



Office of
Community Empowerment and Opportunity

GROW Study

Literature Review

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Introduction – Guaranteed Resources Optimize Wellbeing Study

The City of Philadelphia's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) has commissioned the Guaranteed Resources Optimize Wellbeing (GROW) pilot-study to understand how additional financial resources can improve the quality of life for Extended-TANF (E-TANF) beneficiaries in Philadelphia. E-TANF beneficiaries are mothers who have received TANF benefits for at least 60 months and experience circumstances that prevent them from securing and maintaining full time employment. All E-TANF beneficiaries in Philadelphia are enrolled in the Work Ready program administered by Jewish Employment and Vocational Services (JEVS).¹ Through their experience in the Work Ready program, E-TANF beneficiaries receive regular supports that include internship placements, one-on-one case management, financial barriers assessments, individualized service plans, and access to skills training and job search assistance from their Case Counselors.

The GROW study presents a unique opportunity to understand how enhanced financial support can improve the day to day lives and wellbeing of these women and their families. Over a 12-month period, 50 E-TANF recipients will be randomly selected to receive an additional \$500 per month, while a comparison group of 250 additional E-TANF recipients will receive an additional \$50 per month during the 12-month study period. The primary goals of the study are to understand how these additional resources affect E-TANF recipients social, emotional, and financial wellbeing over the year-long study.

This study is part of a broader proliferation of guaranteed income studies launching in cities across the country. However, this is the only study of its kind focused solely on E-TANF beneficiaries who are also participants in an established workforce development program. Under these conditions, findings from the GROW study will make a unique contribution to a growing evidence base on how guaranteed income programs can improve the lives of the most challenged individuals and families in our communities. This research brief situates the GROW study within the existing literature examining the conceptual and observable benefits guaranteed income programs can have for their participants and presents an overview of the GROW study itself.



Historical Experiences of Low-Income, Black Residents in the Public Service Sector Inform Ongoing Tensions Between Beneficiaries, Service Providers and Society

In Philadelphia, E-TANF beneficiaries are overwhelmingly women with children (98%), and the vast majority of these women are Black (82%) or Hispanic (10%). Their ability to continually receive their TANF benefits depends on maintaining their income eligibility. To be eligible for cash assistance through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services' TANF program, an individual's monthly income must be below \$205 for a single person, \$316 for two people, and \$403 for a family of three. Pennsylvania limits savings to \$250 for an individual and \$1,000 for more than one person. Eligibility is verified twice a year, and during regular (weekly) check-ins with their JEVS case counselors.

These check-ins provide an opportunity for JEVS Case Counselors to provide ongoing case-management support, assist with searches for employment, provide referrals to workforce development opportunities through the Work Ready program or other available resources. At the same time, this high-touch case management approach for E-TANF recipients is quite invasive to their private lives and perpetuates patterns of surveillance of people who benefit from public assistance programs that can be traced back to the 1996 Welfare Reform (Hennigan and Purser 2021; Hamilton 2020; Hughes 2018; Siliunas et al. 2018).

At the broadest level, the historical arc of Black American's experience with social support services has been characterized first by exclusion to then inclusion with strict conditions and surveillance. In United States' history, the provision of social welfare has long been tied to a prevailing sense of those members of society perceived as objects of moral concern, and therefore deserving of state assistance – and ideas about who is and who is not an object of moral concern for the state have evolved over time (Katz 1996, Trattner 1999, Schiele 2000). Early assessments of deservingness in the United States were heavily influenced by the English Poor Laws, which created a moral standard for US colonies, local governments, state governments, and charities allowed to provide respite for the neediest members of their communities in poorhouses – a practice that prevailed from the time of English colonization and into the 19th century (Schiele 2000; Trattner 1999; Katz 1996).

The concept that only families that meet specific criteria are deserving of government support, specifically cash assistance, was initiated during colonial times. The idea that those in need must be deserving of support from the state has long been inscribed into many government programs and policies, often to the exclusion of non-white members of American society. In the early 1900s, white middle-class women advocated for financial assistance to decrease poverty for widowed mothers and their children who they viewed as deserving. In this era, white women staying at home to raise their children was viewed as good dependency (Frazer and Gordon 1994; Maskovsky and Piven 2019). Local and state governments funded and managed the Mothers' pension programs which often excluded children of Black mothers regardless of whether the mother was widowed or destitute (Floyd et al. 2021).



