

Strengthening TANF Programs: A Panel Dialogue

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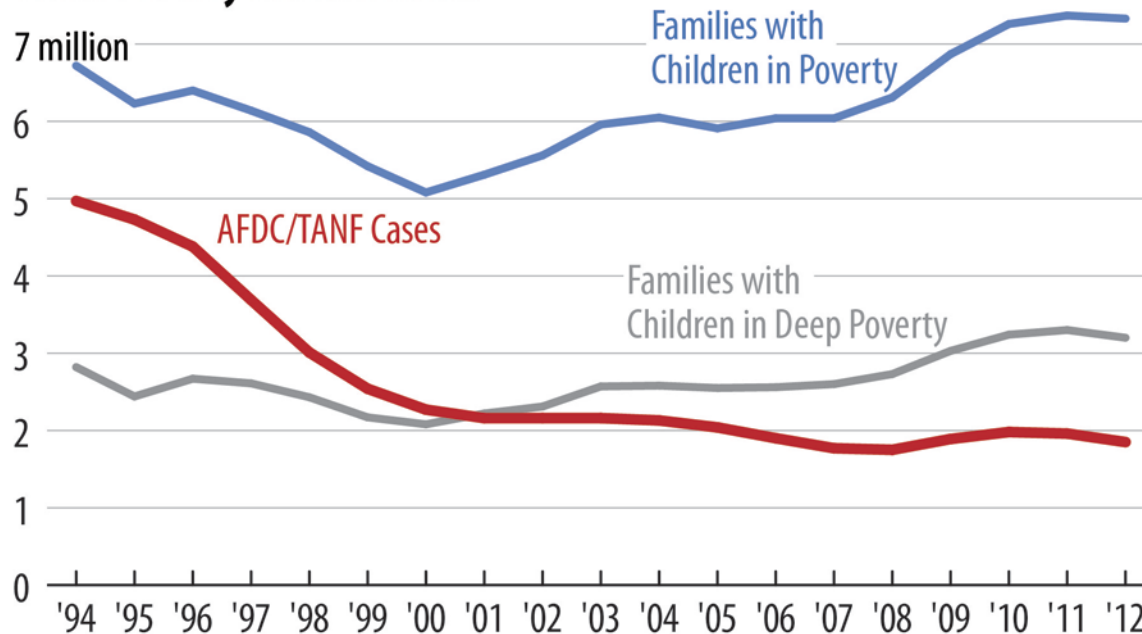
Office of Family Assistance Region VI State Meeting
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Intersection of twin goals: safety net and work program

- Look at TANF performance as a safety net program
- Look at performance of work programs in TANF
 - for those who are participating
 - and for those who are not participating (including those needy families who may not be in TANF caseload)
- Where do these twin goals intersect and how do they support or undercut each other?

TANF Provides Cash Aid to Fewer Families Even When Need Has Increased

TANF Cases Have Declined Dramatically, Including in Years When Poverty Has Increased

