



**Rural Prosperity:
A Longitudinal Study of Rural Communities
and
Rural Low-Income Families**

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**In collaboration with
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Cooperating states are California, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rural Prosperity: A Longitudinal Study of Rural Communities and Rural Low Income Families was funded from an USDA, National Research Initiative Cooperative Grant Program (NRICGP). The multi-state project NC223 and NC1011, “Rural Low-Income Families: Tracking Their Well-being and Functioning in the Context of Welfare Reform,” framed the data set for this project. The project, also known as the Rural Families Speak project, is a longitudinal multi-state project with qualitative and quantitative data from 524 rural low-income families in 30 counties across 17 states. Labor force participation, health, food security, and social support were examined among rural low-income families to give us insight into the forces and opportunities that affect their lives and where they live. The stability of employment in rural America is a major issue. Accessing and maintaining employment was a major challenge for this group of rural families. Not only do these rural low-income women have access to fewer employment opportunities, they also have less access to other resources such as childcare, transportation, physical and mental health services, which are vital to keeping and maintaining employment. Social support served as an essential resource for these rural low-income families and helped them access the resources they needed when other services were not available. At the end of the report, a listing of the collective output of the NC223 and NC1011 research is provided. There have been 23 dissertations and theses completed. There are several still in process. The publications are categorized by topic areas and over 100 referred and reviewed papers are included. Another section on conferences and reports is included, categorized by topic area. The team has shared research in this manner for over 90 venues. The team listed manuscripts in progress to help the reader to follow in the future.

INTRODUCTION

From the mountains, to the valleys, to the prairies in between...25% of the U.S. population resides in rural areas. In those majestic and pastoral settings, families often struggle to obtain and maintain a self-sufficient quality of life. As research demonstrates, rural areas have challenges not well understood by residents of suburban and urban America or by members of Congress and other elected and appointed officials (Bauer, Braun, & Dyk, 2003). These challenges affect the ability of families, the heart of rural communities, to fulfill their functions as workers, consumers and citizens. Impaired family functioning affects rural prosperity.

Public policies and research that influences those policies, seldom integrate perspectives of family and community needs and assets resulting in knowledge gaps that can inhibit growth and development in rural areas. This study reduces the gap by providing a longitudinal unified analysis about the capacity of members of the current or future labor force, their health, and effectiveness of the network of formal and informal support that surrounds rural families living in 17 states and 30 counties in four regions of the U.S.

Economic stability, health and social supports are fundamental elements for strong families, and these can be challenges in rural settings. The Rural Families Speak project examines the interrelatedness of rural families' labor force participation, health including food security, and social support of family, within the context of community forces and opportunities that can strengthen or weaken rural families and communities. More specifically, this project focuses on rural low-income families, an understudied population, who are the recipients of public assistance, especially public food assistance, and the relationships among their lives, the vitality of the rural communities where they live and work, and the impact of public policies that directly affect them.

FINDINGS

This report will begin with a summary of the findings from three topical areas: Labor force, health, and social support. A discussion of the Rural Families Speak multi-state research project will follow. This discussion will include a description of the study design and data overview, sampling framework, the process of constructing and maintaining the data sets, and dissemination.

Labor Force

Poverty is disproportionately higher in rural areas of the United States. Being able to access employment is vital in helping families out of poverty. The topic of labor force cuts across many areas and accessing employment opportunities were constant challenges for these rural families. Being employed served as a pathway to economic self-sufficiency. However, in trying to access employment, many of these families faced a number of obstacles.

Irregular employment often negatively affects individual and family functioning due to the changes in employment related resources. Moving between employment and unemployment or changing employment can lead to unstable income that impacts planning for family life (Wilson, 1996). Job volatility was a significant obstacle for many of these low-income families as they tried to move towards financial stability.

Berry, Katras, Sano, Lee, and Bauer (2008) studied the factors surrounding job volatility among this group of rural low-income families. For this study, 245 rural low-income mothers, with children in the household, were categorized into three groups according to their longitudinal employment patterns: (1) *stable employment*, (2) *intermittent employment*, and (3) *continuous unemployment*. Below are the results organized by employment patterns:

Stable employment

- Only 40 (16.3%) of the mothers remained in the same job over time.
- It was more important for these mothers to have flexibility at work and to be satisfied with their job than to receive higher wages in maintaining stable employment. Flexible work environment, especially, enabled them to combine work and family responsibilities.
- Having a strong social support network (e.g., family, supervisors, or co-workers) was also essential in remaining employed.

Intermittent employment

- 149 (60.8%) changed their employer or were employed on and off over time.
- These mothers changed their employment status due to lack of flexibility at the work place or difficulty in balancing work and family responsibilities. Their employment was interrupted when their job did not allow them to care for their family in case of unexpected situations (e.g., a child being sick).
- The mothers who faced short-term health issues or minor disabilities were also unable to remain in the same job over time.
- Mothers were more likely to be intermittently employed, compared with those who maintained stable employment, if their youngest child was younger, the household experienced higher food insecurity, and they received transportation assistance.

Continuous unemployment

- 56 (22.9%) were continuously unemployed over time.
- Some mothers were unable to participate in the labor force due to chronic health problems, including health of self and/or a family member.
- Others chose to remain unemployed to care for their children. Despite limited income, taking good care of their children was a priority.
- The likelihood of continuously unemployed over the years, compared with the stable employment group, increased if their youngest child was younger, experienced higher food insecurity and lower life satisfaction, did not have a car, and received transportation assistance.

The data showed that all three groups struggled to overcome barriers to care for their families, especially children. However, mothers with stable employment were able to

maintain work and family responsibilities because of flexible work environments and strong support networks, while the intermittently employed could not due to work and family struggles. Continuously unemployed mothers chose to avoid these struggles by staying home with their children.

Huddleston-Casas and Braun created an ecosystem model to illustrate the relationships of systems and challenges to becoming and remaining employed over time (Braun & Huddleston-Casas, 2006; Huddleston-Casas & Braun, 2006). Dolan, Seiling, and Glesner (2006) reported that many of the rural low-income mothers in this project had service jobs. These jobs were described as labor intensive, and were typified by low wages, low skills, and non-standard hours. Further, these results underscored the crucial role social support plays in managing work and family obligations for these mothers. Mammen, Lass, and Seiling, (2006) identified factors that influenced low-income rural mothers' labor force participation decisions. These factors included wage and non-wage income, individual characteristics, household characteristics, individuals' stock of human capital, and local job market characteristics, measured by the county unemployment rate.

Kim, Seiling, Stafford, and Richards (2005) reported a significant relationship between employment status and mental health of rural low-income women. The severe imbalance between the demand for and supply of labor threatens rural low-income women's daily survival and their mental health. Reschke and Walker (2006) examined women's work and caregiving attitudes amidst serious constraints: living in remote, rural areas of the United States, and living in poverty. Findings suggest that many women with limited resources in rural areas are likely to express a strong commitment to both working and caring for their children and will find strategies that reduce the conflict between the two.

