

Testimony of Jodie Levin-Epstein

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify. I am Jodie Levin-Epstein, a Senior Policy Analyst at the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP). I began my work at CLASP in 1988, the year the Family Support Act was enacted. CLASP is a nonprofit organization engaged in research, analysis, technical assistance, and advocacy on a range of issues affecting low-income families. Since 1996, we have closely followed research and data relating to implementation of Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. We place a special emphasis on understanding what is actually occurring at the “ground level” through on-going dialogue with state officials, administrators, program providers, and individuals directly affected by the implementation of welfare reform efforts.<sup>1</sup>

My testimony will address a number of reauthorization issues central to child-well being. The Administration has proposed to establish that the purpose of the welfare program be an “Overarching Purpose to Improve the Well-being of Children.” HHS Assistant Secretary Wade Horn has underscored this goal and said, “The principal question to ask of welfare reform is — are children better off?” He also has urged that generally, one should “proceed cautiously” in order to avoid unintended consequences.<sup>2</sup> Chairman Herger has perhaps summed up best the interest in child well-being when he said, “No success is a success unless it works for kids.”

In its proposal, the Administration puts forward several new provisions designed to encourage states to increase their efforts to promote healthy marriages, citing research that establishes marriage as the “ideal environment for raising children.” However, for many children the reality is that marriage is not a feasible or even a desirable option for their parents. Given the Administration’s overarching purpose to improve the well-being of (presumably all) children, states should be encouraged to help all parents — whether unmarried, married, separated, divorced, or remarried — to work together to raise their children and give them the supports they need to do so.

The Administration has also proposed to restructure the welfare program’s work requirements. Yet, there is a danger that this work proposal could generate new risks for children at the same time as it would diminish resources needed for programs that address child well-being. There is yet another danger lurking behind this one: important child well-being issues may be “crowded out” from the deliberative process because of the intense focus on the Administration’s proposed changes to TANF work requirements and to promoting marriage.

It is not yet clear how TANF implementation has affected children, but research on pre-TANF programs suggests that positive effects may depend on improved family income, and that there may be negative effects on adolescent children that result from increased maternal employment. Recent work by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) and other work by Child Trends, looking at pre-TANF welfare-work programs, found that while many programs raised employment rates, only some raised income, because gains in employment were often offset by losses in benefits. In those programs where employment was associated with increased family income, the research has found evidence of positive effects on elementary school-age children’s school achievement. By contrast, programs that increased employment but did not increase incomes had few effects on elementary school-age children. However, several programs that increased maternal employment had negative effects on adolescent children’s school achievement. At this point, it is unclear whether this adverse impact is principally a

function of decreased supervision, increased stress on parents, or increased responsibilities for teens with working parents.

The data suggest that positive child outcomes are tied to increased income; yet it would be a mistake to ignore something much less tangible and yet as fundamental: the need for a child to be cared for by a loving adult. Thus, it is important to appreciate that underlying child well-being is family well-being.

Highlighted below are some of the key child well-being issues that should be addressed during reauthorization.

### **The Administration's Work Requirements May Hinder Its Articulated Goal to Improve Child Well-Being<sup>3</sup>**

The Administration has proposed to modify the goals of TANF to articulate that the overarching goal of state TANF efforts should be to improve child well-being. And, the Administration has suggested that so long as the 24-hour "direct work" requirements were satisfied, states could count structured activities that furthered child well-being toward meeting the remaining 16 hours of the 40 hour obligations. What would count as a structured activity is something outside the home — like parental participation in a school field trip; what would not count is parental engagement with school homework.

In many ways, this framework seems unresponsive to the central issues that states must address in efforts to simultaneously promote work and advance child well-being. A better approach would be to place weight on such factors as increasing the income of families who go to work, broadening access to child care, or improving access to jobs which have sick and vacation leave and do not require nighttime or weekend hours. The Administration's framework also restricts stand-alone education and training; specifically, it only counts 3 months within any 24 months, making it that much harder for a parent to gain skills and credentials that could lead to a better quality job (i.e., a job with flexible hours and benefits). These restrictions on education and training are proposed despite new research which suggests that welfare programs which improve a parent's educational attainment often improve the child's cognitive and academic levels.

