

CHILDREN AND FAMILY RESEARCH CENTER

INDIVIDUAL AND CONTEXTUAL CONTRIBUTORS TO CHILD MALTREATMENT REPORTING: ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE ILLINOIS FAMILIES STUDY

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A. Executive Summary

Using combined survey, administrative, and census data, this study analyzed household- and community-level variables to determine their relationships with the occurrence of child maltreatment reports among a sample of 1091 low-income households in six Illinois counties. The study sought to determine which factors were most strongly related to the occurrence of reports, and whether the likelihood of reports varied according to a family's relative "visibility" in their neighborhood.

Analysis by Cox event history modeling revealed statistically significant effects for recent prior CPS reports, number of children in the home, and respondent's report of domestic violence in the household in predicting child maltreatment reports during the observation period. Subgroup analyses showed significantly lower levels of social and material support, in addition to protective effects for employment, household income, Black/African American race and Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, among recently moved households. The study's findings suggest that specific risk factors contribute to involvement with the child protection system among low-income families, and further indicate that recently moved low-income families may be subject to additional risk and protective factors.

Policy implications of this study include the importance of developing coordinated responses to child maltreatment and domestic violence reports; the potential value of assuring that prevention and treatment services are available to all families reported for child maltreatment, regardless of investigation findings; and the recognition that adequate income may be especially important to low-income families who move in assuring their ability to adequately protect and care for their children.

B. Introduction

Child maltreatment is an important social problem in the United States, affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and their families each year (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, 2004) and incurring significant costs both in terms of human suffering and in the fiscal pricetag of child protection and related services (Fromm, 2001). Child maltreatment reports to state and local child protection agencies represent the visible face of child maltreatment and constitute the gateway through which families and children become involved with the child protective services (CPS) system. This paper reports on a study assessing factors related to child maltreatment reports among a sample of low-income families in Illinois. A summary of the incidence and prevalence of maltreatment reporting is followed by a brief review of the literature in this area, a description of the theoretical framework guiding the study, its research questions, sample, methods, and findings.

Scope of the Problem

Local agencies around the U.S. receive in excess of 50,000 complaints each week alleging cases of child maltreatment (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families 2004). These reports largely determine the intake and investigative workload of those organizations—where a significant portion of the system's resources are expended (Waldfoegel, 1998). Abuse and neglect referrals arise from a variety of sources, with an increasing majority coming from professionals mandated by law to report suspected maltreatment when they encounter it in the course of their work.

Data indicate that both the total yearly number of child maltreatment reports and the reported per capita incidence of maltreatment more than quadrupled in the U.S. between the mid-1970s and the early 1990s (American Humane Association, 1989; McCurdy & Daro, 1994). It seems likely that broadening definitions of child abuse and neglect, increased public awareness of child maltreatment as a social issue, and the implementation of mandated reporting laws contributed to increased child maltreatment reporting between the mid-1970s and the early 1990s. While a linkage is assumed here as elsewhere between incidence and reporting, the inherent limitations of efforts to study the incidence of child maltreatment directly, together with the confounding effects of factors noted above, make it impossible to know the extent to which increases in maltreatment reporting during this period may have been attributable to increases in the incidence of child maltreatment and the extent to which increases in reporting were caused by other factors.

In the state of Illinois, administrative data on annual numbers of reports received by the state's child protection system indicate that maltreatment reporting rates decreased throughout the 1990s (*see Figure 1, Appendix Section*) and continued to drop in the first two years of the current decade, with the number of reports falling from over 130,000 in 1992 to less than 99,000 in 2002 (Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, 2003). The state had 18 maltreatment reports per 1,000 children in the population in 2002 — approximately half the national average. Illinois received greater proportions of its reports from education, law enforcement, social services, medical personnel and day care providers, parents, and anonymous sources than the national averages for those sources during 2002, while mental health personnel, foster care providers, and relatives in the state reported at rates below national averages. Illinois CPS investigative workers averaged 68 investigations

per worker during 2002, below the national average of about 76 cases per worker (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families 2004).

One point relating to the Illinois child protection system illustrates the degree to which seemingly small changes in a state's child protection policies may have significant effects on maltreatment reporting rates. In 1996 Illinois changed the wording in its statutory definition of neglect to exclude existing care arrangements with extended family where the biological parent was absent but children were deemed safe (Slack, Holl, Lee, McDaniel, Altenbernd & Stevens, 2003). Previously, children living with a relative in the absence of a biological parent could be considered neglected based on the fact that the parent was not in the home. The 1996 change brought Illinois policy into concurrence with that of most other states on this point, and effected a notable reduction in the number of neglect reports in the state (Slack et al., 2003).

Various studies have documented significant geographic variation in maltreatment reporting rates, with some neighborhoods or communities showing relatively high report rates while others have many fewer cases on a per capita basis (Garbarino, 1980; Zuravin, 1989; Freisthler, 2004). Most research in this area to date has been primarily descriptive in nature, and although there is evidence suggesting relationships between some community-level factors and geographic variation in rates of maltreatment reporting (Coulton, Korbin, Su & Chow, 1995), the body of evidence which might help shape a more effective array of child protection services and allow more efficient targeting of interventions to better serve communities and neighborhoods where children are at greatest risk of maltreatment remains incomplete.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

The present study draws upon both ecological theory and community social organization theory. The ecological model suggests that child maltreatment events arise from the cumulative influences of the strengths, limitations, and life experiences of the caregiver(s); the child's temperament, personality and cognitive abilities; interpersonal dynamics and relationship patterns within the household; the quality and extent of relationships among the family and church, school, workplace, and other institutions; the extent and quality of social and material resources and the behavioral norms and expectations of the community; and finally from the tenets, cultural attitudes, and policy priorities of the society (Belsky, 1980).

Community social organization (CSO) theory postulates that the social environment influences outcomes in various domains by affecting the strength and extent of social relationships which offer material and social support to community members, and through the establishment and maintenance of behavioral norms which support activity viewed by the community as appropriate and which prohibit or deter activity seen as inappropriate (Sampson & Groves, 1989; Bowen, Bowen & Ware, 2002).

Because child maltreatment reports are seen as a product of both household- and community-level events and influences, both direct and indirect mechanisms leading to maltreatment reports are proposed, based on the following general outline (*see Figure 2, Appendix Section.*) Child maltreatment reports are seen as being the joint products of child maltreatment events (Figure 2, path E) and community standards requiring the protection of

children (i.e.: laws requiring certain groups of professionals to report suspected maltreatment) (Figure 2, path A). Community factors are believed to limit the occurrence of maltreatment events outside the household setting through the establishment of normative standards of acceptable behavior such as the expectations that adults will not act to harm children and will act to protect children who are seen as being injured or in danger (Figure 2, path B). Maltreatment events within households are seen as being influenced proximally by individual and family factors (Figure 2, path D), and indirectly by the larger community which affects the actions of household members both by offering material and social support to families and by discouraging or forbidding conduct which the community deems inappropriate (i.e.: acts of abuse and neglect) (Figure 2, path C-D). Implicit in the proposed model is the assumption that maltreatment events contribute significantly to maltreatment reports. Maltreatment events are themselves unmeasured and can only be assumed to have occurred in some portion of cases with maltreatment reporting as well as some portion of cases with no report.

The conceptual framework outlined above informs the study in addressing the following research questions:

- (1) Do community structural factors predict child maltreatment reports at the household level, controlling for household demographic and background characteristics?
- (2) Are the effects of community structural factors on child maltreatment reports at the household level mediated by key individual and family risk factors, controlling for household demographic and background characteristics?
- (3) Is there a race/ethnicity "visibility effect" in child maltreatment reporting, with respondents whose race/ethnicity differs from the majority of their neighbors becoming subjects of CPS maltreatment reports at significantly greater rates than respondents without this characteristic, controlling for community structural factors, key individual and family risk factors, and household demographic and background characteristics?

C. Potential knowledge to be gained

Reporting rates—rather than rates of actual maltreatment events—are considered in the present study for three primary reasons. First, because data on actual maltreatment events are essentially nonexistent, maltreatment reports are the best available gauge of the occurrence of child abuse and neglect. While there is undoubtedly some discrepancy between rates of child maltreatment events and maltreatment reporting rates (Schnitzer, Slusher & Van Tuinen, 2004), there is reason to believe that reporting rates do, at a minimum, represent variation in levels of community awareness of and response to child abuse and neglect (Korbin, Coulton, Chard, Platt-Houston, & Su, 1998). For a wide range of purposes, maltreatment reports represent the best available information about actual maltreatment events.

Second, many studies investigating outcomes related to the incidence of abuse and neglect, and particularly those with longitudinal designs and/or large sample sizes, rely on reporting rates as a proxy for actual maltreatment events (Drake & Jonson-Reid, 1999). Thus, while clearly an imperfect representation of actual child maltreatment, report rates have nonetheless become a widely used indicator of rates of abuse and neglect.

Third, and most importantly, official maltreatment reports to CPS agencies constitute the gateway through which families become involved with the child protection system, and form the basis for public policy responses to child maltreatment as a social problem. Administrative policies governing child protection work, justification for the public funding of the child protection system, and child protection interventions which directly affect the lives of children and families all hinge on official maltreatment reports to CPS agencies.

Efforts to identify factors associated with geographic variation in child maltreatment reporting represent an important area of inquiry for those seeking to understand child maltreatment and the communities with which the child protection system is most involved. Increased understanding of factors related to maltreatment reporting holds potential to be helpful both in allowing policy makers and CPS administrators to refine the array of services offered by agencies to families and in facilitating more efficient targeting of preventive and ameliorative services to high risk areas.

African American children and families are significantly over-represented in the child welfare system relative to their numbers in the general population (Hines, Lemon, Wyatt, & Merdinger, 2004). Findings from previous research suggest that the disproportionate representation of African American families within the child welfare system may be attributable at least in part to "front-end" related factors including higher reporting rates for African Americans (National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, 1981; Hampton & Newberger, 1985). According to recent data from Illinois, African American families were the subjects of child maltreatment reports during 2002 at a rate more than twice as high on a per capita basis as the rate for White families (Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, 2003). These figures return one to the question of whether current maltreatment reporting practices institutionalize bias creating disproportionate likelihood for African American families to become subjects of abuse and neglect reports.

Turley (2003) found a significant interaction effect between race at the household level and prevailing neighborhood racial makeup in her study of neighborhood income and child well-being. Some observers have proposed that families of color living in mostly White neighborhoods may receive greater scrutiny with respect to their child rearing

practices, and thus be more likely to become subjects of maltreatment reports, compared to White families living in the same neighborhoods or families of color living in neighborhoods with mostly non-White populations (*see Hampton & Newburger, 1985; Lane, Rubin, Monteith & Christian, 2002; and Garland, Ellis-Macleod, Landsverk, Ganger & Johnson, 1998.*) Indeed, there is evidence from more than one study that the level of White antipathy toward Blacks intensifies significantly as the proportion of Black residents increases (Taylor, 1998)—supporting a visibility perspective. (Taylor found no increase in antipathy among Whites toward Latinos or Asian Americans as their population proportions increased.)

This study holds potential to produce important knowledge regarding individual- and community-level factors related to child maltreatment reporting among low-income Illinois households, with concomitant prospect for improved service array and intervention targeting. The study will explore the effects of both individual-level and neighborhood structural factors in predicting maltreatment reports, and also holds potential to shed further light on racial disparities which may take place at the "front end" of the child welfare system, subsequently affecting child and family well-being, worker caseloads, and the overall workload of the child protection system.