Accessing and maintaining employment was a major challenge for this group of rural families. Not only do these rural low-income women have access to fewer employment opportunities, they also have less access to other resources such as childcare, transportation, physical and mental health services, which are vital to keeping and maintaining employment. Future research is needed to understand the rural context of employment opportunities and the family context of resources needed to care for the family. This context varies across the economic landscape of rural America.

Health

In the United States, health and socioeconomic status are linked. Compared to those with more resources, individuals with fewer economic resources have higher morbidity and mortality rates, and are less likely to have access to and use health care services (Adler & Ostrove, 1999; Kawachi, Kennedy & Wilkinson, 1999; Sells & Blum, 1996; Singh, 2003; Williams, 1990). Changes in welfare policy have led to a core focus on personal responsibility with the expectation that such responsibility will lead to economic self-sufficiency. Little attention has been paid to the role that health may play in poverty; yet, poor health and disease may be both a cause and a consequence of lower socioeconomic status making economic self-sufficiency difficult or even impossible (Adler, Marmot, McEwen, & Stewart, 1999; Brunner, 1997; Krieger, 1999; Pincus, 1994; Wilkinson, 1997; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 1998).

Community context also influences family well-being among low-income families. Rural poverty is more severe, more persistent, and often less visible than urban poverty (Hirschl & Rank, 1999; Marks, Dewees, Quелlette, & Koralek, 1999; Rogers & Dagata, 2000). Thus, more rural families than urban families are likely to experience poor health. Health care services including those associated with mental health are more limited in rural areas; this decreases the odds that people will get preventative or timely care (Findeis, Henry, Hirschl, Lewis, Ortega-Sanchez, Peine, & Zimmerman, 2001; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2002; Wagenfeld, Goldsmith, Stiles, & Mandercheid, 1988). Rural families are also less likely to have health insurance coverage (National Advisory Committee on Rural Health, 2002), and the coverage they do have may be less comprehensive than their urban counterparts (Budetti, Duchon, Schoen, & Shikles, 1999). Nationally, death rates are higher in rural counties for children and young adults. Rural residents have a higher incidence of certain types of heart disease, more activity limitations due to chronic health problems, and a higher suicide rate (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2002).

Analyses of the Rural Families Speak health data have focused on three main areas: health insurance coverage and use of health services; barriers to employment and economic well-being related to health problems, including depression; and the role of food security in family health and well-being.

Health Insurance Coverage and Use of Health Services

The majority of participants in our study had some type of health insurance. About 66% of mothers said that they had health insurance for themselves. In addition, they reported that about 60% of their partners, and 90% of their children had some kind of health insurance. Partners most often had private health insurance coverage, while mothers and children were more likely to have health insurance coverage through Medicaid or a state health insurance plan. Dental insurance coverage was less common, with 52% of mothers, 44% of partners, and 81% of children having dental insurance.

Having employment does not always lead to health insurance coverage for women. Slightly more than half of the working mothers were covered by private health insurance through their employer or husband/partner's employer. Having medical insurance and working more than 30 hours, however, were key contributing factors to employment stability (Dolan, Mammen, Bauer, & Seiling, 2005). Medicaid covered one third of the women workers and it continues to be an important source of health insurance for low-income employed rural women.

Kim, Seiling and Varcoe (2004) studied ethnic differences in predictors of health care acquisition patterns. When the entire sample was used, no ethnic disparities were found. However, when the ethnic groups were analyzed, the predictors of use patterns were quite different (Seiling, Varcoe, DeVitto, & Kim, 2005). This supports the need to have multi-level and within group analyses on issues that are related to health factors in better understanding the quality of life of rural residents.

In a comparison of Hispanic versus non-Hispanic participants, Tatum (2006) reported that the Hispanics in the sample were less likely to have health and dental insurance coverage for all family members, but reported fewer physical, mental, and dental health problems than did their non-Hispanic counterparts. Despite concerns that individuals without health insurance will rely on hospital emergency rooms for routine health care, the Hispanics in this sample were no more likely than non-Hispanics to report use of emergency room services. Having health insurance did not affect the number of doctor's visits for children and partners; however, mother without health insurance (both Hispanic and non-Hispanic) reported fewer visits to the doctor than did those with insurance.

Health and Well-Being

Much of the work related to health of the Rural Families Speak families has explored the relationship between maternal depression and other family characteristics. Given the strong links between poverty and maternal depression, and between presence of young children and maternal depression, it is not surprising that approximately 40% of the mothers in the sample score at risk for symptoms of clinical depression at each wave of interviews. Investigations of factors related to depression in our sample have found that maternal employment is linked to better mental health and few symptoms of depression (Dolan, Richards, Sano, Bauer, & Braun, 2005). Further, perceptions of the family's economic situation and a lower level of income adequacy are indicators of higher depressive symptomatology (Piescher, 2004). Piescher also found that parenting support accounts for a significant amount of the variability in depressive symptomatology.

Another study focused on families with at least one member identified as having health problems serious enough to interfere with daily life or employment at the time of entry to the study family (O'Dell, Abel, Richards, & Manoogian, 2005). At least two waves of qualitative data for the 65 families with serious health problems were examined to explore patterns over time. A few families reported that health problems got consistently better or worse over the 1-2 year interval between points of data collection. Much more common, however, was a pattern of "health chaos." This occurred in families when one or more members had improved health while others got worse; or some family members showed improved health at second point of interview, but declined at third point of interview. This pattern of "health chaos" had serious implications for financial and emotional stability for most families, and illustrated the vulnerability of low-income rural families with serious health concerns. Mammen, Seiling, and Dolan (2004) also reported that the health problems of the woman contributed to difficulties in seeking and maintaining employment.

Another group of Rural Family Speak researchers are testing how family and community characteristics affect physical and psychological well-being of mothers over time. Using data from 199 women with three waves of data that were collected overtime, we have found that the mother's physical health was worsened by food insecurity and inability to purchase appropriate medications. Mothers with higher education and a partner had better health. Surprisingly, direct economic factors such as income or poverty level of family, receipt of public assistance did not impact the mother's physical health. Analysis of the psychological health of these mothers revealed that the factors influencing physical health did not influence psychological well-being. When controlling for depressive

symptomatology of the mother, the number of chronic health problems and being unemployed over all 3 times influenced psychological health. Consistently unemployed mothers scored at greater risk of clinical depression than did mothers who were employed at least one point over the three waves of data collection. Variables related to community characteristics are unrelated to maternal physical or psychological health in these analyses (Sano, Katras, Richards, & Bauer).