In at least two ways, the 40-hour framework could actually be contrary to promoting child well-being: first, as noted in the child impact research above, participation in work-related programs by low-income parents appears correlated with adverse impacts on teens' school performance. This counsels for the importance of helping parents find jobs that are consistent with family responsibilities, and against simply mandating 40 hours of out-of-home participation. Second, it is by no means clear that mandating participation in structured out-of-home activities with children is the best way to promote child well-being.

**Work Requirements and Reauthorization:** CLASP recommends that Congress consider the unintended consequences to child well-being that could result directly from the proposed 40-hour participation requirement. We have recommended a number of changes in federal law to improve TANF's employment outcomes, but we believe that the participation rate changes proposed by the Administration are not necessary and would be costly and potentially counter-productive.

## **Child Support Distribution Can Enhance Income and Parenting<sup>4</sup>**

The work-welfare programs with the best outcomes for young children are those that resulted in increased income. Effective child support is a valuable way to increase income for low income families. Next to earnings, child support is the second largest income source for poor, single female-headed families receiving child support. For poor families who get child support, the child support amounts to 26 percent of the family's budget, or \$2,000 per year. Child support lifts about a half million children out of poverty, reducing poverty among these children by 5 percent.

Child support can also translate into increased parental engagement. For the non-custodial parent, typically the father, making the payment can represent his basic commitment to his children. For the custodial parent, usually the mother, receiving the payment means she can often forego a second or third part-time job, affording her more time to supervise and engage her children and often allowing her to work more regular hours.

Child support translates into improved parental engagement most readily, it appears, the more support the family receives. However, current child support distribution laws limit the amount of child support a family actually gets. How much child support the family actually gets depends on how the government distributes the money it collects – that is, how much of the money goes directly to the family and how much is kept by the government. We now operate under an extraordinarily complex set of distribution rules that few understand. Indeed, the current system serves as a disincentive for dads to pay child support because too often they do not see their dollars buying needed diapers, -- instead, they see it disappear into state coffers. States are no happier with the current distribution rules. Implementation of the current rules are estimated to cost up to \$360 million per year, and a number of states are facing lawsuits and audit problems because they have not accurately implemented the distribution rules.

A demonstration in Wisconsin — which examined the impact of having all the current child support go directly home to the family — found that this led to more dads being willing to pay child support and those dads paying more support. From the perspective of child well-being, there are also intriguing hints in the data that suggest that the increased income also reduced family tension and eased the way to other positive benefits for the children. These positive outcomes were particularly evident for the subgroup where the dads paid enough child support to make a difference in family budgets. The Wisconsin evidence suggests that distributing the money directly to the family led to less conflict between the parents, improved child health outcomes, increased mothers' satisfaction with the child care arrangements they could secure, and, for teens, better school performance and less trouble with the law. Another striking finding is that there was no difference in overall government costs — the cost of distributing all of the current support to families was offset by more support paid by fathers and less welfare used by mothers.

Child Support Distribution and Reauthorization: CLASP urges the House to adopt the bipartisan distribution reform provisions in Johnson-Cardin H.R. 1471 (the “Child Support Distribution Act of 2001”) and Cardin H.R. 3625. In 2000, the House passed nearly identical provisions by a vote of 405-18.

## **Kinship Care TANF Policies Should Be Family-Friendly<sup>5</sup>**

When relatives assume caretaking responsibilities for a child, this kinship care often enables a child to avoid foster care. Some of these kinship families receive modest support from TANF. However, current TANF policies are not as “family-friendly” to these kin caregivers as they ought to be. Reauthorization is an opportunity to address this issue as well as improve coordination between TANF and the child welfare system.

In 1999, approximately 420,000 children living with relatives received TANF “child-only” grants. This means a grant was given to support only the child and not the relatives caring for the child. Nearly 80,000 more children lived in relative-headed households that included the relative caregiver in the grant.

