

Program: NEW CHANCE

Population Served:

Size: 1,553 young mothers in 16 sites located in 10 states across the U.S.

Age: Mothers 16-22 years old, the average age being 18.8

Other Characteristics: New Chance targeted women on the basis of four criteria: first gave birth at age 19 or younger, were receiving AFDC, did not have a high school diploma or GED, and were not pregnant when entering the program.

Studies: 1 experimental, 1 nonexperimental

Program Components

Component	Provided by	Duration	Description
School-like intervention	Program	Up to 18 months with up to 1 year follow-up services	See components below
Adult education and literacy	The New Chance site (e.g., school, community center)	2 to 3 hours per day. Participants engage in New Chance activities 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 5 days a week	Basic education provided in math, reading and writing; preparation for the GED also provided
Employment-related services	The New Chance site	Participants engage in New Chance activities 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 5 days a week	Career exploration and skills training, work internships, job placement assistance
Health and personal development	The New Chance site	Participants engage in New Chance activities 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 5 days a week	Life Skills and Opportunities Curriculum, health education and services, family planning, and adult survival skills
Services to enhance children's development	The New Chance site	Participants engage in New Chance activities 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 5 days a week. Child care is provided during these hours.	Parent education, child care, child health services
Case management	Case managers with caseloads no larger than 25 people	Throughout the program	Case managers assess the needs of the participant and coordinate ongoing services. Case managers also track progress and provide support and guidance.

Program: NEW CHANCE

Program Objectives/Goals:

To provide comprehensive services to assist disadvantaged families headed by young mothers receiving welfare. The program sought to do three main things:

1. Help mothers acquire educational and vocational credentials and skills so that they could secure jobs offering opportunities for advancement and could thereby reduce their use of welfare.
 2. Influence women to postpone additional childbearing and improve parenting skills.
 3. Enhance the cognitive abilities, health, and socioemotional well-being of enrollees' children.
-

Costs:

The program costs approximately \$9,000 per participant. Most funds were spent on child care, recruitment, and case management.

Study 1:

Quint, J.C., Bos, J.M., & Polit, D.F. (1997). *New Chance: Final report on a comprehensive program for young mothers in poverty and their children*. New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Study Objectives and Measurements:

Objective

To determine whether New Chance had any impacts on educational attainment, family life, emotional and physical health, employment and earnings, welfare receipt, and child development. Also to determine the costs of implementing the program.

Measurement instrument

Self-report surveys, face-to-face interviews, teacher survey's, MDRC staff site visits, administrative data from sites, Text of Adult Basic Education (TABE), Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D).

Evaluation:

Type: Experimental

Statistical techniques: Significance testing, F-test, t-test, chi-square.

Significance level: $p \leq .10$

Population evaluated: 2,322 mothers were originally in the program, 1,553 were randomly assigned to an experimental group and 769 to a control group. At the 42-month follow-up, data were collected from 1,401 participants and 678 control group members.

Key Findings:

In most areas, participants did not show greater gains than those in the control group, although there were some differences between the two groups.

Education and job training:

At the 42-month follow-up, both groups were equally likely (approximately 25 percent) to have earned a trade license or certificate.

Program: NEW CHANCE

Among 18- to 19-year-olds and 20- to 22-year-olds, participants were more likely to earn a high school diploma or GED than their counterparts in the control group. Non-Hispanic black and Hispanic participants were also more likely to earn a high school diploma or GED.

Long-term employment rates did not differ significantly between participants and control group members, nor did earnings. During the first 6 months following the program, control group members were significantly more likely to be employed than participants (20.4 percent vs. 15.1 percent). In all other months, employment rates did not differ.

No significant effects on educational achievement, as measured by the TABE.

Participants were significantly more likely than control group members to attain a GED or earn college credits. At the 42-month follow-up, 51.9 percent of participants and 43.8 percent of the control group had attained a GED or high school diploma, and 13.5 percent of participants vs. 10.7 percent of the control group had received college credit. However, participants were slightly, but statistically significantly, more likely to have ever received welfare than those in the control group (98.9 percent vs. 97.9 percent) at the 42-month follow-up. Participants were not on welfare for significantly more months than control group members.

Living arrangements:

At the 42-month follow-up, participants were more likely to report having had trouble finding a place to live within the past year, compared to those in the control group. Similar findings were reported for participants age 20-22.

