



OVERVIEW OF CURRENT
RESEARCH ON
WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2)

March 1998
(Updated Edition)



OVERVIEW OF CURRENT RESEARCH ON WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2)

Updated Edition

Compiled by Michael Grover

An online version of this updated booklet and additional information about welfare reform in Wisconsin will also be available at www.cuir.uwm.edu/w2research

We wish to express our appreciation to the Center for Community Change, the Joyce Foundation, the Johnson Foundation, the Jane and Lloyd Pettit Foundation, the Milwaukee Foundation and the Unitarian Universalist Fund for supporting the Institute's work.

We also wish to express our appreciation to the Johnson Foundation for hosting the first conference. Art work on the cover is derived from photographs of the north wing of Wingspread and "Amanti", a bronze sculpture by Milton Hebdal near the entrance to Wingspread taken by Thomas Heinz.

Introduction

Wisconsin's welfare replacement program — Wisconsin Works (W-2) — is designed to accomplish two goals. The first is to end Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) which had provided a guarantee of cash grants and support services to destitute families for over sixty years. The second goal is to integrate welfare recipients into the work force in order to achieve self-sufficiency through unsubsidized employment. Under W-2, a wide range of low-income individuals are eligible to receive transitional support through childcare, health care, and transportation assistance for up to five years.

Due to these profound alterations in public welfare policy, Wisconsin has emerged as a testing ground observed by researchers, policymakers, service providers, foundations, and advocates both from Wisconsin and across the nation. As implementation of W-2 begins, altering the lives of thousands of families, multiple efforts are underway to monitor and evaluate the impact of W-2 and assess its effectiveness in reaching program objectives.

Originally designed for a meeting at the Johnson Foundation's Wingspread Conference Center, this updated version of the booklet provides an introduction to and overview of current research and monitoring projects in the state of Wisconsin. In keeping with the spirit of the conference, this booklet is also designed to open a dialogue on the need for coordination. This collaborative effort will generate a body of information that can assist in identifying strengths and weaknesses in the new system in a way that can shape and improve the design and implementation of W-2 over time.

Summary of Research Projects

- A. **9to5** is analyzing information obtained through contacts in the field and their hotline in order to assess the impact of W-2 policies on the ability of women to move out of poverty and into full-time employment and self-sufficiency in Milwaukee.
- B. The **Center for Economic Development** at UW-Milwaukee is analyzing employment trends and job gap data in Southeastern Wisconsin and monitoring W-2 agency operations in Milwaukee County.
- C. The **Center for Real Estate and Urban Land Economics Research** at UW-Madison, in collaboration with the Wisconsin Works Management and Evaluation Project (W2-MEP) and the Urban Institute's *Assessing the New Federalism* Project, completed a survey of 6,000 families in Wisconsin to provide baseline information on employment, income, health care and family well-being among low-income families prior to W-2.
- D. **Community Advocates** operates a sanction hotline for W-2 participants which offers information and advocacy.

- E. The **Employment and Training Institute** at UW-Milwaukee is focusing on family economic well-being and changes in poverty rates through a multi-faceted examination of Milwaukee's central-city neighborhoods.
- F. The **Hudson Institute**, in collaboration with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., is studying the declining welfare caseload in Milwaukee County and examining how people fared after leaving or choosing not to participate in welfare programs.
- G. The **Institute for Research on Poverty** at UW-Madison will undertake four projects:
- One project will focus on the labor force participation, income levels and occupational trajectories of low-income workers, AFDC recipients, and W-2 participants.
 - The second project focuses on the impacts of welfare reform initiatives in three cities on various aspects of child welfare including abuse rates, foster care and infant development.
 - The third project examines the experiences of individuals who left Pay-For-Performance and W-2.
 - A fourth project will evaluate the state of Wisconsin's W-2 Child Support Waiver Demonstration.
- H. The **Institute for Wisconsin's Future** will monitor the ability of the state's labor market to meet the needs of former welfare recipients under W-2, coordinate the W-2 Research Consortium with the Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative and provide technical assistance and direct research support to service providers.
- I. The **La Crosse County Research Consortium** is conducting a longitudinal study to explore how individuals and families are faring since the onset of W-2 in La Crosse County.
- J. **Legal Action of Wisconsin** is collecting information on the causes, patterns of occurrence and resolutions to sanctions incurred by W-2 and Pay-For-Performance participants.
- K. The **Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation** will examine the implementation of W-2 in Milwaukee County in terms of program goals and outcomes.
- L. The **Marshfield Area United Way** and **Wood County W-2 Steering Committee** are monitoring the impact of W-2 on the provision of social services and examining what happened to recipients who left welfare prior to W-2's implementation in Wood County.
- M. The **Milwaukee Area Technical College**, in collaboration with the Department of Workforce Development and the Private Industry Council of Milwaukee, monitors the educational and service needs of welfare recipients, especially mothers with children under one year of age, and designs appropriate service plans.
- N. The **New Hope Project** is coordinating a longitudinal welfare replacement project which examines job retention, work patterns, household composition, life-satisfaction, parent-child relationships and access to and the quality of child care among participants.
- O. The **Portage County Health and Human Services Department** uses a Monitoring Tool to collect baseline information on families before and after W-2's implementation and is conducting a Family Needs Assessment survey of families who left AFDC and a longitudinal study of 12 families participating in W-2.

- P. The **Private Industry Council of Milwaukee County** is planning to track the ability of W-2 participants to achieve financial self-sufficiency and the availability and quality of services at the area's five W-2 service providers.
- Q. The **United Way of Brown County** is developing a research project that will examine the experiences of people who left welfare, were denied access to W-2, or are currently participating in W-2.
- R. The **United Way of Dane County** coordinates two community assessment projects that monitor the needs of groups in the community, including those who were on AFDC as well as those currently enrolled in W-2.
- S. The **Wisconsin Catholic Conference** will conduct a home-based project to study the capacity of parents in poor families to protect and nurture socially, psychologically, and cognitively healthy children while participating in W-2.
- T. The **Wisconsin Council on Children and Families' Welfare Watch Project** will study how W-2 alters the demands on and operations of human service and support programs for the poor, the kinds of problems and changes facing employers and the impact of welfare reforms on 30 Wisconsin families over time.
- U. The **Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative's** qualitative study of 200 women in nine Wisconsin communities will examine their employment, training, and educational experiences; conflicts between work and family obligations; child care access; impact of workforce participation on domestic abuse patterns; and the quality and availability of reliable transportation and its impact on job retention.
 - The **Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative** has also sponsored a pilot study conducted by Robert Magill at UW-Milwaukee's School of Social Work that examines the impact of W-2 on various sectors of the service provision community in Milwaukee County.

Organization: 9to5 National Association of Working Women

231 West Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 900
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203
(414) 274-0925



9to5 Poverty Network Initiative (PNI)

223 Maple Avenue
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186
(414) 574-9925

Founded in 1973, 9to5 is a national grassroots organization whose mission is to strengthen women's ability to work for economic justice. Our members are mostly low-wage women in predominantly female jobs. 9to5's program focuses on welfare/workfare, contingent work, balancing work and family, and all forms of workplace discrimination. The organization has a toll free hotline, activists in more than 200 cities, and 25 local chapters. One of these is 9to5's Poverty Network Initiative, a statewide group in Wisconsin consisting of women with personal experience of poverty.

Contact Persons:

Ellen Bravo, Co-Director, 9to5
Truth Freemyn, Organizing Director, 9to5
Elizabeth Felt, Organizer, 9to5 PNI
Janet Vasquez, Organizer, 9to5 PNI

Project/Research Summary:

Nationally, 9to5 has been active in efforts to win changes in work, job training and job availability to enable women to leave welfare and become self-sufficient. In Wisconsin, PNI members have been involved to make W-2 more responsive to the needs of those directly affected, along with educating the public in order to change the policy environment. The group operates a hotline and is gathering information on problems W-2 participants experience in work placements. 9to5 is applying for funding to do a research project in collaboration with the Radcliffe Public Policy Institute to study the impact of family friendly policies or the lack thereof on the ability of women leaving welfare to stay employed and move toward self-sufficiency.