There are a number of issues about whether this manner of supporting kinship caregivers is “family-friendly.” Under current TANF policy, if the relative caregiver is included in the grant, federal time limits and work requirements apply, which may make it difficult or impossible for the relative to provide a stable home for the child. While the kin are extending themselves to help out a relative child, current TANF policy limits the assistance available to them. For example, if an aunt and uncle take in a two-year-old nephew and are included in the grant, they can receive assistance for only five years. The notion that the child would need to enter foster care or move to another relative when he turns seven is inconsistent with the child welfare goal of finding a safe, permanent placement. The work requirements add another possible tension. For example, if a 65-year-old, retired grandmother on a fixed income takes in her grandchild and begins to receive TANF, she is subject to her state rules regarding job search, job training, and employment. While it is possible these state services might help her, it is also possible that she cannot comply with these requirements and provide a stable home for the child. A kinship caregiver could receive a TANF “child-only” grant without being subject to the work requirements and time-limits. However, since the size of these grants is relatively small (averaging \$7.00 per day), a relative caregiver may not be able to adequately care for a child with a child-only grant. In either case, kinship caregivers face a unique set of circumstances and needs, which raise questions about how best to serve these special families.

In addition to the kinship care connection, families in the child welfare system and families in the TANF system often have quite similar needs. They often face the challenges of poverty, substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence. Yet, the services available to families and the manner in which the services are offered often depend on which door the families first enter. In some cases families in both systems have child welfare service plans that conflict with the requirements of their TANF individual responsibility plans. This raises issues of coordinated, collaborative service delivery.

**Kinship Care and Reauthorization:** CLASP recommends that Congress amend the time limit provision so that the 60-month limit applies only to birth and adoptive parents, not relative caregivers; allow a state to exempt relative caregivers from work requirements (and the participation rate) while encouraging states to assess the kinship family’s needs, design a service plan, and offer appropriate services to meet the family’s needs. More generally with respect to the potential child welfare and TANF intersection, we recommend that Congress expand the kinds of activities that count as participation and amend the state plan requirements to require states to describe interagency coordination, among other new plan elements.

## **Infant Care Options Are Needed<sup>6</sup>**

Reauthorization presents an opportunity to test new approaches to infant care. Infancy, it is now recognized, is fueled by experiences that contribute to future development. Research on the significance of a child's early years ("zero to three") to brain development demonstrates that the relationships and experiences formed during this period can contribute significantly to future functioning. When parents of infants go to work, however, often the available infant care is of low quality and/or high cost. Current TANF policies may exacerbate this dual dilemma ; furthermore, the Administration's proposed increased work requirements could have the effect of mandating that more mothers of infants leave home for work and, thereby, further increase the demand for and strain the supply of quality infant care.

Under current TANF policy, states decide whether and to what extent to impose work requirements on parents of infants. The majority of states categorically exempt parents with children under age one (in these states, the time-limit clock runs during the exemption; these families, however, are not included in the calculation of the state's participation rate). Eighteen states require participation by parents of children under age one.

Under the Administration's proposal, while states would still get to choose whether to exempt mothers with infants, the increased work participation rates could induce states to get more mothers of infants into the workforce in order to help the state meet the proposed higher rates. In essence, in the drive to meet a higher work participation rate, states may find themselves forced to "throw a wide net" and limit exemptions; in practice, a state cannot readily know which of two comparable mothers is the one that will help it meet its participation rate so it may, in response to increased rates, abandon its exemption policy in order to hook a "countable" parent — whether there is an infant in the home or not.

If more mothers of infants are to enter the work force, the costs and quality of infant care need to be addressed. The costs of infant and toddler care are high. One study found that the average annual cost of child care for infants in center care is about \$1,100 a year higher than the center care costs for a 4-year-old. This same study found that in every state, the cost of child care for an infant in an urban area center is more than the cost of tuition for a public college in the same state; in more than half the states, the infant care cost is more than twice the tuition cost. The Administration's proposal does not call for an increase in child care funding. This is problematic because the inadequacy of funding for child care for infants as well as low-income children of other ages was evident prior to the Administration's proposal. The proposed work requirements would expand even further the need for subsidies.

Most mothers of infants are not in the workforce most of the time, and this is useful to remember as policies that target poor, single mothers are considered. Nationally, half of the mothers of infants are not employed. Another 17 percent work part-time. Only about one-third of mothers work full-time according to recent Census data (and, the Census does not consider full time to be 40 hours; instead it counts anything more than 35 hours).

