

# ADMINISTRATION FOR **CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

## Selected Research on Cash Transfers

The following is a representative but non-exhausted list of research related to direct cash transfer programs, including research on outcomes, impact, program design, and implementation. Research relevant to key outcome domains such as the impact on maternal and infant health, child welfare, and at-risk youth has been included.

Aizer, A., Eli, S., Ferrie, J., & Lleras-Muney, A. (2014). The Long Term Impact of Cash Transfers to Poor Families (No. 20103). *National Bureau of Economic Research*.

<https://www.nber.org/papers/w20103.pdf>

Seeking to understand whether targeted cash transfers improve children's long-run outcomes, researchers used individual-level administrative records of the applicants to the Mother's Pension program (1911-1935) and matched them to census, WWII and death records for male dependents. They compare outcomes for the children of accepted applicants and rejected applicants, while recognizing most applicants were rejected because they were deemed to have sufficient support.

Researchers found that male children of accepted applicants lived one year longer than those of rejected mothers. Male children of accepted mothers received one-third more years of schooling, were less likely to be underweight, and had higher income in adulthood than children of rejected mothers.

The Resilient Families Hub is an interagency effort to expand knowledge of cash transfer programs within the federal government as part of the Facing Financial Shock initiative. Developed by the Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government (EO 14058), the mission of FFS is to provide stability and smoother pathways to resilience through better benefit delivery, better benefits, and better jobs.

Akee, R. K., Copeland, W. E., Keeler, G., Angold, A., & Costello, J. E. (2010). Parents' Income and Children's Outcomes: A quasi-experiment using transfer payments from casino profits. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2(1), 86-115.  
<https://doi.org/10.1257/app.2.1.86>

Seeking to understand the impact of a household's income on the outcomes of children, researchers compared the educational attainment and criminal justice involvement of children who live in households that received cash transfers among three age cohorts, and against children who lived in households that did not receive additional income as a control.

Researchers found that the children who lived in households with additional income through cash transfers the longest tended to have better outcomes on various measures including being more likely to have graduated from high school by age 19 and having statistically significant lower incidences of criminal involvement. Children from the poorest households experienced the largest gains when the household received additional income, and researchers estimate that an average of \$4,000 in additional income for the poorest families results in an additional year of education for children.

Researchers explored whether these child outcome improvements were related to additional parental time and/or parental quality. The researchers found no reduction in work hours by parents, but did observe dramatically improved parental interactions with children.

American Public Health Services Association & Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. (2023). *Evidence to Impact: State policy options to increase access to economic & concrete supports as a child welfare prevention strategy*.  
[https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/FINAL-ECS-Tool-with-Intro\\_6.14.23.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/FINAL-ECS-Tool-with-Intro_6.14.23.pdf)

The "Evidence to Impact" tool provides an overview of peer-reviewed research related to reducing risk for child maltreatment and child welfare involvement

aligned with policy options that jurisdictions can leverage to increase access and impact of economic and concrete supports.

Berger Gonzalez, S., & Morton, M. (2022). *Maximizing impact of direct cash transfers to young people: A policy toolkit*. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

<https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Cash-Transfers-Policy-Toolkit.pdf>

In collaboration with subject matter experts from around the country, including young adults with lived expertise, the authors provide analysis and recommendations for designing and implementing direct cash programs to minimize risks and maximize benefits to young people and families. The toolkit focuses on identifying and managing barriers to success such as tax obligations, public assistance benefits, and postsecondary financial assistance.

Berman, M., & Reamey, R. (2016). *Permanent Fund Dividends and Poverty in Alaska*. Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska Anchorage.

[https://iseralaska.org/static/legacy\\_publication\\_links/2016\\_12-PFDandPoverty.pdf](https://iseralaska.org/static/legacy_publication_links/2016_12-PFDandPoverty.pdf)

Seeking to understand the overall effect of the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) on poverty reduction, generally and among different populations, and the impact on poverty of ending the program, researchers used Census data aggregated into three areas: Anchorage, other urban Alaska and rural Alaska.

While the size of the PFD changes its impact on poverty rates, researchers estimate that the PFD has lifted between 15,000 and 25,000 Alaskans out of poverty annually. The impact of the PFD in reducing poverty is greater in rural Alaska than in urban areas, with more than one in five rural Alaskans, many of whom are Alaskan Natives, estimated to fall into poverty without the PFD. Researchers estimate that without the PFD, child poverty rates in Alaska would have increased by 50% since 1990.

Bervik, A., Lyons, A. J., West, S., Tandon, N., Castro, A., & Nichols, B. (2024). *The American Guaranteed Income Studies: Columbia, South Carolina*. Center for Guaranteed Income Research. [https://www.penncgir.org/s/CGIR-Columbia-SC-CLIMB-Final-Report\\_51524.pdf](https://www.penncgir.org/s/CGIR-Columbia-SC-CLIMB-Final-Report_51524.pdf)

Interested in the impact of receiving direct cash on non-custodial fathers and their children, researchers conducted a parallel mixed methods randomized controlled trial with 100 non-custodial fathers assigned to the treatment arm and 130 to the control arm. The treatment group received \$500 per month for 12 months (August 2021-September 2022).

