfare Research: Advances for Practice and Policy*, ed. Duncan Lindsey and Aron Shlonsky (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 273-275.

[87] Vee Burke, op. cit., p. 7.

[88] Ibid., p. 7. For a more detailed discussion see Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service Report (HV 84 D, ED-372), *The Limitation on Federal Matching in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program – The So-*

matching funds would not be available to states after July 1, 1969, for any increase above the January-March 1968 level in the proportion of the state's children under age 18 receiving AFDC on grounds of the continued absence of their father. Implementation of the provision was postponed, and subsequently repealed by Congress in 1969 before taking effect (P.L. 91-41).

Under 1974 amendments to the Social Security Act, a new part D[89], Child Support and Establishment of Paternity, was added to title IV. Among Part D provisions, states were required to have plans for establishing paternity and establishing child support and were subject to loss of 5% of AFDC federal matching funds for failure to have "effective" programs. AFDC applicants and recipients were required to "cooperate" in identifying and locating children's fathers, and were required to assign child support rights to the state. Additionally, Part D required the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) to establish a separate organizational unit to monitor state programs and to operate a Parent Locator Service, making use of federal and state records.[90]

Promoting Self-Sufficiency—Work Incentives, Requirements, and Sanctions

In 1961, Congress permitted states to include a second, unemployed, parent as part of the assistance unit under AFDC, the Unemployed Parent (AFDC-UP) program, but were required to deny assistance if the unemployed parent refused to accept work without "good cause."[91] In 1962, Congress authorized federal funds for states to establish Community Work and Training (CWT) programs for federally aided adult recipients. CWT jobs were to pay at least an equivalent wage for the same type of work as prevailing in the community, or the minimum wage, if higher. States were required to deduct only "net" earnings from the grant of the working welfare recipient (i.e., after any reasonable work-related expenses) and were permitted to allow working welfare recipients to deduct any income set aside for identifiable needs of the dependent child.[92]

Amendments of 1967 replaced CWT with the Work Incentive (WIN) program, a joint program between HEW and the Department of Labor (DOL), that required states to set up work and training programs for "appropriate" AFDC recipients.[93] The federal share of WIN spending was set at 80%, with states assuming the remainder. The 1967 amendments also required states to disregard a portion of AFDC adults' earnings—the first $30 plus one-third of the remainder—from income counted against the AFDC grant. Under prior law, other than a required deduction for work expenses from net earnings, the AFDC grant could be reduced by one dollar for every dollar earned. Under the 1967 provisions, the AFDC benefit would phase out more gradually, with a benefit reduction of 67 cents for each dollar earned during the month, in excess of $30. While providing a financial incentive for AFDC recipients to engage in work, the higher

Called AFDC Freeze, by William Fullerton, April 1, 1969 (archived report, available to congressional clients by request).

[89] The 1967 amendments also restructured title IV (Grants to States for Aid to Families with Dependent Children) of the act into parts: with Part A—AFDC; Part B—Child Welfare Services (a new part, transferred from title V, and revised; and a new Part C—Work Incentive Program (WIN), discussed later. Vee Burke, op. cit., p. 6.

[90] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[91] Ibid., p. 4.

[92] Ibid., p. 4.

[93] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *A Brief History of the AFDC Program*, available on the Internet at http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/AFDC/baseline/1history.pdf.

disregard would allow working recipients to stay on the program at higher income levels than otherwise, tending to have a potential countervailing influence on caseloads.

The 1967 amendments also signaled a shift in emphasis in the provision of services from "rehabilitative," personal "competence-enhancing," services, to work-related services, such as vocational training, job and work training referral, and child care, to promote self-sufficiency.[94]

In 1971, Congress required that all AFDC parents register for work or training, except for mothers with a child under age 6. In 1981, Congress gave states the authority to design and test their own "welfare-to-work" programs. In 1988, the Family Support Act replaced the WIN program with the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training program (JOBS). The program extended work requirements (which could include work preparation activities, such as education and training) from mothers with a child as young as six to mothers with a child as young as three and, at states' option, of extending work requirements to mothers with a child as young as age one. The act also required states to provide benefits to a second parent who was incapacitated or unemployed (AFDC-UP program).

A number of states experimented with changes to welfare policy under waiver authority granted to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).[95] Among the features of state programs tested under waiver authority were efforts to strengthen work requirements, experiments requiring a "work first" approach rather than "training first, followed by work," time limits, strengthened sanctions for noncompliance with welfare rules, and capping of welfare benefits for a new baby conceived or born while a mother was receiving welfare.

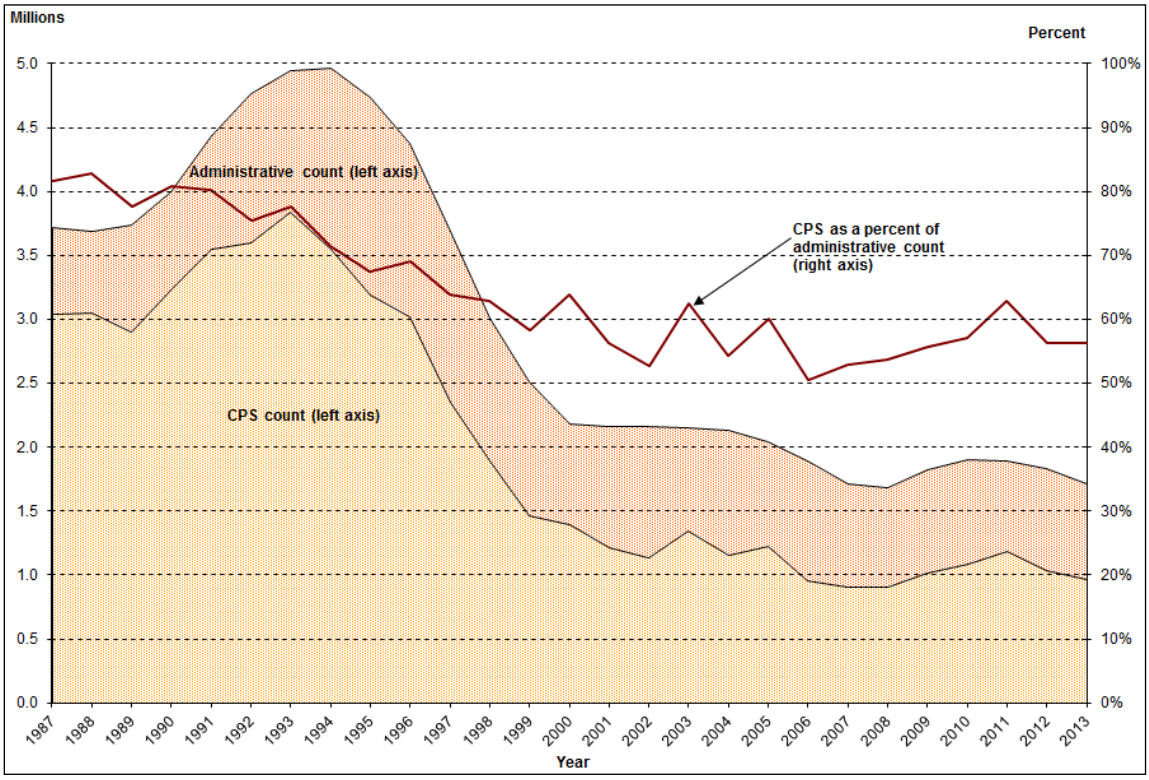
[94] Mildred Rein, "Social Services as a Work Strategy," *The Social Service Review*, vol. 49, no. 4 (December 1975), pp. 515-538.

[95] Section 1115 of the Social Security Act, established in 1962, grants the Secretary authority to waive compliance of states with certain sections of the Social Security Act for state experiments or demonstrations that the Secretary judges to promote specific objectives of the act. For a discussion of waiver authority under this section, see U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *State Welfare Waivers: An Overview*, available on the Internet at http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/isp/waiver2/waivers.htm.

Appendix B. Cash Welfare Under-Reporting on the CPS

A comparison of AFDC/TANF administrative statistics and CPS-estimated caseload counts suggests that the CPS undercounts actual cases and that the CPS undercount has worsened in recent years. **Figure B-1** shows that from 1987 to 1991, the CPS accounted for roughly 80% of the AFDC administrative caseload count, but in 2013 the CPS captured only about 56%.[96] Worsened reporting of cash welfare on the CPS makes it difficult to gauge how much of the drop in welfare receipt among single mothers represents eligible families who do not receive assistance, rather than families who do not report actual welfare aid on the CPS.

Figure B-1. AFDC/TANF Cases: CPS Estimates Versus Administrative Caseload Counts (Annual Monthly Average), 1987 to 2013



Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Family Assistance (OFA) caseload data. See **B-1** for supporting data.

[96] The CPS estimates are for all adults reporting receipt of AFDC or TANF during the year, converted to an estimate of an annual monthly average, based on the number of months over the year recipients reported receiving assistance. For a detailed discussion of cash welfare under-reporting on the CPS and other surveys see Richard Bavier, *Accounting for increases in failure to report AFDC/TANF receipt*, Office of Management and Budget, Unpublished manuscript, Washington, DC, 2000.

Table B-1. AFDC/TANF Cases: CPS Versus Administrative Caseload Counts, Annual Monthly Average, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in millions)

Year	Persons Reporting AFDC or TANF Receipt on the CPS[a]	AFDC and TANF cases Based on Administrative Data[b]	CPS as a Percent of Administrative Total
1987	3.039	3.719	81.7%
1988	3.056	3.691	82.8%
1989	2.901	3.738	77.6%
1990	3.226	3.995	80.8%
1991	3.554	4.434	80.2%
1992	3.596	4.765	75.5%
1993	3.844	4.949	77.7%
1994	3.551	4.972	71.4%
1995	3.193	4.734	67.8%
1996	3.022	4.380	69.0%
1997	2.355	3.690	63.8%
1998	1.892	3.007	62.9%
1999	1.464	2.515	58.2%
2000	1.392	2.181	63.8%
2001	1.216	2.162	56.2%
2002	1.140	2.162	52.7%
2003	1.346	2.158	62.4%
2004	1.160	2.134	54.4%
2005	1.227	2.042	60.1%
2006	0.955	1.890	50.5%
2007	0.907	1.715	52.9%
2008	0.905	1.688	53.6%
2009	1.017	1.824	55.7%
2010	1.088	1.903	57.2%
2011	1.190	1.890	63.0%
2012	1.033	1.837	56.3%
2013	0.965	1.711	56.4%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on U.S. Bureau of the Census 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Family Assistance (OFA), AFDC and TANF caseload data.

Note: Support table for **Figure B-1**.

a. Estimated average monthly number based on number of months CPS respondents indicated they received AFDC or TANF during the year.

b. Average monthly number of AFDC or TANF cases in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. From 2001 and after, includes cases in Separate State Programs (SSP) under state Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements.

Appendix C. Support Tables

Table C-1. Children's Family Living Arrangements and Poverty Status, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

			Female-Headed Families						
Year	Total	Married-Couple Families	Total	Never Married	Separated, Spouse Absent	Divorced	Widowed	Male-Headed Families, Spouse Absent	Lives with Other Relatives, Apart from Parents
All Children—Numbers in 1,000s									
1987	62,906	46,062	13,617	4,231	3,405	5,041	939	1,795	1,433
1988	63,398	46,562	13,700	4,290	3,380	5,227	803	1,795	1,341
1989	63,816	46,526	13,874	4,365	3,416	5,118	975	1,994	1,421
1990	64,730	46,674	14,608	5,040	3,583	5,206	780	2,022	1,426
1991	65,576	46,662	15,396	5,410	3,790	5,507	688	2,185	1,333
1992	66,511	47,197	15,586	5,511	3,739	5,687	649	2,287	1,441
1993	68,879	48,128	16,338	6,003	3,839	5,800	696	2,262	2,150
1994	69,596	48,300	16,480	5,865	3,901	6,019	695	2,467	2,350
1995	70,140	48,246	16,993	6,363	3,928	6,040	662	2,764	2,136
1996	70,194	48,412	16,740	6,596	3,753	5,824	566	3,061	1,981
1997	70,561	48,649	16,639	6,696	3,560	5,708	676	3,146	2,126
1998	70,864	48,805	16,833	6,759	3,561	5,828	685	3,098	2,129
1999	71,200	49,814	16,172	6,590	3,225	5,658	698	3,062	2,152
2000	71,261	49,820	16,120	6,734	3,109	5,577	699	3,137	2,184

Year	Total	Married-Couple Families	Female-Headed Families: Total	Never Married	Separated, Spouse Absent	Divorced	Widowed	Male-Headed Families, Spouse Absent	Lives with Other Relatives, Apart from Parents
2001	71,534	49,685	16,483	6,872	3,289	5,602	720	3,294	2,072
2002	72,238	49,925	16,780	7,008	3,351	5,758	663	3,321	2,211
2003	72,484	49,596	17,116	7,202	3,298	5,910	706	3,392	2,379
2004	72,757	49,499	17,229	7,428	3,395	5,809	597	3,500	2,528
2005	72,717	49,675	17,162	7,441	3,331	5,769	621	3,467	2,413
2006	73,259	49,992	17,921	7,833	3,616	5,876	596	3,327	2,018
2007	73,554	49,406	18,178	8,203	3,512	5,799	663	3,718	2,251
2008	73,637	49,583	18,086	8,394	3,688	5,367	637	3,614	2,355
2009	74,101	49,117	18,706	8,646	3,895	5,524	641	3,898	2,380
2010	74,094	48,516	19,258	9,333	3,620	5,640	666	3,972	2,348
2011	73,376	47,350	19,595	9,669	3,727	5,591	607	4,297	2,134
2012	73,364	47,361	19,071	9,603	3,471	5,474	522	4,539	2,123
2013	73,262	48,004	18,741	9,437	3,315	5,480	508	4,332	2,185
All Children—Percent Distribution									
1987	100.0%	73.2%	21.6%	6.7%	5.4%	8.0%	1.5%	2.9%	2.3%
1988	100.0%	73.4%	21.6%	6.8%	5.3%	8.2%	1.3%	2.8%	2.1%
1989	100.0%	72.9%	21.7%	6.8%	5.4%	8.0%	1.5%	3.1%	2.2%
1990	100.0%	72.1%	22.6%	7.8%	5.5%	8.0%	1.2%	3.1%	2.2%
1991	100.0%	71.2%	23.5%	8.3%	5.8%	8.4%	1.0%	3.3%	2.0%
1992	100.0%	71.0%	23.4%	8.3%	5.6%	8.6%	1.0%	3.4%	2.2%
1993	100.0%	69.9%	23.7%	8.7%	5.6%	8.4%	1.0%	3.3%	3.1%

			Female-Headed Families						
Year	Total	Married-Couple Families	Total	Never Married	Separated, Spouse Absent	Divorced	Widowed	Male-Headed Families, Spouse Absent	Lives with Other Relatives, Apart from Parents
1994	100.0%	69.4%	23.7%	8.4%	5.6%	8.6%	1.0%	3.5%	3.4%
1995	100.0%	68.8%	24.2%	9.1%	5.6%	8.6%	0.9%	3.9%	3.0%
1996	100.0%	69.0%	23.8%	9.4%	5.3%	8.3%	0.8%	4.4%	2.8%
1997	100.0%	68.9%	23.6%	9.5%	5.0%	8.1%	1.0%	4.5%	3.0%
1998	100.0%	68.9%	23.8%	9.5%	5.0%	8.2%	1.0%	4.4%	3.0%
1999	100.0%	70.0%	22.7%	9.3%	4.5%	7.9%	1.0%	4.3%	3.0%
2000	100.0%	69.9%	22.6%	9.5%	4.4%	7.8%	1.0%	4.4%	3.1%
2001	100.0%	69.5%	23.0%	9.6%	4.6%	7.8%	1.0%	4.6%	2.9%
2002	100.0%	69.1%	23.2%	9.7%	4.6%	8.0%	0.9%	4.6%	3.1%
2003	100.0%	68.4%	23.6%	9.9%	4.5%	8.2%	1.0%	4.7%	3.3%
2004	100.0%	68.0%	23.7%	10.2%	4.7%	8.0%	0.8%	4.8%	3.5%
2005	100.0%	68.3%	23.6%	10.2%	4.6%	7.9%	0.9%	4.8%	3.3%
2006	100.0%	68.2%	24.5%	10.7%	4.9%	8.0%	0.8%	4.5%	2.8%
2007	100.0%	67.2%	24.7%	11.2%	4.8%	7.9%	0.9%	5.1%	3.1%
2008	100.0%	67.3%	24.6%	11.4%	5.0%	7.3%	0.9%	4.9%	3.2%
2009	100.0%	66.3%	25.2%	11.7%	5.3%	7.5%	0.9%	5.3%	3.2%
2010	100.0%	65.5%	26.0%	12.6%	4.9%	7.6%	0.9%	5.4%	3.2%
2011	100.0%	64.5%	26.7%	13.2%	5.1%	7.6%	0.8%	5.9%	2.9%
2012	100.0%	64.9%	26.0%	13.1%	4.7%	7.5%	0.7%	6.2%	2.9%
2013	100.0%	65.5%	25.6%	12.9%	4.5%	7.5%	0.7%	5.9%	3.0%

