

# Supporting Healthy Marriage and Good Parenting

*“The human family is the most powerful, the most humane, and by far the most economical system known for making and keeping human beings human.”*

*Urie Bronfenbrenner, 2000*

*(Commencement address at Penn State U.)*

## The Data

- **Declining proportion of married family households.** In 1970 40% of US households were comprised of married adults with children, compared to 23% in 2003. Between 1970 and 2003, single mother households increased from 3 million to 10 million, and single father households from 500,000 to 2 million. ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))
- **Demographic trends affecting household composition.** The shift from two-parent to one-parent families is affected by an increase in unmarried births –itself influenced by increasingly later age at first marriage – and growth in divorce by married couples with children. ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), above)
- **Children’s living arrangements.** The majority of white (69%) and Hispanic (55%) children live with their married parents, while the majority of black children (53%) live with a single parent. One in four Hispanic children and one in five white children live in single parent households. (L. Wherry & K. Finegold, *Marriage Promotion and the Living Arrangements of Black, Hispanic, and White Children*, Urban Institute, 2004)

## The Issues

- **Disconnect between marriage and parenting status.** More than half of unmarried new parents with low incomes are romantically involved and intend to get married. (National Conference of State Legislatures, [www.ncsl.org/statedfed/welfare/quickfacts.htm](http://www.ncsl.org/statedfed/welfare/quickfacts.htm)) Yet, for all teens who become pregnant, marriage today is much rarer before childbirth than it was 50 years ago. (*Teen Pregnancy: Trends and Lessons Learned*, Alan Guttmacher Institute, [www.agi-usa.org](http://www.agi-usa.org))
- **Child poverty and family composition.** Children living with married parents (biological, adoptive, or stepparents) experience a poverty rate of 8%, compared to 38% poverty for children living with single parents and 16% poverty for children living with cohabiting parents. Even still, estimates are that if all unmarried mothers married similar mates, the child poverty rate would drop only 4%. (P. Roberts, *I Can’t Give You Anything But Love*, CLASP Policy Brief, 2004)
- **Why married couples with children can be more economically successful.** They can share costs and perhaps then free up money for asset accumulation; they have the potential for increased income; they can share child care or its costs, and they have a larger familial network from which they can get assistance. (P. Roberts, above)
- **Parental involvement and child well-being.** Children do better with the involvement of their two parents, even if they are not married. Children with involved fathers are less likely to become teen parents, be involved with the juvenile justice system, and perform poorly in school. (National Conference of State Legislatures, above) At least half of the nation’s poor children, mostly in single mother households, have regular interaction with their fathers. (*Poor Children See Their Dads More Often Than Commonly Assumed*, Urban Institute, 2003)
- **The challenges of paying child support.** About half of all fathers who owe child support pay it. Of those who don’t, half lack the resources to pay support. These fathers have low wage employment or may be unemployed, have limited work histories, and have low literacy levels. Many fathers who aren’t paying formal child support – which the state keeps to offset any welfare the mother may collect – still provide direct support to the mothers and their children. (National Conference of State Legislatures, above)

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## Options for Philanthropy

- **Supporting Innovative solutions to reduce adolescent sexual risk-taking and teen pregnancy.** Amidst debate about values, one thing everyone agrees about is the importance of getting results: reducing the level of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. One such innovation that's produced positive results is Plain Talk, a neighborhood-based strategy to equip adults with the skills and tools to communicate effectively to teens about reducing sexual risk-taking. ([www.aecf.org/initiatives/plaintalk/](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/plaintalk/))
- **Investing in strategically timed and strategically focused marriage and fatherhood programs.** Research indicates that fatherhood programs for unwed dads have a significant window of opportunity for success at the moment the baby is born (*Dispelling Myths about Unmarried Fathers*, Fragile Families Research Brief #1, 2000, <http://crcw.princeton.edu/files/briefs/researchbrief1.pdf>). Forthcoming research will give us a better idea of what kinds of investments work for what populations to promote healthy marriage ([www.supportinghealthymarriage.org](http://www.supportinghealthymarriage.org)).
- **Building capacity for existing organizations to stay the course.** Most local fatherhood programs, for example, have a track record of about ten years or less. They thus face the need to build capacity for sustainability through fundraising, strengthened infrastructures, results measurement, and effective message communication. Support for capacity building in specific programs guarantees that successes are less likely to be eroded. The National Fatherhood Initiative ([www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)) and the National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families ([www.npnff.org](http://www.npnff.org)) are useful resources in this field.
- **Convening key stakeholders to promote collaboration.** While the emerging healthy marriages movement has a lot in common with the more longstanding responsible fatherhood movement, the potential exists for competition around issue-framing and resources. The opportunity to bring these stakeholders to a common table — along with organizations focused on assisting single mothers — can advance the possibility that the needs of all children, regardless of their family structure, will receive attention.

## Key Resources

- **Center for Law and Social Policy.** Provides research-based fact sheets, policy briefs, and legislative analyses on issues of marriage promotion, child support, pregnancy prevention, and child care, to name a few. ([www.clasp.org](http://www.clasp.org))
- **Supporting Healthy Marriage.** Details the latest evaluations of policies and programs aimed at helping couples strengthen and maintain healthy marriages. ([www.supportinghealthymarriage.org](http://www.supportinghealthymarriage.org))
- **National Center on Fathers and Families.** Develops materials that expand the knowledge base, strengthen practice, and contribute to critical policy discussions around father involvement, family development, and child well-being. ([www.ncoff.gse.upenn.edu](http://www.ncoff.gse.upenn.edu))
- **National Council on Family Relations.** As the largest organization of marriage and family researchers and practitioners, provides research-based information and analyses on issues of marriage, family, and child well-being.



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# Ensuring Early Success for Young Children

*For every \$1 spent on early learning, society saves \$7 in later costs.*

W.S. Barnett cited in Economic Opportunity Institute  
([www.econop.org/ELC/Early Learning/ELC-SchoolReadiness.htm](http://www.econop.org/ELC/Early Learning/ELC-SchoolReadiness.htm))

## The Data

- **Infant and child health status.** Almost 8% of babies have low birth weight (*Kids Count 2004 Data Book Online*, [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)), which is linked to behavioral disorders and visual and auditory impairments. (National Vital Statistics Reports, v.51, 11, June 25, 2003) Infant health problems are a strong predictor of lower pre-school cognitive abilities.
- **School readiness.** Over 40% of new kindergartners do not enter school fully prepared to learn. (Kauffman Early Learning Exchange, *Set for Success*, v.1 no.1, 2002, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation) Teachers report that at least half of all children have difficulty following directions and/or working independently and lack specific academic skills. (Rimm-Kaufman et al., *Kindergarten Teachers Perceive Difficulty in Transitions to School*, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 15, 2000)
- **Implications for later life.** Young children who do not attend preschool programs have been shown to have higher grade retention, lower high school graduation rates, less college attendance, higher juvenile crime rates, and lower lifetime earnings. ([www.earlycare.org/factsheet1.htm](http://www.earlycare.org/factsheet1.htm))