Health and pregnancy:

Participants had a significantly smaller time period between a previous pregnancy (before assignment to the program) and the onset of the next pregnancy than those in the control group. There were no other significant differences between groups in rates of pregnancy, birth, or abortion.

At the 42-month follow-up, there were no significant differences in contraceptive use or health status.

Child outcomes:

Overall, New Chance does not appear to improve developmental outcomes for participants' children; in fact, there were unfavorable impacts on children's social behavior. Participants' and control group members' children had similar scores on home environment at the 42-month point and low scores on a measure of cognitive development. Participants rated their children as having more behavior problems than control group members did (110.0 vs. 108.5 on the Behavior Problems Index), and they rated their children lower on a scale of positive behavior (192.1 vs. 197.3 on the Positive Behavior Scale, which ranges from 0 to 250).

There were some negative differences by subgroup. Children of Hispanic participants scored lower on the Bracken Basic Concept Scale than children of control group members. Among 18- to 19-year-olds and 20- to 22-year-olds, participants' children exhibited more behavior problems (as measured by the Behavior Problem index) than children of control group members. Similar differences were found for children of non-Hispanic black participants and for male children of all participants.

Program: NEW CHANCE

Socioemotional outcomes:

Participants were at significantly greater risk of clinical depression, as measured by the CES-D, than control group members at the 42-month follow-up: the average score of participants was 16.1, while the average score of control group members was 15.2. However, from the time of assignment to the program to the 42-month follow-up, participants age 20-22 and non-Hispanic black participants were less likely to have an increased risk of depression than their counterparts in the control group. Significantly more participants than control group members reported feeling stressed much or all of the time in the past month (39.4 percent vs. 33.2 percent), and significantly more control group members reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their standard of living at the 42-month follow-up (73.7 percent vs. 69.7 percent).

Participants reported significantly more parenting-related stress than control group members did. Parenting stress was measured by the Parenting Stress Scale, an 8-item self-report scale scored from 0 to 80, with higher numbers indicating greater stress. At the 42-month follow-up, participants scored 26.4, on average, while control group members scored 24.6. Participants in the age 20-22 subgroup had significantly higher scores on the Parenting Stress Scale. Parenting outcomes were also measured on the HOME scale, which indicated no difference between participants and control group members. However, participants age 16-17 had better (higher) scores on the HOME scale than their counterparts in the control group.

Other Information:

None

Study 2:

Quint, J.C., Musick, J.S., & Ladner, J.A. (1994). *Lives of promise, lives of pain: Young mothers after New Chance*. New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Study Objectives and Measurements:Objective:

To determine whether young adults have difficulty advancing toward self-sufficiency after obtaining their GED. To identify the barriers and characteristics that prevent participants from obtaining short-term program goals. To identify what changes in program practice and public policy will assist young parents to work toward self-sufficiency.

Measurement instrument:

Interviews conducted approximately 30 months after participants left the New Chance program.

Evaluation:

Type: Nonexperimental

Statistical techniques: chi-square, qualitative analysis

Significance level: $p \leq .10$

Population evaluated: 50 mothers who were in the New Chance program. Of the 50 mothers, 34 attained a GED or high school diploma by the end of the program, and 16 did not. The population is not representative of the entire New Chance population.

Program: NEW CHANCE

Key Findings:Self-sufficiency:

Participants who earned a GED during the program seemed to have stronger educational backgrounds and to have families that were less financially dependent than those who did not earn a GED by the end of the program. For example, GED earners had a higher average reading level than non-GED earners (9.6 vs. 8.7 reading grade level), a difference that is not significant. Similarly, 15.2 percent of GED earners reported having always been on AFDC when young, compared with 18.8 percent of non-GED earners; again, the difference is not significant. The only significant difference at baseline between the GED earners and non-GED earners was that GED earners were more likely to possess a driver's license (32.4 percent vs. 6.3 percent).

Both GED and non-GED earners had similar post-program experiences.

Most participants (41 out of 50) were still on welfare or waiting to get on welfare at the time of the interview (2.5 years later); participants cited having difficulty maintaining employment. Only 7 of the 20 participants who had ever enrolled in college were still enrolled. Participants reported that the high cost and lack of availability of child care were barriers in working toward self-sufficiency. Finally, participants indicated that family support was an influence in being able to take steps toward self-sufficiency.

Other Information:

This study was done because many New Chance participants viewed attainment of the GED as the only goal of the program and dropped out upon completing this portion.