Cash recipients were more likely to maintain full-time employment during and after the program and had reduced income volatility and increased food security compared to the control group. Cash recipients paid an average of \$300 a month on child support or other court-ordered obligations.

Cash recipients discussed how they used the payments to “connect with their children through meaning-making activities” and to start their own entrepreneurial activities.

Bibler, A., Guettabi, M., & Reimer, M. (2019) Universal Cash Transfers and Labor Market Outcomes. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3357230>

Through an examination of the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD), researchers sought to estimate the causal effects of a universal, non-means tested cash transfer program on short-run labor market activities.

Researchers found evidence of both a positive labor demand and negative labor supply response to the transfers and estimate that a \$1,000 increase in the per-person distribution of the PFD leads to a 0.7% labor market contraction on an annual basis. The researchers note that this suggests a universal cash program would have positive demand shocks that would partially offset any negative impacts on labor supply.

When disaggregated by gender, the researchers found an additional \$1,000 in the per-person PFD s associated with an estimated 1.7 percentage-point increase in the probability of employment. For women, the increase is associated with an estimated decrease of 1.25 hours of paid work per week, with the decrease in hours worked for wages concentrated among women who are younger, lower wage earners and those who have young children at home. This may indicate that the hours were reallocated to unpaid labor at home.

Bogle, M., Williams, J. L., Braswell, C., & Fung, L. (2022). *Guaranteed Income as a Mechanism for Promoting Housing Stability*. Urban Institute.  
<https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/Guaranteed%20Income%20as%20a%20Mechanism%20for%20Promoting%20Housing%20Stability.pdf>

This brief explores how direct cash transfers may be a tool for combatting the affordable housing crisis. Using data from various sources, including interviews with stakeholders from three guaranteed income pilots, the authors explore whether direct cash transfers could: (1) offer renters facing one-time or intermittent financial shocks more flexible access to housing supports; (2) accord more choice and dignity to renters; (3) reduce exposure of marginalized populations to voucher discrimination; (4) provide increased housing access to excluded workers; and (5) offer more efficient and cost-effective housing help to those with urgent need.

Brownell, M., Nickel, N. C., Charier, M., Enns, J. E., Chateau, D., Sarkar, J., Burland, E., Jutte, D. P., Taylor, C., & Katz, A. (2018). An Unconditional Prenatal Income Supplement Reduces Population Inequities in Birth Outcomes. *Health Affairs*, 37(3), 1290. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2017.1290>

Reviewing all mother-newborn pairs born in Manitoba, Canada between 2003 and 2010, researchers compared birth outcomes of low-income mothers who received prenatal income supplements (the Healthy Baby Prenatal Benefit) to

low-income mothers who did not receive the supplement and mothers who were ineligible for the supplement (high-income).

Researchers found that receipt of supplemental income and informational mailings about prenatal nutrition, breastfeeding, and healthy infant development were associated with improved outcomes for newborns and population-level decreases in birth outcome inequalities.

Campos, S., Wilson Ebba, C., Karim, N., & Rowe-Harriott, S. (n.d.). *Magnolia Mother's Trust 2022-2023 Evaluation Report*. Social Insights. <https://springboardto.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/MMT-4.0-Cohort-Full-Evaluation.pdf>

Using a longitudinal mixed-methods study design with an emphasis on qualitative data, the researchers explored the impact of direct cash on the recipient mothers and their children.

In addition to cash, the Magnolia Mother's Trust program offers optional services including access to Community Specialists, social workers, and one-on-one support. Researchers found a statistically significant association between check-ins with staff and increases in self-efficacy. In addition, mothers reported a statistically significant positive shift in the quality of their parent-child relationships.

Recipients reported higher levels of savings and the ability to pay bills on time as well as lower debt levels. Further, recipients for whom the cash transfer was their sole or main income had a significant increase in employment rates.

Cancian, M., Yang, M. Y., & Slack, K. S. (2013). The effect of additional child support income on the risk of child maltreatment. *Social Science Review*, 87(3), 417-438. <https://doi.org/10.1086/671929>

Seeking to understand the causal role of a full pass-through and disregard of child support on the risk of child maltreatment, researchers used a random assignment experiment to explore exogenous differences in child support

received and the risk of a screened-in (i.e., investigated) child abuse or neglect report.

Researchers found that families who received all child support paid on their behalf, an average of just over \$100 a year, were estimated to be about 10 percent less likely to have a screened-in report of child maltreatment than families who received partial child support payments.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2023). *Separating poverty from neglect in child welfare*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/bulletins-poverty-neglect>

This issue brief explains research exploring the overlap among families experiencing poverty and those reported to the child welfare system for neglect, the societal context in which both poverty and neglect exist, and strategies that have proven effective for preventing and addressing poverty and neglect.

Coccia, A. (2023). *Supporting Young Adults through a Guaranteed Income*. Center for the Study of Social Policy. <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Supporting-Young-Adults-through-a-Guaranteed-Income.pdf>.

