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CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY

Two New Briefs on Work-Life Balance

CLASP recently published two briefs—one on paid parental leave and the other on paid sick days—in its new policy brief series focusing on work-life balance. Both briefs offer key findings from the report *High Wire Act: Balancing Families and Jobs at Precarious Points* by Jodie Levin-Epstein. The report, a product of Levin-Epstein's 2004 Ian Axford Public Policy Fellowship in New Zealand, considers the implications of work leave in New Zealand and the United States and examines the implementation experiences of 17 New Zealand small businesses.

If only size mattered, it would make no sense to contrast work-leave policies in New Zealand and the United States. New Zealand has fewer than 2 million workers, while the United States has about 150 million. However, the United States and New Zealand face many of the same labor-force challenges, independent of scale. These challenges include not only increased work participation by mothers, but also an aging workforce in which fewer workers support an increasing number of older citizens. The relative shrinkage in the working-age population and the need for more workers should propel increased business interest and investment in worker well-being.

Another reason to look at New Zealand is that it has made its paid work-leave policies work in a small-

business environment. In the United States, the unpaid leave law, the Family and Medical Leave Act, does not apply to small businesses—that is, those with fewer than 50 employees. It seems likely that U.S. small business would seek to be exempt from any proposed paid sick days law as well. In New Zealand, the vast majority of employers are small under the U.S. definition. In fact, New Zealand businesses successfully

abide by a significantly more generous set of statutory leave policies despite the fact that the firms implementing the rules are primarily composed of companies that in the United States are typically viewed as too small to bear the challenge.

The first brief in the series, *Taking the Next Step: What Can the U.S. Learn about Parental Leave from New Zealand?*, discusses New Zealand's



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Federal Policy for Immigrant Children

In a new policy brief in the Future of Children Policy Brief Series, *Federal Policy for Immigrant Children: Room for Common Ground?*, authors Ron Haskins, Mark Greenberg, and Shawn Fremstad ask how public policy can improve the well-being of immigrant children in the United States. The authors disagree on the precise policy route but hope that researchers and public officials will continue to search for common ground so that the lives of these children can be positively affected.

The 1996 welfare reform law made legal immigrants ineligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Medicaid until they have been in the country for five years. Eligibility for food stamps and supplemental security income was also restricted. The authors disagree on these restrictions.

Haskins supports the current restrictions. He believes that non-citizens' sponsors should take the responsibility for any hardships legal immigrants face before they become citizens. Greenberg and Fremstad argue that legal non-citizens should have the same public benefits as citizens. They write, "If it is in the national interest for all children to be ready for school and grow up to be the most productive citizens they can be, it is shortsighted to deny

non-citizen children the same access to health care, adequate nutrition, and stable housing as citizen children."

While Greenberg and Fremstad would like to see all restrictions on legal immigrants' eligibility for public benefits lifted, Haskins would support allowing states to use TANF dollars to provide work supports—but not cash assistance—to legal immigrants who are working. He would also support providing non-citizen children of working parents with publicly funded health insurance. On education policy, the three authors agree on extending early childhood programming, but they do not agree on how to do it. Haskins maintains that federal and state governments already spend more than \$25 billion on preschool and child care. He would give states more flexibility to use all the funding sources if states agreed to provide all low-income four-year-olds, including immigrants, with at least one year of high-quality preschool. He would require states to use matching funds, but would advocate that Congress appropriate at least \$100 million annually to states that chose to do this.

Greenberg and Fremstad argue that existing child care and early education programs are significantly underfunded. To them, increased flexibility in using the existing funding will only mean increased services for some groups at the expense of reduced services for others. They also point out that waiting until age four to teach English to children may not be sound policy.

The authors conclude with the hope that federal policymakers will search for common ground on issues affecting immigrant children.

Ron Haskins is a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, Mark Greenberg is the Director of Policy at CLASP, and Shawn Fremstad is the Deputy Director of the Welfare and Income Support Division at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. ■

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), a national, nonprofit organization founded in 1968, conducts research, legal and policy analysis, technical assistance, and advocacy on issues related to economic security for low-income families with children.

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■ To view this policy brief, visit: www.clasp.org/publications.php?id=2

Child Support and Subsidized Child Care

A new memorandum from Paula Roberts, *Preliminary Analysis of Child Support Cooperation as a Condition of Eligibility for Subsidized Child Care*, discusses how some states are imposing a child support cooperation requirement on single parents seeking subsidized child care. The memo highlights issues states should be aware of and provides a table of states that are engaged in this practice.

States offer families access to subsidized child care funded through the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF). These funds, however, are not sufficient to provide child care to all families wishing to receive it. Therefore, states have developed a variety of methods to ration these scarce resources. One method is to establish strict income eligibility guidelines. Families with income above a very minimal level are not eligible for a subsidy. Another method is to impose co-payments on some participating families. These co-payments are based on a sliding scale, with higher income families paying a greater share of the cost of care.

A third method of rationing is to impose a child support cooperation requirement on single parents seeking subsidized child care. Usually, this means that the custodial parent who is currently receiving or applying to receive subsidized child care is required to apply to the state's child support enforcement program if he/she is not already receiving services from that program. The custodial parent must then cooperate with the child support program to establish paternity (if that is an unresolved issue) and pursue cash support.

If the effort is successful, the family's income may increase enough to make it ineligible for subsidized care, freeing up the dollars for another family. Alternatively, the family may be able to make a larger co-payment due to increased income. This gives the state the ability to stretch its dollars further. Because of these fiscal benefits, more states are imposing such a requirement.

Some custodial parents are happy to receive help from the state child support agency, especially if fees and costs associated with the program are waived. These families are grateful for the additional child support income, especially if the non-custodial parent is a wage earner whose salary can be subject to income withholding, assuring regular payments. Custodial parents might also welcome help from non-custodial parents in meeting any co-payment associated with the child care.

However, some custodial parents already have informal agreements, and they wish to keep those agreements rather than entering the formal state system. Others face domestic violence issues and have avoided the formal system in order to minimize risk. These custodial parents may be hiding from an abusive spouse or partner or simply fear that pursuing support would engender more violence.

Roberts suggests that states developing policy in this area—as well as children's advocates in those states—might want to pay particular attention to the following:

1. *Are families required to assign their child support rights to the state in order to obtain subsidized child care?*

Assignment is completely unnecessary if the only service the family is receiving is subsidized child care. Other families using the state child support system who do not receive public assistance are not required to make an assignment of their rights because it is not necessary for the state to have an assignment in order to act on the family's behalf. Assignment is necessary only if the state intends to keep the support collected to reimburse itself for the public assistance provided. It is worth noting that only one state that now imposes a child support cooperation requirement on those receiving child care subsidies has included assignment language in its program.

2. *Must families use the child support enforcement system, or are there alternatives?* As noted above, some families have informal arrangements, which they find to be satisfactory.

