

Citation	Groups Studied	Research Question	Research Approach	Data Source	Validity	Reliability	Findings
Adams, G., Snyder, K., & Sandfordt, J. R. (2002). <i>Getting and retaining child care assistance: How policy and practice influence parents' experiences</i> (Occasional Paper No. 55). Washington, DC: Urban Institute.	Women who were currently receiving subsidies and who participated in focus groups conducted between June 1999 and March 2000 in 17 sites located in 12 states.	What factors related to the ways that child care subsidies are administered (beyond funding and eligibility issues) may affect parents' use of subsidies?	The authors interviewed child care experts and child care administrators in 17 communities and 12 states. In most of the communities, they conducted one focus group with non-TANF parents using subsidies, one focus group with TANF parents using subsidies, and one focus group with caseworkers. The authors caution that the findings are not necessarily representative of the experiences of the parents and caseworkers in these states.	Key informant and focus group data from 17 sites and 12 states collected by the researchers. This study was part of the case study component of the Assessing the New Federalism project.	[No information provided.]	[No information provided.]	Administrative issues may influence who gets subsidies and who does not. Access and retention can be particularly complex for some parents, including parents who experience many changes in short periods of time, parents who face other challenges, such as language or transportation barriers, and parents working their way off TANF. Despite the fact that TANF parents were more likely to know that subsidies existed than low-income working families not on TANF, respondents in many sites noted that transitional parents were not always told about their ability to get child care subsidies, what they had to do to get it, and/or within what time frame to apply.
Blau, D., & Tekin, E. (2001). <i>The determinants and consequences of child care subsidies for single mothers</i> (Discussion Paper No. 383). Bonn, Germany: Institute for the Study of Labor.	Single mothers with children under age 13 in 1997.	How do household characteristics and state subsidy rules and expenditures affect the likelihood of getting a subsidy? How does subsidy receipt affect employment and welfare participation?	The NSAF is one of the few nationally representative surveys that includes information about subsidy receipt. Using these data, the authors conducted multivariate analysis to determine factors associated with the receipt of a subsidy. They then modeled the relationship between subsidies and employment and cash assistance.	The 1997 National Survey of America's Families (NSAF).	[No information provided.]	[No information provided.]	Mothers who complete high school are more likely to receive a subsidy than are high school dropouts. Mothers with only young children (under age 5) are less likely than mothers with both young and older children (ages 6-12) to use subsidies. Probability of subsidy receipt decreased with a mother's age until age 43. A black mother was more likely to receive subsidies than were mothers who were white or other races. Hispanic mothers were less likely to receive subsidies than non-Hispanic mothers. Women who had current or previous welfare participation were more likely to receive subsidies.
Burstein, N., Layzer, J. I., Cahill, K., Werner, A., & McGary, N. (forthcoming). <i>National study of child care for low-income families: Patterns of child care use among low-income families</i> . Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates.	Families with children under age 13 who in 1990 had employed mothers earning less than 200% of the federal poverty level. The community survey was conducted in 1999 and 2000.	What are the considerations that influence parents' decisions about non-parental care? How does the presence or absence of a child care subsidy affect parents' employment decisions?	The authors conducted descriptive and multivariate analysis to understand the child care decision-making process for low-income families. Part of the research involved identifying the factors that led families to apply for (and receive) a subsidy.	Survey data collected by the researchers from 2,500 low-income families, using a sample of low-income counties representative of all low-income families living in communities with child poverty rates above 14%, or 90% of poor children in the United States.	[No information provided.]	[No information provided.]	Families in which the youngest child is an infant or school-age are less likely to have applied for a subsidy. Blacks are substantially more likely to apply for a subsidy. Immigrants are less likely to apply for a subsidy. Couple-headed households are less likely to apply for a subsidy. Families using center care are more likely than those using nonrelative family child care to apply for a subsidy. Families using relative care in the child's home are less likely to apply for a subsidy. Recent TANF recipients are much more likely than other families to apply by amounts that vary by chosen mode of care. Subsidy application is more common in the Midwest than the Northeast.

