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MATHEMATICA
Policy Research, Inc.

Survey Design For TANF Caseload Project

Summary Report And Recommendations

Final Report

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

This report presents the research that Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) is conducting for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), to assist states and counties in studying their current Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) caseloads. This research consists of a summary review of existing survey instruments that focus on welfare populations, especially those with sections covering barriers to employability and self-sufficiency, as well as recommendations for specific measures and questions to include in a new survey instrument. This work will culminate in the development of a recommended instrument that states and counties will use to conduct telephone surveys of their TANF caseloads.

The introductory chapter discusses the importance of this project within the current policy context, as well as reinforcing the need for a new survey instrument that focuses on barriers to employability and self-sufficiency and provides background on the process we undertook to review existing survey instruments.

B. STUDY BACKGROUND

Early implementation studies of TANF suggest that states have made significant progress in shifting to a more work-oriented assistance system. Welfare caseloads have fallen 49 percent in the United States since the enactment of TANF, and the proportion of recipients who were working reached an all-time high of 33 percent in fiscal year 1999, compared to less than 11 percent in 1996. The dramatic decline in the TANF caseload has spawned numerous research studies to examine the circumstances of families who left the welfare rolls. With caseloads appearing to have leveled off in some states, however, policymakers and program administrators are now focusing more attention on those who remain on welfare. Yet there is currently little research that describes the characteristics and needs of these families.

While it is likely that some of the families on TANF began receiving benefits only recently, others are likely to have been receiving them for some time, and they may soon be affected by the program's time limits. Although there is limited information on the characteristics of families remaining on the TANF rolls, there is widespread concern that, one, these families face more barriers to employment than families who have already left the welfare rolls, and, two, they will need more assistance in moving from welfare to work than most welfare employment programs are now capable of providing. With the additional information on the characteristics and needs of TANF recipients that will be provided by this task-order project and the ASPE-funded studies by states, policymakers and program administrators will be in a better position to decide both how to help these families make the transition from welfare to work, and how to address the needs of those who may lose their benefits due to time limits.

C. PRIOR RESEARCH FOCUSING ON BARRIERS TO EMPLOYABILITY

Recently, a few studies have questioned whether families currently receiving TANF are more disadvantaged than families receiving cash assistance prior to welfare reform (Moffit and Stevenson 2001; and Zedlewski and Alderson 2001). However, all studies that compare the characteristics of current and former recipients find that those who remain on the welfare rolls are more disadvantaged than those who have left. This suggests that, even if the current TANF caseload is not more disadvantaged than the pre-welfare reform caseload, many families currently receiving TANF are experiencing substantial barriers to employment.

An Urban Institute study based on a nationally representative sample of families receiving welfare in 1997 found that current recipients were generally more disadvantaged than former recipients (Loprest and Zedlewski 1999). For example, 40.7 percent did not complete high school, compared with 28.9 percent of former recipients. While current and former recipients did not differ significantly on a number of other dimensions related to employment, such as health status, current recipients were significantly more likely to experience multiple barriers to work. For example, 17 percent of current recipients had three or more obstacles, compared with only 7 percent of former recipients. The percentage of recipients with no significant obstacles was nearly double that of current recipients—42 percent, compared with 23 percent.

Studies conducted in California, Michigan, and New Jersey provide detailed information on families who have not been successful at making a permanent transition from welfare to work. Thirty-two percent of families surveyed 30 months after they entered Work First New Jersey (WFNJ), New Jersey's TANF program, remained on TANF (Rangarajan and Wood 2000). Some received TANF continuously, while others cycled on and off the welfare rolls. Those who remained on the welfare rolls ("stayers") had less education than those who had left TANF. Three out of four TANF stayers had some serious health problem; more than one in three had been seriously ill in the past year. In addition, more than half the TANF stayers faced multiple employment barriers, such as poor health, low education levels, and no recent employment history. About two-thirds had received welfare for more than one year prior to entry into WFNJ. In spite of these barriers, two-thirds of stayers had worked since entering WFNJ. They typically worked in lower-paying jobs than those held by clients who had left WFNJ and were more likely to have worked in seasonal or temporary jobs.

The Women's Employment Study (WES), conducted in an urban county in Michigan, was the first extensive study of potential barriers to employment (Danziger et al. 2000). This study found that more than 27 percent of recipients suffer from a major depressive disorder; 19 percent suffer from a physical health problem; 22 percent are caring for a child with a health problem; 15 percent are current victims of domestic violence; 30 percent have not completed high school; and

47 percent do not have access to a vehicle or a license to drive. With only a few exceptions, the prevalence of personal and family challenges is far greater among welfare recipients than among all adult women. For example, welfare recipients are twice as likely to suffer from a major depressive disorder and five times as likely to be a victim of domestic violence.

Among the personal and family challenges that significantly reduced the likelihood that a recipient was meeting her work requirements were: low education, few work skills, lack of work experience, poor access to transportation, health problems, drug dependence, major depression, and experiences of perceived workplace discrimination. Multiple barriers to employment were common: 37 percent had two or three barriers; 24 percent, four to six barriers; and 3 percent, seven or more barriers. The prevalence of multiple barriers to employment is important, since the likelihood of working 20 or more hours per week decreases sharply as the number of barriers increases. For example, the likelihood that a single, African American mother—aged 25 to 34, living in an urban area, with one child under the age of two, worked 20 or more hours per week—is 60 percent; if she had between four and six barriers, the likelihood decreased to only 40 percent.

The CalWORKS Project was a study of the prevalence of mental health, alcohol, and other drug and domestic violence issues among CalWORKS applicants in Kern County and among CalWORKS recipients in Stanislaus County. The longitudinal study conducted by the California Institute for Mental Health followed 703 women. Initial interviews were conducted using an in-person interview that included such standardized diagnostic assessments as the Composite International Diagnostic Interview-short form (CIDI-SF). The baseline survey found that more than one-third of all respondents were experiencing domestic violence or alcohol/drug dependency or had a mental health diagnosis. One-third of recipients reported domestic abuse within the past year, while about 80 percent reported that they had experienced domestic violence at some time during their lives. Thirteen percent of the sample were found to have a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that resulted from a physical or sexual assault occurring in the past year. Nearly 1 in 10 participants had a diagnosable alcohol or other drug dependence or abuse disorder. More than one-third of respondents in each county had at least one diagnosable mental disorder in the past year; while about 20 percent had two or more. The CalWORKS survey measured many other potential barriers to employment including limited English; caring for a disabled child; physical health problems; few job skills, and discrimination (Chandler and Meisel 2000).

The Alameda County CalWORKS Needs Assessment study was a separate project from the ongoing study in Kern and Stanislaus counties. Conducted by the Public Health Institute, the project used an entirely different survey instrument, but also focused on barriers to employment among California's TANF recipients. Recent reports presented bivariate and multivariate associations between barriers and employment (Driscoll, Speiglman, and Norris 2000).

D. RATIONALE FOR THE CURRENT RESEARCH

While these studies all tell a consistent story—that families who remain on the TANF caseload are more disadvantaged than those who have left—the studies do not measure the concept of "disadvantage" in a consistent way. In addition, with the exception of the 1999 Urban Institute study, these studies focus on examining the experiences of a cohort of TANF recipients over time, rather than describing the characteristics of the caseload at a point in time.

The completion of this current research will provide the grantee states and counties with an opportunity to develop a better understanding of the characteristics and needs of their current TANF caseloads. By developing a common survey instrument for states to use, it will be possible to examine whether the prevalence of common barriers to work is relatively consistent across the states, or whether there is significant variation from state to state. While these studies will not be able to examine whether the characteristics of the TANF caseload have changed over time, they will be able to offer significant insight into the challenges TANF agencies might face in helping families who remain on the TANF caseload move from welfare to work.

E. THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The process of reviewing and analyzing existing survey instruments took roughly eight weeks. We began by collecting all the relevant survey instruments fielded specifically for use with welfare populations in the past five years, while paying close attention to the instruments that focused on barriers to employability and self-sufficiency. We then reviewed the surveys for content, focusing on instruments with relevant barrier measures and weeding out those with no particular measures of interest. Table I.1 includes the full list of survey instruments initially reviewed during this preliminary phase.

We then reduced our initial list into a core group of 11 survey instruments that contained all the barrier measures of interest, and compiled into one table a list of measures and questions found in each instrument (see Appendix A).[1] We reviewed the measures and questions across the entire group of 11 instruments and studied their differences and common themes. We chose the measures and questions to be recommended for inclusion in the new survey instrument based on their ability to accurately measure the domains of demographics, employment, and personal, family, and community barriers to employability and self-sufficiency. We then chose that instrument's measure that captured the necessary information best—factoring in the survey administration mode and time constraints on the survey to be designed.

[1]Background information about each instrument—such as sample design, sample size, and completion rate; mode of administration; key barrier measures covered; and contact information—are found in Appendix B.

TABLE I.1

LIST OF SURVEY INSTRUMENTS INITIALLY REVIEWED

Alameda County CalWORKS Needs Assessment survey (AC) 1998

Australian National Survey of Mental Health and Well-Being (NSMHWB)

Current Population Survey (CPS)

Healthcare for Communities (HCC) Survey 1998

Illinois Food Stamp Leavers (IL) 1999

Iowa Core Survey 1998

Iowa Child Impact Survey (Iowa CI) 1998

Iowa Limited Benefit Plan Survey, Waves I and II 1996 and 1998

Iowa TANF Leavers Survey 2000

Iowa Work and Welfare Survey 2000

JOBS Child Outcomes Study; EIH and 2-year

Los Angeles Family and Neighborhood Survey 2000

Massachusetts survey

Milwaukee Survey of Former AFDC Recipients 1998

Missouri TANF Leavers and Stayers (MO) 1999, 2000 and 2001 surveys

National Evaluation of Welfare to Work Grants Program Follow-Up Survey 2000

National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)

National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

National Survey of America's Families (NSAF) 1997 and 1999

Nebraska Client Barriers Survey (NE) 2000

New Chance 18 and 42-month surveys

Pennsylvania Job Retention Evaluation (GAPS) 6-month 1998

Pennsylvania Job Retention Evaluation (GAPS) 18-month 1999

Six-County (CalWORKS) Study Prevalence Report

Survey of Program Dynamics (SPD) 1999

Teenage Parent Demonstration

Women's Employment Study (WES), Waves I and II, 1997 and 1998

Work First NJ - Initial Participant Questionnaire 1999

Work First NJ - Second Participant Questionnaire 2000

Work First NJ - Third Participant Questionnaire 2001

Work First NJ - Study of Affected Communities Resident Survey 2000

Work First NJ Child Only Questionnaire 2001

World Mental Health 2000 (WMH2000)

Youth Fair Chance Community Survey 1997 (YFC Comm)

F. OUTLINE FOR THE REST OF THE REPORT

The following five chapters are dedicated to a specific domain and provide an in-depth review of the measures examined, as well as our recommended choice of measures to be included in the survey of TANF recipients. Chapter II covers demographic measures, while Chapter III covers employment and economic outcome measures. Chapter IV is dedicated to personal barrier measures, Chapter V to family barrier measures, and Chapter VI to community barrier measures. At the beginning of each chapter, we present a table that summarizes our recommendations and priorities for measuring the data items of interest in the survey. For each subtopic in the table, we provide the number of questions necessary for adequate measurement; references to surveys that have included the same subtopic; an estimate of the time it would take to administer the measure; and, in the last column, a rating of our priorities for each measure.

To indicate a strong recommendation for the measure, we placed an "A" in the final column. A rating of "B" indicates that it would be useful to include the measure, but either it is not critical to the purposes of our survey, or there are issues with reliable measurement of the topic that cause us to be somewhat less enthusiastic about recommending it. Thus, items given a B-rating are ones we would recommend including in the survey, time permitting, but they are not included in our overall time estimates for each section. Measures rated with a "C" are those we feel could be left out of the survey without seriously compromising its integrity.

The time estimates provide an approximation of how long it will take to administer the measures. Such estimates are variable because respondents can automatically skip out of questions or even entire measures (for example, only those who have work experience can answer the questions about basic job skills). Questions that are administered as part of a multi-item scale with the same response options tend to go more quickly than would the same number of stand-alone items; but this is not always the case. Despite the limitations associated with making estimates at this early stage of survey development, we include them now, in order to aid in making decisions about which measures to drop or abbreviate.

After this summary table, we provide: (1) detail on why each subtopic was selected for inclusion in the survey, including a sketch of background information on the characteristic as a potential barrier to work; (2) a discussion of the various measures used in prior research, their advantages and disadvantages, and their appropriateness for the survey we are developing; and (3) a discussion of the measures we recommend, along with the reasons for our recommending them over the alternatives—including, where appropriate, prioritization.

Appendices A and B provide more detailed information on the measures included in each instrument, organized by topic area and background information about the core group of survey instruments reviewed.

II. DEMOGRAPHIC AND BACKGROUND MEASURES

In this chapter, we begin with demographic and other background characteristics that describe the population of TANF recipients—including age, race and ethnicity, marital and cohabitation status, educational attainment, household composition, living arrangements, and family mobility. This demographic information will enable states to compare the economic, personal, family, and community-barrier measures across various demographic strata, in order to assess whether meaningful differences exist among recipients to these barriers.

Table II.1 summarizes our recommendations and priorities for measuring demographic and other background characteristics in the survey of TANF recipients. The estimate of the total time needed to administer all the "A"-rated items in the demographic and background characteristics domain, as indicated in Table II.1, is 4.25 minutes.

A. AGE

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Age or date of birth is a demographic measure that provides basic descriptive information about the respondent being interviewed. Additionally, in many list frame telephone surveys, date of birth is used as a screening question (along with social security number) to verify that the interviewer has the correct respondent on the telephone before beginning the interview.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Most surveys reviewed collected the respondent's date of birth, often at the beginning of the survey to screen for the correct respondent. Some surveys (Alameda and Nebraska) asked for both the respondent's date of birth and the age. We believe this is not necessary, since respondent's age can be calculated from their date of birth.

TABLE II.1

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic and Other Background Characteristics	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Demographics				
Age, Date of birth	1	WES; MO; NE; IL	.25	A
Race	1	WES; MO; NE; IL; NSAF	.25	A
Ethnicity	1	MO; NE; IL; NSAF	.25	A
Marital status	1	WES;MO; NE; AC; IL; NSAF	.25	A
Living with spouse	1	NE; AC	.25	B
Cohabitation status	1	WES; NE; AC	.25	A
Educational Attainment				
Highest grade completed	1	WES; MO; NE; AC; IL	.25	A
Types of diplomas, degrees, or certificates received	1	MO; NE; IL	.25	B
Household Composition				
Number of people in the Household	1	MO; NE; AC; IL; NSAF; SPD	.50	A
Relationship of people to Respondent	1	MO; AC; IL	.25	A
Age of children in Household	3	NE	.75	A
Whether Respondent has children not currently living with him/her	1	NE; AC; IL	.25	A
Where are they living now?	1	IL	.25	B
Why are they living there?	1	IL	.25	B
Pregnancies and Births				
Whether Respondent had a child in past year	1	WES; AC	.25	C

Table II.1 (*continued*)

Demographic and Other Background Characteristics	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Living Arrangements and Family Mobility				
Does Respondent live in public housing?	1	WES; MO; NE; NSAF	.25	A
How many bedrooms in Respondent's home	1	AC; IL; NSAF	.25	A
Does current housing situation interfere with work or training?	1	AC	.25	A
How many times did Respondent move in past 12 months?	1	MO; AC; IA	.25	A
Why did Respondent move (the last time)?	1	MO	.25	B

3. Recommended Measures

We therefore recommend asking only for the respondent's date of birth. The date of birth measure is preferable, since it can also be used as a screening tool at the beginning of the survey to verify the correct respondent. If the respondent refuses to provide his or her date of birth, the information can be obtained from state administrative data files.

B. RACE/ETHNICITY

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Race and ethnicity are two demographic measures that provide basic descriptive information about a respondent. This information can inform state policymakers of significant differences that may exist among racial or ethnic groups in areas such as employment; job training; or personal, family, or community barriers to employment and self-sufficiency.

