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Impact of Learnfare on Milwaukee County Social Service Clients (1990)

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**THE IMPACT OF LEARNFARE
ON
MILWAUKEE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICE CLIENTS**

by

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Introduction

In October, 1987 the Family Support Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services approved the Learnfare portion of the "Wisconsin Welfare Reform Package Section 1115(a) Waiver Application." The Code of Federal Regulations requires evaluations of demonstration projects, and in July, 1989 the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) contracted with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Division of Outreach and Continuing Education Employment and Training Institute (UW-ETI) to conduct the evaluation of the Learnfare portion of the demonstration project. A research design was approved by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in December, 1989. The research design identified six areas for study: the impact of Learnfare on the school attendance of teenage AFDC recipients, the impact of Learnfare on school completion rates, whether Learnfare effects the school performance of teenage AFDC recipients, the impact of Learnfare on the incidents of female teen AFDC recipients' childbearing, a process evaluation of Learnfare implementation, and a study of the impact of Learnfare on families.¹ A final evaluation report is due June 30, 1993.

State and federal officials indicated their particular interest in the impact of sanctions on participants. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services staff also requested that the Employment and Training Institute provide results when they became available to assist other states in implementing the Family Support Act of 1988.² This paper is the first of a series of reports. The paper limits its discussion to the characteristics of teens sanctioned under the Learnfare policy and Learnfare participation rates because reliable data on school achievement and completion rates will only be possible after review of school records which is scheduled during 1991. The data used in the study was available only for Milwaukee County, which accounts for 73.7 percent of all Learnfare sanctions in the state. The researchers cannot determine the ultimate success or failure of the Learnfare policy at this time, but can only offer guideposts for assessing its impact on sanctioned populations.

Executive Summary

This report is part of a larger evaluation which details the experience of all participants in the Milwaukee County Department of Social Services including all Children's Court system records since 1979, Social Service records since at least 1987, all checks written for Milwaukee County Social Services since 1986, and all records on individuals in the income maintenance system including all Learnfare participants from September, 1988 through December, 1989. It is not a sample. Over 4 million records from the data bases cited above were used to describe the experience of families in Milwaukee County's various social service systems.

Findings

1. From September, 1988 through December, 1989 the families of 6,612 Milwaukee County teens were sanctioned for failure to meet Learnfare school attendance requirements.
2. Of the 6,612 teens sanctioned, 28 percent had returned to school and were reported regularly attending two months after their last sanction. For sanctioned teen parents the percentage of teens reported regularly attending school two months after their last sanction was 20 percent. Thirty-five percent of sanctioned teen parents had been exempted from school attendance two months after their last sanction. (See pp. 10-11.)
3. As state officials anticipated, many teens sanctioned under Learnfare were in families with problems of abuse or neglect. (See p. 4.) 1,327 Milwaukee County teens sanctioned under Learnfare were in families identified by Milwaukee County Social Service workers or the Children's Court system as having possible or documented problems with abuse or neglect. These youth comprised 20 percent of all sanctioned teens in the county. (See p. 11.)
4. When teens who have been in the Children's Court system (either as Children in Need of Protective Services, CHIPS, or for delinquency) are added to teens living in families coded for possible abuse or neglect, they comprised 2,722 (or 41 percent) of the 6,612 Milwaukee County teens sanctioned. (See pp. 13-15.)
5. Teens in families coded for possible abuse or neglect or in the Children's Court system received a total of 10,195 monthly sanctions and accounted for \$1,529,250 of the AFDC savings attributed to Learnfare for the September, 1988 through December, 1989 period.
6. The total sanctions for Milwaukee County for the sixteen-month period were 22,379. These sanctions represented an estimated reduction in AFDC payments of \$3,356,850, including a federal savings of \$1,990,950.
7. Another consequence of Learnfare is the sanctioning of AFDC parents who take in foster children and AFDC families contracting with Milwaukee County to provide family day care. While foster children are exempt from Learnfare, the AFDC families who take in foster children are subject to Learnfare requirements for their own teenagers. An analysis of a portion of Milwaukee County families providing foster care found 144 foster children in living with AFDC caseheads whose own teens were under the Learnfare policy. 53 of these foster children (36.8 percent of the total) were in families sanctioned under Learnfare. Likewise, AFDC families with teens under the Learnfare requirement were identified who also provide family day care for Milwaukee County. Of the 75 children in family day placed with AFDC families under the Learnfare requirement, 43 (57.3 percent) were cared for by families who were sanctioned under Learnfare. (See p. 13.)

1. Background on the Wisconsin Learnfare Policy

In July, 1987 the State of Wisconsin enacted legislation implementing a Learnfare policy for families receiving AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children). As a condition for receiving aid, all teenagers who have not completed high school must attend school regularly. At the time of a family's six month AFDC review or upon application for AFDC, each teenager's prior school attendance is reviewed by a county Income Maintenance worker or through a computerized match with the Milwaukee Public Schools. Those teens with ten or more unexcused absences for the prior semester or lacking information on their prior semester's attendance are placed on monthly monitoring. Any teens not enrolled in school or having more than two days of unexcused absences under monthly monitoring are removed from their parents' grant ("sanctioned") until they return to school or attend regularly. DHSS reports that a sanction results in an average \$150 a month reduction in the AFDC family grant.³ The Learnfare policy identifies "good cause" reasons why a teenager may be exempt from school attendance, including caring for an infant under three months of age, inability to graduate by age 20, lack of day care, lack of transportation to day care, no school available after expulsion, religious grounds. Funding is provided for day care for the children of Learnfare teen parents and for transportation costs to and from day care.