New Deal Policies Initiated Formal Structures of Exclusion & Segmented Access to Social Supports

During the Great Depression, many individuals found themselves having to rely on support from state and local governments and charities to meet their basic needs. As Depression-era need surpassed the capacity of local and state governments and charities, the Federal government was compelled to act to fill the gap. In 1935, the federal government assumed major responsibility for the welfare of children and other dependent people. President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act which established a federal retirement program, unemployment insurance, and a national welfare system. However, the supports provided were not provided equitably to all Americans, with many Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native Americans excluded from New Deal benefit programs.

New Deal policies created to support the poor and elderly in society formally codified a two-tier system of access to support that has continuously exacerbated inequities between the way different groups in American society access the social safety net supports provided by the government. The privileged tier consists of universal, higher, federally administered benefits viewed as rights or earned benefits, such as contributory old age pensions for individuals and social groups that tend to be financially secure and deemed deserving. The poor, single mothers and people of color are over-represented in the other tier, which consists of means and morals tests often administered by state or local entities providing fewer benefits perceived as charity to the undeserving (Gordon and Frazer 1994).

The creation of Aid to Dependent Children as part of the 1935 Social Security Act initiated the federal government's role in providing cash assistance to children in poverty. But like other New Deal relief and work programs, ADC excluded many African Americans. Indeed, government officials designed unemployment insurance and retirement insurance primarily to support white female breadwinners (Floyd et al. 2021).

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (the GI Bill) enacted during the Roosevelt administration provided housing, jobs and education to primarily white veterans. Although benefits were officially open to all veterans, African Americans were denied access to most of them. The US Employment Service responsible for finding good jobs for veterans, openly discriminated against Black veterans by restricting them to menial jobs. The use of racial covenants enforced by the Federal Housing Association (FHA) precluded Black veterans from becoming homeowners. Black vets were excluded from purchasing homes in the suburbs and the FHA would not underwrite mortgages in the neighborhoods where African Americans were allowed to live. The exclusion of Black families from growing suburbs and subsidized homeownership for white families initiated a half century of development patterns that have left many American cities deeply segregated along racial lines while creating the massive wealth gaps that still persist between white and Black families and communities (Brodkin 2018; Massey and Denton 1993; Jackson 1985).



When Black citizens could access public benefits, their access was heavily conditioned by paternalistic practices and surveillance. In some states, “Suitable home” laws that were rhetorically meant to protect children from parental neglect and abuse were used to deem the homes of unmarried Black women as unsuitable and deny them aid based on a determination of a family’s fitness for parenting (Floyd et al. 2021). In addition, punitive measures, such as the “man in the house” rule were employed to constrain Black mothers and to validate their being labeled as undeserving for receipt of public assistance. In the 1960s, “man in the house” rules enforced social norms about who was morally deserving of welfare by preventing males from residing with mothers and children who received assistance. “Man in the house” rules were enforced through highly invasive home inspections, forcing many families to choose between maintaining their eligibility for welfare assistance or keeping their families intact (Goldsmith 1968).

Great Society Welfare Reforms Expand Access to Previously Excluded Groups, with Conditions

During the 1960s and 1970s, the political work of Black activists, urban riots, and the increased number of Black families receiving AFDC raised the nation’s consciousness regarding poverty in the Black community. Recipients of AFDC viewed the welfare policies, the enforcement of rigid eligibility criteria, and the unfair practices of the late 1950s and 1960s as extremely harsh and punitive. Poor Black mothers receiving AFDC expressed their frustrations and their need for autonomy and self-determination and assumed leadership roles in an emerging welfare rights movement. The women demanded less government intrusion into their lives and greater autonomy as women and mothers.

They opposed government imposition of societal norms on their personal relations and sexual and reproduction choices. They demanded higher benefits and opposed the arbitrary power of caseworkers. In the 1960s federal administrators took action to limit state flexibility over AFDC’s eligibility to eliminate the practices of states denying access to Black families and families with unmarried mothers (Floyd et al.2021, Nadasen 2002; 2007).