There has been continuous debate among researchers as to the best way to collect racial and ethnic data in surveys. In 1997, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) revised its standards for maintaining, collecting and presenting federal data on race and ethnicity (OMB 1997). These standards require that:

- A two-question format be used, with the ethnicity question preceding the race question, to provide flexibility and ensure data quality
- "Hispanic" or "Latino" be clearly designated as an ethnicity, not as a race
- Respondents be offered the option of selecting one or more racial designations
- At a minimum, the total number of persons identifying themselves with more than one race will be reported

According to the OMB (1997), the minimum designations for race and ethnicity are:

> **American Indian or Alaskan Native**. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains his or her tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian. Someone whose origins lie in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent—including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Black or African American. A person whose origins lie in any of the black groups of Africa. Terms such as "Haitian" or "Negro" can be used in addition to "Black" or "African American."

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. A person having his or her origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or the other Pacific Islands.

White. Someone whose origins are in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Hispanic or Latino. A person from Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central America, or any other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term *Spanish origin* can be used in addition to *Hispanic* or *Latino.*

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

All survey instruments included a measure of race, although the wording of the question or questions varied greatly. The WES asked whether the respondent was White, African American, or some other race. The Missouri survey asked for the respondent's race as an open-ended question without reading any categories. The Alameda survey asked the respondent what best described himself or herself; Native American or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/Chicano, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander or White/Caucasian. The Nebraska and Illinois surveys asked whether the respondent considered himself or herself to be White, Black or African American descent, Asian or Pacific Islander, or Native American or Alaskan Native.

We observed similar diversity in the question wording for the ethnicity measure. The Missouri survey asked whether the respondent considered himself or herself to be of Hispanic or Latino origin. The Nebraska survey asked whether the respondent was of Latino or Spanish descent or origin. The Alameda survey included ethnicity as a category within the race question but did not ask it as a separate measure. The Illinois survey asked two questions on ethnicity:

whether the respondent was of Spanish or Hispanic origin and, if so, what was his or her specific ethnicity? The WES did not measure ethnicity.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend following the OMB's revised 1997 standards, which dictate using two separate measures for ethnicity and race. First, ask whether a respondent is of Hispanic or Latino origin. Second, ask whether a respondent considers himself or herself to be White, Black or African American, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or Native American or Alaskan Native. The question of ethnicity reflects what was used in the Missouri survey. The question on race most closely reflects what was used in the Nebraska survey, with the categories changed to reflect the revised OMB racial categories. We believe these two questions most closely match the OMB's revised standards.

C. MARITAL STATUS

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Marital status is a common measure that provides basic descriptive information about a respondent. Historically, single mothers with children formed the core of the welfare rolls. Due to a host of personal and family barriers, this group has had greater difficulty finding stable and sustainable long-term employment than have married or single adults. Collecting marital information will allow states to make comparisons among various groups, based on their marital status.

Cohabitation is a relatively common occurrence among welfare populations, as well as being an important measure of family well-being. An unmarried partner can provide economic and social resources to help sustain a family, or—just as a married partner—he or she can cause stress if they have physical or mental health problems, contribute to domestic violence, or have a criminal behavior problem.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Many surveys asked for the respondent's marital status; but they differed slightly in the way the question was worded. The WES asked whether the respondent was currently married and living with her husband, married and living apart, separated, divorced, widowed, or never been married. If not married, follow-up questions were asked whether she was living as an unmarried partner with someone and, if not, whether she currently had a boyfriend or steady partner. The Missouri survey asked whether the respondent was currently married, separated from his or her spouse, divorced, widowed, or never married. Two follow-up questions were asked whether the respondent had gotten married since leaving AFDC, and whether he or she had been separated or divorced since leaving AFDC. The Nebraska survey asked whether the respondent was currently married, separated, divorced, widowed, or never married. If she was not married, a follow-up question asked if she was currently living together as a couple with someone.

The wording in the WES survey contains two ambiguous categories: married and living apart, and separated. The two categories could be interpreted as meaning the same thing or different things. Therefore, we do not recommend this measure; nor do we recommend the other two categories from the WES. The measure that asks whether the respondent is living with someone as an "unmarried partner" is of concern because the language may be perceived by respondents as offensive, and it could lead to item nonresponse. We believe it is not crucial to collect information on whether the respondent currently has a steady boyfriend or partner who does not live with the respondent.

The Missouri and Nebraska surveys ask for marital status in nearly identical fashion. The Missouri marital question contains a few more words that provide no additional clarity. The follow-up questions from the Missouri survey are irrelevant for the purposes of this study, since we will be interviewing current welfare recipients.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend asking two measures under this topic, both taken from the Nebraska survey—first, whether the respondent is currently married, separated, divorced, widowed, or never been married. These categories are clear and distinct from one another. Second, for those respondents who answer anything other than "married," we recommend asking a follow-up question on whether the respondent currently lives together as a couple with someone. We believe the wording of this question is less likely to offend respondents.

D. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Educational attainment is a key measure in determining an individual's economic potential in the workforce, as well as being an indicator of economic self-sufficiency. Individuals with low levels of education have much greater difficulty obtaining self-sustaining employment and are at higher risk of economic instability. This instability can contribute to, and exacerbate, stress on the family unit. Measuring educational attainment will enable states to compare their welfare populations by education level, to learn whether significant differences exist along key barrier measures.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Most surveys included measures of educational attainment. The WES, Missouri, Nebraska, Alameda, and Illinois surveys all asked for the highest grade or year of regular school that the respondent completed. The Missouri, Nebraska, and Illinois surveys followed up by asking for the types of degrees, diplomas, and certificates received. Examples of such degrees and certificates included GED or high school diploma, college-level degrees (BA, BS), and vocational or technical certificates, such as for a nursing assistant or welder. These questions gather the basic information needed to evaluate educational attainment.

The WES also included a question that asked for the age at which the respondent stopped attending school. We do not believe this measure is necessary, since it is unclear what information can be gleaned from these data.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend one measure under this topic: the highest grade or year of regular school completed by the respondent. Time permitting, we would also recommend asking the types of degrees, diplomas, and certificates the respondent has received. Due to the high degree of similarity among measures, these questions can be taken from the Missouri, Nebraska, Alameda, or Illinois surveys.

E. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (NUMBER AND AGE OF CHILDREN)

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Household composition is an important measure for evaluating family functioning and well-being. The information gathered about how many people live with the respondent, and their relationship to the respondent, provides detail on the family structure (nuclear, extended, single), the potential for family stress, and the pooling and sharing of resources among household members.

Collecting information on a respondent's children who do not currently live with the respondent is another measure of family well-being. This information can present further evidence of family stress and hardship, both social and financial. States can use the information gathered from these measures to compare the various barrier measures across family groups, to learn whether significant differences exist.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Some surveys (such as Alameda, Missouri, and Illinois) used a detailed grid format to collect data on household composition. For each member in the respondent's household, these surveys gathered the name, date of birth or age, and relationship of that person to the respondent. The Alameda survey included additional questions on whether the person lived with the respondent during the prior year and, if not, where the person was living before, and whether the respondent supported the person financially during that time. The Missouri survey included an extra question on whether the person lived with the respondent during the prior month but asked no follow-up questions. The Illinois survey included additional questions on whether the person living in the household had a job, whether the person was a minor, and, if so, whether the minor's other parent lived in the household.

The Nebraska survey collected information on household composition in a different format. One question asked for the total number of people living with the respondent. Two more questions asked for the number of children living in the household, grouped by age (0 to 5 and 6 to 17 years). No questions collected the relationship of the household members to the respondent. The Iowa Child Impact Survey did not collect any detailed household information because the information was already collected in a prior survey (the Iowa Core Survey), using the detailed grid format described above. The detailed grid format for collecting household composition provides more precise information about each household member. However, the method is time-consuming and tends to produce a higher level of item nonresponse in the form of refusals than is achieved using anonymous methods. We believe that collecting the information in a more general way, such as in the Nebraska survey, will obtain the requisite data on the number of household members and the age ranges of any children. However, it will not provide information about the relationship of household members to the respondent.

A few surveys collected information on respondents' children who were not living with the respondents. The Nebraska, Alameda, and Illinois surveys asked whether the respondent had any children under age 18 who did not live with them and, if so, how many. The Illinois survey also asked where the children were living and why they were living there. The WES asked only for the number of children under age 18 living outside the respondent's household. We believe that it is important to gather the number of children under age 18 the respondent has who live outside the respondent's household, and also where they are living, and why.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend using a two-question format to measure household composition. First, ask how many people live in the household; then, using a single, multiple-response question, ask for the relationship of everyone in the household, and the relation to the respondent. This question has been used effectively on a survey fielded by MPR which was not reviewed for this report. The question will provide the necessary information on the number of household members and their relationship to the respondent, with the utmost anonymity—which should reduce item nonresponse.

We then recommend asking for the ages of the children who live in the household. Furthermore, we recommend asking whether the respondent has any children under age 18 who do not currently live with the respondent. Time permitting, we also would recommend asking where these children live and why they live there.

F. PREGNANCIES AND BIRTHS

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

A pregnancy or birth of a child can have a significant impact on a woman's ability to obtain and maintain employment. Work-related tardiness and absenteeism can be higher for pregnant or recently delivered mothers, behaviors most employers frown upon. Child care issues, such as the affordability and reliability of child care for low-income women, can have an impact on work performance as well. Low-income women are more likely to deliver low-birthweight infants, an outcome associated with delaying the start of prenatal care until after the first trimester. This delay can lead to serious medical repercussions during pregnancy, as well as complications during and after delivery. The care of a premature or low-birthweight infant can be more demanding than for a full-term infant. These circumstances can increase individual and family stress and be an obvious barrier to working or seeking employment.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Most surveys did not address the topic of pregnancy and birth. The WES asked whether the respondent was currently pregnant and whether the respondent had been pregnant over some specified period of time. The Alameda survey asked, among a list of questions measuring life-stress events, whether the respondent gave birth to a child during the past year.

3. Recommended Measures

Although these measures may be of interest, we do not recommend including them in the survey of TANF recipients. We believe that these items can be measured indirectly, using other questions. In the household composition section, we plan to collect data on the ages of children in the respondent's household. This will provide a measure of the presence and stress of young children in the household, as well as provide better information on the number of births or pregnancies that occurred during the previous year. In addition, under the physical health section, we recommend measures asking about overall health status and whether any health problems interfered with a respondent's ability to work or attend training. A pregnancy or birth-related health condition could be addressed by these measures, even though the information obtained could not be linked directly to a prior pregnancy or birth.

G. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND FAMILY MOBILITY

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Information on living arrangements and family mobility are useful measures with which to assess the family functioning and social and economic well-being of TANF recipients. The type of housing a recipient lives in has an impact on that person's quality of life and may impede his or her ability to find and maintain employment. Similarly, a recipient who moves frequently from place to place may have difficulty securing and maintaining employment, due to the personal disruption experienced.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Most surveys asked for the respondent's current living arrangement—for instance, whether he or she owned or rented a home or apartment, lived rent-free with friends or family, lived in a shelter, or was homeless and living on the street. For those who rented, some surveys asked a follow-up question: Was the respondent living in public housing or receiving vouchers for housing? The Alameda and Illinois surveys asked for the number of bedrooms in the house or apartment (an indicator of family crowding and stress). The Illinois survey also asked for the amount of rent or mortgage payment that the respondent was responsible for in the prior month.

The NSAF asked the longest series of questions about housing. They included whether the respondent lived in public housing or received housing vouchers, whether the home was owned, rented, or occupied without cash payment, how long the respondent lived in the home, the number of bedrooms in the home, the respondent's portion of the monthly rent or mortgage, and the total household's monthly rent or mortgage.

Three surveys included questions on family mobility. The Missouri survey asked three questions: (1) the number of times the respondent moved during the past 12 months, (2) the date of the most recent move, and (3) the primary reason for the move. The Alameda survey asked a longer battery of questions. These included how many times the respondent moved during the past 12 months, the other types of housing he or she lived in during the past 12 months, how long he or she lived in each type of place, whether the respondent could stay in the current housing for the next 30 days without being asked to leave, and whether the current housing situation interfered with work or training. The Iowa Child Impact Survey asked for the number of moves over the past 12 months.

3. Recommended Measures

While it may be common to collect information about a respondent's type of housing, analysis of the data show that the vast majority of welfare recipients are renters. Very few own homes, live in shelters, or are homeless. Thus, we believe it is not useful to include this measure in our proposed survey. We do, however, recommend including the three measures having to do with whether the respondent lives in public housing, the number of bedrooms in the respondent's dwelling, and whether the current housing situation interferes with work or training. This will capture important information on the use of low-income housing, potential household crowding and family stress (when coupled with the data on the number of household members), and perceptions of work- or training-related difficulties due to housing problems. Due to the time constraints on the survey, we do not recommend asking any more questions about housing.

We also recommend asking one measure on family mobility taken from the Alameda survey: how many times the respondent moved over the past 12 months. Time permitting, we would also recommend asking the primary reason for moving (the last time, if more than one move). This will provide the basic information on mobility and family stress, using a minimal number of measures.

III. EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC OUTCOME MEASURES

In this chapter, we turn to the employment and economic outcome characteristics of TANF recipients. These characteristics have to do with the job experiences and earnings and income that are used to evaluate a respondent's economic stability and self-sufficiency. Specifically, we include in the area of employment and economic characteristics the subtopics of employment history, including current or most recent job history; reasons for not currently working or never having been employed; participation in work programs and job-skills training; experience with job search and basic work-orientation services; and earnings, income, and child-support payments.

Table III.1 summarizes our recommendations and priorities for measuring employment and economic outcome characteristics in the survey of TANF recipients. The estimate of the total time needed to administer all the "A"-rated items in the employment and economic outcomes domain is roughly seven minutes (Table III.1).

A. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Employment status is a topic of keen interest to the proposed survey of TANF recipients. The measures used to collect employment information will help evaluate a recipient's job quality, earnings, wages and employee benefits, and history of job stability or cycling in and out of work. This information will, in turn, help in the assessment of the recipient's current economic outlook, as well as the recipient's future potential for economic and personal self-sufficiency.

TABLE III.1

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC OUTCOMES

Employment and Economic Outcomes	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Employment History				
Worked in the past 12 months	1	NE; NSAF; SPD	.25	A
No. of months/weeks employed during past 12 months	1	NE; NSAF	.25	A
No. of jobs held during past 12 months	1	NE	.25	A
Current, Main, or Most Recent job				
No. of current jobs held	1	WES; MO; NE	.25	A
Total hours per week worked at all jobs	1	WES; MO; NE; IL; NSAF	.25	B
Job start and end dates	2	WES; MO; NE; IL, NSAF	.50	A
Hours worked per week	1	WES; MO; NE; IL, NSAF	.25	A
Whether seasonal or temporary job	1	WES; NE; IL; SPD	.25	A
The shift or time of day worked	1	WES; NE; IL	.25	A
Industry and occupation	2	WES; NE; IL; NSAF; SPD	.50	A
Hourly rate of pay	1	NE; IL; NSAF	.25	A
Weekly or monthly earnings	1	WES; MO; NE	.25	A
Type of employee benefits offered	1	IL; NSAF; SPD	.25	A
Opportunities for advancement at job	1	NE	.25	A
Reasons for leaving job	1	NE; IL	.25	A
Reasons not Currently Working				
Main reasons not working	1	WES; NE; AC	.25	A

Table III.1 (*continued*)

Employment and Economic Outcomes	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Lowest hourly wage acceptable for taking a job	1	WES	.25	A
Perceived hiring discrimination	1	WES	.25	B
Participation in Work Programs and Job Skills Training				
Attended GED classes in past year	1	WES; MO; NE; IL	.25	A
Attended other educational training in last year	1	WES; MO; NE	.25	A
Job Search and Basic Work Orientation Service Use				
Attended job search in past year	1	WES; NE; NSAF	.25	A
Did it help Respondent get a job?	1	WES; NE	.25	A
Earnings				
Respondent's total earnings last month	1	WES; MO; NE; AC; IL; SPD	.25	A
Did any household members have earnings last month?	1	WES; NSAF; MO; AC; IL	.25	B
Income				
Respondent's income for past month	1	WES; NE	.25	A
Other Household member's income for past month	1	WES; MO; NE; IL; NSAF; SPD	.25	A
Total Household income for past year	1	WES; MO; NE; IL; SPD	.25	A
Difficulty for Household to live on current Income	1	WES; NE	.25	B
Child Support Payments				
Did Respondent or other Household members receive any child support last month?	1	WES; MO; NE; AC; IL	.25	A

Table III.1 (*continued*)

Employment and Economic Outcomes	**Number of Items**	**Past Survey(s)**	**Estimate of Time (minutes)**	**Priority Rating**
Amount of child support received	1	IA	.25	A
Did Respondent pay any child support last month?	1	NSAF	.25	B
Amount of child support paid	1	NSAF;AL	.25	B

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Few surveys (NSAF, SPD, or Nebraska) collected information on employment history. Questions asked whether the respondent worked during the past 12 months; the number of months, weeks, or hours he or she worked during that time frame; and the number of jobs held. Most surveys, however, covered a core group of measures for evaluating current or recent employment status—including whether the respondent was currently employed and, if not, when the last employment spell occurred, the length of employment, hours worked per week, wages and earnings, industry and occupation, and availability of various employee benefits.