Year	Total	Married-Couple Families	Female-Headed Families: Total	Female-Headed Families: Never Married	Female-Headed Families: Separated, Spouse Absent	Female-Headed Families: Divorced	Female-Headed Families: Widowed	Male-Headed Families, Spouse Absent	Lives with Other Relatives, Apart from Parents
Poor Children—Numbers in 1,000s									
1987	12,580	4,619	7,081	2,845	2,106	1,801	329	332	549
1988	12,224	4,317	7,088	2,821	2,040	1,925	301	365	456
1989	12,380	4,535	6,904	2,800	1,879	1,856	369	416	524
1990	13,214	4,718	7,615	3,306	2,127	1,910	273	378	503
1991	14,054	4,869	8,223	3,578	2,439	2,016	191	469	493
1992	14,385	4,987	8,252	3,654	2,204	2,183	210	541	606
1993	15,456	5,571	8,532	3,869	2,230	2,178	255	546	807
1994	15,013	5,258	8,367	3,655	2,201	2,297	214	644	743
1995	14,345	4,763	8,221	4,015	2,140	1,875	191	606	755
1996	14,126	4,802	7,861	3,882	1,917	1,878	183	682	781
1997	13,786	4,503	7,907	3,870	1,814	2,034	188	628	749
1998	13,144	4,380	7,541	3,720	1,794	1,799	228	613	610
1999	11,812	4,100	6,515	3,437	1,346	1,532	200	558	639
2000	11,337	3,905	6,216	3,211	1,368	1,393	243	575	641
2001	11,450	3,896	6,334	3,233	1,326	1,540	236	634	585
2002	11,869	4,188	6,443	3,269	1,497	1,465	212	606	631
2003	12,591	4,218	6,868	3,631	1,444	1,588	205	775	729
2004	12,760	4,315	7,065	3,742	1,582	1,541	200	641	739
2005	12,582	4,104	7,077	3,819	1,597	1,492	169	645	756
2006	12,589	3,978	7,371	3,884	1,625	1,655	209	678	562

Year	Total	Married-Couple Families	Female-Headed Families: Total	Never Married	Separated, Spouse Absent	Divorced	Widowed	Male-Headed Families, Spouse Absent	Lives with Other Relatives, Apart from Parents
2007	13,114	4,125	7,511	4,111	1,593	1,577	231	765	714
2008	13,826	4,792	7,536	4,230	1,633	1,469	203	762	735
2009	15,168	5,355	8,113	4,482	1,826	1,613	192	1,063	637
2010	16,162	5,596	8,804	4,947	1,889	1,761	207	1,051	711
2011	15,922	5,147	9,063	5,286	1,840	1,756	182	1,041	671
2012	15,856	5,252	8,772	5,210	1,764	1,611	187	1,163	670
2013	14,497	4,581	8,256	4,961	1,556	1,645	94	992	649
Poor Children—Percentage Distribution									
1987	100.0%	36.7%	56.3%	22.6%	16.7%	14.3%	2.6%	2.6%	4.4%
1988	100.0%	35.3%	58.0%	23.1%	16.7%	15.7%	2.5%	3.0%	3.7%
1989	100.0%	36.6%	55.8%	22.6%	15.2%	15.0%	3.0%	3.4%	4.2%
1990	100.0%	35.7%	57.6%	25.0%	16.1%	14.5%	2.1%	2.9%	3.8%
1991	100.0%	34.6%	58.5%	25.5%	17.4%	14.3%	1.4%	3.3%	3.5%
1992	100.0%	34.7%	57.4%	25.4%	15.3%	15.2%	1.5%	3.8%	4.2%
1993	100.0%	36.0%	55.2%	25.0%	14.4%	14.1%	1.7%	3.5%	5.2%
1994	100.0%	35.0%	55.7%	24.3%	14.7%	15.3%	1.4%	4.3%	4.9%
1995	100.0%	33.2%	57.3%	28.0%	14.9%	13.1%	1.3%	4.2%	5.3%
1996	100.0%	34.0%	55.6%	27.5%	13.6%	13.3%	1.3%	4.8%	5.5%
1997	100.0%	32.7%	57.4%	28.1%	13.2%	14.8%	1.4%	4.6%	5.4%
1998	100.0%	33.3%	57.4%	28.3%	13.6%	13.7%	1.7%	4.7%	4.6%
1999	100.0%	34.7%	55.2%	29.1%	11.4%	13.0%	1.7%	4.7%	5.4%

Year	Total	Married-Couple Families	Female-Headed Families: Total	Never Married	Separated, Spouse Absent	Divorced	Widowed	Male-Headed Families, Spouse Absent	Lives with Other Relatives, Apart from Parents
2000	100.0%	34.4%	54.8%	28.3%	12.1%	12.3%	2.1%	5.1%	5.7%
2001	100.0%	34.0%	55.3%	28.2%	11.6%	13.4%	2.1%	5.5%	5.1%
2002	100.0%	35.3%	54.3%	27.5%	12.6%	12.3%	1.8%	5.1%	5.3%
2003	100.0%	33.5%	54.6%	28.8%	11.5%	12.6%	1.6%	6.2%	5.8%
2004	100.0%	33.8%	55.4%	29.3%	12.4%	12.1%	1.6%	5.0%	5.8%
2005	100.0%	32.6%	56.3%	30.4%	12.7%	11.9%	1.3%	5.1%	6.0%
2006	100.0%	31.6%	58.6%	30.9%	12.9%	13.1%	1.7%	5.4%	4.5%
2007	100.0%	31.5%	57.3%	31.3%	12.1%	12.0%	1.8%	5.8%	5.4%
2008	100.0%	34.7%	54.5%	30.6%	11.8%	10.6%	1.5%	5.5%	5.3%
2009	100.0%	35.3%	53.5%	29.5%	12.0%	10.6%	1.3%	7.0%	4.2%
2010	100.0%	34.6%	54.5%	30.6%	11.7%	10.9%	1.3%	6.5%	4.4%
2011	100.0%	32.3%	56.9%	33.2%	11.6%	11.0%	1.1%	6.5%	4.2%
2012	100.0%	33.1%	55.3%	32.9%	11.1%	10.2%	1.2%	7.3%	4.2%
2013	100.0%	31.6%	57.0%	34.3%	10.7%	11.4%	0.7%	6.9%	4.5%
Child Poverty Rate—Poor Children as a Percent of Total Children, By Family Living Arrangement									
1987	20.0%	10.0%	52.0%	67.2%	61.8%	35.7%	35.1%	18.5%	38.3%
1988	19.3%	9.3%	51.7%	65.7%	60.4%	36.8%	37.5%	20.3%	34.0%
1989	19.4%	9.7%	49.8%	64.1%	55.0%	36.3%	37.8%	20.9%	36.9%
1990	20.4%	10.1%	52.1%	65.6%	59.4%	36.7%	34.9%	18.7%	35.3%
1991	21.4%	10.4%	53.4%	66.1%	64.3%	36.6%	27.7%	21.5%	37.0%
1992	21.6%	10.6%	52.9%	66.3%	58.9%	38.4%	32.3%	23.6%	42.1%

			Female-Headed Families						
Year	Total	Married-Couple Families	Total	Never Married	Separated, Spouse Absent	Divorced	Widowed	Male-Headed Families, Spouse Absent	Lives with Other Relatives, Apart from Parents
1993	22.4%	11.6%	52.2%	64.4%	58.1%	37.5%	36.7%	24.1%	37.5%
1994	21.6%	10.9%	50.8%	62.3%	56.4%	38.2%	30.8%	26.1%	31.6%
1995	20.5%	9.9%	48.4%	63.1%	54.5%	31.0%	28.8%	21.9%	35.4%
1996	20.1%	9.9%	47.0%	58.8%	51.1%	32.2%	32.4%	22.3%	39.4%
1997	19.5%	9.3%	47.5%	57.8%	51.0%	35.6%	27.8%	20.0%	35.2%
1998	18.5%	9.0%	44.8%	55.0%	50.4%	30.9%	33.3%	19.8%	28.7%
1999	16.6%	8.2%	40.3%	52.2%	41.7%	27.1%	28.7%	18.2%	29.7%
2000	15.9%	7.8%	38.6%	47.7%	44.0%	25.0%	34.8%	18.3%	29.4%
2001	16.0%	7.8%	38.4%	47.0%	40.3%	27.5%	32.7%	19.3%	28.3%
2002	16.4%	8.4%	38.4%	46.6%	44.7%	25.5%	31.9%	18.3%	28.5%
2003	17.4%	8.5%	40.1%	50.4%	43.8%	26.9%	29.1%	22.8%	30.6%
2004	17.5%	8.7%	41.0%	50.4%	46.6%	26.5%	33.5%	18.3%	29.2%
2005	17.3%	8.3%	41.2%	51.3%	47.9%	25.9%	27.2%	18.6%	31.3%
2006	17.2%	8.0%	41.1%	49.6%	44.9%	28.2%	35.0%	20.4%	27.9%
2007	17.8%	8.3%	41.3%	50.1%	45.3%	27.2%	34.9%	20.6%	31.7%
2008	18.8%	9.7%	41.7%	50.4%	44.3%	27.4%	31.9%	21.1%	31.2%
2009	20.5%	10.9%	43.4%	51.8%	46.9%	29.2%	29.9%	27.3%	26.8%
2010	21.8%	11.5%	45.7%	53.0%	52.2%	31.2%	31.1%	26.5%	30.3%
2011	21.7%	10.9%	46.3%	54.7%	49.4%	31.4%	30.0%	24.2%	31.4%
2012	21.6%	11.0%	46.0%	54.3%	50.8%	29.4%	35.7%	25.6%	29.4%
2013	19.8%	9.5%	44.1%	52.6%	46.9%	30.0%	18.6%	22.9%	29.7%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 1**.

Table C-2. Number of Recipients and Cases Receiving Cash Assistance Under ADC, AFDC, and TANF, 1960 to 2013

(Annual monthly average, in millions)

Calendar Year	Cases	Recipients	Children	Adults
1960	790,910	3,011,508	2,330,042	691,956
1961	872,722	3,362,722	2,597,700	765,022
1962	939,275	3,703,896	2,843,652	860,244
1963	963,368	3,944,635	2,956,962	987,673
1964	1,010,107	4,194,603	3,144,690	1,049,913
1965	1,060,214	4,421,650	3,320,559	1,101,091
1966	1,095,533	4,546,122	3,433,908	1,112,215
1967	1,219,553	5,013,795	3,771,218	1,242,578
1968	1,409,664	5,702,377	4,273,606	1,428,771
1969	1,695,612	6,689,158	4,973,458	1,715,700
1970	2,206,799	8,461,892	6,211,583	2,250,308
1971	2,762,619	10,242,130	7,434,512	2,807,618
1972	3,048,031	10,944,008	7,905,071	3,038,937
1973	3,147,972	10,949,112	7,902,756	3,046,356
1974	3,187,232	10,825,730	7,803,440	3,022,291
1975	3,481,362	11,318,736	8,070,972	3,247,764
1976	3,564,887	11,283,516	7,981,688	3,301,829
1977	3,568,481	11,015,176	7,742,535	3,272,641
1978	3,516,649	10,550,607	7,363,099	3,187,509
1979	3,509,192	10,311,586	7,181,272	3,130,314
1980	3,712,309	10,774,046	7,419,183	3,354,864
1981	3,835,489	11,079,117	7,526,934	3,552,183
1982	3,541,525	10,358,302	6,902,830	3,455,472
1983	3,686,163	10,760,935	7,097,744	3,663,191
1984	3,713,929	10,830,529	7,143,705	3,686,824
1985	3,701,033	10,855,284	7,197,601	3,657,683
1986	3,763,252	11,037,797	7,333,801	3,703,996
1987	3,775,573	11,026,664	7,366,159	3,660,505
1988	3,748,580	10,914,679	7,328,786	3,585,893
1989	3,798,348	10,992,248	7,418,966	3,573,282
1990	4,056,584	11,694,712	7,910,836	3,783,876
1991	4,497,186	12,930,472	8,714,749	4,215,723

Calendar Year	Cases	Recipients	Children	Adults
1992	4,829,094	13,773,319	9,302,846	4,470,473
1993	5,011,827	14,205,484	9,574,475	4,631,010
1994	5,032,632	14,160,920	9,568,359	4,592,561
1995	4,790,749	13,418,386	9,134,603	4,283,783
1996	4,434,160	12,320,970	8,468,759	3,852,212
1997	3,740,179	10,375,993	n/a	n/a
1998	3,050,335	8,347,136	n/a	n/a
1999	2,554,069	6,824,347	n/a	n/a
2000	2,302,780	6,143,156	4,478,742	1,654,818
2001	2,191,506	5,716,797	4,200,666	1,515,552
2002	2,187,158	5,609,012	4,118,797	1,479,433
2003	2,180,075	5,489,786	4,062,665	1,416,022
2004	2,153,066	5,341,859	3,969,376	1,361,701
2005	2,060,282	5,025,650	3,758,077	1,261,392
2006	1,905,785	4,577,114	3,455,961	1,121,153
2007	1,729,894	4,075,611	3,119,519	956,091
2008	1,700,249	4,001,330	3,056,690	944,640
2009	1,838,438	4,367,817	3,294,766	1,073,282
2010	1,917,943	4,594,409	3,432,780	1,161,628
2011	1,907,794	4,559,126	3,409,383	1,149,742
2012	1,852,628	4,400,230	3,298,369	1,101,861
2013	1,725,649	4,042,375	3,049,590	992,785

Source: Figure prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) from Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Family Assistance (OFA).

Notes: Includes enrollment in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands N/A separated estimates for children and adults not available from 1997 to 1999, due to changes in state reporting requirements during the transition from AFDC to TANF. From 2000 and later, data are for combined enrollment in TANF and Separate State Programs (SSP) under state Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements. Support table for **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**.