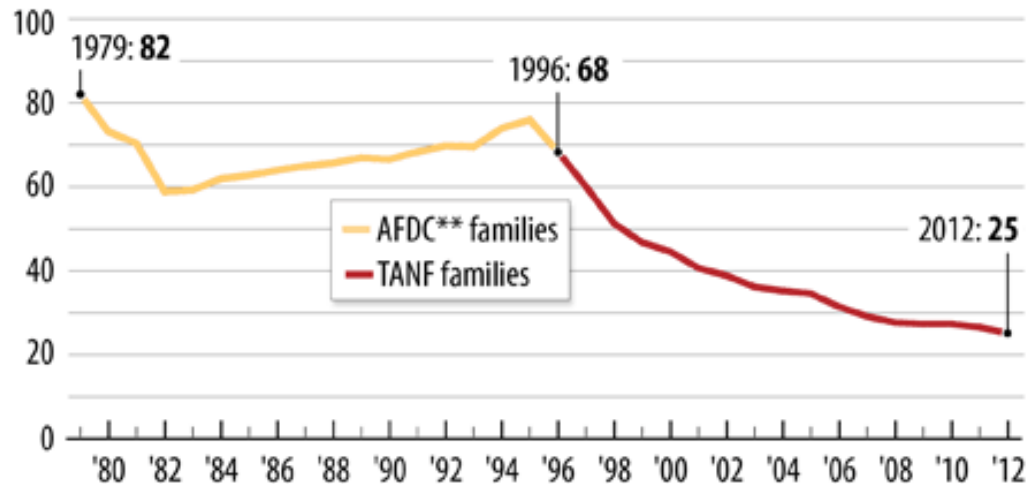


Source: CBPP analysis of poverty data from the Current Population Survey and AFDC/TANF caseload data from Health and Human Services and (since 2006) caseload data collected by CBPP from state agencies.

TANF Serves Increasingly Small Share of Poor Families

TANF's* Role as a Safety Net Has Declined Sharply Over Time

Number of families receiving AFDC/TANF benefits for every 100 families with children in poverty



*Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

**Aid to Families with Dependent Children

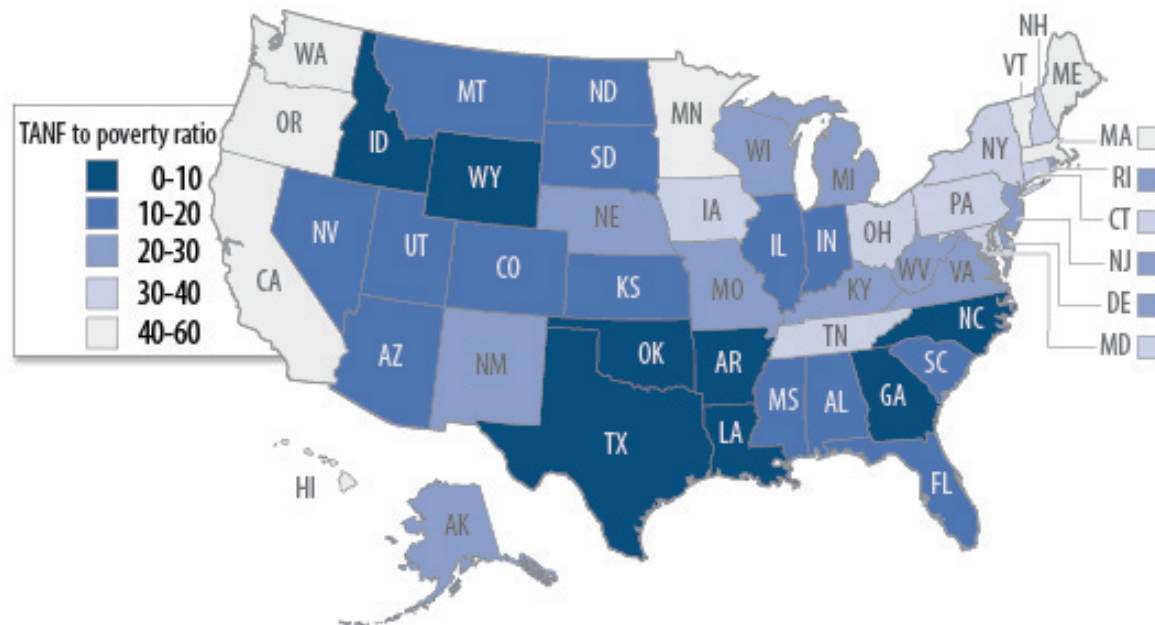
Source: CBPP analysis of poverty data from the Current Population Survey and AFDC/TANF caseload data from Health and Human Services and (since 2006) caseload data collected by CBPP from state agencies.