The WES, Nebraska, and Illinois surveys included extra questions covering the topics of seasonal or temporary employment and the usual shift or time of day worked. The WES also included questions on expectations for working at the same job a year from now, how long it would take a person to learn the respondent's job, and whether the respondent was a union member. The Nebraska survey added two questions on the reasons for a respondent leaving his or her job, if not currently employed, and that person's perception of advancement opportunities at the current job.

The majority of measures presented in this chapter are important to include in the survey of TANF recipients. They gather basic job information and are needed to assess how respondents are faring in the labor market. Some measures are not crucial—such as, whether a respondent is a union member or how long it would take the respondent to learn a job

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend asking a total of 13 measures under the topic of employment status. Three items will cover employment history: (1) whether a respondent worked during the past 12 months, (2) how many months he or she worked during that time, and (3) the number of jobs held. We also recommend asking for the total number of current jobs a respondent has. Time permitting, we would recommend asking for the total hours per week a respondent worked at all jobs.

We recommend asking 10 measures to collect detailed information about a single job, either the respondent's current job, the main job if he or she holds more than one current job, or the most recent job held. Questions would cover: (1) length of employment, (2) hours worked per week, (3) whether the job is seasonal or temporary, (4) the shift or time of day worked, (5) industry and occupation, (6) hourly rate of pay, (7) weekly or monthly earnings, (8) type of employee benefits offered, (9) perceived job advancement opportunity, and (10) reasons for leaving the job. We recommend using the employment status measures from the Nebraska survey.

B. REASONS NOT WORKING

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Although not all TANF recipients will be unemployed at the time of a survey, many experience periods of unemployment. It is important to determine why a recipient is not currently working at a job, has not worked in the past 12 months, or has never held a job. Indeed, our main purpose in surveying this population is to learn the specific barriers recipients face to finding and maintaining stable and secure employment.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Most surveys collected information on why respondents were not currently working at a job or why they never worked. Instruments varied, however, as to whether the question was worded in a general or a specific way. The former type of question allowed the respondent to say anything that came to mind. The interviewer then coded the response from a list of available codes. The latter type of question focused the respondent on a particular reason why he or she might not be working. The WES included three other measures under this topic: (1) perceptions of discrimination during hiring, (2) the lowest hourly wage a respondent would accept to take a job, and (3) whether a respondent would accept a specific type of job (read from a list) if it was offered

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend asking two questions under this topic, using the WES measures. The first question concerns why a respondent is not currently working or has never worked, using general wording and allowing for multiple responses. Although the reasons why a respondent was not working may be answered by the various questions covering barrier measures that we propose, we think it important to ask a general question on the topic, to capture any information that might not be addressed directly by these measures. The second question we recommend is the lowest hourly wage a respondent would accept for taking a job. Time permitting, we also would recommend asking whether the respondent perceived any discrimination during hiring.

C. PARTICIPATION IN WORK PROGRAMS AND JOB SKILLS TRAINING

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Some barriers to employment are directly related to job skills and past work experience. To be employed, even low-wage workers must have some minimum skills. Those with few basic job skills are greatly limited in their work opportunities. Therefore, it is important to measure participation in work and job skills training programs, in order to assess both past behavior and motivation to get a job and go to work.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

The survey instruments varied widely on the types of measures they included. The WES, Missouri, and Nebraska surveys included questions that asked whether a respondent attended a

GED class or other educational training class in the past year, and whether a respondent took any courses that trained them for a specific job. In the Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census for more than 50 years, respondents are asked if, during the past 12 months, they ever attended GED classes, job readiness training, a job search program, a job training program, or a work experience program.

In addition, the WES and Illinois surveys gathered detailed information about programs attended during the past year. Questions included the number of programs attended, the hours attended per week, the type of program, the skills learned, whether a job was found as a result of attending the program, and why a respondent stopped attending a program. Only one instrument, SPD, asked whether the respondent was required to participate in work program activities and whether he or she was doing unpaid work as part of their job training.

3. Recommended Measures

This topic may be of less importance for our proposed survey, given the limitations on survey length and the fact that state administrative data files can identify respondents who have participated in TANF-sponsored work and job skills training programs. However, data files can be inaccurate and will not capture participation in non-TANF-sponsored programs. We therefore recommend asking two measures under this topic: (1) whether a respondent has attended a GED class in the past year, and (2) whether a respondent has attended any other type of educational training in the past year, using either the Missouri or the Nebraska measure.

D. JOB SEARCH PARTICIPATION

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Many TANF recipients require some form of job search assistance to find employment. Job search can encompass such tasks as looking through the newspaper want ads, filling out applications, sending resumes to prospective employers, or attending job search programs or workshops. Gathering information about a respondent's participation in job search provides a measure of their motivation to get a job and go to work.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

The type and number of job search measures found in the surveys varied greatly. A few surveys (WES, NSAF, CPS, and Nebraska) asked whether respondents attended a job search program during the past 12 months, whether the program helped them get a job, or whether they got a job as a result of attending a program. The WES and Alameda surveys asked further questions on whether respondents looked for work during the past month and how many weeks they spent looking for work. In addition, the WES asked a long series of detailed questions about job search activities, such as the number of employers contacted, the number of applications filled out, the number of interviews attended, whether they were offered a job, whether they turned it down, and how helpful or frustrating the program was in general.

3. Recommended Measures

This topic may be less important for our proposed survey, given the limitations on survey length and our goal of focusing on barriers that have not been adequately measured before. However, we recommend including two measures in order to capture basic descriptive information—first, whether a respondent attended a job search program in the past 12 months, and, second, whether it helped the respondent get a job, using either the WES or Nebraska measures.

E. EARNINGS

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Earnings are an outcome measure of critical importance to a survey of welfare recipients. Not only do earnings measure a recipient's current employment level and self-sufficiency, but they can also indicate future employment potential. This information cannot be gathered from any other source.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

The majority of survey instruments included a question asking for a respondent's earnings during the past month. It is possible to obtain earnings information by multiplying the hourly wage times the hours worked per week. However, if a respondent had more than one current job, that information would be incomplete, since it would measure only earnings from one job instead of all jobs.

The WES, Missouri, Alameda, and Illinois surveys included a question asking for other household member's earnings during the past month. The survey instruments that did not ask for other household members' earnings directly did include a question that asked for other household members' *income,* which included earnings.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend asking for a respondent's total earnings during the past month, using either the WES or Nebraska measure. We propose to collect information on other household members' earnings, together with their income, in one question, and not as a separate item. We do not think it necessary for the purposes of this study to analyze other household members' income separate from their earnings.

F. INCOME

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Like earnings, income is another key measure to be included in a survey of TANF recipients. Income measures a recipient's self-sufficiency and financial hardship. However, collecting respondents' income alone may not be enough, since they may be pooling resources with other household members, such as a spouse, partner, or other relative.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Most survey instruments used similar income measures. The WES, NSAF, SPD, Missouri, Nebraska, and Illinois surveys all asked for other household members' income and total household income during the past month and past year. However, only the WES, Nebraska, and Illinois surveys asked for a respondent's income separately during the same time frame.

Most surveys asked whether the respondent received any money during the past month from various government assistance programs, from family and friends, and from any other sources, as well as the amounts received for each. In addition, the WES, Missouri, and Alameda surveys asked whether any foster child payments were received during the past month, and the amount. The WES and Illinois surveys also asked whether any money was received from other household members last month, and the amount.

The WES and Nebraska surveys asked the respondent to rate the difficulty of living on their present household income. The WES asked about the perceived hardship of making ends meet in the coming two months, and whether the respondent engaged in any informal job activities (specified by reading a list) during the past six months in order to make money.

3. Recommended Measures

Given our limitations on survey length and focus on barrier measures, we recommend including three income measures under this topic: (1) respondent income during the past month, (2) other adult household member income during the past month, and (3) total household income for the past year, using either the WES or Nebraska survey measures. Time permitting, we also recommend including the measure from the WES that rates the difficulty for the respondent to live on his or her present household income.

G. CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS

1. Rational for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Receipt of child support measures another source of recipient income. It also is an indicator of the nature and extent of financial support for the respondent's children, as well as family functioning.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Many surveys included measures of child support. The WES, Missouri, Nebraska, Alameda, Illinois, and Iowa Child Impact surveys all asked whether child support payments were received, and the amount that was received. The NSAF asked whether the respondent made any child support payments for children living outside the household, as well as how much was paid over the past 12 months. In addition, the NSAF and Missouri surveys asked whether child support payments were part of a court order.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend including two measures under this topic: whether the respondent received any child support payments last month, and the amount received. Time permitting, we would recommend asking whether the respondent made any child support payments last month for noncustodial children and the amount of payment.

IV. PERSONAL BARRIERS

In this chapter, we turn to the personal-level characteristics of TANF recipients that could potentially function as barriers to employment and self-sufficiency. These characteristics have to do with the individual capacities and readiness for work that arise from the mental, physical, emotional, and social domains of personal functioning. Specifically, in the area of personal barriers, we include the subtopics of prior work history, work orientation norms, ability to perform basic job skills and perceptions of discrimination; learning problems; limited English proficiency and literacy; physical health and disability status; mental health diagnoses; substance abuse and dependency; and criminal involvement.

Table IV.1 summarizes our recommendations and priorities for measuring personal barriers in the survey of TANF recipients. The estimate of the total time needed to administer all the "A"-rated items in the personal barriers domain, as indicated in Table IV.1, is 18.5 minutes.

A. PRIOR WORK EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE OF WORKPLACE NORMS, BASIC JOB SKILLS, AND PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION ON THE JOB

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Some barriers to employment are directly related to job skills and past work experience. Work history has been found to be a strong predictor of whether or not a welfare recipient can obtain and keep employment. Among those with work experience, some may have limited understanding of basic work-orientation norms, such as dress, grooming, attendance, punctuality, and interpersonal behavior. Others have few basic job skills, which can greatly limit their work opportunities. To be employed, even low-wage workers must have some minimum skills—for example, the ability to do arithmetic, make change, fill out forms, talk with customers, and write letters and memos. Finally, some individuals have a history of experiencing racial, ethnic, or sex

TABLE IV.1

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PERSONAL BARRIERS

Personal Barriers	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Work Experience; Work Norms; Job Skills; Job Discrimination				
Work Experience				
Ever worked for pay	1	WES; NE; IL; IA	.25	A
When did Respondent last work for pay?	1	MO; IL; CW	.25	B
How much time/years employed since age 18?	1	WES; NE	.25	A
Workplace Norms				
In the past month, did Respondent have trouble getting along with supervisor; lose temper; refuse to do tasks; show up late for work, etc.?	9	WES	1.0	A
Basic Job Skills				
Performance in the past month of a number of different basic job skills (like writing letters; doing arithmetic; filling out forms)	9	WES; CW	1.0	A
Discrimination on the Job				
Perceived discrimination on basis of gender, race/ethnicity or welfare	16	WES; CW	2.0	A
Perceived sexual harassment	1	WES	.25	B
Learning Problems; Literacy; Limited English Proficiency				
Learning Problems				
Screener for dyslexia; dyscalcula	12	NE; WES	1.5	A
Is Respondent mentally retarded?	1	AC; CW	.25	A
Does Respondent have ADD?	1	AC;CW	.25	A
Literacy				
Does Household have a library card? How often used?	2	WES; IA	.25	B
How many newspapers/magazines does Household get?	1	WES; IA	.25	B
Does Respondent have trouble reading books, newspapers, magazines?	1	WES; IA	.25	B
How often does Respondent read to herself?	1	WES; IA	.25	B

Table IV.1 (*continued*)

Personal Barriers	**Number of Items**	**Past Survey(s)**	**Estimate of Time (minutes)**	**Priority Rating**
Limited English Fluency				
Respondent has difficulty speaking/reading/writing English because it is not her native language	1	NE; AC	.25	A
Respondent's country of origin	1	SPD	.25	C
Physical Health Problems				
Self-rating of current health status, from the SF-36	1	SPD; MO; NE; AC; HCC; IA; CW; WES; NSAF	.25	A
Whether health interferes with Respondent's ability to work or attend job training	1	NE	.25	A
Chronic conditions	1	SPD; AC; HCC	.50	B
Chronic conditions that interfere with work/training activities	1	WES	.50	A
Functional limitations, from the SF-36	8	NSAF; SPD; AC; HCC; CW	1.0	B
Health insurance	2	WES; NSAF; MO; NE; IL	.25	A
Mental Health Conditions				
Major Depression (scale)	16	NE; WES; SPD; NSAF; AC; HCC; IA; CW	2.0	A
Generalized Anxiety Disorder (scale)	17	WES; CW; AC; HCC	2.0	A
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (scale)	35	WES; CW	4.0	A
Phobias – (Social; Specific; Agoraphobia) (scale)	24	WES; CW	3.0	C
Panic Attack (scale)	6	HCC	1.0	C
Non-Specific Psychological Distress (Kessler K10 scale)	10	NHIS; WMH NSMHWB	1.5	B

Table IV.1 (*continued*)

Personal Barriers	**Number of Items**	**Past Survey(s)**	**Estimate of Time (minutes)**	**Priority Rating**
Substance Abuse Dependency				
Alcohol Use/Dependency (scale)	8	SPD; NE; WES; AC; HCC; CW	1.0	A
Drug Use/Dependency (scale)	9	SPD; NE; WES; AC; HCC; CW	1.0	A
Criminal Involvement				
Respondent has past criminal record	1	NE; AC	.25	A
Convicted of felony since age 18	1	AC	.25	A

discrimination or harassment in the workplace. Welfare recipients also may feel that they have been stigmatized by coworkers or employers because of their use of public assistance. Such past experiences can contribute to an overall reluctance to return to the workplace.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Limited Work Experience. To identify individuals with a limited work history, the CalWORKS Prevalence Project asked respondents how long it had been since they last worked for pay (part-time or full-time). Because some survey respondents will be young at the time of the interview, an alternative measure of work history is to ask how many years the respondent worked for pay since turning 18. The WES considers a respondent to have low work experience if he or she worked in less than 20 percent of the years since he or she turned 18.

Knowledge of Workplace Norms, or "Soft Skills." To what degree welfare recipients lack "soft skills," and whether this matters, remains the subject of controversy (Conrad and Leigh 1999; and Eberts and Hollsenbeck 2001). The Denver Workforce Initiative has developed an in-depth assessment of work-readiness skills that includes basic work habits and behaviors, work attitudes and values, interpersonal relations skills, and personal and environmental coping skills. The measure was validated with a study of 500 entry-level employees but is not necessarily intended for use in surveys. It is used to identify a jobseeker's strengths and weaknesses and to help job coaches understand the areas that may require improvement. The Work Readiness Index requires a half-day of training to administer, and the cost is $1,650 per organization, plus travel costs for training. The results for how the measure is performing in the Jobs Initiative sites are not yet available.

An alternative (and more behaviorally based) measure of workplace norms is included in the second wave of the WES. The eight questions were adapted from a previous study of the causes of rapid job loss among welfare recipients (Berg, Olson, and Conrad 1991). Respondents are asked whether in the past four weeks they were late for work, lost their temper, took a longer break than scheduled, failed to correct a problem that a supervisor pointed out, had problems getting along with a supervisor, left work earlier than scheduled, refused to do tasks that were part of the job description, or missed a day of work for any reason.