Welfare reforms passed during the Civil Rights era were some of the first pieces of legislation in the United States that removed exclusionary criteria from eligibility for public assistance programs. Coming out of this era the number of individuals and families receiving public benefits expanded to the highest levels to that time. The National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) helped garner support for issues that led to two legal rulings, King v. Smith and Goldberg v. Kelly that effectively ended the arbitrary eligibility policies and processes and prevented states from adding work or behavioral requirements or eligibility requirements that were more restrictive than the federal requirements (Floyd et al. 2021; Nadasen 2007).



Expanded Welfare Rolls Create Federal and State Backlash

By the 1980s the gains of the civil and welfare rights movement combined with the increasing number of single Black women eligible for welfare benefits generated a backlash against the AFDC program and its participants. To quell the expanding welfare rolls and reduce public expenditures, President Reagan led a rhetorical assault on Black welfare recipients to sway public opinion in support of reigning in social welfare programs and government spending. Reagan portrayed social welfare recipients as poor, lazy, urban Black people frivolously living on public dollars. His characterization of poor Black women as “welfare queens” stigmatized a specific racial group and buttressed a humiliation regime which Maskovsky and Piven describe as the price for participation in social entitlement programs (Maskovsky and Piven 2020; Gans 1995; Piven and Cloward 1993).

Reagan garnered public support for government retrenchment from the political and social gains achieved by the civil and welfare rights movements. Reagan’s strategy was to limit government spending on social programs which could be achieved, in part, by the control, marginalization and exclusion of poor African Americans from receiving welfare benefits. Reagan’s political rhetoric was echoed by some political and social scientists who perpetuated a racialized characterization of the poor that helped cement the public’s negative perception of African Americans and justify government retrenchment regarding social programs and spending. Thus, in response to expanding welfare rolls and expenditures, President Ronald Reagan implemented retrenchment policies that sought to reign in social welfare programs while villainizing those individuals and families receiving public assistance (Murray 1984).

Welfare Reform Reinforces a Culture of Surveillance for Welfare Beneficiaries

In 1996, President Bill Clinton advocated for welfare reform, resulting in the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) which returned most of the control of welfare back to state governments. The PRWORA Act ended the federal guarantee of assistance for single parent families with children and replaced the entitlement program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. Work requirements were a key component of the legislation, and sanctions for noncompliance were an important part of the policy design (Wu et al 2006).

Under the guise of ensuring eligibility, surveillance was undertaken as a fraud prevention and punitive method. TANF authorized state governments to investigate the personal and sexual lives of women by requiring single mothers to identify their children’s biological fathers and curtailing TANF payments to families when a woman gave birth to a child while on the TANF program (Neubeck and Cazenave 2001).



Pervasive intrusion into the lives of the poor was evident throughout the 1990s when legislators infused their moral judgement into social policy, advocating for fertility as a major factor in determining a woman's need for government assistance. Mothers receiving aid from Aid to Families Dependent Children (AFDC) were required to meet sterilization requirements to qualify for benefits (Hamilton 2020; Maxwell 2004; Nathan et al. 2001). To demonstrate their deservingness, poor Black women were also subjected to a pejorative discourse espousing individual responsibility and personal reformation (Siliunas et al. 2018). As with previous welfare policies, the PRWOR Act placed sexist and racist expectations on low-income women, further stigmatizing them as they struggled to provide for their families (Hamilton 2020). Proposals to curtail Black and other AFDC mothers' reproduction shifted from a focus on sterilization to a focus on birth control and contraceptives with some legislators taking coercive measures to ensure compliance (Meyer et al. 2022).

An entire literature of ethnographic studies has repeatedly documented pervasive government surveillance from the welfare recipient's perspective. Two prevailing sentiments emerge time and again:

- Low-income American mothers live every day with the advanced surveillance capacity of the modern welfare state. In their pursuit of food, healthcare, and shelter for their families, they are watched, analyzed, assessed, monitored, checked, and reevaluated in an ongoing process involving supercomputers, caseworkers, fraud control agencies, grocers, and neighbors.(Gilliom 2001).
- The documentation of a daily life is a form of state surveillance to which welfare recipients submit but also a form of surveillance when they resist, sometimes to their detriment. It was this routine documentation that <welfare beneficiaries> described as invasive and oppressive. (Gustafson 2011).