The choice to provide in-home infant care should be available to low- and moderate-income families, as it is to upper-income families. At the same time, the supply of quality infant care

needs to be expanded so that those who wish to (or are required to) return to work can do so with the assurance that their infant will receive the kind of care that is developmentally sound.

Several states have recently adopted a potential model that allows low-income families to care for infants at home: Both Minnesota and Montana have enacted programs under which parents who qualify for child care subsidies can elect either to have the subsidy pay for out-of-home care or to stay at home caring for their child and receive the subsidy as a replacement for lost wages.

**Infant Care and Reauthorization:** There are significant unmet needs for child care for low income families generally, and particularly, with respect to quality infant care. In addition to addressing these unmet needs through increased mandatory CCDF funding, Congress should provide new funding for a set of demonstration projects drawing on the Minnesota/Montana model to test the feasibility and evaluate the effects of programs that allow parents to choose between rapid return to work and staying at home to provide care for an infant. Further, Congress should consider a range of refinements on current policy related to the parents of a child under age one. For example, states that impose work requirements might be restricted from mandating full-time employment or mandating employment without helping the family find appropriate infant care.

### **Adolescent-Sensitive TANF Policies and Programs Need to Be Developed<sup>7</sup>**

Research on the impact of welfare on children typically has focused on elementary-school-age children and not the impact on adolescents. This research focus parallels TANF operational practice in which attention is directed to younger children, largely in terms of their child care needs and little attention is directed towards adolescent needs (except for teen pregnancy prevention). Yet, there are at least 1.3 million youth (ages 12-19) who are “recipient children” in the TANF program.

New research reports from MDRC and Child Trends, however, suggests that the teen population appears to be particularly vulnerable to poor outcomes when their mothers participate in work programs. The initial wave of research suggests that even when mothers do well (i.e., their participation increases family income) for some adolescents this improvement does not “inoculate” them from a set of poor outcomes.

Specifically, the research found that adolescents whose mothers participated in work programs were (1) less likely to be perform above average in school and (2) more likely to repeat a grade or be enrolled in special education (10% higher than adolescents whose mothers did not participate in such a program).

While the research has been able to pinpoint some negative schooling outcomes, what is less clear is what factors are contributing to these outcomes. Child Trends posits several possibilities including that mothers’ stress may lead them to parent harshly; parental participation in the work program may lead to less supervision of adolescents; and, parental participation may change the role of the adolescent in the household into one in which the adolescent takes on adult responsibilities such as primary child care provider for a sibling or bringing income into the household through outside employment. MDRC found in a review of three programs with data on adolescents with “adult responsibilities” that there were adverse consequences: two programs increased the likelihood of the adolescent being responsible for a sibling’s care, a third increased

the likelihood of more than 20 hours of work per week (see, as well, the earlier discussion of the Administration's proposed work requirements).

Adolescents and Reauthorization: CLASP recommends that Congress take a set of steps which can foster adolescent-sensitivity in the TANF context. First, we urge that Secretary's TANF research agenda on child impacts address questions directed at outcomes for adolescents. Second, state plans should be required to describe the steps the state expects to take to consider whether its policies and programs might positively or negatively influence adolescent well-being.

### **Proven Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs Should Be Funded and Promising Programs Evaluated<sup>8</sup>**

While public attention in reauthorization has been drawn to proposals related to marriage and couples and the child impacts of such initiatives, the role of teen pregnancy prevention in decreasing non-marital births is little recognized. Teen pregnancy rates in the U.S. have dropped significantly in the last decade: there has been a 22% decline between 1991 and 2000. That good news is tempered by the fact that this nation still retains the distinction of having the highest birthrate among the developed countries. And while it is useful to avert teen pregnancy because of the social and economic consequences typically attendant to teen parenting, it is also a vital way to address non-marital births.

One way to avert non-marital births is for couples to be married. The other way to reduce such births is for unmarried couples to avoid pregnancy. One-third of all births in the country are non-marital. This is one of the underlying reasons behind the current movement to foster marriages. While there is uncertainty around the question of how government can best foster healthy marriages, there is sound scientific research regarding teen pregnancy prevention programs that can effectively address the problem by helping to prevent a non-marital birth. These proven programs should be replicated at the same time as emerging, promising approaches are evaluated.