D. Method

1. Sample

The population of interest in the study described here is families receiving Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) in Illinois. The Illinois Families Study (IFS), on which the present study is based, is a six-year panel study assessing welfare receipt,

employment and job retention, and child and family well-being in the context of welfare reform among low-income families in nine Illinois counties. The IFS sample included cases from Cook County (Chicago), the state's largest urban area; St. Clair county, containing another, smaller urban area (East St. Louis); Peoria County; and six downstate counties (Fulton, Knox, Marshall, Stark, Tazewell and Woodford counties) clustered geographically around Peoria County.

Sampling was conducted using a stratified random design, with one stratum (about half the sample) drawn from Cook County and the other stratum drawn to include the other eight counties. Together these areas represented more than 75% of the state's 1998 caseload for the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Within each stratum of the sample, a systematic random sample was drawn over a 3-month period beginning in September, 1998. The original IFS sample included 1,899 cases, of which 1,363 (72%) completed the Wave 1 survey.

The cases used in the present study are a subset of IFS Wave 1 cases which met the following criteria for inclusion in the present study: the survey respondent gave consent for use for research purposes of administrative data related to their case; the respondent was living in an IFS study county at the time of Wave 1 interviews; and a geocoding process¹ was able to identify a valid census tract number corresponding to the respondent's address at the time of Wave 1 data collection. Of the 1,363 IFS Wave 1 respondents, 1,260 gave consent for use of administrative data related to their cases. Of that number, 1,236 respondents were living in one of the IFS study counties at the time of the Wave 1

¹ Geocoding is a computerized data development procedure in which basic location information (street addresses) is linked to another set of spatial or geographic data, in this case census tract numbers. Geocoding of the IFS data was performed at Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. The author of this paper does not have access to identifying information, including street addresses, of IFS respondents.

interviews. 1,094 of the cases in this group had sufficient valid information for geocoding. Application of the inclusion criteria eliminated two of the nine original IFS counties from the current dataset and left only 3 cases from Woodford county, which were also eliminated based on the decision that such a small number of cases spread over an area the size of a county was inadequate to support valid inference in the study. The remaining 1,091 IFS cases from six Illinois counties comprise the sample used in the study described here.

Analysis weights were developed and included in the current dataset in order to correct for differential probability of inclusion in the subsample of cases for the present study. These weights build on base and non-response weights previously developed for the IFS sample (Slack et al., 2003), which compensate for oversampling in downstate counties and for survey nonresponse, and add a further correction factor to minimize effects of differential probability of inclusion in the present study.

2. Procedures

IFS survey respondents reviewed and signed detailed consent forms which explained the purpose of the IFS study, survey procedures, potential risks and benefits, financial compensation for survey participation, confidentiality protocols, and subjects' rights. A separate consent form for linking survey data to administrative data at the individual level was also reviewed and signed by respondents who agreed to this process.

See Appendix section to view cover letter and separate survey participation and administrative data use consent forms from the IFS survey. Additional information detailing human subjects and data security protocols are detailed in the "Research Protocol Submission For IL DCFIS IRB" document, Appendix section.

Dependent variable: Child maltreatment reports.

The current study investigates factors related to screened-in child maltreatment reports, irrespective of investigation findings. The dataset contained too few cases with indicated findings within one year of Wave 1 survey completion to support an analysis using only cases found "indicated" upon investigation.² The choice to use all reports rather than only indicated reports is also supported by the literature in this area. A number of prominent authors have questioned the meaningfulness of the indicated and substantiated labels given the variability with which they are applied in maltreatment investigations (*see Drake, Jonson-Reid, Way, & Chung, 2003; English, Marshall, Coghlan, Brummel, & Orme, 2002; and King, Trocme & Thatte, 2003*). Studies have found that cases with indicated/substantiated case findings show very similar rates of recidivism in maltreatment reporting compared to cases without such findings (English et al., 2002)—calling into question the value of these labels in distinguishing cases of actual maltreatment and as tools in child protection.

In order to obtain the most complete possible accounting of maltreatment report events, measures of child maltreatment reporting for this study (both baseline or pre-IFS Wave 1 survey date reports and outcome or post-Wave 1 reports) were created from administrative report data captured in two separate files within the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services CANTS (Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System) database, a "child file" and a "caregiver file." Report data were extracted from each file and then aggregated under a unique case code for each household in the study, sorting by report

²Less than 4% of the cases in the unweighted dataset had an indicated maltreatment report within 1 year after the Wave 1 survey date. By contrast, approximately 10% (n=108) of cases had some maltreatment report within the same time period.

date and type of maltreatment allegation in order to eliminate any redundancies and assure that each unique report event is recorded only once in the dataset.

Major independent variables: Household and community contextual factors.

The present study takes advantage of extensive microlevel data from the IFS survey to include individual-level variables which have been shown by other research to be associated with the occurrence of child maltreatment, but which have not been reported in previous studies which also examined community correlates of child maltreatment reporting. These include measures for number of children and the occurrence of domestic violence in the household, the marital *and* cohabitation status of the respondent³, and respondent's reports of depressive symptoms and of drug and alcohol use. These factors are represented in the present study together with additional household-level background and demographic characteristics such as income and education levels, history of previous CPS reports, residential tenure, and respondent's race/ethnicity, and key individual- and family-level factors including respondent's reports of social and material support, welfare receipt, employment, civic participation, and any recent arrest of a household member.

Levels of community social organization are not measured directly in the present study, but are inferred from measures of community structure including census tract rates of poverty, unemployment, vacant housing, and single parent families, together with median income levels, community racial and ethnic makeup, and rates of residential stability.

Geographic boundaries used to define communities are essential to the ability to accurately capture effects at the community level. This study uses census tracts to represent

³ Coulton, Korbin, & Su (1999) measured marital status but not cohabitation status at the individual level.

community areas, for several reasons. Census tracts cover all inhabited areas in communities across the U.S., nested within established political boundaries (counties), and are "designed to be relatively homogeneous units with respect to population characteristics, economic status, and living conditions at the time of establishment" (United States Census Bureau, 2001). Both the community-level data and the geocoded household-level variables analyzed in this study can be readily aggregated at the census tract level.

For further details regarding variables included in the analyses for this study, see Table 1, "Operational Definitions of Measures," Appendix section.

3. Design

This study implements a longitudinal, nonexperimental design, with household- and community-level independent variables at Wave 1 of the IFS survey used to predict the dependent variable, child maltreatment reports, over a 12-month period following the Wave 1 interview. Outcome measurement was limited to this period for increased confidence that community characteristics measured concurrently with the Wave 1 interview were proximally linked to outcome events.

E. Results

Main and Subgroup Analyses

Table 2 (Appendix section) displays results of the nested Cox model regressions, beginning with community-level factors (Model 1) and then adding household demographic and background variables (Model 2), key individual and family variables (Model 3), CPS history and the interaction term for the race/ethnicity visibility analysis (Model 4). Hazard

ratio estimates, robust standard errors, and *p*-values are included for variables at each step of the analysis; statistically significant hazard ratio estimates appear in boldface numerals.

No community-level variables were found to have significant effects on the dependent variable. Two household-level demographic/background variables (number of children and CPS report within 1 year before the Wave 1 interview) and one key individual/family variable (domestic violence) were found to be statistically significant risk factors. No significant effect was found for racial visibility.⁴

Specifically, the regression results indicate that each additional child in the home confers about 25% increase in the hazard of CPS report within one year. Cases in which the survey respondent reported experiencing domestic violence within one year prior to the Wave 1 interview had an estimated hazard of CPS report during the observation period which was nearly 3.3 times as great as cases without domestic violence. Cases which had a CPS report within 12 months prior to the Wave 1 interview were nearly six times as likely to have a report during the observation period as cases without a recent CPS report.

Two sensitivity tests were also conducted in order to determine the degree to which effects of the independent variables may differ for subsets of respondents based on levels of residential stability. In the first sensitivity test, the regression models were repeated selecting for survey respondents who had lived in their current residence less than 2 years at the time of Wave 1 survey administration, using weights adjusted for this subgroup of cases (Table 3). Among this group of survey respondents, number of children was not a significant risk factor, as it was in all other model iterations; recent CPS report and report of domestic

⁴ As an additional test for significant community-level effects, Model 1 was compared to a null or empty model in the main analysis and both subgroup analyses using Wald chi-square tests. There was no statistically significant difference between Model 1 and the null/empty model in any of the three iterations of the analysis, further confirming that the community-level variables had no statistically significant effect.

violence were both strong and significant risk factors, as in other models. Household income and Black/African American race were significant protective factors for this group.

Specifically, among this subset of cases households with history of previous CPS report within the year preceding the Wave 1 interview were about 7.3 times as likely to have a report within the observation period as cases without a recent CPS report. Cases where domestic violence occurred within 12 months prior to the Wave 1 survey interview were nearly five times as likely to have a CPS report during the outcome observation period as cases without domestic violence. Each 1-level increase in the ordinal household income variable decreased the estimated hazard of CPS report during the outcome observation period by about 17% for this group of cases. Black/African American race of survey respondent reduced the estimated hazard of CPS report by nearly 80% relative to the comparison group. Latino ethnicity reduced the estimated hazard of CPS report to 1% of that for the comparison group among this group of cases; the latter result, however, is primarily attributable to the fact that only one Hispanic/Latino household among this subgroup of respondents had a CPS report during the outcome period.

A second residential stability sensitivity test repeated the regression models selecting for the group of cases in which the survey respondent either did not move or moved to a contiguous census tract during the period between the IFS Wave 1 survey interview and the Wave 2 survey interviews⁵ (Table 4, Appendix section). For this group of cases, significant risk factors included number of children, respondent's report of domestic violence in the home, and history of recent CPS report.

⁵ The time period between the Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews varied somewhat among cases but averaged about 1 year, a timeframe approximately corresponding to the outcome observation period for this study.

Specifically, each additional child in the home increased the hazard of a report by about one-third; domestic violence increased the estimated hazard to 3.7 times that for cases without reported domestic violence; and history of recent CPS report increased the estimated hazard to 7.6 times that for cases without a recent report.

F. Discussion and Conclusions

Main Analysis

Perhaps the most unexpected finding in this study has been the lack of significant effect on the dependent variable by any of the community-level factors. Given the strength of evidence from other studies in this area documenting significant effects of community-level factors on child maltreatment reporting (i.e.: Drake & Pandey, 1996; Coulton et al., 1995), it seems questionable that such effects do not also occur in Illinois, though that is one possibility. Another plausible explanation for the lack of significant community-level effects found in this study lies in the fact that the IFS sample consists of low-income households living primarily in neighborhoods with high rates of community poverty and racial/ethnic homogeneity.

The IFS sample was drawn from among low-income households which, while distributed across areas with a range of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, tended on average to reside in census tracts with high levels of poverty and poverty-related indices. Table 5 (Appendix section) compares the census tracts of IFS cases included in the present study with Illinois statewide means on selected community-level variables. As this table shows, the families in this study live in census tracts which have on average nearly

four times the statewide proportion of households in poverty, more than twice the statewide rate of unemployment, nearly twice the statewide rate of vacant housing, median household income 40% below the statewide average, and an average proportion of Black/African American residents more than four times the statewide mean.

This difference in sampled populations is one potential explanation for the disparity in findings between this study and the other cited studies on these community-level factors. The distributions of values for community-level variables measured in this study indicate that census tracts in which study cases reside are on average far more impoverished, have much higher rates of unemployment, and have far greater proportions of Black/African American residents than would be found in a community sample. There appear to be too few cases residing in non-poor census tracts in this sample to bring the variation on these poverty-related community-level variables to statistical significance.