Food Security

Food security of low-income rural families continues to be a focus of the Rural Families Speak study. Previous work with this data set has established that food and financial life skills are associated with food security (Olson, Seiling, & Lawrence, 2001; Olson, Anderson, Kiss, Lawrence, & Seiling, 2004). More recently, Bove and Olson (2004) found that maladaptive eating patterns and coping strategies likely contribute to the “hunger-obesity” paradox in poor rural women. Further, Olson and Bove (2005) analyzed how the lack of transportation for some rural families confines them to their homes and leads to sedentary lifestyles associated with obesity. Another study has linked ill health and food insecurity (Olson, Miller, Swanson, & Strawderman, 2005). Not surprisingly, we have also found that maternal employment is linked to less food insecurity (Mammen, Seiling, & Dolan, 2004).

Health problems within a family not only affect the person with the illness but rather the entire family system. When a parent cannot find or keep a job, the entire family struggles. When a parent cannot work due to caring for a disabled child, the entire family struggles. Results from the Rural Families Speak project have revealed that health is a major barrier to employment and economic well-being.

Linking of financial life skills and food skills has been an important contribution. Food security tends to be viewed more often from a foods perspective rather than a systems perspective that includes the financial skills in addition to food access and the skills needed to prepare food.

Social Support

Families with limited resources often find it challenging to provide for all of their family’s needs. Formal support systems may be inadequate or unavailable, or families may avoid using them for various reasons (Dolan, Seiling, & Glesner, 2006). Families who have chosen to live in rural areas because of ties to family and place often turn to their kin networks for help. Family network support comes in many forms, ranging from monetary and material resources to practical services such as providing child care and transportation to advice and information. Emotional support is an important part of close support networks as well, and family networks are typically strong sources of emotional support. The relationships within the network play a big role in determining what, how much, to whom support is given. Parents provide the most support and the widest range of resources to their adult children and their families (Marghi, 2004). Parents may have various motives for aiding their grown children: altruism, investment in succeeding generations, and/or expectations for help in their old age.

Proximity of kin and other support network members influences the types and amount of support given (Garrison, Marks, Lawrence, & Braun, 2004). It is obvious that most practical services require giver and recipient to be in the same location, for example, giving rides to work or taking care of children when their parents have to work or school. Distance also impedes information exchange and financial assistance. Emotional support may be exchanged regardless of location, but distance adds to costs of communicating with others.

Social Support Findings from Rural Families Speak Study

Social Support Networks

- Networks helped maintain household viability & increased financial stability (Seiling, 2006; Seiling, Stafford, McCabe, & Reschke, 2006).
- Networks protected against food insecurity and depression (Garrison, Marks, Lawrence, & Braun 2004; Islam, 2004; Marghi, 2004; Piescher, 2004; Seiling, McCabe, Reschke, & Stafford, 2003; Seiling, Stafford, McCabe, & Reschke, 2006; Swanson, Lawrence, Anderson, & Olson, 2004; Vandergriff-Avery, 2001).
- Networks facilitated employment through transportation and childcare and provided information and advice about jobs (Dolan, Seiling, & Glesner, 2006; Seiling, McCabe, Reschke, & Stafford, 2003; Seiling, Stafford, McCabe, & Reschke, 2006; Waybright, Morrison, Seiling, Meek, & Manoogian, 2004).
- Social support was positively linked to education of teen mothers. (Rudd, 2003).
- Networks provided information and advice about parenting (Reschke, Manoogian, Richards, Walker, & Seiling, 2006; Seiling, Stafford, McCabe, & Reschke, 2006; Waybright, Morrison, Seiling, Meek, & Manoogian, 2004).
- Networks provided emotional support and companionship (Seiling, Manoogian, Richards, & Bird, 2007; Stafford, McCabe, & Reschke, 2006; Waybright, Morrison, Seiling, Meek, & Manoogian, 2004).
- Expectations and demands for network participation and reciprocity cost time and money (Richards, Manoogian, Seiling, Bird, 2002; Seiling, 2004).

Mother-Daughter Relationships

- The data set was expanded by a group of Rural Families Speak researchers that created a sub data set of the women (daughters) whom talked about their mothers. The results below are taken from this effort. (Seiling, Manoogian, Richards, & Bird, 2007).
- Most participants reported tightly knit networks that were composed primarily of family members.
- Many participants lived within 50 miles of at least one parent.
- Participants tended to have more contact with their mothers than their fathers, 50% saw their mothers every day.
- About twice as many reported receiving support from their mothers (65%) than from their fathers (34%).
- Although mothers and fathers provided similar types of support, mothers provided more of all types, especially services and emotional support.

Many low-income rural mothers survive with the help of their extended family networks. Their choice to live in close proximity to kin may give them vital access to

resources and emotional support. However, there are time, energy, and financial demands on members of the support networks, especially the parents, to provide support. The lucky ones have family and friends willing to make such sacrifices without demanding too much in return.

The data from Rural Families Speak project clearly show that social support is vital to the economic, emotional, and physical well-being of rural low-income families. Most of this group of rural low-income families depended on their families and friends for access to vital resources; family and friends were the safety net for these families. Most of the Rural Families Speak research on social support has been conducted using the qualitative data. Social support seems to be more difficult to measure quantitatively and varies across groups. This is an area that needs additional research and potentially conceptual framing to provide measures that are easy to collect by large-scale methods.

DATA DESCRIPTION

Study Design and Data Overview

The Rural Families Speak study was developed with an interdisciplinary approach and contributions from family economists, family scientists, child development specialists, nutritional scientists, and rural sociologists. The project employed a triangulation mixed method study design, which meant that both quantitative (variables) and qualitative (textual) family-level data were collected simultaneously. A mixed-method approach offers a better understanding of the research problem or issue than either method alone (Plano, 2004). The project also developed a community-level dataset that is described in detail in a later section of this report.

The interview protocol was allowed to evolve as researchers collected data over 3 years. For example, while the interview protocol for Wave 1 was predominantly qualitative with a few of standardized measures, by Wave 3, the protocol was largely quantitative with some qualitative sections. The raw qualitative data from Wave 1 averaged approximately 30 pages of transcript per interview. Less qualitative data was generated in interviews for Wave 2 and Wave 3 due to the quantitative nature of the protocol.

The quantitative dataset for each of the three waves consists of over 1,000 variables. In addition to comprising a large number of variables, the family level dataset includes multiple perspectives, which is one of the strengths of this study of rural, low-income families.