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The 2005 CLASP Audio Conferences Series

The 2005 CLASP Audio Conference Series has been announced. This year's series is called "The Family Squeeze," and it focuses on the delicate balance between work and family life, especially for low-income people.

An imbalance between work and life can be unhealthy—both for the worker and the worker's family. Businesses need healthy workers and, increasingly, employers are seeking new ways to provide a balance between work and life. Families are often squeezed in other ways, particularly when there is too little or no work and when federal and state budget cuts drain funding for vital work supports that help families keep a balance. This year we are pleased to have as guests Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco (D-LA), along with a host of policy experts.

CLASP audio conferences are telephone conference calls during which you listen to elected officials, experts, and practitioners discuss a specific topic. Each call takes place on a Friday from 12:30-1:30 p.m., Eastern Time. Groups often listen by speaker phone, using the event as a catalyst for discussion about state and local actions. If you cannot listen live, tapes are available. Each audio conference costs \$16, but you can get a 10 percent discount if you order by credit card. The entire 11-call series can be ordered for at a discounted price as well.

For additional information and to order, visit: www.clasp.org/audioconf.php. ■

CLASP 2005 AUDIO CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28

Right to Request Flexible Work:

U.K. Emerging Lessons

- Julie Carney, Director, Participation and Skills, U.K. Department of Trade and Industry
- Jo Morris, Senior Equality and Employment Rights Officer, U.K. Trades Union Congress
- Karen Kornbluh, Program Director, Work & Family, New America Foundation

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11

The Federal Budget:

Implications for Families and States

- Bob Greenstein, Executive Director, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
- Sheri Steisel, Senior Committee Director, Human Services, National Conference of State Legislatures

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Pre-K and Parental Work:

Emerging Lessons from the States

- Rachel Schumacher, Director of Early Education and Child Care Policy, CLASP
- Joyce Staples, Education Consultant, Connecticut Department of Education
- Elizabeth Coulson, State Representative, Illinois Legislature

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

Marriage and Family Balance:

An Interview with Author Kathryn Edin

- Kathryn Edin, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania

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CLASP 2005 AUDIO CONFERENCE SCHEDULE continued

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

Families, Work, and Public Housing: Encouraging Results from Jobs-Plus

- James Riccio, Senior Fellow, MDRC
- Barbara Sard, Director of Housing Policy, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
- Mark Calabria, Majority Staff, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

FRIDAY, MAY 6

Connecting Disconnected Youth and Disconnected Systems: Innovative Community Approaches (Guest Host Linda Harris)

- Clyde McQueen, President, Full Employment Council, Kansas City, Missouri
- Toyce Newton, Executive Director, Phoenix Youth and Family Services, Inc.
- Conny Doty, President, Boston Jobs and Community Services

FRIDAY, JUNE 17

Paid Sick Days: Developments in the U.S. and Lessons from Abroad

- Senator Edward M. Kennedy, D-Massachusetts (participating if Senate schedule permits)
- Jodi Grant, Director of Work and Family Programs and Policy, National Partnership for Women and Families

FRIDAY, JULY 15

Sure Start: Lessons for the U.S. from Universal Pre-K in the U.K.

- Naomi Eisenstadt, Director, Sure Start Unit, Department for Education and Skills, London
- Mark Greenberg, Director of Policy, CLASP

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Louisiana's Fight Against Poverty: An Interview with the Governor

- Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, D-Louisiana

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14

Better Jobs: New Ways to Raise Income for Welfare Families

- Nisha Patel, Senior Policy Analyst, CLASP
- Harry Holzer, Visiting Fellow, Urban Institute

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Better Business: Making Work "Work" for Employers and Employees

- Ellen Galinsky, President, Families and Work Institute
- Donna Klein, President and CEO, Corporate Voices for Working Families

Check Out CLASP.org's New Look

The Center for Law and Social Policy's (CLASP) website has gotten a facelift. Not only does the site have a different look and feel, but it has added usability. You can now:

- Search for publications by type (e.g., report, policy brief, legislative analysis)
- Peruse documents in our new categories—Work-Life and Prisoner Re-entry
- More easily purchase CLASP audio conferences (check out the 2005 series at www.clasp.org/audioconf.php)

Visit the new site soon at www.clasp.org.

CLASP Submits Comments on Proposed CCDBG Changes

On January 8, 2005, CLASP submitted comments to the Child Care Bureau regarding changes to the matching requirements in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

The proposed rules would make two changes to matching requirements for CCDBG:

- Under current law, states may use private funds to count toward state match under certain circumstances, but if the funds are not transferred to the state, they must be received by a single entity designated by the state to receive the funds. Under the proposed rules, states would be allowed to designate multiple public and/or private entities to receive private donations that could be certified as child care expenditures for purposes of receiving federal matching funds.

- Under current law, states can use public pre-kindergarten dollars to count toward up to 20 percent of the state's matching requirement. Under the proposed rules, public pre-kindergarten dollars could count toward up to 30 percent of state matching funds.

CLASP is concerned that the proposed changes could lead to the potential for supplantation, reduced accountability, and the potential for fraud and misexpenditures. The comments outline the areas of concern and suggest alternative approaches. ■

■ To view the full comments, titled *Comments Regarding Changes to the Matching Requirements in the Child Care and Development Block Grant*, visit: www.clasp.org/publications/ccdbg_comments.pdf.

Child Support Memo continued from page 3

Others are using the services of the court or a private attorney. Those with such arrangements should be exempt from the cooperation requirement, as they are already actively pursuing or receiving support.

3. *Who must cooperate?* It seems reasonable to require cooperation from a custodial parent. However, some children seeking or receiving a subsidy may be in the custody of someone other than a parent, and that person may not have the legal right to pursue support on their behalf. The requirement should be limited to those who have the right to seek support under state law.

4. *Are there exceptions for domestic violence victims?* As noted above, there is a long history of exempting abused parents and children from child support cooperation requirements. Not all victims of domestic violence will want an exemption. However, those with a genuine concern about the possibility of abuse should be exempt and the claim should be processed by the agency most familiar with the family's circumstances (i.e., the child care agency).

5. *Who pays fees and costs?* Some families do not use the state child support system because the associated fees and costs are beyond their means. To require such families to pay fees and costs in order to obtain subsidized care is to deny those families a child care subsidy. The state should waive any application fee and process the case. If it generally seeks other fees and costs in child support cases, it should seek them from the non-custodial parent and develop a system so that they can be paid over time. Fees and costs should not come from the child support owed to the child.

The memo also includes a chart providing information about some of the policies states have adopted to date. ■

■ To view this memo, visit: www.clasp.org/publications/cs_cc_subsidy.pdf.

experience with paid parental leave and includes qualitative data from 17 New Zealand small businesses on their experiences with the new law. It concludes with policy implications and some next steps for the United States in this arena:

- A public-private partnership can enhance business involvement in parental leave policy debates.
- General-revenue financing of parental leave can eliminate or limit a likely business objection.
- General-revenue financing of parental leave could facilitate a longer period of leave.
- Making businesses aware that parental leave is a relatively rare occurrence could facilitate support.