The brief documents the need for guaranteed income for young adults as a complement to improve existing programs and services, and highlights design elements that are important for advancing economic and racial justice.

Cusick, G. & Anderson, C. (2024). *Providing Economic and Concrete Support to Increase Effectiveness of Evidence-Based Services*. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. [https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Chapin-Hall\\_ECS-Impact-on-EBPs\\_Policy-Brief\\_July-2024.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Chapin-Hall_ECS-Impact-on-EBPs_Policy-Brief_July-2024.pdf)

This policy brief explores how economic and concrete support, when paired with evidence-based practices related to mental health and substance use

prevention and treatment and parent skill building, can contribute to increased uptake, retention, and completion by families.

DeYoung, E., Tandon, N., West, S., Castro, A., Golinkoff, J., & Thompson, A. (2023). *The American Guaranteed Income Studies: Cambridge, Massachusetts*. Center for Guaranteed Income Research.

[https://www.penncgir.org/s/CGIRFinalReport\\_CambridgeMA\\_2024.pdf](https://www.penncgir.org/s/CGIRFinalReport_CambridgeMA_2024.pdf)

Part of the American Guaranteed Income Studies, this mixed-methods RCT sought to answer (1) how guaranteed income impacts participants' quality of life; (2) what is the relationship between guaranteed income and the participants' sense of self; (3) how guaranteed income affects participants' income, including its effect on paid work; and (4) what participants can teach us about the administration of safety net programs.

Researchers found that, on average, participants reported higher incomes and lower income volatility and were better able to cover a \$400 expense. The treatment group had higher full-time employment and rates of part-time and seasonal employment than the control group. By the end of the treatment, participants experienced lower housing cost burden, more stable utility costs and higher food security. While health findings were mixed, participants were able to give more attention and support to their children, who in turn experienced improved educational outcomes.

DeYoung, E., Castro, A., Tandon, N., Thompson, A., & West, S. (2023). *The American Guaranteed Income Studies: Ulster County, New York*. Center for Guaranteed Income Research. [https://www.penncgir.org/s/CGIR\\_11152023\\_UlsterCountyFinalReport.pdf](https://www.penncgir.org/s/CGIR_11152023_UlsterCountyFinalReport.pdf)

Part of the American Guaranteed Income Studies, this mixed-methods RCT sought to understand (1) how guaranteed income impacts participants' financial well-being; (2) the relationship between guaranteed income and the participants' sense of self; (3) how guaranteed income affects the participants' quality of life; (4) and guaranteed income's role in navigating pathways and



barriers to well-being, and its role in perspectives on work and the possibility of upward mobility.

The findings strongly suggest that the GI positively impacted the treatment group's financial well-being, including a sense of security and freedom in one's financial situation, both present and in the future. While there was positive direction on the Hope Scale for the treatment group relative to the control group, the differences were statistically insignificant. On average, treatment members experienced improved access to food and affordable and stable housing as well as physical and mental health, as the GI mitigated the effects of scarcity and allowed for an improved quality of life.

DeYoung, E., Tandon, N., Neves, C., Castro, A., & West, S. (2023). *The American Guaranteed Income Studies: Paterson, New Jersey*. Center for Guaranteed Income Research. <https://guaranteedincome.us/images/paterson-report.pdf>

Part of the American Guaranteed Income Studies, this mixed-methods RCT sought to answer (1) how guaranteed income impacts participants' quality of life; (2) what is the relationship between guaranteed income and the participants' sense of self; (3) how guaranteed income affects participants' income, including its effect on paid work; and (4) to what degree does guaranteed income facilitate the norms of reciprocity and community belonging.

Researchers found that the treatment group had increased average incomes and financial stability, financial resilience and savings, including an increased ability to cover a \$400 emergency expense. During the study, food insecurity grew for the control group but dropped for the treatment group such that the treatment group was two times less likely to report reducing food intake 12 months into the pilot. While there was a small drop in full-time employment for the treatment group, these hours were translated into spending more time with their children and caring for family members, increased part-time and seasonal work and self-employment.

Drew, K. (2024). *Making Every Dollar Count: A closer look at benefits protection strategies implemented by guaranteed income pilots in Illinois*. The University of Chicago Inclusive Economy Lab.

[https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/attachments/fc728a5fe2d51ac58e8d2500275a5c1ebcefa0a1/store/343b09a7a87c07b637df12c393a105dad2a448901a9e0c0a57064b2cb900/Benefits+Case+Study\\_Final.pdf](https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/attachments/fc728a5fe2d51ac58e8d2500275a5c1ebcefa0a1/store/343b09a7a87c07b637df12c393a105dad2a448901a9e0c0a57064b2cb900/Benefits+Case+Study_Final.pdf)

This brief documents the benefits protection strategies employed by Every Dollar Counts and the Chicago Resilient Communities Pilot, two large-scale direct cash payment pilots operating in Illinois.

