



Center for Studying Disability Policy

Promoting Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE): Five-year Impacts and Other Findings

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Secretaries and Workforce Directors**

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Promoting Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE) Demonstration

/ **Joint initiative of four federal partners**

- U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services, and the Social Security Administration (SSA)

/ **Sought to improve the outcomes of youth ages 14-16 receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and their families**



PROMISE service model

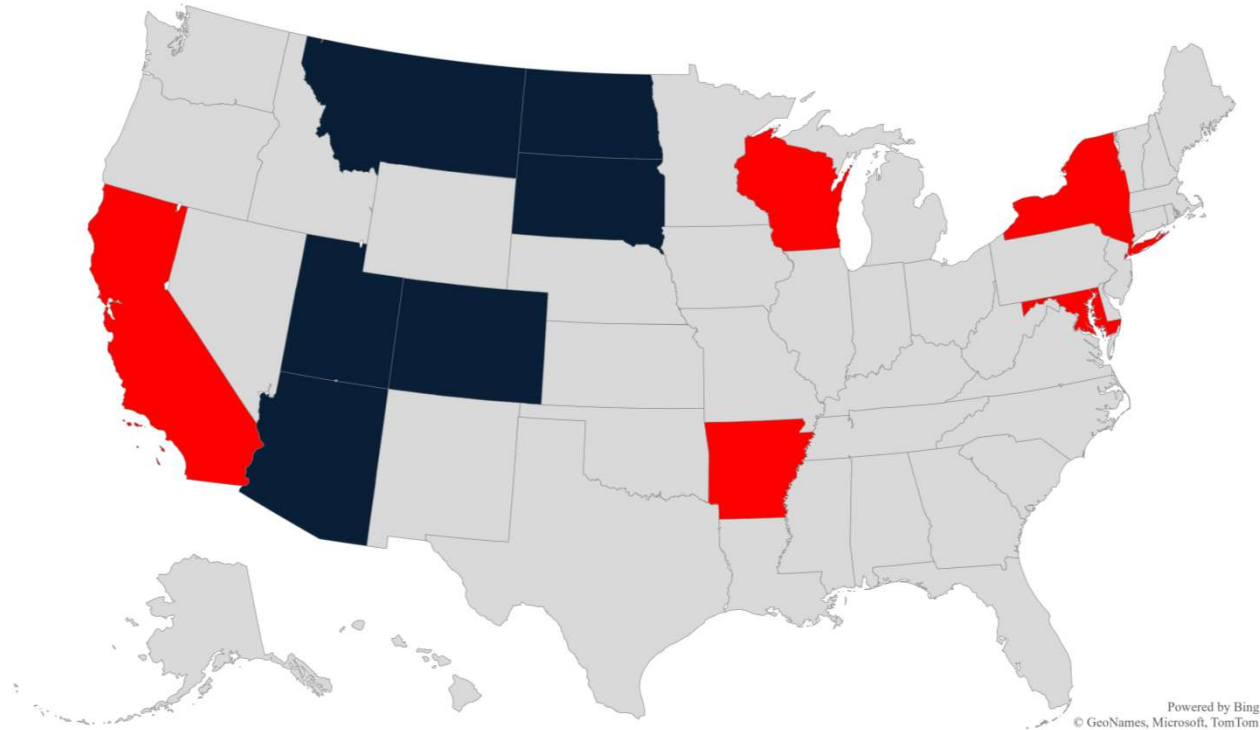
- / Strong partnerships among the federal, state, and local agencies that offer services to youth receiving SSI and their families**
- / Individual- and family-centered approach to case management and service delivery through five core components:**
 - (1) formal partnerships between state agencies, (2) case management, (3) benefits counseling and financial education, (4) career and work-based learning experiences, and (5) parent training and information



Six PROMISE programs

/ State agencies in 11 states implemented demonstration projects during 2014-2019:

- Arkansas (Arkansas PROMISE)
- California (CaPROMISE)
- Maryland (MD PROMISE)
- New York (NYS PROMISE)
- Wisconsin (WI PROMISE)
- A consortium of six western states (Arizona, Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Utah) known collectively as Achieving Success by Promoting Readiness for Education and Employment (ASPIRE)



Red shading denotes the five single-state PROMISE programs.

Black shading denotes the Achieving Success by Promoting Readiness for Education and Employment (ASPIRE) consortium.