All teen parents who have not graduated from high school and do not have exemptions are required to meet the Learnfare school attendance policies. Teen dependents are subject to Learnfare requirements only if they reside with at least one natural or adoptive parent. Other teens, living with non-legally responsible relatives such as an aunt, uncle, or grandparent, or an unrelated adult, are exempt from the Learnfare policy and its sanctions.⁴ The Learnfare policy was first applied to teenage parents and dependent teens ages 13-14 in the spring of 1988. Since September, 1988 the Learnfare requirement has effected all teen dependents ages 13-18 residing with their parents and all teen parents ages 13-19 receiving AFDC.

The DHSS Learnfare waiver request to the federal government stated the intent of the policy.

"For adults, cooperation with employment and training programs is expected. For teens, school attendance is the appropriate equivalent of adult work and should be treated as seriously as work. The school requirement for all teen members of AFDC households between 13 and 18 years old will permit the state to give the teens a clearly understandable and monetarily tangible reason to pursue their education. Obviously, in and of itself, it may not be sufficient to motivate a teen to continue schooling. However, used in conjunction with a wide range of school and social service programs, it should increase the overall effectiveness of the state's efforts to educate these children. This should reduce the likelihood of their future welfare dependence."⁵

The waiver request also addressed the issue of requiring school attendance of 18- and 19-year-old teen parents.

"The rationale for requiring all underage teens to remain in school also applies to the young adults who have not achieved high school graduation or its equivalent. The need is, if anything, even greater among young adults who are pregnant or already parents and living on AFDC. School attendance for this group will reduce future dependency. It also reflects the reality that many young people, especially those who have lost school time because of pregnancy and child birth, do not graduate until they are 19 or 20. Requiring teen parents to continue after the eighteenth birthday also puts an emphasis on educational attainment rather than simply attending school."⁶

It is unclear whether the program's creators were willing to accept certain negative consequences of the Learnfare policy. A DHSS staff memo to Secretary Timothy Cullen in November, 1987 discussed the possibility of referring teens to social services prior to any sanctioning. The memo described the issue as:

"Some kids have problems that prevent them from attending school or learning if they are in school, such as drug or alcohol abuse, or emotional problems due to abuse or neglect. These teens are most likely to be sanctioned because parents will be unable to deal with them. They also may be subjected to further abuse or kicked out of the home altogether."⁷

The staff option proposed referring all teens to social services as a first step prior to any sanctions. Those teens with problems preventing regular attendance at school would be exempt from Learnfare sanctions as long as they met the social service plan for dealing with their problems. The advantage of the service was outlined as,

"Helps identify all teens that have problems beyond poor school attendance, and sees that they are offered the treatment they need. If we are concerned about the future of these teens, we will see they get help with all problems that may prevent them from being productive adults."⁸

The memo identified the major disadvantage of this approach as "cost," stating:

"Con Cost. Dollars must be provided to county social service agencies to assess all teens subject to sanction and to deal with those needing help. The cost could be limited somewhat by only using this process for teens that are dropouts. It could be assumed that kids that are enrolled in the school and having problems with drugs, etc., will be identified and dealt with by the school.

Savings. Fewer teens will be sanctioned so the projected 'savings' will be smaller. Will this affect the waiver?"⁹

Rather than creating a system to review family social service needs prior to Learnfare participation, the Learnfare policy instead relies upon existing school social workers, school at-risk programs, and county social service

workers to address problems as they arise. In October, 1988 the Department of Health and Social Services arranged to provide funding for counseling and alternative education programs for high school dropouts sanctioned under Learnfare. Through a contract with Wisconsin Job Service WEOP (Wisconsin Employment Opportunity Program) staff were made available to provide counseling and limited social services to teens sanctioned under Learnfare as dropouts or for failure to report their school status.

In Milwaukee County three WEOP workers are provided lists of names of teens sanctioned as dropouts and for failure to report. Since October, 1988, approximately 3,300 teens have been referred to the WEOP staff in Milwaukee County. The workers contact parents and teens through phone calls and letters and encourage younger teens to return to the public schools. (638 younger teens have been referred to Milwaukee Public Schools.) The workers provide counseling and community service referrals for a number of older teens and contract for classroom training for high school completion or high school equivalency diploma programs for older teens at the Milwaukee Area Technical College and community-based programs. In addition to classroom training, a number of the community-based programs provide social services, including individual and family counseling, instruction in parenting skills, and referrals to community services. From November, 1988 through December, 1989, 625 contracts were provided for classroom training for Learnfare teens under the WEOP program. However, since contracts are generally for a semester period, several contracts may be written for the same teen. DHSS reports that allocations in 1990 for Learnfare programs in Milwaukee County include \$2,735,000 for day care, \$506,700 for transportation to and from day care, \$754,000 for purchase of alternative education, and \$246,000 for staff for the Learnfare Hotline.

DHSS officials continued to be concerned about families with chronic sanctions under Learnfare after the policy's implementation in spring of 1988. At one of the first meetings scheduled with the Employment and Training Institute to discuss the Learnfare evaluation research design, DHSS Division of Policy and Budget staff stressed the importance of looking at chronically sanctioned teens. In May of 1989 an investigation of younger Milwaukee County teens sanctioned under Learnfare was initiated by the Division of Policy and Budget. Regional DHSS staff solicited the cooperation of the Milwaukee County Department of Social Services to examine the social service records and circumstances of 13- and 14-year-old teens identified by DHSS as sanctioned for at least five months. A recent analysis of the data submitted to DHSS officials in July of 1989 reveals that 22 of the 63 teens studied had Milwaukee County social service codes indicating an investigation for abuse or neglect. These figures are consistent with the findings of this report and are based on several of the same data sources.