Table C-3. Poverty Among Related Children Under Age 18, All Children and Children in Female-Headed Households (No Spouse Present) 1960 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

	All Children			Children in Female-Headed Households				
Year	Total	Poor	Poverty Rate (percent poor)	Total	Share of all Children	Poor	Share of all Poor Children	Poverty Rate (percent poor)
1960	65,275	17,288	26.5	5,987	9.2	4,095	23.7	68.4
1961	65,792	16,577	25.2	6,212	9.4	4,044	24.4	65.1
1962	67,385	16,630	24.7	6,419	9.5	4,506	27.1	70.2
1963	68,837	15,691	22.8	6,419	9.3	4,554	29.0	70.9
1964	69,364	15,736	22.7	6,838	9.9	4,422	28.1	64.7
1965	69,638	14,388	20.7	7,098	10.2	4,562	31.7	64.3
1966	69,869	12,146	17.4	7,106	10.2	4,262	35.1	60.0
1967	70,058	11,427	16.3	7,344	10.5	4,246	37.2	57.8
1968	70,035	10,739	15.3	7,323	10.5	4,409	41.1	60.2
1969	68,746	9,501	13.8	7,820	11.4	4,247	44.7	54.3
1970	68,815	10,235	14.9	7,987	11.6	4,689	45.8	58.7
1971	68,474	10,344	15.1	9,127	13.3	4,850	46.9	53.1
1972	67,592	10,082	14.9	9,600	14.2	5,094	50.5	53.1
1973	66,626	9,453	14.2	9,929	14.9	5,171	54.7	52.1
1974	65,802	9,967	15.1	10,458	15.9	5,387	54.0	51.5
1975	64,750	10,882	16.8	10,622	16.4	5,597	51.4	52.7
1976	63,729	10,081	15.8	10,739	16.9	5,583	55.4	52.0
1977	62,823	10,028	16.0	11,238	17.9	5,658	56.4	50.3
1978	61,987	9,722	15.7	11,232	18.1	5,687	58.5	50.6
1979	62,646	9,993	16.0	11,595	18.5	5,635	56.4	48.6
1980	62,168	11,114	17.9	11,539	18.6	5,866	52.8	50.8
1981	61,756	12,068	19.5	12,059	19.5	6,305	52.2	52.3
1982	61,565	13,139	21.3	11,946	19.4	6,696	51.0	56.1
1983	61,578	13,427	21.8	12,172	19.8	6,747	50.2	55.4
1984	61,681	12,929	21.0	12,536	20.3	6,772	52.4	54.0
1985	62,019	12,483	20.1	12,531	20.2	6,716	53.8	53.6
1986	62,009	12,257	19.8	12,763	20.6	6,943	56.6	54.4
1987	62,423	12,275	19.7	13,066	20.9	7,019	57.2	53.7
1988	62,906	11,935	19.0	13,146	20.9	6,955	58.3	52.9
1989	63,225	12,001	19.0	13,316	21.1	6,808	56.7	51.1

	All Children			Children in Female-Headed Households				
Year	Total	Poor	Poverty Rate (percent poor)	Total	Share of all Children	Poor	Share of all Poor Children	Poverty Rate (percent poor)
1990	63,908	12,715	19.9	13,793	21.6	7,363	57.9	53.4
1991	64,800	13,658	21.1	14,545	22.4	8,065	59.0	55.4
1992	67,256	14,521	21.6	15,319	22.8	8,368	57.6	54.6
1993	68,040	14,961	22.0	15,844	23.3	8,503	56.8	53.7
1994	68,819	14,610	21.2	15,924	23.1	8,427	57.7	52.9
1995	69,425	13,999	20.2	16,637	24.0	8,364	59.7	50.3
1996	69,411	13,764	19.8	16,213	23.4	7,990	58.0	49.3
1997	69,844	13,422	19.2	16,175	23.2	7,928	59.1	49.0
1998	70,253	12,845	18.3	16,550	23.6	7,627	59.4	46.1
1999	70,424	11,678	16.6	15,891	22.6	6,694	57.3	42.1
2000	70,538	11,005	15.6	15,717	22.3	6,300	57.2	40.1
2001	70,950	11,175	15.8	16,137	22.7	6,341	56.7	39.3
2002	71,619	11,646	16.3	16,565	23.1	6,564	56.4	39.6
2003	71,907	12,340	17.2	16,964	23.6	7,085	57.4	41.8
2004	72,133	12,473	17.3	17,081	23.7	7,152	57.3	41.9
2005	72,095	12,335	17.1	16,862	23.4	7,210	58.4	42.8
2006	72,609	12,299	16.9	17,416	24.0	7,341	59.7	42.2
2007	72,792	12,802	17.6	17,557	24.1	7,546	58.9	43.0
2008	72,980	13,507	18.5	17,456	23.9	7,587	56.2	43.5
2009	73,410	14,774	20.1	17,907	24.4	7,942	53.8	44.4
2010[a]	72,581	15,598	21.5	18,451	25.4	8,603	55.2	46.6
2011	72,568	15,539	21.4	18,942	26.1	9,026	58.1	47.7
2012	72,545	15,437	21.3	18,368	25.3	8,664	56.1	47.2
2013	72,573	14,142	19.5	18,122	25.0	8,305	58.7	45.8

Source: Prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on U.S. Census Bureau historical series, available at http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/people.html, "Table 10. Related Children in Female Householder Families, by Poverty Status."

Notes: Estimates are for children in female-headed "households," which differs somewhat from the CRS definition of female-headed "families" used later in this report based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data. Support table for **Figure 4**

a. Revised estimates based on 2010 Census population control totals.

Table C-4. Mothers with Related Children Under Age 18, by Poverty and Marital Status, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in thousands)

	Single Mothers																	
	All Single Mothers			Never Married			Separated, Spouse Absent			Divorced			Widowed			Married, Spouse Present		
Year	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor
1987	8,193	3,661	44.7%	2,689	1,559	58.0%	1,787	975	54.6%	3,130	948	30.3%	588	180	30.6%	24,992	1,912	7.7%
1988	8,321	3,650	43.9%	2,798	1,595	57.0%	1,770	911	51.5%	3,224	966	30.0%	529	177	33.5%	25,096	1,785	7.1%
1989	8,400	3,506	41.7%	2,775	1,536	55.4%	1,836	860	46.9%	3,197	930	29.1%	593	179	30.2%	24,921	1,816	7.3%
1990	8,745	3,821	43.7%	3,100	1,730	55.8%	1,922	986	51.3%	3,225	956	29.6%	498	148	29.7%	24,863	1,938	7.8%
1991	9,031	4,101	45.4%	3,284	1,909	58.1%	1,950	1,075	55.1%	3,349	1,017	30.4%	448	99	22.2%	24,880	2,075	8.3%
1992	9,567	4,339	45.4%	3,595	2,059	57.3%	2,027	1,039	51.3%	3,524	1,128	32.0%	421	112	26.6%	25,386	2,178	8.6%
1993	9,860	4,456	45.2%	3,830	2,139	55.8%	2,044	1,050	51.4%	3,544	1,128	31.8%	443	140	31.7%	25,614	2,295	9.0%
1994	9,837	4,203	42.7%	3,681	1,982	53.8%	2,050	992	48.4%	3,674	1,113	30.3%	432	117	27.0%	25,646	2,170	8.5%
1995	9,887	3,971	40.2%	3,724	1,963	52.7%	2,083	960	46.1%	3,668	949	25.9%	411	99	24.0%	25,386	1,923	7.6%
1996	10,052	4,005	39.8%	4,097	2,033	49.6%	1,965	869	44.3%	3,605	988	27.4%	385	115	29.9%	25,603	1,921	7.5%
1997	9,874	3,946	40.0%	4,154	2,043	49.2%	1,838	794	43.2%	3,448	1,014	29.4%	435	95	21.8%	25,735	1,785	6.9%
1998	9,881	3,685	37.3%	4,184	1,933	46.2%	1,813	754	41.6%	3,489	884	25.3%	396	115	29.1%	25,573	1,775	6.9%
1999	9,741	3,314	34.0%	4,197	1,869	44.5%	1,725	598	34.6%	3,425	750	21.9%	394	98	24.8%	25,806	1,647	6.4%
2000	9,712	3,090	31.8%	4,199	1,668	39.7%	1,662	610	36.7%	3,404	696	20.5%	447	116	26.0%	26,563	1,557	5.9%
2001	10,044	3,259	32.4%	4,311	1,716	39.8%	1,787	614	34.4%	3,501	804	23.0%	445	124	27.9%	26,303	1,574	6.0%
2002	10,206	3,284	32.2%	4,422	1,737	39.3%	1,822	695	38.2%	3,538	736	20.8%	424	115	27.2%	26,484	1,789	6.8%
2003	10,411	3,525	33.9%	4,511	1,917	42.5%	1,758	650	37.0%	3,699	847	22.9%	443	110	24.8%	26,414	1,841	7.0%
2004	10,489	3,663	34.9%	4,647	2,016	43.4%	1,806	726	40.2%	3,631	810	22.3%	404	111	27.4%	26,797	1,858	6.9%
2005	10,476	3,640	34.7%	4,657	2,040	43.8%	1,777	716	40.3%	3,618	786	21.7%	424	98	23.1%	26,507	1,729	6.5%
2006	10,938	3,841	35.1%	4,934	2,100	42.6%	1,970	777	39.5%	3,652	850	23.3%	381	114	29.9%	26,857	1,709	6.4%
2007	10,748	3,790	35.3%	4,961	2,135	43.0%	1,873	734	39.2%	3,507	796	22.7%	407	124	30.6%	25,851	1,718	6.6%

	Single Mothers																	
	All Single Mothers			Never Married			Separated, Spouse Absent			Divorced			Widowed			Married, Spouse Present		
Year	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor	Total	Poor	Pct. Poor
2008	10,797	3,863	35.8%	5,120	2,220	43.4%	2,002	772	38.5%	3,284	759	23.1%	391	112	28.6%	25,861	1,933	7.5%
2009	10,990	4,128	37.6%	5,225	2,365	45.3%	2,019	825	40.8%	3,333	831	24.9%	413	107	26.0%	25,398	2,109	8.3%
2010	11,185	4,418	39.5%	5,497	2,535	46.1%	1,893	845	44.6%	3,380	916	27.1%	416	122	29.5%	24,807	2,210	8.9%
2011	11,467	4,540	39.6%	5,766	2,707	46.9%	1,960	833	42.5%	3,386	906	26.7%	356	94	26.4%	24,519	2,169	8.8%
2012	11,125	4,422	39.8%	5.760	2,709	47.0%	1,844	799	43.4%	3,198	817	25.5%	324	97	30.0%	24,645	2,194	8.9%
2013	10,970	4,164	38.0%	5,635	2,549	45.2%	1,744	704	40.4%	3,248	850	26.2%	343	61	17.8%	24,830	1,924	7.7%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 5** and **Figure 6**.

Table C-5. Single Mothers: Poverty and Cash Welfare Receipt, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in thousands)

Year	Number of Mother-Only Families	Number Receiving AFDC/TANF	Poor but Not Receiving AFDC/TANF	Neither Poor nor Receiving AFDC/TANF
1987	8,193	2,719	1,399	4,076
1988	8,321	2,737	1,380	4,204
1989	8,400	2,537	1,452	4,411
1990	8,745	2,901	1,456	4,387
1991	9,031	3,101	1,554	4,375
1992	9,567	3,300	1,691	4,575
1993	9,860	3,439	1,722	4,700
1994	9,837	3,166	1,754	4,916
1995	9,887	2,862	1,818	5,207
1996	10,052	2,669	1,946	5,437
1997	9,874	2,225	2,211	5,438
1998	9,881	1,872	2,253	5,756
1999	9,741	1,543	2,216	5,981
2000	9,712	1,215	2,251	6,246
2001	10,044	1,064	2,501	6,479
2002	10,206	1,025	2,577	6,604
2003	10,411	1,253	2,610	6,448
2004	10,442	1,054	2,890	6,498
2005	10,476	1,102	2,837	6,537
2006	10,938	991	3,120	6,827
2007	10,748	878	3,142	6,728
2008	10,797	974	3,161	6,662
2009	10,990	967	3,408	6,615
2010	11,185	1,009	3,680	6,497
2011	11,467	1,088	3,776	6,603
2012	11,125	962	3,715	6,448
2013	10,970	795	3,605	6,570

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 7**.

Table C-6. Welfare, Work, and Poverty Status Among Single Mothers, 1987 to 2013

			Percent who Received AFDC/TANF During the Year		
Year	Percent who Worked During Year	Percent Poor ("official definition")	Total	Did not Work During Year	Worked During Year
1987	67.3%	44.7%	33.2%	21.8%	11.4%
1988	68.9%	43.9%	32.9%	21.1%	11.8%
1989	70.1%	41.7%	30.2%	20.1%	10.1%
1990	69.8%	43.7%	33.2%	20.9%	12.3%
1991	68.7%	45.4%	34.3%	22.0%	12.3%
1992	67.2%	45.4%	34.5%	22.2%	12.3%
1993	68.1%	45.2%	34.9%	21.8%	13.1%
1994	71.4%	42.7%	32.2%	18.8%	13.4%
1995	73.0%	40.2%	28.9%	16.5%	12.4%
1996	75.1%	39.8%	26.65	14.6%	12.0%
1997	77.3%	40.0%	22.5%	11.4%	11.1%
1998	79.6%	37.3%	18.9%	8.2%	10.7%
1999	82.0%	34.0%	15.8%	6.5%	9.3%
2000	82.7%	31.8%	12.5%	5.3%	7.2%
2001	81.1%	32.4%	10.6%	5.1%	5.5%
2002	80.3%	32.2%	10.0%	4.6%	5.4%
2003	78.7%	33.9%	12.0%	6.1%	5.9%
2004	77.7%	34.9%	10.1%	5.2%	4.9%
2005	77.6%	34.7%	10.5%	6.6%	3.9%
2006	77.3%	35.1%	9.1%	4.6%	4.4%
2007	77.9%	35.3%	8.2%	4.1%	4.1%
2008	76.9%	35.8%	9.0%	4.4%	4.6%
2009	74.0%	37.6%	8.8%	5.2%	3.6%
2010	72.8%	39.5%	9.0%	5.1%	3.9%
2011	73.7%	39.6%	9.5%	5.3%	4.2%
2012	74.1%	39.8%	8.6%	5.0%	3.6%
2013	75.0%	38.9%	7.3%	4.2%	3.1%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Notes: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. Support table for **Figure 8**.

Table C-7. Employment Rates of Single and Married Mothers, by Age of Youngest Child, March 1988 to March 2014

(Percent of single mothers employed in March)

	Single Mothers				Married Mothers			
Year	With a Child Under Age 18	Youngest Child Under Age 3	Youngest Child Age 3 to 5	Youngest Child Age 6 to 17	With a Child Under Age 18	Youngest Child Under Age 3	Youngest Child Age 3 to 5	Youngest Child Age 6 to 17
1988	57.4%	35.1%	52.9%	69.1%	61.8%	50.7%	58.1%	69.6%
1989	58.2%	37.9%	53.1%	70.0%	63.0%	51.4%	60.8%	70.6%
1990	60.3%	38.0%	61.0%	70.9%	63.4%	52.7%	60.9%	70.8%
1991	58.1%	36.6%	55.7%	70.2%	63.1%	52.7%	60.5%	70.5%
1992	57.3%	35.2%	54.1%	69.8%	63.9%	53.1%	59.4%	71.9%
1993	57.3%	35.1%	54.8%	70.1%	63.9%	53.2%	59.4%	71.9%
1994	58.0%	37.7%	55.2%	69.3%	65.5%	56.0%	61.2%	72.6%
1995	61.1%	43.1%	58.5%	70.5%	67.1%	57.4%	63.9%	73.4%
1996	63.5%	44.7%	60.4%	72.9%	67.6%	58.2%	63.3%	74.2%
1997	65.6%	51.5%	64.3%	72.0%	68.5%	58.3%	64.4%	75.2%
1998	68.8%	54.8%	63.7%	76.4%	67.9%	58.3%	64.1%	74.2%
1999	70.7%	55.8%	69.8%	77.1%	67.9%	57.0%	63.1%	75.1%
2000	72.8%	59.1%	72.7%	78.5%	68.4%	56.8%	66.0%	75.0%
2001	72.5%	57.6%	71.3%	79.1%	68.0%	56.0%	64.2%	75.1%
2002	71.2%	57.9%	71.0%	76.3%	66.7%	54.9%	61.7%	74.1%
2003	69.6%	54.8%	69.3%	75.4%	66.3%	53.5%	61.7%	74.2%
2004	69.7%	54.1%	69.5%	75.7%	65.3%	52.4%	62.3%	72.7%
2005	68.9%	53.7%	66.7%	75.7%	65.9%	54.9%	61.9%	72.8%
2006	69.6%	57.0%	68.0%	75.1%	66.1%	55.4%	61.8%	73.1%
2007	70.0%	56.5%	68.6%	76.0%	67.3%	56.9%	63.0%	74.25
2008	69.1%	54.5%	68.5%	75.5%	67.0%	56.1%	63.6%	73.7%
2009	65.8%	52.5%	62.3%	72.9%	66.0%	56.3%	60.1%	72.7%
2010	64.1%	52.9%	59.7%	70.7%	65.3%	54.9%	62.6%	71.3%
2011	63.6%	49.6%	60.1%	70.8%	64.9%	55.7%	61.7%	70.6%
2012	65.7%	51.4%	65.1%	72.2%	65.0%	55.7%	62.8%	70.1%
2013	65.3%	54.3%	62.2%	71.0%	64.4%	56.9%	61.1%	68.9%
2014	67.5%	54.9%	66.0%	73.1%	65.3%	56.5%	60.5%	70.8%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 9**.