## The Issues

- **Lack of health insurance coverage.** Almost 11 million children – disproportionately African American and immigrant children – are uninsured. ([www.omhrc.gov/OMH/sidebar/datastats1.htm](http://www.omhrc.gov/OMH/sidebar/datastats1.htm))
- **Insufficiency of affordable child care.** 61% of children under age 6 are in care outside the home. (National Conference of State Legislatures, *Child Care and Early Education Issues Overview*, [www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/ccoverview.htm](http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/ccoverview.htm)) But lower-income families experience more limited choices due to the high cost of care, transportation barriers, and lack of affordable options. (“*Affordable, Accessible Early Childhood Education Fact Sheet*,” [www.ywca.org](http://www.ywca.org)) Nearly 40% of children eligible for Head Start do not receive this service. (Children’s Defense Fund, *Head Start Fact Sheet*, February, 2003)
- **Underinvestment in early child care workers.** A study of the human services workforce that included child care workers found that especially those staff working with low-income children felt less prepared for their work, underpaid, and underappreciated. (Paul Light, *The Health of the Human Services Workforce*, [www.aecf.org/initiatives/hswi](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/hswi))
- **Challenges in family learning environments.** Parental circumstances such as limited incomes and limited literacy impede children’s early learning environments. Further, 29% of immigrant children live in crowded housing. (*National Survey of America’s Families, 1999*). And 1 in 10 children (but 1 in 4 African American children) have mothers with depression, which is linked to lower school performance. (AECF Fact Sheet, *Racial Disparities in School Readiness*, 2004)

# Ensuring Early Success for Young Children

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Supporting the development of culturally competent services and supports.** With increasing population diversity, especially among children, existing organizations may require capacity building to be effective with a range of children. Publications like *Building Culturally and Linguistically Competent Services to Support Young Children, Their Families, and School Readiness* (K.S. Hepburn for Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004) offer practitioners guidance. In addition, new culturally-based organizations may emerge that can benefit from more general organizational capacity-building.
- **Underwriting advocacy for the expansion of effective policies.** When policies have a good track record and are cost-effective, but have a limited reach, their expansion makes sense. For example, initial findings from Early Head Start indicate that a combination of center- and home-based interventions for teen parents improve the cognitive development of their toddlers, foster more effective interactions between parent and child, and increase parental return to school. Yet, Early Head Start now only serves a very small percentage of eligible families. (*Making a Difference in the Lives of Infants and Toddlers and Their Families*, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, ACF, DHHS, 2002)
- **Convening critical stakeholders for a comprehensive approach.** Because the goal of early childhood success necessarily encompasses a wide array of service systems and partners, communities whose stakeholders work together will be at an advantage. *Improving School Readiness Outcomes* ([www.aecf.org/initiatives/mc/tarc/priority/education/school\\_readiness\\_summary.pdf](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/mc/tarc/priority/education/school_readiness_summary.pdf)) describes how six communities have successfully brought stakeholders together around school readiness.

## Key Resources

- **Child Trends.** Researches and analyzes issues of early child development to inform policy and practice. ([www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org))
- **Children's Defense Fund.** Provides data, legislative analyses, and action guides in support of advocacy for improved child outcomes. ([www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org))
- **Human Services Workforce Initiative.** Addresses issues and seeks solutions regarding the preparation of, and reward structure for, frontline service providers, including preschool child care workers. ([www.aecf.org/initiatives/hswi](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/hswi))



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# Embracing Children with Incarcerated Parents

*"Just because your mother's in prison doesn't mean you can't fulfill your dreams."* 14-year-old son of incarcerated mother

([www.takingaim.net](http://www.takingaim.net))

## The Data

- **The magnitude of parental incarceration on children.** Three times as many children are affected by parental incarceration as are affected by foster care placement. Over 1.5 million children currently have at least one parent in prison (J. Travis & M. Waul, *Prisoners Once Removed*, Urban Institute Press, 2003), and an estimated 7 million have a parent under some form of correctional supervision. (C.J. Mumola, *Incarcerated Parents and Their Children*, BJS, USDJ, 2000)
- **Who cares for the children?** When fathers go to prison, 89% of their children are cared for by the child's mother. When mothers go to prison, 53% of the children are cared for by their grandparents; about 28% stay with the father; another 10% enter foster care. (C.J. Mumola, above)
- **The vulnerability of child involvement with the criminal justice system.** Children of imprisoned parents are vulnerable to emotional, social, and academic difficulties, including a decline in school performance, behavioral problems, and feelings of abandonment and loss. The Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents reports that children of prisoners are five times more likely than other children to end up in prison themselves. (K. Gabel & D. Johnson, *Children of Incarcerated Parents*, 1997)

## The Issues

- **Social silence.** Family members may avoid difficult discussions with children to explain the absence of an incarcerated parent, thus producing emotional and psychological problems for the child and complicating the restoration of the parent-child relationship upon return. They may keep silent about this situation with friends and neighbors, as well, thus reducing their own network of social support. Child-serving systems such as schools and youth organizations may be unaware of a child's struggle with parental incarceration and thus unable to offer specific support. (J. Travis et.al., *Families Left Behind*, Urban Institute, 2003)
- **Altered family circumstances.** Children are vulnerable to changes in family structure and living arrangements, loss of family income (71% of parents were employed prior to their arrest), separation from their siblings, and changes in their family roles. (D. Braman, "Families and Incarceration" in *Invisible Punishment*, The New Press, 2002)
- **Challenges of maintaining contact.** Mothers and fathers are typically imprisoned a considerable distance from their children, with women averaging 160 miles and men 100 miles. Over half of all incarcerated parents report never receiving a visit from their child. Further, because prisoners can only make collect calls, and because prisons often contract with phone companies to receive revenues from charging very high rates, this form of contact can be very costly, if not prohibitive, for families. (*Families Left Behind*, above)

# Embracing Children with Incarcerated Parents

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Promoting leadership development for those most affected by the issues.** The most compelling voices on this issue can be the children themselves and their family members. Ensuring that their voices are heard and building their capacity for advocacy and leadership brings power to the issue. Organizations like the Osborne Association ([www.osborneny.org](http://www.osborneny.org)) and AIM ([www.takingaim.net](http://www.takingaim.net)) model how to do this respectfully and effectively.
- **Supporting successful practice and replication of promising interventions.** The Family and Corrections Network website ([www.fcnetwork.org](http://www.fcnetwork.org)) and the National Institute of Corrections' publication "Services for Families of Prison Inmates" ([www.nicic.org/Library/017272](http://www.nicic.org/Library/017272)) describe a range of programs to keep children connected to their parents (which reduces parental recidivism upon release) and to sustain children during the difficult time of their parent's incarceration. In-prison parenting classes, family visitation programs in family-friendly spaces, group activities and mentoring for children in similar circumstances, and support for grandparent caregivers hold promise as critical child and family supports. (R.D. Parke & K.A. Clarke-Stewart, "The Effects of Parental Incarceration on Children" in *Prisoners Once Removed*, 2003)
- **Underwriting policy advocacy and system reforms.** The Center on Law and Social Policy's *Every Door Closed: Barriers Facing Parents with Criminal Records* ([www.clasp.org](http://www.clasp.org)) describes a range of opportunities and policy options for enabling parents to become family-supporting upon their return to their community. In addition, advocacy with corrections systems for more child-friendly visitation and more affordable telephone calls from prison would keep families more connected.