Variables significantly predictive of child maltreatment report during the observation period in the main regression analysis include number of children, respondent's report of domestic violence in the household, and recent CPS report, each household-level factors found in previous research to be related to maltreatment reporting. The strength of the effect for recent CPS report, and the fact that it is a significant predictor of the outcome measure when previous CPS reports dated more than 1 year prior to the Wave 1 interview date are controlled in the model, are noteworthy.

This finding concurs with research findings by authors including Lipien & Forthofer (2004) indicating that new maltreatment reports are most likely to occur in the wake of recent previous reports, and suggests that case-related factors such as heightened scrutiny as a result of involvement with ongoing services, and possible increased likelihood that a

referral will be screened-in and investigated in the wake of other recent CPS reports, may be important variables in determining risk for new reports—akin to the "visibility hypotheses" discussed in this paper. This perspective appears to be corroborated by another of Lipien & Forthofer's (2004) findings, that the provision of in-home preventive services (i.e.: "family preservation" programs) was associated with heightened risk for re-referral in cases with a previous CPS report. Alternatively, it may be that cases with recent CPS involvement—and, perhaps, too, those receiving in-home preventive services—often tend to be cases in which there is in fact greatest ongoing risk to children, i.e.: greatest probability of subsequent maltreatment events, and therefore greatest likelihood of new reports.

The implications of recent CPS involvement as a strong predictor of subsequent reporting might vary depending on the findings of studies with more detailed data in this area. For example, if households with recent report history do in fact tend to be settings of heightened risk to children, this would appear to weigh in favor of increased availability of preventive services to such households—irrespective of case findings in index or initial complaints—and might support the argument that differential service provision based on investigation findings—i.e.: indicated/substantiated vs. not substantiated—is not an efficacious approach to child protection. On the other hand, if further study of this point reveals that service system involvement appears to incur further service system involvement due to increased scrutiny or visibility, without strong evidence that children do in fact tend to be at increased risk of harm in households with recent report history, that would suggest that the child protection system has evolved formal or informal processes which lead it to focus undue attention on families once they become involved with local CPS agencies—indicating that a review of screening and intake protocols should be undertaken both in the

interest of fairness to families and to determine whether system resources might be better expended elsewhere.

This study's finding that maltreatment reports become more likely as the number of children in the household increases also concurs with previous research findings. Zuravin (1988) found number of children to be related both to physical abuse and to neglect, a result replicated in the study by Zuravin and DiBlasio (1996) among adolescent mothers. Both of these studies found number of children to be more strongly associated with neglect than with physical abuse. One obvious explanation for this finding is that, especially for single-parent families like many of the households in this study, increased numbers of children in a household likely place greater demand on limited economic resources (Berger, 2005), further tax existing resources for the care and supervision of children, and may also increase the emotional strain of parenting.

From a policy perspective, the finding that the risk of maltreatment reporting increases with the number of children in a household suggests that child protection efforts, particularly among low-income families like those in this study, may be at odds with initiatives such as the "family cap" for TANF benefits, which was in effect in Illinois at the time these data were collected.⁶ If, as seems likely, increased numbers of children add to risk of maltreatment in part by straining a family's financial resources and thus its ability to care for and protect children living in the household, such policies might be counterproductive

⁶ In a policy initiative intended to reduce new births among welfare recipients, Illinois joined 23 other states in writing AFDC and later TANF regulations which capped family income support grants at an amount based on existing family size for ongoing grants beginning in 1995 or at time of initial grant application for new cases thereafter, so that subsequent new births did not increase the family grant amount. Faced with research suggesting that the family cap policy did not have the intended effect of limiting family size among welfare recipients, the Illinois legislature moved in 2003 to phase out the cap beginning in 2004, with final elimination of the policy to take place by 2007 (Levin-Epstein, 2003).

from a child protection viewpoint by undercutting the economic stability of families with already marginal financial resources.

Policy initiatives directed toward helping families protect and provide for all children under their care are more congruent with the aims and efforts of the child protection system. Examples of such initiatives include proactive healthcare measures such as perinatal home visitation for families expecting or with newborn children and expanded access to preventive healthcare including vaccinations and well-child checkups for young children, and school programs such as Head Start, which often include nutritional and health-care components alongside early academics.

The strong and significant effect for respondent's report of domestic violence within the 12 month period preceding the Wave 1 interview date supports a number of similar findings in the child maltreatment literature indicating that a home environment in which physical violence occurs between adult household members may be one of the strongest indicators that children are likely to be at risk for maltreatment. The well-established correlation between domestic violence and child maltreatment has challenged the child protection system and systems of care for victims of domestic or intimate-partner violence to develop assessment, treatment, and prevention solutions compatible with the aims of both systems (Renner & Slack, 2004). For example, researchers in both fields have historically tended to focus on their respective problem areas rather than examining commonalities between child maltreatment and domestic violence (Edelson, 1999), and women whose children were maltreated by an abusive partner have sometimes been viewed in the child protection system as culpable for failing to protect their children, though they themselves

may have done nothing to harm their children and may in fact have been victimized concurrently by the same abuser (Findlater & Kelly, 1999; Echlin & Osthoff, 2000).

Given the number of studies linking child maltreatment with domestic violence, there seems to be little doubt that these two important problems frequently co-occur within households. There does appear to be need for further research addressing the specific mechanisms by which child maltreatment and domestic violence are connected, and despite encouraging indications that the child protection system and systems of care for victims of domestic violence are recognizing common ground and moving toward collaborative interventions (Findlater & Kelly, 1999), it seems clear that there is room for further improvement in terms of inter-system cooperation in this area. The findings of this study indicate sufficient overlap between child maltreatment and domestic violence among low-income populations in Illinois to suggest that reports in either area should trigger at least initial assessment aimed at determining whether there are indications of the other problem also being present.

Subgroup Analyses

While the main analysis provided no evidence to support the CSO perspective on child maltreatment reporting outlined in Chapter 2 of this paper, the results of subgroup sensitivity tests add further information to the study's findings in this area. One of these analyses produced findings which suggest that residential stability, a central factor under CSO theory, may effect the circumstances under which child maltreatment reporting occurs despite lack of significant effect in the main analysis.

For the subgroup of cases in residence less than 2 years at the Wave 1 interview, report of domestic violence in the household and history of recent CPS report were again strongly linked to maltreatment reports during the outcome observation period (Table 3, Appendix section). However, this subgroup analysis also suggests that recently-moved families may experience a less supportive social environment than those with greater levels of residential stability. Independent-samples t-tests (*see Table 6, Appendix section*) show that this group of cases reported significantly lower levels of social and material support than their counterparts who had been in current residence at least two years at the Wave 1 interview. Although this finding does not show that moving *reduced* the levels of social and material support these families received—it may have been families with lower levels of support who tended to move—the significant difference in levels of support by length of residential tenure does, at a minimum, suggest a connection among low-income households between residential stability and the degree of supportiveness such families experience.⁷

Other research has shown that informal supports such as those measured in the present study may reduce parental stress and improve the frequency of positive interactions between parents and children (Lyons, Henly & Schuerman, 2005). While the measure of social and material support was not significantly predictive of the outcome variable in the regression model for either the full group or subgroup analyses, it is possible that levels of informal support do affect other important aspects of family functioning which may bear on the safety and well-being of children.

⁷ The suggestion that the subgroup in current residence less than 2 years at Wave 1 differs qualitatively from other respondents and may be at greater risk for becoming subjects of maltreatment reports is further supported by the fact that while these respondents comprised 41.5% of the sample in this study, they accounted for 55.5% of maltreatment reports during the outcome observation period.

The subgroup analysis selecting for cases in current residence less than two years at time of the Wave 1 interview also showed a statistically significant protective effect for household income, suggesting that economic self-sufficiency may be critical to the ability to protect and care for children when a family relocates. One potential explanation for this finding is that the lower levels of social and material support experienced by recent movers in this study, resulting in fewer informal resources for the care and protection of children, were further exacerbated by economic stress in those households which were also faced with the greatest shortfalls in income.

Another finding for the subgroup of cases in current residence less than 2 years at Wave 1 is the significant protective effect associated with Black/African American race in the relative hazard for maltreatment reporting during the outcome period. A similar protective effect was also associated with Black/African American race and with Hispanic/Latino ethnicity in the main (full group) analysis for this study, but neither was statistically significant in the main analysis. Examination of differences on key independent variables between these race/ethnicity groups and all other respondents within this recently-moved subgroup of cases did not reveal a clear explanation for this finding.⁸

The most straightforward interpretation of these findings is to note that among this sample of low-income respondents Black/African American families who relocate may have strengths or resources which make them less likely to become involved with the CPS system than other families who move, but that it is not clear from analyzing the present dataset what those strengths or resources may consist of. While the present dataset was drawn and is

⁸ Black/African American respondents differ significantly from other cases within this subgroup in having greater numbers of children, in having lower levels of eligible employment, and in being more likely to have been receiving TANF in the month the survey interview was administered. Between-group differences were also found, but did not reach statistical significance, on other key variables.

weighted to represent the Illinois TANF population as accurately as possible, it may be that a different sampling strategy resulting in greater proportions of cases in the White, Hispanic/Latino and "other" race/ethnicity categories could be helpful in further exploring between-group differences such as the protective effect associated with Black/African American race and Hispanic/Latino ethnicity within this recently-moved subgroup of survey respondents.

Finally, the subgroup analysis for survey respondents in current residence less than 2 years at Wave 1 also reveals a significant protective effect associated with employment of the survey respondent in Model 3 (estimated hazard ratio .44, $p = .045$), though not in Model 4. While Berger (2005) has noted that employment among single parents might be expected to have an "ambiguous" effect overall with respect to risk for violence toward children, with low-income working parents subject to the concurrent stresses of limited economic resources and reduced time available for child care and supervision, this subgroup analysis in the present study suggests that employment may have a protective effect for at least some members of this group, a finding which seems likely related to the protective effect of household income also noted for this subgroup of cases.

A separate sensitivity test was performed by repeating the 4-block regression sequence selecting for cases in which the family either did not move or moved only to a contiguous census tract between Wave 1 and Wave 2, a timeframe approximately corresponding to the 1-year outcome observation period (Table 4, Appendix section). Findings among this subgroup of cases closely mirrored findings in the full-group analysis, with number of children, respondent's report of domestic violence in the household, and history of recent CPS report being the significant predictors of maltreatment reports within

one year following the Wave 1 interview. The results of this sensitivity test indicate that findings in the main analysis were not substantively affected by household moves during the outcome observation period, lending weight to both the findings of significant effects where those are noted for the main analysis, and to the lack of significant findings for other key variables, notably at the community level.

The present study has produced potentially valuable information regarding factors associated with child maltreatment reporting, and has at the same time been limited in its ability to produce broad and generalizable findings on some important points. Findings of the present study can be extended by future research using a sample of households more representative of the spectrum of demographic and socioeconomic community settings found within the catchment areas of CPS agencies, as doing so might allow a future study to measure significant community-level effects related to child maltreatment reporting, which may have been present but were not statistically significant in the present study. Measuring organizational factors affecting the child maltreatment reporting equation is another important step, one which will require CPS organizational data capable of being linked to additional variables at both the case and neighborhood levels. Finally, future studies might also benefit from the incorporation of a risk and resiliency perspective, which could add an important new dimension to the presently limited understanding within the child maltreatment field of how and why both families and neighborhoods become involved with the child protection system, and why some families who do become involved do so to a greater extent than others.

