



Implementing Work Programs for Men

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Introduction:

- Presumption: Men's work programs can succeed.
- Question: How can we take these programs to scale?
- Approach:
 - Literature review.
 - State survey.
 - Interviews in MI, NJ, NY, OH, TX, WI.

What implementation means:

- Instituting effective programs.
- Different approaches stress:
 - Top-down control by federal or state govts.
 - Bottom-up influence of local implementers.
- Effective implementation of TANF meant:
 - Politics: policymaking, consensus, funding.
 - Administration: commitment, coordination, capability.
 - We can apply this approach to men's programs.



Implementation in child support:

- Traditional problems:
 - Locating fathers, establishing paternity.
 - Establishing orders, getting collections.
- How to get fathers to work and pay?
 - Automatic wage withholding doesn't solve this.
 - Work programs arose to support enforcement.
 - Yet child support hasn't focused on work.
- Complexity: many players involved.



Implementation in prison reentry:

- Parole has failed to reduce recidivism.
- Parole focuses more on technical violations than on employment.
- Criminal justice involves many agencies.
- Reentry programs require collaboration with community organizations.

Major changes required:

- Agencies have to shift from traditional goals:
 - Child support: From money to work
 - Criminal justice: From public safety to work.
- Benefits and obligations must be combined:
 - Welfare reform: from entitlement to conditionality.
 - Men: from obligation to benefits.
- Relationships to government must change
 - Welfare reform drove mothers *away* from government.
 - Work programs must draw men *toward* government.

Preliminary findings from survey (1):

<i>Work programs in</i>	<i>States</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>With</i>	<i>Without</i>	
Child support	19	11	30
Criminal justice	20	7	27

Preliminary findings from survey (2):

<i>Work programs in</i>	<i>Mandatory?</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	
Child support	15	4	19
Criminal justice	3	17	20



Preliminary findings from survey (3):

- General movement toward wider work programs.
- Great variation among states.
- Little collaboration across states.
- Various funding sources.
- States currently strapped due to recession.



Findings from interviews:

- Causes of the work problem were seen as largely cultural, with structure secondary.
- Men do face barriers, but largely from their personal lives.
- Work is deterred more by resentment of child support than low wages.
- Jobs exist for most men now.
- But the job market may ultimately be a constraint.



Factors associated with more ambitious men's programs:

■ Politics:

- Policymaking.
- Consensus.
- Funding.

■ Administration:

- Commitment.
- Coordination.
- Capability.

Politics:

- Policymaking: High-level political attention does generate more ambitious programs.
- Consensus: Issues less divisive than in welfare reform.
- Funding: Work programs cost money, but there are major offsets:
 - Child support: Higher collections.
 - Criminal justice: Reduced incarceration.



Administration:

- Commitment: Clearer in child support than criminal justice.
- Coordination: Challenges posed by judges and the workforce system (WIA).
- Capability: Need to shift case management to focus more on work.



Unresolved issues:

- Size of program relative to need.
- Sanctions: How best to enforce participation and work?
- Guaranteed jobs?
- Role of contractors.
- Joint program?

National policy:

- Work programs should be *cautiously* expanded.
 - Child support is ready for this.
 - Criminal justice is less ready.
- Current policy/proposals would help:
 - Deficit Reduction Act, approved 2006.
 - Second Chance Act, enacted 2008.
 - Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Relationships Act, now pending in Congress.

Recommendations:

- Child support: Allow IVD funding for work programs subject to participation standards, as in TANF.
- Criminal justice: Continue project grant funding but shift toward programs run by state agencies as against NGOs.
- Maintain mandatoriness and work first.
- Condition project grants on experimental evaluations.
- Condition expanded EITC on work.



Conclusion: The need for vision:

- Men's work programs are appearing.
- The movement needs greater ambition—to expect *all* nonworking men to work.
- That would transform the inner city.
- How to approach that by expanding work programs for men?



Reactions?