



Building the Third Wave of Collaborative Economic and Family Support Interventions for Low-Income Families

Presented by
Pamela Joshi, Ph.D.

National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics
July 13, 2009

Two Components of Anti-Poverty Policy



- The first emphasizes income and work supports by low-income heads of families including:
 - EITC expansion
 - Strong work requirements
 - Addressing barriers to work
 - Child care expansion
 - Child support collections
- The second expands to include family structure issues, including father engagement and healthy relationships and marriage.

Third Wave: Collaborative Approaches



- To build on these policy efforts in the context of tightening state budgets and rising unemployment, some have suggested a third wave of interventions that concentrate on collaborations between economic and family-oriented interventions.
- The idea is to capitalize on synergies between the two program approaches that can bolster both economic and family stability.
- Some early evidence suggests that a combined approach to serving families is promising (Lerman, Acs & Bir, 2007).

CHMI Offers Unique Examples of Collaborative Approaches



- There are several potential approaches to foster collaboration and better coordination of service delivery of economic and family support programming.
- We examine community approaches developed as part of the Community Healthy Marriage Initiative (CHMI).
- The goal of CHMI is to build a tailored community strategy to provide education about healthy relationships and marriages and child support and provide links to support services such as employment and training.
- These community strategies are implemented by grantees partnering with community and faith-based organizations, and state and local agencies that administer and provide services such as TANF, Child Support, WIC, and Head Start.

CHMI 1115 Waivers



- Beginning in 2002, the Office of Child Support Enforcement funded 16 demonstration projects through Section 1115 demonstration waiver authority. 14 agency projects are included in the RTI/Urban Institute evaluation.
 - Applications had to be submitted by the State IV-D agency and the State agency was responsible for administration of the demonstration. A contribution of matching funds by the state and/or local agencies was also required.
 - Projects fostered partnerships between state child support enforcement agencies, local government agencies and community and faith-based organizations to deliver healthy relationship and marriage education and child support services.
 - Some CHMI sites reached out to new partners from the criminal/ juvenile justice system, schools, the National Guard, hospitals and employers.
-

CHMI Demonstration Project Goals



- Project goals for 1115 sites include economic and family support to increase:
 - the financial well-being of children
 - the healthy relationships and marriage, and
 - parental responsibility.
- Approaches to CHMI activities are typically different from site to site, but share these common goals.

Types of CHMI Activities



- Mobilization of community coalitions.
- Direct services – voluntary healthy relationship and marriage education programs provided to individuals and couples.
- Assistance with child support enforcement services.
- Case management and needs assessments.
- Referrals to services – examples include employment and training, domestic violence, child care, financial literacy and IDA programs.
- Media campaigns and community outreach.

Building the Case for Collaboration



- CHMI demonstrations are relevant to fostering collaborative efforts in the work, child support and family structure areas by providing evidence about:
 - The potential needs of enrolled participants in relationship-building programs for other needed services to address employment and child support issues.
 - Comprehensive approaches and program strategies that address multiple needs.

Research Questions



- Specifically, we address four questions about CHMI participants and partnerships:
 - (1) To what extent are participants in healthy relationship and marriage education programs involved in the child support enforcement system and do they make payments?
 - (2) What are participants' employment and wages?
 - (3) What innovative practices have been developed by community partnerships to address economic and family outcomes?
 - (4) What are the lessons learned from these new collaborations between state and local agencies and community organizations in terms of delivering economic and family support services?

CHMI Implementation Evaluation



- In-person interviews with key personnel, partners and staff.
- Review of curriculum, materials and other resources.
- Data analysis of the management information systems (MIS) data to provide a portrait of participants.
- Data linked with IV-D records to understand what child support involvement participants have.
- Participant data was matched with the National Directory of New Hires to provide a picture of employment and wages.
- Reports have been completed for 5 sites. Report on 5 more sites is in process.