To meet requirements to receive government funded resources from nonprofits, African American women endured pervasive intrusions into their privacy, self-protection, identity, and self-mastery (Siliunas 2018), as they experience welfare surveillance as an effort to uncover fraud and to punish them. These dynamics shaped their perceptions of the public-private safety net and influenced their view of themselves and their community (Hughes 2019; Roberts 2005).

The 1960s federal cash assistance programs for poor families slowly transformed from a limited federal entitlement program to a work-conditioned safety net that culminated in the 1996 welfare reform (Bertram 2011). Requiring participation in mandatory work programs as a prerequisite to receive benefits is one of TANF's most racially driven policies, that is equated to enslavement and the coercive labor practices that has continued for decades (Floyd et al. 2021). TANF's humiliating, coercive requirements were designed to exclude people due to past behavior rather than current need. These policies conveyed the narrative that parents applying for assistance are irresponsible, criminal, or undeserving of public assistance (Maskovsky and Piven 2020).



Within social policy circles race continues to be an overarching narrative that implicitly, and explicitly, structures welfare debates, as the majority of social welfare policies have observable, negative effects on African Americans, especially women. Assessment of deservingness and practices of exclusion shaped the initial designs of welfare programs and continue to sustain disparities as a modern form of inequality. This is reaffirmed by the racist and sexist narratives that perpetuate conversations regarding the state of welfare policy in the United States today. In response to a legacy of social welfare policies and practices that have systematically underserved, stigmatized and humiliated Black families, a number of cities have begun to revisit the idea of Universal Basic Income (UBI) or Guaranteed Income (GI) programs as a way to mitigate the day-to-day hardships of poverty without stigmatizing or harming beneficiaries.

Guaranteed Income Programs Potentially Disrupt Prevailing Paradigms of Public Assistance for Low Income Individuals and Families

The expansion of guaranteed income programs across the United States points to a potential opportunity to disrupt the prevailing social safety net structures established by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996. As noted in the previous section, the primary goals of Welfare Reform included the reduction of the number of people receiving state benefits, the reduction of the amount of time any individual could receive benefits, and an explicit emphasis that beneficiaries must maintain some form of employment activity to maintain their eligibility to receive these benefits. The common thread that runs through Welfare Reform programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Permanent Supportive Housing and Housing Vouchers, includes some measure of persistent surveillance of beneficiaries to ensure they continuously satisfy eligibility criteria to access these supports.

The idea that a Universal Basic Income (UBI) could substantially reduce the need for a panoply of existing social service programs is grounded in the normative belief that a society should guarantee a minimum level of wellbeing and autonomy for members of that society. A UBI is fundamentally premised on the notion that all members of society should have adequate resources to meet their basic needs. The logic is relatively straight forward. First – in a complex society with inherent inequality, redistribution from the most well-off to the poor is in the interests of society overall. Second – the most efficient and dignified means of redistribution is through direct cash payments. And third – these cash transfers should be unconditional and provided to all members of society (Fleishcer and Hemel 2020).²

²There are variety of ways that a UBI can be funded, and a discussion of the minutia of the different options is beyond the scope of this paper. At a very high level a UBI would need to be funded by increased taxes on wealthy individual's earned and unearned incomes, and that a UBI would essentially be 'taxed back' for all members of society whose annual incomes exceed some agreed upon threshold.



A UBI provides a straight-forward response to poverty reduction and is enjoying renewed support across the ideological spectrum, reflected in the pilot studies ramping up in dozens of cities across the country.³ From a social welfare perspective, a UBI directly responds to vast disparities between the marginal utility gains for poor residents who receive the UBI compared to the marginal utility losses to wealthy citizens whose additional taxes would necessarily pay for a portion of the program. Very basically, an additional \$1,000/month for a poor individual makes a much greater difference in their day-to-day life than a \$1,000/reduction in income would for a rich individual. In this way, cash transfers from rich to poor increase the overall welfare of society since the gains to poor residents are so much greater than the losses experienced by the well-to-do (Fleishcher and Hemel 2020; Bidadanure 2019).