The brief concludes that New Zealand law promotes work-life balance by providing income and job protection for eligible workers—regardless of the size of the company or the socioeconomic status of the worker. It has accomplished this in a nation of small businesses. As the United States considers national legislation, and as states develop laws, the experience of New Zealand and its businesses is instructive.

The second brief in the series, *Taking the Next Step: What Can the U.S. Learn about Sick Leave from New Zealand?*, looks at what New Zealand has done to provide paid sick days for its workers. Drawing from the New Zealand experience, the brief then provides recommendations on what United States policymakers can do to ensure that workers have paid sick days:

- A U.S. paid sick days law should be established to provide a minimum standard that applies to all businesses regardless of size.
- A paid sick days law should provide for a meaningful illness verification process that considers workers' ability to pay for verification. In addition, the medical certification process, to be sustained and credible, must recognize the capacity of the health system to provide such verification. Can the health system accommodate a verification process for illnesses that do not ordinarily

necessitate a visit to the doctor (e.g., flu, a periodic migraine headache, back pain flare up)?

- The law should provide for carryover of unused days, up to a cap.

The policy brief on paid sick days and the brief on paid parental leave provide a small business perspective on work-leave policies. As the interviews with New Zealand small businesses show, implementing work-leave policies is challenging, yet helping workers does not have to be detrimental to businesses. While some might worry that mandated paid sick days would result in untenable costs for small business, the New Zealand experience indicates these costs can be absorbed. Indeed, the latest New Zealand data show that profits have increased for the nation's small businesses.

Both briefs are available in the Work-Life section of the CLASP website. ■

■ The parental leave brief is available at www.clasp.org/publications/work_life_br1.pdf.

The sick days brief is available at www.clasp.org/publications/work_life_br2.pdf.

PETITION ON THE HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT

CLASP encourages readers to sign the Healthy Families Act petition to help the 86 million Americans who do not have a single day of paid sick leave to care for a sick child. The Healthy Families Act would guarantee a minimum of seven paid sick days per year, which can be also used to care for sick family members. This is the flexibility that American families need to survive in today's workforce.

Visit the National Partnership for Women and Families' website for more information and to sign the petition: www.nationalpartnership.org/Default.aspx?tabid=114. Together we can make paid leave a reality for America's working families.

Resources

Welfare Reform and Children

Child Trends' latest research brief, *How Welfare Reform Might Affect Children: Updating the Conceptual Model*, provides a short history of the study of welfare reform and children and shares early conceptual models of how welfare reform might affect child well-being. The brief then discusses whether any income gains experienced by former welfare recipients have translated into greater resources for their children. The brief also discusses the role of fathers in families receiving and leaving welfare, as well as how infants are faring when their mothers move from welfare to work and the quality of child care these mothers are able to obtain.

www.childtrends.org/Files/welfarebrief.pdf

Food Stamp Demographics

Characteristics of Food Stamp Households: Fiscal Year 2003, a new report from Mathematica, summarizes the demographic and economic circumstances of food stamp households. On average, about 21.3 million people

received food stamps each month in 2003. A little more than half of all food stamp households contained children, and most of these households were headed by a single parent. About 18 percent of food stamp households contained an elderly person. Although benefit amounts varied quite a bit, the average monthly benefit was \$195 per household. Compared with 2002, the number of program participants increased by 12 percent.

www.mathematica-mpr.com

Marriage Promotion and Living Arrangements

A new brief from the Urban Institute, *Marriage Promotion and the Living Arrangements of Black, Hispanic, and White Children*, examines racial and ethnic differences in children's living arrangements. Current proposals to promote marriage, they suggest, may be too narrow to benefit most low-income black children, the group of children least likely to be living with two, married parents.

www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=311064

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New CLASP Couples and Marriage Brief

CLASP has just released its sixth brief in the Couples and Marriage Series—*Rethinking Welfare Rules from a Marriage-Plus Perspective* by Paula Roberts and Mark Greenberg. The brief, adapted from the paper *Marriage and the TANF Rules* by the same authors, explores the relationship between public benefits rules and marriage.

The authors start the brief by asking the following questions: Do public benefits rules affect decisions to stay single, cohabit, or marry? If so, in what ways? Answering these questions raises complex issues that are endemic to any system that provides benefits on a group (i.e., family) basis rather than looking at individual needs. The complexity becomes particularly acute when eligibility for or amount of a benefit depends on household composition and income. Thus, these questions arise in a broad range of means-tested benefits, such as cash assistance, child care, food stamps, subsidized housing, and Medicaid, as well as tax system rules.

This policy brief examines the issues in the context of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. The authors focus on TANF for two principal reasons:

- All of the rules and choices discussed are entirely within a state's control. A state wishing to restructure its program is free to do so.
- Since there are virtually no federal constraints (except those relating to resources), examining TANF rules allows a pure opportunity to consider what kinds of policies are most appropriate for a means-tested program.

While the focus is on TANF rules, many of the principles and issues explored are applicable to the structuring of other means-tested programs and may also be relevant to discussions of family structure and tax policy.

The authors note there is broad agreement that program rules should *not penalize* marriage. Beyond this, there is no general consensus about what the rules of a public benefits system should seek to accomplish in relation to family structure. Some contend that the system's rules should encourage or advantage two-parent families whether married or cohabiting. Others would encourage or advantage only married-couple families. Still others think a system that neither encourages nor discourages a particular family structure is the more appropriate goal. Which rules are "right" for a



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All Together Now: Report on State Pre-K

State pre-kindergarten programs have grown dramatically in the last two decades, and much more attention is being paid to the school readiness of children. In 1980, there were only 10 state programs; now at least 38 states and the District of Columbia have one or more pre-kindergarten initiatives. A new CLASP report, *All Together Now: State Experiences in Using Community-Based Child Care to Provide Pre-Kindergarten*, studies the emergence of the mixed delivery model, in which pre-kindergarten is delivered in community-based settings and schools.

The report focuses specifically on the policies associated with implementing pre-kindergarten programs in community-based child care settings, as opposed to Head Start programs, community colleges, and other types of programs. It describes findings of a CLASP survey of 29 states that was undertaken to understand the policy choices, opportunities, and challenges of including community-based child care providers in their pre-kindergarten programs. The report:

- Summarizes the methodology CLASP used to conduct the survey.
- Describes the policy choices that states are making in implementing pre-kindergarten in community-based child care programs, including illustrative examples.

- Discusses the emerging implications of the findings and offers a set of policy and research recommendations for state policymakers to consider as they design and implement pre-kindergarten programs.

The authors find that the majority of states implementing pre-kindergarten programs have opted for some version of mixed delivery. Moreover, the emergence of this model is significant to the future of early childhood education because it has the potential to: 1) break the traditional barrier between early education and child care policies and address the needs of children in working families in a coordinated way; and 2) strengthen the quality of community-based child care programs.