Implementation Study 5 CHMI Sites



Site	Scope	Service Delivery Approach
Grand Rapids, MI	2,500 individuals in low-income neighborhoods	Intermediary organization coordinates service delivery with community IOTs (Institutions of Trust)
Nampa, ID	Couples and single parents citywide that either have, or are expecting, a child	Train-the-Trainer of agency and individual facilitators
Chicago, IL	100 couples in 2 neighborhoods	Direct services at 2 WIC Food Distribution Centers
Boston, MA	600 individuals served by network partner agencies	Direct services at fatherhood program and social service agency partners
Jacksonville, FL	1,000 individuals citywide	Train-the-Trainer of agency and individual facilitators; provides a gateway to services

Child Support Involvement



Site	% match to CS
Grand Rapids, MI	44%
Nampa, ID	57%
Chicago, IL	64%
Boston, MA	27%
Jacksonville, FL	36%
Source: Matched participant data to IV-D records.	

- CHMI participants' involvement with child support enforcement varied widely.
- Only a small proportion of clients (<20%) had full payments of child support orders.
- The proportion of clients' with partial payments was higher, but a large proportion had not made payments (60-80%).
- In sum, while clients have different levels of involvement with child support, for those who have orders, there is a payment gap.
- Addressing ability to pay (income/employment) and communication about payments between NCP and CPs via healthy family relationship services could be beneficial to addressing multiple outcomes.

Employment Characteristics



Site	% employed in 2 year period
Grand Rapids, MI	82%
Nampa, ID	74%
Chicago, IL	86%
Jacksonville, FL	75%

Source: Matched participant data to the National Directory of New Hires

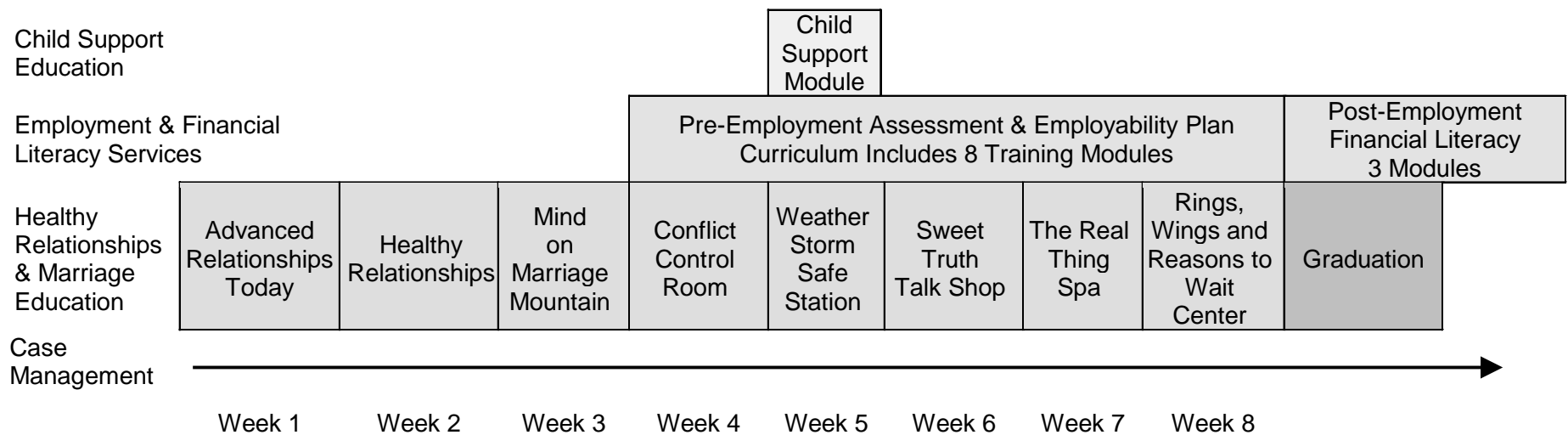
- Three quarters of CHMI participants were ever employed over two year period.
- However, a low proportion of clients worked in all quarters (<30%).
- A subgroup of clients had 3 or more jobs (20-30%) during the period.
- Participant wages were low (50-75% earned less than the minimum wage), but real wage growth across sites was higher than average for U.S. workers (9 to 32%).
- In sum, on average, CHMI programs are serving participants with intermittent labor force attachment and low wages.
- Targeting employment-related services to healthy relationship and marriage program participants is warranted.