Dworsky, A., Napolitano, L., & Courtney, M. (2013). Homelessness During the Transition from Foster Care to Adulthood. *Am J Public Health* 103(Suppl 2): S318-S323. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301455>

Using data from the Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth, researchers estimated the cumulative percentage of youth who became homeless during the transition from foster care to adulthood. Researchers determined that 31% to 46% of the youth had been homeless at least once by age 26.

Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies. (2024). *Rewriting the Story: Lived experiences of New Yorkers receiving cash assistance*. [https://www.fpwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/FPWA-Cash-Assistance-Story-Collection-Series\\_10.21.2024\\_3.52\\_PM-1.pdf](https://www.fpwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/FPWA-Cash-Assistance-Story-Collection-Series_10.21.2024_3.52_PM-1.pdf)

Using 32 phone interviews and 82 surveys, the researchers captured the experience of New York State residents receiving cash assistance. Researchers probed questions relating to households, reasons for applying, experiences with applying and recertifying for benefits, experiences with work requirements, and how participants met their economic needs. The report includes information and a quote from each of the 32 phone interviews as well as key themes and findings.

Frasz, A. (2024). *Creatives Rebuild New York: Guaranteed Income for Artists Process Evaluation*. Creatives Rebuild New York / Helicon Collaborative.  
[https://www.creativesrebuildny.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/CRNY-Evaluation-Report\\_GI.pdf](https://www.creativesrebuildny.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/CRNY-Evaluation-Report_GI.pdf)

This brief is an evaluation of the design and implementation of Creatives Rebuild New York's Guaranteed Income for Artists program from inception through program launch and the beginning of disbursement of funds to artists. The evaluation focuses on the goals, actions taken, critical choices, and lessons learned from the program. It is not an evaluation of the impact of the program on participants.

Ginther, D. K., & Johnson-Motoyama, M. (2022). Associations between TANF policies, child protective services involvement, and foster care placement. *Health Affairs*, 41(12), 1744-1753. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2022.00743>

Researchers used instrumental variables, two-way fixed effects, and event studies to examine the associations between state-level TANF policies, Child Protective Services involvement, and foster care placement between 2004-2016, to study TANF's effects on children.

Researchers found that (1) each additional TANF policy that restricted access to benefits was associated with a 13 percent reduction in TANF caseloads; (2) increases in TANF caseloads were associated with significant reductions in the numbers of neglect victims and foster care placements; and (3) restrictions on TANF access were associated with more than forty-four additional neglect victims per 100,000 children and between nineteen and twenty-two additional children per 100,000 placed in foster care.

Guettabi, M. (2019) *What Do We Know About the Effects of the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend?* Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska Anchorage. <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/10581>

This study provides a summary of empirical literature on the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) and highlights areas for future research.

As of 2019, three papers examined the effect of the PFD on employment and hours finding no negative influence on the labor market, and a small positive demand response. One study found significantly increased spending on non-durable goods and services in the month of PFD receipt and through the quarter following payment. Evidence indicates the PFD has a positive but modest effect on birth weight and strong evidence shows the PFD reduces childhood obesity. The PFD both substantially decreases poverty for rural Alaskans, particularly for the elderly, while also increasing income inequality in the short and long term. Finally, following PFD distribution, substance abuse related incidents rise while property crime related incidents decrease. The amount of the PFD impacts increases in substance abuse and medical assistance instances, but not property crime.

Hamilton, C., Harris, D., Wimer, C., Kimberlin, S., Collyer, S. & Garfinkel, I. (2023). The case for a federal birth grant: a plan to reduce poverty for newborns and their families. *Poverty and Social Policy Brief*, 7(1). Columbia University Center on Poverty and Social Policy. <https://www.povertycenter.columbia.edu/publication/case-for-federal-birth-grant>

Examining infant poverty in the months surrounding birth, researchers modeled the impact of (1) current policies in which no additional income is provided to new parents; (2) a \$1,800 birth grant provided to parents of newborns; and (3) a birth grant provided to parents of newborns along with an expanded Child Tax Credit as provided under the American Rescue Plan Act in 2021.

Noting that the birth of a child increases the likelihood of familial poverty by 33%, researchers found a one-time birth grant of \$1,800 would nearly eradicate poverty in the month of birth. Further, if the one-time birth grant were coupled with an expanded Child Tax Credit, poverty in the birth month would be almost eliminated and poverty among mothers would be kept lower throughout the child's first year of life.

Hoynes, H., Miller, D., & Simon, D. (2015). Income, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and Infant Health. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 2015, 7(1), 172-211.  
<https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.20120179>

Using a quasi-experimental variation from the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), researchers evaluated the effect of the EITC on infant health outcomes. Researchers found that the 1993 EITC expansions are associated with decreases in low birth weight and increases in average birth weight. For single mothers with a high school education or less, an increase of \$1,000 in after-tax income is associated with a 1.6 to 2.9 percent reduction in the rates of low birth weight.