However, whether the promise is actually met depends on the policy choices made by states and the ways in which these choices are implemented, the authors point out. State pre-kindergarten policy choices also have the potential to strengthen the quality and program standards of community-based child care programs. State child care licensing standards primarily focus on assuring basic health and safety protections and do not usually provide support to improve and strengthen quality, although many states also require limited program activities related to general educational content. State child care subsidy programs, which responded to increased funding in the 1990s by expanding access and making some investments to improve quality, are now moving backwards. According to the Government Accountability Office, at least 23 states have limited child care assistance for some families since 2001, and many have also made cuts in their activities to improve child care quality.

Coordinated planning and implementation between state pre-kindergarten and child care programs, and increased resources to integrate early education standards in child care, have the potential to increase quality across the variety of settings preschool-age children are experiencing, often in the same day. This could lead to a system in which children can experience the same level of program

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CLASP Submits Testimony on TANF Reauthorization

As the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) legislation is moving toward reauthorization in Congress, CLASP recently submitted written testimony to the Human Resources Subcommittee of the House Committee on Ways and Means. CLASP submitted testimony on the work-related provisions and on the child support and fatherhood provisions in the House TANF reauthorization bill, H.R. 240.

Work-Related Provisions

The testimony, submitted by Mark Greenberg, Nisha Patel, and Hedieh Rahmanou, notes that there has been dramatic growth in single-parent employment since 1996 (when the legislation creating TANF was enacted), but much of the employment has been in low-wage jobs without employer-provided benefits. Many families still receiving assistance have serious employment barriers, and a group of families with serious barriers is now not in work and not receiving welfare. The expansion of supports for working families outside welfare has been a critical contributor to the employment growth, but those supports are increasingly at risk because TANF and child care funding have remained flat. The sharp decline in reserve funds underscores that, at current funding levels, states will find it difficult or impossible to sustain current service levels over the coming years.

In this context, CLASP has urged that the work-related provisions of reauthorization focus on efforts to improve job quality; encourage a stronger focus on employment retention and advancement; expand child care and other supports for working families outside welfare; and ensure that states have incentives to work with, rather than terminate assistance to, families with the most serious employment barriers.

Much of the reauthorization debate has centered around the mechanics of the participation rate calculation for families receiving TANF assistance. Based on the experi-

ence since 1996, there is little reason to believe that this should have been the central issue in reauthorization: a large share of TANF resources is now used for families outside the traditional welfare system, and participation rates measure engagement in activities among families receiving assistance, not the effectiveness of programs in promoting employment.

In the testimony, the authors address key work-related provisions of H.R. 240 and recommend modifications based on the belief that promoting and supporting work should be central to state welfare reform efforts. They conclude that several provisions of H.R. 240 will make it harder for states to run effective programs to connect families with jobs and will encourage states to terminate assistance to families rather than working with them to help them find sustainable employment.

Child Support and Fatherhood

States have more than doubled their child support collection rates since 1996. In addition, the number of children with legally established fathers has nearly tripled, and orders for health care coverage have more than quadrupled, since Congress made improvements to child support collection in 1993.

CLASP's Vicki Turetsky submitted testimony urging the Human Resources Subcommittee to make two critical changes to support the commitment of parents to their children: first, to provide funding to state and community-based programs that reach out to unemployed, often destitute, fathers to help them get back on their feet, find steady work, and support their children; and second, to make sure that children directly benefit from the financial support paid by parents through reforms to child support distribution rules. Turetsky urges the Subcommittee to reform the distribution rules by doing the following:

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CLASP Releases Budget Analyses

After President Bush released his fiscal year 2006 budget, CLASP responded with two papers that explain the impact of the Administration's child care and adult education funding decisions. Families would be denied child care assistance, and adults would lose access to literacy and English classes if Congress acts on the President's proposed cuts.

Child Care

In *President's Budget Projects 300,000 Low-Income Children to Lose Child Care by 2010*, Hannah Matthews and Danielle Ewen point out that according to the Administration's own calculations, an estimated 300,000 fewer low-income children will receive child care assistance by 2010. The President's budget would freeze child care funding for 2006—and projects that child care funding would remain frozen for the next five years, through 2010. Yet, child care assistance is critical to the success of low-income working families.

Reports by the Government Accountability Office and the National Women's Law Center have shown that states have responded to frozen child care funding and rising costs by cutting working families from the program, raising the cost to families to participate, and reducing programs that improve the quality of care.

Last year's budget showed that in 2003, an estimated 2.5 million children were served by all major federal funding streams for child care. These funding streams include the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant, and the Social Services Block Grant. According to the Administration's data, the number of children receiving child care fell to 2.3 million in 2004. These budget projections show that the number of children served will further decline to 2 million by 2010.

Adult Education

In *President's Budget Sabotages Pipeline of Skilled Workers*, Julie Strawn and Amy-Ellen Duke estimate that nearly half a million people—at least 470,000—would be denied literacy, Adult Basic Education, GED, and English as a Second Language services due to the President's proposed budget cuts. Because states must use 25 percent of their own monies in order to receive federal adult education funds, states may cut back on their own investment in proportion to the federal cut, resulting in even more students being turned away. Over time, these cuts will doom millions of Americans to unemployment and low-wage jobs. In addition, businesses risk a shortage of skilled workers at a time when the U.S. workforce is aging.

More than 51 million American out-of-school youth and adults lack a high school diploma or GED, and 29 million are in need of English language services. However, only 2.8 million individuals can be served by current public adult education and English language efforts, according to the Department of Education. Yet the Bush Administration proposes to slash funding for these programs by nearly three-fourths (74.1 percent)—from the current \$501.1 million to \$131.4 million.

Some states would be especially hard hit:

- More than half of those seeking services would have to be turned away in 11 states—Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas—and in Puerto Rico.
- Eleven states would lose 75 percent or more of their federal adult education funding—California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas.
- Another 25 states and Puerto Rico would lose at least 70 percent of their grants.

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A Guide for Facilitating Re-entry

As the rates of incarceration have climbed and the subsequent rates of recidivism have stayed stubbornly high, state and local governments and the U.S. Congress have begun to pay more attention to ex-offenders returning to the community. The Council of State Governments (CSG) and 10 partners have recently released a comprehensive report on this topic that offers hundreds of recommendations for reducing public spending and increasing public safety by promoting the safe and successful return of ex-offenders to the community.

The report, titled *Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council: Charting the Safe and Successful Return of Prisoners to the Community*, is the result of the work of CSG's Re-entry Policy Council, coordinated by CSG and comprised of 100 bipartisan leaders at the state, local, and national level. The report provides 35 policy statements, which include descriptions of the problems and recommendations for implementing the proposed policy. In addition, the report highlights many re-entry initiatives throughout the country.