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APPENDIX

Appendices

Figure 1: Illinois Report Trends, 1992-2002
(Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, 2003)

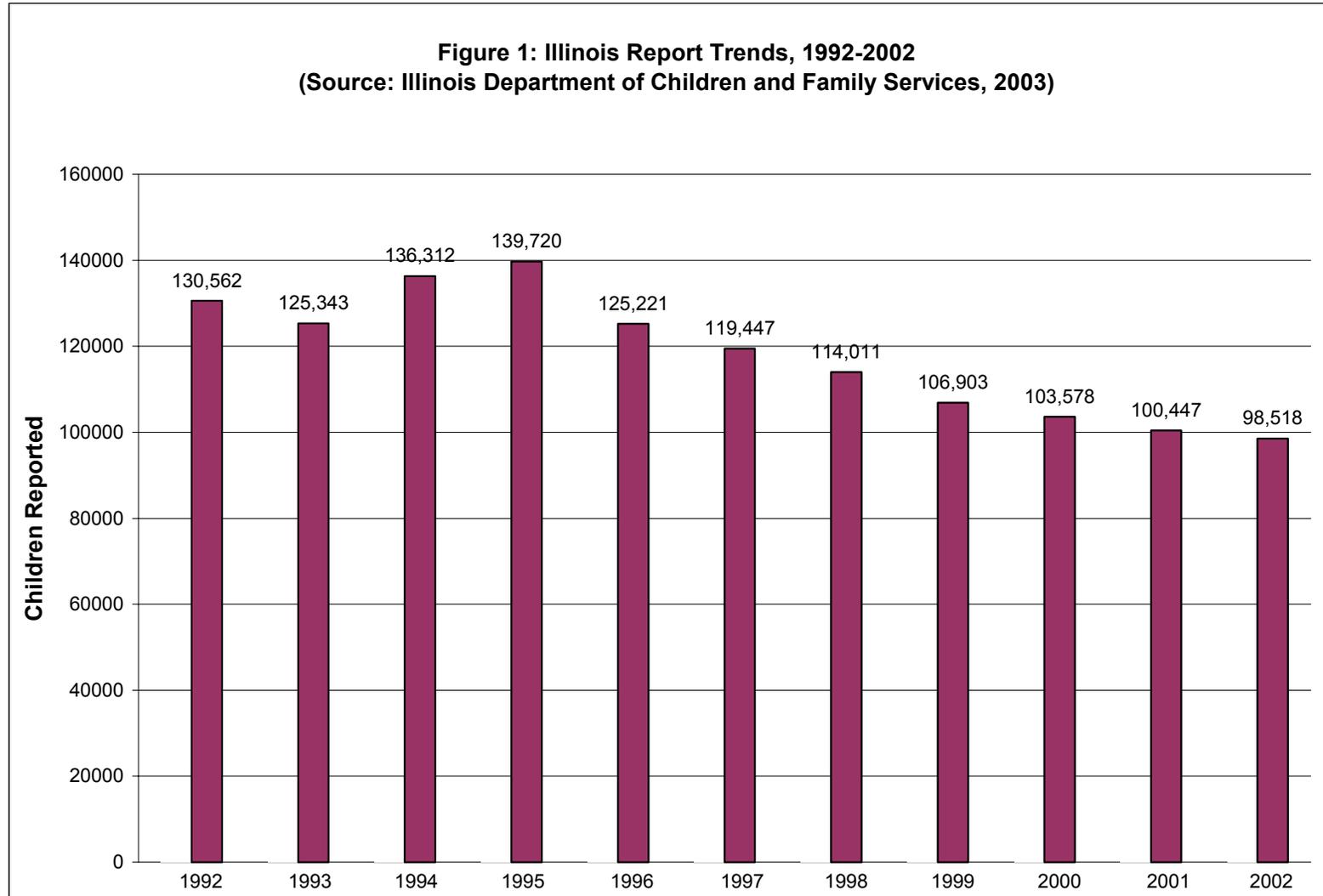


Figure 2: Factors affecting child maltreatment reports

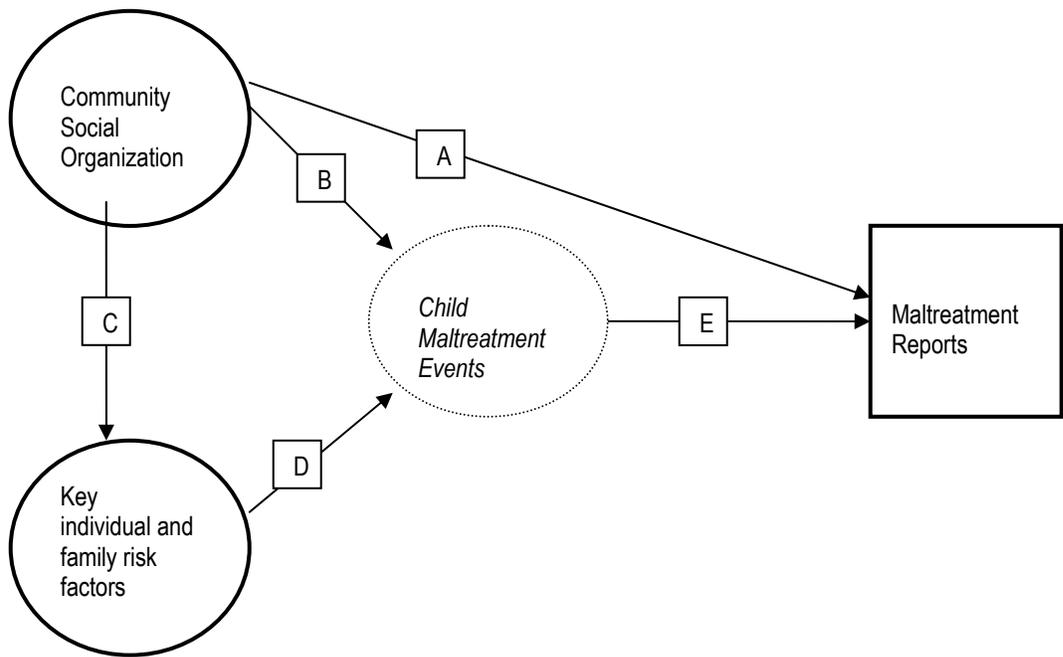


Table 1: Operational Definitions of Measures

Main Analysis: Community Variables

Variable	Data Source	Operational Definition	Comments
Poverty rate	Census 2000	Proportion of residents below federal poverty level.	By census tract (continuous var.)
Unemployment rate	Census 2000	Proportion of residents employed.	By census tract (continuous var.)
Residential tenure rate	Census 2000	Proportion of residents in current residence less than 5 years.	By census tract (continuous var.)
Rate of vacant housing	Census 2000	Proportion of housing units unoccupied.	By census tract (continuous var.)
Median income	Census 2000	Median household income	By census tract (continuous var.)
Rate of single-parent households	Census 2000	Proportion of households with children reporting single parent as primary householder.	By census tract (continuous var.)
Racial/ethnic composition	Census 2000	Proportion of households reporting race/ethnicity of primary householder as African-American/Black, White, or Latino/Hispanic	By census tract (continuous var.)

Main Analysis: Household and Individual Variables

Variable	Data Source	Operational Definition	Comments
<u>Dependent Variable</u>			
Child Maltreatment Report	CANTS	Record of report in administrative database	Continuous variable measured as number of days to first CPS report during 12-month period beginning at Wave 1 interview.
<u>Demographic and Background Vars</u>			
Household income	IFS Survey	"What was the total <u>household</u> income (for you and other members of your household) from work and all other sources combined <u>in 1998</u> , before taxes and other deductions?" (In dollars).	Ordinal variable: 1 Less Than 2500 2 2500-4999 3 5000-7499 4 7500-9999 5 10000-12499 6 12500-14999 7 15000-17499 8 17500-19999 9 20000-24999 10 25000-29999 11 30000-34999 12 35000-39999 13 40000-44999 14 45000-49999 15 50000 or more

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Data Source</i>	<i>Operational Definition</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<u>Demographic and Background Variables (cont.)</u>			
Caregiver education level	IFS Survey	"Do you have a high school diploma or have you passed a high school equivalency test; that is the GED?"	Dichotomous variable
Number of children in household	IFS Survey	All children under age 18 for whom R was primary caregiver at some time in past 12 months (self-report on Household Roster).	Continuous variable
Married/domestic partner status of respondent	IFS Survey	"I may have asked you this before, but please remind me, are you currently married?" (If "No" to previous question) "Are you living with a partner/boyfriend/girlfriend at this time?"	Dichotomous variable for affirmative response to either question
Prior CPS report more than 1 year before Wave 1	CANTS	Prior CPS report history but none within 12 months prior to Wave 1 interview date	Categorical variable: 0 = No prior report, or case has recent prior report (see below) 1 = Previous CPS report > 1 yr
Recent prior CPS report	CANTS	Previous CPS report within 12 months prior to IFS Wave 1 interview date	Categorical variable: 0 = No CPS report within 12 months of Wave 1 interview date 1 = Previous CPS report within 12 months of Wave 1 interview date
<u>Key Individual and Family Variables</u>			
Alcohol/drug use ¹	IFS Survey	R's self-report of: a) Answered 3-5 times or more to "How many times during the past 12 months did you have more than 5 drinks in one day?" b) Answered 1-2 times or more to "In the past 12 months, how often have you [used] 1) marijuana, hashish (pot, grass, hash); 2) hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine or crack, LSD or any other hard drug?"	Dichotomous variable for either 3-5 times or more on item "a" or 1-2 times or more on item "b," or both

¹ Questions adapted from the Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI) (World Health Organization, 1994.)

Variable	Data Source	Operational Definition	Comments
<u>Key Individual and Family Vars (cont.)</u>			
Domestic violence	IFS Survey	"In the past 12 months, has any current or former spouse or partner..." a) Hit, slapped, or kicked you? b) Thrown or shoved you onto the floor, against a wall, or down stairs? c) Hurt you badly enough that you went to a doctor or clinic? d) Made you think that he might be going to hurt you? g) Used a gun, knife, or other object in a way that made you afraid? s) Forced you to have sex?	Dichotomous variable based on response of "Yes" to any of the listed items.
Welfare status	Illinois DHFS Admn Dta	Record of TANF claim during month of IFS Wave 1 survey interview	Dichotomous variable
Social and Material Support	IFS Survey	"Sometimes a person needs the support of people around them. When you need someone to listen to your problems when you're feeling low, are there..." "When it comes to people who encourage you in meeting your goals, are there..." "When you need help with small favors, are there..." "When you need someone to loan you money in an emergency, are there..."	(Summed variable combining scores from the four items; range of possible scores = 4 to 12) 3=enough people you can count on; 2=too few people, or; 1=no one you can count on?

Variable	Data Source	Operational Definition	Comments
<u>Key Individual and Family Vars (cont.)</u>			
Depression	IFS Survey	1=less than 1 day; 2=1-2 days; 3=3-4 days; 4=5-7 days. "Please tell me how often you felt this way <u>during the last week only.</u> " a) I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me. b) I did not feel like eating; or my appetite was poor. c) I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing. d) I felt depressed. e) I felt that everything I did was an effort. f) I felt that I couldn't shake the blues, even with help from family and friends. g) I felt fearful. h) My sleep was restless. i) I talked less than usual. j) I felt lonely. k) I felt sad. l) I could not "get going."	Dichotomous variable for summed score of 10 or above (this is the standardized cutoff score indicating depression on this 12-item version of the CES-D). ²
Employment status	Illinois Dep't of Emplmt. Security admin data	Record of R's employment during interview month in position potentially eligible for earnings compensation in the event of job loss.	Dichotomous variable
Civic Participation	IFS Survey	"Do you belong to any voluntary groups, organizations, or clubs, (including churches)?" "How active are you in these groups, organizations, or clubs, (including churches)?"	Categorical variable combining responses from both items: 0=Not a member of any group 1=Not active; hardly ever attend meetings or services 2=Fairly active; attend meetings often, or Very active; attend most meetings.