Basic Job Skills. The WES adapted a series of questions about basic job skills from Holzer (1996) and administered the measure in Waves I and II. The questions ask about the performance of nine basic skills on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis in previous jobs. The CalWORKS Prevalence Project fielded the same measure in their study of welfare recipients in Kern and Stanislaus counties, but asked only if respondents had performed each task at least once a month. The questions ask respondents about writing letters or memos, talking with customers face to face, talking with customers on the phone, reading instructions, working with a computer, filling out forms, doing arithmetic, working with electronic machines and watching gauges. Respondents who report having performed less than four of these tasks are classified as having low basic job skills.

Perceived Discrimination on the Job. Adapting items from a 1995 Los Angeles household survey by Lawrence Bobo and a Detroit area study by Jackson and Williams, the WES asked respondents 16 questions about discrimination. Included in the questions were whether respondents' current or most recent supervisor made insulting comments about women, welfare recipients, or people of color. Respondents were also asked whether they thought they had experienced discrimination because of race, gender, or welfare status and whether they had been sexually harassed on the job. Four or more instances of these experiences are considered indicative of perceived discrimination. An alternative measure of discrimination was used in the CalWORKS Prevalence project; a single item asked respondents whether they were ever discriminated against for any reason on any job. This measure does not permit disaggregating discrimination on the basis of gender, race, or welfare status. Further, the findings from this measure appear to be unexpectedly low, suggesting that perhaps some recipients did not understand the question or interpreted "discrimination" in various ways.

3. Recommended Measures

After weighing the trade-offs associated with the various measures described above, we recommend the questions from the WES that relate to this topical area, as follows: (1) Limited Work Experience: Ever worked for pay, number of years worked for pay since age 18; (2) Knowledge of Workplace Norms: Series of nine workplace behaviors in the past month; (3) Basic Job Skills: Experience with nine basic skills; (4) Perceived Discrimination: 16 questions on racial, sex, and welfare status discrimination. Although these measures have not been fielded in a telephone survey format, almost all of them require only a simple yes/no response and should be readily adapted for that mode of administration.

B. LEARNING DISABILITIES, LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY, AND ILLITERACY

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Although they are derived from different sources, the presence of such language and learning problems as learning disabilities, limited English proficiency, and illiteracy can present serious obstacles to finding and keeping employment. Written and oral communication skills are often named by employers as some of the most desired job skills.

A learning disability is a neurobiological disorder that can affect a person's ability to read, listen, speak, write, spell, reason, recall, organize information, and do mathematics. It is not the result of low intelligence; in fact, comprehensive assessment typically shows a significant discrepancy between the learning disabled person's cognitive ability and his or her actual achievement. Learning disabilities can lead to frequent job changes, problems on the job, and underemployment and unemployment. Evidence is building that a substantial proportion of welfare recipients may have such a condition. Using screening and assessment, the states of Kansas and Washington have estimated that between one-quarter and one-third of their TANF populations have learning disabilities.

People who are illiterate may experience difficulty obtaining and keeping employment because they are unable to complete application forms, understand written directions, and read important information. Like people who have limited proficiency in English because it is not their native language, they may be restricted to jobs that require minimal communication, such as manual labor, housekeeping, or meat-packing jobs, which tend to be low-wage, seasonal, or physically demanding. In addition, foreign-born individuals are more likely to be in poorer health, which can affect their employability and make them less likely to have jobs that offer health insurance, compared to the native population. Finally, cultural attitudes about work can sometimes restrict work opportunities for non-native women.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Learning Disabilities. Many nationally representative surveys attempt to identify those with learning disabilities by directly asking whether they have such a disability. For example, the SPD asks whether respondents have any problems on a list of different types of learning problems. However, it is known that the vast majority of learning disabled adults have never been tested or diagnosed and thus do not know whether they have a learning disability. A lengthy assessment, usually conducted by a specialist or licensed psychologist, is required to definitively diagnose learning disabilities. Such an assessment is not within the scope of the telephone survey we are planning.

That said, the Washington State Learning Needs Screening Tool, a brief and easily administered screening instrument, was recently developed and tested to identify the likelihood that an adult may have learning disabilities and require further assessment. The screening tool has been administered to recipients in welfare offices in Minnesota, Utah, and Washington. Emerging results suggest that the measure is reasonably predictive, valid, and reliable when compared to actual assessments. The Nebraska survey and Wave IV of the WES are also fielding the screener in their work with TANF clients.

Limited English Proficiency and Literacy. English proficiency has been measured in numerous surveys by first identifying those respondents whose native language is other than English, then inquiring about their comfort level with reading, writing, or speaking English. In contrast, we found few instruments that measure illiteracy directly. One exception is the third wave of the WES, which includes the Wide Range Achievement Test III (WRAT-III). The WRAT-III requires the respondent to read a list of words while the interviewer scores whether the word was read correctly. Obviously, this measure would not be feasible in a telephone survey without pre-mailing materials, which would add time and expense. An alternative that might serve as a proxy for identifying individuals who are illiterate would be to ask respondents who are native English speakers and not learning disabled about the degree and comfort with which they read to themselves, go to the library, or subscribe to newspapers or magazines. The later questions have been administered in several welfare studies as part of a measure originally designed to get at the extent of cognitive stimulation available in the home environment; but these questions have not yet been used as an indicator of literacy in adults.

3. Recommended Measures

To estimate the number of TANF recipients who are at risk of a learning disability, we recommend the 12-item Washington State Learning Needs Screening Tool. We also recommend including two yes/no items that ask about other types of learning problems: one to determine whether or not individuals have been told they have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), and one to determine the presence of diagnosed mental retardation.

To measure limited English proficiency, we recommend an item that identifies respondents who are non-native English speakers. We have less confidence that illiteracy can be reliably measured in this telephone survey, and thus recommend only the proxy measure (reading to self, going to the library, and so on), in the event that time remains after higher-priority measures are included.

C. PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, LIMITATIONS, AND DISABILITIES

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

A recent report from the NSAF indicates that 13 percent of the sample reported that their physical health limits their ability to work. Other state studies suggest that at least one-fifth, but possibly as many as one-half, of TANF recipients who are not working have health problems which, they believe, prevent them from working. Many parents who are no longer receiving TANF due to sanctions report being unable to comply with the rules because of a health condition, illness, or disability (Sweeney 2000). Evidence from studies of welfare recipients is beginning to show that health problems may present an important barrier, not only for obtaining and keeping employment but also for participating in programs meant to improve recipients' employability. Although individuals with severe health problems can be exempted from work-activity requirements, most have not been evaluated for disability. Understanding the prevalence and severity of such problems could be useful in guiding states' policies and procedures.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Physical Health and Functional Limitations. The SF-36 Health Survey (Ware et al. 1993) is a widely used and well-validated survey measure of general health and physical functioning.[2] One of its advantages is that scores can be compared to age-specific national norms. An abbreviated version of the measure, the SF-12, was used in the Healthcare for Communities Survey and in the CalWORKS Prevalence Project. Several of the items in the SF-12 ask about limitations with respect to vigorous and moderate physical activities, such as lifting heavy objects or moving a table. Respondents are asked to indicate the degree to which they have difficulty with bathing or dressing themselves, walking over one mile, walking several blocks, and walking one block. Other items are brief indicators of emotional or mental health distress.

Several surveys that do not use the full SF-12 include its first item, which asks respondents to rate their overall physical health (see Nebraska, the SPD, NSAF, Iowa, and Alameda). This single item has repeatedly been shown to have very good predictive validity for mortality and disability. The item is frequently supplemented by other questions aimed more closely at the population targeted by the survey. For example, the Nebraska survey used three items to measure physical health: the self-rating of overall health, and two questions about whether the respondent's health had interfered with his or her ability to work or attend training in the past 12 months. The Alameda survey of welfare recipients asks about medical problems in the past month, as well as such health behaviors as the frequency of check-ups and cigarette smoking.

An alternative measure of functional limitations that may be especially useful for a study of welfare recipients was developed by the NHIS. It asks the number of days in the previous months that the respondent was unable to function at work or school, as well as the number of days on which he or she went to work or school but was less productive because of poor health.

[2] For more information on the SF-36 and its shorter versions, see www.sf36.com.

Disabilities or Chronic Conditions. The SPD goes beyond the measure of health and general functioning to ask about such disabilities as limitations in vision and hearing and the need for special aids, such as a wheelchair. It also asks whether the respondent has difficulty walking or carrying things, and whether any chronic condition limits their daily activities. In the 1999 SPD, the respondent is not asked to name the specific limiting condition. In contrast, the WES and the Healthcare for Communities Survey include a question asking the respondent to name any chronic health or medical condition he or she may have; the WES explicitly asks the respondent to name only those conditions that prevent or interfere with working or doing regular activities (for example, diabetes, asthma, and cancer). The open-ended responses are then coded into categories. The Alameda survey uses a lengthy list asking respondents about the presence of each disabling or chronic condition. Respondents are then asked whether each of the problems interfered with the respondent's ability to work, look for work, or participate in job training.

Access to Health Care. Almost all surveys of welfare recipients include questions about whether the respondent has any health insurance, including Medicaid or employer-provided coverage. Health care is likely to be an important factor in determining whether health problems interfere with participating in employment and employment activities.

3. Recommended Measures

To assess the respondent's health and whether it interferes with his or her ability to work or participate in training, we recommend using the items in the Nebraska survey: rating of overall health, and whether it has interfered with the respondent's ability to work or attend training. To assess the presence of chronic conditions or disabilities, we recommend the WES measure because, in this version, the respondent is asked only about conditions that prevent or interfere with work or training. Finally, we recommend the two items from the Nebraska survey that ask about the respondent's access to health insurance (whether the respondent is covered and, if so, the type of coverage).

D. MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Researchers have found that mental health conditions can limit or prevent employment. Lower rates of labor force participation, reduced work hours, and lower earnings have been found to be associated with mental illness. In many cases, attendance is affected; for example, individuals with depression have been found to use as many as four times the number of sick days used by individuals who are not depressed (Broadhead et al. 1990; and Wells et al. 1989). Moreover, some behaviors associated with a mental illness are not conducive to working, including problems with social functioning and coping with day-to-day stress. Added to these difficulties, people with mental health conditions may face stigma and potential discrimination by employers. Gaining the support of the employer can be critical to the success of the mentally ill person in the workplace; yet many affected individuals fear that employers will be reluctant to accommodate their needs.

Mental health problems, especially depression, are considered more prevalent among low-income and welfare recipients than in the general population. For example, more than one-quarter of the sample of welfare recipients in the WES suffered from a major depressive disorder, compared with 13 percent nationally. Moreover, in the WES, major depression was found to be significantly associated with employment. Using the same diagnostic measure of depression, the CalWORKS Prevalence Project found that 22 percent of recipients in Kern County and 36 percent of applicants in Stanislaus County could be classified as having major depression.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is estimated to be present in about 4 percent of women in the general population, according to the National Co-Morbidity Study (NCS), the largest nationally representative epidemiological study of mental health in the United States. Recent studies of welfare recipients find higher rates of this disorder: about 7 percent in both the WES and a study of welfare recipients in Utah, and 9 to 10 percent in the CalWORKS Prevalence Project. GAD often coexists with other mental health conditions.

Many welfare recipients experience such traumas as domestic violence and rape, which put them at high risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); see Curcio (1996). The rate of 12-month PTSD in the WES was more than 14 percent; the rate was 13 percent in each site of the CalWORKS Prevalence Project. The rate of PTSD in the NCS was 3.9 percent; this figure, however, includes men, who have a lower prevalence rate than women. The CalWORKS Prevalence Project found that more than 80 percent of women with PTSD had another mental health diagnosis as well.

Among other mental health diagnoses that could interfere with employment are such forms of depression as dysthymia and manic-depression, as well as several forms of anxiety disorders, including specific phobias, social phobias, panic disorders, and agoraphobia. When combined, the prevalence of specific anxiety disorders among welfare recipients in the CalWORKS Prevalence Project was 35 percent in Kern County and 23 percent among applicants in Stanislaus County. Women may also suffer from adjustment problems, such as eating and sleep disorders. With the exception of the anxiety disorders listed above, most studies of welfare recipients have not attempted to measure the prevalence of these other disorders.

Dimensional scales are measures that assess the severity of symptoms associated with a mental health diagnosis (The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) is a good example). They differ from diagnostic assessments, which result in a report of the proportion of individuals with a positive diagnosis of a specific condition. Dimensional scales have often been used as screening measures in the past. Although they do not constitute an assessment, they are considered useful because they provide more information than a dichotomous classification of diagnostic prevalence.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

General Screening Instruments for Global Mental Health

The NSAF administered a brief, general measure of parental mental health intended to cover four broad dimensions. Five questions ask about anxiety, depression, psychological well-being, and loss of behavioral or emotional control. These questions were adapted from the five-item Mental Health Inventory scale (MHI-5), used in the Medical Outcomes Study (MOS). The measure was developed by selecting the five items that best predicted summary scores on the longer 38-item version of the MHI scale. The MOS sample was drawn from patients waiting in doctors' offices, rather than from the general population. It is important to note that general measures such as the MHI-5 can only suggest the respondent's *perception* of his or her mental health, rather than determine the presence of any actual mental health conditions. In addition, general measures are not informative with respect to specific disorders, their severity, or whether they interfere with daily functioning and employment. Research that attempts to use the MHI-5 to distinguish between respondents who have clinical conditions and those who do not, does not have a track record as strong as other measures that focus on individual conditions.

The Alameda survey included 53 questions selected from the 90-item Symptom Checklist-90, a measure developed in the early 1970s to gauge symptoms of mental distress: depression, interpersonal sensitivity, obsessive-compulsive behavior, paranoia, hostility, anxiety, phobic anxiety, somatization, and psychotic thoughts. Although this measure covers symptoms and distress in many different areas, it is important to note that it cannot suggest the presence or absence of particular mental health conditions. A recent report on this study (Driscoll, Speiglman, and Norris 2000) indicated that the measure failed to predict employment at the multivariate level, unlike results from other studies that use diagnostic assessments, such as the WES and the CalWORKS Prevalence Project.

A short, dimensional measure of nonspecific psychological distress was recently developed by Ronald Kessler at the Department of Health Care Policy at Harvard Medical School (documentation currently under review for publication). The measure captures the severity of symptoms associated with a broad range of mental disorders. The scale includes questions about cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and psycho-physiological symptoms that have been found to be elevated among people with mental health diagnoses. Six- and 10-item versions were carefully developed from a larger set of items, and extensive tests have demonstrated their reliability and validity. The 6-item measure is currently being used in the NHIS, and the 10-item measure is being used in the annual SAMSHA National Household Survey of Drug Abuse and the World Health Organization's (WHO) World Mental Health 2000 surveys (a set of representative community surveys being administered in 25 countries).

Survey Instruments for Specific Disorders

Depression. Depression, or depressive symptomatology, has been measured in dozens of surveys of welfare recipients. A 20-item measure of depressive symptoms developed by the Center for Epidemiological Studies at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has repeatedly been shown to be reliable and valid when administered to welfare recipients, including studies in Iowa, Florida, and Minnesota, the New Chance Demonstration, the National Evaluation of Welfare to Work Strategies (NEWWS), and other studies. The CES-D, as it is known, has an established clinical cut-off point, permitting researchers to identify respondents who are at risk for depression versus those who are not (Ensel 1986). Other survey measures of depression include the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), a list of 21 symptoms and attitudes that can be self-administered or administered by interviewers (Beck, Steer, and Garbin 1988). The major limitation of measures such as the CES-D and BDI is that they provide only screening-type estimates of the risk for clinical depression. Instead of suggesting a probable diagnosis, these measures provide an estimate of the number of depressive symptoms relative to others.

The more recent development of the Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI) permits researchers actually to assign a diagnosis of depression based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, version IV (DSM-IV).[3] The CIDI was developed by WHO for use in epidemiological surveys around the world, and was administered in the NCS, the largest psychiatric, epidemiological study in the past decade. Since then, the CIDI has been included in hundreds of studies that have documented and confirmed its reliability and validity. Designed for use with trained interviewers (rather than clinicians), the full CIDI was converted to a short form by Ronald Kessler (1998), the lead investigator of the NCS, making it especially useful in brief surveys. The CIDI-SF consists of several different "modules" for various diagnoses, including major depression.[4] The depression module of the CIDI-SF was used in the WES, the CalWORKS Prevalence Project, and the Healthcare for Communities Survey, among others. MPR also employed the CIDI-SF depression module in the Nebraska survey.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD). Compared to major depression, the potential presence of GAD has not been frequently measured in studies of welfare recipients, perhaps due to the unavailability (until recently) of a reliable survey instrument. The GAD module of the

[3] For more information on the CIDI, see www.who.int/msa/cidi.