Table C-8. Monthly Unemployment Rate of Women Who Maintain Families, January 1987 to October 2014

(Rates are not seasonally adjusted)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual Average
1987	9.8	10.0	9.7	9.0	9.1	9.5	9.0	9.7	9.3	9.2	8.4	7.6	9.2
1988	8.9	8.6	7.5	8.2	8.1	7.9	8.2	7.9	8.5	8.1	7.5	7.6	8.1
1989	8.1	8.3	7.8	7.3	8.1	7.9	8.5	8.4	8.0	7.8	8.1	7.5	8.1
1990	7.8	7.9	8.3	7.2	7.4	8.1	8.8	9.0	9.4	8.8	8.7	8.4	8.3
1991	9.2	9.4	9.0	9.2	9.0	9.1	8.8	10.2	9.6	9.8	9.1	8.6	9.3
1992	9.2	9.8	9.9	9.8	9.7	10.2	11.0	11.4	9.6	9.4	10.4	9.7	10.0
1993	10.5	10.5	9.1	9.5	9.6	9.8	10.4	9.6	9.1	9.4	9.0	9.8	9.7
1994	9.5	9.9	9.5	8.9	8.6	8.7	8.3	9.4	8.7	8.8	8.1	8.7	8.9
1995	9.1	8.5	7.7	8.8	7.8	8.3	8.8	7.4	7.9	7.9	7.3	6.6	8.0
1996	8.4	7.7	7.4	7.0	8.3	7.6	9.7	9.0	8.3	8.5	8.4	8.1	8.2
1997	9.5	9.1	8.7	7.1	7.5	7.9	8.2	8.6	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.2	8.1
1998	8.3	7.9	7.6	6.8	7.2	6.8	7.3	7.2	7.5	6.9	6.9	5.8	7.2
1999	6.7	6.8	6.8	6.5	5.8	6.3	6.8	6.7	6.5	6.0	6.0	5.7	6.4
2000	6.6	6.4	7.0	5.8	6.3	5.9	5.9	6.4	5.4	5.3	5.1	4.5	5.9
2001	6.7	6.3	6.5	5.9	6.2	6.2	6.5	7.0	6.9	6.6	7.7	7.2	6.6
2002	8.2	8.3	7.9	8.2	8.1	8.2	8.6	7.6	7.0	7.7	8.0	7.9	8.0
2003	8.0	9.0	8.4	8.5	8.3	8.7	9.0	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.3	8.4	8.5
2004	8.3	8.1	8.4	7.5	7.4	8.2	9.0	8.3	8.2	7.8	7.7	7.1	8.0
2005	8.2	8.0	8.0	7.7	7.9	8.2	8.8	7.2	7.6	7.3	7.2	6.9	7.8
2006	8.2	7.5	7.5	7.5	6.3	7.2	7.4	6.7	6.8	6.5	6.9	6.2	7.1
2007	6.6	6.5	6.7	6.2	6.3	6.8	6.8	6.2	6.4	6.3	6.6	6.9	6.5
2008	7.0	6.7	7.1	6.8	6.9	7.9	8.5	9.6	8.2	8.8	9.3	9.5	8.0
2009	10.3	10.3	10.8	10.0	11.0	11.7	12.6	12.2	11.6	12.9	11.4	13.0	11.5
2010	12.3	11.6	11.3	11.0	11.6	12.1	13.4	13.4	12.9	12.4	13.0	12.0	12.3
2011	12.7	13.0	12.3	11.7	12.7	12.8	12.1	11.9	12.4	12.3	12.4	12.9	12.4
2012	12.0	11.7	10.8	10.2	10.9	11.8	11.7	12.3	11.3	11.5	10.7	11.3	11.4
2013	11.3	11.0	10.7	10.3	9.9	10.7	10.5	11.0	8.8	9.5	9.7	8.7	10.2
2014	9.1	9.1	9.0	8.5	8.4	8.1	9.1	9.3	8.3	8.7			

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data extracted from the internet on November 10, 2014. Data available at http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/srgate (Series: LNU04000313).

Note: Support table for **Figure 10**.

Table C-9. Poor Single Mothers: Work and Welfare Status During the Year, 1987 to 2013

Year	Number of Poor Single Mothers (in 000s)	Received Cash Welfare During Year	Received Cash Welfare but Did Not Work During Year	Combined Work and Welfare over the Year	Worked at Any Time During the Year	Worked but Did Not Receive Cash Welfare at Any Time During the Year	Neither Worked nor Received Welfare During the Year
1987	3,661	61.8%	43.3%	18.5%	42.2%	23.7%	14.5%
1988	3,650	62.2%	43.0%	19.2%	43.5%	24.3%	13.5%
1989	3,506	58.6%	42.7%	15.9%	43.1%	27.2%	14.2%
1990	3,821	61.9%	41.4%	20.5%	46.0%	25.5%	12.6%
1991	4,101	62.1%	43.3%	18.8%	44.3%	25.5%	12.5%
1992	4,339	61.0%	42.1%	18.9%	43.6%	24.7%	14.3%
1993	4,456	61.4%	41.5%	19.8%	44.3%	24.5%	14.1%
1994	4,203	58.3%	37.8%	20.5%	47.3%	26.8%	14.9%
1995	3,971	54.2%	34.2%	20.0%	49.7%	29.7%	16.1%
1996	4,005	51.4%	31.1%	20.3%	52.6%	32.2%	16.4%
1997	3,946	44.0%	24.5%	19.5%	57.8%	38.3%	17.7%
1998	3,685	38.9%	19.2%	19.7%	60.4%	40.7%	20.4%
1999	3,314	33.1%	15.4%	17.8%	64.3%	46.5%	20.3%
2000	3,090	27.2%	13.6%	13.6%	61.6%	48.1%	24.8%
2001	3,259	23.2%	12.9%	10.4%	58.6%	48.2%	28.6%
2002	3,284	21.5%	11.8%	9.8%	59.0%	49.2%	29.3%
2003	3,525	26.0%	14.7%	11.2 %	56.5%	45.3%	28.7%
2004	3,648	20.8%	12.1%	8.7%	55.3%	46.6%	32.6%
2005	3,640	22.1%	13.2%	8.9%	54.0%	45.1%	32.8%
2006	3,841	18.8%	11.0%	7.8%	54.4%	46.7%	34.6%
2007	3,790	17.1%	10.0%	7.1%	55.9%	48.8%	34.1%
2008	3,863	18.2%	10.4%	7.8%	55.0%	47.2%	34.6%
2009	4,128	17.5%	11.4%	6.1%	51.6%	45.6%	37.0%
2010	4,418	16.7%	10.9%	5.8%	50.8%	45.0%	38.3%
2011	4,540	16.8%	10.7%	6.1%	51.5%	45.3%	37.8%
2012	4,422	16.0%	10.7%	5.3%	52.9%	47.7%	36.3%
2013	4,164	13.4%	8.7%	4.7%	53.9%	49.2%	37.4%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 11**.

Table C-10. Receipt of Selected Benefits by Female-Headed Families with Children, All Families and "Earnings Poor" Families, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

		Received AFDC, TANF, or GA		Received SSI		Received Food Stamps/SNAP		Received UI		Received Child Support		Received the EITC		Received the ACTC[a]	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
All Families															
1987	8,193	2,719	33.2%	412	5.0%	2,958	36.1%	421	5.1%	2,322	28.3%	3,437	41.9%		
1988	8,321	2,737	32.9%	383	4.6%	3,034	36.5%	446	5.4%	2,286	27.5%	3,994	48.0%		
1989	8,400	2,537	30.2%	404	4.8%	2,860	34.0%	493	5.9%	2,451	29.2%	4,086	48.6%		
1990	8,745	2,901	33.2%	430	4.9%	3,260	37.3%	628	7.2%	2,531	28.9%	4,365	49.9%		
1991	9,031	3,101	34.3%	474	5.3%	3,572	39.6%	694	7.7%	2,603	28.8%	4,441	49.2%		
1992	9,567	3,300	34.5%	555	5.8%	3,981	41.6%	721	7.5%	2,849	29.8%	4,745	49.6%		
1993	9,860	3,439	34.9%	748	7.6%	4,295	43.6%	699	7.1%	2,968	30.1%	4,963	50.3%		
1994	9,837	3,166	32.2%	725	7.4%	4,036	41.0%	706	7.2%	3,097	31.5%	5,312	54.0%		
1995	9,887	2,862	28.9%	722	7.3%	3,755	38.0%	615	6.2%	3,263	33.0%	5,589	56.5%		
1996	10,052	2,669	26.6%	755	7.5%	3,674	36.5%	692	6.9%	3,204	31.9%	5,987	59.6%		
1997	9,874	2,225	22.5%	723	7.3%	3,291	33.3%	554	5.6%	3,015	30.5%	5,950	60.3%		
1998	9,881	1,872	18.9%	661	6.7%	3,019	30.6%	543	5.5%	3,077	31.1%	6,064	61.4%		
1999	9,741	1,543	15.8%	619	6.4%	2,491	25.6%	496	5.1%	3,158	32.4%	6,196	63.6%		
2000	9,712	1,215	12.5%	614	6.3%	2,298	23.7%	519	5.3%	3,194	32.9%	6,039	62.2%		
2001	10,044	1,064	10.6%	630	6.3%	2,433	24.2%	705	7.0%	3,387	33.7%	6,033	60.1%		

		Received AFDC, TANF, or GA		Received SSI		Received Food Stamps/SNAP		Received UI		Received Child Support		Received the EITC		Received the ACTC[a]	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
2002	10,206	1,025	10.0%	591	5.8%	2,574	25.2%	800	7.8%	3,330	32.6%	6,018	59.0%		
2003	10,411	1,253	12.0%	600	5.8%	2,758	26.5%	766	7.4%	3,333	32.0%	5,187	49.8%		
2004	10,442	1,054	10.1%	704	6.7%	2,918	27.9%	659	6.3%	3,373	32.3%	5,209	49.9%	3,876	37.1%
2005	10,476	1,102	10.5%	699	6.7%	3,005	28.7%	608	5.8%	3,205	30.6%	6,170	58.9%	3,384	32.3%
2006	10,938	991	9.1%	694	6.3%	2,982	27.3%	533	4.9%	3,233	29.6%	6,451	59.0%	3,625	33.1%
2007	10,748	878	8.2%	668	6.2%	2,979	27.7%	499	4.6%	3,157	29.4%	6,454	60.0%	3,526	32.8%
2008	10,797	974	9.0%	663	6.1%	3,464	32.1%	813	7.5%	3,044	28.2%	6,384	59.1%	3,366	31.2%
2009	10,990	967	8.8%	716	6.5%	3,908	35.6%	1,100	10.0%	3,004	27.3%	6,546	59.6%	4,976	45.3%
2010	11,185	1,009	9.0%	676	6.0%	4,165	37.2%	1,229	11.0%	3,041	27.2%	6,479	57.9%	4,831	43.2%
2011	11,467	1,088	9.5%	707	6.2%	4,391	38.3%	1,099	9.6%	3,099	27.0%	6,836	59.6%	5,030	43.9%
2012	11,125	962	8.6%	698	6.3%	4,452	40.0%	879	7.9%	3,093	27.8%	6,749	60.7%	5,095	45.8%
2013	10,970	795	7.3%	679	6.2%	4,301	39.2%	719	6.6%	2,936	26.8%	6,562	59.8%	4,900	44.7%
"Earnings Poor" Families															
1987	4,417	2,515	56.9%	352	8.0%	2,756	62.4%	206	4.7%	942	21.3%	1,798	40.7%		
1988	4,476	2,506	56.0%	312	7.0%	2,782	62.2%	198	4.4%	928	20.7%	1,940	43.3%		
1989	4,384	2,318	52.9%	318	7.3%	2,635	60.1%	224	5.1%	1,012	23.1%	1,959	44.7%		
1990	4,707	2,670	56.7%	353	7.5%	3,012	64.0%	261	5.5%	1,057	22.4%	2,159	45.9%		
1991	4,983	2,840	57.0%	412	8.3%	3,232	64.9%	320	6.4%	1,049	21.0%	2,277	45.7%		
1992	5,292	2,968	56.1%	469	8.9%	3,557	67.2%	398	7.5%	1,217	23.0%	2,372	44.8%		
1993	5,540	3,114	56.2%	611	11.0%	3,831	69.1%	362	6.5%	1,333	24.1%	2,425	43.8%		
1994	5,297	2,848	53.8%	623	11.8%	3,576	67.5%	344	6.5%	1,300	24.5%	2,609	49.3%		

		Received AFDC, TANF, or GA		Received SSI		Received Food Stamps/SNAP		Received UI		Received Child Support		Received the EITC		Received the ACTC[a]	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1995	5,040	2,495	49.5%	585	11.6%	3,233	64.1%	307	6.1%	1,432	28.4%	2,635	52.3%		
1996	5,009	2,330	46.5%	633	12.6%	3,125	62.4%	333	6.7%	1,299	25.9%	2,722	54.3%		
1997	4,993	2,038	40.8%	574	11.5%	2,867	57.4%	300	6.0%	1,247	25.0%	2,821	56.5%		
1998	4,730	1,688	35.7%	548	11.6%	2,584	54.6%	289	6.1%	1,131	23.9%	2,895	61.2%		
1999	4,249	1,321	31.1%	474	11.2%	2,135	50.3%	230	5.4%	1,101	25.9%	2,720	64.0%		
2000	3,966	1,026	25.9%	462	11.7%	1,931	48.7%	200	5.0%	1,100	27.7%	2,508	63.2%		
2001	4,205	920	21.9%	484	11.5%	2,029	48.3%	307	7.3%	1,233	29.3%	2,502	59.5%		
2002	4,308	863	20.0%	451	10.5%	2,080	48.3%	414	9.6%	1,301	30.2%	2,531	58.8%		
2003	4,470	1,078	24.1%	465	10.4%	2,294	51.3%	380	8.5%	1,293	28.9%	2,182	48.8%		
2004	4,625	913	19.7%	526	11.4%	2,428	52.5%	317	6.9%	1,326	28.7%	2,219	48.0%	1,187	25.7%
2005	4,605	956	20.8%	571	12.4%	2,487	54.0%	285	6.2%	1,225	26.6%	2,636	57.2%	874	19.0%
2006	4,866	844	17.3%	548	11.3%	2,554	52.5%	256	5.3%	1,346	27.7%	2,800	57.5%	1,008	20.7%
2007	4,801	765	15.9%	533	11.1%	2,456	51.2%	223	4.7%	1,303	27.1%	2,846	59.3%	1,085	22.6%
2008	4,961	838	16.9%	524	10.6%	2,787	56.2%	381	7.7%	1,258	25.4%	2,954	59.5%	1,067	21.5%
2009	5,313	864	16.3%	575	10.8%	3,197	60.2%	607	11.4%	1,345	25.3%	3,072	57.8%	2,433	45.8%
2010	5,599	871	15.5%	551	9.8%	3,344	59.7%	758	13.5%	1,385	24.7%	3,154	56.3%	2,435	43.5%
2011	5,666	917	16.2%	540	9.5%	3,495	61.7%	640	11.3%	1,426	25.2%	3,213	56.7%	2,522	44.5%
2012	5,516	825	14.9%	551	10.0%	3,565	64.6%	532	9.6%	1,463	26.5%	3,203	58.1%	2,599	47.1%
2013	5,22	647	12.4%	538	10.3%	3,341	64.0%	417	8.0%	1,362	26.1%	3,040	58.2%	2,399	45.9%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Notes: "Earnings poor" families whose annual earned income is below their poverty income threshold. Other sources of income received by these families might subsequently lift their total income above poverty. Support table for **Figure 12**.

a. The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 (EGTRRA; P.L. 107-16) made the Child Tax Credit (CTC) partially refundable. Beginning in 2004, the Census Bureau began modeling the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC), the refundable portion of the CTC, on the CPS/ASEC.