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<p>Danziger, S. K., Ananat, E. O., &amp; Browning, K. G. (2003). <i>Childcare subsidies and the transition from welfare to work</i> (National Poverty Center Working Paper Series No. 03-11). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, National Poverty Center.</p>	<p>Participants were subsidy-eligible women who received welfare in an urban Michigan county in February 1997.</p>	<p>Do demographic characteristics and other factors that may affect work differ by child care use and subsidy receipt?</p>	<p>Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the women in fall 1997, 1998, and 1999. Child care questions were asked in Wave 3. The authors used regression analysis to examine work-related outcomes that could be affected by the availability and affordability of care. One set of comparisons was between families who used child care subsidies and families who used unsubsidized child care.</p>	<p>Data were from the first three waves of the Women's Employment Study (WES), a survey of welfare recipients in an urban Michigan county. A simple random sample was selected from eligible women who received welfare in the county in February 1997. For the present paper, a sub-sample of 529 subsidy-eligible families was used. Subsidy receipt data is self-reported.</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>Compared to families using unsubsidized care, families using subsidies were more often African American, and those who did not were more likely to be white. However, African Americans in the study had a lower average income, so financial need may have driven the difference. Those who received a subsidy were less often married or cohabiting and had the highest average number of children and preschoolers relative to those using unsubsidized care or no care.</p>
<p>Huston, A. C., Chang, Y. E., &amp; Gennetian, L. (2002). <i>Family and individual predictors of child care use by low-income families in different policy contexts</i> (The Next Generation Working Paper Series No. 9). New York: MDRC.</p>	<p>Women who participated in three welfare reform initiatives that began in the 1990s (New Chance, Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), and New Hope). At the point the women participated in the initiatives, their children included in the study were between birth and age 9, depending upon the initiative.</p>	<p>What factors predict the amount of child care used, child care as a barrier to employment, and use of public subsidies? What effects do policies have on the relationship between these predictors and outcomes?</p>	<p>The original studies were designed to evaluate the effects of these three initiatives on a range of parent and child outcomes. The authors used regression analysis for each participant and control group to identify relationships between the predictors of child care use (e.g., family structure, human capital) and outcomes (i.e., use of child care, barriers to employment, and use of subsidies). They then combined program and control groups to test whether relationships between predictors and outcomes varied by policy context. Because New Chance did not collect information on subsidy use, the authors limited analysis about subsidy use to New Hope and MFIP.</p>	<p>Data collected from the three welfare reform experiments to answer the questions about predictors of child care and barriers to employment. Data from only New Hope and MFIP were used to answer questions about subsidies.</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>In both New Hope and MFIP, women used more subsidies when they had younger children or had larger families. In MFIP, women used more subsidies when they had younger children, but not when they had more children. In the program groups for both MFIP and New Hope, people with low prior earnings were more likely to receive subsidies. Those families in the MFIP program group (i.e., who received the welfare reform initiative) had less subsidy use than the parents in the control group. In the MFIP control group, longer-term welfare users were more likely to receive subsidies, perhaps because they were most likely to qualify for assistance. Other factors that predicted less subsidy use in MFIP included believing in the priority of work over family, having barriers to work, and having high mastery scores. In New Hope, there were few relationships between personal or social characteristics to child care subsidy use. While the findings sometimes varied by the program, few of the relationships were strong even when they were statistically significant.</p>

