

The Recession – Hitting Hard Times “through no fault of my own!”



NAWRS 2013: Research and Analysis in
a Changing Social Policy Landscape

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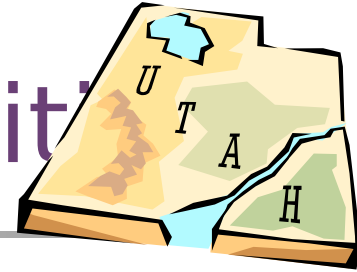
Study Sample and Methods



- Monthly random sample of new (2-9 months) TANF recipients
- Open case, requiring participation
 - Pre-recession - 2006 (N = 1144)
 - Post deep recession - 2012 (N = 1075)
- Statewide, in-person interviews – generally conducted in person's



Customer Profile Similarity



- Basic demographics

- Exception: **Gender 2012**
2006

Males: 13% 6%

- Family size and characteristics

- Education levels and experiences

- Frequency and strength of work history



Gender Comparisons

	Female (N = 934)	Male (N = 141)
Age	28.3 yrs	37.5 yrs
Single never married	43.1%	20.7%
Youngest child under age 6	75.3%	51.5%
Criminal record has prevented work	16.4%	43.0%
“Fair” to “Poor” physical health	22.6%	40.7%
Has worked $\frac{3}{4}$ of adult life or more	62.0%	84.4%
Has received unemployment in past	25.2%	62.4%




Current Employment



	2012 N = 1075	2006 N = 1144
Currently Employed	24%	29%
Unemployed: worked in past year	43%	51%
Unemployed: no work in past year	30%	18%


Employment Challenges - Past Year



	2012	2006
■ Physical health issues 55%	37%	
■ Transportation 42%	37%	
■ Lack of education	35%	25%
■ Lack of child care	31%	43%
■ Mental health issues 30%	27%	
■ Lack of good jobs available 8%	19%	

Primary Reason for Welfare

Entry



	2012	2006
■ Change in customer's income		43%
50%		
■ Lost job		
■ Physical/mental: unable to work		
■ Maternity leave		
■ Change in partner's income		23%
35%		
■ Spouse/partner lost job		
■ Separation from Spouse/partner		
■ Change in parent/family support		23%



New User Types

- *I ran out of my 401k and didn't have a job. My mom and I worked at the same place for years. After she died, I couldn't keep going there every day. It was too hard emotionally and I had savings and a 401k and I thought I would have plenty of time to find a new job, but nowhere is hiring.*





Respondent's Perspective

- *That very first time when you applied for cash assistance how would you describe your feelings?*
 - Embarrassing/Guilty/Bad: 62%
 - Desperate/Scared/Overwhelmed: 30.5%
 - OK/I paid into it/It's here to help: 15%
 - Like a bad parent/Lower self-esteem: 12%




Additional Differences

2012

2006

- Third trimester pregnancy
 - no other children: 6%
 - 1.7%
- Living with family rent free 14%
- Laid off from most recent job 10.5%
- 5%

Programs that Make a Difference: “Work Success”



- Provide relevant professional services
- Focus on employment preparation and work related activities
- Support seeking employment at a family sustaining wage
- Teach budgeting, networking, computer job search skills
- Key: Sustain supportive, hopeful environment



Overall Take Aways

- Greater disconnect between respondents never before associated with cash assistance and program policies
- Glaring differences between TANF and UI participation requirements and reflected views of participants
- Even poorer fit between available activities and population seeking assistance – less ownership of employment plans