CIDI-SF was administered in the CalWORKS Prevalence Project, the WES, and the Healthcare for Communities Survey. The Alameda survey screened for GAD but used an instrument other than the CIDI-SF.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The prevalence of PTSD in the past 12 months was measured in two surveys of welfare recipients by using the PTSD module of the CIDI-SF: the WES and the CalWORKS Prevalence Project. To be diagnosed with PTSD, respondents must first have experienced a traumatic event causing helplessness or horror, and then to persistently re-experience the trauma. Recurring symptoms include avoidance of trauma-related stimuli, outbursts of anger, disturbed sleep, and numbing of general responsiveness. Although there are many possible causes of PTSD—such as war trauma, being in a life-threatening accident, or witnessing someone being killed or badly injured—the CalWORKS Prevalence Project abbreviated the PTSD module by asking the respondent the PTSD questions from the CIDI only if he or she had experienced a physical or sexual assault some time in their past (instead of the 10 different events in the PTSD module).

Phobias. The CIDI-SF provides modules for specific phobias, social phobia, panic disorder, and agoraphobia. The CalWORKS Prevalence Project used the CIDI-SF modules to assess each of these conditions among their current welfare recipients and applicants. The major benefit of including measures of phobias is that they can be included in prevalence estimates that reflect all anxiety disorders. Yet all surveys must consider the trade-off between the constructs that should be measured and the survey length. Wave II of the WES included the CIDI-SF eight-item

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(continued)

[4]For complete instructions on coding the various modules of the CIDI-SF, see www.who-int.mas/cidi/CIDISFscoring%20memo8-01.pdf.

measure of social phobia in place of the GAD module that appeared in Wave I. The Healthcare for Communities Survey, a nonwelfare sample, screened for panic disorder.

Other Mental Health Conditions. Dysthymia and Lifetime Mania were assessed using the full CIDI in the Healthcare for Communities Survey, but these and other conditions have not typically been measured in studies of welfare recipients.

3. Recommended Measures

Building on what is known at this time about mental health barriers among welfare recipients, we recommend taking a specific, rather than broad and general, approach. Although it is now possible to diagnose many types of mental health conditions within a survey context, we propose to measure the prevalence of disorders that research suggests are more prevalent among low-income women: Major Depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Furthermore, because of the high rates of mental health problems in welfare recipients, we recommend assessing the presence of conditions using only the best available measures that can be administered in a brief telephone survey. In particular, we propose the CIDI-SF to diagnose the prevalence of these disorders. The depression module of the CIDI-SF consists of 16 major questions and took only two minutes to administer in the WES. The module for GAD has 17 mostly simple yes/no items. The PTSD module is available in the CIDI and contains 35 items.

E. ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE DEPENDENCY

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Abuse and dependence on alcohol or other substances is closely linked to problems with finding and keeping a job. Researchers estimate that one in five families on welfare have an adult with an alcohol or drug problem. Employment options are limited for those who cannot pass a drug-screening test as a condition of employment; past drug- or alcohol-related convictions may also restrict opportunities. Moreover, the symptoms associated with chemical addiction can frequently interfere with maintaining employment. Studies have shown that people with such addictions are far less productive at work, are more likely to injure themselves or someone else, and have higher-than-average health care claims, compared to those with no addiction. These problems often result in cycling in and out of jobs—and welfare. Most individuals with a drug or alcohol addiction require intervention before they can maintain steady employment. Chemical addictions sometimes mask psychiatric disorders; while mental health conditions—such as depression, mania, and attention deficit disorder—often coexist with alcoholism or drug dependency.

The DSM-IV makes a clinical-diagnostic distinction between alcohol or substance *abuse* and alcohol or substance *dependence*. Dependence is a diagnosis involving a "maladaptive pattern of substance use, leading to clinically significant impairment or distress." It is considered to be a long-term condition (though responsive to treatment) and is characterized by having at least three symptoms from a list of criteria that includes, among other symptoms, tolerance, withdrawal, taking a substance in larger amounts or over a longer period than was intended. Alcohol or substance abuse, on the other hand, is characterized by having only one or more symptoms, which include problems in performance at work, school, or home; recurrent use when it is physically hazardous; and recurrent substance-related legal problems. If a person meets the criteria for substance dependence, a substance abuse diagnosis is not applicable. Although dependence is the more serious and long-term condition, both dependence and abuse of alcohol or other substances is likely to interfere with the ability to obtain and maintain employment.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

The CIDI-SF provides separate diagnostic assessments for abuse and dependence of both drugs and alcohol.[5] The CalWORKS Prevalence Project, the WES, and SPD used the alcohol and drug modules of the CIDI-SF to assess dependence. The modules are relatively short for a diagnostic assessment (the alcohol component has eight items, and the drug module has nine). Thus, the modules suggest a diagnosis, they are brief, and scores can be compared to national norms from the NCS. These measures have the additional advantage of having been previously OMB-approved for use in a nationally representative survey (the SPD).

The Nebraska survey of welfare recipients used a four-item screener for drug and alcohol use, known as the Drug-CAGE. Adapted from the original CAGE, which is an alcoholism screener used primarily by clinicians, the Drug-CAGE includes "alcohol *or* drug use" in each item. The measure was supplemented with a small number of other questions asking whether drug or alcohol use interfered with the respondent's ability to work or attend training activities, as well as questions about service receipt. Though brief, these items do not permit disaggregation of alcohol from drug use; more important for our purposes, the Drug-CAGE does not result in a probable diagnosis of drug or alcohol dependence. Furthermore, although the CAGE has been widely used, it has been found not to be equally sensitive across ethnic and racial groups, and its items are not equally discriminating (Cherpitel 1998; and Volk et al. 1997).

The Alameda study administered numerous lengthy measures for alcohol and drug use and dependence, making them largely unsuitable for our purposes. The Healthcare for Communities Survey employed a screener for alcoholism (the AUDIT) and included a modified version of the CIDI for drug abuse and dependency.

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[5] For more information on the CIDI, see www.who.int/msa/cidi.

3. Recommended Measures

Considering the practical implications of drug or alcohol dependency as a barrier to work, it seems important to measure these barriers especially well. Several states are considering, or have already implemented, programs that address alcohol and substance abuse among welfare recipients; yet there is little accurate data on the actual prevalence among this population. Moreover, diagnosing rather than screening for alcohol and drug dependency would be consistent with our approach to the assessment of mental health conditions in this survey. Because mental health conditions and alcohol/drug dependency so often coexist, it is desirable to take a similar approach to their measurement. For these reasons and others, we strongly recommend the two modules of the CIDI-SF for measuring alcohol and drug dependency.

F. PRIOR CRIMINAL INVOLVEMENT

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

The employment needs of individuals with prior criminal involvement are somewhat different relative to those of other job-seeking adults. Although ex-offenders may face some challenges in keeping a job, their primary difficulty is obtaining one. Most job applications require prospective employees to report criminal convictions, and employers are cautious about hiring workers who have a past felony conviction because of the added behavioral risk they may bring to the workplace. In the eyes of employers, a criminal background raises the chance that theft, physical endangerment, substance abuse, and related activities will occur in the workplace. In fact, ex-offenders may be categorically barred from certain types of work in some states, including working with vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, or the ill. In addition to these barriers, many ex-offenders have limited or sporadic work histories, particularly those who have been incarcerated.

Ex-offenders may have some difficulty maintaining employment due to legal issues requiring them to take time off work or issues that arise as they struggle with the transition from structured prison life to the mainstream. It is unclear whether being on probation or parole may interfere with working.

Despite these challenges, some employers—including those in the construction, assembly work, and manufacturing sectors—often are willing to hire ex-offenders and do not perform background checks on applicants. When the supply of labor is limited, other employers who are not legally prohibited from hiring ex-offenders may be persuaded to hire them. In fact, most employment programs that serve this population focus on helping the ex-offender understand the laws that protect him or her and on working with prospective employers to overcome fears and concerns about hiring an individual with a criminal background.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

In the Nebraska survey, the respondent is asked whether he or she has a criminal record and, if so, whether it caused the respondent to lose a job or be prevented from working or participating in training. The question is embedded in a longer list of "things that could make it hard to look for a job." Similarly, the WES asks whether the respondent has a criminal record, in a list of "reasons you think you don't have a job." The CalWORKS Prevalence Project and the SPD do not ask about respondents' potential criminal activity.

Among the surveys of welfare respondents we examined, the Alameda survey includes the most extensive measurement of criminal background. It asks whether and, if so, how many times the respondent was convicted of a crime since reaching age 18. Respondents also are asked about 18 specific crimes they may have committed in the past year, and how many times they committed them. Finally, they are asked whether they have been on probation, bail, in jail/prison, or awaiting charges, trial or sentencing in the past 90 days. These measures do not appear to have national norms against which results could be compared.

3. Recommended Measures

Since there is no standard with respect to measurement of criminal background, little information exists on how welfare recipients compare to non-welfare recipients in this regard. Given the sensitivity of such questions, we recommend keeping measurement of this issue particularly brief. We recommend including the two questions asked in the Nebraska survey, potentially within the context of another measure.

V. FAMILY BARRIERS

We now turn to family-level characteristics of TANF recipients that could potentially function as barriers to employment and self-sufficiency. These characteristics emerge in the context of the family environment, including the TANF recipient's children, partner, or spouse or other household members such as elderly parents. We include in this area, family-level problems that could interfere with a recipient's ability to go to work, look for work, or attend school or job training. Subtopics include caring for a family member with a disability or serious health problem, difficulty obtaining or using child care during the recipient's work or school hours, domestic violence, and the presence of a family member involved in criminal activity.

Table V.1 summarizes our recommendations and priorities for measuring family barriers in the survey of TANF recipients. The estimate of total time to administer all the "A"-rated items in the family barriers domain, as indicated in Table V.1, is nine minutes.

A. FAMILY MEMBER WITH DISABILITY/HEALTH PROBLEM

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

The evidence from previous research on welfare recipients suggests that children in low-income families may suffer from physical, emotional, and other health problems to a greater extent than children in higher-income families. Children in low-income families are more likely to have been born with low birth weight and to have higher exposure to environmental pollutants such as lead paint, which can put them at greater risk of learning problems, such as developmental delay, learning disabilities, and other conditions. Children with special needs typically require greater attention and specialized care, which could cause difficulty for their mothers in terms of obtaining and keeping steady employment. Most child care providers are not equipped to provide specialized care; even when such services are available, the cost is often

TABLE V.1

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILY BARRIERS

Family Barriers	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Family Member with Disability/Health Problem				
Respondent has child with a health, behavioral behavioral or other need that limits his/her activity	6	SPD, WES, NE; IL; CW	1.0	A
Respondent has child with vision, hearing, or other conditions that require special aids	6	SPD	1.0	C
Child's condition interferes with Respondent's ability to work or attend training	2	NE	.50	A
Respondent's children have no health insurance	1	MO; NE; IL; IA; WES	.25	A
Respondent has other family member with disability/other special needs	1	NE	.25	B
Other family member's disabling condition interferes with Respondent's ability to work or attend training	1	NE	.25	B
Problems with Child Care				
Due to a problem with child care:				
Unable to look for work/training program	1	WES; CW	.25	A
Unable to take job/participate in training	1	WES; MO; AC; IL; CW	.25	A
Was late for work/school/training	1	WES	.25	A
Was absent from work/school/training	1	WES	.25	A
Had to quit job or training activity	1	WES; MO; NE; AC	.25	A
The following child care situations prevent Respondent from working or looking for work:				
Getting care for infants	1	MO	.25	A
Getting care for sick kids	1	MO	.25	A
Getting care for disabled kids	1	MO	.25	A
Getting care for kids after school	1	MO	.25	A
Getting care during breaks / summer	1	MO	.25	A
Getting care for kids in early mornings or evenings	1	MO	.25	A
Respondent concerned about...				
Provider is too far away	1	WES; NE	.25	B
Child care too costly	1	WES; NE	.25	A
Can't find child care when needed/during work hours	1	WES; NE; AC	.25	C
Quality of available child care	1	WES	.25	A
Child care not dependable	1	WES	.25	A

Table V.1 (*continued*)

Family Barriers	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Problems with Child Care (continued)				
Respondent has no relatives who could help out with child care	1	WES	.25	C
Afraid caretaker would harm child	1	WES	.25	A
Rate the quality of child care you use	1	AC; CW	.25	C
Has any child had an accident, injury, poisoning in child care?	1	IA; AC	.25	C
Is any child under 12 in self-care?	1	AC	.25	B
Number of different current child care arrangements	1	IA; WES	.25	C
How much does Respondent pay for child care?	1	WES; NE; AC; IA	.25	B
Receive child care subsidy	1	NE	.25	A
Ease or problems getting child care subsidy	1	NE	.25	B
Domestic Violence				
Severe physical abuse	9	WES; NE; AC; IA; CW	1.25	A
Sexual abuse	1	WES; NE; AC; IA; CW	.25	A
Serious threats	1	NE; IA; CW	.25	C
Serious threats	3	WES	.75	A
Abusive control	1	WES; NE; IA; CW	.25	A
Emotional abuse or verbal humiliation	1	NE; IA; CW	.25	C
Stalking	1	CW	.25	B
Interference or harassment at work	2	WES	.50	A
Who committed abuse (partner versus stranger)?	1	WES; NE; AC; IA	.25	B
Whether relationship interferes with Respondent’s ability to work or attend job training	1	NE	.25	A
Family Member with Criminal Involvement				
Family member or close friend in jail in past 12 months	1	WES	.25	C
Someone close to Respondent died or was killed	1	WES	.25	C
Respondent lived with someone with an alcohol or drug problem	1	WES	.25	C
Respondent lived with people she wished didn't live there	1	WES	.25	C

higher. Child care providers and schools that accept children with emotional or behavioral conditions may require the mother to unexpectedly take off work to address problems that arise, an issue that many employers of low-wage workers are unwilling to accommodate.

In the WES, 22 percent of respondents indicated they had a child with a health problem that limits the child's activities. This compares with 15.7 percent of all women in the 1994 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY). The women reporting this barrier in the WES were significantly less likely to be working 20 or more hours per week. Twenty-two percent of Kern County respondents in the CalWORKS Prevalence Project also reported a child with a health problem that limits the child's activities; however, the rate was lower in Stanislaus County (13 percent). In each county, about one-third of those reporting such a barrier said they had been unable to take a job, school, or training because of having to take care of the child; while 17 percent said they had to quit a work or training situation for the same reason.

Finally, other family situations that could interfere with the respondent's ability to find or maintain work involve caring for an elderly or disabled parent or other relative. Nursing home or other special care may be unavailable or unaffordable for low-income families. Little data exist on the prevalence of adult caregiving as a barrier to employment among welfare recipients.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

In both the WES and the CalWORKS Prevalence Project, having a child with a health problem was defined as having at least one child in the family with a physical, learning, or emotional problem that limited his or her activity. Three questions are asked: (1) does the respondent have a child who meets this definition; (2) the name of the condition or problem; and (3) does the child's condition interfere with the respondent's work or regular activities. The WES also asks a series of questions related to special behavioral problems (feeding, sleeping, crying) that may be present in any infants in the home.

The Nebraska survey asks whether the respondent has a child with health, behavioral, or other special needs. It also asks whether the respondent has an elderly, disabled, or sick family member or friend the respondent is caring for. If the respondent answers affirmatively to either question, he or she is then asked whether the situation caused the respondent to lose a job or be prevented from working or attending training activities.

The SPD asks several questions about children's health and disability. The respondent is asked about the child's general health; whether the child has a developmental or learning disability; whether the child has a health condition that makes it difficult to do things appropriate for his or her age; whether the child has any limitation in his or her ability to do regular school work because of a physical, learning, or mental health condition; whether the child has received any special education services in the past year; and whether anyone has told the respondent that the child has an emotional or behavioral problem. Six additional questions ask about the child's difficulty with vision, hearing, and the need for special aids.