² CES-D measure authored by Ross, Mirowski & Huber (1983).

Variable	Data Source	Operational Definition	Comments
<u>Additional Household-Level Control Variables</u>			
Recent arrest of household member	IFS Survey	"In the past 12 months, have any of the following things happened to you, to your spouse/partner, or to <u>any</u> of your children?" (b) Someone was arrested, taken into custody for an illegal or delinquent offense, put in jail, or put in a juvenile facility? (Please do not include arrests for minor traffic violations)	Dichotomous variable
Race/ethnicity of respondent	IFS Survey	Race: "What race do you consider yourself to be?" Hispanic: "Are you Latino, Chicano, or of Hispanic origin?"	Dichotomous variables for Non-Hispanic Black, Non-Hispanic White, Hispanic, Other
Residential stability	IFS Survey	"How many years and months have you lived in your current residence?"	Continuous variable

Visibility Analysis: Household and Community Variables

Variable	Data Source	Operational Definition	Comments
<u>Dependent Variable</u>			
Child Maltreatment Report	CANTS	Record of report in administrative database	Dichotomous variable for any report during 12-month period beginning at Wave 1 interview.
<u>Independent Variables</u>			
Race/ethnicity of respondent	IFS Survey	Race: "What race do you consider yourself to be?" Hispanic: "Are you Latino, Chicano, or of Hispanic origin?"	Operationalized as dichotomous variables for Non-Hispanic Black, Non-Hispanic White, Other.
Racial/ethnic composition	Census 2000	Proportion of households reporting race/ethnicity of primary householder as African-American/Black, White, or Latino/Hispanic	Dichotomous variables, by census tract: <50% Black <50% Hispanic --White + "other" form comparison group.
Interaction of R's race & census tract composition	IFS Survey + Census 2000	Black Respondent x <50% Black census tract Hispanic/Latino Respondent x <50% Latino tract	Dichotomous variable

Table 2: Cox Regression Models, Outcome = CPS Report Within 1 yr Post-Wave1

VARIABLE	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z
Community Poverty	1.06	.156	.691	1.04	.156	.786	1.07	.165	.650	.92	.164	.631
<50% Black	1.26	.507	.565	.73	.439	.597	.89	.493	.827	1.00	.593	.995
<50% Latino	1.30	.576	.560	.67	.423	.526	.74	.472	.638	.73	.404	.564
% Residing < 5 yrs	1.54	2.344	.775	.81	1.226	.889	.77	1.165	.864	.80	1.112	.872
Household Income				.93	.069	.294	.96	.069	.544	.96	.064	.569
HS Deg/GED				1.27	.349	.384	1.32	.343	.290	1.63	.465	.089
Number of Children				1.38**	.119	.000	1.35**	.122	.001	1.25*	.118	.018
Married / Cohabiting				1.79	.598	.084	1.66	.558	.135	1.43	.505	.308
In residence < 2 yrs				1.56	.425	.100	1.48	.396	.142	1.09	.317	.755
Black Rspndt				.34*	.170	.031	.37*	.163	.024	.54	.269	.212
Latino Rspdt				.23	.176	.054	.27	.199	.075	.39	.267	.170
Frqnt Drug/Alc							1.63	.735	.281	1.51	.672	.350
Domestic Violence							3.02**	1.165	.004	3.28**	1.120	.000
Social/Material Support							1.06	.075	.421	1.09	.081	.267
Depression							1.27	.455	.512	1.35	.432	.348
On TANF							1.47	.390	.151	1.45	.393	.168
Employed							.71	.190	.197	.68	.200	.185
Civic Participation							1.28	.505	.524	1.63	.656	.228
Recent Arrest							.69	.386	.504	.67	.365	.460
Prior Report >1yr pre-Wv1										.74	.318	.485
Prior Report <1yr pre-Wv1										5.93**	1.887	.000
Black Rspndt * <50% Black										.95	.665	.938

* = Estimate significant at .05 level, ** = Estimate significant at .01 level

**Table 3: Cox Regression Models, Outcome = CPS Report Within 1 yr Post-Wave1
Select if R in Current Residence < 2 yrs (n=453, Total Reports < 1 yr = 60)**

VARIABLE	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z
Community Poverty	1.04	.174	.796	1.15	.195	.420	1.27	.234	.197	.90	.224	.681
<50% Black	1.30	.554	.541	.39	.209	.079	.55	.332	.323	.53	.376	.373
<50% Latino	3.66	2.805	.091	.57	.474	.499	.66	.614	.659	.59	.364	.391
% Residing < 5 yrs	1.00	1.751	.998	.33	.591	.537	.26	.490	.473	.39	.624	.556
Household Income				.84	.081	.077	.89	.078	.167	.83*	.064	.019
HS Deg/GED				.97	.370	.935	1.01	.327	.975	1.85	.750	.127
Number of Children				1.33*	.167	.022	1.27	.179	.090	1.09	.153	.541
Married / Cohabiting				3.23**	1.281	.003	2.84*	1.270	.020	2.29	1.205	.114
In residence < 2 yrs				—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Black Rspndt				.12**	.047	.000	.12**	.064	.000	.21*	.138	.018
Latino Rspndt ³				.01**	.013	.000	.01**	.017	.001	.01**	.018	.001
Frqnt Drug/Alc							1.87	.994	.236	1.34	.719	.586
Domestic Violence							3.91**	1.781	.003	4.68**	1.954	.000
Social/Material Support							1.03	.090	.714	1.09	.099	.339
Depression							1.19	.532	.694	1.45	.573	.344
On TANF							1.31	.535	.505	1.65	.636	.197
Employed							.42*	.156	.020	.46	.201	.075
Civic Participation							1.46	.993	.578	1.82	1.358	.420
Recent Arrest							1.06	.765	.936	.86	.652	.845
Prior Report >1yr pre-Wv1										.95	.681	.948
Prior Report <1yr pre-Wv1										7.29**	3.514	.000
Black Rspndt * <50% Black										.72	.677	.729

* = Estimate significant at .05 level, ** = Estimate significant at .01 level

³ Only one case in this subgroup with Hispanic/Latino ethnicity had a CPS report during the outcome period.

**Table 4: Cox Regression Models, Outcome = CPS Report < 1 yr Post-Wave1
Select if No Move or New Tract Contiguous (n=859, Total Reports < 1 yr = 81)**

VARIABLE	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z	Hazard Ratio	Robust Std Err	P> z
Community Poverty	1.17	.200	.358	1.13	.209	.527	1.19	.241	.401	1.01	.232	.981
<50% Black	1.46	.696	.424	.87	.678	.862	1.10	.780	.893	1.06	.672	.930
<50% Latino	1.15	.564	.768	.55	.386	.392	.62	.426	.484	.67	.456	.560
% Residing < 5 yrs	.90	1.750	.958	.56	1.115	.769	.62	1.289	.820	.63	1.274	.821
Household Income				.86	.071	.065	.89	.076	.159	.90	.084	.270
HS Deg/GED				1.41	.448	.282	1.41	.422	.253	1.77	.575	.080
Number of Children				1.48**	.154	.000	1.47**	.170	.001	1.33*	.158	.018
Married / Cohabiting				2.33*	.849	.020	1.96	.749	.078	1.82	.717	.128
In residence < 2 yrs				1.66	.492	.088	1.63	.468	.091	1.17	.371	.614
Black Rspndt				.35	.229	.109	.37	.209	.078	.55	.275	.231
Latino Rspdt				.21	.178	.068	.24	.199	.086	.43	.363	.318
Frqnt Drug/Alc							1.43	.858	.554	1.14	.662	.823
Domestic Violence							3.74**	1.542	.001	3.71**	1.539	.002
Social/Material Support							1.11	.089	.172	1.14	.091	.112
Depression							1.32	.528	.481	1.32	.518	.478
On TANF							1.48	.451	.196	1.54	.501	.185
Employed							.94	.298	.852	.90	.316	.760
Civic Participation							1.51	.669	.350	1.90	.858	.156
Recent Arrest							.52	.346	.327	.45	.277	.195
Prior Report >1yr pre-Wv1										1.19	.555	.712
Prior Report <1yr pre-Wv1										7.63**	2.714	.000
Black Rspndt * <50% Black										1.05	.830	.952

* = Estimate significant at .05 level, ** = Estimate significant at .01 level

Table 5: Community Structure Variables, Current Sample vs Illinois Means

	<i>IL Statewide Mean (Census 2000)</i>	<i>Unweighted Means, Census Tracts in Present Study (Census 2000)</i>
Households in Poverty	7.8%	30.1%
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	8.7%
Vacant Housing Rate	6.0%	11.6%
Median Household Income	\$46,950	\$28,260
Proportion Black/African American	15.1%	62.2%

Table 6: Income, Social & Material Support & Civic Participation by Tenure

Variable Mean (SD)	<i>In Residence <2 yrs at Wave 1 (n=444)</i>	<i>In Residence => 2yrs at Wave 1 (n=647)</i>
Social & Material Support**	10.00 (2.18)	10.35 (2.13)
Civic Participation	.25 (.656)	.27 (.656)
Monthly Household Income	\$1218.40	\$1202.70

**Difference is significant at .01 level (Independent Samples t-test)

**The Illinois Families Study:
Contextual and Individual Determinants of Child Maltreatment Reporting**

RESEARCH PROTOCOL SUBMISSION FOR IL DCFS IRB

I. Purpose or Hypotheses of the Study:

The proposed study will examine child maltreatment reporting⁴ at two different analytical levels: by zip code⁵ in Illinois counties, and by household. The study's conceptual framework will incorporate elements of both Community Social Organization theory (Coulton, Korbin, Su & Chow, 1995) and Political Economy organizational theory (Austin, 1988; Hasenfeld, 1992) in addressing the following research questions:

- (1) To what extent are characteristics of neighborhoods/communities and of local child protective services (CPS) offices associated with variations across geographic areas in child maltreatment reporting rates?
- (2) To what extent do individual and family structure characteristics predict the likelihood of a CPS report, controlling for characteristics of neighborhoods/ communities, and of local CPS offices?
- (3) Are the effects of individuals and family structure characteristics moderated by particular neighborhood/community and agency characteristics?

II. Potential Knowledge to be Gained:

Given that maltreatment reporting represents the ongoing occurrence of a significant social problem (child maltreatment) and sets in motion both tremendous logistical burdens on the child welfare system and great financial costs to taxpayers, efforts to identify factors associated with variation in maltreatment reporting rates represent an important area of inquiry. It is also essential to examine the role reporting rates play in contributing to the racial disparities within the child welfare system. Increased understanding of neighborhood and community factors which influence reporting rates may support the design of more effective interventions aimed at reducing the incidence of child maltreatment, and more efficient targeting of high risk families.

At the same time, attaining greater insight into factors within the DCFS organizational structure which may affect reporting rates could contribute to a better understanding of how and why rates vary across DCFS catchment areas.