Sampling Framework

The Rural Families Speak study consists of families with at least one child under 13 years old and currently eligible for, although not necessarily receiving, Food Stamps or the Supplemental Nutritional Program for Women Infants and Child (WIC). Preference was given to families with at least one preschool child so that child care arrangements can be studied. In order to receive WIC, the youngest child must be under 5. Each state recruited participants who represented the racial and ethnic diversity of the low-income rural population in that state, with three states (Michigan, Oregon, and California) over-sampling

Latino(a)s. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the woman in the family for about 2 hours using a semi-structured protocol. Interviews predominately took place in their home, at the Cooperative Extension Service Office in a conference room, the library in the community, or at their place of work (Bauer, 2004). For more information on the methodology of the Rural Families Speak project refer to the *Basebook Report* (Bauer, 2004) available at <http://fsos.che.umn.edu/img/assets/16501/basebook.pdf>.

The longitudinal Rural Families Speak project data contains three panels of family level data, each comprising a different combination of states and counties (see Note for Table1). Data for Panel 1 Wave 1-3 were collected in 24 counties in 14 states, data for Panel 2 were collected in 3 counties in 2 states and data for Panel 3 were also collected in 3 counties in 2 states.

For each panel, the initial data collection (Wave 1) used the same interview protocol that included a core set of questions. States were allowed to add additional questions appropriate to their specific interests. While Panel 1 families were interviewed three times (Wave 1, Wave 2 and Wave 3), both Panel 2 and Panel 3 families were interviewed only 2 times with the last interview being a combination of questions from Wave 2 and Wave 3 interview protocols. Two states joined the study in 2004 as Panel 3, but only one of the two states collected the follow-up interviews as Wave 2/3.

Table1. Rural Families Speak sampling framework by panel and year

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Panel 1 ^a	Wave 1 (N=413)							
		Wave 2 (N=325)						
				Wave 3 (N=270)				
Panel 2 ^b			Wave 1 (N=58)					
					Wave 2/3 (N=52)			
Panel 3 ^c						Wave 1 (N=53)		
							Wave 2/3 (N=25)	

Note. Data were collected from families in:

^aPanel 1: CA, IN, KY, LA, MD, MA, MI, MN, NE, NH, NY, OH (County 1), OR, and WY (Wave 1 only).

^bPanel 2: OH (County 2) and WV.

^cPanel 3: Wave 1 includes IA and SD. Wave 2 data were collected only for IA.

Quantitative Datasets

The quantitative data sets consist of responses to a variety of interview questions as well as numerous survey measures. Survey measures included Knowledge of Community Resources, Life Skills Assessment, The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), Adult and Child Health Survey, the USDA Food Security Module, and Parental Ladder. Specific data collection waves included additional surveys such as the Role of Religious or Spiritual Beliefs in Wave 2, and SF-36 (health measure) in Wave 3.

The data files were constructed based on waves and panels. Information from interviews and surveys was quantified and entered into the statistical software package, SPSS, by the research team at Oregon State University (OSU). The centralization of data entry at OSU was intended to ensure consistency of data entry across waves and panels. OSU was also responsible for construction of additional variables, calculation of measurement scores, and computation of specific variables such as income, percent of poverty threshold, and age at the time of interview. The finalized data files were made available to participating researchers in all states through project's FTP (File Transfer Protocol) site.

Qualitative Datasets

Each wave of interview data for the three panels was transcribed and systematically coded by the Oregon State University research team using a qualitative coding scheme developed for the project by researchers from the entire team. This coding scheme consisted of 18 broad content areas. The tenets of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and qualitative analysis techniques (Berg, 2003; Gilgun, Daly, & Handel, 1992; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) were employed to guide this process. Using MAXqda© data analysis program segments of the transcripts were coded using the 18 broad codes that emerged from the context of our interview research questions and theoretical frameworks. Data on a particular content area was coded wherever it appeared in the interview, not just in response to targeted questions. The broad coding scheme enabled researchers to distill sizeable interview data into manageable coded sections. Inter-coder reliabilities calculated on approximately 5% of interviews ranged from .75 to .93, with an average of .86. Subgroups of researchers then selected particular topics for further sub-coding and analysis.

Community Data Set

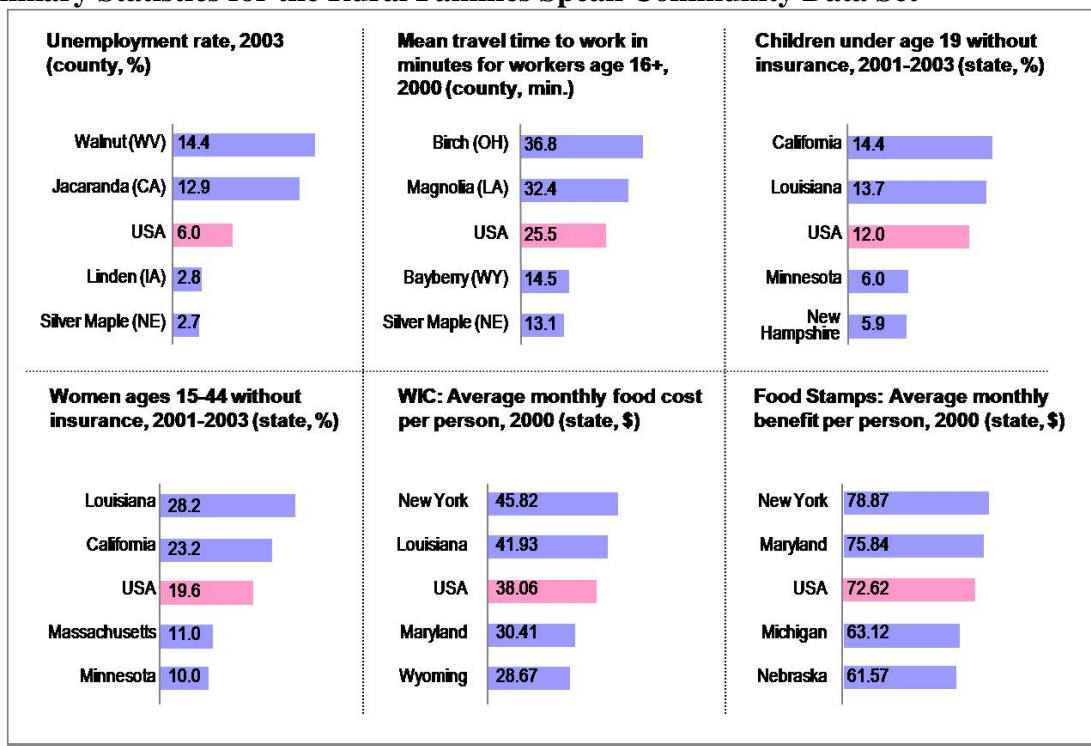
The community level dataset includes county level data, and state level and national level data when county information was not available. These data reflect aspects of community life that directly affect families. (See Table 2 for statistical results from the highest and lowest counties and states on labor force, health, food security, and social support variables.) The community data set was created to bridge the macro (contextual effects, historical trends, socio-political practices, and social changes) and micro (family interaction within the household that are shaped by neighborhoods and communities in which they exist) contexts (Bokemeier, 1997; Tickamyer, 1996). In 2004, the Rural Families Speak project partnered with South Dakota State University to build a community data set with oversight from the University of Minnesota and several research consultants from the Rural Families Speak project. A committee was formed to help determine the contents of the data set, for example, what variables to include and where to find the data. Workgroup leaders from the Rural Families Speak project helped to compile lists of potential variables by reviewing existing data sets and identifying variables for the community data set.

