

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA

POVERTY PROJECT FACT SHEET

Hispanics , AFDC, and JOBS

September 1995

Overview

- ❖ The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program is a federally funded cash assistance entitlement program designed to provide assistance to poor women with children. AFDC is funded by both state and federal sources through a matching grant structure and is generally implemented by state and county officials. Currently, AFDC provides assistance to over five million families and over nine million children nationwide. The program was created in 1935, under the Social Security Act, and was intended to economically sustain widows with young children.
- ❖ The Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program is the primary federal employment and training program for AFDC recipients. JOBS is financed through a matching grant structure between the state and federal government and is currently capped at \$1.3 billion. The program was created under the Family Support Act of 1988 and, in 1993, on average served over one-half million AFDC recipients monthly.

Hispanic Fertility, Family Structure, and Poverty

- ❖ Hispanic women, especially young Latinas, have higher fertility rates than comparable non-Hispanic women. In 1992, Hispanic women between the ages of 15-44 averaged 108.6 births per 1,000 women compared to 64.4 births for non-Hispanic women. In that same year, the birth rate for Hispanic women between the ages of 15-19 was 107.1, while the comparable group of non-Hispanic women averaged 54.4 births per 1,000 women.
- ❖ Hispanic families are disproportionately headed by single females, many with children. Although Hispanics represented slightly less than one in ten (8.7%) U.S. families in 1993, they represented 14.1% of female-headed households and 21.8% of all female-headed families with children under 18. Altogether, in 1993, one-quarter (25.2%) of Hispanic families were headed by single mothers, three-quarters (77.9%) of whom had at least one child under 18.
- ❖ Poverty in the Hispanic community is severe and is especially prevalent in Hispanic female-headed families. In 1993, more than one-quarter (27.3%) of all Hispanic families were living below the poverty line, the highest proportion ever recorded. In addition, in 1993, more than half (51.6%) of all Hispanic female-headed households were poor.
- ❖ Overall, poverty is most prevalent in Hispanic families with children, and most severe in female-headed families with children. In 1993, more than one-third (34.3%) of Hispanic families with children under 18 were poor, the highest proportion ever recorded. In addition, Hispanics overall were more than one in five poor families with children under 18 (21.1%) in the U.S., also the highest proportion ever recorded. Furthermore, 60.5% of the over 1.1 million Hispanic women heading households with children under 18 were poor in 1993, and, overall, Latinas constituted one in six (17.5%) poor female-headed families with children under 18 in the U.S.



Hispanics, AFDC, and JOBS

Hispanics and AFDC

- ❖ High poverty rates generally are associated with public assistance use; however, as a proportion of poor families with children in poverty, Hispanics underutilized AFDC. While 21.1% of all poor families with children under 18 in 1993 were Hispanic, 18.5% of AFDC cases were persons of Hispanic origin.
- ❖ A large proportion of Hispanic children are poor and receive AFDC assistance, yet Hispanic children, overall, underutilize AFDC. In 1993, two-fifths (40.9%) of Hispanic children were living below the poverty line and, overall, constituted one-quarter (24.6%) of all poor children in the U.S. In fact, Hispanic children typically constitute two out of every three (67.0%) Hispanic AFDC recipients. Furthermore, although nearly 1.9 million Hispanic children received AFDC and while Hispanic children were one-quarter of the nation's poor children, they constituted only one-fifth (19.5%) of all children on AFDC.

Hispanics and JOBS

- ❖ Although a substantial number of Hispanic AFDC recipients were served by the JOBS program, data suggest that Hispanics are underserved by the program. In 1993, nationwide, almost 70,000 Hispanic AFDC recipients participated in the JOBS program in an average month. However, while 18.7% of AFDC recipients in 1993 were Hispanic, only one in eight JOBS participants were Hispanic (12.5%).

Sources

Census Bureau, *Income, Poverty, and Valuation of Noncash Benefits: 1993*. Current Population Reports, Series P60-188, 1994; Census Bureau, *The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1993*. Current Population Reports, Series P20-475, 1994; *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, Centers For Disease Control And Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 1994; Preliminary 1993 AFDC data from the Office of Family Assistance, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1995. Unpublished 1993 JOBS data from the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.