Table C-11. Effect of Earnings, Transfers, and Taxes on Family Poverty and Household Low-Income Status, All Single Mothers, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

		Poverty Rates by Income Concept										
Year	Number of Families	Earned Income Only	+ Cash, Other than Child Support, UI, and Cash Welfare	+ Child Support	+ UI Benefits	+ SSI	+ AFDC, TANF, GA ("Official Poverty Rate")	+ Food Stamp / SNAP Benefits	+ EITC Less FICA and Federal and State Income Taxes	+ ACTC	+ Economic Stimulus and Recovery Payments + Making Work Pay Tax Credit	Total House-hold After-Tax Income
1987	8,193	53.9%	49.2%	47.4%	47.1%	46.6%	44.7%	42.3%	42.6%	42.6%	42.6%	39.5%
1988	8,321	53.8%	48.6%	46.5%	46.1%	45.9%	43.9%	42.2%	42.1%	42.1%	42.1%	38.9%
1989	8,400	52.2%	46.8%	44.4%	44.0%	43.7%	41.7%	39.7%	39.9%	39.9%	39.9%	36.3%
1990	8,745	53.8%	49.0%	46.9%	46.6%	46.1%	43.7%	41.5%	41.2%	41.2%	41.2%	37.4%
1991	9,031	55.2%	50.1%	48.3%	47.8%	47.4%	45.4%	42.8%	42.2%	42.2%	42.2%	38.0%
1992	9,567	55.3%	50.8%	48.8%	48.2%	47.4%	45.4%	42.5%	41.7%	41.7%	41.7%	37.5%
1993	9,860	56.2%	50.9%	48.7%	48.1%	47.4%	45.2%	42.7%	41.9%	41.9%	41.9%	37.8%
1994	9,837	53.9%	48.5%	46.5%	46.0%	45.5%	42.7%	39.8%	37.5%	37.5%	37.5%	33.3%
1995	9,887	51.0%	46.4%	43.6%	43.2%	42.3%	40.2%	36.9%	33.4%	33.4%	33.4%	30.0%
1996	10,052	49.8%	45.2%	43.1%	42.6%	41.5%	39.8%	37.1%	33.9%	33.9%	33.9%	30.2%

		Poverty Rates by Income Concept										
Year	Number of Families	Earned Income Only	+ Cash, Other than Child Support, UI, and Cash Welfare	+ Child Support	+ UI Benefits	+ SSI	+ AFDC, TANF, GA ("Official Poverty Rate")	+ Food Stamp / SNAP Benefits	+ EITC Less FICA and Federal and State Income Taxes	+ ACTC	+ Economic Stimulus and Recovery Payments + Making Work Pay Tax Credit	Total House-hold After-Tax Income
1997	9,874	50.6%	45.1%	43.0%	42.6%	41.7%	40.0%	37.7%	33.5%	33.5%	33.5%	29.2%
1998	9,881	47.9%	42.6%	40.1%	39.5%	38.8%	37.3%	35.2%	30.8%	30.8%	30.8%	27.3%
1999	9,741	43.6%	38.9%	36.7%	36.3%	35.3%	34.0%	32.2%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	24.7%
2000	9,712	40.8%	36.0%	33.9%	33.7%	32.8%	31.8%	30.5%	26.8%	26.8%	26.8%	22.8%
2001	10,044	41.9%	37.6%	34.9%	34.3%	33.3%	32.4%	30.9%	27.2%	27.2%	27.2%	23.4%
2002	10,206	42.2%	37.1%	34.8%	33.8%	32.9%	32.2%	30.5%	26.6%	26.6%	26.6%	23.4%
2003	10,411	42.9%	38.4%	36.1%	35.3%	34.5%	33.9%	32.2%	29.0%	29.0%	29.0%	24.8%
2004	10,442	44.3%	39.6%	37.1%	36.5%	35.7%	34.9%	32.5%	29.9%	29.2%	29.2%	24.8%
2005	10,476	44.0%	39.5%	37.0%	36.4%	35.5%	34.7%	32.6%	28.9%	28.5%	28.5%	24.4%
2006	10,938	44.5%	39.6%	37.5%	36.9%	35.7%	35.1%	32.9%	29.2%	28.7%	28.7%	23.7%
2007	10,748	44.7%	39.4%	37.1%	36.7%	35.8%	35.3%	33.1%	29.1%	28.8%	28.8%	24.4%
2008	10,797	45.9%	40.5%	38.1%	37.3%	36.3%	35.8%	33.3%	29.7%	29.4%	28.3%	23.8%
2009	10,990	48.3%	42.6%	40.3%	38.9%	38.0%	37.6%	33.5%	29.6%	27.9%	27.3%	22.6%
2010	11,185	50.1%	44.4%	42.3%	40.8%	39.9%	39.5%	35.8%	31.3%	30.2%	29.6%	24.8%
2011	11,467	49.4%	44.1%	42.1%	40.9%	40.2%	39.6%	35.7%	30.8%	29.5%	29.5%	25.2%
2012	11,125	49.6%	44.0%	41.9%	41.1%	40.1%	39.8%	35.6%	31.0%	29.6%	29.6%	24.9%
2013	10,970	47.6%	41.9%	39.9%	39.2%	38.3%	38.0%	34.3%	30.7%	29.2%	29.2%	24.0%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 13**.

Table C-12. Effect of Earnings, Transfers, and Taxes on Family Poverty and Household Low-Income Status, Single Mothers Who Worked at Any Time During the Year, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

		Poverty Rates by Income Concept										
Year	Number of Families	Earned Income Only	+ Cash, Other than Child Support, UI, and Cash Welfare	+ Child Support	+ UI Benefits	+ SSI	+ AFDC, TANF, GA ("Official Poverty Rate")	+ Food Stamp / SNAP Benefits	+ EITC Less FICA and Federal and State Income Taxes	+ ACTC	+ Economic Stimulus and Recovery Payments + Making Work Pay Tax Credit	Total House-hold After-Tax Income
1987	5,518	36.8%	32.3%	30.1%	29.7%	29.4%	28.0%	26.1%	26.1%	26.1%	26.1%	23.4%
1988	5,733	37.5%	32.6%	29.9%	29.4%	29.2%	27.7%	26.5%	26.3%	26.3%	26.3%	23.8%
1989	5,891	35.9%	30.9%	27.9%	27.4%	27.2%	25.7%	23.8%	23.9%	23.9%	23.9%	21.0%
1990	6,108	38.5%	33.7%	31.3%	30.8%	30.4%	28.8%	27.1%	26.4%	26.4%	26.4%	23.5%
1991	6,205	38.8%	33.8%	31.7%	31.0%	30.6%	29.3%	26.9%	26.0%	26.0%	26.0%	22.5%
1992	6,433	38.9%	34.6%	32.2%	31.4%	30.9%	29.4%	27.0%	25.9%	25.9%	25.9%	22.4%
1993	6,717	39.7%	35.0%	32.3%	31.5%	31.0%	29.4%	27.5%	26.1%	26.1%	26.1%	22.6%
1994	7,022	38.8%	33.9%	31.5%	30.9%	30.6%	28.3%	26.0%	22.7%	22.7%	22.7%	19.3%
1995	7,220	37.4%	33.4%	30.0%	29.5%	28.9%	27.3%	24.6%	19.9%	19.9%	19.9%	17.3%
1996	7,548	37.1%	32.6%	30.1%	29.4%	28.8%	27.9%	25.5%	21.1%	21.1%	21.1%	17.9%
1997	7,636	39.0%	34.5%	32.1%	31.6%	31.1%	29.9%	27.8%	22.3%	22.3%	22.3%	18.6%

		Poverty Rates by Income Concept										
Year	Number of Families	Earned Income Only	+ Cash, Other than Child Support, UI, and Cash Welfare	+ Child Support	+ UI Benefits	+ SSI	+ AFDC, TANF, GA ("Official Poverty Rate")	+ Food Stamp / SNAP Benefits	+ EITC Less FICA and Federal and State Income Taxes	+ ACTC	+ Economic Stimulus and Recovery Payments + Making Work Pay Tax Credit	Total House-hold After-Tax Income
1998	7,868	38.0%	33.5%	30.7%	30.0%	29.7%	28.3%	26.3%	20.9%	20.9%	20.9%	18.2%
1999	7,986	34.7%	30.9%	28.7%	28.2%	27.6%	26.7%	25.1%	20.6%	20.6%	20.6%	17.7%
2000	8,030	31.6%	27.4%	25.2%	24.9%	24.4%	23.7%	22.6%	18.1%	18.1%	18.1%	15.0%
2001	8,148	31.5%	28.3%	25.3%	24.6%	24.0%	23.4%	22.0%	17.6%	17.6%	17.6%	14.8%
2002	8,193	31.9%	28.0%	25.7%	24.6%	24.1%	23.6%	22.2%	17.3%	17.3%	17.3%	14.8%
2003	8,191	32.0%	28.7%	26.1%	25.2%	24.7%	24.3%	22.8%	18.7%	18.7%	18.7%	15.8%
2004	8,110	32.5%	28.8%	26.4%	25.7%	25.3%	24.9%	22.7%	19.1%	18.4%	18.4%	15.2%
2005	8,124	32.0%	28.5%	25.9%	25.2%	24.7%	24.2%	22.1%	17.1%	16.7%	16.7%	13.7%
2006	8,458	32.6%	28.6%	26.5%	25.9%	25.1%	24.7%	22.6%	17.5%	17.0%	17.0%	13.2%
2007	8,372	33.2%	29.2%	26.6%	26.3%	25.7%	25.3%	23.1%	17.6%	17.3%	17.3%	14.2%
2008	8,301	34.2%	30.1%	27.6%	26.8%	25.9%	25.6%	23.2%	18.3%	18.0%	16.7%	13.7%
2009	8,133	35.6%	30.7%	28.3%	27.1%	26.5%	26.2%	22.5%	17.0%	14.9%	14.2%	11.2%
2010	8,138	36.9%	32.0%	29.5%	28.4%	27.9%	27.6%	24.0%	17.6%	16.1%	15.5%	12.4%
2011	8,451	36.3%	31.7%	29.3%	28.5%	28.1%	27.6%	23.7%	17.1%	15.3%	15.3%	12.7%
2012	8,242	36.9%	32.5%	30.1%	29.3%	28.6%	28.4%	24.1%	17.9%	15.9%	15.9%	13.2%
2013	8,226	35.4%	30.8%	28.5%	28.0%	27.4%	27.3%	24.0%	18.8%	16.9%	16.9%	13.3%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data

Notes: Support table for **Figure 14**.

Table C-13. Effect of Earnings, Transfers, and Taxes on Family Poverty and Household Low-Income Status, Single Mothers Who Did Not Work at Any Time During the Year, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

		Poverty Rates by Income Concept										
Year	Number of Families	Earned Income Only	+ Cash, Other than Child Support, UI, and Cash Welfare	+ Child Support	+ UI Benefits	+ SSI	+ AFDC, TANF, GA ("Official Poverty Rate")	+ Food Stamp / SNAP Benefits	+ EITC Less FICA and Federal and State Income Taxes	+ ACTC	+ Economic Stimulus and Recovery Payments + Making Work Pay Tax Credit	Total House-hold After-Tax Income
1987	2,676	89.1%	84.2%	83.3%	83.0%	82.1%	79.1%	75.7%	76.5%	76.5%	76.5%	72.9%
1988	2,588	89.8%	84.2%	83.4%	83.3%	82.8%	79.7%	76.8%	77.2%	77.2%	77.2%	72.3%
1989	2,510	90.3%	84.0%	83.0%	83.0%	82.5%	79.5%	76.8%	77.3%	77.3%	77.3%	72.3%
1990	2,637	89.3%	84.2%	83.2%	83.1%	82.3%	78.3%	74.9%	75.4%	75.4%	75.4%	69.5%
1991	2,826	91.2%	85.8%	84.8%	84.6%	84.1%	80.8%	77.6%	77.9%	77.9%	77.9%	72.0%
1992	3,135	89.0%	83.9%	83.0%	82.7%	81.2%	78.1%	74.2%	74.3%	74.3%	74.3%	68.5%
1993	3,144	91.5%	84.9%	83.8%	83.5%	82.6%	78.9%	75.1%	75.6%	75.6%	75.6%	70.3%
1994	2,815	91.5%	84.9%	83.9%	83.7%	82.7%	78.7%	74.2%	74.5%	74.5%	74.5%	68.1%
1995	2,667	87.6%	81.7%	80.5%	80.4%	78.6%	74.9%	70.2%	69.9%	69.9%	69.9%	64.2%
1996	2,504	88.2%	83.3%	82.4%	82.1%	79.5%	75.9%	72.2%	72.5%	72.5%	72.5%	66.9%
1997	2,238	90.1%	81.3%	80.2%	80.1%	77.8%	74.4%	71.5%	71.6%	71.6%	71.6%	65.2%

		Poverty Rates by Income Concept										
Year	Number of Families	Earned Income Only	+ Cash, Other than Child Support, UI, and Cash Welfare	+ Child Support	+ UI Benefits	+ SSI	+ AFDC, TANF, GA ("Official Poverty Rate")	+ Food Stamp / SNAP Benefits	+ EITC Less FICA and Federal and State Income Taxes	+ ACTC	+ Economic Stimulus and Recovery Payments + Making Work Pay Tax Credit	Total House-hold After-Tax Income
1998	2,013	86.3%	77.8%	76.6%	76.5%	74.3%	72.5%	69.8%	69.2%	69.2%	69.2%	62.8%
1999	1,755	84.4%	75.3%	73.6%	73.3%	70.8%	67.4%	65.0%	64.9%	64.9%	64.9%	56.5%
2000	1,682	84.8%	77.0%	75.8%	75.5%	72.9%	70.5%	68.3%	68.6%	68.6%	68.6%	60.0%
2001	1,896	86.5%	77.5%	76.1%	75.6%	73.3%	71.2%	69.1%	68.9%	68.9%	68.9%	60.3%
2002	2,013	84.0%	74.0%	72.0%	71.2%	68.7%	66.9%	64.6%	64.9%	64.9%	64.9%	58.5%
2003	2,220	83.1%	74.0%	72.8%	72.5%	70.5%	69.0%	66.8%	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%	58.0%
2004	2,332	85.2%	76.8%	74.4%	73.9%	71.7%	69.9%	66.6%	67.2%	66.7%	66.7%	58.2%
2005	2,352	85.4%	77.8%	75.7%	75.3%	72.7%	71.2%	68.9%	69.7%	69.4%	69.4%	61.3%
2006	2,479	85.0%	76.8%	75.1%	74.4%	72.0%	70.6%	67.9%	68.9%	68.8%	68.8%	59.7%
2007	2,376	85.1%	75.5%	73.9%	73.4%	71.3%	70.3%	68.5%	69.6%	69.5%	69.5%	60.3%
2008	2,496	85.1%	75.0%	72.9%	72.3%	70.6%	69.6%	67.0%	67.5%	67.5%	66.9%	57.3%
2009	2,856	84.7%	76.5%	74.6%	72.6%	70.8%	69.9%	64.7%	65.2%	64.8%	64.5%	55.1%
2010	3,048	85.1%	77.4%	76.2%	73.9%	71.8%	71.3%	67.2%	67.9%	67.6%	67.3%	57.9%
2011	3,016	86.2%	78.7%	77.8%	75.9%	74.3%	73.1%	69.2%	69.3%	69.3%	69.3%	60.0%
2012	2,882	85.8%	76.8%	75.6%	74.7%	73.0%	72.2%	68.6%	68.7%	68.5%	68.5%	58.3%
2013	2,744	84.2%	75.0%	73.8%	72.7%	70.9%	70.0%	65.2%	66.3%	66.1%	66.1%	55.9%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 15**.