CHMI Approaches Addressing Family and Economic Support



- Offer integrative services including healthy marriage and relationship (HMR) education, child support education and child support services, employment placement or retention/advancement services, and financial literacy education.
- Establish direct lines of communication between HMR service providers and state/local child support offices to provide child support education and help clients access child support enforcement services including order establishment and modifications.
- Train HMR staff to educate on and facilitate voluntary paternity establishment – staff members trained to be PEP reps (paternity establishment program reps).
- An example of integrated services is provided in the next slide – CHMI site in Chicago, IL.

Example: Integrative Economic and Family Support Program Components; Chicago, IL

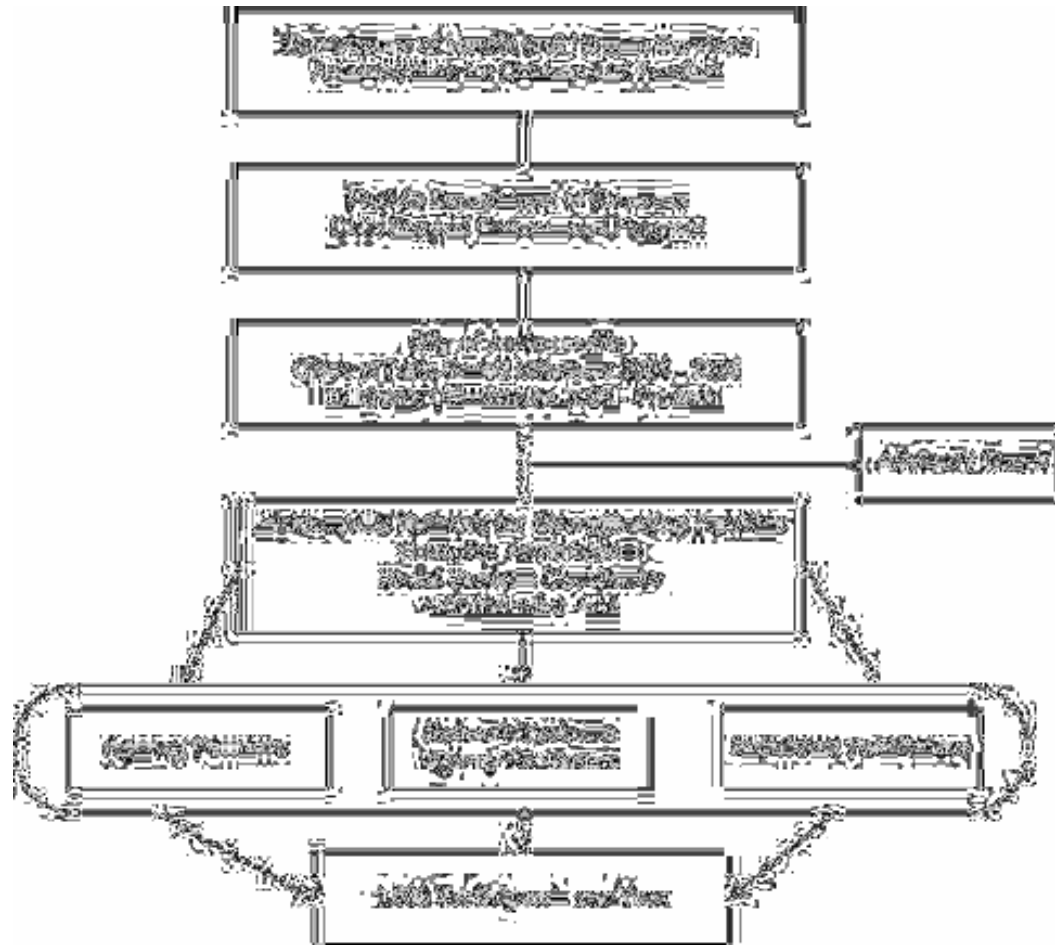


CHMI Approaches Addressing Family and Economic Support



- Umbrella organization coordinates multiple service approach to provide a gateway to HMR, employment, financial literacy and IDA providers.
- Train staff at social service agencies that provide employment and financial literacy classes as facilitators in HMR curricula to add a new menu of services for clients.
- Reach out to employers (private and public sectors) to provide HMR classes as part of lunch and learn seminars and/or EAP programs.
- An example of this multi-tiered approach is provided in the next slide – CHMI site in Jacksonville, FL.