While most non-marital births are to older women, many of these women started as teenage mothers. Of all non-marital births, more than half (57%) were teen births or births by older women who first were teen mothers (1992-95 average). About 80% of teen births (400,000 per year) are non-marital. Thus, a focus on teens in efforts to address non-marital births makes particular sense.

In sum, a reauthorization strategy that focuses on investments in teen pregnancy is compelling for several reasons. First, teen births are a substantial part of the overall picture of non-marital births. Second, we know of programs that have been proven to help reduce pregnancy and sexual risk-taking. Finally, encouraging marriage by teenagers might result in a "premature" marriage; the earlier the marriage, the more unstable and likely to dissolve.

Teen Pregnancy, Couples & Marriage and Reauthorization: CLASP recommends that Congress re-direct the current "illegitimacy bonus" and use those monies in the manner proposed in H.R. 3625. In that measure, the \$100 million is devoted to research, technical assistance, and demonstrations and is split three ways: for replication and adaptation of proven best practices related to teen pregnancy prevention (first and subsequent births); for programs that increase the

ability of non-custodial parents to financially support and be involved with their children; and for programs that promote two parent families.

### **Abstinence Education Should Devolve Program Content to the State<sup>9</sup>**

Child-well being is enhanced when premature sexual activity is averted. Promotion of abstinence can be an important tool in helping avoid unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted illnesses. However, programs that exclusively teach abstinence and do not provide participants with information about how to contracept can lead to increased health risks for some participants over time. Republican and Democratic members of the Subcommittee (Representatives Nancy Johnson (R-CA), Benjamin Cardin (D-MD), and Jim McDermott (D-WA) at a November, 2001, hearing, noted the value of flexibility in allowing states to determine what they consider the best approach to utilizing federal abstinence education funds.

The abstinence education program established in 1996 (often called “Section 510”) is designed to teach that individuals should abstain unless they are married — whether they marry at 16 or 60 or whether they are divorced and between marriages. Under current law, programs funded through Section 510 are not to use these funds to provide participants with education about how to avoid sexually transmitted disease and pregnancy if they fail to abstain.

Some have worried that contraceptive education might have the unintended consequence of increasing sexual activity and that is why young people should not receive such education; multiple studies now show, however, that such concerns are unfounded. In contrast, evaluations of programs that combine abstinence education with contraceptive information find that they can help delay the onset of intercourse without a concomitant concern regarding health risk.

Significantly, recent research regarding particular abstinence strategies raises some hopes but, at the same time, also health concerns. Notably, research on a “virginity” pledge — to abstain from sex until marriage — delayed intercourse on average by nearly 18 months, but pledging had no effect among older teens (18 and older). Further, pledgers were less likely than a comparison group to use contraceptives once they had intercourse, and thereby were at greater risk for sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy.

While there is very strong support for abstinence education, most parents want abstinence education taught along with contraceptive information. Nearly 100% of parents of 7th-12th graders want their children’s sexuality education program to cover abstinence, according to a national study in 2000 by the Kaiser Family Foundation. Notably, these parents *also* want lessons on how to use condoms (85%) and on general birth control topics (90%). State and local surveys also have found strong support for information about both abstinence and birth control.

Medical experts also find problematic those abstinence programs that only teach abstinence (“abstinence-only”) and preclude contraceptive education. The National Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Medicine, the National Institutes of Health, and the Academy of Pediatrics have all commented on the importance of including contraceptive information in education programs.

Since 1996, at least \$533 million in federal and state matching funds have been earmarked for abstinence-unless-married programs. These include the \$50 million in annual federal “Section 510” funds which require a state match of \$3 for every \$4 federal dollars. In addition, since the

passage of TANF, millions more in abstinence-unless-married education funding has been made available through two other federal funding sources (the Adolescent Family Life Act and a grants program called SPRANS-CBAE). All three of these funding sources are subject to the eight-point definition laid out in the welfare law, which includes provisions that require any abstinence-unless-married program have as its “exclusive purpose, teaching the social, psychological and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity” and that the program teach that “sexual activity outside of the context of marriage is likely to have harmful psychological and physical effects.”