Target Group:

Representative samples from the appropriate state departments in four cities (including Atlanta, Cincinnati, Denver and Milwaukee), along with representative businesses, both those with formal family-friendly policies and those lacking such policies.

Measurements:

Project information is collected daily through contacts in the field and through the hotline. This information consists of an individual's W-2 work category, employer, job title, employment history, address, and W-2 related problem or story. To-date, 1,250 women have contacted the 9to5 Poverty Network Initiative hotline.

Related Publications/Reports:

"Welfare to Work: Obstacles to Job Retention, A Survey of Graduates of Federally Funded Training Programs in Cleveland in Milwaukee." 1993.

Funding and Timeline:

This project has just started and is fully funded for two years. Funding sources for the organization's policy work on welfare include the Milwaukee Women's Fund, the Wisconsin Community Fund, the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program, the Ms. Foundation, Ben and Jerry's and the Ford Foundation.

Organization: **Center for Economic Development**
UW-Milwaukee
P.O. Box 413 Bolton Hall
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201
(414) 229-6155

B

The Center for Economic Development provides technical assistance, research, public information, and educational services to support the retention and expansion of existing employment and the creation of new economic activity and family-supporting jobs. The Center publishes studies with the goal of contributing to informed public discussion of economic development policy issues. The Center is supported by a grant from the Economic Development Administration of the US Department of Commerce.

Contact Persons:

Dr. Marc Levine, Director
Pamela Fendt, Policy Analyst
Lisa Heuler-Williams, Research Technician

Project/Research Summary:

Center projects include a comparison of state data on the number of jobs available annually in metropolitan Milwaukee with the number of unemployed, new labor market entrants and welfare recipients expected to obtain private sector employment under W-2. Another Center report analyzes the increasing proportion of low-wage jobs in the Milwaukee labor market. Another project examined W-2 employment goals outlined by the state's Department of Workforce Development in comparison to actual W-2 agency operations in Milwaukee County.

Central Research Questions:

- What types of jobs or job categories are W-2 participants being placed in?
- What is the effect of these placements on the larger Metropolitan Milwaukee economy?

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Ensure the fair and equitable provision of services by W-2 agencies across Metropolitan Milwaukee.
- Assess the impact of new W-2 workers into the regional economy.

Target Group:

These projects focus on welfare recipients, unemployed and employed workers and an analysis of general labor market trends in the seven counties located in the Southeastern Wisconsin region, with particular emphasis on metropolitan Milwaukee and the city of Milwaukee.

Measurements:

The job-gap analysis compares the Department of Workforce Development's employment estimates and projections with existing labor market trends. Employing data that measures private sector employment and unemployment, job openings, the welfare caseload, current wage and occupation data and skill codes for occupations (derived from the US Department of Labor), the analysis contrasts the supply and demand sides of the metropolitan Milwaukee labor market. The second project, comparing agency operations to stated goals, will utilize policies and statistics as well as interviews with W-2 agency personnel.

Funding and Timeline:

These projects are not currently funded. The second project comparing agency operations to policy goals is currently underway and will be completed in March, 1998.

Related Publications/Reports:

UWMCED. *Welfare Reform and the Metropolitan Milwaukee Labor Market*. Briefing Paper #6. Center for Economic Development, UW-Milwaukee, August 1996. By Pamela Fendt and Marc Levine.

See the Institute for Wisconsin's Future's related publications/reports.

Organization: **The Center for Real Estate and Urban Land Economics Research**
School for Business, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Grainger Hall
975 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
(608) 262-9816



Contact Person:

Michael Wiseman, Professor of Public Affairs, Urban and Regional Planning and Economics
Vice Chair, Wisconsin Works Management and Evaluation Project (W2-MEP)

Project/Research Summary:

In August 1996, Professor Wiseman was appointed by Governor Thompson to be Vice Chair of the Wisconsin Works Management and Evaluation Project (W2-MEP) Steering Committee. This umbrella organization established within the Department of Workforce Development provides general evaluation and management information strategies for W-2 and coordinates the state's activities with other non-government organizations also involved in evaluation. One of the research projects being completed by this group is the Wisconsin Special Survey of the National Survey of American Families (NSAF) which is part of the Urban Institute's *Assessing the New Federalism* project. The survey is designed to provide baseline information on Wisconsin's families prior to the implementation of W-2.

Central Research Question:

- What is the status of Wisconsin's population on the eve of W-2's implementation?

Target Group:

During the past year, the phone-based survey contacted over 6,000 households drawn at random from the state's population. While the survey covers all of the state's households, families with low incomes (200 percent of poverty) were over-sampled to allow for a greater examination of the portion more likely to utilize W-2. The sample expansion was also intended to facilitate a separate analysis of Milwaukee County.

Measurements:

The survey covered a variety of topics related to work, family well-being, health insurance access and child care. In particular, the survey collected information on employment, economic hardship, and income; child care and child support; health insurance coverage, access to care, and use; and the emotional well-being of children and families. The survey also measured the interviewees' participation in welfare, job training, and other social service programs. The survey will be re-administered in 1999 and compared with findings from this year's analysis.

Funding and Timeline:

This project is fully funded. The survey began in March 1997 with a report on findings likely due in early 1998.

Additional Information:

Currently, W2-MEP is undertaking an evaluation of a previous Pay-For-Performance Demonstration project and has issued a request for proposal for the Child Support Demonstration research project.

The NSAF survey is complete and a preliminary report will be published this fall. Expansion of the survey to include a larger number of survey participants in Wisconsin was made possible with the support of the Bradley Foundation and the Joyce Foundation. Data from the survey will be available for public use and can be downloaded from the Urban Institute's home page (www.urban.org).

Organization: **Community Advocates**
4906 West Fond du Lac Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216
(414) 449-4777

D

Community Advocates was founded in 1976 to help low-income families and individuals overcome the obstacles that keep them from meeting basic needs. Community Advocates is the largest advocacy agency in Wisconsin and focuses its efforts primarily on housing, health care and entitlement advocacy.

Contact Persons:

Ramon Wagner, Executive Director Flora Boyd, Advocate
Ann Laatch, Coordinator/Advocate

Project/Research Summary:

For the last year, Community Advocates, in conjunction with three other organizations, operated a sanction hotline for participants in the Pay-For-Performance program. This hotline served as a mechanism whereby Pay-For-Performance recipients could call and receive assistance from six staff advocates. Advocates provide outreach, advocacy and education to recipients experiencing difficulties with the changing entitlement programs. Advocates also produce and distribute easy-to-understand educational materials on changes in entitlement. The service will be transformed during the next six months to serve as an intermediary between W-2 participants and service providers. The Institute for Wisconsin's Future will assist Community Advocates in organizing this information into a report.

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Assessing the impact of W-2 on children and families with regard to their financial, housing, health, and developmental needs.

Target Group:

The hotline averages 1,500 calls a month from recipients located in Milwaukee County. Of these calls, approximately 75% were resolved and the sanction lifted. The remaining calls were primarily individuals seeking information about access to service providers.

Project Funding and Timeline:

This project is partially funded. The project and data collection will last for several years.

Additional Information:

The agency's funding sources include the United Way, Milwaukee County, the City of Milwaukee, the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Gas Company, the Wisconsin Electric Power Company, Ameritech, as well as other local and national foundations.

Organization: **Employment and Training Institute**

UW-Milwaukee
161 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203
(414) 227-3380



The Employment and Training Institute of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee focuses on the employment and education needs of low-income workers in Wisconsin through applied research, program and policy development and technical assistance. The Institute works with local and state governments, community organizations and national agencies to generate research and policy papers on the interrelationships between training programs, labor market trends, educational programs and welfare policies.