The policy statements of particular interest to *CLASP Update* readers include:

- Promoting systems integration to ensure continuity of care, supervision, and effective service delivery between criminal justice, workforce, and human services systems.
- Developing an intake procedure that can be used to assess the strengths, risks, and needs of individual inmates.
- Developing a programming plan that, based on information obtained from inmate assessments, explains what programming should be provided during incarceration to ensure successful return to the community.
- Facilitating physical and mental health care and providing substance abuse treatment.
- Providing services and supports for family members and children of prisoners, and, when appropriate, help-

ing to re-establish and strengthen prisoner relationships with their families, including encouraging payment of child support.

- Providing inmates with work experience and skill-building programs, including the creation of transitional jobs.
- Ensuring that those who exit prisons as a potential risk to public safety receive some form of community supervision.
- Facilitating access to stable housing upon re-entry into the community.
- Planning continuity of care so that individuals receive uninterrupted services and support upon re-entering the community.
- Promoting, where appropriate, the employment of ex-offenders and creating job opportunities for them.
- Connecting inmates to employment and employment services before their release to the community.
- Providing services, as needed, to the family members, victims, and relevant community members.
- Ensuring individuals exit prison with appropriate forms of identification and that those eligible for public benefits receive them immediately upon their release from prison or jail.
- Recognizing and addressing the obstacles that make it difficult for an ex-offender to obtain and retain viable employment while under community supervision (includes a discussion of transitional jobs).

The report maintains that no one agency or organization can, on its own, implement the recommendations of a single policy statement. Collaboration and partnerships among parties unaccustomed to working together will be critical to success. ■

■ To view sections of this 600-page report online or to find out how to order it, visit: www.reentrypolicy.org.

- **Eliminate pre-assistance assignment.** Pre-assistance assignment means that families who tried to hold out the longest before going on welfare can lose all of the support owed to them, even though they were not receiving assistance at the time. If families could keep this money, they would have a better chance of leaving welfare sooner and staying off longer.
- **Eliminate the federal tax offset exception.** Under the current rule, the state keeps the child support collected on a family's behalf so long as a family receives TANF assistance. Once the family leaves assistance, the family keeps most of the collected child support. However, if the support is collected through one specific method—by withholding federal tax refunds—the state keeps the money, instead of the family. This exception means that the government withholds a private source of income and undermines the efforts of a parent to support his child, right at the point when the family has left welfare and is trying to make ends meet.
- **Mandate federal participation in child support pass-through.** Under the current law, states can decide to pass through support to families while they are receiving TANF assistance. Research from Wisconsin's welfare program shows that parents pay more child support, are more willing to establish paternity, and are less likely to work underground when the support is passed through to their children. Among parents who pay

support regularly, the study suggests improved child outcomes and less severe conflict between the parents.

- **Allow states the flexibility to implement early and completely.** States need flexibility to implement early so that they can coordinate distribution changes with other computer upgrades or computer replacement efforts.

On fatherhood funding, Turetsky urges the Subcommittee to do the following:

- **Appropriate new funding for program grants.** Past House and Senate reauthorization bills have authorized—but not appropriated—funds for fatherhood programs.
- **Target resources to low-income parents.**
- **Permit the funds to be used to help parents get jobs.** In past reauthorization bills, the Senate version allowed the fatherhood program money to be used for direct employment services, as well as marriage. However, the House bill emphasized marriage services, and does not permit funds to be used for direct employment services. ■

■ To view both sets of written testimony, visit the Welfare Policy page of the CLASP website, www.clasp.org.

Many of these same states face especially high demand for adult education services:

- In 17 states, many of them in the South or Southwest, at least 1 in 4 adults is in need of adult education and/or English language services.
- In six of these 17 states—California, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, Texas—30 percent or more of all adults lack a high school diploma, have limited proficiency in English, or both.

This analysis includes a table that estimates the impact of the proposed cuts in adult education and English language services on a state-by-state basis. ■

- To view the child care budget analysis, visit: www.clasp.org/publications/cc_2006_budget.pdf.
- To view the adult education budget analysis, visit: www.clasp.org/publications/adult_ed_budget_cuts.pdf.

benefits system depends, of course, on which policy goal is being advanced.

CLASP has adopted a “Marriage Plus” perspective. From this perspective, two goals should be paramount in designing public benefits programs: 1) the state should seek to develop rules that do not discourage marriage; and 2) these rules should not disadvantage children who live in single-parent families.

This policy brief proceeds from this perspective and describes some of the research addressing the effects of the different welfare policies over the years on family formation decisions. The brief then provides a framework for preliminary analysis of how to proceed. Finally, the brief concludes with some suggested concrete policies that would neither discourage marriage nor disadvantage children being raised in single-parent families.

Both the brief and the longer paper on this topic are available at www.clasp.org in the Welfare Policy or Couples and Marriage sections of the site. To receive a hard copy of the brief, please call (202) 906-8000. ■

quality whether they spend their days in a school, a child care program, or a Head Start program. Integrated policies across child care and school systems could also increase standards and resources for quality improvements in child care that will benefit children as they grow from infancy to their preschool years, and on through their time in elementary school.

While there are important potential advantages in the community-based model, there is no guarantee that implementation will result in policies and programs that meet the model’s potential. There may be wide variation in the initial or subsequent quality levels of participating providers, and it may be difficult to monitor and track provider performance. Some providers are likely to need far more technical assistance and support than others. It

Other Recent CLASP Publications

Stay up-to-date on the latest child support regulations and find out more about the economic reasons for businesses to provide paid sick days for their workers.

In *New Regulation on Review and Adjustment of Child Support Orders* Paula Roberts describes a new Interim Final regulation on review and adjustment of child support orders in states using the guidelines method of adjustment. The Office of Child Support Enforcement is proposing to return to a policy under which these states can adopt quantitative standards for adjusting support orders. Such standards allow states to disregard adjustments of a small magnitude, even when such adjustments could be consequential for both low-income custodial parent families and obligors.

In *Presenteeism and Paid Sick Days* Jodie Levin-Epstein discusses new research that suggests that when workers are sick on the job, their presence comes at a cost to employers — the “hidden” cost of reduced productivity. This four-page paper defines “presenteeism” and discusses what can and is being done about it. ■

may be more difficult to encourage or require consistent standards, compensation, and benefits for teachers across multiple settings in a mixed delivery model. And, expansion of pre-kindergarten in community-based settings would require support services and ongoing monitoring that is targeted to these settings.

To receive individual detailed descriptions of each of the 29 states’ responses to the CLASP survey on the state policies used to integrate pre-kindergarten into community-based child care settings, please e-mail Danielle Ewen at dewen@clasp.org or Rachel Schumacher at rschumacher@clasp.org. ■

■ To view the full 61-page document, visit: www.clasp.org/publications/all_together_now.pdf.