3. Recommended Measures

To identify respondents for whom caregiving is a barrier to employment, we recommend the six items used in the SPD, supplemented by two items from the Nebraska survey that ask about the effect of the condition on the respondent's ability to work or attend job training. The SPD questions will provide specificity with regard to the type of health or behavioral problem the child has and how limiting the condition is. We also recommend including the item about children's health insurance from the Nebraska survey.

B. CHILD CARE PROBLEM

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

In order to remain steadily employed, mothers with young children require access to stable, affordable, and good-quality child care. Yet recent evidence suggests that widespread problems may exist in the availability, accessibility, and quality of low-cost child care. The current supply of child care providers may be lower than the demand, due in part to the large number of welfare mothers who are now subject to work requirements. Moreover, financial assistance for child care expenses has been found to be inconsistent, with child care subsidies sometimes unavailable or difficult to access.

More than 26 percent of the Alameda study respondents reported that child care was needed but unavailable (defined as more children in the family needing child care than are currently receiving it, inability to obtain or pay for child care, or inability to obtain evening child care). In the CalWORKS Prevalence Project, about one-quarter of respondents in each county (Kern and Stanislaus) reported quitting or not taking a job (or job training) in the past 12 months, due to difficulty arranging or paying for child care (Chandler and Meisel 2000).

The type of employment low-skilled women are likely to obtain when moving off welfare often involves nonstandard hours that may not match the standard schedules of child care providers. In Alameda County, many families reported needing evening child care, which was unavailable; this group (16.4 percent) was significantly less likely to be working even after accounting for other potential barriers and respondents' background characteristics (Driscoll, Speiglman, and Norris 2000).

In addition, low-wage jobs may not offer benefits that would allow parents to take time off to care for a sick child; flexibility of hours worked may be limited, potentially contributing to difficulty in child care coverage during school breaks and summers. The limited incomes of welfare recipients usually means that child care must be low-cost, which can translate into care that is of lower quality or less reliable. Finally, the availability of child care for infants and disabled children is considered especially limited for low-income families.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Questions about the use of child care—such as the number of different arrangements, types of arrangements, and number of hours of child care—have been administered in numerous studies of welfare recipients. However, specific questions about child care as a potential barrier to work—the extent to which it interferes with the respondent's ability to attend work or training—have only recently begun to be developed and fielded. Such items were included in the WES, Nebraska, Missouri, Alameda, and CalWORKS surveys. However, child care as a work barrier is not well understood; consequently most of these studies take a somewhat different approach to measuring this potential factor. Below is a brief discussion of various aspects of child care as a work barrier and the ways in which they have been measured.

One approach involves asking respondents about their concerns about child care. Responses suggest the extent to which the mother may be struggling with child care issues that could—if not now, in the future—interfere with her ability to work or attend job training. These concerns can include such issues as the provider being too far away, too costly, unreliable, or unavailable during nonstandard hours. Seven of this type of question were asked in the first wave of the WES; three were selected for inclusion in the Nebraska survey.

A more outcomes-based approach to measuring this barrier involves directly asking whether a problem with child care has resulted in the respondent needing to quit her job, being late or absent for work, or being unable to look for work or take a job. These five items were asked in the second wave of the WES survey; those pertaining to having to quit a job or turn down a job appeared in the Missouri, Nebraska, Alameda, and CalWORKS surveys.

Problems with child care may be related to specific situations or times when it is difficult to obtain care. A series of questions in the Missouri survey ask the respondent whether any of the following situations caused her to lose or quit a job, be unable to look for a job, or lose time from work: getting care for infants; getting care for sick children; getting care for disabled children; getting after-school care; getting care during school breaks and summer; and getting early-morning or evening care for children.

Finally, other questions that appear in the surveys we examined include asking the respondent to name all the types of child care used, the total number of hours used, and the perception of the quality of child care. Although useful from a descriptive and contextual point of view, these single-item measures are less direct in determining whether child care is a barrier to the respondent's employability.

3. Recommended Measures

To adequately measure the extent to which child care may be a barrier to employment, we recommend questions in three major areas: (1) the degree to which child care has interfered with the respondent's ability to participate in work or training; (2) the specific child care situations that have caused a problem with respect to work or training; and (3) concerns about the cost, quality, and reliability of the child care provider. For the first area, we specifically recommend the five items fielded in Wave II of the WES (due to a problem with child care, respondent was unable to look for a work/training program; unable to take a job/participate in training; late for work/school/training; absent from work/school/training; or had to quit a job or training activity). For the second area about child care situations, we recommend the six items in the Missouri survey (the respondent is prevented from looking for work or lost a job because of a problem getting child care for: infants; sick children; or disabled children; or getting child care during school breaks/summer; after school; or early morning or evening). For the third area, we suggest four items from the WES (the respondent is concerned about: quality of available child care; dependability of child care; safety of child care setting; cost of child care). Finally, we recommend that one item be included to assess whether the respondent receives a child care subsidy from the Nebraska survey.

C. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Domestic violence refers to a broad array of tactics that perpetrators may use within a relationship to exert power and control over the victim. It can involve emotional and verbal abuse, physical and sexual abuse, the exercise of coercive, controlling or threatening behavior, stalking and other psychological abuse. These behaviors typically result in physical and emotional harm to the victim.

New evidence confirms that domestic violence is an important contributor to the decision to apply for TANF. As part of the CalWORKS Prevalence Project, welfare recipients who were receiving domestic violence services were interviewed. Thirty-seven percent indicated that a domestic violence situation was the sole reason they applied for cash assistance; another 18 percent said it was a contributing factor in their decision to apply (Meisel 2000). As might be expected, the lack of independent economic means is a major reason many women remain in abusive relationships, and welfare is one of the ways by which women can leave these harmful situations.

Domestic violence can affect a woman's ability to attend work or training programs, both directly and indirectly. The partner may prevent the woman from going to work or may harass her at the workplace. Direct physical harm may result in missed work; and the emotional consequences of being abused—including fear, depression, and anxiety—can be sufficiently distracting to affect the woman's job performance. More subtle effects of domestic abuse may involve undermining the respondent's ability to balance work and home responsibilities.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

There is no universally accepted typology of different kinds of domestic abuse, and little consensus about how to assess its presence. To date, the development of survey measures of domestic violence have focused primarily on physical violence, with less attention given to other forms of domestic abuse. Most welfare studies administer some variation of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS).[6] By focusing on specific behaviors, rather than broad questions about abuse, the CTS is thought to reduce measurement error associated with both under- and over-reporting. Over the years, researchers have created numerous variations and adaptations of the CTS since it was developed in 1972. The original "Form A" included three subsets of questions related to Reasoning, Verbal/Symbolic Aggression, and Physical Violence (Strauss 1979). The most commonly used questions are the nine items that make up the original Physical Violence subscale. However, restricting measurement of domestic violence to severe physical abuse means having to exclude such other abusive strategies as emotional abuse and controlling behavior. For that reason, researchers have modified the subscale to include questions about these other abusive strategies.

The widely used Physical Violence subscale of the CTS was administered in all three waves of the WES, along with additional items about abuse. In addition, the CalWORKS Prevalence Project asked recipients questions from a modified version of the CTS, and went beyond

[6] For more information on the CTS, please see www.nnfr.org/eval/bib_ins/STRAUS.html, http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2CTS _Application.html, or www.nvawr.org/research/screenings.html

physical abuse to ask about stalking (one item); verbal abuse (one item), controlling behavior (four items), and other threats (four items). The rate of physical abuse reported in the WES during the past 12 months was almost 15 percent. The CalWORKS Prevalence Project found similar rates: 16 percent among Kern County welfare recipients, 25 percent among Stanislaus County welfare applicants. When CalWORKS included the other forms of domestic violence in their measure of any abuse in the past 12 months, they found 35 percent and 49 percent in Kern and Stanislaus counties, respectively.

The frame of reference with respect to when the domestic abuse occurred is important because it can greatly influence reports. The CTS asks whether the respondent "ever" experienced the abusive event and, if so, whether it occurred during the past 12 months. The CalWORKS Prevalence Project, which used the CTS, reported that 62 percent of Kern County recipients and 64 percent of Stanislaus County applicants had been physically abused at some time in their lives.

The Iowa Child Impact Survey asked respondents five questions about different types of abusive behavior: emotional abuse, threats, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and controlling behavior. Respondents who answer affirmatively are asked to identify the relationship of the perpetrator (for example, husband, boyfriend, partner) and how recently the event occurred, up to two years prior to the interview. The Nebraska survey used the same items but in a way that was more feasible for telephone administration. An additional item in the Nebraska survey asks how much the respondent's relationship interfered with her work or job training in the past year.

The Alameda study took yet another approach to the measurement of domestic violence. It asks seven questions about whether someone in the past year did any of the following things to the respondent: stole money, fought with the respondent, choked the respondent, threw something or hit the respondent, hurt the respondent so much she had to go to the doctor or clinic, forced her to have sex, or used a knife or gun on the respondent. If the respondent experienced any of these events, she was asked to identify whether the perpetrator was a stranger, a partner, another family member, or someone else the respondent knows.

3. Recommended Measures

Because it has been widely used, and thus permits some comparison, we recommend the nine yes/no items from the severe physical abuse portion of the CTS, plus the one item on sexual abuse. To obtain a broader measure, however, we further recommend supplementing this scale with six additional items used in the WES (Wave II) that capture various forms of emotional abuse and controlling behavior, and one item used in the Nebraska survey to capture the extent to which the respondent's relationship with a partner interferes with her work or job training activities.

D. FAMILY MEMBER WITH CRIMINAL INVOLVEMENT

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Respondents who have a family member or person in the household who is actively involved in illegal activities are likely to be subject to unstable and/or dangerous situations. Potential police involvement could make the respondent's living situation tenuous and put her at risk of being arrested as an accomplice. Living with such an individual is stressful and distracting and thus may affect the respondent's well-being and ability to perform adequately on the job.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

None of the surveys that we examined included direct measures of whether the respondent has a family or household member that is involved in criminal activity. This is probably because of concerns that the respondent will be reluctant to reveal such information. The WES does, however, ask a series of questions about the respondent's experience of stressful life events that may have occurred in the past 12 months—including items that may indirectly suggest the presence of a household member with criminal involvement. For example, the respondent is asked whether she has had a relative or close friend in jail; whether someone she was close to died or was killed; whether she lived in a household with someone who had a problem with alcohol or drugs; and whether she had people living with her who she wished were not there.

3. Recommended Measures

At this time, we recommend against measuring this potential barrier, for two reasons. First, there is no empirical data on the prevalence of having a family or household member with criminal involvement, nor the degree to which such a situation might interfere with a welfare recipient's employability. Second, although we could attempt to measure this potential barrier indirectly, direct questions of this nature are likely to be strongly influenced by respondent bias. Given the limitations on survey length, it may be prudent to restrict the survey to barriers that we know are common and that can reasonably be measured.

VI. COMMUNITY BARRIER MEASURES

In this chapter, we turn to community-level characteristics that could potentially function as barriers to employment and self-sufficiency for TANF recipients. These characteristics have to do with the influence communities can exert, both positive and negative, on inhabitants in the realm of work readiness and attendance. Specifically, we include in the area of "community barriers" the subtopics of transportation, crime, housing problems, as well as the lack of affordable housing, inadequate job availability, and inadequate social and community service availability.

Table VI.1 summarizes our recommendations and priorities for measuring community barriers in the survey of TANF recipients. The estimate of total time to administer all the "A"-rated items in the community barriers domain, as indicated in Table VI.1, is five minutes.

A. TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Transportation is a common barrier to employment and self-sufficiency for TANF recipients. Transportation problems can involve poor public transportation within a respondent's area or between the area where a respondent lives and where jobs are located, inadequate access to a car or other vehicle, mechanical problems with that vehicle, or the lack of a current driver's license. Recipients who face transportation problems often show up late for work, a behavior most employers are unsympathetic to. Transportation problems can impede a recipient's ability to attend school or training, thereby perpetuating the cycle of unemployment due to lack of work skills, work training, and low education level.

TABLE VI.1

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY BARRIERS

Community Barriers	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Transportation Problems				
How does Respondent get to work (usual mode of transportation)?	1	WES; MO; NE; AC; IL	.25	A
How long it takes to get to work?	1	WES; NE; AC; IL	.25	A
Does Respondent have a valid driver's license?	1	WES; MO; NE; AC; IL	.25	A
Does Respondent own or have access to a car?	1	WES; MO; NE; AC; IL	.25	A
Did Respondent's car break down last month?	1	IL	.25	A
Do transportation issues keep Respondent from working?	1	MO; NE; IL	.25	A
Could Respondent get to work via public transportation, if needed?	1	None	.25	B
How long would it take to get to work via public transportation?	1	None	.25	B
High Crime Rates				
In Respondent's neighborhood, how much of a problem is… drug use or dealing in the open, unemployment, rundown buildings and yards, crime, assaults, and burglaries?	4	IL; YFC	.50	A
Is Respondent afraid to walk alone within 8 blocks of home?	1	IL; YFC	.25	A
Does Respondent feel safe at home at night?	1	IL; YFC	.25	A
Does Respondent feel neighborhood is a safe place for children to play?	1	IL; YFC	.25	A
Housing Problems and Lack of Affordable Housing				
Is affordable housing available in Respondent's area?	1	WES	.25	A
Has Respondent been homeless during the past year?	1	WES	.25	A
Has Respondent been evicted during the past year?	1	WES	.25	A
Inadequate Job Availability				
Do people in Respondent's neighborhood have to travel a long way to work?	1	YFC	.25	A
Is there high unemployment in Respondent's neighborhood?	1	IL; YFC	.25	A

Table VI.1 (*continued*)

Community Barriers	Number of Items	Past Survey(s)	Estimate of Time (minutes)	Priority Rating
Inadequate Social and Community Service Availability				
Are the following services available in Respondent’s community: career or job counseling, counseling or treatment for alcohol or drug abuse, counseling to help with other personal or family problems, health clinics or places for emergency health care?	4	YFC	.75	A
Are the following services available… community day care or after-school program, literacy, GED, or tutoring program?	2	WES	.25	A

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Many survey instruments (WES, Missouri, Nebraska, Alameda, and Illinois) covered a core group of questions on this topic. Those core questions asked for the method of transportation that respondents typically used to get to work, training, or school; how many minutes it usually took them to travel one way to work; whether respondents owned or had access to a car; and whether they had a valid driver's license. The Missouri instrument contained an additional battery of questions asking whether transportation issues prevented the respondent from working or attending educational activities, whether the respondent was ever docked pay, lost or quit a job because of lack of transportation, and whether public transportation was perceived as a reasonable way to get to work or as a barrier to getting a job.

The Nebraska survey asked additional questions—whether the respondent's community offered shuttle or van service, and whether transportation issues prevented the respondent from working or attending educational activities. The Illinois survey asked three additional questions—whether the respondent's car broke down during the past month, whether transportation issues prevented the respondent from working, and an opinion question, whether the respondent's neighborhood has good public transportation.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend six measures under this topic, from either the Nebraska or the Illinois survey: (1) how the respondent usually gets to work, (2) how long it takes to get to or from work one way, (3) whether the respondent owns or has access to a car, (4) whether he or she has a valid driver's license, (5) whether the respondent's car has broken down during the past month, and (6) whether the respondent feels that transportation issues prevent him or her from working. Time permitting, we recommend including two new measures: (1) whether the respondent believes he or she could get to work using public transportation, if needed; and (2) an estimate of how long it would take to get to work using public transportation. The last two questions were not found in any of the survey instruments reviewed; we think they are important, in order to determine a respondent's perception of public transportation as a barrier to work and the potential hardship of using that method. However, these questions would not be asked of any respondents who usually travel to work using public transportation, since they would be repetitive and unnecessary.

B. HIGH CRIME RATES

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Crime is more prevalent in low-income communities where most welfare recipients live, and has a negative impact on its members, creating feelings of powerlessness and worthlessness, which can feed back into the cycle of crime and perpetuate itself. In addition, crime has the potential to become employment—particularly for young adults who may see their employment options limited due to lack of job availability in their community, combined with low levels of education and job skills.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Measures of crime varied greatly among the survey instruments. Many surveys did not address the topic at all. Only the WES, Illinois, Youth Fair Chance Community, and Iowa Child Impact surveys contained questions on neighborhoods and crime. The WES contained the most extensive battery of questions about neighborhood problems. Questions asked whether respondents had problems in their neighborhood with vandalism, prostitution, sexual assaults, rapes, muggings, gangs, drug dealing, groups of youth hanging out, and police taking a long time to come when called. Additional questions included respondent perceptions of neighborhood safety, whether the respondent would move from the neighborhood if he or she could, and whether the respondent had any serious problems with neighbors in the past year.