It is the position of DHSS administrators that social service needs of Learnfare families can be adequately addressed by existing school and county social service staff. The WEOP staff do not presently receive school records or county information on the identified social service needs of sanctioned teens, and the alternative education programs have access to social service records only upon request by the client. Families of in-school youth requesting social services assistance, other than for day care or

transportation to day care, are encouraged by the Learnfare Hotline and the Income Maintenance Unit workers to contact a public school social worker.¹⁰ The public schools do not presently have access to social service records of Learnfare clients except for those incidents involving the youth at school.

11. Present Status of Milwaukee County Teens on AFDC

As of December, 1989 there were 15,343 teenagers included in AFDC grants in Milwaukee County. This included 2,625 teen parents, 11,672 teen dependents living with a natural or adoptive parent, and 1,046 teens living with an adult other than their parent. The 13,527 teen parents and dependents living with parents who had not graduated from high school were required to meet the Learnfare policy.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY TEENS INCLUDED IN AFDC GRANTS¹¹ December, 1989

<u>Age of Teens</u>	<u>Teen Parents</u>	<u>Dependents Living With Parents</u>	<u>Other Teens</u>
13 years	6	2,684	196
14 "	15	2,586	231
15 "	25	2,324	205
16 "	66	2,117	200
17 "	200	1,701	190
18 "	976	260	24
19 "	1,337	--	--
TOTAL	2,625	11,672	1,046
High School Graduates ¹² (Estimate)	735	35	5
TOTAL Non-Graduates (Estimate)	1,890	11,637	1,041

Computerized data from the state's Computer Reporting Network (CRN) file which is used to determine eligibility for AFDC, food stamps and medical assistance and to record compliance with the Learnfare requirement was analyzed to provide an overview of the DHSS-reported school status of Milwaukee County teens. The school status as of December, 1989 is shown below.

REPORTED SCHOOL STATUS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY TEEN PARENTS AND DEPENDENTS
(December, 1989)

<u>Status</u>	<u>Teen Parents</u>	<u>Dependents Living with Parents</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
In-school regular student status	193	6,847	7,040	49.2
In-school on monthly monitoring	145	933	1,078	7.6
Unverified, attendance not yet reviewed, not found ¹³	281	2,159	2,440	17.1
Non-graduate exempt from school under Learnfare	907	270	1,177	8.2
High school graduate/G.E.D.	735	35	770	5.4
Sanctioned	364	1,428	1,792	12.5
TOTAL	2,625	11,672	14,297	100.0

III. The Wisconsin Learnfare Model

As other states examine the Learnfare option for portions of the AFDC teen population, the Wisconsin experience can be instructive. The waivers granted by the federal government in October, 1987 permitted Wisconsin to require 13- to 18-year old dependent children and 13- to 19-year-old teen parents to register and participate in school or be subject to sanction. Key to Wisconsin's Learnfare policy was an exemption from assessment activities. Under the JOBS program, states are required to conduct the following activities:

Within a reasonable time period prior to participation the State IV-A agency must make an initial assessment of employability based on:

- (i) The individual's educational, child care, and other supportive services needs;
- (ii) The individual's proficiencies, skills deficiencies, and prior work experience;
- (iii) A review of the family circumstances, which may include the needs of any child of the individual; and
- (iv) Other factors that the State IV-A agency determines relevant in developing the employability plan....¹⁴

However, federal officials point out that the JOBS assessment process does not require a review of existing social service records and may be conducted by income maintenance workers. Such a minimal assessment even if required for Learnfare may not have identified the several thousand teenagers in Milwaukee County AFDC families with documented or suspected problems of abuse or neglect, several hundred youth who had previously run away from home, been in court over changes in guardianship, or had parents petition for court-ordered services for a child they could not control, and another thousand teens with Children's Court events for delinquency or CHIPS.

While state DHSS officials recognized the possible consequences of this policy on victims of abuse or neglect prior to implementation, measures were not instituted to protect these victims apparently due to the costs involved. It is the position of DHSS administrators that social service needs of Learnfare families can be adequately addressed by existing school and county social service staff.

The Wisconsin Learnfare demonstration project officially ends December 31, 1991.¹⁵ In September, 1989 state officials sought waivers from the federal government both to expand the Learnfare policy to dependents ages 6 to 12 and to exempt the state from JOBS legislation requiring assessment of family circumstances and development of an employability plan for teens in the Learnfare population.¹⁶ In December, 1989, the federal government granted the state request to be exempt from JOBS for the current 13- to 19-year-old teen Learnfare population.¹⁷ The waiver request for the 6- to 12-year-olds is still pending.

IV. Methodology

The Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services contracted in April, 1989 with the Employment and Training Institute of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UW-ETI) to provide evaluation services for the Milwaukee County Youth Initiative. This work was incorporated into the evaluation of Wisconsin's Learnfare Policy for the Wisconsin legislature and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which UW-ETI began in July, 1989. As anticipated in the UW-ETI Learnfare evaluation proposal and research design, the combined work provides a comprehensive examination of the identified social service needs of AFDC teens and their families in Milwaukee County.¹⁸ This phase of the research evaluation examined the entire 1989 AFDC teen population and their families in Milwaukee County, utilizing computer data bases for county social services, the Children's Court Center, and the DHSS's Computer Reporting Network.