⁴ Official records of maltreatment reporting generally summarize numbers of cases opened for investigation after an initial screening process, rather than total numbers of contacts CPS agencies receive from reporters. Difficulty obtaining full screen in/screen out records by geographic area makes use of data on screened-in cases the practical method of assessing reporting rates in studies such as the one proposed. "Reports" here refers to screened-in cases unless otherwise noted

⁵ Although other levels of analysis might, arguably, better approximate a "community" or "neighborhood," we want to ensure sufficient variability in reporting rates—something that may not be achievable with an aggregated unit of analysis as small as a census tract.

III. Description of Study Methodology and Design:

Procedures and instruments:

Data will be drawn from existing Illinois Families Study (IFS) survey data, the U.S. Census, Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) data, Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) data, DCFS CANTS data, and DCFS case manager data (aggregated to the office level). The variables examined in the proposed study are described below according to whether they are conceptualized as individual and family structure characteristics, community characteristics, or agency/office characteristics.

<i>Individual and Family Structure Variables:</i>	<i>Data Source:</i>
Child maltreatment report history prior to Wave 1 IFS	CANTS
Child maltreatment reports subsequent to Wave 1 IFS	CANTS
Race/ethnicity of respondent	IFS Survey
Number of children in household under respondent's care	IFS Survey
Marital status of respondent	IFS Survey
Cohabitation status of respondent	IFS Survey
Household "doubling-up," tenure, and housing moves	IFS Survey
Household income	IFS Survey
Respondent employment status	IDES data
Respondent welfare status	IDHS data
Social support (perceived availability of material and emotional support)	IFS Survey
Civic engagement (e.g., membership in local organizations, including churches; frequency of participation in local meetings)	IFS Survey

<i>"Community" Variables:⁶</i>	<i>Data Source:</i>
Ratio of screened-in reports to child population	CANTS, Census 2000
Percent below federal poverty level	Census 2000
Housing tenure rates (e.g., percent less than one year)	Census 2000
Vacant housing rates	Census 2000
Single-parent household rates	Census 2000
Racial/ethnic composition	Census 2000
Non-Hispanic black (percent of residents)	
Non-Hispanic white	
Hispanic	
Other	
Unemployment rates	Census 2000
Respondents' perceptions of neighborhood:	IFS survey data
As a safe place to live	
As a good neighborhood to raise children	
As a neighborhood where people help each other	

⁶ In the household analyses, census data are updated annually when respondents report a housing move.

In addition to the survey data, census data, and administrative CANTS data, the proposed study will also draw upon case manager data from the DCFS administrative system. We propose to link each zip code (for the aggregate analysis) and each IFS respondent (in the household analysis) to the relevant DCFS office using information on region, site, and field code combined with address information.⁷

The case manager data contains limited information on the demographic and professional characteristics of workers in each office; these data will be aggregated to the “office” level. The following variables will be constructed:

<i>DCFS Office Variables:</i>	<i>Data Source:</i>
Ratio of screened-in reports to CPS workers	Case manager, CANTS
Percent female (CPS workers)	Case manager
Percent Non-Hispanic black (CPS workers)	Case manager
Non-Hispanic white	
Hispanic	
Other	
Percent with Master’s degree (CPS workers)	Case manager
Ratio of CPS investigators to total number of office staff	Case manager
Proportion of screened-in reports from various sources: e.g., Health care professionals, educational professionals, social service workers, neighbors, anonymous reporters	Case manager, CANTS

The proposed study will also seek information regarding frequency of DCFS trainings for mandated reporters and for other community members by geographic area. At this point, we do not have knowledge of the source of such data, or whether it is publicly available.

Study design

The proposed study will combine longitudinal data from three waves of IFS survey interviews and administrative records constructed and continually updated for this time period in the context of the Illinois Families Study. These data will be combined with U.S. Census data within target counties, and with additional DCFS data (from the case manager administrative data system).

To ensure cultural sensitivity in the collection of survey data, the IFS used several strategies, including cognitive pre-testing, pilot testing, reliance on standardized scales and measures when available, and extensive training of interviewers.

IV. Description of Sample:

Sample:

For analyses at the household level, existing data from a longitudinal study of current and former TANF recipients will be used. The Illinois Families Study (IFS) is a 6-year panel study

⁷ We are not proposing to link individual workers to individual IFS respondents and households; we propose to construct the link only at the office level, which should maintain the confidentiality of workers potentially associated with investigations involving IFS household members. Under the data-sharing agreement with Chapin Hall established for the IFS study and approved by DCFS, this link will be constructed by Chapin Hall and office-level data will be provided to us stripped of worker identifying information.

begun in 1999, which gathers annual information on families through in-person interviews and a variety of administrative data sources including welfare and child protection administrative records. The original sample (N=1,899) was randomly selected from the September 1998 TANF caseload in 9 Illinois counties. The sample was stratified by 2 geographic regions: Cook County, and selected “downstate” counties (St. Clair, Peoria, Tazewell, Fulton, Knox, Marshall, Woodford and Stark). These 9 counties were chosen because they collectively represent 75% of the state TANF caseload while including cities and towns of varying sizes and demographic makeup. A 72% response rate was achieved in the first IFS survey (N=1,363).

Because the sample was drawn from among TANF recipients, who are predominantly female and economically disadvantaged, the respondent pool differs from the general population along these lines. These differences may be seen as appropriate for the proposed study because families who become involved with the child welfare system are likely to have a recent history of welfare receipt. Thus, the IFS sample affords an opportunity to closely examine factors associated with maltreatment reporting in a population subset (those receiving welfare or with a welfare history) which has higher than average rates of child maltreatment reporting (Shook, 1999; Goerge, Sommer, Lee, and Harris, 1995). Great care will be taken to interpret the findings from the household analysis with the sample selection limitations in mind.

Our analyses will be conducted at two levels: communities, and individual households. The community-level analysis will utilize zip code areas as geographic boundaries in examining structural variables for counties throughout the state. The household-level analysis will utilize IFS survey data drawn from the nine Illinois counties described above.

V. Potential Risks and Benefits:

All data used for the proposed study are secondary and have been stripped of identifying information; no primary data collection is involved. Thus, no significant risks to individual children or their families will be incurred in the course of this study. Potential benefits of this research include enhanced knowledge of factors associated with geographic variation in child maltreatment reporting rates and of the role reporting rates play in contributing to racial disparities within the child welfare system, and better understanding of factors within DCFS which may affect reporting rates.

VI. Informed Consent/Assent:

The Illinois Families Study already adheres to strict procedures to maintain confidentiality, and has met all requirements for the protection of human subjects (see attached Human Subjects Consent Forms). Our IFS respondents were also asked for their permission to link survey data with all administrative data sources identified above; 93% consented to this procedure. It is this subset of IFS respondents (N=1,260) who will be the focus of the household level analyses.

VII. Incentives:

Not applicable.

VII. Confidentiality:

Maintenance of confidentiality

It will be a fundamental objective of the proposed study to assure the confidentiality of any personal or identifying information obtained in the course of this research.

All records for the proposed study will be kept in a locked file cabinet within a locked office at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Social Work. Computers used in conducting analysis and writing reports for the study will be kept in a locked office and will be password-protected and equipped with firewall protection to guard against electronic intrusion or theft of data.

IFS Survey Cover Letter



Institute for Policy Research
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

October 22, 1999

Dear Illinois Families Study Respondent:

Recent years have brought about many changes in laws about work and welfare in Illinois. Yet, very little is known about the true effects these changes are having on the families in our state.

A group of researchers from Northwestern University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, Northern Illinois University and Roosevelt University are conducting a study to better understand how work and welfare may be helpful or harmful to families in Illinois. You have been selected as one of 1500 people in the state to take part in this study and discuss your experiences and views.

Your participation is voluntary. We hope you will agree to participate because your opinions are very important to our understanding of how work and welfare policies affect families. If you choose to be part of the study, you will be mailed \$30 in the form of a money order, once we confirm that you have completed the interview. The interview will take place in your home and will last about one hour. After this initial interview, we will ask to contact you for five more over the next five years. You will be paid an additional \$30 for each of these interviews and they will last one hour each. A member of the research team from the Metro Chicago Information Center (MCIC) will call you soon to arrange an appointment.

Your involvement in this study will be strictly confidential. Your participation will not affect any services you currently receive or any services that you may receive in the future. The people conducting this study are not employees of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), and IDHS will not be informed about your participation in the study.

Please mail the enclosed form back to us with your address and phone number(s) in the Business Reply Envelope we've provided. Or, call the toll-free phone number below to provide an updated address and phone number, or to ask questions about this study.

1-800-434-6575

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Dan Lewis
Northwestern University

IFS Survey Consent Form

Northwestern University
Institute for Policy Research

CONSENT FORM

Title of protocol: The Illinois Families Study, Wave I Interview

Principal Investigator: Dan A. Lewis, Northwestern University
Stephanie Riger, University of Illinois at Chicago
Paul Kleppner, Northern Illinois University
James Lewis, Roosevelt University

I. STUDY PURPOSE

You are being asked to participate in a research study to learn about the work and welfare experiences of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients in Illinois. Researchers from several Illinois universities are interviewing 1,500 families who have received TANF. They hope that the information they learn from individuals like yourself can be used to improve welfare programs to better meet the needs of families in Illinois.

II. PROCEDURE

As a participant in this study you will be interviewed for approximately one hour in person or by telephone (whichever you prefer). During the interview you will be asked questions about the following kinds of things: your family and others who have lived with you in the past year; your experiences with public aid; major events that have happened to you in the past year; your work experiences; and financial assistance you have received from family and friends. If you agree to be interviewed, we will ask to contact you for five more interviews over the next five years. These additional interviews will each last approximately one hour.

III. RISKS

Your participation in this study may involve the following risk. Over the course of the interview you may feel that some of the questions you are asked are too personal. If you feel uncomfortable answering a question at any point in the interview, just say so and we will skip to another question. Please be informed that Illinois state law requires that any evidence of intentional harm to a child that is witnessed by an interviewer must be reported to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. This would include things like hitting or slapping a child in the presence of an interviewer, or leaving a child unattended in a potentially dangerous situation. It does not include things you tell an interviewer in response to a survey question.

IV. BENEFITS

You may find some of the topics we discuss helpful. For example, you will have the chance to discuss your experiences with TANF, both positive and negative, and your thoughts about what would make this program better for families. On the other hand, you may not benefit at all from participating in this study, other than being paid.

V. ALTERNATIVES

The only other alternative available to you is to not participate in the study.

VI. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

If you choose to participate in the study, you will not incur any costs. You will be paid \$30 in the form of a money order if you finish the entire interview, not including specific questions that you feel uncomfortable answering. This money order will be mailed to you once we have confirmed that the interview took place. You will be paid an additional \$30 for each of the additional interviews you agree to complete over the next five years.

VII. CONFIDENTIALITY

Your answers to the survey questions will be strictly confidential. They will be combined with the answers of other people who have been interviewed for the study. Your name will not be used in any reports about the survey. In fact, no information that could identify you will be released to any individuals or agencies (including the Illinois Department of Human Services). In the event that intentional harm to a child is witnessed by an interviewer, and a report has to be made to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, no unrelated information will be released to the Department. Everything you tell us, including all your answers to our questions, will be strictly confidential.

VIII. SUBJECTS RIGHTS

The decision of whether or not to participate in this study is entirely up to you. If you choose to take part in the study, you may withdraw from it at any time. Your decision to withdraw is entirely confidential and will not affect any services you are receiving now or that you may receive in the future.