The Illinois and Youth Fair Chance Community surveys each contained a similar, four-question scale that asked the respondent to rate the magnitude of the problem in his or her neighborhood with unemployment, run-down buildings and yards, crime, assaults and burglaries, and drug use. The surveys also contained the same questions on perceptions of safety in walking alone within an eight-block vicinity of home, feeling safe at home at night, and whether the neighborhood is a safe place for children to play.

The Iowa Child Impact Survey contained a list of questions to be answered by the interviewer at the end of the survey, based on his or her observations of the neighborhood. Among the questions was whether the interviewer observed groups of youths hanging out in public, vandalism, vacant lots, abandoned or boarded-up houses, and litter or garbage on the streets.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend seven of the measures listed under this topic, from either the Illinois or the YFC survey. They include the four-item scale that asks the respondent to rate the magnitude of the problem in their neighborhood with: unemployment; run-down buildings and yards; crime, assaults and burglaries; and drug use. We also would include the three measures that ask for the respondent’s perception of safety walking alone within eight blocks of home, feeling safe at home at night, and whether the neighborhood is a safe place for kids to play. Although these measures are briefer than those used in the WES, they capture the key information on the respondent’s perception of crime in his or her neighborhood.

C. HOUSING PROBLEMS

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Housing, or shelter, is one of our most basic needs, along with food and clothing. To be without housing or to have a daily struggle with housing can derail the most motivated jobseeker or worker. Like transportation, housing problems can cause worker absenteeism or tardiness, which can lead to job instability and unemployment. Low-income individuals have greater difficulty finding and keeping affordable housing. There often is a waiting list for obtaining low-income housing; and, once obtained, that housing can be fraught with plumbing, heating and/or insect-infestation problems. Similarly, low-income individuals may be faced with a choice of which bills to pay in any given month, due to financial shortages.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Housing problem measures varied widely among surveys. The WES and Alameda surveys were the most thorough in their coverage of the topic. Each contained a battery of questions that gathered different information about potential housing problems. The WES asked more general questions on whether affordable housing was available in the respondent's community, whether the respondent had been homeless during the past year and for how long, whether he or she had been evicted in the past year, and whether the respondent lost their gas, electricity, or phone service because he or she could not pay the bill.

The Alameda survey asked more specific questions, such as whether the respondent owned or had access to a flush toilet, bath or shower with hot water, cooking equipment, refrigerator, telephone, fire escape, windows that open, curtains or blinds on the windows, enough lights, and electricity. Each item had a follow-up question that asked whether that item worked (that is, it was not broken). In addition, a second set of questions asked whether the respondent had any of the following problems where they currently lived: exposed wires, too few outlets, fuses that blew or circuit breakers that cut out, lead paint, holes in the ceiling or floor, broken locks on doors or windows, rats or rodents, insect problems, plumbing problems, landlord problems with providing heat or hot water, smoke detectors missing or not working, and security bars that would not open.

The Illinois and Missouri surveys contained, respectively, one or two questions about housing problems. The Missouri survey asked whether the respondent had received help with paying the rent in the past year, and whether the phone service had been turned off because the respondent could not pay the bill. The Illinois survey asked whether the respondent had a working telephone in his or her home.

3. Recommended Measures

Due to survey time limitations, we recommend using three measures under this topic from the WES: (1) whether affordable housing is available; (2) whether the respondent has been homeless at any time during the past year (includes both living in a shelter or on the street); and (3) whether the respondent has been evicted at any point in the past year. These measures will best evaluate whether the respondent has experienced any critical housing problems during the past year, using a minimum number of questions.

D. INADEQUATE AVAILABILITY OF JOBS

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Obtaining jobs that pay a decent living wage and that include health benefits often is a challenge for welfare recipients. One reason for this difficulty can be the relative availability (or lack thereof) of such employment. The robust economy, which has largely been responsible for helping many welfare recipients get off welfare and find jobs, is now slowing down. Even though the economy spurred new job growth during its recent robust period, many of the jobs created did not provide a decent living wage or health benefits. The lack of good-paying jobs with health benefits can perpetuate a cycle of poverty and of moving on and off the welfare rolls.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

This topic was not well covered in the surveys. The Missouri survey asked whether the respondent was not working because there were no jobs available in their local area. The Illinois survey asked whether there was high unemployment in the neighborhood. The Youth Fair Chance (YFC) Community Survey asked two questions: whether people living in the respondent's neighborhood had to travel a long way to work, and whether there was high unemployment in the neighborhood.

The question in the Missouri survey focused more directly on whether the lack of available jobs was the reason why the respondent was not working, while the YFC questions focused more on the respondent's perceptions of the community. Although the former measure may appear more direct, we believe the answer could be interpreted as a transportation problem. Was the respondent not working because he or she had no transportation to get to a job outside the local area? Or was the respondent not working because he or she refused or did not want to travel outside the local area? Analysis of the answer would not be clear. We also believe the information could be collected under the employment section when asking the question why a respondent was not working.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend asking two questions under this topic: first, whether people living in the respondent's neighborhood have to travel a long way to work; and, second, how much of a problem there is with unemployment in the neighborhood. The unemployment question is already included in one of the recommended scales under the high crime rate section and does not need to be asked twice. We believe these measures will best address the issue of inadequate job availability in the respondent's neighborhood.

E. INADEQUATE AVAILABILITY OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. Rationale for Why the Topic Was Chosen

Social and community services form a cushion against family instability, stress, and hardship. Often, these services are lacking in low-income communities, where they are needed most. Such services can provide recipients with needed health care, alcohol or drug treatment, mental health services, or career counseling—which can mean the difference between keeping a job and losing it.

2. Common Measures Used, Pros and Cons

Very few surveys covered this topic. Only the WES, Alameda, and YFC surveys contained questions that covered various types of community services. The WES survey asked whether any of the following services were available, and whether the respondent used any of them during the past year; a community family health service, a bank or credit union; an organized summer recreational program; a community day care or after-school program; a literacy, GED, or tutoring program; and an employment office.

The Alameda survey asked a much longer battery of questions on whether the respondent needed any of the following services: assistance with physical health, help with an emotional or mental health problem, help with an alcohol or drug problem, help with combating physical violence in the home, prenatal care, assistance with managing money or paying utility bills, help getting or keeping a job, child care, help finding housing, assistance with paying rent, low-cost attorney services, help with transportation, free or inexpensive clothing or goods, and free or reduced priced meals for their children at school or Head Start. Three follow-up questions asked whether the respondent knew where to go for the service, whether he or she actually received the service, and where the respondent went for each item.

The YFC Community Survey asked a shorter battery of questions on whether the following services were available in the respondent's community: career or job counseling; counseling or treatment for alcohol or drug abuse; counseling to help with other personal or family problems; health clinics or places for emergency health care, birth control, or family planning services; referrals or help finding needed assistance; help preparing for a GED; a place to improve reading, math, or other subject skills; and a place for recreational activities.

3. Recommended Measures

We recommend six measures under this topic, taken from the WES and YFC surveys. From the WES, we recommend asking two measures on the availability and service use of (1) community day care and after-school programs, and (2) literacy, GED, or tutoring programs. From the YFC survey, we recommend asking four measures on the availability and service use of (1) career or job counseling, (2) counseling or treatment for alcohol or drug abuse, (3) counseling to help with other personal or family problems, and (4) health clinics or places for emergency health care. These measures provide a brief but salient list of services that recipients might need access to.

VII. SUMMARY

We have reviewed existing survey instruments that address the topics of employment, demographics, and various barrier measures to employability and self-sufficiency of welfare populations. Based on this review, we believe a new instrument is needed, one that focuses greater attention on key barrier measures. The new instrument will provide grantee states with an opportunity to understand better the characteristics and needs of their current TANF caseloads.

Table VII.1 summarizes our recommendations by topic area for the survey of TANF recipients. For each domain, we provide the number of measures recommended from Chapters II through VI, with an “A” rating and an estimate of the amount of time it would take to administer them. The estimate of total time to administer the “A”-rated items from all the domains is 43.75 minutes. This length is a rough estimate and will need to be formally tested with survey respondents to verify the accuracy. Cuts may be necessary to allow states the ability to add other measures of interest and maintain a reasonable survey length.

TABLE VII.1

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROPOSED SURVEY OF TANF RECIPIENTS

Topic Domains	**Number of “A”- Rated Items**	**Estimate of Time (Minutes)**
Demographic and other background information	14	4.25
Employment and economic outcomes	28	7.0
Personal barriers	20	18.5
Family barriers	25	9.0
Community barriers	17	5.0
TOTAL	**104**	**43.75**

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APPENDIX A

TOPIC DOMAINS AND DETAILED MEASURES FOR SELECTED SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

	APPENDIX A - TOPICS AND DETAILED MEASURES FOR SELECTED SURVEY INSTRUMENTS											
		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS											
*	Age/DOB of SM	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
*	Ethnicity (Hispanic or Latino descent)		x		x	x		x				
*	Race	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
	Born in US?		x	x		x	x		x			x
	US citizen?		x	x		x						
*	current marital status	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
	how long married/living together	x										
	age / sex of spouse		x	x								
*	currently living together as couple with someone	x				x	x		x			
*	currently live with spouse?					x	x					
	Educational Attainment/Low Educational Level											
*	Highest Grade completed	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x
*	types of degrees / diplomas / certificates		x	x	x	x		x				x
	age stopped attending school	x										
	Household Composition											
*	# people in HH		x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
*	relationships of people to SM in HH				x		x	x				x
*	# kids age 5 or younger living in HH		x			x						
*	# kids age 6-17 living in HH		x			x						
	ages / names of kids [under 18] in HH		x		x		x	x			x	x
*	Does SM have kids [under 18] not living with them?		x			x	x	x				
	# of kids under 18 living outside HH		x				x	x				
*	Where are they living?						x	x				
*	Why are they living there?							x				
	Pregnancies / Births											
	sm had child last yr (part of list of life stress events)						x					
	Living Arrangements / Family and Child Moves											
	type of living arrangement (own, rent, homeless, etc)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
*	Does SM live in public housing?	x	x	x	x	x						x
	Does SM receive vouchers for housing?		x	x	x		x					
	SM's home owned / rented / occupied w/o cash payment		x									
	how long sm live in home		x				x					
	sm move from either from in-state or out of state		x									
*	# bedrooms in home		x				x	x				

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS (CONT.)											
	Living Arrangements (cont.)											
	SM's rent / mortgage payments last month		x				x	x				
	Total HH monthly rent / mortgage payments		x									
	what kind of place sm living in now (verbatim)						x					
	can stay where living next 30 days w/o being asked to leave						x					
	what other types of housing SM lived in past 12 mo's						x					
	how long sm lived in each type of place						x					
	where else [how long] has sm lived in past 12 mos						x					
*	current housing situation interfere w/ wk or training						x					
*	how many times did sm move (in past 12 mos)				x		x			x		
	when was most recent move				x							
*	primary reason sm moved?				x							

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
	EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC OUTCOMES											
	Employment History											
*	work in the last 12 months		x	x		x	x		x		x	
*	months/weeks employed during last 12 months		x			x						
	how many hrs usually worked p/wk last yr		x	x					x			
*	# different jobs in last 12 months					x						
	Current Job / Main Job / Most recent Job											
	sm (or spouse) currently working	x	x		x	x			x			x
*	no. of current jobs	x			x	x						
*	total hrs per week (all jobs)	x	x		x	x	x	x				x
*	job start date/length of employment	x	x		x	x	x	x				x
*	hrs per week - current, main or most recent job	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
*	seasonal/temporary	x		x		x		x				
*	shift information	x				x		x				
	union membership	x					x					
	employed by self, gov. or private employer	x	x	x					x			x
*	industry/type of company	x	x	x		x	x	x				x
*	occupation	x	x	x		x	x	x				x
	how long for new person to do your job?	x										
	no. of employees at company		x	x								
*	hourly rate of pay		x			x		x				x
	sm offered bonuses					x		x				
*	weekly / monthly earnings	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
*	types of benefits offered	x	x	x	x	x						x
	expectations for working at job 6 mo/1yr/2yrs from now	x										
*	opportunity for advancement					x						
*	reasons SM left job					x	x	x				

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
	EMPLOYMENT/ECONOMIC OUTCOMES (CONT.)											
	Reasons Not Currently Working/Never worked											
*	Main Reasons (multiple)	x				x	x					
	Main Reason (single)		x	x				x				
	Has worked in exchange for goods/services (no $$)					x						
*	lowest hourly wage acceptable for taking a job	x										
	List of reasons why sm can't find/keep a job (b/cause…											
	it's discouraging to sm						x					
	someone makes sm feel guilty				x		x					
	someone refused to help sm						x					
	sm can't attend classes						x					
	sm harassed at work						x					
	someone caused sm to lose a job						x					
	list of job types/would sm take that job now if offered	x										
*	perceived hiring discrimination (race, sex, welfare)	x									x	
	Reasons not Working Prior Month											
	couldn't afford / arrange child care				x						x	
	child was ill / disabled				x							
	sm currently ill / disabled				x							x
	working does not pay sm enough $				x							
	sm feels depressed / overwhelmed				x							
	sm getting financial support f/ husband / partner				x							
	sm in school / training				x							
	sm does not want to work				x							
	sm cannot find work				x							
	no jobs available in local area				x							
	sm not qualified for jobs				x							
	sm has transportation problems				x							
	sm has drinking problem				x							
	sm pregnant				x							
	sm retired				x							

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
	EMPLOYMENT/ECONOMIC OUTCOMES (CONT.)											
	Participation in Work/Job Skills Training											
*	attend/received help find / pay for a GED Class last yr	x			x	x	x	x				
*	attend/received help find / pay other ed. Training last yr	x			x	x						
	sm receive help with resumes / applications last yr					x						
	sm receive help with proper dress, behavior last yr					x						
	sm receive help with on-the-job training last yr				x	x						
	sm participate in other ed / train programs last yr	x			x	x	x					x
	sm participate in unpaid job			x	x		x					
	sm participate in life skills / job readiness classes				x		x					
	sm take courses that trained for specific jobs	x	x		x		x					
	sm receive training to improve job skills / learn new job			x			x					
	# different schools / training programs attended							x				x
	why stopped attending program?	x						x				
	hours per week attending	x			x		x	x				x
	describe skills you are learning	x										x
	sm complete program?							x				
	sm find job as result of attending program?						x	x				
	type of school or training sm attended						x	x				x
	sm required to participate in activities			x								
	sm do community work / unpaid wk as part of job train			x			x					
	Utilization of Job Search/Basic Work Orientation Services											
	sm currently in job search activity						x					
*	attend job search in past 12 mos (sm and/or spouse)	x	x			x						
*	helped/did sm get job thru this source?	x				x						
	receive any help from job search or placement			x								
	sm required to participate in job search			x								
	how helpful were programs in...teaching skills,	x										
	feeling better about yourself	x										
	Were programs… frustrating….	x										
	or make it difficult to get things done during day	x										
	sm looked for wk during past 30 days	x					x					
	when last looked for work / how long ago	x										
	no. of employers contacted	x										

