



Kansas Model for Welfare Reform

Kansas Department for Children and Families

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Department for Children
and Families

Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas

HOPE Act

- In 2015 and 2016, the Kansas State Legislature approved statutory changes to public assistance.
- The new legislation was referred to as HOPE Act and HOPE Act 2.0



HOPE Act

- H – Hope
- O – Opportunity
- P – Prosperity for
- E - Everyone



HOPE Act Continued

- This included strengthening work requirements and encouraging program fidelity; changes include:
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):
 - Progressive periods of ineligibility for non-compliance (i.e. work requirements)
 - 20-hour minimum work participation for child care assistance

HOPE Act Continued

- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Prohibit Kansas from adopting Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE)
 - Prohibit Kansas from adopting ABAWD waiver

HOPE Act Results

- TANF
 - Average Hourly Wage: \$10.64
 - Average Hours per Week: 31.3
 - Adults who left TANF saw wages double after one year of work requirements
 - Kansas was one of only 12 states to meet the federal work participation rate for both overall and two-parent families for 2015-2017.

HOPE Act Results

- SNAP
 - 72 percent decrease in ABAWD population between 2014 and 2017
 - The average time ABAWDs spent on SNAP reduced by nearly half, from 13.8 to 7 months
 - •After reviewing six months of payment history, the households that had originally not cooperated with child support received an increase of almost 39 percent in child support—a total of \$664,509.

HOPE Act Results

- According to the 2018 Kids Count, a report released each year by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the childhood poverty rate was the lowest since 2004.



Shifting Ground

- DCF continues to analyze trends in client engagement and employment to ensure the right policies are in place
- Both trends and internal data confirm the welfare reforms are working

Shifting Ground

- A state think-tank noted in a local OP-ED, “TANF restrictions don’t create a single new job, or raise a single Kansan’s salary. They merely limit families’ ability to keep their heads above water as they’re drowning under bills.”
- <https://www.cjonline.com/opinion/2016-07-27/annie-mckay-welfare-reform-vs-reality>

Shifting Ground

- In 2017 KU published a study arguing there was a direct correlation between changes to public assistance and the rise of youth in foster care
- “A University of Kansas study supports the suspicions of lawmakers and advocates who believe there’s a link between additional restrictions on welfare benefits and an increase in foster care cases.” <http://www.kcur.org/post/ku-study-indicates-link-between-kansas-welfare-restrictions-foster-care-case-increase#stream/0>

The Issue

–How does an agency with limited resources, time and capacity, address the large resources of the academy?