The final community data set includes 238 state and/or county variables from 30 counties and 17 states. Topical areas included in the data set are population, household and family, housing, income, employment, industry, poverty, health and fertility, mortality, education, social support, child maltreatment, and crime. Data were taken from various data sources, such as the Census, March of Dimes, U.S. Department of Labor, Kaiser Foundation,

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, California Research Bureau, USDA Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Justice, USDA Economic Research Service.

South Dakota State University created the data set using SPSS. All Rural Families Speak researchers have access to the data set and corresponding codebook on the Rural Families Speak project File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site. The community level dataset, available to project researchers in September 2005, provides context for what was happening in the larger community when the rural family level data were collected. Table 2 shows statistical results from the highest and lowest counties and states on labor force, health, food security, and social support variables.

Table 2.
Summary Statistics for the Rural Families Speak Community Data Set^a



^aPlease note that to protect the confidentiality of our families, we replaced county names with pseudonyms.

Data Enhancements

The Rural Families Speak datasets have been continuously updated and improved by adding, modifying, or simplifying data. The challenge in this process has been to do so without losing the rich, complex information that was gathered about this group of rural low-income families. Data enhancements are necessary to facilitate use by a diverse group of researchers and to ensure that all are using the most up-to-date data for their work. The Oregon State University team managed and supervised enhancements of both quantitative and qualitative datasets. The following subsections highlight selected data enhancements made since September 2004.

Quantitative Data Enhancements

Two additional states—Iowa and South Dakota—joined the Rural Families Speak project in 2003 (Identified as Panel 3) and data collection started in 2004. Both states utilized the project's standard interview protocols and surveys with additional state-specific questions. The Iowa team collected data from 30 families and the South Dakota team interviewed 21 families, resulting in 51 cases for Wave 1 Panel 3 data. The Iowa team conducted follow-up interviews with 25 families in 2005-2006 using Wave 2 and Wave 3 interview protocols.

All Panel 3 data were processed according to guidelines developed by the OSU team and entered into either SPSS or MAXqda© software, depending on nature of the data. After the quantitative and qualitative data were entered by the Oregon State University team, data files were returned to the state of origin to be examined for data entry errors. Any data entry errors were reported to the Oregon State University team, double checked, and corrected before Panel 3 datasets were finalized and made available to the team. This iterative process was established to safeguard against human error likely to occur with intensive data entry. This improved the organization and usability of the data. For complex variables such as employment, data were closely verified between the qualitative and quantitative data.

One of the tasks of data management was to make data corrections when needed. A major adjustment was made to the occupation coding. Codifying employment-related information for low-income families was difficult. Categorization of participants' occupations was originally based on occupational categories based on 1998-1999 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Categories for Wave 1. The Occupational Categories, which are updated every year, were significantly different in 2003 (Wave 3) than 1998-99. As a result, to allow for longitudinal comparisons, we decided to keep the Wave 1 codes and not use current job type codes for each wave.

Responding to requests from project researchers, we created a master Wave 1 data set that combined both Panel 1 and Panel 2 datasets in order to make data analysis more consistent across researchers. Any changes made in the data sets were reported to researchers in all states in periodical email data updates. While all modifications we conducted cannot be listed, major modifications included:

- Variable names were made consistent across waves and panels
- Outliers were examined in detail
- Baseline cases were re-identified more accurately

Data management also included developing different ways to make accessing and using the data less complex. Because there are 8 different quantitative family-level data files in our project (Refer to Table 1 for names of data sets in addition to Community Data set) and each data file had its own codebook, researchers using multiple data files had to simultaneously use two or three different codebooks. To simplify this aspect, we produced a master codebook, *Map of Variables*, which allows researchers to locate specific variables by waves and panels electronically. The *Map of Variables* is intended to help a researcher using multiple data files quickly identify which variable exist in each panel/wave. The *Map of*

Variables is arranged by protocol questions, waves, and panels, and utilizes hyperlinks that allow researchers to easily jump to target variables.

In addition, detailed descriptions of data file information were documented and posted on the project's File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site. Among other information, such descriptions included how each data file was structured, what information was recorded, and when data were collected by waves and panels. Such documentation was essential for keeping track of data structure, changes between waves and panels, and subsequent data modifications.

Qualitative Data Enhancement

During the course of the project, the qualitative software programs used by the project underwent major updates to necessitate the transfer of data between programs or versions. For example, the qualitative data was initially processed using an initial WinMAX©. The software company stopped supporting WinMAX©, and launched a new program called, MAXqda©. Given the size of our qualitative data files and the number of different people working with such data, the transfer of data between programs was a significant task. All team members needed to consistently use the same versions of the software as we worked on papers and shared them electronically as well as when new states were added to the project. The grant purchased one copy of the new program for each state in the project. All of these tasks were supervised by a data manager that was hired by the grant

Protecting participants' confidentiality was one of the top priorities of our project. Pseudonyms were created for participants, partners, and all children in households. In transcripts we replaced all real names with pseudonyms. To safeguard against possible issues, separate documentation was created to provide explanation of and guidelines for use of pseudonyms by researchers in their work. Similarly, pseudonyms were created for county names and city names. All information regarding place pseudonyms were documented and posted on the project File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site. Following the guidelines for use of the pseudonyms was the responsibility of the project leader in each state.

DISSEMINATION

Website Development

The Rural Families Speak website serves as the key dissemination channel. The development of the website (<http://fsos.che.umn.edu/projects/rfs.html>) began in 2004 and has continued to evolve throughout the project's life course. The goal of this website was to make products available via the web to provide access to any interested party. Further, for those populations or clients who lack convenient access to web technology, it was envisioned that educators and other professionals could access and disseminate hard copies.

The website is divided into four main parts: Project Description, States, Publication and Resources. The project description gives an overview of the project from its inception. The States page gives information about the families in each individual state. On each state page, University of Minnesota created a profile of the families in that state. The profiles help readers not only look at the rural low-income families as a whole, but also learn families in

individual states. The publication page houses all of the products of the project. This page is divided up into different types of publications: Project basebook, journal articles and book chapters, conference presentations and proceedings, dissertations and theses, other papers and presentations, policy/research briefs and fact sheets, and Breeze Live webcast series. These dissemination products are accessible to others interested in rural families and rural communities. Educators can reproduce the products for use in programs, available for policy work, or use in research.