Contact Persons:

John Pawasarat, Director
Lois Quinn, Senior Research Scientist

Project/Research Summary:

The Institute's current longitudinal research project, titled *The Index of Neighborhood and Family Well-Being*, focuses on family economic well-being through a multi-faceted examination of Milwaukee's central-city neighborhoods. The Institute also monitors the relationship between county AFDC caseloads and unemployment rates, local employment conditions through its "Annual Survey of Job Openings", and recently conducted studies on the mobility and employment of public assistance recipients in Milwaukee County and central-city workers.

Target Group:

The *Neighborhood and Family Well-Being* project will examine the entire Milwaukee County area with a special focus on the central-city zip codes that approximate the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) area.

Measurements:

Starting with 1993 data, the *Neighborhood and Family Well-Being* project will examine the general indicators of family economic well-being annually. Using institutional welfare and employment data, the project will examine the wage and occupational status of families who are working, the number of families in poverty, the number of families on public assistance and the number of children in poverty over time. Using city property records (MPROP), the project will also track rates of home ownership.

Related Publications/Reports:

Recent research publications which focus on employment, training, public assistance and other monitoring projects, such as the comparison between county AFDC caseloads and unemployment rates, can be found on the Institute's web page (<http://www.uwm.edu:80/Dept/ETI>).

Organization: **The Hudson Institute**
P.O. Box 26-919
Indianapolis, Indiana 46226
(317) 549-4138



The Hudson Institute is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization founded in 1961. The Institute analyzes and makes recommendations on a variety of public policies for business and government executives and for the public at large.

Contact Person:

Andrew Bush, Director, Welfare Policy Center

Project/Research Summary:

The Hudson Institute continues to play a supportive role as a member of the Wisconsin Works Management and Evaluation Project (W2-MEP). As a member, the Institute has focused on integrating the state's own management and evaluation agenda with outside research and evaluation efforts. In collaboration with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., the Institute's current exploratory research project focuses on the phenomenon of the declining welfare caseload in Milwaukee County by examining the trajectory of diverted and former welfare recipients as they left the welfare caseload.

Target Group:

Using caseload information from the Department of Workforce Development's CARES system, a random sample was collected of 750 people who left or were diverted from welfare participation over the past year. This sample will consist of three sub-samples: 250 families diverted from applying for cash assistance, 250 families who applied for W-2 and 250 families who left the welfare rolls.

Measurements:

Research will employ a phone-based survey and existing administrative data. The survey will collect basic information on the respondent's educational and employment background, current employment situation, sociodemographic characteristics, and family size and structure. Other survey questions currently under development will seek to examine the decision-making process and choices made by individuals after they left or were diverted from welfare participation with respect to how they were able to meet their basic income, employment, housing, childcare, and transportation needs without entitlement income support. Survey information, in turn, will be matched to earnings and employment information obtained through the Department of Workforce Development. While it is not a longitudinal study, the research project is designed with the potential for an optional follow-up survey with respondents.

Funding and Timeline:

This project is fully funded. Interviews will begin in early 1998 and findings released during the summer of 1998.

Organization: **The Institute for Research on Poverty**
UW-Madison
1180 Observatory Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
(608) 262-6358



The Institute for Research on Poverty is a national, university-based center for research into the causes and consequences of poverty and social inequality in the United States. It is nonprofit and nonpartisan. It is one of two centers designated as a National Poverty Research Center by the US Department of Health and Human Services. The Institute is located at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Contact Persons:

Maria Cancian, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs and Social Work
Thomas Kaplan, IRP Senior Scientist
Daniel Meyer, Associate Professor of Social Work

Project/Research Summary:

This research group's two-part study employs a pre-post longitudinal design to examine program outcomes in Wisconsin before and after W-2's implementation. Their research focuses primarily on the labor force participation and the income and occupational trajectories of low-income workers, AFDC recipients, and W-2 participants during a period ranging from three to seven years.

Central Research Question:

- The project examines the income, earnings and labor market progression over a three-year period of low-income and AFDC recipients in Wisconsin, to serve as the baseline for a later comparison with labor market outcomes under W-2.

Target Group:

The target research population will consist of three groups. These include a statewide sample of low-income families, former AFDC recipients and W-2 participants. In their previous research, a 10 percent sample of the state welfare caseload was utilized. That sample size may be expanded to 50 percent for portions of this study in order to more closely examine smaller subgroups.

Measurements:

The first phase of the study will examine income changes among low-income workers and AFDC recipients for a three-year period (from 1990 to 1992), prior to Pay-For-Performance. The second phase of the study will examine these same income changes between low-income workers and W-2 participants for three years under W-2. An evaluation and comparison of pre-post income and occupational trajectories for all groups will follow.

The researchers expect the primary source of data to consist of administrative information on quarterly income, including that from public assistance programs, and employment information obtained from the Department of Workforce Development possibly merged with information from the Department of Revenue. Intervening factors to be examined include the sociodemographic characteristics of each family, such as education and family size and structure, geographic differences and features of the local labor market.

Funding and Timeline:

The first phase of the project is funded and will be completed by July 1998. The first phase of the project is funded with a grant from the Joyce Foundation. The second phase of the study has not been funded or started.

Related Publications/Reports:

Cancian, Maria and Daniel Meyer. "A Profile of Wisconsin Welfare Recipients: Baseline Data." *Focus* (Special Issue 1996) 58-62.

Kaplan, Thomas and Daniel Meyer. "Toward a Basic Impact Evaluation of Wisconsin Works." *Focus* (Spring 1997) 33-41.

Organization: **The Institute for Research on Poverty (continued)**
UW-Madison
1180 Observatory Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
(608) 262-6358

Contact Persons:

Irving Piliavin, Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Social Work
Mark Courtney, Assistant Professor of Social Work

Project/Research Summary:

This group is currently pursuing two research projects. Both involve longitudinal studies on the impact of welfare reform in Wisconsin. One of the studies currently underway focuses on families in Dane County. The second study, which is still in the planning stage, will focus on families in Milwaukee.

Central Research Question:

- What happens to families and their children who enroll in W-2?

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Social breakdown events: unemployment, child neglect, poor school performance, family dissolution, need for child welfare services, etc.

Target Group:

For the first project, the total representative sample will consist of 1,000 (300 to 400 from each city) families with infants. Potential participant families for this study will be contacted through birth records obtained from hospitals in each of these three cities. The second study's sample will consist of 300 families from Dane County. Study participants will be obtained through the Dane County Department of Human Services.

Measurements:

The first study will be based on information collected from formal interviews with families and administrative data sources which indicate a family's utilization of public assistance programs and health and social services. Using this information, this project will examine the impact of different welfare reform initiatives by documenting the incidents of child neglect and abuse, adoption, and foster care in these families and assessing an infant's basic measure of physical, psychological and behavioral development. The duration of this study is five years. The Dane County study will also utilize qualitative information obtained from interviews with participants matched with administrative data. To date, 10 preliminary interviews have been completed and more formal interviews with all of the study's participants will begin during the next five to six months.

Funding and Timeline:

The second project is fully funded, has begun and will be completed in late fall 1998. The first project is not funded and is still in the planning stage.

Organization: The Institute for Research on Poverty (continued)

UW-Madison
1180 Observatory Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
(608) 262-6358

Contact Persons:

Maria Cancian, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs and Social Work
Daniel Meyer, Associate Professor of Social Work
Emma Casper, Project Manager

Project/Research Summary:

In November, IRP was awarded the contract by the State of Wisconsin to evaluate the W-2 Child Support Waiver Demonstration. Prior to W-2, families received the first \$50 per month paid on their behalf, while the remainder went to public agencies as partial reimbursement for their welfare expenditures. As of October 1, 1997, families will generally retain the entire amount paid on their behalf. The child support component of W-2 is operating as a waiver demonstration program. The terms and conditions under which the federal government granted the waiver required an evaluation of the program, and stated that the evaluation must include assignment to treatment and control groups.