Jones, D., & Marinescu, I. (2022). The Labor Market Impacts of Universal and Permanent Cash Transfers: Evidence from the Alaska Permanent Fund. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 14(2): 315-40.  
<https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.20190299>

Seeking to understand the effects of a universal and permanent cash transfer program on the labor market, and how they might differ from the effects of a temporary cash transfer program, such as lottery winnings and the income experiments of the 1960s and 1970s, researchers used data from the Current Population Survey and a synthetic control group.

The researchers found that the dividend has no effect on employment and increased part-time work by 1.8 percentage points (17%). Their preferred interpretation is that the null employment effect may be explained by a

positive general equilibrium response offsetting a negative income effect, i.e., the increased consumption driven by the cash transfer stimulates labor demand and mitigates any potential reductions in employment. While an alternative interpretation is that the size of the PFD is too small to affect labor supply, the researchers note that the PFD has exceeded EITC payments, which have been found to have sizable employment effects.

Kappil, T., Rosenberg, S., Yang, H., Jefferson, A., Juras, R., Greenwood, Z., & Cocatre-Zigien, E. (2024). *Young Adult Louisville Income for Transformation! Final Report*. Abt Global.

<https://www.abtglobal.com/sites/default/files/files/insights/reports/2024/louisville-mgi-report-v10.pdf>

Using a mixed methods designed randomized experiment, researchers evaluated a guaranteed income program that provided 151 young adults with \$500 per month for 12 months (from April 2022 through March 2023). Researchers found that receiving the guaranteed income increased the recipients' financial and housing stability and bolstered their feelings of independence and agency.

Kehrer, K. C. (1977). *Findings from the Gary Income Maintenance Experiment: Testimony before the House Committee on Ways and Means*. Mathematica Policy Research. <https://www.mathematica.org/our-publications-and-findings/publications/findings-from-the-gary-income-maintenance-experiment-testimony>

Reporting to the House Ways and Means Committee, Kehrer presented findings from the Gary Income Maintenance Experiment, a field test of the feasibility and effects of a negative income tax. Kehrer notes that the experiment offered evidence (1) that a system of monthly retrospective self-reporting of income is feasible and humane; (2) of the costs of administering such a program; and (3) that families will use support payments to improve

their lives in ways that will reduce their dependence on income support in the long run.

Kim, B-K. E., Castro, A., West, S., Tandon, N., Ho, L., Nguyen V. T., & Sharif, K. (2024). *The American Guaranteed Income Studies: City of Los Angeles BIG:LEAP*. Center for Guaranteed Income Research. <https://www.pennccgir.org/s/CGIR-LA-BIGLEAP-Final-Report.pdf>

Part of the American Guaranteed Income Studies, this mixed-methods RCT sought to understand (1) how guaranteed income affects the participants' quality of life; (2) the relationship between guaranteed income and the participants' sense of self; (3) how guaranteed income affects the participants' income, and through what mechanisms; (4) how the implementation of GI informs the existing safety net; (5) the relationship between GI and intimate partner violence (IPV); (6) the relationship between GI and community interactions and safety; and (7) how GI affects engagement in child enrichment activities.

As the largest 12-month guaranteed income RCT to date, researchers note that the participants moved sequentially from alleviating material hardship and establishing immediate safety (months 1-6) to an active goal setting and establishing proximate safety phase (months 6-9), and then shoring up resources in anticipation of a return to material hardship and establishing future safety (months 9-12). Researchers found a statistically significant decrease in food insecurity and a statistically significant increase in savings, as well as an emerging increase in financial well-being among the treatment group.

As one of the first studies conducting an epidemiological assessment of IPV using a self-reported survey, this study found both qualitative and quantitative data indicating that GI reduced or prevented the incidence of IPV in the treatment group.

Komro, K. A., Markowitz, S., Livingston, M. D., & Wagenaar, A. C. (2019). Effects of State-Level Earned Income Tax Credit Laws on Birth Outcomes by Race and Ethnicity. *Health Equity*, 3(1), 61-67. <https://doi.org/10.1089/heq.2018.0061>

Using a quasi-experimental multistate and multiyear difference-in-difference design, researchers explored differential effectiveness of state-level Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) in birth outcomes across racial and ethnic groups. This work builds on prior work by the researchers evaluating the effect of state-level EITCs on maternal health behaviors and birth outcomes which found few statistically significant differences in maternal health behaviors, while also finding consistent improvements in birth weight and gestation weeks for states with EITCs and larger effects with more generous EITCs.

Researchers found that across race, and consistent with previous studies, any level of state EITC is associated with improved birth outcomes, with the largest effects seen in states with the most generous EITCs. Researchers found larger percentage-point effects for Black mothers with a high school education or less, including higher birth weights and longer gestation time for Black mothers. Researchers found few differences in effects by ethnicity.



Koutavas, A., Yera, C., Collyer, S. Curran, M. Harris, D., & Wimer, C. (2023). What Would 2022 Child Poverty Rates Have Looked Like if an Expanded Child Tax Credit Had Still Been in Place? *Poverty and Social Policy Brief*, 7(3). Columbia University Center on Poverty and Social Policy.