CLASP Audio Conferences in March and April

Fridays 12:30-1:30 pm (ET) with host Jodie Levin-Epstein

MARCH 18, 2005

**MARRIAGE AND FAMILY BALANCE:
AN INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR
KATHRYN EDIN**

As the co-author of *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*, Kathryn Edin, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, studied the lives of low-income single mothers living in eight poor Philadelphia-area neighborhoods over six years. She will explore such questions as: How do jobs and job stability play into poor women's decisions regarding marriage? Do poor women view marriage as a means to balancing work and family? Why is the prospect of two potential incomes through marriage trumped by other concerns for the family?

APRIL 15, 2005

**WORK AND PUBLIC HOUSING:
ENCOURAGING RESULTS FROM JOBS-PLUS**

A multi-year evaluation of Jobs-Plus, a place-based employment initiative in public housing, showed the program produced substantial improvements in residents' earnings. How much did residents work? How big were the effects of Jobs-Plus on their employment, earnings, and welfare receipt? Did different kinds of families have different outcomes? Did life in the housing developments change? Will Congress take note? Guests for this audio conference include: James Riccio, Senior Fellow, MDRC; Barbara Sard, Director of Housing Policy, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; and Mark Calabria, Majority Staff, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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CLASPupdate

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CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY

Missed Opportunity in Early Education Funding?

Finding sufficient funding to make high-quality pre-school programs available to all children is a pressing issue for many policymakers. For the last decade, research has consistently demonstrated that high-quality early education programs that are designed to support the full range of children's development can have long-term positive implications on later school success. A new report from CLASP, *Missed Opportunities: The Possibilities and Challenges of Funding High-Quality Preschool through Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act* by Danielle Ewen, Jennifer Mezey, and Hannah Matthews, highlights a source of early education funding and the opportunities and challenges in accessing it.



Missed Opportunities: The Possibilities and Challenges of Funding High-Quality Preschool through Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act by Danielle Ewen, Jennifer Mezey, and Hannah Matthews

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In 1980, there were only 10 state pre-school programs; now at least 38 states and the District of Columbia have one or more preschool initiatives. Most state programs are part-day, part-year, and targeted to a limited number of four-year-olds based on family income or other risk factors for school success. In addition, many local communities have contributed resources to state programs or have started their own programs to help children succeed when they enter the K-12 system. At every level, underfunded schools and communities have driven policymakers to look to a variety of funding streams, including Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), to

expand the availability and quality of preschool programs for three- and four-year-old children, especially those at risk of school failure.

While much research has examined state spending on preschool programs, little research has examined how other funding streams are used to support preschool. It is clear that the majority of funding programs often looked to for additional support are limited in scope; generally are designed to serve other goals; and have been subject to flat funding or have been cut. In comparison, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which authorizes Title I of ESEA, has seen some increases in funding and may therefore provide a viable opportunity to expand high-quality preschool programs for at-risk children. Title I, Part A of ESEA is primarily intended to provide funding for elementary and secondary education. Although there is no specific designated funding source for preschool services within Title I, Part A, these funds may be used for

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Policy Potpourri

CLASP has recently released short, easy-to-digest publications on a range of topics, including child support, the Higher Education Act, and child care. Following are synopses of these publications.

Child Support Program's Success

The Child Support Program: An Investment That Works by Vicki Turetsky is a primer on the benefits the federal child support program brings to low-income families. In 2003, the child support program served 17.6 million children and collected \$20.1 billion in private child support dollars. Next to the mothers' earnings, child support is the second largest income source for poor families receiving child support. Among families receiving support in 2001, families below poverty received an average of \$2,500 in support, or 30 percent of total family income. The research shows that child support performance and funding levels are directly related. Increased investment of federal and state dollars since 1996 has contributed to improved performance. The more effective the child support program, the higher the savings in public assistance costs.

Uniform Parentage Act

The Uniform Parentage Act (UPA) provides a comprehensive framework for establishing the parentage of chil-

dren born to both married and unmarried couples. The UPA was revised in 2002, and six states have enacted it in some form. *Update on the Uniform Parentage Act (2002)* by Paula Roberts describes the most recent iteration of the UPA and provides a table that compares major provisions of the model act to state enactments and variations.

Higher Education Act Priorities

Making HEA an Engine of Economic Productivity and Worker Prosperity is a joint publication of the National Consumer Law Center, CLASP, and the Workforce Alliance. This brief document discusses how the Higher Education Act (HEA) can be modernized through reauthorization to support economic development and meet the needs of business and workers. The skill requirements of today's and tomorrow's jobs continue to rise—by 2020 it's estimated that 15 million new jobs will require college preparation. This paper suggests ways Congress can better align HEA with the needs of employers and the realities of working adults' lives.

Child Care Funding

In March, the Senate Finance Committee passed its Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) reauthorization bill—the bipartisan PRIDE bill—that includes \$6 billion in new federal funds for child care assistance. The bill recognizes the important role that child care plays in helping families reach self-sufficiency. *The Senate's \$6 Billion Child Care Provision: A Critical, but Modest, Investment* by Danielle Ewen explains why this increase is crucial. Child care funding has been flat for four years, causing low-income working families to lose child care assistance they need to find and keep jobs and forcing states to limit access to assistance, increase family fees, and cut investments in quality. Some have questioned whether the \$6 billion figure is more than is needed. This paper explains that, to the contrary, \$6 billion would merely pay for the cost of keeping pace with inflation in child care over the next five years and would meet the cost of a limited increase in TANF work participation requirements.

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The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), a national, nonprofit organization founded in 1968, conducts research, legal and policy analysis, technical assistance, and advocacy on issues related to economic security for low-income families with children.

CLASP Update is published monthly.

Editor: Gayle Bennett

CLASP

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The Intersection Between Social Security and Children

Most people think of Social Security solely as a retirement safety net, but the program also serves as an “insurance program” for the children of workers who become seriously disabled or die. CLASP had the opportunity to talk with Nancy K. Cauthen, Ph.D, Acting Deputy Director of the National Center for Children in Poverty, on the intersection between Social Security and children.

CLASP: What proportion of Social Security payments go to families with disabled workers or to survivors of workers who die?

Nancy: Of the 48 million Americans who currently benefit from Social Security, 15 million receive benefits through the survivor and disability components of the program. Stated another way, one in three Social Security beneficiaries is not a retiree.

About 13 percent of recipients are severely disabled workers and their spouses, and another 10 percent are the

surviving spouses of workers who have died. Children comprise 8 percent of Social Security beneficiaries.

In short, Social Security is a family insurance program, not a pension plan. In President Roosevelt’s words, Social Security was designed to assure “the security of the men, women, and children of the nation against certain hazards and vicissitudes of life.”

