

Welfare Reform in Rural Areas

A Voyage through Uncharted Waters



What Is Welfare Reform?

- It was once called AFDC meaning Aid to Families with Dependent Children.
- In 1996 legislation law changed and named the program TANF which means Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.



Goals of Welfare Reform

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.



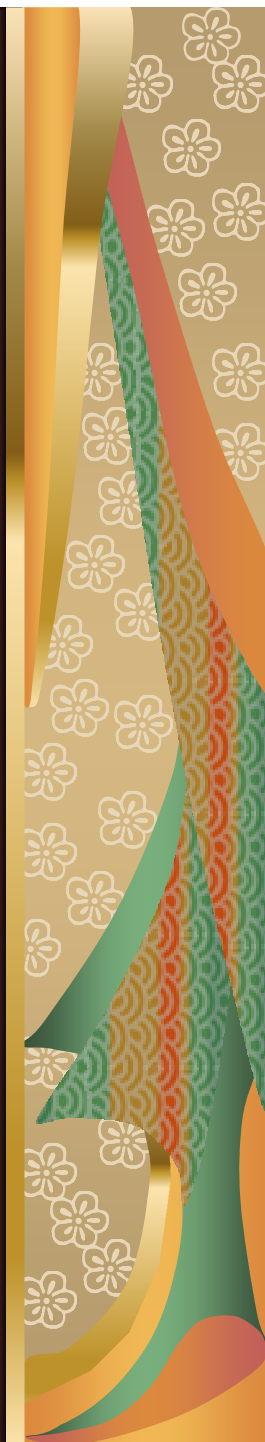
Continue Goals of Welfare Reform

- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out of wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies.
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two parent families.



Are there Rural/Urban Differences in Welfare Reform Outcomes?

- In Tennessee, a larger proportion of rural recipient families were employed, with even larger rural/urban differences for two adult cases.
- Transportation is often found to be a key difference between rural and urban areas.



Continued Rural/Urban Differences

- There were also rural/urban differences in overall service provision and availability. For example, in a rural county in Iowa food assistance was only open for two hours at a time, two days a week.
- Rural/Urban differences are also evident in relation to child care, with recipients in rural areas relying less on formal child care and more on a family member or friend to meet their child care needs.



Issues and Implications

- Recent declines in Medicaid
- Fewer Economic and Job Advancement Opportunities
- Child Care Alternatives
- Transportation Options



Conclusion

- Even though Policy Makers implemented the TANF program to help single families go from welfare to work no one really knows how effective the program will become in many rural areas because of the few employment opportunities available in the areas.