Central Research Questions:

- To evaluate the potential advantages and disadvantages of this new approach to child support.
- To examine how the child support system is working for low-income families in Wisconsin.

Target Group:

The target research population will consist of two groups. The control group of 4,000 will receive either 40 percent of the amount paid or \$50, whichever is greater, and a treatment group of 4,000 plus all others participating in W-2 will receive the full amount of child support.

Measurements:

The IRP evaluation plan is composed of three components: an implementation/process study, impact analysis, and a nonexperimental study. The first part of the project will examine the waiver's implementation. Using administrative data and a 50-minute survey of a random sample of both groups, the impact analysis will examine eight policy impact areas. This component will focus on identifying and analyzing patterns and changes between the treatment and control groups with regard to child support collections, child support orders and paternity establishment, W-2 and related program costs, resident and non-resident parents, child well-being, non-resident parent earnings and formal versus informal child support payments. The nonexperimental portion of the project will consist of comparisons with programs in other states, including the Parent's Fair Share Experiment, AFDC cases in this state, and earlier studies of this group in Wisconsin. This study component will also include in-depth interviews with selected cases.

Funding and Timeline:

This IRP project is funded through the State of Wisconsin and the federal government. A four-year evaluation is planned.

Organization: **The Institute for Wisconsin's Future**
1717 South 12th Street Suite 203
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53204
(414) 384-9094



The Institute for Wisconsin's Future (IWF) is a statewide policy research and community education center. IWF was established in 1994 by a broad coalition of concerned citizens, labor organizations, academics, professionals, religious leaders and advocacy groups. Its mission is to inform Wisconsin residents about issues and policies that affect their lives and to encourage broader citizen involvement in public policy debates and decision making.

Contact Persons:

Karen Royster, Executive Director
Michael Grover, Research Associate

Project/Research Summary:

IWF is involved on a variety of levels in monitoring the impact of W-2. In September 1997, at a successful daylong conference of W-2 researchers, a plan for collaborative work was developed. IWF now coordinates this group, called the W-2 Research Consortium. A project website was developed to share updates and research information. A library of related published studies and other W-2 information will be established at the IWF offices by March, 1998. IWF began publication of a W-2 impact newsletter to monitor research progress and share information on the implementation of the program. In addition, IWF is developing new sources of client impact data through community service agencies. IWF is providing technical assistance and direct research support to emergency shelters and food programs, direct client advocacy and disability programs. IWF is also negotiating with W-2 provider agencies to adapt their intake protocols to ensure that adequate information is collected from clients as they enter the system. Second and third meetings of the W-2 Research Consortium are being planned for 1998 and 1999. In addition and on an ongoing basis, IWF will track the number and type of jobs available in Wisconsin and compare them with the number of unemployed and employed workers and welfare recipients expected to obtain private sector employment under W-2.

Target Group:

These projects focus on an analysis of welfare recipients, children, unemployed and employed workers, and general labor market trends in Wisconsin.

Measurements:

The job-gap analysis compares the Department of Workforce Development's employment estimates and projections with labor market trends. Employing data that measures private sector employment and unemployment, job openings, the welfare caseload, current wage, education and occupation data, the project examines the reality of the state's economy to absorb low-wage job seekers. Direct W-2 client data will be collected primarily through interviews at intake and will include demographics, financial, housing and family status information and changes in their family well-being.

Related Publications/Reports:

Fendt, Pamela and Anne Statham. *W-2 (Wisconsin Works): An Analysis of Feasibility and Impact*. The Institute for Wisconsin's Future, October 1995.

_____. *W-2 (Wisconsin Works): An Analysis of Impact on Families and Children*. The Institute for Wisconsin's Future, November 1995.

Training and Wage Levels in the Wisconsin Job Market: An Analysis of the Relationship Between Wage Levels and Educational Requirements in Occupational Growth Areas. The Institute for Wisconsin's Future, September, 1997.

Funding and Timeline:

The Institute's research and monitoring is supported by the Center for Community Change's State Welfare Redesign Grants Pool, the Joyce Foundation, the Jane and Lloyd Pettit Foundation and other funders. Client-based research and technical assistance projects began in December 1997 and will continue through 1998. The next meeting of the research consortium will also occur in the fall of 1998.

Organization: **La Crosse County W-2 Research Consortium**

UW-La Crosse
1725 State Street
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601
(608) 785-8479 Hope Hagar
(608) 785-6500 Donell Kerns



The La Crosse County W-2 Research Consortium was formed in response to a request from the La Crosse County Human Services Department and the United Way of the La Crosse Area, Inc. The Consortium is composed of faculty from three universities/colleges and a practitioner from the health and social service community. The sole purpose of the Consortium is to design and implement a W-2 research project that addresses the interests of the local human service community.

Contact Persons:

Gloria Fennell, Northland Community Services, Inc.
Hope Hagar, Department of Social Work, UW-La Crosse
Donell Kerns, Continuing Education and Extension, UW-La Crosse
Nancy Krug, Department of Sociology, St. Mary's University
Vicki Moss, School of Nursing, Viterbo College
Debra Daehn Zellmer, Department of Sociology, Viterbo College

Project/Research Summary:

This group is conducting a longitudinal study to explore how individuals and families are faring since the onset of W-2. In addition to customary demographic information, such as household composition and education, researchers will collect information on their employment history, attitudes toward work, self-assessment of employment skills, job training goals and participation in job training activities, economic well-being, transportation, child care arrangements, health care use and insurance coverage, parenting experiences and behavior, child-well being, and perceptions about self.

Central Research Questions:

- What personal, family or lifestyle changes, if any, occurred parallel to the onset of W-2 in the lives of La Crosse County participants?
- What are the differences, if any, between recipients of a W-2 cash benefit and non-recipients of a W-2 cash benefit?
- What variables are related to W-2 job tier progression, obtaining unsubsidized employment, maintaining unsubsidized employment and satisfaction with quality of life?

Target Group:

The study's sample will consist of individuals and families who reside in La Crosse County. The projected sample size is 150 and research participants will be obtained through the La Crosse County Human Services Department. Because the research sample will be randomly selected, individuals or families from several target subgroups may be included in the sample.

Measurements:

In-depth interviews will be conducted with individuals or the adult members of families. Primary care parents will complete a paper and pencil questionnaire regarding one's child (ren). The interview protocol and parent questionnaire were adapted from the survey instrument used in the New Hope Project in Milwaukee. Administrative data will also be accessed to ascertain the family's use of financial and social services as well as child attendance and performance in school, pre-school, or childcare settings. The interview and questionnaire elicit responses that cross many issue and content areas. Thus, the focus of this research is overall quality of life, and several indicators combine to operationalize this broad construct. At a minimum, data collection will occur at two points in time: spring 1998 and once during 1999. The same recipients will be reinterviewed and the same administrative data sources will be used.

Funding and Timeline:

A grant proposal for partial funding has been submitted to the La Crosse County Community Foundation. If awarded, the grant will be administered by UW-La Crosse. Also, a request for partial funding has been made to the United Way of the La Crosse Area. If funded, the two-year project will start in spring 1998.

Organization: **Legal Action of Wisconsin**
230 West Wells
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203
(414) 278-7722



Legal Action of Wisconsin provides advocacy services and information to low-income individuals and families with legal problems pertaining to housing, welfare and income maintenance and family-related issues.

Contact Person:

Pat DeLessio, Attorney

Project/Research Summary:

Since Pay-For-Performance, Legal Action has monitored the impact of welfare reform on former welfare recipients and those who receive income assistance through family kinship-care and Social Security. Monitoring is designed to detect differences in sanction rates between these three groups, identify possible patterns behind sanctioning, distinguish program implementation problems at the local level and track the resolution of and any adverse effects due to each client's sanction. The Institute for Wisconsin's Future will assist Legal Action in organizing this information into a report.

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Assessing the impact of W-2 on children and families with regard to their financial, housing, health and developmental needs.