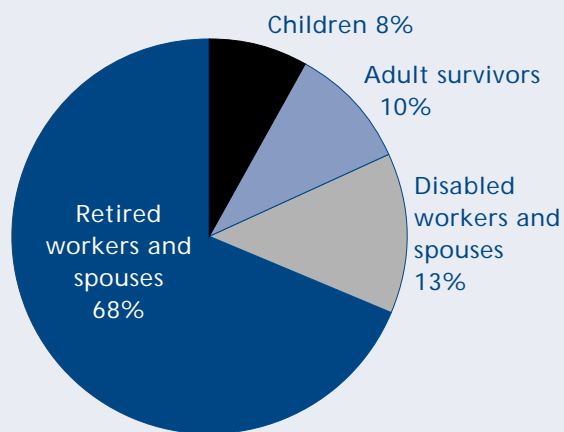
CLASP: What are the effects of Social Security on children, including child poverty?

Nancy: Social Security is in fact the government’s largest children’s program, paying out roughly \$16 billion annually to child beneficiaries under age 18. More children benefit from Social Security than from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). About 3.1 million children under age 18 receive benefits because a parent has died, retired, or can no longer work because of disability. Another 2.2 million children live in households with a relative who receives Social Security benefits. In total, over 7 percent of American children under 18 currently benefit from Social Security.

In terms of child poverty, a recent report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities indicates that one million children under age 18 were lifted out of poverty by Social Security in 2002—that’s more than any other program except the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). One of the report’s most striking findings is that *Social Security has a greater impact on child poverty than the EITC when the breadth and severity of poverty is considered*. In some ways, this comparison is more meaningful because it is based on the aggregate effect of Social Security or EITC benefits on the incomes of poor families with children—not just the number of children lifted above the poverty level.

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Social Security Beneficiaries by Type, December 2004



Note: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Source: U.S. Social Security Administration, Office of the Chief Actuary. (2005). Fact sheet on the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program. Washington, DC: Author.

Fond Farewell to Nisha and Steve

CLASP Senior Policy Analyst Nisha Patel is leaving CLASP to be a Program Officer at the Washington Area Women's Foundation, a community-based, public foundation dedicated to increasing the resources and leadership opportunities for low-income women and girls in the Washington Metropolitan Area. Nisha has worked at CLASP for the last five years, focusing on work supports for low-income families, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) reauthorization, tribal TANF, microenterprise lending for TANF recipients, and implementation and reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Prior to her work here, she worked at the Project for the Future of Equal Justice, a project CLASP conducts with the National Legal Aid and Defender Association.

"Nisha has not only been a leader at CLASP, but she has provided an invaluable insight and perspective into our work," said Alan W. Houseman, CLASP Director. "Nisha was a personal and professional friend during the seven years we have worked together. I am both sad that she is leaving and pleased that she is moving into a new job with new responsibilities."

Senior Staff Attorney Steve Savner is also leaving CLASP. For the past two years, Steve has been on sabbatical, working at the Center for Community Change, where he is now taking a permanent position as Senior Fellow. Steve directed CLASP's workforce development work for the past 10 years. He has worked tirelessly on TANF reauthorization and implementation, on the creation of WIA and its implementation, and on the creation of transitional jobs programs throughout the country.

"Steve has been one of our most effective and creative advocates since he joined CLASP over 10 years ago," said Houseman. "He brought a wealth of knowledge on welfare reform, job training, and employment issues to CLASP and helped develop some of our most exciting and effective work."

Nisha's last day at CLASP was May 20, 2005. Steve's last day was May 13, 2005. ■

Policy Potpourri continued from page 2

In addition, Administration representatives have suggested that enacting the Administration's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) reauthorization proposal would free up \$2 billion for states to use for child care. A recent analysis from CLASP, *Administration's TANF Proposal Would Not Free Up \$2 Billion for Child Care* by Mark Greenberg and Hedieh Rahmanou, explains the proposed change and why it would not result in an additional \$2 billion becoming available for child care.

Head Start

In 2004, 13 percent of the children in Head Start and Early Head Start (more than 134,000 children) were diag-

nosed with a disability. Without Head Start, some of these children might have gone undiagnosed, leaving their disabilities unaddressed for years. *Preparing for Success: How Head Start Helps Children with Disabilities and Their Families* by Danielle Ewen and Katherine Beh Neas, a joint venture between CLASP and Easter Seals, updates data from a 2003 paper of the same title. It details the requirements that Head Start grantees must meet to serve children with disabilities and provides data on how the programs are meeting them. ■

■ To view any of these documents, visit www.clasp.org

CLASP's WIA Recommendations

Congress has been working on legislation to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the federally funded job training and employment services program. In March, the House passed its WIA reauthorization bill, H.R. 27. In January, Senator Enzi introduced S. 9, the Senate's WIA reauthorization bill. CLASP has released two documents that provide WIA policy recommendations for the provisions of the law affecting disadvantaged adults and those affecting high-risk youth. CLASP also released an analysis of the Administration's consolidation and WIA Plus proposals.

CLASP recommends the following changes to WIA to encourage better participation of disadvantaged adults:

1. Promote greater access to training.
 - Eliminate sequential eligibility and allow individuals to receive intensive and training services in any sequence determined appropriate.
 - Encourage use of WIA funds for training.
2. Improve performance measures.
 - Improve adjustment of performance measures by incorporating the language contained in S. 9 into this year's Senate WIA reauthorization bill.
 - Require that performance measures take into account job quality.
3. Address the needs of adults with limited English proficiency.
 - Add limited English proficient individuals to the list of hard-to-serve populations and add assessment of English proficiency to the list of core services.
 - Encourage programs to combine adult education, ESL, and job training.
4. Improve opportunities for TANF-WIA coordination.

To better serve at-risk youth through WIA, CLASP recommends the following changes:

1. Target the funds to where the need is the greatest.
 - Change the sub-state allocation formula for youth funds to distribute the funding to where the need is the greatest.
 - Require the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor to include factors reflecting youth distress in the award of Youth Challenge Grants.
2. Retain service to both in-school and out-of-school youth. Greater service to out-of-school youth should not be at the expense of in-school youth.
 - Requirements for increased service levels to out-of-school youth should be triggered by increases in appropriations in youth formula funds.
3. Keep youth councils mandatory.
 - Maintain mandatory youth councils but refocus their role on strategic planning, oversight, and coordination.
4. Refine the eligibility requirements for out-of-school youth to ensure that the most vulnerable youth receive services.
5. Incorporate adjustment factors into the performance measures.
 - State and local youth standards should be adjusted to take into account drop-out status, offender status, teen parenting, foster care status, and limited English proficiency of the participants enrolled.
 - Expand the literacy and numeracy gains measure with a category that measures academic progress more broadly.
6. Allow youth to access core services from the one-stop.
 - Include all youth 16 and older as part of the universal population eligible for core services at the one-stop centers.

continued on page 6

CLASP: The President has proposed allowing workers to divert some Social Security payments into private accounts. How would this potentially affect children?