The Employment and Training Institute's past research both with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections and the Department of Public Instruction has demonstrated the limitations of the use of sampling data, particularly for hard-to-serve populations making many entrances and exits into the welfare, social service, court or education systems. In addition, given the focus of the Milwaukee County Youth Initiative on needs of families which can be met by neighborhood-based strategies, the evaluations examined the variety of services or problems encountered by various members of AFDC households affected by the Learnfare policy.

Working with the Milwaukee County Department of Social Services, the UW-ETI with assistance from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Social Science Research Facility created one data base from four separate computer systems within the county: the JUSTIS file providing data on all persons in the Children's Court system since 1979, SIMPLE and its predecessor SSIS which provide a history of social services recorded in Milwaukee County since at least January of 1987, and the county UPS file detailing checks written since January, 1986. Each computer system retains historical data since at least 1987, and in some cases as far back as 1979. For over 10,000 records, cases were visually inspected to match client data which did not have common identifiers, had name changes or variations in spelling, or had miscoded data fields. UW-ETI also worked for several months developing a file format for the state's Computer Reporting Network (CRN) active database system which has recorded information on all AFDC, food stamp, and medical assistance clients and applicants since 1980. In late December, 1989 UW-ETI received state DHSS computer files on Learnfare sanctions which were subsequently matched with the county data.

The following cautions should be noted regarding the county social service and court data. Data from Milwaukee County's computer system regarding social services to families and individuals (the SIMPLE system and its predecessor SSIS) accurately reports only those cases entered into the computer. In some instances clients may not have been entered, thereby undercounting the services (e.g. investigations or ongoing services for child abuse or neglect) provided. Extensive examination of the Children's Court data reveals an extremely low error rate. However, delays as long as six months in entering information result in missing data for 1989 dispositions. While numerous errors were observed in the coded CRN data on Learnfare-eligible teens, the sanction data should be accurate.¹⁹ The data on sanctioned families in this report has not been revised, however, to reflect cases where full AFDC payments were restored as a result of appeals or fair hearing decisions.

V. Teens Sanctioned Under Learnfare in Milwaukee County

From September, 1988 through December, 1989, the families of 8,968 Wisconsin teens receiving AFDC were sanctioned for failure to meet the Learnfare requirement. 6,612 of these sanctions (73.7 percent of the total) occurred in Milwaukee County.

AFDC TEENS SANCTIONED ONE OR MORE MONTHS September, 1988 through December, 1989

	<u>Milwaukee County</u>	<u>Balance of State</u>	<u>Total</u>
Teen Parents	1,562	872	2,434
Dependents	5,050	1,484	6,534
TOTAL	6,612	2,356	8,968

A longitudinal file was created from monthly DHSS computer tapes to follow the reported progress of teens sanctioned under Learnfare. Of the 6,612 Milwaukee County teens sanctioned during the period from September, 1988 through December, 1989, 28 percent had returned to school and were reported regularly attending two months after their last sanction. This group included 317 teen parents (20 percent of all sanctioned teen parents) and 1,530 dependent teens (30 percent of all sanctioned teen dependents).

REPORTED SCHOOL STATUS OF TEEN PARENTS TWO MONTHS AFTER THEIR LAST SANCTION (as of December, 1989)

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
In-school	317	20.3
Still sanctioned ²⁰	366	23.4
Unverified or not found	92	5.9
Exempt from school	549	35.2
No longer on AFDC	238	15.2
TOTAL	1,562	100.0

Thirty percent of Milwaukee County dependent teens sanctioned under Learnfare had returned to school with regular attendance two months after their last sanction. An additional 2.7 percent of the teens may be in school, but their attendance is unverified for that month.

REPORTED SCHOOL STATUS OF TEEN DEPENDENTS TWO MONTHS
AFTER THEIR LAST SANCTION (as of December, 1989)

	Number	Percent of Total
In-school	1,530	30.3
Still sanctioned ²¹	1,428	28.3
Unverified or not found	256	5.1
Exempt from school ²²	116	2.2
Moved to AFDC case headed by a non-parent	29	0.6
No longer on AFDC	1,691	33.5
TOTAL	5,050	100.0

VI. AFDC Families Coded for Possible Problems with Child Abuse or Neglect

Using both the Social Service system computer files (SIMPLE and SSIS) and the JUSTIS file, a "flag" was created for those families who had an indication of possible abuse or neglect. This included families with any children who had an event in Children's Court under the statutes for abuse or neglect, families investigated or provided ongoing services through Protective Services, and families for whom a social worker indicated a possible problem in this area. It is important to note that these families have not necessarily had a court action or a proven instance of abuse or neglect (although some have), but that at a minimum a case worker has investigated one or more members of the family for abuse or neglect or has indicated this as a possible problem in the casehead's social service file. In some families, the person who abused the child may no longer be in the household or the abused child may have been removed to foster care or a group home.

2,284 teens were identified whose families had a code indicating possible abuse or neglect and who were required to attend school under the Learnfare policy.