IX. CONTACT PERSON

If you have any questions concerning this research study please contact our interviewers at the Metro Chicago Information Center at the toll-free number (1-800-434-6575), or Kristen Shook, the Research Project Director, at (847) 491-5889. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant please contact The Office for the Protection of Research Subjects of Northwestern University at (312) 503-9338.

X. CONSENT

I agree to participate in the research study described above. A copy of this consent form will be given to me. (Please sign and date your signature below).

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Witness

IFS Consent Form for Use of Administrative Data

Northwestern University
Institute for Policy Research

CONSENT FOR ACCESSING STATE ADMINISTRATIVE DATA AND SCHOOL RECORDS

Title of protocol: The Illinois Families Study
Principal Investigators: Dan Lewis, Northwestern University
Stephanie Riger, University of Illinois at Chicago
Paul Kleppner, Northern Illinois University
James Lewis, Roosevelt University

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE

You are being asked to participate in a research study by granting permission for researchers to access information related to you and your children from state of Illinois administrative databases over the six-year study period. These databases are: the Illinois Department of Human Services, the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the Illinois Common Performance Management System, and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. You are also being asked for your permission to access school administrative data on your children over the six-year study period. This information will be collected on all 1,500 survey participants. The information from the administrative databases will be combined with information from the annual surveys to get a more complete picture of how families fare under welfare reform policies.

PROCEDURE

If you agree to participate, staff members of the University Consortium on Welfare Reform will be given access to state administrative databases so that they may collect these administrative data on all 1,500 sample members, using a combination of names, birthdates, and social security numbers. No one from any of the state departments will be involved in this data collection. School records will be obtained from school officials at each of your children's schools. A form authorizing the release of this information will be sent to a school official with our signature. This form will identify you only as a research participant. It will not identify you as a client of any public welfare program, nor will it reveal any confidential information about you or your family.

RISKS

There are no risks to participating in this research study.

BENEFITS

You will not benefit from participation in this study. However, the administrative data and school records will help provide a more complete picture of how families who are working or

receiving welfare are doing.

ALTERNATIVES

You have the choice not to provide this consent, but still participate in the main study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information on you and your children is confidential and will be used only by research staff. Your name and your children's names will not be released to any state employee as a result of this research.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Your will not incur any costs by virtue of your participation in this study.

SUBJECT'S RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time. You may withdraw your consent to participate at any time by calling the Project Director, Kristen Shook, at (847) 491-5889. Your consent for accessing administrative data pertaining to your family will not affect any services you receive now or may wish to receive in the future.

CONTACT PERSON

If you have any questions, or wish to discuss anything, you may call the Project Director at Northwestern University, Kristen Shook at (847) 491-5889. If you have any questions about my rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects of Northwestern University at (312)503-9338.

CONSENT

I hereby give consent to participate in this study and give permission to the University Consortium on Welfare Reform Project staff to collect information from the Illinois Department of Human Services, the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the Illinois Common Performance Management System, and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services related to me, my children, and any children for whom I am the legal guardian. I also agree to verify my social security number, the social security number(s) of my child/children, and of any children for whom I am the legal guardian, so that the researcher may access this administrative data for the purposes outlined in this consent form.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Witness

IFS Survey Items Used in Present Study

HOUSEHOLD ROSTER

INTERVIEWER (read to self): The family members associated with the Sept/Oct/Nov, 1998 welfare grant headed by R are listed on the grant information sheet. Complete the following household roster for R and those individuals on the grant information sheet only. Transfer all relevant information to the household roster, check accuracy, and ask R to provide the additional information in columns HR4-HR8.

HR1_f. First, I'd like to verify the first and last names of the people associated with your welfare grant one year ago. Let's start with you, and then I'd like to ask about [INTERVIEWER: read off names on grant list. If R doesn't want to give last names, ask for first name and last initial, but no nicknames.]
HR1_l.

HR2. I need to verify the sex of each grant member. 1 Female 0 Male

HR3. I need to verify each grant member's age, including your age. ____ (age in years)

HR4. Is <NAME> still living with you now? 1 Yes 0 No

When did <NAME> last move out? HR4_mm. ____ HR4_yy. ____

HR5. [INTERVIEWER: use relationship codes below to code each grant member's relationship to R]:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1..... husband or wife | 9..... brother or sister (including step siblings and half-siblings) |
| 2..... partner/boyfriend (or girlfriend) | 10..... niece or nephew |
| 3..... biological child | 11..... grandchild |
| 4..... adopted child | 12..... great-grandchild, grand niece/nephew |
| 5..... child of spouse or partner/boy/girlfriend | 13.....cousin (1st, 2nd, or more distant) |
| 6..... foster child | 14.....roommate/friend |
| 7..... parent, step-parent, or parent of spouse or partner/boy/girlfriend | 15.....spouse/partner/boy/girlfriend of another adult in household |
| 8..... grandparent, aunt/uncle, great aunt/uncle | 16.....other (HR5v. specify: _____) |

**INT1. INTERVIEWER CHECKPOINT:
NEXT ITEMS SHOULD BE ASKED OF ALL PERSONS 15 AND OLDER.**

HR6. I need to verify the marital status of grant members currently 15 and older. Starting with you, are you.....
1..... never married 4..... divorced, or
2..... married and living together 5.....widowed?
3..... married but separated

HR7. What is the employment status of the grant members currently 15 and older? Starting with you, are you.....
1..... working part-time (10+ hours per week)
2..... working full-time (30+ hours per week)
3..... not working or looking for work, or
4..... not working, but currently looking for work?

HR8. What is the highest grade completed by each grant member age 15 and older, starting with you? (e.g., 8 = 8th grade; 12 = h.s. dgr; 16 = 4 years college)

Household Roster

HR1_f. HR1_l. first and last name of household member	HR2. sex f m	HR3. age in years	HR4. still living here? y n	HR4_mm. HR4_yy. [If no to HR4, date moved out]	HR5. relatn- ship to R	For persons age 15 and over only		
						HR6.	HR7.	HR8.
						marital status nm m sp d w	work status pt ft nwnl nwl	highest grade completed
Respondent: <i>Rfnm/Rlnm</i> f _____ l _____	<i>Rsex</i> 1 0	<i>R_age</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>Rmarstat</i> 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Rwkstat</i> 1 2 3 4	<i>Reduc</i>
f _____ l _____	1 0		1 0	m: _____ y: _____		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4	
f _____ l _____	1 0		1 0	m: _____ y: _____		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4	
f _____ l _____	1 0		1 0	m: _____ y: _____		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4	
f _____ l _____	1 0		1 0	m: _____ y: _____		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4	
f _____ l _____	1 0		1 0	m: _____ y: _____		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4	
f _____ l _____	1 0		1 0	m: _____ y: _____		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4	
f _____ l _____	1 0		1 0	m: _____ y: _____		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4	
f _____ l _____	1 0		1 0	m: _____ y: _____		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4	

NOTE: Use key codes on P. 1 to complete this roster.

HR9. Is there anyone else now living with you on a regular basis that I did not mention, including friends, a boyfriend or girlfriend, or other relatives?

- 1 Yes
 0 No (go to the HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD Section HNI, P. 5)

**INT2. INTERVIEWER CHECKPOINT:
 ASK R FOR THE NAMES OF THESE INDIVIDUALS AND COMPLETE SUPPLEMENTAL
 HOUSEHOLD ROSTER.**

HR10_f. What are the first and last names of these individuals? [If R doesn't want to give last name, ask
HR10_l. for first name and last initial, but make sure that you are not given a nickname.]

HR11. What is the sex of each of these household member? 1 Female 0 Male

HR12. What are their ages? _____ (age in years; infant=0)

HR13. When did <NAME> move in? **HR13_mm.** _____ **HR13_yy.** _____

HR14. [INTERVIEWER: use relationship codes to code each household member's relationship to R]:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1..... husband or wife | 9..... brother or sister (including step siblings and half-siblings) |
| 2..... partner/boyfriend (or girlfriend) | 10..... niece or nephew |
| 3..... biological child | 11..... grandchild |
| 4..... adopted child | 12..... great-grandchild, grand niece/nephew |
| 5..... child of spouse or partner/boy/girlfriend | 13..... cousin (1st, 2nd, or more distant) |
| 6..... foster child | 14..... roommate/friend |
| 7..... parent, step-parent, or parent of spouse or partner/boy/girlfriend | 15..... spouse/partner/boy/girlfriend of another adult in household |
| 8..... grandparent, aunt/uncle, great aunt/uncle | 16..... other (HR14v. specify: _____) |

HR15. What is the marital status for each of these individuals who are age 15 and older?
 Is <NAME>..... 1..... never married 4..... divorced, or
 2..... married and living together 5..... widowed?
 3..... married but separated

HR16. What is the employment status of each of these individuals who are 15 and older?
 Is <NAME>..... 1..... working part-time (10+ hours per week)
 2..... working full-time (30+ hours per week)
 3..... not working or looking for work, or
 4..... not working, but currently looking for work?

HR17. What is the highest grade completed by each of these individuals who are age 15 and older?
 (e.g., 8 = 8th grade; 12 = h.s. dgr; 16 = 4 years college)

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

Now I'd like to ask you about the places you've lived in the past 12 months.

HN1. First, which type of residence best describes your current residence?

- 1..... apartment or house, with 2 or more rooms
- 2..... hotel, "SRO," or single room apartment
- 3..... halfway house or group home (*go to HN9*)
- 4..... homeless shelter (*go to HN9*)
- 5..... other (HN1v. specify: _____)

HN2. How many bedrooms do you have in this residence?

_____ # bedrooms

HN3. Do you own this place, do you pay or help out with rent, or are you staying for free at someone else's place?

- 1..... own
- 2..... pay or help with rent
- 3..... stay for free at someone else's place (*go to HN6, below*)
- 4..... other (HN3v. specify: _____) (*go to HN6, below*)

HN4. How much do you, personally, contribute to the rent or mortgage each month?

\$ _____

INT3. INTERVIEWER CHECKPOINT:
IF R OWNS, GO TO HN9, P.6; OTHERWISE CONTINUE.

HN5. Is your name on the lease?

- 1..... Yes
- 0..... No

HN6. Are you (or is the person you're staying with) paying lower rent because the federal, state, or local government is paying part of the cost of rent?

- 1..... Yes
- 0..... No
- 8..... DK

Is this residence in a public housing project?

- 1..... Yes
- 0..... No
- 8..... DK

HN8. Do you (or does the person renting this place) receive a rent voucher, such as Section 8?

- 1..... Yes
- 0..... No
- 8..... DK

HN9. How many years and months have you lived in your current residence?

HN9_yy. ____ years HN9_mm. ____ months

HN10. I'm going to name some problems with housing that sometimes cause people difficulty. Do any of these things apply to your current living situation?

	Yes	No
a. a leaky roof, ceiling, or walls?	1	0
b. a toilet, hot-water heater, or other plumbing that does not work right?	1	0
c. rats, mice, roaches, or other insects?	1	0
d. broken windows?	1	0
e. heating system that does not work right?	1	0
f. exposed wires or other electrical problems?	1	0
g. a stove or refrigerator that does not work right?	1	0

HN11. In the past 12 months, that is, since <PREVIOUS MONTH>, 1998, has there been a period of more than 2 days that you:

	Yes	No
a. stayed at a homeless shelter or domestic violence shelter?	1	0
b. lived in a car or other vehicle?	1	0
c. lived in an abandoned building?	1	0
d. lived "on the streets?"	1	0
e. stayed with a friend or relative for less than 2 weeks because you had nowhere else to go? (Do not include vacations)	1	0

INT4. INTERVIEWER CHECKPOINT:
IF R ANSWERS "NO" TO ALL ITEMS IN HN11, GO TO HN13, P. 7; OTHERWISE CONTINUE.