Nancy: Unfortunately, in the absence of a specific plan, there's no way to know, especially since the survivor and disability components of Social Security have barely been acknowledged by policymakers or the media. But the President has now proposed a combination of private accounts and benefit cuts. Younger workers who become disabled or die would not be able to accumulate sufficient assets in a private account to provide the same level of insurance protection currently offered by Social Security. Given that Social Security's retirement, survivor, and disability benefits are all calculated using a single formula, it's hard to imagine a scenario under which retirement cuts would *not* result in cuts in survivor and disability benefits as well.

The only way to hold harmless children, survivors, and the disabled would be to radically alter the entire structure of Social Security. One possibility would be to separate out the retirement component, but that would raise serious questions about how to finance other benefits. And what would happen to political support for such benefits? Children can't vote, so it's not likely that the level of protection currently provided to them by Social Security would be preserved.

CLASP: Is there any way to quantify those protections?

Nancy: Social Security is the primary, if not the only, source of life and disability insurance for many American families, especially those headed by younger workers and those working for low wages. Nearly half of all private sector employees do not have life insurance provided by their employers, and nearly three quarters do not have long-term disability protection through their employers. Social Security provides a young worker with a young spouse and two young children the equivalent of a life insurance policy with a face value of about \$400,000 and a long-term disability insurance policy with a face value of \$350,000.

How likely is it that an individual family will end up needing these protections? According to the Social Security Administration, 3 out of 10 of today's 20-year olds will become disabled before retirement and 1 out of 7 will die. No one wants to think about it, but we're all at risk for unexpected tragedy; we're all vulnerable. And Social Security is currently the best protection that most parents have to offer their children. ■

■ For more information on this topic, see the National Center for Children in Poverty's Social Security resources at www.nccp.org.

CLASP has also written about the Administration's proposed two WIA reauthorization initiatives that would effectively eliminate requirements that existing employment and training funding streams be targeted for populations and purposes specified by Congress. The first proposal would require states to consolidate funding for the following programs: WIA adult, WIA dislocated worker, WIA youth, and the Employment Service. The second proposal—called WIA Plus—would give governors the option for unprecedented, broad waiver authority and allow for consolidation of a range of federal programs, including: Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation,

Trade Adjustment Assistance, Food Stamps Employment and Training, and Veterans Employment. In *Senate WIA Reauthorization Bill Should Not Adopt the Administration's Consolidation or WIA Plus Proposals*, Nisha Patel outlines why the Senate should reject both proposals in its WIA reauthorization bill. ■

■ To view *Recommendations for Senate WIA Reauthorization Legislation: Title I Provisions Affecting Disadvantaged Adults*, visit: www.clasp.org/publications/wia_recs_040705.pdf.

To view *Recommendations for Senate WIA Reauthorization: Title I Provisions Affecting Youth*, visit: www.clasp.org/publications/2005_wia_youth_comments.pdf.

preschool services for at-risk children within Title I-funded schools and school districts, at the discretion of the school or school district. Although states and localities have not spent large amounts of Title I funds on preschool services, because these funds are primarily intended to meet the needs of older children, expenditures for children from birth to age five have been allowable since the law's enactment in 1965.

Among the benefits of using Title I funds for preschool are:

- They can reach children who are at risk but are in families with income above the poverty level;
- They must be used to provide high-quality programs that meet the Head Start educational standards;
- They can be used for comprehensive services that are needed to prepare at-risk children for school success;
- They can go beyond school-based programs to serve children in other early childhood settings within the community;
- They can be used to screen children to determine whether they are at risk and to make services available; and
- They can be used for professional development for teachers working with young children at risk of school failure.

Although Title I funds can be used to support preschool programs at the discretion of local school districts and schools, it is unclear how available these funds will be in future years. NCLB, which reauthorized ESEA in 2001, has placed new accountability requirements and mandates on states and local school districts and created new requirements for some of the discretionary funds available to schools and school districts. NCLB increased the authorization level for Title I funding and the Administration and Congress have provided new funds—but the level of these funds has not matched the increased authorization levels. (ESEA funding must be appropriated annu-

ally, meaning that while the ESEA legislation authorizes a certain funding level, Congressional appropriators actually decide how much funding the program will get, and may set levels equal to, above, or below the level set by the authorizing legislation.) As a result, there may be fewer Title I funds available for “discretionary” purposes, such as funding preschool programs, and more competition for those funds.

This paper examines the availability of Title I funds for preschool programs from both a legal and practical perspective. First, it provides general background on ESEA and the changes that were made to it in the NCLB legislation. Second, it provides data on states' use of Title I funds for preschool. Third, it examines the U.S. Department of Education's statutes, regulations, and guidance on the use of Title I funds for preschool and raises some unanswered questions. Finally, it discusses how the implementation of NCLB affects the availability of Title I funding for preschool programs.

The paper ultimately concludes that Title I is a flexible and useful funding source for preschool, serving over 300,000 disadvantaged and at-risk children. However, a lack of data and research at the national and state level complicates our ability to understand the degree to which Title I has been used and the purposes for which it is used. Furthermore, given the evidence that preschool helps prepare children to succeed in school, states and districts could reap long-term benefits from serving younger children with these funds by eventually narrowing the achievement gap between disadvantaged and less disadvantaged students. However, insufficient overall funding for NCLB, coupled with its legislative mandates, could make it more difficult for states to prioritize the use of Title I funds for preschool services in the future. ■

■ To view the report, visit: www.clasp.org/publications/missed_opp.pdf. To receive a hard copy of the report, call CLASP at (202) 906-8000.

CLASP Audio Conferences in June and July

Fridays 12:30-1:30 pm (ET) with Host Jodie Levin-Epstein

JUNE 17, 2005

PAID SICK DAYS: DEVELOPMENTS IN THE U.S. AND LESSONS FROM ABROAD

About half of all U.S. workers have no paid sick days. The Healthy Families Act, which has been introduced in Congress, proposes a minimum of seven sick days for full-time workers and a pro rata share for part-time workers. Some state legislators are also introducing bills of a similar nature. Why are sick days important to both workers and businesses? What is likely to happen in Congress and state legislatures? Guests for this audio conference include: Senator Edward M. Kennedy, D-Massachusetts (participating if Senate schedule permits); Jodi Grant, Director of Work & Family Programs and Policy National Partnership for Women and Families; and Anne Paulsen, State Representative, Massachusetts State Legislature.

JULY 15, 2005

SURE START: LESSONS FOR THE U.S. FROM UNIVERSAL PRE-K IN THE U.K.

In the U.K., the government's Sure Start program aims to ensure delivery of free early education for all three- and four-year-olds; affordable, quality child care and after school activities; and health and family support to disadvantaged areas where it is most needed. It also works with parents on their employment goals and their goals for their children's education. What are the current findings about the program? How does financing work? What are the program, policy, and political lessons for the U.S.? Guests for this audio conference include: Naomi Eisenstadt, Director, Sure Start Unit, Department for Education and Skills, London and Mark Greenberg, Director of Policy, CLASP.

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