The Administration, in addition to seeking reauthorization of Section 510, wants to increase funding for SPRANS-CBAE to \$73 million, a \$33 million increase. Proponents of increased funding argue that funding “parity” is needed between abstinence-unless-married education and family planning available to teens. This comparison, however, contrasts expenditures for education against costs for medical services. Thus, this is a comparison of “apples” and “oranges” and creates even greater misunderstanding in the public debate.

The request for additional funding for SPRANS-CBAE appears to be inconsistent with the Administration’s own call for accountability in government spending. In its FY 2003 budget, the Administration promotes accountability and asserts “the assumption that more government spending gets more results is not generally true and is seldom tested.” Yet more government spending on unproven abstinence-unless-married education is specifically sought.

Abstinence Education and Reauthorization: CLASP recommends that Congress devolve to states the decision about what to include and not include in a “medically accurate” abstinence education program. Some states may decide to maintain the current program as is. Other states should be free to decide that, in light of available research, age-appropriate information about contraception should be included. In some states, the state may decide to devolve the content decision to localities so that programs may be most appropriately tailored to local interests. CLASP also urges Congress not to expand funding for SPRANS-CBAE.

### **Teen Parents’ Special Needs Meeting Requirements Should Be Addressed<sup>10</sup>**

In 1996, teen parents received particular attention in the creation of TANF. In part, this is because historically about 40-50% of older women receiving AFDC became a parent as a teenager. In the 2002 reauthorization, little attention is being paid to the experiences of teen parents in TANF. Yet, it appears that too often needy teen parents and their very young children are not receiving TANF.

Participation in TANF requires minor teen parents to meet two important eligibility requirements that reflect goals specific to teens — participation in school and living in an approved setting (teen parents are also subject to other eligibility rules that are not limited to teens such as child support cooperation). Generally, the TANF time-limit clock does not tick on minor teens if they are engaged in meeting education requirement (this can include 18 year olds who are in schooling full-time). Once teen parents participate in TANF, these goals remain central to effective implementation. Thus, if implemented well, the TANF requirements should help teens “stay on track” towards economic self-sufficiency. However, new research suggests that some teen parents who are in need of assistance are too often “turned away at the door” — not even given a chance to meet the requirements.

Research undertaken by the Center for Impact Research (CIR) in Chicago and replicated in Atlanta and Boston indicates that some teen mothers are wrongly denied TANF, in some measure due to caseworker misunderstandings about the TANF teen parent rules. CIR trained teen parents to conduct interviews of other teen parents and the results of these 1500 interviews indicate the current law may have important unintended and negative consequences. Depending on the site, somewhere between 35-58% of those teen parents who sought but did not receive TANF were either not given an application to complete or not contacted after submitting an application. (Those who did get to submit an application also were on occasion denied due the teen rules, sometimes, it appeared, inappropriately). While more research is needed to fully understand this “turned away at the door” phenomenon, to some extent it results from local caseworker misapprehension that a teen parent must already meet the teen parent requirements when she comes to apply. This is often out of sync with state policy, which allows for caseworker flexibility to permit such teens to receive TANF. Indeed, already in Illinois, the state agency is moving to improve the application process and the engagement of needy teen parents in TANF.

The 1996 focus on teen parents reflected a concern that teen parents need help to get on or stay on a path that will lead to economic self-sufficiency. For teen parents to “stay on track” more readily, help may be needed to avoid a rapid repeat birth. About 20% of the roughly 500,000 teen births each year are not the first child to a teen mother; about 100,000 teenagers gave birth to a second or higher order child in 2000. When teen mothers have more than one child, problems compound for both the mother and child. Teen mothers who have more than one child are less likely to complete high school or to get a GED; babies born to a teen who already has one child are more likely to be born premature or at low-weight. While it is not evident how much of a contribution, if any, the specific TANF teen parent requirements make to the goal of reducing subsequent births, in an effective program a case manager working with an at-risk teen mother might engage this mother in a set of activities that could ameliorate this problem. Certainly, if the teen mother is not engaged in meeting TANF program requirements or served by other social service programs, she may miss essential case management.