- Nearly 60 percent of these teens (1,327 youth) have been sanctioned for one or more months under Learnfare.
- Another 957 teens (42 percent of teens identified in families flagged with abuse or neglect codes) who were in families with an abuse or neglect code had their school attendance reviewed for at least one month during the sixteen month period and had no sanctions.
- The 1,327 Milwaukee County teens sanctioned under Learnfare between September, 1988 and December, 1989, and in families with an abuse or neglect family code made up 20 percent of all sanctioned teens for the 16-month period.
- One-fourth (24 percent) of Milwaukee County teens sanctioned for ten or more months were in families with an abuse or neglect code.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY SANCTIONED TEENS
(September, 1988 through December, 1989)

Teens with Identified Needs	TOTAL MONTHS TEEN WAS SANCTIONED													Total
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13-15</u>	
In families with abuse/neglect codes	356	259	191	140	89	59	54	50	46	27	24	13	19	1,327
In Children's Court system as individuals	493	418	262	210	139	111	80	71	67	48	40	20	31	1,990
TOTAL (excluding overlap)	702	568	367	287	190	140	106	101	87	58	51	25	40	2,722
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ALL TEENS SANCTIONED	2034	1455	860	626	410	292	236	198	157	120	100	54	70	6,612
Teens with Identified Needs as a percent of all sanctions	34%	39%	43%	46%	46%	48%	45%	51%	55%	48%	51%	46%	57%	41%

VII. Foster Parents and Child Care Providers on AFDC

Many Milwaukee County AFDC recipients whose own children are under the Learnfare requirement also care for foster children or are family day care providers. As a result, these families may be sanctioned under Learnfare. An analysis of a portion of the foster care population found 144 foster children living in families where a teenager was subject to Learnfare. 53 of these foster children (36.8 percent of the total) were in families where a Learnfare sanction occurred. Likewise, 75 children were identified receiving family day care from a family whose teens were subject to Learnfare. 43 of these children (57.3 percent of the total) were in families who were sanctioned.

The Milwaukee County Department of Social Services maintains a check writing file (UPS) which details all expenses paid for by Milwaukee County for social services. Checks written during the period from September, 1988 to June, 1989 for foster home and family day care were matched against the Learnfare longitudinal file in September, 1988 through December, 1989 and the July 1989 CRN file to establish whether or not the child was living out of the home and to identify foster parents. This is not a complete count of the foster care population on AFDC.

This analysis limits itself to the population identified as foster parents or day care providers and the extent to which sons or daughters of these families were sanctioned under Learnfare. Subsequent analysis will examine whether there was an increase in the number of dependent children being placed in foster care or living with non-legally related relatives. This preliminary analysis suggests only that social service providers are also required to participate under Learnfare and are at some time sanctioned under Learnfare.

VIII. AFDC Teens in the Children's Court System

Milwaukee County's JUSTIS file was used to provide information on children involved in Children's Court both under CHIPS (children in need of protective services) and for delinquency. The JUSTIS file provides data on all persons at Children's Court since 1979.

The Children's Court charges of 1,990 youth sanctioned under Learnfare were reviewed. Note: the term "charges" is used for many events in which the child is a victim, e.g. for abuse or neglect, or where guardianship may be transferred to a non-parent as well as for cases of delinquency. The charges of the first event in Children's Court for the 1,990 teens sanctioned included,

- 909 youth - Statutes 943.01 to 943.125 (See the Appendix for a list of charges)
- 295 youth - Statutes 940.01 to 940.44
- 170 youth - Statutes 941.01 to 941.30

- 146 youth - Statutes 48.13(10) neglect, 48.13(3) abuse, 48.13(2) abandonment
- 144 youth - Statutes 947.01 to 947.15
- 76 youth - Statute 48.13(4), parent unable to provide care (uncontrollable)
- 55 youth - Statutes 341.04 through 347.06
- 49 youth - Statutes 161.41 to 167.10, including possession or delivery of controlled substance
- 40 youth - Statute 48.13(7a), runaway
- 23 youth - Statutes 48.13(8) and 48.13(2), parent unavailable or without parent
- 19 youth - Statute 880.07 and 880.15, guardianship or appointment of temporary guardian
- 11 youth - Statutes 944.01 to 944.33, sexual offenses
- 10 youth - Statutes 48.13(6) and 48.13(7), truancy
- 10 youth - Statutes 946.41(1) to 946.80

238 of these first charges (12 percent of the total) occurred in 1989, and 403 charges (20 percent of the total) in 1988.

A number of teens with Children's Court system charge events (CHIPS or delinquent) were reported as attending school regularly under the Learnfare policy. 1,727 AFDC teens with Children's Court charges were identified whose school attendance was reviewed for the semester or monitored monthly and who had no sanctions during any months on aid between September, 1988 through December, 1989. The charges of the first event in Children's Court for these 1,727 teens include,

- 678 youth - Statutes 943.01 to 943.125 (See the Appendix for a list of charges)
- 367 youth - Statutes 940.01 to 940.44
- 104 youth - Statutes 947.01 to 947.15
- 89 youth - Statutes 941.01 to 941.30
- 75 youth - Statute 48.13(4), parent unable to provide care (uncontrollable)

- 49 youth - Statute 880.07 and 880.15, guardianship or appointment of temporary guardian
- 45 youth - Statutes 341.04 through 347.06
- 29 youth - Statutes 161.41 to 167.10, including possession or delivery of controlled substance
- 14 youth - Statutes 48.13(8) and 48.13(2), parent unavailable or without parent
- 10 youth - Statute 48.13(7a), runaway

When the teens from the Children's Court system are combined with those teens identified from families with possible problems of abuse or neglect, there is considerable overlap. Taken together, the following can be said of their Learnfare experience.

- 2,722 of the 6,612 Milwaukee County teens sanctioned between September, 1989 and December, 1989, were in families with an abuse or neglect code or had an event in the Children's Court system, or both. These teens made up 41 percent of all sanctioned teens.
- 344 teens were sanctioned for at least ten of the last sixteen months of Learnfare (September, 1988 through December, 1989). Half of this group (174 teens) have been identified as living in families with an abuse or neglect code, having an event in Children's Court for CHIPS or delinquency, or both.
- 45 percent of the AFDC cost savings resulting from monthly sanctions in Milwaukee County during the sixteen month period can be attributed to sanctions for teens in families with an abuse or neglect code or with events in the Children's Court system. These teens and their families accounted for \$1,529,250 of the reduced AFDC benefits due to Learnfare sanctions in Milwaukee County.