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TANF Role as Safety Net Varies Across States

TANF Provides a Safety Net to a Small Share of Poor Families

Number of families receiving TANF benefits
 for every 100 families in poverty with children, by state (2012)






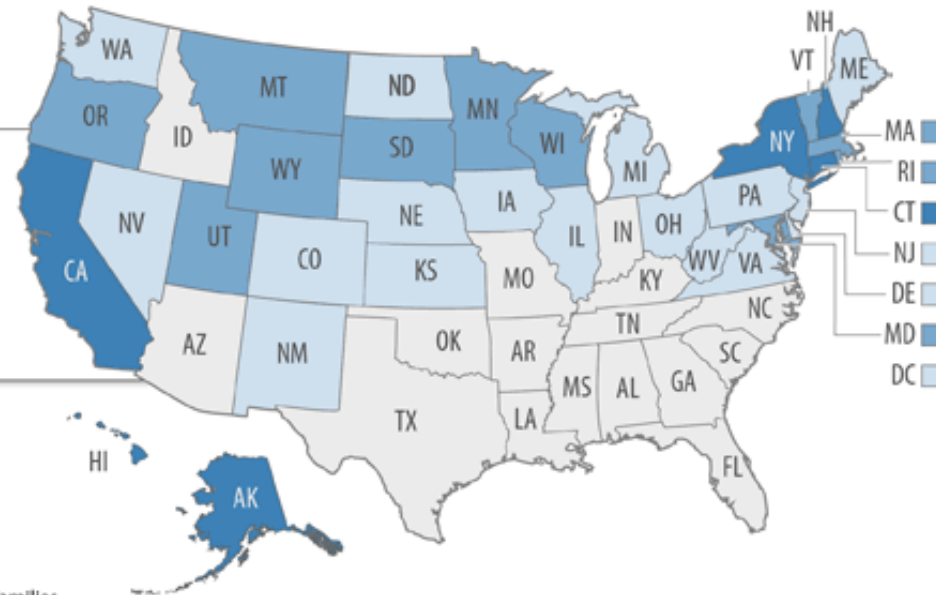
Source: CBPP analysis of poverty data from Current Population Survey and TANF caseload data from Health and Human Services (since 2006) caseload data collected by CBPP from state agencies.

Families that Receive TANF Remain Extremely Poor

Maximum TANF* Benefits Leave Families Well Below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

Maximum TANF benefit
 as a percent of FPL
 (For a family of three)

-  0 to 10 % of FPL
-  10 to 20% of FPL
-  20 to 30% of FPL
-  30 to 40% of FPL
-  40 to 50% of FPL



*Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Note: Hawaii and Alaska FPLs are higher than the other 48 states.

Source: Calculated from 2014 HHS Poverty Guidelines and CBPP-compiled data on July 2014 benefit levels.

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Key Aspects of a Work-focused Safety Net Program

- Relates to the needs, conditions of the labor market
 - Preparing people for available jobs and providing skills and training employers need
- Recognizes need for and supports multiple pathways to work (NOT one-size-fits-all)
 - Varying education, experience, capacity and interest levels require customized employment pathways
- Provides assistance that improves employment and earning outcomes, leads to self-sufficiency
 - Also services that support work

Key Aspects of a Work-focused Safety Net Program (cont.)

- Recognize the diversity of the caseload
 - Steady work with significant hours may not be realistic goal for all
 - Set expectations consistent with ability to succeed
 - Do not exclude the most vulnerable families through work requirements they cannot meet
- Provides adequate cash assistance when people are unable to work
 - Individual or labor market inability
- Considers impact of policies on children

How well is your program working as a work-focused safety net?

- How well is your TANF program working in providing a cash assistance safety net to poor families?
- What work-related policies and practices keep vulnerable families out of the safety net altogether?
- How do vulnerable families advance towards self-sufficiency work if excluded from safety net and work programs?
- What policies or practices might you change so that vulnerable families could have improved access cash aid and work program services?

How well is your TANF work program working?

- How well does your work program recognize the diverse work-related needs of TANF families?
- Does it offer a range of activities to match needs of the participants?
- Does it recognize multiple pathways to work?
- How does your program respond to persons for whom significant hours of steady work may not be realistic or who may need more flexible work activities or hours?

Does your TANF program advance or impede self-sufficiency?

- Does it advance skills and employment prospects?
 - Lead to improved employment and earnings outcomes?
 - Related to the needs of labor market?
- Can TANF families benefit from other workforce training systems (WIA, adult ed, community college?)
- What do you know about the employment and earnings outcomes?
 - What impacts can you attribute to the work program?