Teen Parents and Reauthorization: CLASP urges Congress to establish a “transitional compliance” provision, a period of up to 180 days for teen parents who at application do not meet program requirements. This allows the state to provide customized case management to help the teen come into compliance. The purpose of the transitional eligibility period would be to “signal” to states that time is available to provide supports and services for teen parents, enabling teen parents to come into compliance with federal requirements. CLASP further urges Congress to “start the clock” on teen parents (through age 19) once they have completed education/training requirements.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding issues of child well-being.

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## Resources

<sup>1</sup> This testimony reflects collaborative work with a number of CLASP colleagues, including Vicki Turetsky, Mark Greenberg, Rutledge Hutson, Rachel Schumacher, Steve Savner, Jennifer Mezey, John Hutchins, and Christine Grisham.

<sup>2</sup> September 5, 2001 HHS Conference On Welfare Reform

<sup>3</sup> On TANF work participation see: "At What Price?: A Cost Analysis of the Administration's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Work Participation Proposal," and "Unwise and Unworkable: Work Participation Requirements in the Administration's Welfare Plan," CLASP, forthcoming; "Children and Welfare Reform," *The Future of Children*, Vol 12-Number 1., The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Winter/Spring 2002; "Comments Regarding the Reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant," submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by the CLASP, November 30, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> On child support distribution see: "Reauthorization Issues: Child Support Distribution," CLASP, February 2002; "W2 Child Support Demonstration Evaluation: Phase I: Final Report," Daniel Meyer and Maria Cancian, University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty, April 2001; "Child Support Offers Some Protection Against Poverty," Elaine Sorenson and Chava Zibman, The Urban Institute, March 2000.

<sup>5</sup> On kinship care and TANF see: "Reauthorization Issues: The Child Welfare Link," CLASP, February 2002; "Child Welfare and TANF Reauthorization," CLASP, February 2002; "Red Flags: Research Raises Concerns About the Impact of Welfare Reform on Child Maltreatment," CLASP, October 2001.

<sup>6</sup> On infant care see: "Investing in Family Well-being, a Family-Friendly Workplace and a More Stable Workforce: A "Win-Win" Approach to Welfare And Low-Wage Policy," (Draft) Ellen Bravo, Mark Greenberg, Cindy Marano, CLASP joint publication, January 2002; "Testimony of Mark H. Greenberg," CLASP, U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, and U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, March 19, 2002; "Unfinished Agenda Child Care for Low-Income Families from 1996: Implications for Federal and State Policy," CLASP, March 2002; "The High Cost of Child Care Puts Quality Care Out of Reach for Many Families," Children's Defense Fund, Winter 2002; "From Neurons to Neighborhoods The Science of Early Childhood Development," Editors Jack P Shonkoff, Deborah Phillips, National Research Council, Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences 2000; "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program Third Annual Report to Congress," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, August 2000.

<sup>7</sup> On adolescents and TANF see: "Welfare Policies Matter for Children and Youth: Lessons for TANF Reauthorization," Pamela Morris, Lisa A. Gennetian, and Virginia Knox, *The Next Generation*, MDRC, March 2002; "Welfare Reform's Impact on Adolescents: Early Warning Signs," Jennifer Brooks, Elizabeth Hair, and Martha Zaslow, *Child Trends*, July, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> On teen pregnancy prevention see: "Emerging Answers: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy," Douglas Kirby, National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, May 2001; "Reauthorization Issues: Reproductive Health," CLASP, January 2002; "Comments to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Regarding Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Teens Parents Provisions in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant," CLASP November 30, 2001; "Is Teen Marriage a Solution?" CLASP, April 2002

<sup>9</sup> On abstinence see: "Reauthorization Issues Abstinence Education," CLASP, January 2002; "Reproductive Roulette," *American Prospect*, Fall Issue, 2001; "Teen Pregnancy Prevention Hearing Submission, House Human Resources Subcommittee," CLASP, November 15, 2001.

<sup>10</sup> On Teen Parents see: "Reauthorization Issues: Reproductive Health," CLASP, January 2002; "Comments to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Regarding Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Teens Parents Provisions in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant," CLASP November 30, 2001.

*Note: all published CLASP publications are available online at: [www.clasp.org](http://www.clasp.org) and list authors*

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[MHG1] Easier for someone to quote if you say 22% decline from 1991 to \_\_\_/