## Key Resources

- **Urban Institute, Justice Policy Center.** Publications on family and child issues around incarceration and re-entry based on the latest research and data. ([www.urban.org/content/PolicyCenters/Justice/Projects/PrisonerReentry/Publications/pubs.htm](http://www.urban.org/content/PolicyCenters/Justice/Projects/PrisonerReentry/Publications/pubs.htm))
- **Federal Resource Center for Children of Prisoners, Child Welfare League of America.** Publications, data, training for advocates and practitioners. ([www.cwla.org/programs/incarcerated/](http://www.cwla.org/programs/incarcerated/))
- **Annie E. Casey Foundation.** Examples of what faith-based organizations can do: J. Read & M.M. Dohadwala, *From the Inside Out: Coming Home from Prison to the Islamic Faith*, Research & Action Brief #1, and R.A. Cnaan & J.W. Sinha, *Back into the Fold: Helping Ex-Prisoners Reconnect Through Faith*, Research & Action Brief #2.
- **Re-Entry National Media Outreach Campaign.** Media resources to generate solutions-oriented community conversations about a range of family and community issues. ([www.reentrymediaoutreach.org](http://www.reentrymediaoutreach.org))



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# Contributing to Youth Development & Success

*"The transition to adulthood is never an automatic or uncomplicated process."*

*Moving Youth from Risk to Opportunity*

KIDS COUNT 2004 DATA BOOK Essay, Annie E. Casey Foundation

## The Data

Unless otherwise noted, information in this Fact Sheet comes from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2004 KIDS COUNT Essay ([www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/essay.htm](http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/essay.htm)).

- **Youth is a time of significant developmental milestones and the need for meaningful external supports.** Youth need positive values and a positive identity, skills to succeed in life, a commitment to lifelong learning, and a chance to contribute to the world. They also need boundaries and expectations, constructive use of their time, caring and supportive adults, and a sense of safety and security. ([www.search-institute.org/assets/assetcategories.html](http://www.search-institute.org/assets/assetcategories.html))
- **Too many youth experience difficulties in achieving these milestones.** About 15% of all young adults aged 18-24 – 3.8 million – are neither in school nor employed. This number has jumped 19% since 2000. These youth are disproportionately from families with low-incomes and families that are African American, Hispanic, and Native American.
- **The most at-risk youth have certain common experiences.** They are most likely to be in the foster care system, in juvenile detention, among teens with early pregnancies, and among those who have never finished high school.

## The Issues

- **Limited supports for transition from foster care.** Each year about 20,000 youth leave the foster care system without being adopted or returning to families. Some studies indicate that within four years, only half of these youth were regularly employed, nearly half had been arrested, more than half of the young women had given birth, one-fourth had been homeless, and a significant number were receiving welfare support. Despite some federal support for transition services, they have not met the challenges facing these youth.
- **Severe consequences of juvenile detention.** Each year over 600,000 youth get locked up, over 1/3 for non-criminal offenses and technical rule violations. Two-thirds are African American and Latino youth. Detained youth disproportionately suffer from mental health and drug use problems and inadequate academic skills. Once confined, these youth are less likely to complete high school, more likely to get re-arrested, and experience lifelong employment consequences from juvenile detention.
- **Lifelong ramifications of early childbearing.** While teen birth rates are declining, in 2002 850,000 young women, disproportionately African American and Latino, became mothers. Both teen moms and dads have reduced chances of high school completion, which impacts their lifelong income. In addition, babies of adolescents have higher risk of developmental challenges.
- **High school failure for students in urban cores.** The most dramatic dropout problems are concentrated in 200-300 large, segregated, under-performing schools in the 35 largest cities, where at most half of all 9th graders will get their diplomas.

# Contributing to Youth Development & Success

Unless otherwise noted, information in this Fact Sheet comes from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2004 KIDS COUNT Essay ([www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/essay.htm](http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/essay.htm)).

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Generating local area data for planning, intervention, and evaluation.** If a community needs data about youth issues and programming, Community YouthMapping ([www.communityyouthmapping.org/Youth](http://www.communityyouthmapping.org/Youth)) is a unique approach to data collection using youth development strategies. Where it has been employed, youth have uncovered community resources not previously identified through traditional approaches.
- **Providing opportunities for inclusion of youth voices in issues affecting them.** Too often adults plan programs and activities for youth and for communities without a complete understanding of how youth view the world and what motivates them. Supporting ways for youth voices to be heard and their talents to be utilized is consistent with the framework of positive youth development .
- **Supporting the replication of successful practices for positive youth development.** Any number of youth-focused interventions have demonstrated with solid data that they can have successful results and are simultaneously cost effective. Two examples are the Plain Talk Initiative, which reduced teen pregnancy risk by 70% and the School-to-Career Partnership, which placed youth transitioning from foster care into jobs averaging almost \$8/hr. , half with health benefits, and experienced an 81% retention rate.
- **Underwriting advocacy for system reform.** Because so many youth are locked up for non-violent offenses, advocacy for effective detention alternatives that don't undermine public safety should be considered. The State of Missouri is a model in that regard, with a focus on counseling, personal development, and small unit housing within driving distance of their families. Its recidivism rates are impressive, and its spending per youth is less than states with significantly higher recidivism spend.

## Key Resources

- **Academy for Educational Development.** Focuses on young people as assets and provides information, tools, and publications related to after school programs, youth development, and youth worker training. ([www.aed.org/Youth](http://www.aed.org/Youth))
- **National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.** Provides a wealth of national and state level information on teen pregnancy, teen pregnancy prevention programs, media campaigns, and legislative activity. ([www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org))
- **Pathways to Juvenile Detention Reform.** A series of publications detailing various aspects of detention reform for advocates, legislators, planners and practitioners. ([www.aecf.org/initiatives/jdai/download.htm](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/jdai/download.htm))
- **Forum for Youth Investment.** Provides youth and adult leaders with information, technical assistance, training, and partnership opportunities in support of increased youth investments and involvement. ([www.forumforyouthinvestment.org](http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org))



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# Improving School Success & Student Outcomes

**“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world .”**

– Nelson Mandela

## The Data

- **Difficult starts.** Over 40% of new kindergartners do not enter school fully prepared to learn. (Kauffman Early Learning Exchange, *Set for Success*, v.1 no.1, 2002, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation)
- **High school completion rates.** While government figures indicate that in 2001 about 11% of the U.S. population aged 16-24 had dropped out of high school (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003, <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts>), non-governmental figures show a bleaker picture (e.g., J.P. Greene, *High School Graduation Rates in the United States*, 2002, [www.manhattan-institute.org](http://www.manhattan-institute.org), [www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/news/pressreleases/book\\_dropout.php](http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/news/pressreleases/book_dropout.php))
- **Ramifications across one’s lifetime.** Students who fail to receive a high school diploma or GED have higher unemployment rates and make a median 50% less than those with only a diploma or GED. They are also more likely to become single parents, rely on public assistance, and become incarcerated. (J.P. Greene, *High School Graduation Rates in the United States*, 2002, [www.manhattan-institute.org](http://www.manhattan-institute.org))

## The Issues

- **Continuing income and race segregation of schools.** Eighty-two percent of the students in low poverty schools are white, while black and Latino students are isolated by both race and poverty in their schools. The bulk of what have been called “dropout factories” are 200-300 high schools in large city school systems that are highly segregated by race and income. (G. Orfield & C. Lee, *Why Segregation Matters*, 2005, [www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/deseg/deseg05.php](http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/deseg/deseg05.php))
- **Inequitable school resources.** High poverty schools tend to have a less stable and less qualified teaching staff, less safe facilities, and insufficient supplies of quality educational materials. Schools where at least 75 percent of the students were low-income had three times as many uncertified or out-of-field teachers in both English and science. (G. Orfield & C. Lee, *Why Segregation Matters*, above)
- **Differential punishment.** In 1998, more than 3.1 million children in America were suspended and another 87,000 were expelled. African-American children are suspended and expelled at much higher rates than white students for subjectively determined offenses such as “disrespect.” (*Opportunities Suspended*, The Advancement Project and the Civil Rights Project, 2000, [www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/discipline/opport\\_suspended.php](http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/discipline/opport_suspended.php))
- **Uneven performance of market solutions.** Research on vouchers shows increased parental satisfaction but at best modest improvements for some students in selected subjects. (M. Carnoy, *School Vouchers: Examining the Evidence*, Economic Policy Institute, 2001) Performance of students in charter schools compared to children in other public schools was not measurably different. (NAEP, *The Nation’s Report Card: America’s Charter Schools*, 2003, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/studies/charter/2005456.asp>)