Measuring Performance of Work Programs

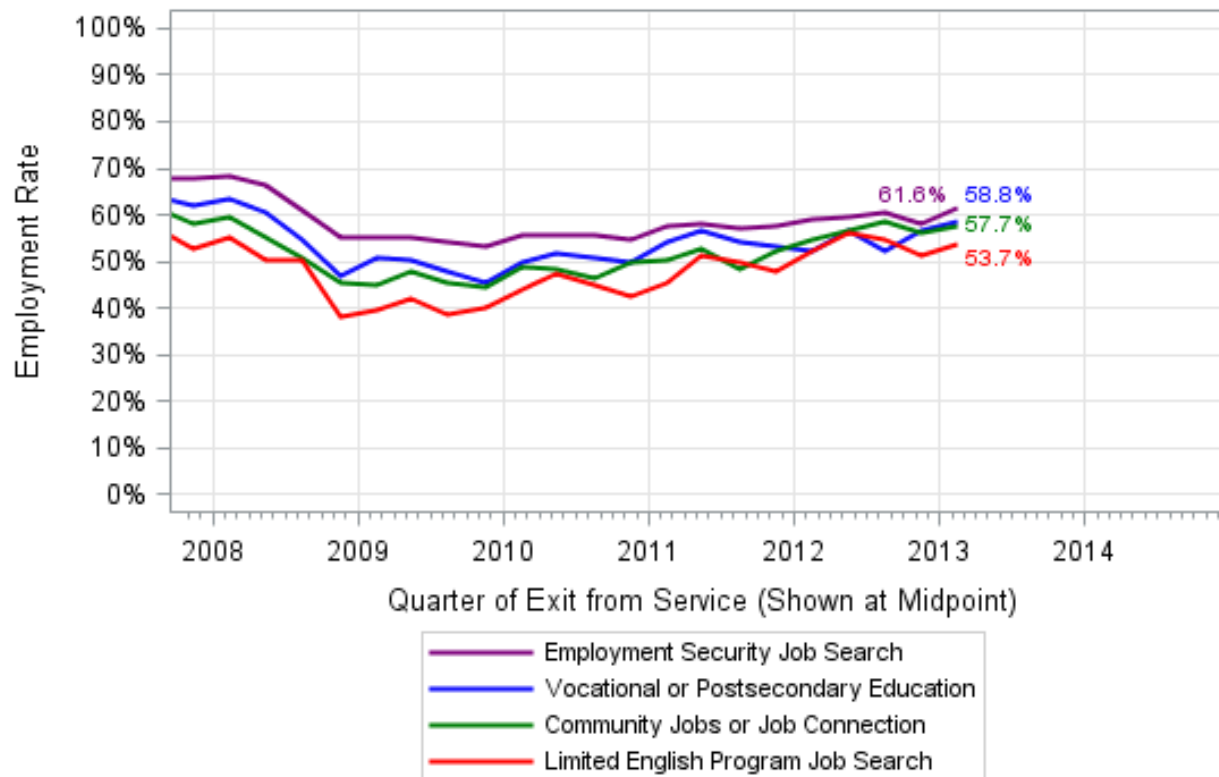
- TANF Work Participation Rate only measures processes (participation), not outcomes
- What factors does your state track beside the components of the WPR? What might you track?
- What would you want to know?
 - About which families?
 - For how long a follow-up period?
- What can you track administratively?
- How can you use what you learn to improve programs?

Washington State's WorkFirst Performance Chartbook

- WA publishes monthly data-driven chartbook
 - Over 100 pages, over 50 measures
 - Appears to all be administrative data or matches
- Employment outcome measures include:
 - Rates of employment after various types of services (e.g., job search, vocational education)
 - Quarterly and hourly wage data after completing various types of services
 - Sufficient employment to qualify for UI after services
 - <http://www.workfirst.wa.gov/performance/measures.asp>

Example: Tracking employment rates after exiting various services

Employment Rates in Quarter One, Two, or Three After Selected Services for WorkFirst Adults



Example: Tracking hourly wage after subsidized employment exit

**Median Hourly Wage in Quarter Three After Exiting
 Commerce Community Jobs or Job Connection**