Table C-14. Single Mothers' Living Arrangements, by Mothers' Work and Welfare Status, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

					Lives with Others							
	Total		Independent Families		Total		Extended Families		Cohabiting[a]		Unrelated Families[a]	
Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All Single Mothers												
1987	8,193	100.0%	5,526	67.4%	2,668	32.6%	1,703	20.8%	590	7.2%	375	4.6%
1988	8,321	100.0%	5,703	68.5%	2,618	31.5%	1,667	20.0%	603	7.3%	348	4.2%
1989	8,400	100.0%	5,681	67.6%	2,720	32.4%	1,650	19.6%	603	7.2%	466	5.6%
1990	8,745	100.0%	5,916	67.7%	2,829	32.3%	1,693	19.4%	695	7.9%	441	5.0%
1991	9,031	100.0%	5,993	66.4%	3,038	33.6%	1,690	18.7%	835	9.2%	512	5.7%
1992	9,567	100.0%	6,294	65.8%	3,273	34.2%	1,872	19.6%	880	9.2%	522	5.5%
1993	9,860	100.0%	6,555	66.5%	3,306	33.5%	1,890	19.2%	849	8.6%	567	5.7%
1994	9,837	100.0%	6,357	64.6%	3,479	35.4%	1,968	20.0%	914	9.3%	597	6.1%
1995	9,887	100.0%	6,347	64.2%	3,536	35.8%	2,030	20.5%	948	9.6%	562	5.7%
1996	10,052	100.0%	6,593	65.6%	3,456	34.4%	1,930	19.2%	945	9.4%	584	5.8%
1997	9,874	100.0%	6,362	64.4%	3,511	35.6%	1,966	19.9%	967	9.8%	580	5.9%
1998	9,881	100.0%	6,497	65.8%	3,382	34.2%	1,884	19.1%	951	9.6%	549	5.6%
1999	9,741	100.0%	6,217	63.8%	3,524	36.2%	1,882	19.3%	1,064	10.9%	578	5.9%
2000	9,712	100.0%	6,160	63.4%	3,552	36.6%	1,913	19.7%	1,076	11.1%	563	5.8%
2001	10,044	100.0%	6,639	66.1%	3,405	33.9%	1,831	18.2%	999	9.9%	574	5.7%
2002	10,206	100.0%	6,714	65.8%	3,492	34.2%	1,825	17.9%	1,050	10.3%	617	6.0%
2003	10,411	100.0%	6,745	64.8%	3,664	35.2%	1,950	18.7%	1,062	10.2%	654	6.3%

					Lives with Others							
	Total		Independent Families		Total		Extended Families		Cohabiting[a]		Unrelated Families[a]	
Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2004	10,442	100.0%	6,820	65.3%	3,622	34.7%	1,946	18.6%	1,031	9.9%	646	6.2%
2005	10,476	100.0%	6,866	65.5%	3,610	34.5%	1,882	18.0%	1,103	10.5%	624	6.0%
2006	10,938	100.0%	6,905	63.1%	4,033	36.9%	2,136	19.5%	1,581[a]	14.5%[a]	315[a]	2.9%[a]
2007	10,748	100.0%	6,791	63.2%	3,957	36.8%	2,101	19.5%	1,581[a]	14.7%[a]	275[a]	2.6%[a]
2008	10,797	100.0%	6,814	63.1%	3,983	36.9%	2,177	20.2%	1,503[a]	13.9%[a]	303[a]	2.8%[a]
2009	10,990	100.0%	6,592	60.0%	4,398	40.0%	2,345	21.3%	1,647[a]	15.0%[a]	406[a]	3.7%[a]
2010	11,185	100.0%	6,738	60.2%	4,447	39.8%	2,277	20.4%	1,806[a]	16.2%[a]	364[a]	3.3%[a]
2011	11,467	100.0%	6,949	60.6%	4,519	39.4%	2,293	20.0%	1,860[a]	16.2%[a]	365[a]	3.2%[a]
2012	11,125	100.0%	6,751	60.7%	4,373	39.3%	2,180	19.6%	1,846[a]	16.6%[a]	348[a]	3.1%[a]
2013	10,970	100.0%	6,556	59.8%	4,414	40.2%	2,227	20.3%	1,833[a]	16.7%[a]	354[a]	3.2%[a]
Worked During the Year												
1987	5,518	100.0%	3,797	68.8%	1,721	31.2%	1,004	18.2%	422	7.7%	295	5.3%
1988	5,733	100.0%	4,048	70.6%	1,685	29.4%	981	17.1%	449	7.8%	255	4.4%
1989	5,891	100.0%	4,059	68.9%	1,832	31.1%	1,025	17.4%	439	7.4%	368	6.2%
1990	6,108	100.0%	4,246	69.5%	1,862	30.5%	1,031	16.9%	506	8.3%	326	5.3%
1991	6,205	100.0%	4,182	67.4%	2,023	32.6%	1,004	16.2%	613	9.9%	406	6.5%
1992	6,433	100.0%	4,398	68.4%	2,035	31.6%	1,044	16.2%	619	9.6%	372	5.8%
1993	6,717	100.0%	4,535	67.5%	2,181	32.5%	1,150	17.1%	607	9.0%	425	6.3%
1994	7,022	100.0%	4,620	65.8%	2,402	34.2%	1,240	17.7%	690	9.8%	472	6.7%
1995	7,220	100.0%	4,755	65.9%	2,465	34.1%	1,286	17.8%	729	10.1%	451	6.2%
1996	7,548	100.0%	5,019	66.5%	2,529	33.5%	1,321	17.5%	772	10.2%	436	5.8%
1997	7,636	100.0%	5,033	65.9%	2,603	34.1%	1,373	18.0%	763	10.0%	467	6.1%

					Lives with Others							
	Total		Independent Families		Total		Extended Families		Cohabiting[a]		Unrelated Families[a]	
Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1998	7,868	100.0%	5,336	67.8%	2,532	32.2%	1,287	16.4%	780	9.9%	465	5.9%
1999	7,986	100.0%	5,317	66.6%	2,669	33.4%	1,303	16.3%	891	11.2%	474	5.9%
2000	8,030	100.0%	5,229	65.1%	2,801	34.9%	1,433	17.8%	899	11.2%	469	5.8%
2001	8,148	100.0%	5,521	67.8%	2,627	32.2%	1,328	16.3%	802	9.8%	497	6.1%
2002	8,193	100.0%	5,517	67.3%	2,675	32.7%	1,283	15.7%	863	10.5%	529	6.5%
2003	8,191	100.0%	5,528	67.5%	2,662	32.5%	1,331	16.2%	809	9.9%	523	6.4%
2004	8,110	100.0%	5,493	67.7%	2,617	32.3%	1,285	15.8%	820	10.1%	511	6.3%
2005	8,124	100.0%	5,496	67.7%	2,628	32.3%	1,277	15.7%	846	10.4%	505	6.2%
2006	8,458	100.0%	5,558	65.7%	2,900	34.3%	1,436	17.0%	1,226[a]	14.5%[a]	238[a]	2.8%[a]
2007	8,372	100.0%	5,551	66.3%	2,822	33.7%	1,409	16.8%	1,192[a]	14.2%[a]	220[a]	2.6%[a]
2008	8,301	100.0%	5,504	66.3%	2,797	33.7%	1,445	17.4%	1,119[a]	13.5%[a]	233[a]	2.8%[a]
2009	8,133	100.0%	5,133	63.1%	3,001	36.9%	1,508	18.5%	1,189[a]	14.6%[a]	304[a]	3.7%[a]
2010	8,138	100.0%	5,198	63.9%	2,940	36.1%	1,407	17.3%	1,257[a]	15.4%[a]	276[a]	3.4%[a]
2011	8,451	100.0%	5,374	63.6%	3,077	36.4%	1,491	17.6%	1,334[a]	15.8%[a]	252[a]	3.0%[a]
2012	8,242	100.0%	5,264	63.9%	2,978	36.1%	1,394	16.9%	1,313[a]	15.9%[a]	271[a]	3.3%[a]
2013	8,226	100.0%	5,169	62.8%	3,056	37.2%	1,441	17.5%	1,344[a]	16.3%[a]	270[a]	3.3%[a]
Did Not Work During Year												
1987	2,676	100.0%	1,729	64.6%	947	35.4%	699	26.1%	168	6.3%	80	3.0%
1988	2,588	100.0%	1,655	64.0%	933	36.0%	686	26.5%	154	6.0%	93	3.6%
1989	2,510	100.0%	1,622	64.6%	888	35.4%	624	24.9%	165	6.6%	98	3.9%
1990	2,637	100.0%	1,671	63.4%	966	36.6%	662	25.1%	189	7.2%	115	4.3%
1991	2,826	100.0%	1,811	64.1%	1,015	35.9%	687	24.3%	222	7.8%	106	3.8%

					Lives with Others							
	Total		Independent Families		Total		Extended Families		Cohabiting[a]		Unrelated Families[a]	
Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1992	3,135	100.0%	1,897	60.5%	1,238	39.5%	828	26.4%	260	8.3%	150	4.8%
1993	3,144	100.0%	2,020	64.2%	1,124	35.8%	740	23.5%	242	7.7%	142	4.5%
1994	2,815	100.0%	1,737	61.7%	1,078	38.3%	728	25.9%	224	7.9%	126	4.5%
1995	2,667	100.0%	1,592	59.7%	1,075	40.3%	744	27.9%	219	8.2%	111	4.2%
1996	2,504	100.0%	1,574	62.9%	930	37.1%	609	24.3%	173	6.9%	148	5.9%
1997	2,238	100.0%	1,329	59.4%	910	40.6%	593	26.5%	204	9.1%	113	5.1%
1998	2,013	100.0%	1,161	57.7%	852	42.3%	597	29.7%	171	8.5%	84	4.1%
1999	1,755	100.0%	900	51.3%	855	48.7%	578	33.0%	172	9.8%	104	5.9%
2000	1,682	100.0%	931	55.3%	751	44.7%	481	28.6%	177	10.5%	94	5.6%
2001	1,896	100.0%	1,119	59.0%	777	41.0%	503	26.5%	197	10.4%	77	4.1%
2002	2,013	100.0%	1,196	59.4%	817	40.6%	542	26.9%	187	9.3%	88	4.4%
2003	2,220	100.0%	1,216	54.8%	1,004	45.2%	620	27.9%	253	11.4%	131	5.9%
2004	2,332	100.0%	1,327	56.9%	1,005	43.1%	660	28.3%	210	9.0%	135	5.8%
2005	2,352	100.0%	1,370	58.2%	982	41.8%	606	25.8%	257	10.9%	119	5.1%
2006	2,479	100.0%	1,347	54.3%	1,133	45.7%	701	28.3%	355[a]	14.3%[a]	77[a]	3.1%[a]
2007	2,376	100.0%	1,241	52.2%	1,135	47.8%	692	29.1%	388[a]	16.3%[a]	55[a]	2.3%[a]
2008	2,496	100.0%	1,310	52.5%	1,186	47.5%	733	29.3%	384[a]	15.4%[a]	70[a]	2.8%[a]
2009	2,856	100.0%	1,459	51.1%	1,397	48.9%	837	29.3%	458[a]	16.0%[a]	102[a]	3.6%[a]
2010	3,048	100.0%	1,540	50.5%	1,508	49.5%	870	28.5%	549[a]	18.0%[a]	88[a]	2.9%[a]
2011	3,016	100.0%	1,575	52.2%	1,441	47.8%	802	26.6%	526[a]	17.4%[a]	113[a]	3.8%[a]
2012	2,882	100.0%	1,478	51.6%	1,395	48.4%	786	27.3%	533[a]	18.5%[a]	77[a]	2.7%[a]
2013	2,744	100.0%	1,387	50.5%	1,358	49.5%	785	28.6%	489[a]	17.8%[a]	84[a]	3.1%[a]

					Lives with Others							
	Total		Independent Families		Total		Extended Families		Cohabiting[a]		Unrelated Families[a]	
Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Received Welfare During the Year												
1987	2,905	100.0%	1,995	68.7%	910	31.3%	654	22.5%	156	5.4%	99	3.4%
1988	2,919	100.0%	2,074	71.0%	845	29.0%	614	21.0%	174	6.0%	57	2.0%
1989	2,717	100.0%	1,908	70.2%	809	29.8%	552	20.3%	154	5.7%	103	3.8%
1990	3,081	100.0%	2,137	69.4%	944	30.6%	655	21.3%	196	6.4%	92	3.0%
1991	3,296	100.0%	2,225	67.5%	1,071	32.5%	696	21.1%	241	7.3%	135	4.1%
1992	3,545	100.0%	2,399	67.7%	1,146	32.3%	769	21.7%	234	6.6%	142	4.0%
1993	3,757	100.0%	2,561	68.2%	1,197	31.8%	742	19.7%	269	7.2%	185	4.9%
1994	3,470	100.0%	2,330	67.2%	1,140	32.8%	702	20.2%	306	8.8%	132	3.8%
1995	3,247	100.0%	2,102	64.7%	1,145	35.3%	770	23.7%	260	8.0%	114	3.5%
1996	3,075	100.0%	2,079	67.6%	996	32.4%	640	20.8%	212	6.9%	144	4.7%
1997	2,646	100.0%	1,764	66.7%	882	33.3%	573	21.7%	195	7.4%	114	4.3%
1998	2,265	100.0%	1,636	72.2%	629	27.8%	386	17.0%	159	7.0%	85	3.7%
1999	1,950	100.0%	1,258	64.5%	692	35.5%	452	23.2%	150	7.7%	90	4.6%
2000	1,647	100.0%	1,122	68.2%	524	31.8%	357	21.7%	124	7.5%	44	2.7%
2001	1,524	100.0%	1,031	67.6%	493	32.4%	335	22.0%	102	6.7%	57	3.7%
2002	1,464	100.0%	1,017	69.5%	447	30.5%	298	20.4%	102	6.9%	47	3.2%
2003	1,673	100.0%	1,143	68.3%	530	31.7%	348	20.8%	136	8.1%	46	2.8%
2004	1,592	100.0%	1,087	68.3%	505	31.7%	353	22.2%	87	5.5%	65	4.1%
2005	1,617	100.0%	1,153	71.3%	464	28.7%	284	17.6%	116	7.1%	64	4.0%
2006	1,526	100.0%	1,068	70.0%	458	30.0%	256	16.8%	176[a]	11.5%[a]	27[a]	1.7%[a]
2007	1,419	100.0%	972	68.5%	447	31.5%	316	22.2%	105[a]	7.4%[a]	27[a]	1.9%[a]

					Lives with Others							
	Total		Independent Families		Total		Extended Families		Cohabiting[a]		Unrelated Families[a]	
Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2008	1,507	100.0%	1,031	68.4%	476	31.6%	298	19.8%	145[a]	9.6%[a]	33[a]	2.2%[a]
2009	1,527	100.0%	950	62.2%	577	37.8%	363	23.8%	169[a]	11.1%[a]	45[a]	3.0%[a]
2010	1,552	100.0%	998	64.3%	554	35.7%	335	21.6%	186[a]	12.0%[a]	33[a]	2.1%[a]
2011	1,658	100.0%	997	60.1%	661	39.9%	431	26.0%	181[a]	10.9%[a]	49[a]	2.9%[a]
2012	1,500	100.0%	953	63.6%	547	36.4%	351	23.4%	170[a]	11.3%[a]	26[a]	1.7%[a]
2013	1,369	100.0%	807	59.0%	562	41.0%	378	27.6%	152[a]	11.1%[a]	33[a]	2.4%[a]

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Notes: Independent families are families headed by a single mother with no other members other than her children. Extended families include mothers and their children who live with other family members. Cohabiting mothers live with another unrelated member who is identified or inferred to be a co-resident partner. Mothers in unrelated families co-reside with other unrelated household members, other than those identified or inferred to be a cohabiting partner.

Support table for **Figure 17**.

a. Beginning with the 2007 CPS/ASEC, cohabiting couples are identifiable based on self-report. In earlier years, cohabiting couples are identifiable indirectly by inference. The method used here, for CPS/ASEC years before 2007, is based on households with two unmarried adults, who are unrelated and of the opposite sex, and no other adults reside in the household. As a result, estimates for single mothers who are cohabiting or in unrelated families in CPS/ASEC years 2007 and after are not comparable to earlier years.

