

Program will provide new experimental evidence on the impacts of employment interventions on both parents and children.

The goal of this grant area is to develop new knowledge about the possible linkages between intervening to support children's development (in childhood or adolescence) and intervening to promote families' economic self-sufficiency and about the conditions under which linkages occur or can be created. We seek knowledge which can inform policy formulation at national, state, and local levels and can guide the design of service interventions.

Topics of interest include:

- Changes in parents' poverty or welfare dependency as a function of the provision of child development services (such as child care, after school care, and more intensive child and youth development programs);
- Changes in children's development as a function of changes in family poverty or welfare dependency;
- Variations in home environments or in child and youth development as a function of low-income parents' transitions from welfare to employment and participation in work or training programs;
- Variations in children's time use and parents' supervision and monitoring of children's activities as a function of AFDC parents' participation in work or training;
- Relationships between developing employability skills and developing parenting skills;
- Characteristics of low-wage jobs or employment and training programs which affect parents' continued participation in work or training because of their influence on the home environment and parents' ability to manage their child-rearing responsibilities; and
- Effects of participation of low-income youth in employment and training on family relationships and economic self-sufficiency.

Technical questions concerning this topic should be directed to Martha Moorehouse at 202-690-6939.

D. Research on Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting

Teen pregnancy and teen parenthood have raised great concerns among policy makers and the general public. Teen parenthood is associated with many negative outcomes such as welfare dependency and school dropout for young mothers and low birth weight and other problems for their children. Given the potential consequences of teen pregnancy, the issue has been at

the center of many recent policy debates.

While our knowledge about the factors related to teen pregnancy and parenthood are limited, we do have some information on trends in sexual activity and childbearing and have identified some possible antecedents. Earlier physical maturation, increasing teen sexual activity, and the incidence of non-consensual sexual intercourse have increased the risk of exposure to pregnancy among adolescents. It is important to recognize that teens report 84% of all pregnancies in 1990 were unintended. The primary factors that are associated with teenage sexual activity and parenthood are socioeconomic disadvantage, school failure, behavior problems and risk-taking.

The most recent synthesis of the literature, *Beginning Too Soon: Adolescent Sexual Behavior Pregnancy and Parenthood* by K. Moore and her associates (in press) identifies the different roles people, institutions and policies play in influencing the decisions of teen mothers. We are only beginning to learn the relative roles of peers, partners, siblings, parents, media, neighborhood influences, biological development and public policy and programs on the timing of first sexual intercourse and other decisions related to sexual activity, pregnancy and parenthood. More research in each of these areas is necessary.

The topics listed below could fill some of the knowledge gaps we face, but are given only for purposes of illustration. Authors are encouraged to submit their own ideas for potential topics.

- What is the impact of involuntary sex on teens? Is it an antecedent of adolescent parenthood? What is the role of non-sexual child abuse?
- Do we know if vulnerable teen populations (e.g., youth living away from their parents, incarcerated youth, and runaway or homeless youth) have an increased chance of becoming teen parents?
- What impact do the media have on teens' decisions related to sexual activity and/or childbearing? What is the impact of the popular media? What is the impact of the use of media to support healthy decision making and activity?
- What is the role of religious institutions? What is the impact of religiosity in general? Does it vary across religions?
- What is known about the relationship between youths' participation in youth development activities and pregnancy or parenthood?

- What do we know about the male partners of sexually active teenagers? What types of interventions should target teen males? What interventions (if any) have targeted or could target older males? What is the impact of child support policies on their intention to become fathers?

- What is known about the impact of the presence/absence of significant adults on teens' decisions that lead to adolescent pregnancy and parenthood? What are particular elements of this factor? What are the roles of parents? Peers? Other caring adults?

- What impact does a teen's perception of future opportunity have on decisions regarding sexual activity, pregnancy and parenthood?

- What are the roles of schools as social and community settings for adolescent development? What do school reform intervention efforts tell us about the relationship between school functioning, students' academic success and teen pregnancy and parenthood?

- What is the role of labor market opportunities in decisions related to adolescent fertility?

- What do we know about how adolescents decide whether to place their children for adoption? Why don't more adolescents select adoption as the outcome of their pregnancy?

- What do we know about interventions specifically to reduce the number of second pregnancies or births to teens?

Technical questions concerning this topic should be directed to Elisa Koff at 202-690-5932.

E. Other Topics Related to Poverty and Dependency

In making decisions about which proposals to fund, priority attention will be given to projects which address concerns within the topical areas listed above. However, we do invite researchers to propose projects which are not included above, but which directly address the overall themes of poverty and dependence.

ASPE also encourages applicants to propose projects that analyze the various service delivery approaches or intervention strategies in use in a field. Appropriate fields include early childhood development, family economic development, child welfare services, youth services, or other social service areas of interest to HHS.

Such projects would describe and categorize service delivery approaches and intervention strategies now being used in a field and would explain their relationship to one another and to interventions in other service fields. This would create a framework for