The Rural Families Speak Webcast Series

The Rural Families Speak webcast series consisted of one internal electronic conference and three public electronic conferences utilizing the Macromedia Breeze, a web-based conferencing system available at University of Minnesota. The webcast series audio and visual presentations along with 9 policy and research briefs and fact sheets from the webcast series are located on the Rural Families Speak website at <http://fsos.che.umn.edu/projects/rfs.html>.

The initial webcast conference, “NC1011 Breeze Live Conference: From Research to Action” on September 13, 2005 was open to only NC1011 Team members. This webcast was internal to the project team for orientation to the technology; subsequently presentations were archived on the website for broader dissemination. This webcast conference had 11 participants and three presenters: *From Research to Action: Rural Mothers Use of Supports to Meet Food Needs*, Presented by Josephine A. Swanson, Cornell University; *From Research to Action: Social Support Sustains Employment in Service Jobs* presented by Sharon Seiling, The Ohio State University and *From Research to Action: Putting Knowledge to Work: Extension Applications* presented by Shirley Mietlicki, University of Massachusetts.

Our target audiences for the three public web casts below were extension educators and other community educators who can apply the knowledge provided during the webcasts to their practice; and faculty at Land Grant, state and community colleges teaching undergraduate courses. Participants across the 3 webcasts came from 32 different states.

The initial public webcast was titled, “Rural Families Speak Out: Food Security & Health” on March 28, 2006. The NC1011 team members first promoted the webcast via “Early Bird” invitations to their colleagues and collaborators. Subsequently, a public invitation was sent out through national mailing lists for academics and professionals in human ecology, family & consumer sciences including nutrition---extension specialists and educators, faculty teaching undergraduate courses via Board on Human Sciences contact list. This webcast had 73 registered participants and 50 who participated. Those registered represented 24 states. Some registered viewed webcast as a group; for example, The University of Kentucky had 5 sites. This webcast conference had two presenters and one discussant: *Three Year Dynamics of Food Insecurity* was presented by Christine Olson, Cornell University, *Rural Mothers Physical and Mental Health*, Leigh Ann Simmons, University of Kentucky and the discussant was Leslie Richards, Oregon State University.

Seventeen (17) participants completed an electronic evaluation form; over 80% of the respondents said the webcasts were moderately to very effective at increasing their

knowledge of the topics. Some technical difficulties were experienced at the broadcast and receiving ends of the webcast during the interactive portion. Regardless, most respondents were satisfied with the technology used and indicated they were more likely to include the topics in their professional work after the webcast than before.

The second public webcast was titled, “Rural Families Speak Out: Child Care & Social Support” on April 19, 2006. This webcast conference was promoted in a similar way as the first webcast. For this webcast, there were 35 registered participants and 29 who participated. Those registered represented 13 states. Some registered viewed webcast as a group; for example, The University of Kentucky had 5 sites. This webcast conference had two presenters and one discussant: *Family Network Solutions to Child Care Needs of Rural, Low-Income Mothers* presented by Kathy Reschke, The Ohio State University, *Social Support and Rural Low-Income Mothers* presented by Sharon Seiling, The Ohio State University and the discussant was Margaret Manoogian, Ohio University. Only eight (8) participants returned evaluations; all respondents indicated the webcast was effective in increasing knowledge with 75% reporting the webcast was moderately to very effective at increasing knowledge and delivery of information.

The final public webcast was titled, “Rural Families Speak Out: Laboring Towards Economic Self-Sufficiency” on May 3, 2006. This webcast conference was promoted in a similar way as the subsequent public webcasts. For this webcast there were 76 registered participants and 47 who participated. Those registered represented 22 states. This webcast conference had two presenters and one discussant: *An Ecosystem Model* presented by Catherine Huddleston-Casas, University of Nebraska, *Using the Ecosystem for Policy and Programs* presented by Bonnie Braun, University of Maryland and the discussant was Miriam Shark from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Sixteen (16) participants returned the evaluation form with over 70% indicating the webcast was moderately or very effective at increasing knowledge; audio difficulties caused by a university server affected the quality of the interactive portion. Comments indicated that some participants derived the greatest value from the model shared illustrating the interconnectedness of issues affecting the self-sufficiency of low income families.

CONCLUSION

The grant that the Rural Families Speak project received from USDA allowed the multi-state project to have infrastructure to support data management, outreach and dissemination. The grant supported upgrades to computer programs, a data manager, and an over-all coordinator that managed within team communication, web presence, and webcasts for the general public. This grant also supported research coordination for many of the papers listed in the publications section of this report. The multi-state project is grateful to USDA for their insight to support the infrastructure and targeted research on issues that are important to the rural prosperity of rural communities and rural low-income families.

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DISSERTATION/THESES

Childcare/Transportation

Katras, M. J. B. (2003). *The private safety net: How rural low-income families access and use resources to make ends meet in the era of welfare reform*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Minnesota. (J. W. Bauer & V. S. Zuiker, co-advisors).

Depression

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Piescher, K. (2004). *Economic, social and community factors indicating depressive symptomatology in rural, low-income mothers*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Minnesota (J. W. Bauer, advisor).

Education and Training

Bird, C. (2004). *Education and training: Understanding the factors that influence the opportunity to pursue additional education or training for low-income, rural women*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Minnesota. (J. W. Bauer, advisor).

Rudd, M. (2003). *The influence of teenage childbearing, family structure, and social support on educational attainment among rural, low-income women*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Maryland (B. Braun & E. Anderson, co-advisors).

Ethnicity

Tatum, J. M. (2006, June). *Comparing the health and healthcare needs of poor rural Hispanics and Non-Hispanic Whites*. Undergraduate Honors Thesis, B.S., Biology, Oregon State University (L. Richards).

Fatherhood

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Earned Income

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Ethnicity/Well-Being

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Family Rituals

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Fatherhood

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- Sano, Y., & Richards, L. N. (2004, November). *Women around fathers: The role of social support systems in promoting father-child interaction after separation*. Symposium, "Rural families speak: The support systems of rural, low-income women". Paper presented at annual meeting on National Council on Family Relations, Orland, FL.