IX. Federal Legislation Targeting AFDC Participants and Their Families

The federal government policies toward social services mandated for welfare clients involved in employment and training programs have shifted during the last decade. Under the Work Incentive Program (WIN), originally established as part of the 1967 Social Security Amendments, states were required to provide assessment, counseling, supportive services and an employability development plan which considered the particular needs of the client. The governmental cooperation mandated under WIN required the state DHSS to operate an administrative unit separate from the income maintenance unit whose employees were to specialize in the provision of services including "health, vocational rehabilitation, counseling, child care, and other social and supportive services as are necessary to enable such individuals to accept

employment..."²³ Secondly, this unit in cooperation with the WIN sponsor (Job Service) was responsible for developing an employability development plan containing a "manpower services plan and a supportive services plan."²⁴ Furthermore the unit was required to "certify in writing that the necessary immediate and ongoing supportive services have been provided or arranged, or that no such services are required for those individuals who have been selected for participation in a WIN component."²⁵

WIN-DEMO

Many states complained that the WIN structure was inefficient and resulted in parallel bureaucracies in DHSS and Job Service. WIN-Demo, authorized under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, allowed states to "streamline" WIN by transferring all activities to one administrative unit, and additionally allowed states to abandon all assessment, employability plans, and supportive services. Wisconsin adopted their WIN-Demo project in this fashion under the Wisconsin Employment Opportunities Program (WEOP). All applicants were registered in WEOP as a condition for eligibility for AFDC, and all mandatory and voluntary participants immediately entered into Job Search. Wisconsin's WEOP Plan provided that, "Appraisal of recipients' job history, job skills, education and training needs and general employability will only be done if the recipient is still unemployed after the initial Job Search period."

JOBS

The Family Support Act of 1988 through its Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) Program returns to the original WIN model and in many respects expands upon the requirements set forth in the original WIN program. Emphasis is once again placed on the importance of assessing the clients' needs and family circumstances in the development of individual employability development plans. Target groups are identified and special consideration is given the needs of teen parents. The JOBS regulations include the following:

- Emphasis on identifying a long-range employment goal even for students required to complete school.
- Identification of supportive services needs and family circumstances which may include the needs of any child of the individual.
- Development of an employability plan which takes into account the individual's supportive service needs and local employment opportunities.
- Optional contracts with participants specifying client obligations and social services to be provided.
- A conciliation procedure to resolve disputes related to clients' participation in JOBS programs.

In the 1987 application for welfare reform waivers, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services was very clear about the need for supportive services for teen parents.²⁶ The Learnfare waivers did not, however, anticipate building in a social service component for assessment or services, but requested exemptions from responsibility from this portion of the Social Security Act. The waiver application makes clear the importance of these exemptions by restating its request to waive WIN requirements for assessment, counseling and supportive services.²⁷

The implementation of the Wisconsin Learnfare model would likely not have been possible without an exemption from assessment, counseling, supportive services and an employability plan. The sheer numbers of AFDC dependent teens along with teen parents in the state (30,000 plus) may have made the task fiscally prohibitive. With WIN and JOBS requirements waived, the process became an inexpensive policy with limited administrative costs. Accordingly, the Learnfare process in Milwaukee County was abbreviated to the following:

- 1) The Income Maintenance Unit (IMU) requires families to report school attendance information as a condition of AFDC eligibility.
- 2) An IMU worker decides any exemptions.
- 3) A computer matches school records against IMU data.
- 4) Sanctioning occurs automatically after the computer match.
- 5) Families of in-school youth requesting social services are referred by the Learnfare Hotline to the public school social worker.
- 6) The names of teens who are sanctioned as dropouts or for failure to report information are provided to three WEOP workers who attempt to make contact with these families and provide services including contracting for alternative education programs.

Future research will examine programs instituted by the schools to serve Learnfare teens who have been sanctioned, are under monthly monitoring for their attendance, or who return as dropouts. In addition, the data in this report will be expanded in future studies along with the issues it raises, including:

- Exploration of the consequences of sanctioning teens from families with multiple problems.
- An examination of services, both educational and supportive, provided by WEOP-funded alternative education programs for 18- and 19-year-old teens.
- An in-depth analysis of the teen parent population and the reasons for the large number of exemptions to school attendance for this group.

- An analysis of the Income Maintenance Unit (IMU) workers' expanded responsibilities under Learnfare and WEJT/CWEP, their preparation and training, and the method of establishing program participation status.
- An analysis of the expanded role for the school social worker and the adequacies of funding and training to absorb Learnfare responsibilities.
- A survey of school officials to assess impact of Learnfare on school programs.