Target Group:

The project only monitors sanctioned clients who receive assistance through Legal Action. The average number of clients seeking assistance ranges from 100 to 150 each month. This Legal Action office serves Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties.

Measurements:

Tracking each client's sanction consists of an interview with a client to determine the cause of the sanction, working with the service provider or going to administrative hearings to overturn the sanction, and monitoring how the sanction is eventually resolved. In addition, background information on each client is collected during this interview and includes their education and employment backgrounds, information on family size and composition, adult and child disabilities and prior problems obtaining public assistance and adequate childcare services.

Organization: **Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation**

3 Park Avenue 32nd Floor
New York City, New York 10016
(212) 532-3200



The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) is a nonprofit social policy research organization founded in 1974 and located in New York City and San Francisco. Its mission is to design and rigorously field-test promising education and employment-related programs aimed at improving the well-being of disadvantaged adults and youth and to provide policymakers and practitioners with reliable evidence on the effectiveness of social programs.

Contact Person:

Fred Doolittle, Vice President and Associate Director of Research

Project/Research Summary:

MDRC is currently involved in a collaborative research project with several foundations examining the implementation of W-2 in Milwaukee County. The study will focus on the implementation over its first three years, with research questions designed to reflect the key events and topics within that time frame.

Research Questions:

- How is W-2 implemented in Milwaukee County?
- What program issues emerged during implementation, how were they addressed, and what are the lessons for future welfare reform efforts?

Process or Outcome Focus:

- Focus largely on program implementation with special interest on relations between government agencies and service providers, assessment of participants for specific W-2 components, the experiences of participants, and participant progress up the W-2 "employment ladder" or departure from the program.

Target Group:

The project examines the implementation of welfare and employment policy reforms on services in Milwaukee County.

Measurements:

The effort will include document review, on-going monthly field research and interviews with staff and managers, a consultative process with various representatives in the Milwaukee community focus groups with participants, a staff survey and program participation analysis for a sample of participants. Further, the project will provide briefings on early findings for service providers, county PIC and state, and two project reports at approximately 18 and 36 months into the project.

Funding and Timeline:

This project is partially funded. It began in January 1998 and will be completed in 2000.

Related Publications/Reports:


Dan Bloom and David Butler. *Implementing Time-Limited Welfare: Early Experiences in Three States*. Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, November 1995.

Additional Information:

In 1995, MDRC's Cross-State Study of Time-Limited Welfare Project examined jurisdictions moving to work-based welfare programs. The Cross-State Study focused on state and local policy approaches and program start-up implementation in Vermont, Florida and Wisconsin. The report concluded that how state policy affects daily life in local welfare offices may be the key to understanding its long-term impacts of families and on government budgets. The Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Joyce Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation funded this study.

The current work on W-2 grew out of a multi-site Rockefeller project (Competitive Connections to Work) which examines reforms introducing competition into the choices of welfare employment service providers and a greater link between post-program outcomes and funding.

MDRC is also the research organization subcontracted to evaluate the New Hope Project. See the New Hope Project entry in this booklet.

Organizations:	Marshfield Area United Way	Wood County W-2 Steering Committee	
	PO Box 771	c/o Ron Herman	
	Marshfield, Wisconsin 54449	Figi's Gifts, Inc.	
	(715) 384-9992	2525 Roddis Avenue	
		Marshfield, Wisconsin 54449	
		(715) 384-1330	

The mission of the Marshfield Area United Way is to improve the community's capacity to care for its members. Its purpose is to assess the need for human service programs, help develop, expand or modify human service programs and foster cooperation among local, state and national agencies serving the community. The Community Steering Committee seeks to establish strong ties to local employers, create and identify job opportunities, develop employment strategies, promote entrepreneurship and provide mentoring to people making the transition from welfare to work.

Contact Persons:

Ron Herman, Chair, Wood County W-2 Steering Committee
Stacy Mara, Marshfield Area United Way

Project/Research Summary:

There are two projects currently underway in Marshfield and in Wood County. The first project, coordinated by the Marshfield Area United Way, is monitoring the impact of W-2 on the provision of social services in Marshfield and in Wood County. The second, initiated by the Wood County W-2 Steering Committee, will examine what happened to those recipients who left the county's welfare rolls prior to W-2's implementation through a survey.

Central Research Questions:

- How are families in Wood County meeting their needs without public assistance?
- Are the needs of Wood County families met through established agency programs?

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Both projects seek an outcome that will strengthen W-2 by improving the quality and quantity of services available in Wood County.

Target Group:

The United Way coordinated project monitors a number of service providers. These include housing assistance, social services, emergency relief, health, utility, childcare and support, crime and employment providers. The Steering Committee survey project will focus on the close to 600 families in Wood County who left the welfare rolls prior to the implementation of W-2 (September 1, 1996). With assistance from Wood County Social Services, individuals will be contacted by phone and, if respondent is unavailable, by mail. To date, there are approximately 40 individuals participating in W-2.

Measurements:

The Monitoring Tool developed by the United Way gathers quarterly information about the number of households served by service agencies in order to identify and measure trends in service provision over time. Each service agency has a different set of questions pertaining toward its own programs. For example, Wood County Social Services provides the number of W-2 and Food Stamp cases, child abuse/neglect, and children in foster care. The Steering Committee's questions seek to identify service needs and gaps, primarily in the areas of childcare, transportation, and employment by focusing on an individual's past and current work history, day-care needs, health care insurance status, transportation and child care usage patterns, and demographic information. Summary questions will also seek to identify the needs that individuals distinguish, such as enhanced financial, education and training assistance.

Funding and Timeline:

The monitoring project is funded internally through the United Way. Monitoring began during the last quarter of 1995 and will end in 1998 when three full-years of information will be collected and analyzed. The Steering Committee's survey is supported through funds obtained from Wood County's W-2 program. The survey will be implemented in January of 1998 and results will be compiled and released in February.

Organization: **Milwaukee Area Technical College**

700 West State Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233
(414) 297-6781



The Milwaukee Area Technical College offers high-quality instruction and programs consistent with current and emerging educational and labor market needs. MATC is the largest of the 16 districts that make up Wisconsin's two-year technical college system. The MATC district includes all of Milwaukee County, most of Ozaukee County and portions of Waukesha and Washington Counties. The population of the district is 1.25 million. During the 1996-1997 school year, 1,663 students obtaining entitlement benefits were enrolled. At the beginning of this year, 273 students participating in W-2 were enrolled.

Contact Person:

Russ Prust, Director of the Office of Grants and Development

Project/Research Summary:

In 1996, MATC, the Department of Workforce Development, the Private Industry Council of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County JOBS agencies initiated Project Get Started. The project focused attention on the educational and service needs of AFDC recipients, especially mothers with children under one year of age, who are a potential pool of participants for MATC training programs. The goals of the project were to improve the transition from welfare to work by: 1) assessing the needs of this group with regard to child care, education, work activity, and other services, and; 2) recommending strategies to meet these needs. An analysis of Phase II of the project is now complete. The Phase II Report reveals that a large percentage (65 percent) of this previously exempt portion of the AFDC population will have trouble finding and keeping jobs mainly because of mothers' lack of work experience, high school diplomas and basic math and reading skills, driver's license and adequate child care. The report's authors highlight the need for additional training and education programs and greater access to child care services.

Central Research Question:

- What are the needs of mothers with young children who are now required to work as a condition of their enrollment in W-2?

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Describe and assess the social and occupational characteristics and needs of a previously exempt AFDC population, mothers with young children.

Target Group:

Using an estimated population of 2,190 Milwaukee County mothers with a child under one year of age, a random sampling procedure produced 730 individuals for assessment with a minimum sample population of 256. The initial phase of the project assessed 345 cases (or 15.8 percent of the total eligible population). Under Phase II the number of individuals assessed was increased. The total number of cases assessed by the project was 1,551.