From a libertarian perspective, an unconditional UBI with direct cash transfers is a freedom maximizing response to the adverse side effects of advanced capitalism. From this perspective, advanced capitalism inevitably leads to inequalities which may compel low-income individuals to pursue socially deviant behaviors to meet their basic needs. If free-market capitalism is the preferred economic system and it inevitably leads some members of society into a situation where they cannot meet their basic needs without violating others' property rights, within this system some additional support is therefore required. The UBI provides a way to offset this adverse consequence while maximizing the autonomy and dignity of poor members of society (Fleishcher and Hemel 2020; Bidadanure 2019).

From a racial equity perspective, a UBI presents an opportunity to mitigate the impact of generations of discriminatory practices in the public and private sectors that have perpetuated generations of cyclical poverty and disinvestment among BIPOC individuals, families and their communities. A UBI does not represent a step toward reparations for past harms inflicted on BIPOC individuals and their communities, but it would provide a baseline level of respect and security for individuals' whose life experiences have been adversely informed by systemic racism throughout American history (Bidadanure 2019).

From a feminist perspective, a UBI is a potentially liberatory resource of women and others engaged in uncompensated domestic labor and other care-intensive activities. A UBI provides these individuals with the dignity and autonomy of their own resources. Without having to rely on the generosity of a spouse, partner, or some other responsible party the UBI provides these individuals with an enhanced ability to make their own financial decisions, as well as enhanced opportunities to leave unsafe or unhealthy living environments they may be forced to endure without access to their own resources (Bidadanure 2019).

³<https://www.mayorsforagi.org/>



In many ways, a UBI is a freedom enhancing approach to poverty alleviation as well as a policy response to uncompensated labor of those who care for others in society. Unlike existing social welfare programs that require beneficiaries to work, provide regular updates on their activities, living conditions, and eligibility to receive benefits, a UBI provides direct cash assistance to individuals who can use this money however they choose. While a UBI can likely not replace existing social welfare structures, it can make substantial reductions in society-wide poverty levels, and potentially provide an antidote for some of the most pernicious effects the current system exerts on individuals and families who rely on public assistance.

Prior Studies of Guaranteed Income Programs Point to Promising Outcomes for Beneficiaries

An existing body of literature has examined the effects on a range of narrowly focused UBI programs that have been implemented domestically and internationally. In addition, a nascent literature focused on the rapidly expanding number of UBI pilot programs being implemented in the United States is beginning to document the potential benefits that can accrue to low-income individuals and families who receive guaranteed income support. Prior studies, and proposed studies on the horizon (including the present study) are designed to understand how guaranteed income programs benefit individuals and families across a range of outcomes, including labor force attachment, physical and mental health, education (for adults and children), consumer spending behavior, and financial wellbeing.

Labor Force Attachment of Guaranteed Income Programs Participants

Critics of UBI programs often argue that a UBI would be expected to lead to lower labor supply, at least in the short run (Daruich and Fernandez 2021). However, a UBI program could also exert positive near and long-term influences on wages: wages could increase for those who remain working (if there is a reduction in labor supply); individuals could make increased investments in human capital (i.e. educational attainment or job training); and additional income to care for children would lead to positive effects on child health and development, which would translate into improved human capital accumulation and eventually higher wages. While UBI program impacts may depress labor market participation in the near term, the longer-term impacts imply positive outcomes for the overall labor supply (Hoynes and Rothstein 2019).

A limited number of studies have identified a mixed set of impacts on labor force participation for UBI beneficiaries – and these effects can vary based on the UBI program design and for different populations. Unsurprisingly, these impacts vary for men and women, for parents and non-parents, younger and older adults. A series of studies of negative income tax (NIT) programs examined effects on male household heads, second earners, female household heads, and young people. These studies found small reductions in hours worked for male heads of households, which primarily involved longer spells between jobs. Absolute reductions for second earners and female heads of households were small, but larger as a



percentage due to lower baseline hours. There is evidence to suggest that second earners and single parents spent more time in the home, and that the presence of preschool children in the home was a stronger predictor of hours worked for male heads of households than receiving the NIT. The NIT studies also identified reductions in adolescent employment for those receiving NIT – time that tended to be redirected to school-work. Additional studies have identified either very small, or non-observable, effects on male employment. Female employment impacts were less consistent across all the studies reviewed, suggesting that female labor market participation is more influenced by contextual factors (Gibson et Al. 2018).