<https://povertycenter.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Publications/What-Would-2022-Child-Poverty-Rates-Have-Looked-Like-CPSP.pdf>

After the temporary expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC) under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) ended, child poverty rates increased from 5.2% to 12.4%, largely as a result of the end of the expanded CTC. Seeking to understand what the child poverty rates would have been if the expanded CTC had continued, researchers modeled an expanded CTC and adjusted the credit for inflation. Based on this modeling, they found that, had the expanded CTC been in effect in 2022, the child poverty rate would have been 8.1%, preserving much of the historic decline in child poverty seen in 2021.

Kovski, N. L., Hill, H. D., Mooney, S. J., Rivara, F. P., & Rowhani-Rahbar, A. (2022). Short-Term Effects of Tax Credits on Rates of Child Maltreatment Reports in the United States. *Pediatrics* 150(1). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2021-054939>

Seeking to understand the ways in which income support programs that target poverty influence child maltreatment rates in the U.S., researchers used a quasi-experimental design to study the effect of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit refunds on child maltreatment reports made to child welfare authorities.

Researchers found that state EITC and CTC payments are associated with lower rates of child maltreatment reports, with the largest impact occurring three weeks after issuance when child maltreatment reports decreased by 7.1 per 100,000 children. For each additional \$1,000 in per-child EITC and CTC tax refunds, rates of reported maltreatment declined in the week of issuance and four weeks following payment by an estimated five percent.

Marinescu, I. (2018). No Strings Attached: The behavioral effects of the U.S. unconditional cash transfer programs (No. 24337). *National Bureau of Economic Research*. [https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w24337/w24337.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w24337/w24337.pdf)

Seeking to understand how unconditional cash transfers affect the behavior of recipients in a variety of areas, including consumption, labor force participation, education, health, and more, the researcher conducted an evidence review of available studies. While the effects of unconditional cash transfers vary depending on program design, the evidence review found no impact or a moderate decrease in labor participation and a significant increase in other quality-of-life benefits, including mental and physical health, education outcomes, parenting, reduced criminal activity and more.

Miller, S., Rhodes, E., Bartik, A. W., Broockman, D. E., Krause, P. K., & Vivalt, E. (2024). Does Income Affect Health? Evidence from a randomized controlled trial of a guaranteed income (No. 32711). *National Bureau of Economic Research*. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w32711>

Seeking to understand the causal relationship between income and health, researchers conducted a randomized controlled trial in which 1,000 adults with low incomes received \$1,000 a month for three years, with 2,000 control participants receiving \$50 a month over the same time period.

Researchers found large but short-lived improvements in stress and food security, greater use of hospital and emergency department care, and increased medical spending of about \$20 per month in the treatment group. Researchers did not find any improvements in physical health and the mental health improvements seen in year one did not persist.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). *A Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

<https://doi.org/10.17226/25246>

The report was produced pursuant to a request by the U.S. Congress to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to provide a nonpartisan, evidence-based report providing an assessment of the most effective means for reducing child poverty by half in the next 10 years.

The report provides many conclusions and findings, including but not limited to: (1) the weight of causal evidence indicates that income poverty itself causes negative child outcomes; (2) many programs that alleviate poverty either directly, by providing income transfers, or indirectly, by providing food, housing, or medical care have been shown to improve child well-being; (3) government tax and transfer programs reduced the child poverty rate modestly between 1967 and 1993, but became increasingly important after 1993 because of increases in government benefits targeting the poor and near poor; and (4) no single program or policy option was estimated to meet the goal of 50 percent poverty reduction, but the \$3,000 per child per year child allowance policy came closest and also met the 50 percent reduction goal for deep poverty.

Osborne, C., Navarro, M., Doe, H., & Huffman, J. (2024). *Receiving Concrete Support Linked to Home Visiting Program Engagement*. Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center.

<https://pn3policy.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Basic-Needs-Brief-Final-Corrected.pdf>

Seeking to understand the value of providing concrete support within a home visiting program, the Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center at Vanderbilt University surveyed 602 families that participated in home visiting services in Texas and analyzed program administrative data for 9,261 Texas home visiting families. Researchers found that pairing concrete support to meet basic needs

with core home visiting services may increase the benefits of the home visiting program for families.

Paxon, C., & Waldfogel, J. (2003). Welfare reforms, family resources, and child maltreatment. *Journal of Policy Analysis & Management*, 22(1), 85-113.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3325847>

As families who are or have been on welfare make up a large share of families in the child welfare system, researchers sought to understand the effect of welfare reforms in the 1990s on child maltreatment.

Researchers found that higher poverty rates, while not associated with more reports of maltreatment, are associated with more substantiated cases of maltreatment; that having a working mother and no father in the household increased the number of children with substantiated maltreatment cases; and that more generous welfare benefits are associated with significantly fewer children in out-of-home placements.

Pilkauskas, N., & Micheltmore, K. (2018). *Working Paper Series #1-17: The Effect of Income on Housing Instability and Living Arrangements: Evidence from the Earned Income Tax Credit*. Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan.