- HN12.** In how many different months did (any of these things/this) happen in the past 12 months?
_____ # of months R had homeless spells
- HN13.** So, in how many different places have you lived in the past 12 months, including your current residence but not including shelters, vehicles, abandoned buildings or short stays with friends or relatives?
_____ # of residences
- HN14.** Thinking of just your current neighborhood, how do you feel about it as a place to live and raise children? Are you ...
4..... very satisfied
3..... somewhat satisfied
2..... somewhat dissatisfied, or
1..... very dissatisfied?
- HN15.** In some neighborhoods people do things together and help each other. In other neighborhoods people mostly go their own way. What kind of neighborhood would you say yours is?
1..... one where people help each other, or
2..... one where people go their own way?
8..... DK
- HN16.** How safe do you feel or would you feel being alone outside in your current neighborhood at night? Would you say...
1..... very unsafe,
2..... somewhat unsafe,
3..... somewhat safe, or
4..... very safe
- HN17.** Thinking of the people who live in your current neighborhood, would you say you are financially...
5..... much better off,
4..... somewhat better off,
3..... about the same,
2..... somewhat worse off, or
1..... much worse off?

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

CE1.* Are you currently working for pay?

- 1..... Yes
0..... No (go to CE24, P.13)

CE2. Including self-employment and both part-time and full-time jobs, how many jobs do you currently have? Please count each employer as a separate job.

- 1 (go to CE4, below) 2 3 4

CE3. Including overtime, how many hours did you work last week for all of your employers combined?

_____ # hours 98.....DK; Depends

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about your job with your current main employer.

CE4. In your current, main job do you work for yourself, for the government, or for a private employer?

- 1..... self
2..... government
3..... private employer

CE5.* Are you a regular employee, a temporary employee, or a seasonal employee?

- 1..... regular
2..... temporary
3..... seasonal

CE6.* What is your occupation? That is, what kind of work do you do?

Verbatim: _____

CE7. What kind of business or industry is that in?

Verbatim: _____

CE8. In what month and year did you first start working for this employer?
[INTERVIEWER: If R is self-employed, read "In what month and year did you start working in this job?"]

CE8_mm. _____ Month CE8_yy. _____ Year

HISTORY/BACKGROUND

BDATE. What is your birthdate?

___M ___D ___Y

BPLACE. In what city, state, and country were you born?

- a. City: _____
b. State: _____
c. Country: _____

RACE. What race do you consider yourself to be?

- 1 African American or black
2 White
9 Other (RACEv. specify: _____)

HISP. Are you Latino, Chicano, or of Hispanic origin?

- 1 Yes
0 No

HB1. Do you have a license or degree from a professional or trade school?

- 1..... Yes
0..... No

HB2. Do you have a high school diploma or have you passed a high school equivalency test; that is the GED?

- 1..... Yes, high school diploma (go to HB4, P. 47)
2..... Yes, GED
0..... No

HB3. How old were you when you left high school?

___age 97.....never entered high school

INT24. INTERVIEWER CHECKPOINT:
IF R HAS A GED, GO TO HB4, P. 47; OTHERWISE GO TO HB6, P. 47.

HB4. Do you have an associates degree or a 2 year degree from a community college?

- 1..... Yes
- 0..... No

HB5. Do you have a 4 year college degree?

- 1..... Yes
- 0..... No

HB6. I may have asked you this once before, but please remind me, are you currently married?

- 1..... Yes (go to HB9, below)
- 0..... No

HB7. Are you living with a partner/boyfriend/girlfriend at this time?

- 1..... Yes (go to HB9, below)
- 0..... No

HB8. Are you dating someone in particular at this time?

- 1..... Yes
- 0..... No (go to HB13, P. 48)

HB9. Is this person the (father/mother) of all of your children, some of your children, or none of your children?

- 2..... all my children (go to HB10, below)
- 1..... some of my children **HB9a. Which children? (write first names)**
- 0..... none of my children (go to HB10, below)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

HB10. I may have already asked this, but please remind me, is this person working part-time, full-time, or not currently working?

- 1..... part-time
- 2..... full-time
- 3..... not working

LE5.	In the past 12 months, has there been a time when you...	Yes	No
a.	Were without telephone service for any reason?	1	0
b.	Couldn't pay the full amount of the rent or mortgage?	1	0
c.	Were evicted from your home or apartment for not paying the rent or mortgage?	1	0
d.	Had service turned off by the gas or electric company, or the oil company wouldn't deliver oil because payments were not made?	1	0
e.	Had phone service turned off or went without a phone because you couldn't afford it?	1	0
f.	Had to borrow money from friends or family to help pay bills?	1	0
g.	Went to a church or charity for clothes or help with a financial problem?	1	0
h.	Received help from a government crisis assistance program?	1	0
j.	Had to move in with family or friends to reduce expenses?	1	0
k.	Had a family member or friend who had to move in with you to reduce his or her expenses?	1	0
l.	Had a major household expense, such as a car or appliance repair?	1	0

LE6.	In the past 12 months, has there been a time when you or your children...		LE6R. Was this for you?		LE6CHLD. Was this for a child?	
	No	Yes	Y	N	Y	N
a.	Needed to see a doctor or go to the hospital but couldn't afford to?	0	1	a. 1	0	a. 1 0
b.	Needed to fill a prescription for medicine, but couldn't afford to fill it?	0	1	b. 1	0	b. 1 0
c.	Needed to see a dentist but couldn't afford to go?	0	1	c. 1	0	c. 1 0

HRDP.*	Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.			
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree, or	Strongly Agree?
a.	My financial situation is better than it's been in a long time. Do you....	1	2	3 4
b.	I worry about having enough money in the future.	1	2	3 4
c.	These days I can generally afford to buy the things we need.	1	2	3 4
d.	There never seems to be enough money to buy something or go somewhere just for fun.	1	2	3 4

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

CP1.

What is your religion or religious affiliation?

- 1 Baptist
- 2 Other Protestant
- 3 Catholic
- 4 Muslim
- 5 Jewish
- 6 Other (CP1v. specify: _____)
- 7 None

CP2.

How often do you attend religious services?

- 0 Never
- 1 Once or twice a year
- 2 Every other month or so
- 3 Every other week or so
- 4 Once a week or more

CP3.

Do you belong to any voluntary groups, organizations, or clubs, (including churches)?

- 1 Yes
- 0 No (go to SS1, below)

CP4.

How active are you in these groups, organizations, or clubs to which you belong?

- 1 Not active; hardly ever attend meetings or services
- 2 Fairly active; attend meetings often
- 3 Very active; attend most meetings

SS1.

Sometimes a person needs the support of people around them. When you need someone to listen to your problems when you're feeling low, are there....

- 3 enough people you can count on,
- 2 too few people, or
- 1 no one you can count on?

SS2.

When you need help with small favors, are there ...

- 3 enough people you can count on,
- 2 too few people, or
- 1 no one you can count on?

SS3.

When you need someone to loan you money in an emergency, are there . . .

- 3..... enough people you can count on,
- 2..... too few people, or
- 1..... no one you can count on?

SS4.

When it comes to people who encourage you in meeting your goals, are there.....

- 3..... enough people you can count on,
- 2..... too few people, or
- 1..... no one you can count on?

SS5.

When it comes to people who need you to help them with small favors, do you feel there are too many, just enough, or none at all?

- 3..... too many,
- 2..... just enough
- 1..... none

SS6.

When it comes to people who need you to loan them money in an emergency, do you feel there are too many, just enough, or none at all?

- 3..... too many,
- 2..... just enough
- 1..... none

INCOME RESOURCES

The next few questions are about the different sources of income you use. Again, I want to remind you that none of your answers will be discussed with anyone.

IR1. Did you do any work for pay in 1998?

- 1..... Yes
0..... No (go to IR3, below)

IR2.* In 1998, how much did you earn in total from all of your jobs or any work you did for pay, before taxes and other deductions were taken out?

a. (IF R RESPONDS)

\$ _____

b. (If R DK OR REFUSED)

Would you say it was...

- 1.....Less than \$2,500
2.....\$2,500 - \$4,999
3.....\$5,000 - \$7,499
4.....\$7,500 - \$9,999
5.....\$10,000 - \$12,499
6.....\$12,500 - \$14,999
7.....\$15,000 - \$17,499
8.....\$17,500 - \$19,999
9.....\$20,000 - \$24,999
10.....\$25,000 - \$29,999
11.....\$30,000 - \$34,999
12.....\$35,000 - \$39,999
13.....\$40,000 - \$44,999
14.....\$45,000 - \$49,999
15.....\$50,000 or more
98 DK
99 Ref

IR3. Did you receive a tax refund for 1998?

- 1.....Yes
0.....No (go to IR5, P. 70)
7.....Did not file a tax return
(circle only if R volunteers) (go to IR5, P. 70)
8.....DK
9.....Ref

IR4. Did you receive the Earned Income Tax Credit?

- 1.....Yes
0.....No
8.....DK
9.....Ref

IR5.

In 1998, did you receive money or assistance from any of the following sources?

Income Resources Table

	Received in 1998?			
	Yes	No	DK	Ref
a. TANF or AFDC? (meaning the cash grant only)	1	0	8	9
b. Food stamps?	1	0	8	9
c. Child support or alimony (including child support you received directly from Public Aid)?	1	0	8	9
d. Aid for the disabled, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?	1	0	8	9
e. Social security benefits (SSA) or any other kind of private or government pension?	1	0	8	9
f. Unemployment Insurance?	1	0	8	9
g. Worker's Compensation as a result of a job-related injury?	1	0	8	9
h. Foster child payments?	1	0	8	9
j. Financial support from a spouse or partner?	1	0	8	9
k. Rent from a tenant or boarder?	1	0	8	9
l. Public housing subsidies (e.g., Section 8 or CHA housing)?	1	0	8	9
m. Utility assistance (e.g., LIHEAP)	1	0	8	9
n. Women, Infants, and Children's assistance (e.g., WIC)?	1	0	8	9
o. Earnfare?	1	0	8	9
p. Crisis assistance or emergency assistance?	1	0	8	9
q. Any money from family or friends to help pay for living expenses?	1	0	8	9
r. Any other sources of income you haven't already mentioned? (IR5v. specify: _____)	1	0	8	9

EXPERIENCES WITH WELFARE

- W1.*** Are you or your children receiving [welfare or TANF] benefits now?
- 1..... Yes
0..... No
- W2.** To the best of your knowledge, do you get to keep receiving any of your cash [welfare or TANF] benefits if you are working?
- 1..... Yes (*go to W2how, below*)
2..... No (*go to W3, below*)
3..... It depends
8..... DK (*go to W3, below*)
- W2dep.** What does it depend on?
- Verbatim: _____
- W2how.** How much of your benefits do you get to keep receiving?
- Verbatim: _____
- W3.** To the best of your knowledge, is there a limit on the amount of time that most parents can stay on [welfare or TANF]?
- 1..... Yes (*go to W3time, below*)
2..... No (*go to W4, P.73*)
3..... It depends
8..... DK (*go to W4, P.73*)
- W3dep.** What does it depend on?
- Verbatim: _____
- W3time.** What is the time limit? (The amount of time that most parents can stay on [welfare or TANF])?
- W3time_m. _____ months W3time_y. _____ years