Table C-15. Single Mothers' Work Status During the Year and Self-Reported Reason for Not Working, by Cash Welfare (AFDC/TANF/GA SSI) Receipt, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1987	8,193	5,518	67.3%	2,676	32.7%	100.0%	285	10.7%	1,724	64.4%	283	10.6%	309	11.5%	65	2.4%
1988	8,321	5,733	68.9%	2,588	31.1%	100.0%	235	9.1%	1,759	68.0%	271	10.5%	244	9.4%	72	2.8%
1989	8,400	5,891	70.1%	2,510	29.9%	100.0%	227	9.0%	1,744	69.5%	272	10.8%	186	7.4%	81	3.2%
1990	8,745	6,108	69.8%	2,637	30.2%	100.0%	286	10.9%	1,831	69.5%	276	10.5%	160	6.1%	83	3.2%
1991	9,031	6,205	68.7%	2,826	31.3%	100.0%	243	8.6%	1,928	68.2%	315	11.1%	245	8.7%	95	3.4%
1992	9,567	6,433	67.2%	3,135	32.8%	100.0%	364	11.6%	2,011	64.2%	398	12.7%	278	8.9%	84	2.7%
1993	9,860	6,717	68.1%	3,144	31.9%	100.0%	434	13.8%	1,960	62.4%	443	14.1%	225	7.1%	77	2.5%
1994	9,837	7,022	71.4%	2,815	28.6%	100.0%	470	16.7%	1,626	57.8%	462	16.4%	177	6.3%	79	2.8%
1995	9,887	7,220	73.0%	2,667	27.0%	100.0%	491	18.4%	1,531	57.4%	400	15.0%	163	6.1%	81	3.0%
1996	10,052	7,548	75.1%	2,504	24.9%	100.0%	501	20.0%	1,349	53.9%	375	15.0%	183	7.3%	97	3.9%
1997	9,874	7,636	77.3%	2,238	22.7%	100.0%	446	19.9%	1,197	53.5%	331	14.8%	164	7.3%	100	4.5%
1998	9,881	7,868	79.6%	2,013	20.4%	100.0%	419	20.8%	1,038	51.5%	361	17.9%	113	5.6%	83	4.1%
1999	9,741	7,986	82.0%	1,755	18.0%	100.0%	444	25.3%	875	49.9%	311	17.7%	55	3.1%	67	3.8%
2000	9,712	8,030	82.7%	1,682	17.3%	100.0%	442	26.3%	911	54.2%	223	13.3%	48	2.9%	57	3.4%
2001	10,044	8,148	81.1%	1,896	18.9%	100.0%	527	27.8%	974	51.4%	228	12.0%	89	4.7%	78	4.1%
2002	10,206	8,193	80.3%	2,013	19.7%	100.0%	540	26.8%	989	49.1%	285	14.1%	116	5.8%	83	4.1%
2003	10,411	8,191	78.7%	2,220	21.3%	100.0%	574	25.8%	1,093	49.2%	351	15.8%	130	5.9%	73	3.3%
2004	10,442	8,110	77.7%	2,332	22.3%	100.0%	614	26.3%	1,176	50.4%	328	14.1%	133	5.7%	80	3.4%

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
2005	10,476	8,124	77.6%	2,352	22.4%	100.0%	616	26.2%	1,257	53.4%	292	12.4%	98	4.2%	90	3.8%
2006	10,938	8,458	77.3%	2,479	22.7%	100.0%	689	27.8%	1,245	50.2%	342	13.8%	96	3.9%	108	4.4%
2007	10,748	8,372	77.9%	2,376	22.1%	100.0%	633	26.6%	1,248	52.5%	283	11.9%	95	4.0%	118	5.0%
2008	10,797	8,301	76.9%	2,496	23.1%	100.0%	650	26.0%	1,243	49.8%	356	14.2%	157	6.3%	90	3.6%
2009	10,990	8,133	74.0%	2,856	26.0%	100.0%	679	23.8%	1,292	45.2%	398	13.9%	382	13.4%	105	3.7%
2010	11,185	8,138	72.8%	3,048	28.2%	100.0%	678	22.2%	1,394	45.7%	435	14.3%	421	13.8%	121	4.0%
2011	11,467	8,451	73.7%	3,016	26.3%	100.0%	634	21.0%	1,422	47.1%	423	14.0%	420	13.9%	116	3.8%
2012	11,125	8,242	74.1%	2.882	25.9%	100.0%	672	23.3%	1,333	46.2%	381	13.2%	362	12.6%	135	4.7%
2013	10,970	8,226	75.0%	2,744	25.0%	100.0%	654	23.8%	1,280	46.6%	385	14.0%	325	11.9%	101	3,7%
Did Not Receive Cash Welfare																
1987	5,288	4,511	85.3%	778	14.7%	100.0%	84	10.7%	456	58.7%	124	16.0%	75	9.7%	28	3.6%
1988	5,402	4,651	86.1%	751	13.9%	100.0%	74	9.8%	427	56.8%	134	17.9%	58	7.7%	52	7.0%
1989	5,683	4,930	86.7%	754	13.3%	100.0%	75	10.0%	492	65.2%	100	13.2%	42	5.6%	45	5.9%
1990	5,664	4,945	87.3%	719	12.7%	100.0%	67	9.3%	469	65.2%	90	12.6%	39	5.4%	54	7.5%
1991	5,735	5,005	87.3%	730	12.7%	100.0%	69	9.4%	454	62.2%	98	13.4%	72	9.8%	38	5.2%
1992	6,022	5,146	85.4%	876	14.6%	100.0%	102	11.7%	508	58.0%	155	17.7%	71	8.1%	40	4.6%
1993	6,103	5,237	85.8%	866	14.2%	100.0%	124	14.3%	490	56.6%	157	18.1%	45	5.2%	45	5.2%
1994	6,367	5,549	87.2%	817	12.8%	100.0%	130	15.9%	445	54.4%	171	20.9%	38	4.6%	34	4.2%
1995	6,640	5,798	87.3%	842	12.7%	100.0%	119	14.2%	473	56.2%	150	17.8%	53	6.3%	46	5.5%
1996	6,976	6,118	87.7%	858	12.3%	100.0%	108	12.6%	463	54.0%	173	20.2%	66	7.7%	48	5.6%

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1997	7,228	6,313	87.3%	916	12.7%	100.0%	121	13.2%	516	56.4%	160	17.4%	60	6.6%	59	6.5%
1998	7,616	6,628	87.0%	989	13.0%	100.0%	162	16.4%	523	52.8%	204	20.6%	42	4.3%	58	5.9%
1999	7,791	6,859	88.0%	933	12.0%	100.0%	172	18.5%	499	53.5%	174	18.7%	31	3.3%	54	5.8%
2000	8,065	7,105	88.1%	961	11.9%	100.0%	176	18.3%	558	58.1%	159	16.6%	22	2.3%	46	4.7%
2001	8,520	7,342	86.2%	1,178	13.8%	100.0%	216	18.3%	655	55.6%	175	14.9%	66	5.6%	67	5.7%
2002	8,741	7,453	85.3%	1,288	14.7%	100.0%	234	18.2%	709	55.0%	212	16.5%	61	4.8%	71	5.5%
2003	8,738	7,397	84.7%	1,341	15.3%	100.0%	230	17.1%	726	54.2%	242	18.1%	86	6.4%	56	4.2%
2004	8,850	7,334	82.9%	1,516	17.1%	100.0%	305	20.1%	818	54.0%	241	15.9%	86	5.7%	66	4.3%
2005	8,859	7,379	83.3%	1,480	16.7%	100.0%	275	18.5%	881	59.5%	214	14.5%	48	3.3%	62	4.2%
2006	9,411	7,723	82.1%	1,688	17.9%	100.0%	354	21.0%	910	53.9%	266	15.8%	67	4.0%	90	5.3%
2007	9,329	7,693	82.5%	1,636	17.5%	100.0%	300	18.4%	946	57.8%	225	13.8%	62	3.8%	103	6.3%
2008	9,290	7,545	81.2%	1,745	18.8%	100.0%	341	19.5%	929	53.2%	298	17.1%	102	5.8%	76	4.3%
2009	9,463	7,486	79.1%	1,976	20.9%	100.0%	346	17.5%	939	47.5%	312	15.8%	290	14.7%	89	4.5%
2010	9,634	7,478	77.6%	2,156	22.4%	100.0%	360	16.7%	1,052	48.8%	354	16.4%	303	14.0%	88	4.1%
2011	9,809	7,701	78.5%	2,108	21.5%	100.0%	297	14.1%	1,078	51.1%	322	15.3%	312	14.8%	99	4.7%
2012	9,625	7,598	78.9%	2,027	21.1%	100.0%	364	18.0%	972	47.9%	298	14.7%	289	14.3%	103	5.1%
2013	9,601	7,643	79.6%	1,959	20.4%	100.0%	376	19.25	970	49.5%	308	15.7%	216	11.0%	89	4.5%
Received Cash Welfare (AFDC/TANF/GA or SSI)																
1987	2,905	1,007	34.7%	1,898	65.3%	100.0%	202	10.6%	1,267	66.8%	159	8.4%	233	12.3%	37	1.9%
1988	2,919	1,083	37.1%	1,836	62.9%	100.0%	162	8.8%	1,332	72.5%	137	7.4%	186	10.1%	20	1.1%

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1989	2,717	961	35.4%	1,756	64.6%	100.0%	152	8.6%	1,253	71.3%	172	9.8%	144	8.2%	36	2.1%
1990	3,081	1,163	37.7%	1,918	62.3%	100.0%	219	11.4%	1,363	71.0%	186	9.7%	121	6.3%	30	1.6%
1991	3,296	1,200	36.4%	2,096	63.6%	100.0%	175	8.3%	1,474	70.3%	217	10.4%	173	8.3%	57	2.7%
1992	3,545	1,286	36.3%	2,258	63.7%	100.0%	262	11.6%	1,503	66.6%	242	10.7%	207	9.2%	44	1.9%
1993	3,757	1,480	39.4%	2,278	60.6%	100.0%	310	13.6%	1,470	64.5%	286	12.5%	179	7.9%	33	1.4%
1994	3,470	1,473	42.4%	1,997	57.6%	100.0%	339	17.0%	1,182	59.2%	292	14.6%	139	7.0%	45	2.3%
1995	3,247	1,422	43.8%	1,825	56.2%	100.0%	372	20.4%	1,058	58.0%	250	13.7%	110	6.0%	35	1.9%
1996	3,075	1,430	46.5%	1,645	53.5%	100.0%	393	23.9%	886	53.8%	201	12.2%	117	7.1%	49	3.0%
1997	2,646	1,324	50.0%	1,323	50.0%	100.0%	326	24.6%	681	51.5%	171	12.9%	104	7.9%	41	3.1%
1998	2,265	1,240	54.8%	1,025	45.2%	100.0%	257	25.1%	515	50.3%	157	15.3%	70	6.9%	25	2.5%
1999	1,950	1,128	57.8%	822	42.2%	100.0%	272	33.1%	376	45.7%	137	16.7%	24	2.9%	13	1.6%
2000	1,647	925	56.2%	721	43.8%	100.0%	266	36.9%	353	49.0%	64	8.9%	26	3.6%	12	1.6%
2001	1,524	806	52.9%	718	47.1%	100.0%	312	43.4%	319	44.4%	53	7.4%	23	3.2%	12	1.7%
2002	1,464	739	50.5%	725	49.5%	100.0%	306	42.2%	280	38.6%	72	10.0%	55	7.5%	12	1.7%
2003	1,673	793	47.4%	880	52.6%	100.0%	344	39.1%	366	41.6%	109	12.4%	44	5.0%	17	1.9%
2004	1,592	776	48.8%	815	51.2%	100.0%	309	37.9%	358	43.9%	87	10.6%	47	5.8%	14	1.8%
2005	1,617	745	46.1%	871	53.9%	100.0%	341	39.1%	376	43.1%	77	8.9%	49	5.7%	28	3.2%
2006	1,526	735	48.2%	791	51.8%	100.0%	335	42.4%	334	42.2%	76	9.6%	28	3.6%	18	2.2%
2007	1,419	679	47.9%	740	52.1%	100.0%	332	44.9%	302	40.8%	58	7.9%	32	4.4%	15	2.1%
2008	1,507	756	50.2%	751	49.8%	100.0%	309	41.2%	314	41.9%	58	7.7%	55	7.3%	14	1.9%

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
2009	1,527	647	42.4%	880	57.6%	100.0%	333	37.9%	353	40.1%	86	9.8%	92	10.5%	16	1.9%
2010	1,552	660	42.5%	892	57.5%	100.0%	318	35.6%	342	38.4%	81	9.1%	118	13.3%	32	3.6%
2011	1,658	750	45.3%	908	54.7%	100.0%	337	37.1%	344	37.9%	101	11.2%	108	11.9%	17	1.8%
2012	1,500	644	42.9%	856	57.1%	100.0%	308	36.0%	361	42.2%	82	9.6%	73	8.5%	32	3.7%
2013	1,369	583	42.6%	786	57.4%	100.0%	277	35,3%	319	39.4%	77	9.8%	109	13.9%	13	1.6%
Received AFDC/TANF/GA Only																
1987	2,493	887	35.6%	1,606	64.4%	100.0%	111	6.9%	1,117	69.6%	138	8.6%	212	13.2%	26	1.6%
1988	2,536	935	36.9%	1,600	63.1%	100.0%	88	5.5%	1,200	75.0%	133	8.3%	164	10.2%	15	0.9%
1989	2,313	817	35.3%	1,496	64.7%	100.0%	92	6.2%	1,113	74.4%	147	9.8%	121	8.1%	23	1.5%
1990	2,651	1,013	38.2%	1,638	61.8%	100.0%	106	6.5%	1,235	75.4%	164	10.0%	109	6.6%	25	1.5%
1991	2,822	1,036	36.7%	1,786	63.3%	100.0%	90	5.0%	1,308	73.3%	190	10.6%	157	8.8%	41	2.3%
1992	2,990	1,095	36.6%	1,895	63.4%	100.0%	133	7.0%	1,331	70.3%	221	11.7%	172	9.1%	37	2.0%
1993	3,010	1,198	39.8%	1,812	60.2%	100.0%	145	8.0%	1,248	68.9%	240	13.2%	153	8.4%	26	1.4%
1994	2,745	1,228	44.7%	1,517	55.3%	100.0%	124	8.1%	994	65.5%	247	16.3%	117	7.7%	37	2.4%
1995	2,525	1,157	45.8%	1,368	54.2%	100.0%	156	11.4%	859	62.8%	230	16.8%	99	7.2%	24	1.8%
1996	2,321	1,129	48.7%	1,191	51.3%	100.0%	157	13.2%	699	58.7%	179	15.1%	111	9.3%	45	3.7%
1997	1,923	1,017	52.9%	906	47.1%	100.0%	106	11.7%	539	59.5%	131	14.5%	94	10.4%	36	3.9%
1998	1,604	984	61.3%	620	38.7%	100.0%	61	9.9%	374	60.4%	118	19.0%	56	9.1%	10	1.7%
1999	1,331	839	63.0%	492	37.0%	100.0%	96	19.4%	267	54.3%	107	21.7%	12	2.4%	11	2.2%
2000	1,033	642	62.1%	391	37.9%	100.0%	60	15.3%	256	65.5%	49	12.5%	20	5.1%	6	1.6%

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
2001	894	516	57.8%	377	42.2%	100.0%	80	21.3%	229	60.6%	42	11.2%	18	4.7%	8	2.1%
2002	874	500	57.2%	374	42.8%	100.0%	72	19.2%	192	51.5%	57	15.2%	45	12.1%	7	2.0%
2003	1,073	568	52.9%	505	47.1%	100.0%	95	18.8%	296	58.6%	75	14.9%	27	5.4%	12	2.4%
2004	888	481	54.1%	407	45.9%	100.0%	61	15.1%	253	62.1%	53	13.0%	35	8.7%	4	1.0%
2005	917	486	53.0%	431	47.0%	100.0%	93	21.6%	233	54.1%	63	14.5%	32	7.4%	10	2.3%
2006	833	456	54.7%	377	45.3%	100.0%	92	24.5%	207	54.8%	49	12.9%	21	5.4%	9	2.3%
2007	751	417	55.6%	334	44.4%	100.0%	81	24.3%	177	53.0%	44	13.2%	21	6.3%	11	3.3%
2008	844	467	55.3%	377	44.7%	100.0%	76	20.1%	219	58.2%	42	11.1%	32	8.4%	8	2.2%
2009	811	360	44.4%	451	55.6%	100.0%	91	20.2%	228	50.4%	52	11.4%	69	15.3%	11	2.5%
2010	876	407	46.5%	469	53.5%	100.0%	80	17.0%	221	47.1%	49	10.5%	97	20.8%	21	4.6%
2011	951	459	48.3%	492	51.7%	100.0%	81	16.4%	247	50.1%	73	14.8%	81	16.5%	11	2.2%
2012	802	375	46.7%	427	53.3%	100.0%	70	16.4%	244	57.1%	48	11.2%	48	11.3%	17	3.9%
2013	690	321	46.6%	369	53.4%	100.0%	54	14.8%	190	51.5%	47	12.8%	69	18.8%	8	2.1%
Received SSI Only																
1987	186	70	37.4%	117	62.6%	100.0%	30	25.5%	60	51.4%	14	12.1%	10	8.9%	2	2.0%
1988	182	104	57.0%	78	43.0%	100.0%	26	33.7%	43	55.3%	2	2.7%	2	2.0%	5	6.2%
1989	180	111	61.5%	69	38.5%	100.0%	10	14.3%	33	47.7%	11	15.7%	10	15.0%	5	7.3%
1990	179	91	50.6%	89	49.4%	100.0%	35	39.7%	43	49.0%	9	10.5%	1	0.8%	0	0.0%
1991	195	90	46.3%	105	53.7%	100.0%	26	25.0%	48	45.8%	15	14.1%	3	2.9%	13	12.2%
1992	244	114	46.8%	130	53.2%	100.0%	60	45.9%	46	35.4%	5	3.8%	17	12.7%	3	2.3%