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<p>Knox, V. W., London, A. S., Scott, E. K., &amp; Blank, S. (2003). <i>Welfare reform, work, and child care: The role of informal care in the lives of low-income women and children</i> (The Next Generation Policy Brief). New York: MDRC.</p>	<p>116 parents in two ethnographic studies embedded within larger welfare experimental evaluation studies conducted over three-year periods between 1997 and 2001. Most participants were single parents originally on welfare in very low-income neighborhoods in Cleveland, Milwaukee, and Philadelphia. These low-income, disadvantaged families are very likely to be subsidy eligible.</p>	<p>How does pursuit of early education and care policy goals (parents' employment goals and children's developmental needs) actually play out in the lives of very low-income families in disadvantaged neighborhoods?</p>	<p>Ethnographic data were collected from subsamples of the two larger studies, New Hope, and the Project on Devolution and Urban Change.</p>	<p>Ethnographic data were obtained via in-depth interviews and observations.</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>Although current subsidy policy emphasizes the goal of parental choice, families in these studies had very limited control over their choices due to limited money, sparse care options available in their neighborhoods, and the inflexibility of their role as employees. A hidden but significant cost of care for parents was the logistical effort required to maintain care arrangements, which may prevent parents from using subsidies as well because of the time and effort needed to seek and maintain subsidies. Subsidies were sometimes problematic for families in two ways: families could not count on them due to changes in work schedules or incomes that could make them ineligible; and the bureaucratic procedures and unsupportive staff attitudes in subsidy agencies often discouraged parents from using subsidies.</p>
<p>Lee, B. J., Goerge, R., Reidy, M., Kreadler, J. L., Georges, A., Wagmiller Jr., R. L., et al. (2004). <i>Child care subsidy use and employment outcomes of TANF mothers during the early years of welfare reform: A three-state study</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children.</p>	<p>Single mothers with children younger than age 13 who began receiving TANF in three states (Illinois, Maryland, and Massachusetts) from 1997 to 1999.</p>	<p>What are the patterns of subsidy take-up, and is there a time lag from eligibility to uptake? What are the patterns of child care use when mothers use subsidies?</p>	<p>The study followed a series of TANF entry cohorts over time. The researchers used wage reporting data to learn about participants' employment, and child care subsidy data to determine subsidy use. The authors conducted within-state and cross-state analyses to identify patterns of subsidy use.</p>	<p>The study linked individual-level administrative data on child care subsidy use and TANF receipt with unemployment insurance wage-reporting data.</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>Subsidy take-up rates in all three states were low. There was a substantial lag in the take-up of subsidies from the time a family became eligible. Subsidy take-up rates varied across different demographic groups. Mothers with younger children were more likely to take up the subsidy than those whose youngest is over age 6. African-American mothers were more likely to take up the subsidy. Parents in urban settings were less likely to use the subsidy when eligible. The probability of taking up the subsidy decreases substantially in all three states the longer a person is subsidy eligible. The types of care most frequently used by families with subsidies varied by state.</p>

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Lowe, E. D., & Weisner, T. S. (2001). <i>"You have to push it— who's gonna raise your kids?": Situating child care and child care subsidy use in the daily routines of lower-income families</i> (The Next Generation Working Paper Series No. 7). New York: MDRC.	38 low-income families in Milwaukee who participated in the New Hope welfare to work experimental intervention since 1998. Ethnographic data were collected between summer 1998 and fall 1999.	Why is subsidy use not higher and more stable?	The study used ethnographic methods. Fieldworkers visited families and used open-ended interviews to engage parents in conversations and descriptions of their lives. Fieldworkers also participated in family activities. Fieldworkers recorded conversations and also wrote descriptive field notes for each visit. Excerpts related to child care choices were analyzed. Data were coded for analysis using conventional content-based qualitative analysis procedures.	The New Hope ethnographic study employed a stratified random sample of families from the experimental and control groups of the New Hope Child and Family Sub-Sample of the larger project. Ethnographic data, child care use, and subsidy use data for these families were utilized in this study.	[No information provided.]	[No information provided.]	Subsidy use was indeed low for control group participants and episodic for experimental and control group participants. To explore the reasons behind low use of subsidies, the authors identified four themes that they found were key to how families adapt and manage their family routines: (1) Sets of material and social resources. (2) Values and beliefs regarding parenting and child care. (3) The amount of congruence and conflict in the interests of family members. (4) The degree of stability and predictability in day-to-day activities.