	Topic/Items	WES	NSAF	SPD	MO	NE	Alameda	Illinois	HCC	Iowa CI	CalWks	YFC Com
		Survey instruments										
	EMPLOYMENT/ECONOMIC OUTCOMES (CONT.)											
	Utilization of Job Search/Basic Work Orientation Services (cont.)											
	no. of applications filled out	x										
	no. of interviews sm had	x										
	how many wks sm looking for work	x					x					
	no. of hours p/week looking for work	x										
	was sm offered a job	x										
	why did sm turn down job offer	x										
	list of methods used by sm to find a job	x										
	Earnings											
*	SM's earnings (last month/week)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	Other HH members earnings, last month	x	x		x		x	x				
	Income											
*	SM's income last month/ year	x	x	x		x	x		x			
*	income from other adults, [last month / yr]	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
*	total household income	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	receipt / amount of AFDC [last month / yr]	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	receipt / amount of Food Stamps [last month / yr]	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
	receipt / amount of WIC [last month / yr]	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	receipt / amount of child support [last month / yr]	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	receipt / amount of Unemployment Ins. [Last mon / yr]	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	receipt / amount of SSI / SS [last month / yr]	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
	receipt / amount of foster child payments last month	x		x	x		x					
	receipt / amount of $ from other HH members last month	x					x	x	x			
	receipt / amount of $ from family friends [last mon / yr]	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	receipt / amount from other sources [last mon / yr]	x	x	x		x	x	x				
*	rating of difficulty living on HH income right now?	x				x						
	list of activities to make money - did any in past 6mos	x										
	perceived hardship for HH in next 2 mos	x										
	Child Support Payments											
*	Did SM/other HH adults receive CS? Amount?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		
*	Did sm make CS payments to Non-HH kids under 18		x				x					
	were CS payments part of court order		x	x	x					x		
	how much CS did SM contribute in past 12 mos		x				x					

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**Calwks**	**YFC Com**
	PERSONAL BARRIERS											
	Low Prior Labor Force Participation											
*	ever worked for pay	x				x		x		x		
*	when did sm last work for pay				x			x			x	
*	how much time/years employed since age 18	x				x						
	Lack of Work Orientation Skills (Dress, attendance)											
*	list of failed work skills and perceived seriousness	x										
	whether received training in dress/job behavior, etc					x						
	Few Job Skills											
*	list of job skills that SM has ever done	x									x	
	Perceived Discrimination on the Job											
*	discrim. because of gender or race/ethnicity (series)	x									x	
*	sexual harassment	x										
	Learning Problems											
*	screener for dyslexia; dyscalcula - scale	x				x						
	sm was in special education program in school			x		x						
	sm has learning disability						x					
*	sm mentally retarded						x					
*	sm has ADD						x					
	list of different types of learning problems						x				x	
	Limited English Fluency											
*	difficulty speaking / reading / writing English											
	because not SM's native language					x						
	what is SM's native language (if o/than English)											
	comfort level w/speaking, writing and reading English						x					
	Illiteracy											
	does HH have a library card/ how often used	x								x		
	how many newspapers/magazines does HH get	x								x		
	does SM have trouble reading books/newspaper/mag	x								x		

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**Calwks**	**YFC Com**
	PERSONAL BARRIERS (CONT.)											
	Illiteracy (cont.)											
	how often does SM read to him/herself	x								x		
	Physical Health Problems and Disabilities											
*	current health status	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	
*	chronicity of condition			x			x		x			
*	physical disability			x					x			
	functional limitations		x	x			x		x		x	
*	sm has no health insurance	x			x	x		x	x			
	Mental Health Conditions											
*	Depression - scale	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	
*	Generalized Anxiety Disorder - scale	x					x		x		x	
*	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder - scale	x									x	
	Phobias - scale	x					x				x	
	Alcohol and Substance Abuse/Dependency											
*	Alcohol Use/Dependency - scale	x		x		x	x		x		x	
*	Drug Use/Dependency - scale	x		x		x	x		x		x	
	Criminal Involvement											
*	SM has past criminal record (makes it hard to get job)					x						
*	convicted of felony since age 18						x					

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
	FAMILY BARRIERS											
	Family Member with Disability/Health Problem											
*	SM has child w/ health/behavioral/other needs	x		x		x		x			x	
*	SM has other fam mem w/ disability/other needs					x						
*	children have no health insurance	x			x	x		x		x		
	Problem with Child Care											
	SM concerned about ...											
	provider being too far away	x				x						
*	child care too costly	x				x						
	can't find child care when needed/during work hrs	x				x	x					
*	quality of available childcare	x										
*	childcare not dependable	x										
	no relatives who could help out w/childcare	x										
*	afraid caretaker would harm child	x										
	sm skip wk / training b/c worried about childs safety						x					
	# days in past mon. sm missed wk to take care of child						x					
	Due to problem w/childcare:											
*	unable to look for work/training program	x									x	
*	unable to take job/participate in training	x			x		x	x			x	
*	was late for work/school/training	x										
*	was absent from work/school/training	x										
*	had to quit job or training activity	x			x	x	x				x	
							x					
	no. of different current childcare arrangements	x								x		
	satisfaction with current childcare arrangement	x										
	sm docked pay b/c she lacked child care				x							
	how difficult was it to arrange childcare	x									x	
	how much do you pay for childcare	x				x	x			x		
	do you swap services w/others for childcare	x										
	what is the quality of child care you use						x				x	
	did child have an accident, injury, poisoning in ch care						x			x		
	was any child under 12 in self-care						x					

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
	FAMILY BARRIERS (CONT.)											
	Problem with Child Care (cont.)											
	how big of a problem are child care issues in terms of working or going to school/training					x						
	receive child care subsidy					x						
	ease or problems getting child care subsidy					x						
	need for child care						x					
	types of child care used						x					
	number of hours per week child care used						x					
	receive any child care that is unpaid						x					
	following cc situations prevent sm from looking for work:											
*	getting care for infants				x							
*	getting care for sick kids				x							
*	getting care for disabled kids				x							
*	getting care for kids after school				x							
*	getting care during breaks / summer				x							
*	getting care for kids in early mornings				x							
	is childcare a barrier to getting a job?				x							
	Domestic Violence											
*	physical abuse	x				x	x			x	x	
*	sexual abuse	x				x	x			x	x	
*	serious threats	x				x				x	x	
*	abusive control					x				x	x	
*	emotional abuse or verbal humiliation					x				x	x	
*	stalking										x	
*	interference with work	x										
*	who committed abuse (partner v. stranger)	x				x	x			x		
	Family Member w/ Criminal Involvement											
	family member or close friend in jail in past 12 mos	x										
	someone close to sm died or was killed	x										
	sm lived with someone with an alcohol or drug problem	x										
	sm lived with people who she wished didn't live there	x										

		Survey instruments										
	Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
	COMMUNITY BARRIERS											
	Transportation Problems											
*	How SM gets to job, etc	x			x	x	x	x				
*	Minutes to get to work, etc. (one way)	x		x		x	x	x				
*	SM has valid drivers license	x			x	x	x	x			x	
*	SM owns / has access to car	x		x	x	x	x	x				
*	Did sm car break down last month							x				
	community offers shuttle / van service?					x						
*	trans. Issues prevent sm from working?				x	x		x				
	trans issues prevent sm from attending ed. activities?				x	x						
	sm docked pay b/c sm lacked transportation				x							
	sm lost / quit job b/c lack of transportation				x						x	
	public trans. A reasonable way to get to work?				x							
	public trans. A barrier to getting a job?				x							
	availability of public transportation	x										
*	Could you get to work via public trans if needed?											
*	How long would it take you (via public trans.)											
	agree/disagr: there is good pub. trans in neighborhood							x				x
	High Crime Rates											
	problems in neighborhood with…	x										
	police not coming or taking a long time when called	x										x
	groups of youth hanging out in public	x								x		
	vandalism	x								x		
	prostitution	x										
	sexual assaults/rapes	x										
	muggings	x										
	gangs	x										
*	drug use or dealing in the open	x						x				x
*	unemployment	x						x				x
*	Run down buildings and yards							x		x		x
*	crime, assaults,burgleries							x				x
	would sm move from neighborhood if could	x										
	perception of neighborhood safety	x										
	had any serious problems w/neighbors in past yr	x										

	Topic/Items	WES	NSAF	SPD	MO	NE	Alameda	Illinois	HCC	Iowa CI	CalWks	YFC Com
		Survey instruments										
	COMMUNITY BARRIERS (CONT.)											
	High Crime Rates (cont.)											
*	sm afraid to walk alone in 8 block vicinity							x				x
*	sm feel safe at home at night							x				x
*	sm feel neighborhood is safe for kids to play in							x				x
	Housing Problems/Lack of Affordable Housing											
*	availability of affordable housing	x										
*	been homeless during past year	x										
	no. of days/weeks sm was homeless	x										
*	been evicted in past year	x					x					
	had gas/electricity turned off b/c couldn't pay bill	x					x					
	had phone service turned off b/c couldn't pay bill	x			x		x					
	sought/received help from community agencies past yr	x										
	food security question (one out of the scale)	x	x	x			x	x				
	received help paying rent				x							
	Inadequate Job Availability											
	not working b/cause no jobs available in local area				x							
	People in neighborhood have to travel long way to work											x
	High unemployment							x				x
	Inadequate Availability of Services											
	are services available/did you use them in past yr…											
	community family health service	x										x
	bank or credit union	x										
	organized summer recreational program	x										x
	community daycare or after-school program	x										
	literacy, GED, or tutoring program	x										x
	an employment office	x										
	are services available in your community…											
	career or job counseling											x
	couseling or treatment for alcohol or drug abuse											x
	counseling to help w/other personal or family problems											x
	health clinics/places for emergency health care											x

	Survey instruments										
Topic/Items	**WES**	**NSAF**	**SPD**	**MO**	**NE**	**Alameda**	**Illinois**	**HCC**	**Iowa CI**	**CalWks**	**YFC Com**
COMMUNITY BARRIERS (CONT.)											
Inadequate Availability of Services (cont.)											
are services available in your community…											
birth control / family planning services											x
referrals or help finding needed assistance											x
help preparing for a GED											x
place to improve reading, math or other subject skills											x
recreational activity place for teenagers/young adults											x
place like big brother/big sister program											x
have you needed any…/did you know where to go for…						x					
have you received…/where did you get help for…						x					
assistance with physical health						x					
prenatal care						x					
help w/emotional or mental health						x					
help w/alcohol or drug problems						x					
help w/physical violence in your home						x					
assistance w/managing money						x					
help getting and keeping a job						x					
child care (sitters) for your children		x				x					
assistance paying utility bills						x					
help finding housing						x					
assistance paying the rent						x					
low-cost attorney services						x					
help arranging transportation						x					
free/inexpenvise clothing for your children						x					
free/inexpenvise clothing for yourself						x					
free/inexpensive cold weather clothing/raincoats for all						x					
free or reduced price meals for kids at school/Hd Start		x				x					
free/inexpensive goods (pots, pans, cleaning devices)						x					
other assistance						x					

APPENDIX B

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SELECTED SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX B – BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SELECTED SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Survey Instrument	Conducted by / date	Mode of Administration, Interview length	Population and Sample Frame	Sample Size	Key Barrier Topics Covered	Contact Name, Address, and Phone
Women's Employment Survey (WES)	University of Michigan Poverty Research and Training Center, 1997 and 1998	In-person (hard copy), 60 minutes	Random sample of single mothers w/children in an urban county of Michigan who were receiving TANF in Feb. 1997. Interviewed in fall 1997 (Wave 1) and reinterviewed in fall 1998 (Wave 2)	Wave 1 - 753 interviews (86% completion rate)	Workplace norms, perceived work related discrimination, transportation issues, physical and mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence	Sandra Danziger (734) 998-8504, sandrakd@umich.edu
National Survey of America's Families (NSAF)	Urban Institute (UI), 1999	Phone (CATI), 45 minutes	RDD sample drawn from 13 states, representative of the civilian, non-institutionalized pop. under age 65, plus an area probability sample of households without telephones	42,360 household interviews conducted	Health status and limitations, housing and economic hardship, food insecurity, child well being, family stress and parent/adult psychological well-being	Jenny Kenney, Urban Institute (202) 261-5886, http://Newfederalism.urban.org
Survey of Program Dynamics (SPD)	U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1999	In-person (CAPI), w/self-administered q'aires (SAQs) for adolescents using a personal audio-cassette player	Nationally representative RDD Sample of non-institutionalized pop. over age 15	16,395 household interviews, including 3,259 SAQs completed by adolescents	Core - food security, child well being SAQ – Substance abuse, sexual behavior, and other problem behavior	Michael McMahon, (301) 457-1616, michael.f.mcmahon@census.gov, http://www.sipp.consus.gov/spd/

Survey Instrument	Conducted by / date	Mode of Administration, Interview length	Population and Sample Frame	Sample Size	Key Barrier Topics Covered	Contact Name, Address, and Phone
		72 minutes per household		(85% completion rate for household interview, 58% completion rate for SAQ)		
Missouri TANF Leavers and Stayers Surveys (MO)	Midwest Research Institute, 1999, 2000 and 2001	Phone (CATI) with in-person follow-up (mostly cell-phone call-ins) Estimated length for 1999, 2000 and 20001 surveys - 45 minutes	1999 and 2000 surveys – Missouri TANF leavers in 1997 2001 survey – current or recent TANF recipients	1999 survey – 792 interviewed (66% completion rate) 2000 follow-up survey – 594 interviewed (75% completion rate) 2001 survey – still in progress	1999 survey – Training; reasons not working; mobility and housing 2000 survey – Reasons not working; Training 2001 survey - Mental health, domestic violence, child care	Nancy Dunton, University of Kansas Medical School, (913) 588-1456, Ndunton@kumc.edu
Nebraska Client Barriers Survey (NE)	Mathematica Policy Research (MPR), 2000	Phone (hard copy) 45 minutes	Women in Nebraska, age 18-54, (with children), who received TANF during Jan. 2000	412 interviews (75% completion rate)	Physical and mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, learning disabilities, childcare and transportation issues	Alicia Meckstroth, MPR, (609) 275-2338 ameckstroth@mathematica-mpr.com
Alameda County (CalWORKS) Needs Assessment	Public Health Institute; Berkeley, CA,	In-person (hard copy) 90 minutes	Random sample of adult CalWORKS clients receiving TANF in October 1998	512 interviews (DK completion rate)	Domestic Violence, childhood and teenage abuse, physical and mental health, substance	Richard Speiglman (510) 649-1987, richards@phi.org

Survey Instrument	Conducted by / date	Mode of Administration, Interview length	Population and Sample Frame	Sample Size	Key Barrier Topics Covered	Contact Name, Address, and Phone
Survey	1998				abuse, learning disabilities.	
Illinois Food Stamp Leavers Survey	MPR, 1999	Phone (hard copy) 45 minutes	Random sample of Illinois residents who received food stamps at some point in 1997 but not in the two months after	497 (60% completion rate)	food insecurity, list of hardship indicators, transportation problems, neighborhood conditions	Anu Rangarajan (609) 936-2765, arangarajan@mathematica-mpr.com
Health Care for Communities Survey (HCC)	MPR and RAND, 1998	Phone (CATI), 34 minutes	List frame sample drawn from Community Tracking Study respondents, w/oversampling of 3 groups; those with low- income, those who used specialty mental health services in prior yr, and those who reported high psychological distress	9,661 interviews (64% completion rate)	Physical and mental health, substance abuse, life stressors	Katherine Minnium (310) 393-0411, ext. 6580, guestkm@rand.org
CalWORKS Prevalence Survey	CA Institute for Mental Health (2000)	In-Person (hard copy)	List frame of TANF recipients meeting the following criteria: female CalWORKS recipients in Kern and Stanislaus counties, must be English or Spanish speaking only; aged	Kern County: 398 completed interviews (55% completion rate) Stanislaus County: 499 completed interviews (71% completion rate)	Mental health, domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse	Sandra Naylor Goodwin, project director. (916)-556-3480, ext. 103. Sgoodwin@cimh.org

Survey Instrument	Conducted by / date	Mode of Administration, Interview length	Population and Sample Frame	Sample Size	Key Barrier Topics Covered	Contact Name, Address, and Phone
			18 – 59 and be on TANF for at least one year.			
Iowa Child Impact Survey (Iowa CI)	MPR (1999)	In-Person (hard copy)	List frame sample drawn from Iowa Core Survey respondents w/eligible focal child in household	1,475 interviews (completed 75% of eligible cases)	Mental health, domestic violence, behavioral assessments of focal child	Chris Ross (202) 484-4235, cross@mathematica-mpr.com
Youth Fair Chance Community Survey (YFC)	MPR (1995 and 1997)	Phone (CATI)	RDD sample of at-risk youth living in 32 high crime areas	1995 survey = 2590 interviews completed (57% response rate from listed sample and 47% from unlisted sample); 1997 survey = 1609 interviews completed (59% overall response rate)	Lack of available jobs and services in community	Mark Dynarski (609) 275-2397 mdynarski@mathematica-mpr.com