# Improving School Success & Student Outcomes

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Support promising practices.** A comprehensive set of specific organizational, instructional, and teacher support changes, when well implemented, can significantly improve student chances of success. (J. McPartland & W. Jordan, *Essential Components of High School Dropout Reforms*, [www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/dropouts/mcpartland.pdf](http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/dropouts/mcpartland.pdf)) The opportunity should exist for parents, caregivers, and community organizations to be effective partners.
- **Invest in leadership development.** School systems undergoing reform can benefit from formal opportunities for professional development for teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders. ([www.annenberginstitute.org/work/leadership.html](http://www.annenberginstitute.org/work/leadership.html) and [www.aecf.org/initiatives/ldu](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/ldu)).
- **Underwrite policy advocacy.** Because access to high-performing schools is related to class and race segregation, some communities are exploring the concept of regional equity in resource allocation as a solution to these deeply embedded inequities. (V. Kay, *Creating Regional Equity for Families and Children*, 2003, Institute on Race and Poverty, [www.irpumn.org](http://www.irpumn.org))
- **Convene stakeholders.** Education increasingly is everyone's business, which requires conveners that can work across stakeholder groups. In St. Louis, for example, the Annenberg Institute for School Reform is working with municipal officials and funders on a broad-based community and parent engagement initiative following a major district reorganization. ([www.annenberginstitute.org/work/community\\_NLC.html](http://www.annenberginstitute.org/work/community_NLC.html))

## Key Resources

- **Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University.** Collaborates with education reform organizations, school districts, school improvement networks, and education funds to develop the capacity of urban communities to improve teaching and learning. ([www.annenberginstitute.org](http://www.annenberginstitute.org))
- **The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.** Focuses on key opportunity issues including education reform, desegregation, school dropouts, school discipline, and Title I. ([www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu](http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu))
- **Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement.** Offers information, tools, guides, and links relating to comprehensive school reform and school improvement, including an in-depth catalog of school reform models. ([www.csrclearinghouse.org](http://www.csrclearinghouse.org))



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# Promoting Jobs & Family Economic Success

*“If America believes in work, we must honor it.”*  
Beth Shulman, *The Betrayal of Work*

## The Data

- **Millions of workers earn poverty-level wages.** One in four U.S. workers — thirty million — earns \$8.70 an hour or less, which keeps them at poverty level for full-time year-round work. These jobs typically lack health care, child care, pension, and vacation benefits. (B. Shulman, *Four Myths about Low Wage Work*, August 29, 2003, [www.alternet.org/story/16686](http://www.alternet.org/story/16686))
- **The poor pay more for necessities.** Low-income people living in high-poverty neighborhoods pay more for buying and owning a car, health care, child care, and groceries. They pay a higher proportion of their incomes for housing and utilities. And they face barriers to saving because of government benefit restrictions. (*The High Cost of Being Poor*, KIDS COUNT 2003 Essay, [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org))
- **Retailers exploit low-income consumers.** Rent-to-own outlets, retail merchant-issued credit cards, check-cashing outlets, payday lenders, refund anticipation loan providers, and subprime lenders charge extreme interest rates and extract over \$5 billion a year from low-income families. (*The High Cost of Being Poor*, above)

## The Issues

- **The percentage of low-wage jobs is growing.** The growing sectors of the economy are the labor-intensive industries. The two lowest paid categories, retail and service, represent about 50% of the job market. Low wage workers have few career ladders. (B. Shulman, above)
- **A “spatial mismatch” exists between where jobs and workers are located.** Because of persistent race and class residential segregation and incentives for suburban job growth, poor and low-income African Americans in central city neighborhoods remain geographically isolated from work opportunities. (S. Raphael & M. A. Stoll, *Modest Progress*, The Brookings Institution, 2002, [www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu)) The challenge is to turn high poverty areas into high opportunity areas. (*“Community Initiatives,”* [www.mdrc.org](http://www.mdrc.org))
- **Workers with low wages are significantly helped by the EITC and other income supports.** The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) now lifts more children out of poverty than any other government program while at the same time rewarding work. In 2002 4.9 million people, including 2.7 million children, were removed from poverty as a result of the federal EITC. (*A Hand Up*, Center on Budget & Policy Priorities, 2004)
- **Wealth creation is a struggle for working class families.** Home ownership is the central asset families have, but low-wage working families have difficulty saving for a down payment, finding affordable housing, securing a home loan and insurance at market rates, and sustaining home ownership. Even when families own their own homes, they do not escape burden. Over 30 million low income people who own their homes report housing cost problems. (*America’s Neighbors*, National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2004)

# Promoting Jobs & Family Economic Success

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Investing in capacity building for potential employers.** Experience has proven that with accurate information and additional skills, employers can be open to employing less experienced, lower-income workers. The Welfare to Work Partnership's *Smart Solutions* series offers guidance for employers to manage new issues that arise around such hiring decisions. ([www.welfaretowork.org](http://www.welfaretowork.org))
- **Replicating successful programs.** Earned Income Tax Credit campaigns utilizing tax preparation volunteers annually return millions of dollars to eligible lower-income working families who otherwise would not be aware of their eligibility or would use predatory tax preparation services that prey on poor neighborhoods. (A. Berube et.al, *The Price of Paying Taxes*, Brookings Institution, 2002) When coupled with Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), EITC refunds become an opportunity for meaningful asset-building. ([www.nga.org/cda/files/013197ASSETS.pdf](http://www.nga.org/cda/files/013197ASSETS.pdf))
- **Supporting innovative solutions.** Considerable opportunity exists for improving the range of financial products and services for distressed communities, coupled with expanded consumer outreach, education, and awareness. The innovations being tested by community development credit unions and community development financial institutions should be studied carefully. (J.H. Carr & J. Schuetz, *Financial Services in Distressed Communities: Framing the Issue, Finding Solutions*. Fannie Mae Foundation, 2001, [www.fanniemaefoundation.org](http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org))

## Key Resources

- **"Welfare Reform and the Work Support System."** Summarizes the major federal policies and programs that provide assistance to poor and low-income working families. An excellent primer for policy advocacy. (The Brookings Institutions, Policy Brief 17, March, 2002, by I. Sawhill and R. Haskins. [www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu))
- **Welfare to Work Partnership.** Helps business identify and capitalize on hiring, retention, and career advancement strategies for new workers. Website contains a Welfare to Work Human Resource Library. ([www.welfaretowork.org](http://www.welfaretowork.org))
- **Family Economic Success Initiative.** An emphasis of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, provides framing materials for the family economic success perspective as well as a range of information and links that address workforce development, economic supports, asset building, and community investment. ([www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/))
- **Initiative on Financial Security.** A new Aspen Institute focus to create a leadership group from the financial services industry to solve the asset crisis in the U.S. ([www.aspeninstitute.org](http://www.aspeninstitute.org))