Meyers, M. K., Heintze, T., & Wolf, D. A. (1999). <i>Child care subsidies and the employment of welfare recipients</i> (Working Paper No. 15). Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, UC-Data Archive & Technical Assistance.	Women followed from 1992 to 1995 who were receiving cash assistance from four counties in California. The four counties included both rural and urban areas and represented about half the caseload on cash assistance in the state.	What are the characteristics of families receiving subsidies? How do low-income families without subsidies arrange care? What is the likelihood of subsidy receipt? What is the impact of subsidy receipt on probability of employment and economic well-being?	The researchers conducted a two-step analysis. They first identified characteristics of women who were more likely to receive a subsidy. They then predicted the impact of the probability of receiving a subsidy on employment.	A random sample of survey respondents was selected in November 1992 from welfare administrative records from four California counties and followed up 18 and 36 months later.	[No information provided.]	[No information provided.]	In comparison with mothers with school-age children, mothers with preschool children were more likely, and mothers of infants were less likely, to receive subsidies. Mothers' years of education, being born in the United States, and having employment history are all positively but nonsignificantly associated with a greater likelihood of subsidy receipt. Mothers who know about subsidies were more likely to receive them but there was no effect of knowledge of welfare's work rules. Evidence of local rationing practices was weak.
Schumacher, R., & Greenberg, M. (1999). <i>Child care after leaving welfare: Early evidence from state studies</i> . Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy	Women who participated in studies about leaving the TANF program in 17 states. (Participating women may or may not have represented all women who left TANF, depending upon individual study design.)	What share of employed women leaving TANF receive subsidies? What are the possible reasons why women leaving TANF do not use child care assistance? What are the most common child care arrangements for working families that have left welfare?	The authors analyze the information related to child care and child care subsidies gathered from surveys of families who left TANF in 17 states. Each survey has different sample size, data collection method, response rates, and questions. The authors caution that the quality of the individual research studies varied widely but assert that it was possible to identify cross-cutting themes	Research reports from 17 state studies of families leaving TANF were analyzed to glean information on child care issues for families leaving TANF.	[No information provided.]	[No information provided.]	In most of the studies, 30% or less of responding families that left welfare and were working were receiving child care subsidies. In the few studies that included such a question, 40% or more of the families indicated that they were unaware that subsidies were available to them. Overall, most of the families report that they rely on friends and family for child care, while families who received subsidies used center care.

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<p>Shlay, A. B., Weinraub, M., Harmon, M., &amp; Tran, H. (2002). <i>Barriers to subsidies: Reasons why low-income families do not use child care subsidies</i>. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University, Center for Public Policy.</p>	<p>16 white and 13 African-American mothers in low-income, Philadelphia-area neighborhoods, in late 2000/early 2001 who were loosely eligible to receive a subsidy but were not receiving one. Also, 196 African-American Philadelphia-area families in 2001 who were eligible for child care subsidies, given Pennsylvania's subsidy rules.</p>	<p>What are the barriers to using child care subsidies?</p>	<p>The researchers gathered information from focus groups to determine the range of reasons people may not use the subsidy system. Using survey data, they then conducted descriptive analysis to understand the nature and amount of misinformation about subsidy rules, and if it varied by whether an eligible family received subsidies. They identified reasons given by eligible families for not receiving subsidies. (They also conducted analysis to identify factors that led to more subsidy use).</p>	<p>Data from four focus groups conducted to help develop subsequent surveys—two groups with African-American mothers and two with white mothers. Participants were loosely eligible to receive a child care subsidy, but not receiving one. Also, data from a later random telephone survey by the researchers drawing from low-income, Philadelphia-area neighborhoods. Survey focused on African-American families, to reflect the nature of the selected neighborhoods. Survey data were collected on 196 subsidy-eligible, African-American families.