A review of unconditional cash transfer payment programs in the United States (Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend) and Canada (Eastern Band of Cherokees Casino Dividend) suggests either no effect on labor market supply or a slight reduction in work and earnings. Evidence from these programs does not suggest that average workers will drop out of the labor force when provided with unconditional cash, even when the transfer is large (Marinescu 2017).

A recent study identified labor-force participation gains for UBI recipients compared to a similar population of non-beneficiaries. At the outset of the study in February 2019, 28% of UBI recipients had full-time employment, and one year later, 40% of recipients were employed full-time. Control group participants only experienced a 5% increase in full-time employment over the same one-year period - 32% to 37%. Shifts in employment patterns were tied to removing material barriers to full-time employment and removing time and capacity limits created by scarcity and precarity. The alleviation of constant financial strain also generated increased capacity for goal-setting and risk-taking, both of which were previously limited (West et Al. 2021).

Despite the variation in changes in individuals' labor force attachment under a UBI framework, the existing evidence suggests that where individuals reduced their labor market activity, the time gained was channeled into other productive activities such as education or care for children or other family members. (Gibson et al. 2017; Marinescu 2017). Findings from these studies suggest that feared substitution effects on short-run labor supply tend to be small or moderate (i.e., upon receiving transfers a small number of people work less) and income effects are similarly small. At the same time, there is also clear evidence that additional family resources improve beneficiaries' mental health, parenting, as well as children's outcomes related to health and school achievement (Akee et al. 2010; Hoynes and Rothstein 2019; Marinescu 2017; Wolfe et al. 2012).

Physical and Mental Health Benefits for Guaranteed Income Programs Participants

Another benefit animating the increased attention for UBI programs in recent years is the potential for these programs to improve the mental and physical health of UBI recipients and their family members. The idea is that stability provided by regular financial support from a UBI would mitigate stress and anxiety associated with the uncertainty of income fluctuations from month to month for individuals and families. Improved financial stability could then lead to improvements in participants' mental health. Moreover, additional income every month could also provide UBI participants with resources necessary to access health care they may have previously not accessed due to financial restraints. The existing literature points to positive signs for the prospect that UBI participants can be expected to realize physical and mental health improvements as a result of their access to stabilized income.

A historical study of UBI participants' healthcare utilization from 1974 to 1979 identified substantial improvements for treatment group participants compared to those in a comparison group. Treatment group participants entered the 1970s with a significantly higher rate of hospitalization than the comparison group, but this gap narrowed over the study period until, by the end of the period, there was no significant difference between individuals in the treatment and control groups. Treatment group participants experienced an 8.5 percent decrease in hospitalizations compared to the control group, especially for mental health, accidents, and injuries (Forget 2011).

An impact study of a UBI program tied to casino revenues for Native Americans suggests the increase in income from casino gaming was tied to observable improvements in physical health, mental health, and health-related behaviors. The largest improvements were observed for reductions in UBI beneficiaries smoking rates and anxiety levels. The income produced by casino gaming also reduced UBI beneficiaries' frequency of heavy drinking, obesity, hypertension, and diabetes rates (Wolfe et al. 2012).

Multiple studies have found modest to strong positive effects on a range of health outcomes, including reductions in low birthweight, improvements to adult and child mental health, increased access of healthcare services, and improved diet. These improvements tend to be most consistently observed among the most disadvantaged or at-risk groups participating in UBI programs. Study authors suggest improved parenting and reductions in study participants' financial strain as probable mechanisms underlying these improvements (Gibson et al. 2018).



Another income intervention designed to move families out of poverty had substantial effects on some pediatric psychiatric disorders. Study findings identified causal pathways between poverty and reductions in children's behavioral misconduct as well as reductions in incidences of oppositional defiance. In adolescence, the additional income was linked to reduced behavioral misconduct through a causal pathway associated with improved parental engagement and supervision. In later studies, the same authors found positive associations between receipt of a casino dividend and children's incidences of psychiatric disorders and delinquency as adults, although these effects were most consistently observed for the youngest study participants (Costello et al. 2003; Costello et al. 2010).