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# Facilitating the Transition from Welfare to Work

*“My daughter sees me every day doing my homework and going to school, and I am setting an example, and I know she’s going to follow in my footsteps.”*

— Mother with young child, welfare recipients

*Welfare Reform as WE Know It*, Applied Research Center

## The Data

- **More low-income single parents are now working.** Since the 1996 changes in welfare (TANF) rules that focus on time limits for support and work-first requirements for recipients, the most employable recipients have been moved off the rolls. Whereas in 1995 about 35% of women receiving public assistance were in the labor force, almost 57% were by 2000. (R. M. Blank & L. Schmidt, “Work, wages, and welfare” in *The New World of Welfare*, Brookings Institution Press, 2001)
- **While welfare caseloads have dropped, economic self-sufficiency remains elusive, and child poverty has risen.** Welfare leavers typically have low earnings, face high levels of job instability, and experience little upward mobility. Without assistance, their families continue to suffer economically. (*Before and After Welfare Reform*, Institute for Women’s Policy Research, 2003)
- **A weaker economy significantly affects poor families.** Since 2001, states have experienced slight welfare caseload increases, and Food Stamp receipt has risen significantly. (H. Rahmanou & M. Greenberg, *Welfare Caseloads Increase in 27 States...*, CLASP, 2004) The proportion of leavers who were working declined from 50% to 42%. (P. Loprest, *Fewer Welfare Leavers Employed in a Weak Economy*, Urban Institute, 2003)

## The Issues

- **Barriers to employment confront welfare recipients.** Almost 90% have at least one of the following barriers: low basic skills (67%), substance abuse (5% alcohol, 9% cocaine or crack use), a health limitation (10%), depression (13%), or a child with a chronic medical condition or serious disability. (K.K. Olson & L. Pavetti, *Personal and Family Challenges to the Successful Transition from Welfare to Work*, Urban Institute, 1996)
- **Education pays off.** The factor that most increases the earnings potential of the poor is additional years of education. Yet only 1% of federal TANF resources are invested in education and training. (Applied Research Center, *Race and Recession*, 2002) Overall, the educational attainment of single parents declined under the work-first policies of welfare reform. (*Before and After Welfare Reform*, above)
- **Child care costs keep low-wage workers in poverty.** If child care subsidies were available, the poverty rate of working parents who also receive welfare would decrease from 52% to 34% and for families of single mothers not receiving welfare from 15% to 8%. (H. Hartmann et.al., *Survival at the Bottom*, Institute for Women’s Policy Research, 2003)
- **Place matters in moving from welfare to work.** Single mothers in central cities and remote rural areas face the greatest barriers to moving from welfare to work. Job access is the key factor for urban women, while job availability is the issue facing rural women. (M.G. Fisher & B.A. Weber, *The Importance of Place in Welfare Reform*, The Brookings Institution & Rural Policy Research Institute, June, 2002)



# Facilitating the Transition from Welfare to Work

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Supporting successful practice and replication of promising interventions.** Research finds some negative effects of work requirements on adolescents whose parents are transitioning into the workplace. These youth perform less well in school, are more likely to repeat a grade, and are more likely to be suspended or expelled or drop out of school. (*“Welfare Reform and Children’s Well-Being,”* Poverty Research Insights, Fall 2004) Support for effective after-school programs to provide youth and their younger siblings with supervision and engagement may be valuable complements to programs focused on parents and work.
- **Underwriting policy advocacy for work supports.** The availability of health insurance and reliable child care are critical factors for keeping former welfare recipients in the workplace. Welfare leavers with access to health insurance and child care are less likely to return. (P. Loprest, *Who Returns to Welfare?* Urban Institute, 2002) *Improving the Economic Success of Families* (available from [www.cssp.org](http://www.cssp.org)) describes policy options for these and related concerns of low income workers.
- **Convening a “big tent” of stakeholders for effective state efforts.** As welfare strategies get fine-tuned, advocates tend to array in camps focused on work-first or education-first. Research shows that both job-search-first and education -first strategies are effective, but neither is as effective as both combined. The challenge is to find ways to maintain an employment orientation while opening the door to additional education and training. (*What Works in Welfare?* 2002, [www.mdrc.org/Reports2002/TANF/TANF-Introduction.htm](http://www.mdrc.org/Reports2002/TANF/TANF-Introduction.htm))

## Key Resources

- **Welfare Information Network.** A clearinghouse for information, policy analysis and research related to welfare, workforce development, and other human and community services. ([www.financeprojectinfo.org/win](http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/win))
- **Manpower Development Research Corporation.** Research and policy analysis on welfare and barriers to employment. ([www.mdrc.org](http://www.mdrc.org))
- **Center for Law and Social Policy.** Research and policy analysis on welfare policy, workforce development, transitional jobs, and child well-being. ([www.clasp.org](http://www.clasp.org))
- **Joint Center on Poverty Research.** Research, newsletters,
- policy briefs about welfare specifically and poverty more broadly. ([www.jcpr.org](http://www.jcpr.org))



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# Reducing Hunger & Food Insecurity

*"I go hungry all too often, but no one knows this – I 'don't look sick.' "*  
– (signed) Disabled and alone, Tucson, AZ  
([www.secondharvest.org/hunger\\_stories.asp](http://www.secondharvest.org/hunger_stories.asp))

## The Data

- **Millions of Americans are food insecure.** More than one in every nine households in the U.S. experiences food insecurity, the difficulty of providing enough food for all members, during the year. This represents about 36 million people, including 13 million children. (M. Nord et.al., *Household Food Security in the U.S., 2003*, Economic Research Service, USDA, Oct. 2004)
- **Demand is rising for emergency assistance.** A survey of major U.S. cities shows that demand is increasing for emergency food assistance, but 20% of the requests have gone unmet because of lack of local resources. (*US Conference of Mayors—Sodexo USA Hunger and Homelessness Survey 2004*, [www.usmayors.org](http://www.usmayors.org))
- **Hunger hurts child development.** Even mild under-nutrition experienced by young children during critical periods of growth may lead to reduction in physical growth and affect brain development. (*Childhood Hunger Fact Sheet*, [www.secondharvest.org](http://www.secondharvest.org)) Inadequate food energy intake and nutrient deficiencies can produce impaired cognitive development and lower academic achievement. (*Differences in Nutrient Adequacy among Poor and Non-Poor Children Fact Sheet*, [www.secondharvest.org](http://www.secondharvest.org))

## The Issues

- **Poverty limits food expenditures.** Food insecure households spend less on food than food-secure households do. In 2001, the median food-secure household spent \$123 per week compared to \$93 per week by food-insecure households. (*"Putting Food on the Table,"* Amber Waves, February, 2003, [www.ers.usda.gov](http://www.ers.usda.gov)) High housing costs, which are likely to be paid first, exacerbate the problem.
- **Poverty changes food spending and nutrition patterns.** Households without money to buy enough food first change their purchasing and eating habits—relying on cheaper, high caloric foods over more expensive, nutrient-rich foods—before they cut back on the amount of food. Families try to maximize caloric intake for each dollar spent. ([www.frac.org/html/hunger\\_in\\_the\\_us/hunger&obesity.htm](http://www.frac.org/html/hunger_in_the_us/hunger&obesity.htm))
- **Low-income families depend on assistance for food.** In 2001, 3 million households obtained food from food pantries at least once during the year, with 20% using them almost every month. (*"Putting Food on the Table,"* above) When the 16 million children who receive free or reduced price lunches through the School Lunch Program are out in the summer, food pantries and soup kitchens report seeing them more often. ([www.hungerday.org/child\\_hunger\\_factsheet.html](http://www.hungerday.org/child_hunger_factsheet.html))
- **Lack of access to emergency food supplies.** Among food-insecure households that didn't use a food pantry, 28% reported their community had no such resource, and an additional 19% said they didn't know if there was one. (*"Putting Food on the Table,"* above)

# Reducing Hunger & Food Insecurity

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Providing opportunities for inclusion of those most affected by the issue.**

This effort compels media attention to hunger and brings a grounded perspective to planning and practice. The Hunger Stories shared by America's Second Harvest ([www.secondharvest.org/hunger\\_stories.asp](http://www.secondharvest.org/hunger_stories.asp)) illustrate the value of hearing from stakeholders.