[https://poverty.umich.edu/files/2018/09/Pilkauskas\\_Micheltmore\\_EITC\\_Housing\\_Sept2018.pdf](https://poverty.umich.edu/files/2018/09/Pilkauskas_Micheltmore_EITC_Housing_Sept2018.pdf)

Seeking to understand the effects of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) on housing outcomes, the effect of increasing the EITC, and whether these effects would be stronger for mothers with young children, researchers used the Current Population Survey (CPS), Census/American Community Survey (ACS) and the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCWS) and employed different methodological approaches.

Consistent with other research, this study indicates that the EITC increases employment and income among single mothers. Generally, the findings

suggest the EITC improves housing outcomes for mothers by reducing their housing costs burden, as well as doubling up, household size and other shared living arrangements and crowding. There was some support for the hypothesis that the effects are stronger for mothers with children under age 6, although the researchers note that more research is needed to verify these findings. Finally, the study's findings suggest that increasing the EITC by \$1,000 would reduce extreme housing cost burdens, crowding and doubling up significantly.

Data did not support the hypothesis that EITC income reduces homelessness and evictions and foreclosures. This finding is also consistent with prior research findings that those at the bottom of the income distribution (below 50% of the federal poverty limit) are least likely to be affected by the EITC.

Puls, H. T., Hall, M., Anderst, J. D., Gurley, T., Perrin, J., & Chung, P. J. (2021). State Spending on Public Benefit Programs and Child Maltreatment. *Pediatrics* 2021;145(5):e2021050685. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2021-050685>

Seeking to understand the association between states' total spending on benefit programs and child maltreatment outcomes, researchers conducted an ecological study of all U.S. states and the District of Columbia during federal fiscal years 2010-2017, excluding Oregon in 2010 and 2011 due to missing maltreatment reporting data.

Before adjusting for federal spending, states' total spending on benefit programs was indirectly associated with maltreatment reporting (neglect only), foster care placements, and fatalities. After adjusting for federal spending, states' total spending on benefit programs was indirectly associated with all maltreatment outcomes.

Each additional \$1,000 spent by states on benefit programs per person living in poverty was associated with a -4.3% difference in all maltreatment reporting, -4.0% difference in substantiated reports, -2.1% difference in foster care placements, and -7.7% difference in fatalities.

Rostad, W. L., Roges, T. M., & Chaffin, M. J. (2017). The Influence of Concrete Support on Child Welfare Program Engagement, Progress, and Recurrence. *Child Youth Serv Rev.* 72, 26-33. [The influence of concrete support on child welfare program engagement, progress, and recurrence - PMC](#)

Seeking to understand the influence of adjunctive concrete support by home visitors on families' engagement, retention, and satisfaction with child welfare services as well as parenting outcomes, researchers used propensity stratification and mixed modeling procedures. The research demonstrated that increasing concrete supports predicted greater engagement, satisfaction, goal attainment, and lower short-term recidivism.

Sauval, M., Duncan, G. J., Gennetian, L. A., Magnuson, K. A., Fox, N. A., Noble, K. G., & Yoshikawa, H. (2024). Unconditional cash transfers and maternal employment: Evidence from the Baby's First Years study. *Journal of Public Economics*, 236. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2024.105159>

Seeking to understand the effect of unconditional cash transfers on the labor force participation of low-income mothers with young children, researchers used a randomized controlled trial that provided \$333 a month for 40 months to low-income new mothers. Overall, researchers found mostly negative but not statistically significant effects on the labor supply or self-reported earnings. The data did show a statistically significant decrease of hours worked per week at the time of their child's second birthday, which was early in the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers suggest this finding indicates the cash facilitated behavioral adjustments to the pandemic.

Spitzer, A., Chandler, J., Hicks, B., & Thal, D. (2024). *Understanding Economic Risk for Low-Income Families: Economic Security, Program Benefits, and Decisions About Work*. ASPE and OPRE Report #2024-324, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, and Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/5fdf4788ea74f64930c7b201e6523079/Economic-Risk-Report.pdf>

Seeking to understand how workers with low incomes consider higher-paying job opportunities when faced with potential loss of means-tested benefits, researchers used a survey experiment in which respondents were asked to consider a series of vignettes. Specifically, researchers tested how important respondents found the potential loss of benefits and, if lost, ease of resumption, the effect of the marginal tax rate and net income increase, and the stability of the new job opportunity when making a decision.

Researchers found that, overall, respondents were very likely to accept a higher paying job, especially if the higher paying job was considered more stable. Respondents were less likely to accept a higher paying job if they faced a loss of benefits, unless the lost benefit could be easily resumed if needed. In general, lower marginal tax rates and higher net income increases made respondents more likely to accept higher-paying jobs, with women being more sensitive to the size of the marginal tax rate and change in net income.