Measurements:

The assessment process involved a one-hour orientation session and a data collection session. Participants were surveyed on their educational background and attitudes toward work and welfare, and took an Accuplacer computer-based literacy test. Participant information was crossmatched to the Department of Workforce Development CARES system. Based on an analysis of the information collected, participants were divided into four levels of employment readiness. Each level of readiness was crossmatched with corresponding recommendations for child care, transportation and other service needs of W-2 participants seeking training at MATC.

Funding and Timeline:

The project was fully funded. Began in 1996 with Phase I, Project Get Started was recently completed with the publication of the Phase II report.

Related Publications/Reports:

Kelley, Teresa L. and Milwaukee Area Technical College. *Project Get Started: Phase I Report*. A Report for the Private Industry Council of Milwaukee County, March 1997.

Kelley, Teresa L., Francine Triplett, and Art Martinez. *Project Get Started: Phase II Report*. Milwaukee Area Technical College, September 1997.

Additional Information:

Under Pay-For-Performance, MATC began to track student attendance in 1996. At the beginning of this school year, the College also contacted approximately 2,000 students who receive welfare benefits in order to identify problems with continuing their education and utilizing local W-2 agencies. No long-term analysis of this information is currently planned.

Organization: **The New Hope Project**
623 North 35th Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208
(414) 342-3338



New Hope is a three-year antipoverty demonstration project designed to help people leave poverty through work. The project was designed to test the notion that individuals in poverty will choose work over welfare when supports are provided to make work pay.

Contact Person:

Julie Kerksick, Executive Director

Project/Research Summary:

The project is based on an experimental research design. New Hope offers assistance in looking for work and a guaranteed job of last resort, a Community Service job, as well as a wage supplement. The offer also includes affordable health insurance and child care. In addition to economic support, project group participants also have access to counseling services from agency case managers. The project group is the only group to receive the New Hope offer.

Central Research Questions:

- How often are New Hope services used?
- Do individuals with access to the New Hope offer do better than those without access?

Process and Outcome Focus:

- To provide credible information to policymakers on the implementation, effectiveness and costs of the New Hope approach.

Target Group:

The project operates in two neighborhoods south and west of downtown Milwaukee in the zip code areas 53204 and 53208. Individuals 18 years or older, already working, unemployed, or on welfare and were willing to work at least 30 hours a week, and were living in a household below 150 percent of poverty were eligible. Between August 1994 and December 1995, project participants were recruited from these areas during several meetings and randomly assigned to a project group and a control group. The total number of participants is approximately 1,400.

Measurements:

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation has been subcontracted to analyze the project. Longitudinal research will track what happens to participants of both groups in terms of household income and employment using data from the State of Wisconsin's Welfare and Unemployment Insurance systems. In the next year, a phone-based survey of both groups will also examine job retention, work patterns, household composition, life-satisfaction, and access to and the quality of child care obtained while the parent is at work. New Hope participants will also be asked to assess the agency's services. A smaller substudy will examine the effects of the program on the child and parent relationship with regard to home life, child development and discipline, the child's health and attitudes of both parents and children.

Related Publications/Reports:

Benoit, Dudley. *The New Hope Offer: Participants in the New Hope Demonstration Discuss Work, Family, and Self-Sufficiency*, Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, MDRC Working Papers, 1996.

Wiseman, Michael. *Who Got New Hope?* Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, MDRC Working Papers, August 1997.

Brock, Thomas, Fred Dolittle, Veronica Fellrath and Michael Wiseman. *Creating New Hope: Implementation of a Program to Reduce Poverty and Reform Welfare*. Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, October 1997.

Funding and Timeline:

The New Hope Project is supported by funds obtained through a number of public and private sources. These include the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the Helen Bader Foundation, as well as other private foundations and the State of Wisconsin, the federal government and the City of Milwaukee. Data collection is ongoing and a final report will be completed in 1999.

Organization: Portage County Health and Human Services Department
817 Whiting Avenue
Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481
(715) 345-5860



Portage County Health and Human Services is a consolidated agency representing social services, the health department and mental health services as authorized under Wisconsin Statutes 51.42. It is the mission of this agency to assist county residents in meeting their physical and psychological health needs, economic, social and environmental needs.

Contact Person:

Lauri M. Rockman, Family and Employment Support Manager

Project/Research Summary:

Through the Community Response Team, the Portage County Health and Human Services Department is currently coordinating three projects. Since the last quarter of 1995, a Monitoring Tool has been used to collect baseline information about families and identify service patterns before and after the implementation of W-2. In addition, Portage County has also contracted with a local research firm, Itzkowitz and Associates, to complete three research projects. The first is a program evaluation which is still in the planning stage, that will assess the impact of W-2's implementation on county administration and services. The second is a Family Needs Assessment survey that was sent to all families in the county who received cash welfare benefits before the implementation of W-2 in 1997. The last project is a longitudinal study of 12 families who were on AFDC in 1996.

Central Research Questions:

- How has W-2 impacted the provision of services in the county?
- What happened to those individuals who left the welfare rolls prior to W-2? What are their perceptions?
- How are families in Portage County meeting their needs without public assistance?

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Projects seek an outcome that will strengthen W-2 by improving the quality and quantity of services available in Portage County.

Target Groups:

The Monitoring Tool collects information from a number of service providers. These include housing assistance, social services, emergency relief, health, utility, childcare and support, crime, and employment providers. The Family Needs Assessment survey focuses on all of the families in Portage County who left the welfare rolls prior to the implementation of W-2 (September 1, 1996). The longitudinal study will follow 12 families (both Hmong and non-Hmong) who were on AFDC in 1996. Both groups were identified with assistance from Portage County Health and Human Services Department.

Measurements:

The Monitoring Tool focuses on a wide variety of impact measure, not just those related with W-2. It incorporates quarterly data from various sectors of the community, including employment indicators, the number of refugee families, the public assistance caseload, child care assistance applications and child care slots, housing indicators, child welfare issues, and information from emergency service providers. The tool is expanded when more data sources become available. Due to their overrepresentation, the Hmong population, which had been 25 percent of the AFDC caseload, was isolated in order to monitor this subgroup.

The Family Needs Assessment survey was mailed to all families who left welfare prior to W-2's implementation. The survey will collect basic information on the respondent's educational and employment background, current employment situation, demographic characteristics, and family size and structure. Questions seek to assess service needs and gaps, primarily in the areas of childcare, transportation, and employment by focusing on an individual's work history, day-care needs, transportation and child care usage patterns, and demographic information. Survey information will also be crossmatched with administrative data. To-date, the survey has had a 50 percent response rate.

The final study will employ a three-year longitudinal in-depth interview format. The initial interview is complete and these same families will be reinterviewed every six months over the next three years. Interview questions focus on the experiences of families participating in W-2. Issues covered include employment, training and educational experiences, childcare access and transportation availability.

Funding and Timeline:

Data collection for the Monitoring Tool is voluntary and will continue in the future. Responses to the Family Needs Assessment survey are currently being collected and will be analyzed in the first quarter of 1998. Begun in 1997, the longitudinal study of twelve families will continue for a total of three years. No current timeline exists for the administrative impact study. Support for these last three projects is obtained through county W-2 funds.

Organization: **The Private Industry Council of Milwaukee County
and the Milwaukee Job Center Network**
611 West National Avenue Fourth Floor
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53204
(414) 384-4000



Contact Person:

N. Clark Earl, Director of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Project/Research Summary:

This research project would involve an examination of the quality and availability of services at Milwaukee's five W-2 service providers. The project would also closely monitor the people engaged in work and training activities through these service providers.

In particular, a longitudinal approach would be employed to gauge and correlate the outcomes of W-2 activities with participants as they enter and exit these subsidized work-based programs. The project would specifically focus on understanding what happens to these participants after they leave these work programs into unsubsidized employment, are sanctioned, or drop out. Research would also examine and monitor participants' access to W-2's integrated services, especially the childcare and transportation support system, income changes, job retention, family composition and participant self-esteem.