</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>The survey results found that both the participants that received subsidies and the eligible ones that did not had a great deal of misinformation about subsidy eligibility rules and the types of care that could be paid for with subsidies. Reasons eligible families said they did not receive subsidies included that they did not need them, they were not eligible, the application process created too many hassles, and that subsidy receipt would interfere with their choice of care. (Multivariate analysis showed that the following were more likely to receive subsidies: families with higher-income levels, with court-ordered child support agreements—a Pennsylvania subsidy requirement—with children in center-based care, with a history of prior cash assistance receipt, and single-parent families.)</p>
<p>Shlay, A. B., Weinraub, M., Harmon, M., &amp; Tran, H. (2004). <i>Barriers to subsidies: Why low-income families do not use child care subsidies</i>. <i>Social Science Research</i>, 33(1), 134-157.</p>	<p>196 African American, Philadelphia-area families in 2001 who were eligible for child care subsidies, given Pennsylvania's subsidy rules.</p>	<p>Why are subsidy-eligible families not using subsidies?</p>	<p>The study employed a telephone survey of a random sample of low-income, African-American families. The authors conducted multivariate analyses to estimate the impact of family, economic, and welfare characteristics on subsidy use.</p>	<p>Data from a random telephone survey by the researchers drawing from low-income neighborhoods in the Philadelphia area. Survey focused on African-American families, to reflect the nature of the selected neighborhoods. Survey data were collected on 196 subsidy-eligible, African-American families.</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>[No information provided.]</p>	<p>Fully 50% of families incorrectly believed they were not eligible for child care subsidies. The aspect of subsidy program rules about which respondents most frequently were misinformed was income eligibility. Of families eligible but not using subsidies and who said they need financial help with child care, 44% were not aware that they were eligible for child care subsidies. Families who correctly believed they were eligible for subsidies and needed assistance but did not use subsidies chose not to due to: hassles in applying (37%), a belief that there were long waiting lists (31%), and bad experiences with other programs (20%). Multivariate analyses showed subsidy recipients were much more likely to use center care and licensed or registered care. Those not receiving a subsidy were about twice as likely to be living with a spouse or partner than those receiving a subsidy. Subsidy recipients were almost three times as likely to have a legal child support arrangement (required for subsidy receipt in the locality studied).</p>

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Witte, A. D., & Queralt, M. (2002). <i>Take-up rates and trade-offs after the age of entitlement: Some thoughts and empirical evidence for child care subsidies</i> (NBER Working Paper No. 8886). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.	Current and former TANF-families eligible for subsidies in the states that guarantee subsidies to all eligible families who apply.	What is an accurate way to model the “take-up rate” for subsidies in states that guarantee subsidies to all eligible families who apply? What are these rates in Illinois and Rhode Island?	The major purpose of the paper is to develop a model that accurately portrays the “take-up” rate for subsidies. (“Take-up” generally is used to describe universally available social services, and this is not the case with subsidies in many states.) Using this concept, the authors use administrative data in Rhode Island and Illinois to describe take-up rates in those two states by following families who initially received cash-assistance (and were eligible for subsidies) over the course of two to four years. (The authors also use information about subsidy expenditures and service rates to make comparisons of subsidy policy strategies among states.)	Administrative data from TANF and child care subsidy systems in Illinois and Massachusetts gathered in the late 1990s through 2000 and made into research files.	[No information provided.]	[No information provided.]	While it was not the authors' purpose to identify characteristics of families or policy regimes that predicted subsidy receipt, they did find that eligible TANF and former TANF families tended to use subsidies at greater rates as time passed. For instance, while only about 44% of all eligible current and former TANF families in the Rhode Island sample used child care when the data were collected, 53% of the same families used subsidies four years later. Similarly, in Illinois, while 11% of the TANF recipients used subsidies in the quarter they entered TANF, nearly 57% of that cohort remaining on TANF used subsidies two years later.

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