Financial Management

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Food Security

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- Cook, C., & Greder, K. (2006, May). *Rural Iowan Latino families: Hunger, housing, and economic well-being*. Presentation to community leaders, Storm Lake, IA.
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- Grutzmacher, S., Braun, B., Anderson, E., & Wallen, J. (2004, November). *Influence of food-related life skills on food security of rural, low-income families*. National Council on Family Relations, Orlando, FL.
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- Olson, C. M. (2006, July). *Poverty, food insecurity, and obesity*. Bread for the World Institute, Washington, DC.
- Olson, C. M., Bove, C. F., & Miller, E. O. (2005, April). *How growing up poor may contribute to adult obesity*. Experimental Biology, San Diego, CA.
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Health

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- Maring, E. F., & Braun, B. (2005, March). *Rural, low-income families experience barriers to substance abuse services*. National Council on Family Relations Report, F19-F20.
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- Simmons, L.A., & Braun, B. (2005, June). *Income Matters: Understanding Health in Rural Low-Income Women*. Institute for Women's Policy Research Public Policy Conference. Washington D.C.
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Housing

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Labor Force

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- Kelly, E. B. (2006, August). *The Work We Do for Work: Examining the Concept Negotiating Work*. Annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP), Montreal, Canada.
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- Mammen, S., Lass, D., & Seiling, S. B. (2006, July). *To work or not to work: How rural low-income mothers make employment decisions*. Poster session presented at 2006 IAREP-SABE Conference, Paris, France.
- Mammen, S., Lass, D., & Seiling, S. B. (2006, July). To work or not to work: How rural low-income mothers make employment decisions. *Proceedings for Behavioral Economics and Economic Psychology conference*, Paris, France.
- Seiling, S. B., Dolan, E. M., & Glesner, T. (2005, June). *Rural low-income women who work in service jobs tell about their lives*. Gender, Work & Organization Conference, Staffordshire, United Kingdom: Keele University.

Marriage

- Taylor, A., Sano, Y., Manoogian, M., & Feeney, S. (2006, August). *Is marriage important for relationship longevity?: Factors predicting long term stable relationship in rural low income families*. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of American Psychological Association, New Orleans, LA.

Outreach

- Kaye, S., & Braun, B. (2004) *Engaging unheard voices through participatory action research*. Conference presentation at Crossroads: Critical Issues in Community-Based Research Partnerships. Hartford, CT.
- Kaye, S., & Braun, B. (2005, May). *Using deliberative forums to engage unheard voices*. Children, Youth and Families At Risk Conference, Boston, MA.

Over-All Project

- Bauer, J. W., Katras, M. J., & Lee, J. (2005, June). *Rural Families Speak: Managing a longitudinal research project*. Presented to Seoul National University, Department of Child Development and Family Studies.
- Mammen, S. (2001). *Poor and invisible: profiles of Franklin County Families in poverty*. Presented at Cultivating Hope, Harvesting action: A Conference on Rural Poverty and Social Change. Northampton, MA.

Parenting

- Bird, C. L., Zuiker, V. S., & Bauer, J. W. (November 2006). *Life quality and parenting performance, well-being and economic strain*. Poster session presented at the National Council on Family Relations 68th Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN.
- Ko, J., & Manoogian, M. (2005, April). *Commitment to Parenting and Personal Outcomes for Rural, Low-income Appalachian Mothers*. Presented at OAFCS, Perrysburg, OH.

Public Policy

- Bartl, M. J., Powell, S. E., & Bauer, J. W. (2000). Welfare reform and two-parent family policies. *NCFR Report: Family Focus*, 45, 9.
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- Braun, B., Anderson, E.A., & Waldman, J. (2006, November). *Marginalized rural mothers—Unheard voices in the policy arena*. Poster presented at the National Council on Family Relations 68th Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN.
- Braun, B., Rudd, M., & Anderson, E. (2003). *Social support: Key to educational outcomes for rural, teenage mothers*. Policy research brief available for citizens and policy makers.
- Braun, B., & Vandergriff-Avery, M. (2001). Facing the facts of the well-being of rural low-income women in the context of welfare reform. *Proceedings of the Women's Policy Institute Conference* (pp. 276-279). Washington, DC: Women's Policy Research Institute.
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- Drennen, N. H., & Makela, C. J. (2001). Welfare reform: People and polices. In A. Martin (Ed.), *Proceeding of the Western Regional Home Management Family Economics Educators Conference*, Long Beach, CA.. 63-64.
- Dyk, P. H. (2005, November). *Understanding Rural Service Access for Low-Income Families: Bridging Research and Policy*. National Council on Family Relations, Phoenix, AZ.
- Reschke, K., & Walker, S. (2003). *The continuum of compromise: Low income rural women's strategies for balancing work and caregiving*. Ohio State University and University of Maryland, College Park.
- Walker, S., & Blumengarten, S. (2002). *Maryland rural families speak about: Child care*. University of Maryland, Maryland Cooperative Extension.
- Walker, S., & Reschke, K. (2002). *Child care use by low income rural families*. University of Maryland, College Park and Ohio State University.

Quality of Life

- Dezfulian, T., Waldeman, J. & Braun, B. (2005, December). *Hidden hurdles to resiliency*. National Council on Family Relations Report. F3, F16.
- Mammen, S., Bauer, J., & Varcoe, K. (2004, November). *Quality of Life Among Rural Low-Income Families*. ISQOLS, Philadelphia, PA., 127.
- Mammen, S., Seiling, S., & Dolan, M. (2004, November). *Employment and Quality of Life of Rural Single Mothers*. Poster session presented at ISQOLS, Philadelphia, PA.

Religious Beliefs

- Braun, B., & Marghi, J.R. (2003). Faith as a resiliency factor for rural, low-income mothers. *NCFR Report: Family Focus*, F6, F8.

Social Support

- Feeney, S.L., Taylor, A.L., Washburn, I.J., Cancel Tirado, D.I., Manoogian, M.M., & Richards, L.N. (November 2006). *Rural low-income Latino Families: Comparing sources of support by nativity*. Paper presented at the National Council on Family Relations 68th Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

- Katras, M. J., Dolan, E. M., Braun, B., & Seiling, S. B. (2002). Rural families speak: Making ends meet after welfare reform. *NCFR Report: Family focus*, 47, F3-F4.
- Manoogian, M., & Reschke, K. (2004, November) *Rural families speak: The support systems of rural, low-income women*, Symposium presented at the annual conference of National Council on Family Relations, Orlando, FL.
- Seiling, S. B. (2004, November). *The costs of social support*. Paper presented at the 66th Annual Conference of the National Council on Family Relations, Orlando, FL.
- Seiling, S. B. (2006, April). *Food security is basic to a family's well-being*. Paper presented at the Oregon State University Extension Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program and the Family Nutrition Program faculty and staff.
- Seiling, S. B., Manoogian, M., Richards, L., & Bird, C. (2007, June). Relationships and resource sharing: Adult daughters and their mothers in rural, low-income families. *Proceedings of the Extended and Extending Families International Conference* at the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland.
- Seiling, S. B., Stafford, K., & Dolan, E. M. (2006, July). *Multiple dimensions of well-being for the rural poor*. Paper presented at 2006 IAREP-SABE Conference, Paris, France.
- Waybright, L., Morrison, P., Seiling, S. B., Meek, J., & Manoogian, M. (2004). *The informal and formal support networks of rural, low-income Appalachian families*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Association of Extension Family and Consumer Sciences, Nashville, TN.