Central Research Questions:

- What happened to the 19,000 former AFDC caseheads in W-2?
- Where are they and what is their level of self-sufficiency?
- What W-2 self-sufficiency strategies have been the most successful?

Target Group:

Research would involve a longitudinal impact study of using a randomly generated sample of Milwaukee County's W-2 population, both those exiting and entering the system. The exit sample would consist of 25 percent (approximately 4,500 persons) of the current caseload.

Measurements:

The proposed study would crossmatch data by employing administrative data, neighborhood-based interviews/surveys, and site-based assessments for new applicants at area provider agencies with the overall goal of tracking, primarily through employment and wage information, the ability of this target group to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Monitoring and evaluation would last five years, with research beginning this fall.

Funding and Timeline:

This project is currently not funded and awaits approval. The timeline also has yet to be determined. The project's sponsorship, funding and scope will likely be determined in early 1998.

Organization: **United Way of Brown County**
1825 Riverside Drive
PO Box 1593
Green Bay, Wisconsin 54305-1593
(920) 432-3393



Contact Persons:

Alice Azure, United Way of Brown County
Patricia O’Keefe, Associated Bank, W-2 Committee Co-Chair
Rose Dobkoski, Executive Director of Encompass Child Care, W-2 Committee Co-Chair

Project/Research Summary:

Through their W-2 Committee, the United Way of Brown County, along with St. Norbert College’s Survey Center, are in the process of developing a research project which focuses on W-2’s impact on social services and clients in Brown County. One part of this project will examine what happened to those recipients who left the county’s AFDC rolls, were denied access to W-2, or are currently participating in W-2. The project also seeks to assess the program’s impact on the provision of services to clients.

Central Research Questions:

- What are the circumstances of families in Brown County who left AFDC, were denied entry into W-2, or are currently enrolled in W-2?
- Are the needs of Brown County families met through established agency programs?

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Project findings will be used to strengthen W-2 by improving the quality and quantity of services available in Brown County.

Target Group:

This United Way coordinated project will conduct in-depth interviews with individuals who either dropped out of AFDC, were denied access to W-2, or are now participating in W-2. Brown County will assist with the identification of the 140 respondent sample for the survey. The sample is not randomly generated nor representative of Brown County’s AFDC/W-2 caseload.

Measurements:

The Research Committee, composed of faculty from St. Norbert College and UW-Green Bay, is currently designing the survey instrument. Interviews will be conducted quarterly over a one-year period using a panel survey design. Survey questions will focus on identifying service provision gaps, successful and unsuccessful survival strategies employed by recipients after leaving welfare and the perceptions of individuals from the three groups in the sample.

Funding and Timeline:

Funding was secured for this research project in early January, 1998, through support from the United Way of Brown County, the Cornerstone Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce and Brown County. The first round of interviews will begin in March and will last for one year. Project findings will be distributed sometime during March of 1999.

Organization: **United Way of Dane County**

2059 Atwood Avenue
PO Box 7548
Madison, Wisconsin 53707
(608) 246-4350



The United Way of Dane County is an independent, volunteer-driven fund-raising and community problem solving organization. Activities of the United Way of Dane County are overseen by a 35-member volunteer board of directors whose members represent local businesses, government entities, unions and the community.

Contact Person:

Sandra Erickson, Director of Planning and Community Building

Project/Research Summary:

The United Way of Dane County coordinates a City, County, United Way and School District community assessment report that includes a recently-developed "Indicators of Community Well-Being" database. Begun in 1986, the biennial assessment tool has been used to gather and report information on a number of health and human service needs and socio-demographic subgroups in Dane County to inform the development of policy and allocation of resources. Information from Dane County's Department of Human Services on W-2 is included for the first time as a separate chapter of the document. 1995 data serves as the baseline for the Indicators of Community Well-Being that focuses on identifying trends in the social, mental and physical health of the county through existing data collected on an ongoing basis by a variety of organizations. Data that tracks the impact of welfare reform is included.

Central Research Question:

- To monitor the changing needs of groups in the community, including the impact of welfare reform in Dane County.

Process and Outcome Focus:

- Provide a tool that allows funders individually and collectively to establish strategic directions and decisions based on a common foundation of data.

Target Group:

The monitoring tool includes chapters that focus on a number of population subgroups including the elderly, youth and W-2 participants. Information compiled for the indicators focus on countywide social, economic and health data.

Measurements:

The monitoring assessment tool furnishes a biennial compilation of information from existing governmental and agency reports and planning efforts. A new chapter, which focuses exclusively on W-2, is based on information obtained from Dane County Department of Human Services reports. The most recent Dane County report contains statistical profiles of W-2 participants/AFDC recipients, an analysis of caseload trends and a discussion of federal and state welfare policy changes for the county. Using data sets from existing organizations, the indicators of well-being measure and track changing patterns in county basic needs (such as requests for shelter and food pantry referrals), child welfare, crime, education, employment (including W-2 job placements), health, and service provision for the elderly.

Related Publications/Reports:

The Changing Face of Welfare in Dane County: Part II. A Report Prepared by Dane County Department of Human Services, March 1997.

Funding and Timeline:

This project is a collaboration with other Dane County funders who provide staff and limited financial resources to the effort.

Organization: **The Wisconsin Catholic Conference**
30 West Mifflin Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
(608) 257-0004



The Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC) was founded in 1969 by the Bishops of Wisconsin. The WCC offers a specifically Catholic contribution to state and federal public policy debates. The Conference also offers a statewide response to issues common to its five dioceses.

Contact Persons:

David Yamane, Policy Analyst and Project Coordinator
Barbara Barnard, Data Analyst and Project Manager
Thomas Schneider, Project Fiscal Agent, Executive Director, Catholic Charities of Milwaukee

Project/Research Summary:

The WCC's research project, *Family Life Under Wisconsin Works (W-2)*, will study the capacity of parents in poor families to protect and nurture socially, psychologically and cognitively healthy children while participating in W-2. Research will explore the different experiences of those working in Community Service Jobs and Transitional Placements. Private versus public service providers and regional differences will also be examined.

Central Research Question:

- How does participation in W-2 affect the capacity of parents to protect and nurture socially, psychologically and cognitively healthy children?

Target Group:

A total of 104 families (40% from Milwaukee) representing each of Wisconsin's five Catholic dioceses currently participating in W-2 will be selected. Study participants will be obtained through the existing network of Catholic agencies and family resource centers in each diocese. The sample will be strategically selected to represent the diversity of the state's welfare population.

Measurements:

Data will be collected using a combination of interviewing and participant observations. A trained interviewer will conduct an entrance interview with an adult member of the family to collect basic background information, particularly about the structure of the family and the family's history in the welfare system. After the entrance interview, each family in the study will be observed in their home at three different times of the week (weekday morning, weekday evening, and weekend day) for a total of approximately 10 hours.

Observers will use this time to understand how W-2 shapes participants' ability to parent their children, both through direct observation of the parent-child relationships and through informal questioning of the

parents regarding their experience of W-2 (their jobs, childcare situation, relationship with the W-2 agency, etc.). During the weekday evening visit, the observer will administer the Home Observation for the Measurement of the Environment (HOME) Inventory, an observationally-based instrument designed to measure the stimulation potential of a child's early developmental environment. Data collection and analysis will begin in January 1998 and a final research report will be issued in September 1998.

Funding and Timeline:

This project is fully funded. Field workers will be trained and cases selected by February 1998. Fieldwork will be conducted between March and May and the study will conclude with the release of a findings in a report in September 1998.

Organization: **Wisconsin Council on Children and Families**
16 North Carroll Street Suite 420
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
(608) 284-0580



The Council is a statewide private, nonprofit organization committed to building a strong, dedicated constituency for the health, safety, education and well-being for all children in Wisconsin.

