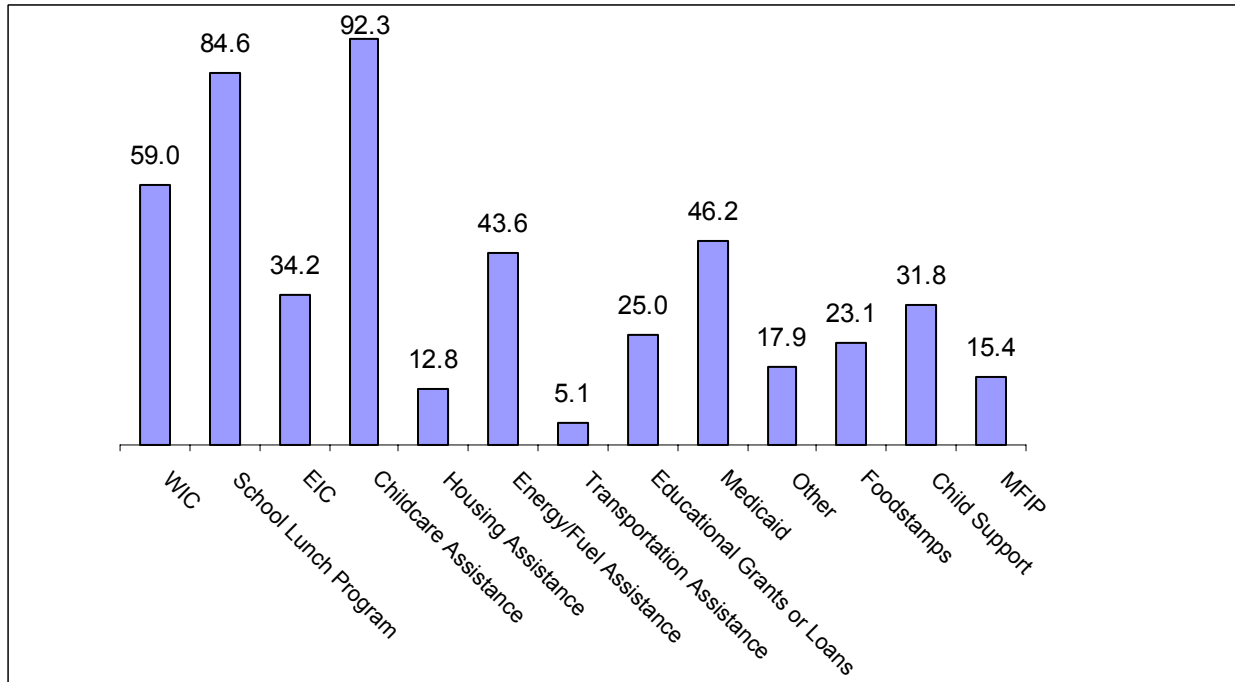


A Profile of California Rural Families

Thirty-nine families in two rural counties in California participated in the Rural Families Speak project. Thirty-nine mothers were interviewed in either their own home or in a day care center. Pictures of the children were taken with mother's permission and given to the mother as a gift.

The average California rural family size was 5.4 members with an average total monthly income, not including food stamps, of \$1605.00 or \$19,268.16 annually. According to the 2000 Federal Poverty Guidelines, the annual income for a family of four at 100% of poverty was \$1420.83 monthly or \$17,050 annually. The number of children ranged from 1 to 5 children with an average of 2.3 children. The average age of the youngest child was 3.3 years old. The chart below highlights the percentage of California rural families that responded yes to receiving various types of assistance.



Almost seventy-five percent (74.4%) of the mothers were Hispanic/Latino while 7.7% were Non-Hispanic White, 2.6 African American, and 2.6 Multi-racial. The average age of the mothers was 27.9 years old. The marital status of the mothers varied with 17.9% single, 56.4% married, 12.8% living with a partner, 5.1% divorced, and 7.7% separated. Eighty-five percent (85.2%) of the partners were Hispanic/Latino, while, 3.7% were Non-Hispanic White and 11.1% were Multi-racial. The average age of partners was 31.4 years old.

The mothers that participated in the study were well educated with, 38.5% having some college or Associates Degrees, 25.6% having specialized technical, business or vocational training, 20.5% with a high school diploma or GED and 15.4% with some high school or less. The educational level of the partners varied with 7.7% having a specialized technical, business or vocational training, 38.5% having a high school diploma or GED, 38.4% having some high

school or less, 11.5% having some college or Associates Degree, and 3.8% having one or more years beyond college.

The level of work participation for these rural California families varied. Fifty-nine (59.0%) were currently working at time of the interview while 17.9% were students. Of those mothers who were students, half were currently working. Of the mothers that reported not working, eight were looking for work. However, all mothers interviewed had worked for pay at one point in their lives and started their first paying job at about 16 years old.

Of the mothers that were working, 86.4% had one job, 9.1% had two jobs, and 4.5% had three jobs. The types of jobs that mothers reported were mostly service orientated (41.7%), administrative support (25.0%) and laborer/helper (12.5%) positions. The average time spent in the first job was 34.5 months with an average wage of \$7.16 per hour. The average total number of hours worked per week by the mothers interviewed was 32.0 hours.

About eighty-nine percent (88.9%) of the partners were currently working at time of the interview. None of the partners were students. Similar to the mothers, the employment of the partners varied. Of the partners, 90.5% had one job and 9.5% had two jobs. The type of jobs that the partners held varied greatly with 37.5% as laborers and helpers, 20.8% in production, and 12.0% in service. The average wage for partners' first job was \$7.38 and the average number of hours worked per week for all jobs was 40 hours per week.

For many rural families, housing can be the largest monthly expense. Of these rural California families, 51.4% of the families rented their place of residence, while 24.3% owned their own home and 24.3% did something other than rent or own their place of residence.

In terms of childcare care arrangements, 82.1% had some type of childcare arrangement each week. Forty-one percent of these families (41.0%) had 2 childcare arrangements and 23.1% of families had 3 childcare arrangements.

When asked about the types of food eaten in this household, according to Food Security Module created by the USDA, 5.0% were considered food insecure with hunger, 25.6% were food insecure without hunger, 20.5% were marginally food secure, and 48.7% of these California rural families were food secure.

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