- **Supporting and testing innovative solutions.** Sometimes small-scale innovations can have profound effects. Activities such as community gardens for residents to raise fresh foods when neighborhood groceries charge too much for low-quality goods ([www.communitygarden.org](http://www.communitygarden.org)) and grab-and-go school breakfasts to reduce student stigmatization around federally subsidized program participation (<http://tinyurl.com/6gyrf>).
- **Underwriting advocacy to sustain or expand food assistance programs.** Over half of all food-insecure households receives help from either food stamps (25%), school lunches (33%), or the Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (13%) ([www.centeronhunger.org](http://www.centeronhunger.org)). At the same time, welfare regulations have placed bans on food stamp receipt for certain categories of people and time limits on receipt for others. Emergency food services have experienced increased demand because of the insufficiency of governmental supports for hungry families and children.

## Key Resources

- **Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.** Provides information on all nutrition assistance from the USDA (Food Stamps, School Lunches, WIC, and more), statistics, current legislation, and regulations. ([www.fns.usda.gov/fns](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns))
- **Center on Hunger and Poverty.** At Brandies University, conducts research and policy analysis and public education initiatives and provides data and curricula around issues of hunger. ([www.centeronhunger.org](http://www.centeronhunger.org))
- **RESULTS.** Focuses on educating the public, the media, and leaders about hunger in order to create the political will to end it. Provides tools, resources, alerts, and updates for grassroots advocacy. ([www.results.org](http://www.results.org))
- **Food Research and Action Center.** A research and policy center working to improve public policies to eradicate hunger and under-nutrition in the U.S. Provides policy- and practice-relevant information for practitioners and advocates. ([www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org))



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# Ensuring Safe & Affordable Housing

*“Owning a home is at the heart of the American Dream. A home is a foundation for families and a source of stability for communities.”*

President Bush’s Radio Address to the Nation, June 15, 2002

## The Data

- **People who are homeless.** About 3.5 million people, 1.3 million of whom are children, or about 1% of the total U.S. population, are likely to experience homelessness in a given year. ([www.nationalhomeless.org/numbers.html](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/numbers.html))
- **Families who live in substandard housing.** Among occupied housing units, 1.3 million lack complete plumbing, and 1.5 million lack complete kitchen facilities. (U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3)
- **Families who are homeowners.** Sixty-nine percent of American families overall are homeowners, but white, non-poor families have the highest rates of home ownership. ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))
- **The link between housing and opportunity.** Housing and neighborhood location is closely associated with access to schools, community facilities, retail services, and recreational facilities. ([www.policylink.org](http://www.policylink.org))

## The Issues

- **Availability of affordable housing.** Based on the affordability standard of spending no more than 30% of income for housing, a full-time worker would need to make almost 3 times the minimum wage in order to rent a modest 2-bedroom home in a typical U.S. community. ([www.nlihc.org/oor2004/presrelease.htm](http://www.nlihc.org/oor2004/presrelease.htm)) About 12 million renter and homeowner households pay more than 50% of their annual incomes for housing. ([www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/index.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/index.cfm))
- **Enforcement of housing codes for renters.** Irresponsible landlords may get away with not meeting housing codes. But when the code is enforced, rents may be raised to the level of unaffordability, or the city may condemn or seize the property, in both cases displacing current tenants. ([www.policylink.org/EDTK/codeenforcement/Challenges.html](http://www.policylink.org/EDTK/codeenforcement/Challenges.html))
- **Sufficient shelter for people who are homeless.** In virtually every city, the estimated number of people who are homeless exceeded the availability of emergency shelter and transitional housing spaces. In 2001, 52% of emergency shelter requests from families were denied. Rural areas may have no shelters at all. ([www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org), above)
- **Barriers to home ownership.** Common barriers include a lack of affordable homes, inability to save for a down payment, affordable mortgage credit, a weak credit history, lack of knowledge about the homebuying process and assistance programs, and language barriers. ([www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/fes/investments\\_sub.htm#1](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/fes/investments_sub.htm#1))
- **Home ownership as an investment strategy.** A home purchase is the largest single investment most people ever make. Owning a home builds stability and long-term financial security, and it represents wealth to be passed to the next generation. ([www.aecf.org/initiatives...](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives...), above)

# Ensuring Safe & Affordable Housing

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Underwriting promising interventions for low-income working families to buy their homes.** Individual development accounts (IDAs), in which matched dollars are provided for family savings, have been successful in enabling families with modest incomes to buy their own homes. The Corporation for Enterprise Development provides a website with tools for starting an IDA initiative, understanding applicable policy, and accessing the latest research and resources. ([www.idanetwork.org](http://www.idanetwork.org))
- **Promoting promising practices for low-income working families to keep their homes.** Home equity scams, high utilities that make home ownership unaffordable, debt accumulation, and foreclosures can ruin the dream of home ownership. Once housing is acquired, families with limited incomes may need advice to retain their investment. The National Consumer Law Center provides advocates, service organizations, and homeowners with materials for sustaining home ownership. ([www.consumerlaw.org/initiatives/sustainable\\_home/](http://www.consumerlaw.org/initiatives/sustainable_home/))
- **Supporting advocacy for affordable housing.** Strategies exist and policies can be shaped to increase the availability of affordable rental and for-sale homes. The National Low Income Housing Coalition provides local area data and offers education, research, and policy advocacy ideas for ending the nation's affordable housing crisis. ([www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org))
- **Initiating innovative solutions.** Community development financial institutions (CDFIs) are being created specifically to address the banking and capital needs of working families with modest incomes and simultaneously to build the community in which they're located. More can be learned about CDFIs at either [www.communitycapital.org](http://www.communitycapital.org) or [www.cdfi.org](http://www.cdfi.org).