Endnotes

1. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, "Evaluation Research Design for Wisconsin's Learnfare Program," submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services, October 15, 1989.
2. Meeting with Nancye Campbell and Lois James, Family Support Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, October 2, 1989.
3. Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services, "Final Fourth Quarter Statement, Quarterly Statement of Welfare Reform Waivers' Costs and Savings," September 30, 1989.
4. Governor Tommy G. Thompson line-itemed vetoed Wisconsin Act 27 of the 1987 legislature enacting Learnfare to expand its coverage from teenage parents to all teenage youth receiving AFDC. DHSS administrative rules narrowed the target population among non-parents to those teen dependents who reside with one of their natural or adoptive parents.
5. Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services, "Wisconsin Welfare Reform Package Section 1115(a) Waiver Application," submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, May 1, 1987, p. 10.
6. Ibid., p. 14.
7. Memo from DHSS staff member Diane Waller to DHSS Secretary Timothy Cullen re "Learnfare", November 24, 1987, p. 1.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Interview with Jill Meade, Milwaukee County Learnfare Coordinator, September 28, 1989. See also, DHSS "Important Notice: This Notice May Affect Your AFDC Grant," December 26, 1987; Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services, "Important Notice to Teens Currently Being Sanctioned for Learnfare: This Notice May Affect Your Grant," May, 1989.
11. These numbers differ from the DHSS monthly reports on "Learnfare-Covered Teen AFDC Recipients." Eighteen-year-old teen dependents who are sanctioned as dropouts are considered ineligible for AFDC and not included in this analysis. All 19-year-old teen parents (even those within two months of their 20th birthday) are included.
12. Eighteen year olds who have completed high school are not eligible for AFDC as dependents.
13. This group includes 274 teens with Learnfare school codes of "not found," 824 teens whose attendance was not verified for that month, 1,106 thirteen-year-olds whose attendance has not yet been reviewed, and 236 fourteen- to nineteen-year-olds miscoded as "children under age 13."

14. Paragraph 250.41 of Chapter II, Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations as amended October 13, 1989.

15. Letter from Wayne A. Stanton, Administrator, Family Support Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to Patricia Goodrich, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services, December 2, 1988.

16. "Wisconsin Learnfare Waiver," submitted by Governor Tommy G. Thompson to Louis Sullivan, Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, September 12, 1989, pp. 14-15.

17. Letter from Eunice S. Thomas, Acting Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to Patricia Goodrich, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services, received December 29, 1989.

18. Employment and Training Institute, "A Proposal to Evaluate Learnfare," submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services on November 1, 1988; UW-ETI, "Evaluation Research Design for Wisconsin's Learnfare Program," submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services on October 15, 1989.

19. 13 percent of the 29,269 teen parents and dependents under the Learnfare requirement in the state in July, 1989 had missing or inconsistent entries for Learnfare status or highest grade completed.

20. This total includes 54 teen parents sanctioned only in December, 145 parents sanctioned for 2-4 months, 116 parents sanctioned for 5-9 months, and 51 teen parents sanctioned for 10-15 months. Eighteen-year-old teens who are sanctioned as dropouts are not included since 18-year-olds are only eligible as AFDC dependents if they are In school.

21. This total includes 171 teens only sanctioned in December, 639 teens sanctioned for 2-4 months, 422 teens sanctioned for 5-9 months, and 196 teens who have been sanctioned for 10-15 months.

22. This group includes only 13-17 year old dependents since 18-year-old dependents are eligible for AFDC only if they are attending school.

23. Social Security Act, 402(a)(19)(G).

24. 45 CFR 224.22(d).

25. 45 CFR 224.22(e).

26. Wisconsin DHSS, "Wisconsin Welfare Reform Package Section 1115(a) Waiver Application," May 1, 1987, p. 10.

27. Ibid., pp. 10, 31, 32.

CHILDREN'S COURT CHARGE LIST

Appendix 21

2.138	Hindering
48.13(1)	Without a Parent
48.13(2)	Abandonment
48.13(3)	Abuse
48.13(4)	Parent Unable to Provide Care (Uncontrollable)
48.13(5)	Illegal Placemnt
48.13(6)	School Truancy
48.13(7)	Home Truancy
48.13(7a)	Runaway
48.13(8)	Parent is Unavailable
48.13(9)	Child Over 12 Needs Special Care
48.13(10)	Neglect
48.13(11)	Emotional Damage
48.13(12)	Child Under 12 Delinquent
48.13(13)	Not Immunized Per Required Statute
48.36	Motion to Compel Support
48.355(6)	Motion for Imposition of Sanction
48.41(1)	TPR-Voluntary
48.415(1)	TPR-Abandonment
48.415(2)	TPR-Cont. Need Prtn. & Srv.
48.415(3)	TPR-Cont. Par. Disability
48.415(4)	TPR-Cont. Denial of Visitation
48.415(5)	TPR-Repeated Abuse
48.415(6)	TPR- Fail to Assn. Par Resp.
48.423	Adjudication of Paternity
48.43(5)(A)	Permanency Plan Review
48.64(4c)	Foster Home License Appeal
48.205(1a)	P/C-Injury to Child or Others
48.205(1b)	P/C-No Care for Child
48.205(1c)	P/C-Runaway
48.207(1)(d)	Violation of Non-Secure Court Order
51.20(1)	Involuntary Commitment (attempted Suicide)
51.45(13)	Commitment for Alcoholism
55.06(2)	Developmentally Disabled
66.054(19)	Loitering by Minor on Class B Premises
66.054(22)	Misrepresentation of Age by Minor to Obtain Alcoholic Beverage
66.054(200)	Possession by Minor of Alcoholic Beverage
105.20	Assault & Battery
105.69	Paint Sniffing
105.70	Toxic Glue Sniffing
106.23	Loitering-Curfew
106.31	Loitering-Prowling
106.31(1)	Loitering-Prostitution Related
115.81	Special Education Appeal
125.07(4)(2)	Underage Drinking
161.41(1)	Deliver Controlled Substance
161.41(1m)	Possession of Controlled Substance with Intent to Deliver
161.41(3)	Possession of Controlled Substance
161.465	Distribution of Controlled Substance to Prisoners
164.20(T)	Possession of Tear Gas Weapon
167.10	Possession of Fireworks
192.32	Railroad Trespass
341.04	Operation Unreg. or Improperly Reg. Vehicle
343.05	Driving Without Operator's License
343.05(C)	Driving Motor-Driven Cycle W/O Operator's License
343.07	Violations of Instruction Permit
343.14(5)	Falsifying License or ID Card