Springboard To Opportunities Staff. (n.d.). *2020 Evaluation Report*. The Magnolia Mother's Trust. [https://springboardto.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/STO\\_MMT-2nd-Cohort-2020-Evaluation-Summary-1.pdf](https://springboardto.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/STO_MMT-2nd-Cohort-2020-Evaluation-Summary-1.pdf)

The mothers in the second cohort of the Magnolia Mother's Trust guaranteed income initiative received \$1,000 per month for 12 months starting in March 2020. During the instability of the COVID-19 pandemic, the mothers receiving the GI reported an increase in their ability to pay all their bills on time from

27% to 83%, an increase from 64% to 81% of those with enough money for food, and from 40% to 88% of those with money saved for emergencies. Further, the number of mothers with health insurance coverage increased by 25%.

Troller-Renfree, S. V., Costanzo, M. A., Duncan, G. J., Magnuson, K., Gennetian, L. A., Yoshikawa, H., Halpern-Meekin, S., Fox, N.A., & Noble, K. G. (2022). The Impact of a Poverty Reduction Intervention on Infant Brain Activity. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the U.S.A.*, 119(5). <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2115649119>

Designed to address whether poverty reduction causes changes in children's brain development, researchers used a randomized controlled trial, researchers explored the effect that predictable, monthly unconditional cash payments to low-income families may have on the brain activity of infants. Increased brain activity, or "power" in the mid- to high-frequency bands as measured by electroencephalography (EEG) is associated with higher language, cognitive, and social-emotional scores, whereas more absolute or relative low-frequency power has been associated with the development of behavioral, attention, or learning problems.

Infants whose parents had received \$333 per month, the "high-cash group", showed higher power in the three mid- to high-frequency bands than infants in the "low-cash group" whose parents received \$20 per month. The researchers note that they do not know whether the neurodevelopmental effects of this intervention will translate into differences in direct assessments of children's skills and behavior.

Vivalt, E., Rhodes, E., Bartik, A. W., Broockman, D. E., & Miller, S. The Employment Effects of a Guaranteed Income: Experimental Evidence from Two U.S. States. (No. 32719). *National Bureau of Economic Research*. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w32719>

Seeking to understand the causal impacts of income on a variety of employment outcomes, researchers conducted a randomized controlled trial



in which 1,000 adults with low incomes received \$1,000 a month for three years (2020-2023), with 2,000 control participants receiving \$50 a month over the same time period using survey data, administrative records and data from a custom mobile phone app.

Overall, the data suggests a moderate labor supply effect, including a 2.0 percentage point decrease in labor market participation and a 1.3-1.4 hour per week reduction in labor hours. Researchers found that recipients spent nearly all of the money received either on consumption or on reduced work hours. Researchers did find indications that younger participants may have pursued more formal education, and that recipients expressed more interest in entrepreneurial activities and were more willing to take financial risks.

West, S., & Castro, A. (2023). Impact of Guaranteed Income on Health, Finances, and Agency: Findings from the Stockton Randomized Controlled Trial. *J Urban Health*, 100, 227-234. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11524-023-00723-0>

Seeking to understand the effects of a \$500 per month guaranteed income on health and financial outcomes, researchers conducted a 24-month mixed-methods randomized controlled trial with 131 treatment participants and 200 control participants. The second year of the study corresponded to the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Treatment recipients had lower rates of income volatility than control, with year one differences being statistically significant and year two differences being statistically insignificant. The treatment group's measure of psychological distress was lower than the control group's at a significant level in year one, but not in the pandemic year or after withdrawal of the intervention. Significant between group changes, largely in the pre-pandemic year, were found in measures of pain, energy over fatigue, emotional wellbeing, role limitations due to emotional health, and physical functioning. During the pandemic year, the treatment group indicated better physical functioning than did the control,

while after treatment withdrawal there were no between group effects detected.

Wimer, C., Collyer, S., Harris, D., & Lee, J. (2022). The 2021 Child Tax Credit expansion: Child poverty reduction and the children formerly left behind. *Poverty and Social Policy Brief*, 6(8). Columbia University Center on Poverty and Social Policy. <https://poverty-and-social-policy.site.drupaldisttest.cc.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Publications/Expanded-CTC-and-Child-Poverty-in-2021-CPSP.pdf>

The U.S. Census Bureau's poverty statistics for 2021 found that child poverty declined to 5.2%, as measured using the Supplemental Poverty Measure, the lowest level on record. This decline was credited in large part to the expanded Child Tax Credit, which alone cut child poverty by 43% that year. Not only did the expanded CTC reduce child poverty, it also reduced or even closed gaps between groups of children who historically face higher levels of poverty and those with lower rates of poverty.

Yang, H., Thomas, H., & Juras, R. (2024). *Interim Brief: Guaranteed Income After One Year in Baltimore*. Abt Global. <https://www.abtglobal.com/sites/default/files/2024-09/baltimore-mgi-report-6.26.24.pdf>

Seeking to understand the effects of a \$1000 per month guaranteed income transfer program targeting young adults aged 18 to 24 with full or partial caretaking responsibilities, researchers conducted a 24-month randomized controlled trial with 130 treatment participants and 156 control participants. This interim brief provides findings from the first year of the study.

Researchers found that one year into the study participants receiving the cash transfers were doing better than those who did not receive cash transfers in three key areas: income, housing, and mental health.