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1993	318	183	57.6%	135	42.4%	100.0%	70	51.5%	42	31.4%	13	9.7%	8	5.9%	2	1.5%
1994	304	156	51.5%	147	48.5%	100.0%	69	47.1%	65	44.0%	7	4.6%	4	2.9%	2	1.5%
1995	385	192	50.0%	193	50.0%	100.0%	97	50.2%	78	40.7%	6	3.3%	4	1.9%	8	4.0%
1996	406	225	55.4%	181	44.6%	100.0%	99	54.8%	73	40.6%	3	1.4%	3	1.7%	3	1.5%
1997	421	223	53.0%	198	47.0%	100.0%	111	56.2%	54	27.5%	23	11.7%	4	1.9%	5	2.7%
1998	393	187	47.7%	205	52.3%	100.0%	121	59.1%	59	28.6%	8	4.1%	4	1.8%	13	6.4%
1999	406	222	54.7%	184	45.3%	100.0%	93	50.7%	69	37.7%	12	6.3%	10	5.2%	0	0.0%
2000	431	227	52.7%	204	47.3%	100.0%	122	59.8%	63	30.9%	11	5.5%	5	2.3%	3	1.5%
2001	461	253	54.9%	208	45.1%	100.0%	135	65.1%	56	27.0%	8	3.9%	5	2.3%	4	1.8%
2002	440	188	42.7%	252	57.3%	100.0%	165	65.5%	68	27.2%	10	3.9%	3	1.4%	5	2.0%
2003	421	180	42.7%	241	57.3%	100.0%	165	68.5%	45	18.7%	21	8.9%	6	2.5%	4	1.5%
2004	537	261	48.6%	276	51.4%	100.0%	163	59.0%	74	26.9%	28	10.0%	3	1.2%	8	2.9%
2005	515	228	44.2%	287	55.8%	100.0%	159	55.5%	97	33.6%	12	4.1%	7	2.3%	13	4.6%
2006	536	252	47.0%	284	53.0%	100.0%	177	62.4%	77	27.0%	18	6.4%	3	1.0%	9	3.1%
2007	542	238	44.0%	303	56.0%	100.0%	185	61.0%	96	31.6%	10	3.3%	8	2.7%	4	1.4%
2008	533	257	48.3%	276	51.7%	100.0%	170	61.8%	68	24.6%	16	5.9%	16	5.8%	5	1.9%
2009	560	249	44.5%	311	55.5%	100.0%	168	54.0%	95	30.7%	27	8.8%	15	4.9%	5	1.6%
2010	543	225	41.5%	318	58.5%	100.0%	165	51.8%	103	32.4%	24	7.6%	18	5.8%	8	2.4%
2011	569	266	46.8%	303	53.2%	100.0%	188	62.0%	65	21.3%	21	6.8%	24	7.9%	6	2.0%
2012	538	239	44.5%	299	55.5%	100.0%	169	56.5%	81	27.2%	22	7.4%	15	5.1%	11	3.8%

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
2013	573	247	43.1%	327	56.9%	100.0%	185	56.6%	90	27.6%	23	7.0%	24	7.2%	5	1.5%
Received AFDC/TANF/GA and SSI																
1987	226	51	22.4%	175	77.6%	100.0%	61	34.7%	90	51.2%	6	3.5%	11	6.1%	8	4.4%
1988	201	43	21.5%	158	78.5%	100.0%	47	29.8%	89	56.2%	1	0.7%	21	13.3%	0	0.0%
1989	224	34	15.0%	191	85.0%	100.0%	50	26.0%	106	55.7%	14	7.3%	13	6.6%	8	4.4%
1990	251	59	23.5%	192	76.5%	100.0%	78	40.7%	85	44.1%	13	6.6%	11	6.0%	5	2.7%
1991	279	74	26.5%	205	73.5%	100.0%	59	28.6%	118	57.3%	13	6.1%	13	6.4%	3	1.5%
1992	311	77	24.8%	234	75.2%	100.0%	69	29.5%	126	53.8%	17	7.1%	19	8.0%	4	1.5%
1993	429	99	23.0%	331	77.0%	100.0%	95	28.7%	180	54.4%	33	9.9%	19	5.6%	5	1.5%
1994	421	89	21.1%	333	78.9%	100.0%	146	44.0%	123	37.0%	38	11.5%	19	5.6%	6	1.9%
1995	337	73	21.6%	264	78.4%	100.0%	119	45.0%	121	45.8%	14	5.3%	7	2.7%	3	1.2%
1996	348	75	21.6%	273	78.4%	100.0%	137	50.1%	113	41.3%	19	7.1%	3	1.1%	1	0.4%
1997	302	83	27.5%	219	72.5%	100.0%	109	49.7%	87	39.7%	17	7.8%	6	2.8%	0	0.0%
1998	268	69	25.8%	199	74.2%	100.0%	74	37.4%	82	41.2%	31	15.4%	10	5.2%	2	0.8%
1999	213	66	31.2%	146	68.8%	100.0%	83	57.0%	39	26.9%	19	12.7%	2	1.7%	2	1.6%
2000	183	57	31.0%	126	69.0%	100.0%	84	66.9%	34	26.9%	4	3.0%	2	1.2%	2	1.9%
2001	170	37	21.5%	133	78.5%	100.0%	96	72.0%	34	25.9%	3	2.0%	0	0.2%	0	0.0%
2002	151	51	33.9%	100	66.1%	100.0%	69	69.3%	19	18.8%	6	5.7%	6	6.1%	0	0.0%
2003	180	46	25.5%	134	74.5%	100.0%	84	62.9%	26	19.2%	12	9.2%	11	7.9%	1	0.8%
2004	167	35	20.8%	132	79.2%	100.0%	84	64.1%	31	23.5%	6	4.4%	8	6.4%	2	1.6%

				Did Not Work During the Year—Primary Reason for Not Working												
		Worked		Total			Ill or Disabled		Taking Care of Home or Family		Attending School		Could Not Find Work		Retired or Other	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Sub-total Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
2005	184	31	16.9%	153	83.1%	100.0%	89	57.9%	46	29.8%	3	2.0%	11	7.0%	5	3.3%
2006	158	28	17.6%	130	82.4%	100.0%	66	50.5%	50	38.8%	9	6.8%	5	3.8%	0	0.0%
2007	126	24	18.7%	103	81.3%	100.0%	66	64.5%	29	28.3%	4	4.1%	3	3.1%	0	0.0%
2008	130	32	24.4%	99	75.6%	100.0%	63	63.9%	27	27.8%	0	0.0%	7	7.5%	1	0.8%
2009	156	38	24.2%	119	75.8%	100.0%	74	62.7%	30	25.1%	7	5.8%	8	6.4%	0	0.0%
2010	133	27	20.6%	105	79.4%	100.0%	74	69.7%	19	17.7%	7	7.1%	2	2.2%	3	3.2%
2011	137	25	18.0%	113	82.0%	100.0%	68	60.4%	33	29.2%	8	7.3%	4	3.1%	0	0.0%
2012	160	30	18.7%	130	81.3%	100.0%	69	53.3%	36	27.6%	12	9.5%	9	6.9%	4	2,7%
2013	106	15	14.3%	91	85.7%	100.0%	38	42.1%	29	32.55	7	7.3%	16	18.1%	0	0.0%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 18** and **Figure 19**.

Table C-16. Poverty Status of Children in Female-Headed Families Under Selected Income Measures, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

		Poor Based on Earned Income Only		Poor Based on Total Cash Income "Official" Poverty Measure		Poor Based on Cash Income Plus Food Stamp/SNAP Benefits, EITC and ACTC Net of Federal and State Income Taxes, Plus Stimulus and Recovery Payments		Below Household Low-Income Threshold Based on Total Household Income	
Year	Total	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1987	13,617	8,360	61.4%	7,081	52.0%	6,822	50.1%	6,437	47.3%
1988	13,700	8,406	61.4%	7,088	51.7%	6,827	49.8%	6,453	47.1%
1989	13,874	8,310	59.9%	6,904	49.8%	6,582	47.4%	6,083	43.8%
1990	14,608	9,003	61.6%	7,615	52.1%	7,258	49.7%	6,712	45.9%
1991	15,396	9,682	62.9%	8,223	53.4%	7,712	50.1%	7,092	46.1%
1992	15,586	9,724	62.4%	8,252	52.9%	7,660	49.1%	7,042	45.2%
1993	16,338	10,311	63.1%	8,532	52.2%	8,026	49.1%	7,346	45.0%
1994	16,480	10,132	61.5%	8,367	50.8%	7,444	45.2%	6,791	41.2%
1995	16,993	10,038	59.1%	8,221	48.4%	7,002	41.2%	6,457	38.0%
1996	16,740	9,547	57.0%	7,861	47.0%	6,780	40.5%	6,108	36.5%
1997	16,639	9,615	57.8%	7,907	47.5%	6,713	40.3%	6,023	36.2%
1998	16,833	9,280	55.1%	7,541	44.8%	6,311	37.5%	5,752	34.2%
1999	16,172	8,171	50.5%	6,515	40.3%	5,468	33.8%	4,844	30.0%
2000	16,120	7,733	48.0%	6,216	38.6%	5,294	32.8%	4,640	28.8%
2001	16,483	7,981	48.4%	6,334	38.4%	5,407	32.8%	4,755	28.8%
2002	16,780	8,202	48.9%	6,443	38.4%	5,341	31.8%	4,810	28.7%
2003	17,116	8,492	49.6%	6,868	40.1%	5,895	34.4%	5,211	30.4%

Year	Total	Poor Based on Earned Income Only		Poor Based on Total Cash Income "Official" Poverty Measure		Poor Based on Cash Income Plus Food Stamp/SNAP Benefits, EITC and ACTC Net of Federal and State Income Taxes, Plus Stimulus and Recovery Payments		Below Household Low-Income Threshold Based on Total Household Income	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2004	17,229	8,725	50.6%	7,065	41.0%	5,805	33.7%	5,100	29.6%
2005	17,162	8,654	50.4%	7,077	41.2%	5,820	33.9%	5,084	29.6%
2006	17,921	9,111	50.8%	7,371	41.1%	6,025	33.6%	5,272	29.4%
2007	18,178	9,195	50.6%	7,511	41.3%	6,056	33.3%	5,268	29.0%
2008	18,086	9,390	51.9%	7,536	41.7%	6,502	36.0%	5,626	31.1%
2009	18,706	10,114	54.1%	8,113	43.4%	6,011	32.1%	5,222	27.9%
2010	19,258	10,790	56.0%	8,804	45.7%	6,694	34.8%	5,851	30.4%
2011	19,595	10,953	55.9%	9,063	46.3%	6,669	34.0%	5,820	29.7%
2012	19,071	10,644	55.8%	8,770	46.0%	6,560	34.4%	5,622	29.5%
2013	18,741	10,018	53.5%	8,256	44.1%	6,256	33.4%	5,253	28.0%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Note: Support table for **Figure 16**.

Table C-17. Single Mothers' Job Attachment, 1987 to 2013

(Numbers in 1,000s)

		Worked During the Year								Did Not Work During the Year					
		Total		Worked Full-Time, Full-Year		Worked Less Than Full-Time, Full-Year, Due to Unemployment or Discouragement		Worked Less Than Full-Time, Full-Year, for Personal Reasons		Total		Did Not Work Due to Unemployment or Discouragement		Did Not Work Due to Personal Reasons	
Year	Total	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1987	8,193	5,518	67.3%	2,636	32.2%	1,296	15.8%	1,586	19.4%	2,676	32.7%	449	5.5%	2,217	27.1%
1988	8,321	5,733	68.9%	2,809	33.8%	1,299	15.6%	1,625	19.5%	2,588	31.1%	434	5.2%	2,147	25.8%
1989	8,400	5,891	70.1%	2,810	33.4%	1,325	15.8%	1,756	20.9%	2,510	29.9%	324	3.9%	2,185	26.0%
1990	8,745	6,108	69.8%	2,815	32.2%	1,461	16.7%	1,825	20.9%	2,637	30.2%	343	3.9%	2,294	26.2%
1991	9,031	6,205	68.7%	2,925	32.4%	1,569	17.4%	1,709	18.9%	2,826	31.3%	427	4.7%	2,399	26.6%
1992	9,567	6,433	67.2%	3,030	31.7%	1,668	17.4%	1,735	18.1%	3,135	32.8%	468	4.9%	2,666	27.9%
1993	9,860	6,717	68.1%	3,143	31.9%	1,695	17.2%	1,871	19.0%	3,144	31.9%	557	5.7%	2,582	26.2%
1994	9,837	7,022	71.4%	3,259	33.1%	1,720	17.5%	2,038	20.7%	2,815	28.6%	442	4.5%	2,372	24.1%
1995	9,887	7,220	73.0%	3,589	36.3%	1,609	16.3%	2,020	20.4%	2,667	27.0%	406	4.1%	2,261	22.9%
1996	10,052	7,548	75.1%	3,646	36.3%	1,693	16.8%	2,200	21.9%	2,504	24.9%	425	4.2%	2,079	20.7%
1997	9,874	7,636	77.3%	3,838	38.9%	1,568	15.9%	2,225	22.5%	2,238	22.7%	362	3.7%	1,877	19.0%
1998	9,881	7,868	79.6%	4,116	41.7%	1,543	15.6%	2,200	22.3%	2,013	20.4%	270	2.7%	1,744	17.6%
1999	9,741	7,986	82.0%	4,286	44.0%	1,428	14.7%	2,269	23.3%	1,755	18.0%	151	1.5%	1,602	16.4%
2000	9,712	8,030	82.7%	4,459	45.9%	1,251	12.9%	2,307	23.8%	1,682	17.3%	174	1.8%	1,508	15.5%
2001	10,044	8,148	81.1%	4,505	44.9%	1,492	14.9%	2,138	21.3%	1,896	18.9%	193	1.9%	1,701	16.9%
2002	10,206	8,193	80.3%	4,649	45.6%	1,556	15.2%	1,980	19.4%	2,013	19.7%	271	2.7%	1,742	17.1%
2003	10,411	8,191	78.7%	4,569	43.9%	1,575	15.1%	2,040	19.6%	2,220	21.3%	297	2.8%	1,924	18.5%

		Worked During the Year								Did Not Work During the Year					
		Total		Worked Full-Time, Full-Year		Worked Less Than Full-Time, Full-Year, Due to Unemployment or Discouragement		Worked Less Than Full-Time, Full-Year, for Personal Reasons		Total		Did Not Work Due to Unemployment or Discouragement		Did Not Work Due to Personal Reasons	
Year	**Total**	**Num.**	**Pct.**	**Num.**	**Pct.**	**Num.**	**Pct.**	**Num.**	**Pct.**	**Num.**	**Pct.**	**Num.**	**Pct.**	**Num.**	**Pct.**
2004	10,442	8,110	77.7%	4,476	42.9%	1,497	14.3%	2,134	20.4%	2,332	22.3%	294	2.8%	2,038	19.5%
2005	10,476	8,124	77.6%	4,657	44.5%	1,398	13.3%	2,060	19.7%	2,352	22.4%	249	2.4%	2,102	20.1%
2006	10,938	8,458	77.3%	4,845	44.3%	1,452	13.3%	2,156	19.7%	2,479	22.7%	233	2.1%	2,245	20.5%
2007	10,748	8,372	77.9%	4,702	43.8%	1,519	14.1%	2,142	19.9%	2,376	22.1%	229	2.1%	2,146	20.0%
2008	10,797	8,301	76.9%	4,426	41.0%	1,989	18.4%	1,882	17.4%	2,496	23.1%	281	2.6%	2,212	20.5%
2009	10,990	8,133	74.0%	4,252	38.7%	2,041	18.6%	1,832	16.7%	2,856	26.0%	569	5.2%	2,285	20.8%
2010	11,185	8,138	72.8%	4,250	38.0%	2,029	18.1%	1,848	16.5%	3,048	27.2%	666	6.0%	2,382	21.3%
2011	11,467	8,451	73.7%	4,488	39.1%	2,150	18.7%	1,806	15.7%	3,016	26.3%	611	5.3%	2,403	21.0%
2012	11,125	8,242	74.1%	4,197	37.7%	2,104	18.9%	1,927	17.3%	2,882	25.9%	600	5.4%	2,281	20.5%
2013	10,970	8,226	75.0%	4,348	39.6%	2,077	18.9%	1,797	16.4%	2,744	25.0%	542	4.9%	2,203	20.1%

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates based on analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 1988 to 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

Notes: Persons who worked for 50 weeks or more and 35 or more hours per week are designated as full-time, full-year workers. Unemployed are persons who were without a job and searched for work. Discouraged workers are persons who were without a job but did not search for work because they believed no jobs were available. Personal reasons for not working during the year, or working less than full-time, full-year, include taking care of home or family, attending school, illness or disability, retired, or other.

Support table for **Figure 20**.

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