## Key Resources

- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).** HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development provides critical information about both affordable housing development and assistance to people who are homeless. ([www.hud.gov/offices/cpd](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd))
- **Annie E. Casey Foundation.** The Foundation's focus on Family Economic Success positions home ownership within the broader notion of family asset-building and offers an array of interconnected resources and ideas about families' financial futures. ([www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/))
- **PolicyLink.** PolicyLink's Equitable Development Toolkit offers strategies for the creation of affordable housing within the context of promoting regional policies that promise neighborhood stability and equity. ([www.policylink.org/edtk/](http://www.policylink.org/edtk/))
- **Fannie Mae Foundation.** The Foundation's website provides information and resources about affordable home ownership and housing through various partnerships and initiatives. ([www.fanniemaefoundation.org](http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org))



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# Preventing and Treating Substance Abuse

*"We cannot arrest our way out of the problem of chronic drug abuse and drug-driven crime."*

*Barry R. McCaffrey, Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy, 1999*

## The Data

- **One in eleven Americans has a substance dependence or abuse problem.** About 15 million people abuse alcohol only; about 4 million abuse illicit drugs; another 3+ million abuse both. Three-fourths of them are employed. The abuse rate is highest among Native Americans and lowest among African Americans. (*2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, SAMHSA, USDHHS)
- **Societal costs of drug abuse are enormous.** In 2000 the societal costs were about \$161 billion, including \$110 billion in productivity losses and \$14 billion in health care costs. ([www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/pdf/drug\\_datasum.pdf](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/pdf/drug_datasum.pdf)) The cost to incarcerate drug use offenders is \$20,000-\$50,000 per person per year. (*Drug Court Resources— Facts and Figures*, [www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org))
- **Violence is associated most with alcohol abuse.** More than all other drugs *combined*, alcohol is implicated in violence, including domestic violence, assault, homicide, and suicide. ([www.safeyouth.org/scripts/facts/substance.asp](http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/facts/substance.asp))

## The Issues

- **The path to dependence and abuse starts early.** Early initiation of use is highly related to later incidence of dependence or abuse. Use before age 15 increases the risk about five times over for later dependence or abuse. (*2003 National Survey...*, above)
- **The key risk factors are known.** Individuals' low impulse control, lack of parental supervision, substance-using peers, and drug availability in homes, schools and communities all play a role in the likelihood that an individual will abuse substances. ([www.nida.nih.gov/Prevention/risk.html](http://www.nida.nih.gov/Prevention/risk.html))
- **The key protective factors are known, too.** Individual self-control and self-esteem, parental monitoring, academic success, high expectations from others, and decreased accessibility of alcohol and drugs all play a role in the likelihood that an individual will not abuse substances. ([www.safeyouth.org](http://www.safeyouth.org), above)
- **Low-income communities are inundated by substance marketers.** One study showed that a state's poorest zip code has nine times as many liquor stores as its richest zip code. The poorest area has 59 liquor stores for every 100,000 people compared to 6 per 100,000 in the richest area. (*Capital News Service*, April 18, 2003, [www.journalism.umd.edu/cns/wire/2003-editions](http://www.journalism.umd.edu/cns/wire/2003-editions))
- **The war on drugs swells prison populations.** Three-fourths of the increase in admissions to America's prisons over the last two decades came from non-violent offenses, the bulk of which were drug offenses. While there are 5 times as many white drug users as black, black men are being incarcerated at a rate over 13 times that of white men. ([www.cjcj.org/pubs/poor/pp.html](http://www.cjcj.org/pubs/poor/pp.html))

# Preventing and Treating Substance Abuse

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Investing in cost-effective, results-oriented prevention programs.** Research shows that \$1 of investment in prevention saves up to \$10 in treatment for abuse. Effective prevention programs focus on the specific local problem, strengthen protective factors, and target modifiable risk factors. ([www.nida.nih.gov/infobox/lessons.html](http://www.nida.nih.gov/infobox/lessons.html)) Because parents play such a critical role as protective factors, building their skills to communicate effectively may prove to be cost-effective.
- **Facilitating inclusion of those most affected by the issue in planning and implementation.** Those at-risk of, or experiencing, substance abuse and family members affected by the problem, have critical perspectives to offer. La Bodega de la Familia ([www.labodegadelafamilia.org](http://www.labodegadelafamilia.org)), for example, found that its substance abuse treatment efforts for people released from incarceration were significantly aided by family involvement in the planning and delivery of treatment. Similarly, youth involvement in shaping youth prevention and treatment programs is critical.
- **Convening critical stakeholders around specific issues.** Because substance abuse is highly correlated with other problems like domestic violence, other forms of violence, academic failure, and mental illness, planning and intervention will benefit by the collaboration of stakeholders relevant to specific issues. The specialized nature of the work of practitioners in each area and their specialized networks and funding sources suggest that it may take intentional and regular convening by a neutral party to foster effective collaboration.
- **Engaging in policy advocacy for prevention and treatment.** Two under-addressed issues are local policies to limit the number of liquor stores in any given neighborhood and criminal justice system reform to provide adequate drug treatment in prison and detention alternatives for people with drug offense arrests.

## Key Resources

- **National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information.** Offers data bases, publications, practitioner resources, media materials, and information by specific drugs and for diverse audiences. ([www.healthy.org](http://www.healthy.org))
- **National Institute of Drug Abuse.** Provides information tailored specifically for students and young adults, parents and teachers, and researchers and health professionals, based on the latest scientific knowledge. ([www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov))
- **National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center.** Sponsored by the CDC, provides professionals, parents, and youth with resources and tools for addressing substance abuse within the larger framework of youth violence. ([www.safeyouth.org/scripts/topics/subabuse.asp](http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/topics/subabuse.asp))



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# Facilitating the Re-Entry of Former Prisoners

*“America is the land of second chance, and when the gates of prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life.”*

George W. Bush, State of the Union Address, 2004

## The Data

- **The magnitude of incarceration and reentry.** Almost 1.5 million people are in state and federal prisons. Each day about 1,600 leave prison and return to the community. This represents over 600,000 returnees annually. (J. Travis et.al., *From Prison to Home*, Urban Institute 2001)
- **The community implications of reentry.** A large majority of formerly incarcerated people return to significantly distressed and working class communities in and around the central cities of metropolitan areas. ( J.P. Lynch & W. J. Sabol, *Prisoner Reentry in Perspective*, Urban Institute, 2001)
- **The likelihood of recidivism.** Given the range of issues that confront formerly incarcerated individuals (see below) and the lack of services and supports to address them, recidivism is projected to be almost 66% within three years of release. (J. Travis et.al. , above)

## The Issues

- **Lack of programs in prison to foster successful reentry.** People in prison are disproportionately low-income and have limited education and work experience. Only 35% received the educational programming they need and only 27% the vocational programming to improve their post-release prospects. (S. Lawrence et.al., *The Practice and Promise of Prison Programming*, Urban Institute, 2002) About 75% of returning individuals have a history of substance abuse, but less than 1/3 received treatment in prison. (J. Travis et.al., above)
- **Challenges of family reunification.** Formerly incarcerated individuals often return to families that are struggling with poverty and related crises, as well as the range of emotions that a loved one’s imprisonment produces. While constructive family ties reduce recidivism and homelessness, few supports are available for families during the reunification transition. (J. Travis & M. Waul, *Prisoners Once Removed*, Urban Institute Press, 2003)
- **Insufficient community-based supports and services.** Other challenges upon return include the need for housing, substance abuse treatment, and work. Limited data suggest that in major urban areas 30-50% of parolees may be homeless, few receive the substance abuse treatment they need, and perhaps 1/5 find full-time jobs. (J. Travis et.al., above)
- **Policy roadblocks.** Many state and federal laws pose barriers to successful reentry, the ability to support a family , and responsible citizenship by putting jobs off-limits to returnees, banning them from public benefits and public housing, and denying them the right to vote after serving their time. (Legal Action Center, *After Prison: Roadblocks to Reentry*, 2004)
- **Lifelong wage penalty.** The majority of state inmates held a low-wage job prior to incarceration. But the economic cost of incarceration for men is a loss of \$6000-\$7000 annually compared to their counterparts who have never been in prison. (M. Joseph, *The Economic Consequences of a Criminal Background*, 2002)