Additional studies have identified modest to strong positive effects on a range of health outcomes, including adult and child mental health, service use, and diet. Following the initial year of the guaranteed income experiment in Stockton, CA, treatment group participants reported significantly improved levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms than the control group. In addition, after the first year receiving the guaranteed income, the treatment group reported significantly better emotional health, energy levels, emotional wellbeing, and pain when compared to the control group. Similar to other studies, improved parenting quality and reduced financial strain were among the suggested mechanisms underlying some of these improvements; and benefits to health and social outcomes tend to be stronger among the most disadvantaged or at-risk groups (West et al. 2021; Gibson et al. 2018; Marinescu 2017).

Financial Wellbeing Benefits for Guaranteed Income Programs Participant

One of the primary financial outcomes that researchers examine through previous guaranteed income studies, or financial studies of very low-income populations, is financial volatility – or the amount of month-to-month variation in individuals' available cash resources. Findings from the US Financial Diaries study suggest that income volatility is a primary driver of spells in and out of poverty for middle and lower-income families (Morduch and Siwicki 2017; Hannagan and Morduch 2015).

In addition, recently released findings from the SEED guaranteed income study in Stockton, CA suggest that this approach can help stabilize monthly fluctuations that mitigate the adverse effects of income volatility. One year into the program, the treatment group demonstrated less month-over-month income volatility than those in the control group with the control group experiencing nearly 1.5x more income volatility than the treatment group. In addition, at the start of the program only 25% of treatment and control participants indicated that they would pay for an unexpected expense with cash or a cash equivalent. After a year of the study, 52% of treatment group participants indicated they would use cash or a cash equivalent for an unexpected expense, compared to 28% of control group participants (West et al. 2021).



Moreover, income stability, rather than day-to-day spending patterns, has been identified as a mediating pathway through which a number of the reviewed studies have tied UBI and guaranteed income programs to positive outcomes associated with individuals' mental and emotional wellbeing, as well as contributing to improved parenting and relationships with other household residents. The first-year findings from the SEED study in Stockton, CA point to promising connections between guaranteed income and financial stability, and mental and physical health improvement. Using a mixed methods research design provides the opportunity to detect quantitative effects, and also to understand how guaranteed income allows study participants to live their lives with a greater degree of autonomy and agency (West et al. 2021).

Guaranteed Resources Optimize Wellbeing (GROW) Study Design

The City's GROW study is designed to understand how additional cash resources can support and enhance the wellbeing of Extended TANF (E-TANF) beneficiaries in Philadelphia. E-TANF beneficiaries are individuals who have received TANF benefits for at least 60 months and face some set of conditions that prevent them from securing and maintaining full time employment. All E-TANF beneficiaries in Philadelphia are enrolled in the Work Ready program administered by JEVS. Through their experience in the Work Ready program E-TANF beneficiaries receive an array of workforce development supports designed to build participants financial skills, job-readiness skills, and identify job placement opportunities.

Study participants will be invited to participate in the study through a direct communication from JEVS. Once individuals agree to participate in the study, they will be placed into a lottery to be included in a 'treatment group,' which will receive 12 monthly payments of \$500 during the study or a 'control group', which will receive 12 monthly payments of \$50 during the study. Once study participants are assigned to the treatment and control groups the study team will conduct an initial orientation with study participants to provide them with a more in-depth overview of the study itself, goals of the study, and what their participation means for them.

Over the course of the study, all treatment and control group participants will complete up to four surveys designed to understand study participants social, emotional, and financial wellbeing as well as information about their living situations and day-to-day financial decision making. These surveys will be administered prior to the initial payments are made to participants; after two months of payments; after eight months of payments; and then two months after the final payment is made.



All 50 study-group participants, and 20 control-group participants will participate in up to 3 in-depth interviews that will be conducted to better understand their life histories, their aspirations for how the additional income will impact their lives, and ultimately to understand what difference these additional resources make on their day-to-day lives. The study team will conduct focus groups with JEVS Case Counselors to get their perspectives on how additional resources provided by the GROW Study impacted their clients over the study period. Additionally, a round of focus groups will be conducted with key stakeholders in the public and private sector whose work intersects with the E-TANF program.

Findings from the GROW Study will be disseminated in partnership with the City's Center for Empowerment and Opportunity and contribute to the increasing knowledge base about the promise the guaranteed income programs have for improving the wellbeing of individuals and families who need these supports.



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