Substance Abuse

- Maring, E. F., & Braun, B. (2005, March). Rural, low-income families experience barriers to substance abuse services. *NCFR Report: Family Focus*, 50, F19-F20.

TANF/Welfare Reform

- Dolan, E., Braun, B., Seiling, S. B., & Katras, M. J. (2006, June). *Rural TANF recipients: How they fare over time*. Annual Welfare Research and Evaluation Conference. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency on Children Youth and Families Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Arlington, Virginia.
- Simmons, L. A., & Braun, B. (2005, June). *The case for place in considering long-term economic well-being*. Annual Welfare Research and Evaluation Conference. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency on Children Youth and Families Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Washington, D.C.

Well-Being

- Seiling, S. B., Stafford, K., & Manoogian, M. (2006, November). *Objective and subjective well-being for Appalachian low-income mothers*. Paper presented at the National Council on Family Relations 68th Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

Community

Bird, C. L., & Bauer, J. W. (work in progress). An opportunity for additional education: Does place matter?

Bird, C. L., & Bauer, J. W. (work in progress). Does Community Infrastructure Influence the Opportunity to Pursue Additional Education?

Dyk, T., Bauer, J. W., Katras, M. J., & Frank, S. M. (work in progress). Rural Context.

Simmons, L. A., & Arwood, D. (work in progress). The effects of social disorganization on maternal health status in low-income rural families. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*.

Earned Income

Mammen, S., & Lawrence, F. (work in progress). Earned Income Tax Credit: Barriers Faced by Rural Low-Income Families.

Ethnicity

Greder, K., Cook, C., Garasky, S., & Sano, Y. (under review). Rural Latino immigrant families: Hunger, housing, and economic well-being. In *Strengths and Challenges of New Immigrant Families: Implications for Research, Policy, Education and Service*. Lexington, MA: The Lexington Press, Inc.

Greder, K., Cook, C. C., Garasky, S., Ortiz, L., Ontai, L., & Sano, Y. (under review). Understanding the relationship between transnationalism and the housing and health risks of rural Latino immigrant families. *Family Relations*.

Family Rituals

Lee, J., Katras, M. J., & Bauer, J. (under review). Children's birthday celebrations from the lived experiences of low-income rural mothers. *Journal of Family Issues*.

Food Security

Grutzmacher, S., & Braun, B. (under review). Food security status and food resource management skills over time among rural, low-income mothers. *Family Economics and Nutrition Review*.

Huddleston-Casas, C. A., Charnigo, R., & Simmons, L. A. (work in progress). Household food insecurity and depression over time among rural, low-income women.

Mammen, S., Bauer, J., & Richards, L. (work in progress) Understanding persistently high and low food insecurity: A paradox of place and circumstance. *Social Indicators*.

Swanson, J. A., Olson, C. M., Miller, E. O., & Lawrence, F. A. (revised and re-submitted). Rural mothers use of formal programs and informal social supports to meet family food needs: A mixed methods study. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*.

Health

Carlton, E., & Simmons, L. A. (work in progress). *Unmet health care needs among rural, low-income mothers*. Graduate student project.

Frazer, M.S. Poverty and Depression in the Context of Welfare Reform-Ph.D. Dissertation, J.W. Bauer Adviser.

Peng, S-Y & Bauer, J.W. Changes in employment and partner status, social support, and self-reported health status of rural, low-income mothers post PRWORA.

Piescher, K.N. & Bauer, J.W. (master's thesis paper). Economic and Social Factors of Depression in Rural, Low-Income Mothers. *Journal of Marriage and Family*.

Simmons, L.A., Anderson, E.A., & Braun, B. (revise & resubmit). Health needs and health care utilization among rural, low-income women. *Journal of Women and Health*.

Varcoe, K., & Seiling, S. B. (work in progress). Ethnic differences in predictors of health.

Labor Force

Dolan, E. M., Seiling, S. B. & Mausloff, C. (work in progress). Constrained lives: Rural women employed in the service industry. (Journal to be determined).

Huddleston-Casas, C., Braun, B., Dolan, E., & Bauer, J. W. (work in progress). The Ecology of Labor Force Participation among Rural Low-income Families. Manuscript in preparation for *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*.

Kelly, E. B. (Summer/fall 2007). Negotiating low-income work and family separation: Working for work in rural Michigan, to be submitted to *Family Issues*.

Mammen, S., Lass, D., & Seiling, S. B. (revised and resubmitted). Labor force supply decisions of rural low-income mothers. *The Journal of Family and Economic Issues*.

Sano, Y., Katras, M. J., Lee, J., Bauer, J. W., & Berry, A. (work in progress). Job Volatility: Non-Standard Work. (Journal to be determined).

Marriage/Partnership

Sano, Y., Manoogian, M., Ontai-Grzebik, L., & Pong, H. (work in progress) Partnerships trajectories and family well-being in rural low-income families. (Journal to be determined).

Methodology

Bird, C. L., McCulloch, B. J., & Bauer, J. W. (work in progress). A comparison of logistic regression and discriminate analysis using family data. (Journal to be determined).

Mobility

Berry, A. A., Dolan, E. M., & Seiling, S. (work in progress.). On the Move: Residential mobility among rural, low-income families (Journal to be determined).

Parenting

Ontai-Grzebik, L., Sano, Y., & Pong, H. (revise and resubmitted). Parenting confidence in low-income, rural mothers: The role of health risk factors and parent support. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*.

Ontai-Grzebik, L., Hatton, H., & Imig, D. (in press). Predictors of parental competence in single parent, low-income rural families. Submitted SRCO Poster.

Pong, H., Ontai, L., & Sano, Y. (work in progress). Differential Influence of Social Supports on Parenting for Single vs. Cohabiting Low-Income Rural Mothers. *Journal of Family Relations*.

Varcoe, K., Ontai, L., & Pong, H. (work in progress). Life skills as a resiliency factor for parenting in low-income rural families.

Quality of Life

Bird, C. L., Zuiker, V. S., & Bauer, J. W. (work in progress). Life quality: The influence of parenting performance and economic strain. (Journal to be determined).

Relationships

Anderson, E. A., & Braun, B. (work in progress). Rural mother's relationships with the men in their lives. (Journal to be determined).

Social Support

Richards, L., Manoogian, M., Seiling S. B., & Bird, C. (work in progress). She's always just there. (Journal to be determined).

Sano, Y., Richards, L. N., & Zvonkovic, A. M. (work in progress). Women around fathers: The role of social support on nonresident father involvement.

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