Contact Persons:

Anne Arnesen, Executive Director
Jill Jacklitz, Outreach Coordinator

Project/Research Summary:

The purpose of the Council's *Welfare Watch Project* is to monitor the impact of welfare changes on families in poverty, service providers, employers and communities. Monitoring efforts include employer and service provider focus groups, WIC Program interviews, a housing and homelessness project, and longitudinal in-depth interviews with families and teen parents involved in the welfare system.

Process and Outcome Focus:

- These projects monitor how various populations are affected by W-2 and related policy changes in Wisconsin.

Target Group:

WIC Program interviews are conducted through respective service providers in a number of sites across the state. Employer and service provider focus groups are convened in counties across Wisconsin and vary in size. For the longitudinal study, approximately 30 families from Rock and Dane Counties (8 to 10 from each area) are participating in an 18-month study exploring how families fare under the new welfare programs.

Measurements:

WIC Program interviews focus on the general impact of the new welfare system on WIC recipients. In 1996, a variety of service providers, shelters, food pantries and human service agencies were asked to assess the impact of Pay-For-Performance on their operations, use of services, caseload, work time and barriers to services.

In collaboration with the Institute for Research on Poverty, employers working with W-2 agencies are being asked to discuss their decision to participate in the program to hire welfare recipients. Employers also

discuss any work-force barriers, accommodations and changes in workplace culture that occurred after hiring W-2 workers.

For the longitudinal study, families are interviewed every three to four months during the 18-month period. Since February 1997, the first interview gathered the family's demographic information, employment and educational history of adults, its history on public assistance, income and expenses and perceptions of welfare policy. Follow-up interviews will be done quarterly as counties transition to W-2. In these interviews, families will be asked questions in order to update information on their employment, childcare and housing arrangements, income and expenses and perceptions and feelings about welfare changes. No formal research reports are currently planned.

The council is also conducting a short survey at homeless shelters across the state, looking at employment and public assistance involvement.

Advocacy materials based on the information gathered through the monitoring activities are currently being created.

Related Publications/Reports:

Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. *W-2 Watch Reports*. 1996-1997.

Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. *Wisconsin Public Policy Papers*.

Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. *The Other Wisconsin: Voices of Wisconsin's Low-income Families*.

Additional Information:

The Welfare Watch Project is supported by funds from the Joyce Foundation and the National Association of Child Advocates.

With a state grant, the Council is also establishing a statewide W-2 Disability Hotline to assist participants. Data will be collected on the problems encountered by recipients in order to improve the program. United Cerebral Palsy will operate a similar hotline in Milwaukee County.

Organization: **The Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative**
P.O. Box 2000
Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141
(414) 595-2162



Established in 1994, the Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative is a statewide network of academics, poverty leaders and others in 10 Wisconsin communities striving to educate the general public about poverty-related issues.

Contact Persons:

Anne Statham, Project Coordinator
Laura Whitmann, Research Coordinator
Sheri Nero, Sociology, UW-Stout
Mary Kay Schleiter, Professor of Sociology, UW-Parkside
Julie Elliot and Kathe Johnson, Rock County
Jean Verber and Teresa Ragland, Milwaukee
Robert Magill, Social Work, UW-Milwaukee
Katherine Rhoades, Women's Studies, UW-Eau Claire
Cindy Klevgard, UW-Eau Claire
Sandra Krajewski, Women's Studies, UW-La Crosse
Michelle Graf, Women's Studies, UW-La Crosse
Ruth Kalms, Social Work, UW-River Falls
Victoria Hansen, UW-River Falls
Nancy Bayne, Psychology, UW-Stevens Point
Ethel Quisler, Stevens Point

Project/Research Summary:

The recently released report, *In Our Own Words*, was based on a representative sample survey of 740 current and former welfare recipients and low-wage workers in nine Wisconsin communities. The survey was designed to explore the interaction of a number of causal factors, including domestic violence, which lead to poverty. The report concluded that employment and educational issues and childcare problems were barriers to women striving towards self-improvement and economic self-sufficiency. A second report with new data is forthcoming.

In September, the Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative began a new qualitative longitudinal study which attempts to study the trajectory life course of low-wage workers and current and former welfare recipients. Special attention will be placed on understanding how the sequence of program events and welfare policy changes interface with an individual's life events to impact chances for leaving poverty.

Central Research Questions:

- What is the process that people go through as they attempt to move out of poverty? Are there stages or patterns?
- From the perspective of those involved, what are significant barriers or assets in this process?

Process and Outcome Focus:

- The project will examine if and how these women and their families achieve economic self-sufficiency and adequate income and benefits for their family's needs. It will also focus on whether women obtain needed services from the new state work-based system and other social supports.

Target Group:

This new study will use a strategic sampling method to obtain a sample of respondents that reflects the diversity of the issues faced by Wisconsin's welfare and low-wage worker populations. The sample will consist of 200 women or 25 women from eight communities (Milwaukee, La Crosse, Eau Claire, River Falls, Beloit/Janesville, Stevens Point, Racine/Kenosha, and Menominee with plans to add Madison as a ninth community).

Measurements:

This study will employ a two-year longitudinal in-depth interview format. An initial interview was conducted in October 1997 and these same women will be reinterviewed every six months over the next two years. As with an earlier study, the interview guide that is being utilized was developed in collaboration with members of the poverty community. Interview questions will focus on changes in poverty status and perceived barriers and assists to leaving poverty. Issues covered will include employment, training and educational experiences; conflicts between work and family obligations; childcare access; the increased number of domestic violence incidents as women begin to participate in work and training; quality and availability of reliable transportation and its impact on job retention and logistical arrangements. A holistic view of background experiences and implications for policy needs will also be provided.

Related Publications/Reports:

Whitman, Laura, Anne Statham, and Katherine Rhoades. *In Our Own Words: Mothers' Perspectives on Welfare Reform*. University of Wisconsin-Parkside, January 1997.

Statham, Anne, Katherine Rhodes, and Laura Whitman. "A First Look at Wisconsin's Welfare Reform." Presentation at the American Sociological Association, August 1997.

_____. "Gender and Self-Esteem: Narrative and Efficacy in the Negotiation of Structural Factors." In *Self Esteem and Beyond*. Timothy Owens, et al., eds. New York: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.

See the Institute for Wisconsin's Future's related publications/reports.

Funding and Timeline:

The project is partially funded and currently supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Center for Community Change. The project began in August 1997 and participants will be reinterviewed every six months until March or April of 1999. Reports on findings will be released on an interim basis.

Additional Research:

New team member, Jo Anne Schneider at UW-Parkside, is beginning a participant observation study in several W-2-related agencies in southeastern Wisconsin. This project will involve participant observations, focus groups and in-depth interviews with agency staff. See also Robert Magill's entry on the next page.

Organization: School of Social Work/Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative

UW-Milwaukee
P.O. Box 413 Enderis Hall
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201
(414) 229-5634

Contact Person:

Robert Magill, Professor of Social Work

Project/Research Summary:

This research project examines the impact of W-2 on various sectors of the service provision community, especially private social service agencies. Research focuses primarily on the demand for two essential emergency programs - meal programs and food pantries - during the first four months of W-2's phased implementation in the city of Milwaukee

Central Research Questions:

- What is the impact, if any, of welfare reform on these emergency services?
- What future programmatic changes, if any, are being made as a result of W-2?

Target Group:

With assistance from the Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee, a list of agencies that provide meal programs and food pantries was compiled. A sample of programs and pantries were selected to represent the City of Milwaukee's different geographic areas. The total number of programs and pantries selected was 23.

Measurements:

This research project collects and examines administrative and program planning data obtained from in-depth interviews with key staff from each of the pantries and meal programs. The demand for and availability of services at each site is measured by gathering data on clients, the number of requests for services, the number of individuals turned away, increased requests for services due to W-2, as well as any programmatic changes implemented by the pantry or program due to W-2's implementation.

Funding and Timeline:

This project was funded and sponsored by WPPEI. Program and pantry surveys were conducted during the fall of 1997. Project findings will become available in the first quarter of 1998. A research proposal to study similar issues at other private emergency services is under review.