Example: Coordinated Multi-Provider Effort Jacksonville, FL



CHMI Approaches Addressing Family and Economic Support



- Other CHMI approaches include:
- Coordinate with fatherhood programs to add HMR education component in addition to employment and child support enforcement services.
- Intermediary organization coordinates collaborative efforts to address client needs beyond HMR education classes.
- Intermediary organization facilitates the development of new partnerships to serve clientele outside of existing network and assist with data collection.

Lessons Learned To Inform Collaborative Economic and Family-Oriented Interventions



- Goal alignment: map overlap between target populations and objectives for the different service sectors to establish common economic and family support goals.
 - Service sectors that address economic and family support share the common goal of improving child well-being.
 - Addressing clients' needs in one service area can also help facilitate achieving goals in other service areas.
 - For example, citing research underscoring the positive relationship between better economic outcomes (e.g. wages) and family outcomes (and vice versa) can help build a mutual understanding of common goals.
 - Appealing to organizations' broader social service missions can help expand the focus beyond short-term goals.
 - This process can help identify and develop solutions to address conflicting goals.
-

Lessons Learned To Inform Collaborative Economic and Family-Oriented Interventions



- Champions at state/local agencies (e.g. Child Support, TANF, WIA): strong inter-agency buy in at State and local agencies facilitates start up, implementation, and sustainable collaborative service delivery.
 - Active involvement from agency partners (ranging from convening formal meetings to informal check ins) can help facilitate problem solving on behalf of clients and lead to service delivery efficiencies.
 - Provides motivation for the development of a broader approach to serve families' multiple needs rather than narrow focus on eligibility.
 - Encourages the identification of clients for cross-referrals.

Lessons Learned To Inform Collaborative Economic and Family-Oriented Interventions



- Develop partnerships between state/local agencies and connected local providers:
 - Builds trust
 - Provides access to key community supporters
 - Can help improve quality of service delivery.
- Invest in partnerships:
 - Budget time and resources to establish new partnerships
 - Provide professional networking opportunities
 - Offer cross training opportunities
 - Publicize partners' services and events.

Lessons Learned To Inform Collaborative Economic and Family-Oriented Interventions



- Build shared data collection capacity between partners:
 - Shared data systems across agencies/organizations can centralize needs assessments and intake information for clients participating in multiple service systems.
 - Helps identify overlapping needs of clients.
 - Can diminish the duplication of services.
 - Provides updated information as clients' needs and family situations change.
- Track inter-agency referrals:
 - Helps to know where to invest or target recruitment energy and resources.
 - Helps to translate referrals from IV-D and IV-A agencies and employment providers into participation in family support services and vice versa.

Lessons Learned To Inform Collaborative Economic and Family-Oriented Interventions



- Encourage economic and family support providers to think broadly about addressing clients' cross-over needs such as:
 - Parents who are part of multiple family systems economically support their children.
 - Labor force issues such as work schedules of partners and grandparents who may help single parents care for children.

- Program practices to address cross-over needs could include:
 - Assessing clients' work schedule preferences, partners and/or extended family members' work schedules, and child care coverage before placement in night shift work.
 - Include modules in HMR programs that cover communication issues that address difficult conversations at work such as the negotiation of wage increases or changes in work schedules.

More Information



- Full implementation reports for the 5 sites are available online at:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/strengthen/eval_com/index.html

- For more information, please contact:

- Pam Joshi, pjoshi@rti.org
- Anupa Bir, abir@rti.org
- Bob Lerman, blerman@urban.org
- Nancye Campbell, nancye.campbell@acf.hhs.gov