343.43(1)	Unlawful Use of License
343.44	Driving While License Revoked or Suspended
346.04(1)	Failure to Obey Traffic Officers
346.04(2)	Disregarding Official Sign
346.04(3)	Fleeing
346.04(3A)	Eluding
346.13(3)	Wrong way on One-Way Street
346.57(2)	Speed not Reasonable or Prudent
346.57(3)	Failure to Control Vehicle
346.57(5)	Speed Exceeds Zoned Posted Limits
346.62(1)	Reckless Driving
346.63(1)	Operating Under Influence of Controlled Substance
346.63(1)(A)	Operating Under Influence of Intoxicant
346.67(B)	Duty Upon Striking Occupied Vehicle - Personal Injury
346.68	Duty Upon Striking Unoccupied Vehicle
346.69	Hit and Run of Property On/Adj. Highway
346.87	Unsafe Backing
346.89(1)	Inattentive Driving
346.92(1)	Illegal Riding On Vehicle
346.93	Poss. of Liq/Beer in Auto With Minor
347.06(1)	Driving Without Headlamps
880.07	Guardianship
880.15	Appointment of Temporary Guardian
939.05	Party To a Crime (Must include another charge)
939.31	Conspiracy to Commit Crime
939.32	Attempted (Must include another charge)
939.63	While Armed
940.01	First Degree Murder
940.02	Second Degree Murder
940.03	Third Degree Murder
940.05	Manslaughter
940.06	Homicide by Reckless Conduct
940.08(W)	Homicide by Negligent Use of Weapon
940.09	Homicide by Intoxicated User of Vehicle
940.19	Battery
940.19(2)	Aggravated Battery
940.20(2)	Battery to Police Officers or Firefighters
940.20(3)	Battery to Witnesses or Jurors
940.21	Mayhem
940.225(1)	First Degree Sexual Assault
940.225(2)	Second Degree Sexual Assault
940.225(3)	Third Degree Sexual Assault
940.225(3M)	Fourth Degree Sexual Assault
940.23	Injury by Conduct Regardless of Life
940.24	Injury by Negligent Use of Weapon
940.30	False Imprisonment
940.32	Abduction
940.43	Intimidation of Witnesses
940.44	Intimidation of Victim
941.01	Negligent Operation of Vehicle
941.10	Negligent Handling of Burning Materials
941.13	False Alarms
941.20	Reckless Use of Weapon
941.22	Possession of Pistol by Minor
941.23	Carrying Concealed Weapon
941.24	Possession of Switchblade Knife
941.26	Machine Gun & Other Weapons Use
941.28(2)	Possession of Sawed-Off Shotgun
941.30	Endangering Safety by Conduct Req. of Life
943.01	Criminal Damage to Property

943.02 Arson of Buildings
 943.02(A) Arson
 943.06 Possession of Molotov Cocktails
 943.07(3) Criminal Damage to Railroads
 943.10 Burglary
 943.10(A) Burglary (Armed)
 943.11 Entry Into Locked Vehicle
 943.12 Possession of Burglarious Tools
 943.13 Trespass to Land
 943.14 Criminal Trespass to Dwelling
 943.14(A) Criminal Trespass
 943.15 Entry Into Locked Building
 943.20 Theft
 943.20(A) Auto Theft
 943.20(1) Theft from Auto
 943.20(P) Theft from Person
 943.21 Fraud on Hotel Keeper
 943.23 Operating Motor Vehicle W/O Owner's Consent
 943.24 Issue of Worthless Checks
 943.30 Threats to Injure
 943.30(2) Extortion
 943.32 Robbery (Includes Strongarm)
 943.32(A) Robbery (Armed)
 943.32(B) Robbery (Armed & Masked)
 943.32(D) Robbery (Masked)
 943.34 Receiving Stolen Property
 943.34(C) Concealing Stolen Property
 943.34(P) Possession of Stolen Property
 943.38 Forgery
 943.38(A) Forgery-Uttering
 943.41(5) Fraudulent Use of Credit Card
 943.45 Obtaining Telecommunications Service by Fraud
 943.50 Shoplifting
 943.125 Entry Into Locked Coin Box
 944.01 Rape
 944.02 Sexual Intercourse Without Consent
 944.11 Indecent Behavior with a Child
 944.15 Fornication
 944.17 Sexual Perversion
 944.20 Lewd & Lascivious Behavior
 944.30 Prostitution
 944.33 Pandering
 945.02 Gambling
 946.41(1) Resisting/Obstructing Officer
 946.41 Resisting Officer
 946.41(A) Obstructing Officer
 946.42 Escape
 946.44 Assisting or Permitting Escape
 946.62 Concealing Identity
 946.71 Interfering with Custody of a Child
 946.715 Concealment
 946.80 Misconduct on Public Grounds
 947.01 Disorderly Conduct
 947.01(2) Unlawful Use of Telephone
 947.01(5) Bomb Scares
 947.15 Contributing to Delinquency of Child
 948.02 Cruelty to Animals
 948.03 Dognapping
 999.80 Petition for Revision of Dispositional Order
 999.80(p) Petition for Change of Placement

999.81 Petition for Extension of Dispositional Order
999.82(d) Motion to Dismiss Petition
999.85 Supervision Requested - Other Court
999.86 Disp/Supv Requested - Other Court
999.82(v) Motion to Vacate Order
943.70(2) Computer Crime Against Data or Program
943.70(3) Computer Crime Against Equipment or Supplies