# Facilitating the Re-Entry of Former Prisoners

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Producing local area data for Issue Identification, Intervention, and evaluation.** Each community needs to know what neighborhoods will receive the most formerly incarcerated persons, what their needs are, what resources exist to assist them, what else needs to be done, and what works. The Urban Institute's *Re-Entry Mapping Network* (see below) offers a model for data collection and analysis. The re-entry field as a whole would benefit from good evaluations of program interventions in order to invest its resources most effectively.
- **Supporting successful practice and replication of promising interventions.** Organizations like the Fifth Avenue Committee ([www.fifthave.org](http://www.fifthave.org)) address a range of issues faced by returning community members and utilize the latter's first-hand understanding of what's needed and what can work to shape the programs. Three factors most critical to re-entry success are steady employment, substance abuse treatment, and family connections. The Urban Institute's *Outside the Walls* (see below) describes a wide range of programs focused on successful re-entry.
- **Underwriting policy advocacy and system reform.** In addition to the need for barriers to successful re-entry to be removed (see Legal Action Center resource below), research indicates that successful re-entry must begin inside prison. In-prison programming like vocational training and substance abuse treatment have been shown to be cost-effective by reducing recidivism. (J. Travis et.al., *From Prison to Home*, 2001)

## Key Resources

- **Urban Institute, Justice Policy Center.** Publications on re-entry issues and challenges based on the latest research and data, including *Outside the Walls: A National Snapshot of Community-Based Prisoner Re-entry Programs* and the *Re-Entry Mapping Network*. ([www.urban.org/content/PolicyCenters/Justice/Projects/PrisonerReentry/Publications/pubs.htm](http://www.urban.org/content/PolicyCenters/Justice/Projects/PrisonerReentry/Publications/pubs.htm))
- **Legal Action Center.** *After Prison: Roadblocks to Re-Entry* for policy barriers that prevent formerly incarcerated persons from working toward self-sufficiency. ([www.lac.org/roadblocks.html](http://www.lac.org/roadblocks.html))
- **Re-Entry National Media Outreach Campaign.** Media resources to generate solutions-oriented community conversations about a range of family and community issues. ([www.reentrymediaoutreach.org](http://www.reentrymediaoutreach.org))



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# Promoting Neighborhood & Community Vitality

*“Am I going to remain tired, or am I going to make a difference?”*

President of Communities for Change, Detroit

*The Paths to Leadership in Community Change (www.aecf.org)*

## The Data

- **Key Ingredients for vitality.** Advocates and scholars emphasize that residents should feel secure in their homes, collaborate with one another, be influential in public affairs, have supportive jobs and quality affordable goods, services, and institutions nearby, and maintain a collective moral fabric. (R.F. Ferguson & W.T. Dickens, *Urban Problems and Community Development*, Brookings Institution Press, 1999)
- **Community disinvestment and concentrated neighborhood poverty erode vitality.** In 2000 6.7 million people lived in urban high-poverty neighborhoods. These areas disproportionately experience job flight and unemployment, business and infrastructure disinvestment, under-resourced schools, an inadequate tax base, and declining collective efficacy. (G.T. Kingsley & K.L.S. Pettit, *Concentrated Poverty: A Change in Course*, Urban Institute, 2003)
- **Community disinvestment and concentrated poverty are policy decisions.** Since the 1930s public policies initially at the federal level and then at state and local levels have provided incentives for suburban housing and job growth at the expense of central cities and older suburbs and their low-income residents. (PolicyLink, *Promoting Regional Equity*, 2002)

## The Issues

- **Limited fiscal capacity of central cities and aging suburbs.** Inequitable tax policies mean that these communities face aging infrastructures, deteriorating housing, unmet educational needs, and costly government services without the fiscal capacity to meet them. ([www.policylink.org/EquitablePublicInvestment](http://www.policylink.org/EquitablePublicInvestment))
- **Poor neighborhoods underserved and overcharged by retailers.** The lack of competitive retail offerings negatively affects prices, with inner city residents paying up to 40% more for basic grocery items than their suburban counterparts. More than 25% of retail demand is unmet in inner cities. (Boston Consulting Group & ICIC, *The Business Case for Pursuing Retail Opportunities in the Inner City*, 1998, [www.icic.org](http://www.icic.org))
- **Neighborhood address, stigma, and discrimination.** Lower-income neighborhoods experience zip code discrimination in auto insurance ([www.consumersunion.org/pub/core\\_financial\\_services/000683.html](http://www.consumersunion.org/pub/core_financial_services/000683.html)), homeowners insurance (*Homeowners Insurance Study 1996*, [www.fhcsp.com](http://www.fhcsp.com)), and job hiring (*Discrimination in the Job Market*, 2003, [www.povertyactionlab.com/projects](http://www.povertyactionlab.com/projects)).
- **Persistent poverty and reduced community organization.** Over time persistent poverty in a neighborhood generates self-reinforcing processes by undermining key features of community social organization: mutual trust, shared expectations for social control, and neighborhood engagement. (R.J. Sampson & J.D. Morenoff, “Durable Inequality” in *Poverty Traps*, Princeton University Press, 2004)



# Promoting Neighborhood & Community Vitality

## Options for Philanthropy

- **Producing local area data for planning and priority-setting.** Effective community action begins with good data and the ability of community stakeholders to use it for planning, action, and evaluation. A Guidebook for Local Learning Partnerships covers issues of collaboration and the nuts and bolts of building a data warehouse and using data strategically (see [www.aecf.org/initiatives/mc/llp/guidebook.htm](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/mc/llp/guidebook.htm)).
- **Supporting equitable neighborhood development.** A community cannot thrive if its neighborhoods don't. Equitable development is undertaken in a variety of ways: affordable mixed-income housing, tax innovations, local hiring strategies, neighborhood stabilization, community development financial institutions, to name a few. An Equitable Development Toolkit is available at [www.policylink.org/EDTK/tools.html](http://www.policylink.org/EDTK/tools.html)
- **Strengthening leadership from excluded and isolated communities.** A range of methods can be used to help local leaders learn new skills and meet the challenges facing them. *The Paths to Leadership in Community Change* ([www.aecf.org/publications/data/leadership\\_paper.pdf](http://www.aecf.org/publications/data/leadership_paper.pdf)) and other resident and parent engagement approaches ([www.aecf.org/initiatives/leadership/programs/parent.htm](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/leadership/programs/parent.htm)) provide examples of approaches taken and lessons learned in capacity-building.

## Key Resources

- **National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership.** A collaborative of the Urban Institute and local partners to develop and use neighborhood information systems for policymaking and community building. Includes guides to building and operating neighborhood indicator systems and building community capacity to use information. ([www.urban.org/nnip/](http://www.urban.org/nnip/))
- **PolicyLink.** Focuses on neighborhood regional equity and offers tools for equitable neighborhood development, equitable public investment, fair distribution of affordable housing, and community strategies to improve health. ([www.policylink.org](http://www.policylink.org))
- **Annie E. Casey Foundation.** Publications and tools from the Making Connections and Rebuilding Communities initiatives provide lessons learned, promising practices, and guiding principles for promoting neighborhood and community vitality. ([www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org))
- **National Community Building Network** ([www.ncbn.org](http://www.ncbn.org)) and the **Aspen Roundtable on Community Change** ([www.aspenroundtable.org](http://www.aspenroundtable.org)). Both offer a solid understanding of the field of community building and access to an array of tools and information for local community builders.



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