The national evaluation of PROMISE

- / **The programs enrolled 12,584 youth and families into the evaluation**
- / **Half were randomly assigned to a treatment group and half to a control group**
- / **Evaluation components:**
 - In-depth implementation studies
 - 18-month and five-year impact studies
 - Assessment of benefits and costs during the five years after enrollment
 - Additional special topic analyses
- / **Today's presentation will summarize high-level findings from the implementation and impact studies**



Key findings from the implementation studies

- / Programs varied considerably in their implementation**
- / Key youth transition services were intensive case management and work-based experiences**
- / Family support services were less intensive and targeted than youth transition services**



Distinctive features of the PROMISE programs

- / **Arkansas PROMISE:** Offered summer camp and paid summer work experiences, provided the most extensive wage subsidies
- / **ASPIRE:** Implemented across six sparsely-populated states, relied heavily on existing resources in the community
- / **CaPROMISE:** Implemented within local education agencies, required case managers to earn benefit counselor certification
- / **MD PROMISE:** Assigned each youth to a team comprising a case manager and a family employment specialist
- / **NYS PROMISE:** Implemented within local education agencies, brought in specialists from Bridges from School to Work to support employment services
- / **WI PROMISE:** Implemented within vocational rehabilitation agency



The five-year impact evaluation

- / **Outcomes: education, employment, benefit receipt, well-being, and other outcomes**
- / **Follow-up period: five years after RA**
- / **Data:**
 - Five-year follow-up surveys of youth and parents
 - Administrative data on SSA program participation and earnings reported to the IRS
- / **Method: compare average outcomes for the treatment and control groups using a regression-based adjustment to control for baseline characteristics**

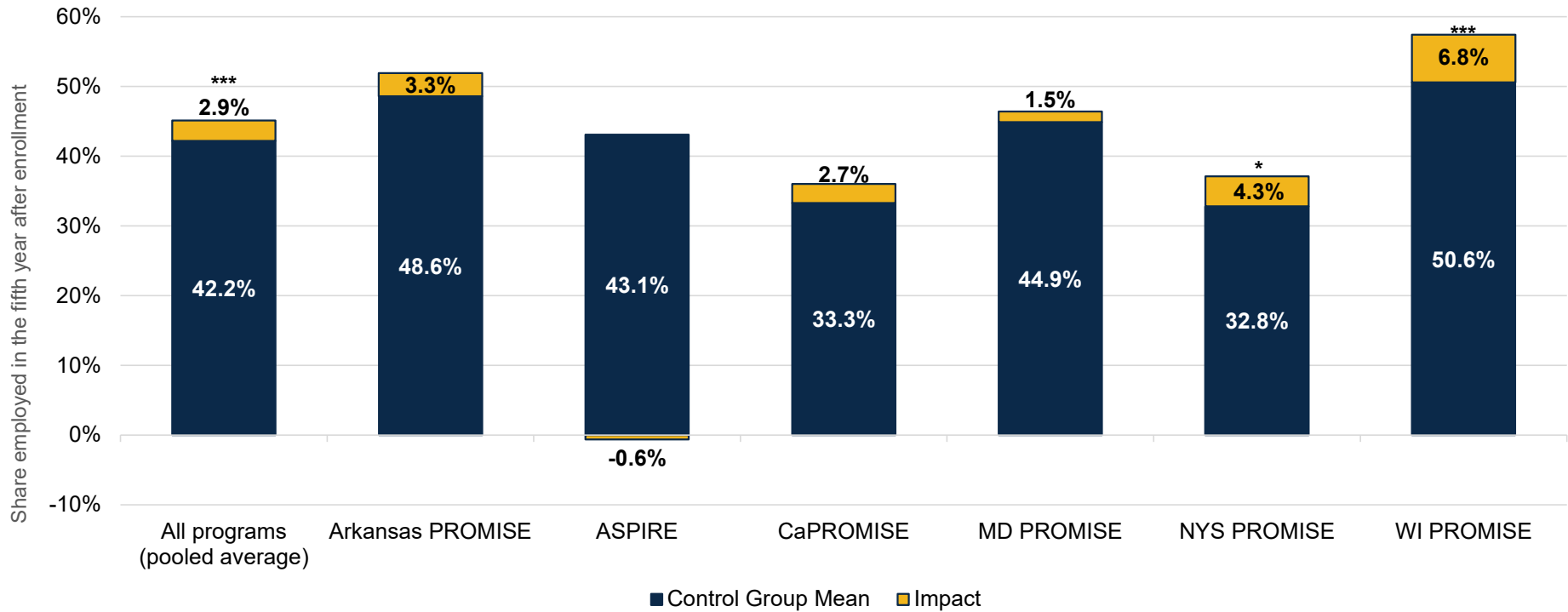


The six programs varied substantially in their impacts on youth outcomes

- / **Each program increased employment and earnings in the first few years after enrollment**
 - Only two programs had persistent impacts on youth employment rates
- / **Three programs increased youth's total income (sum of earnings and SSA benefits) over the five-year period**

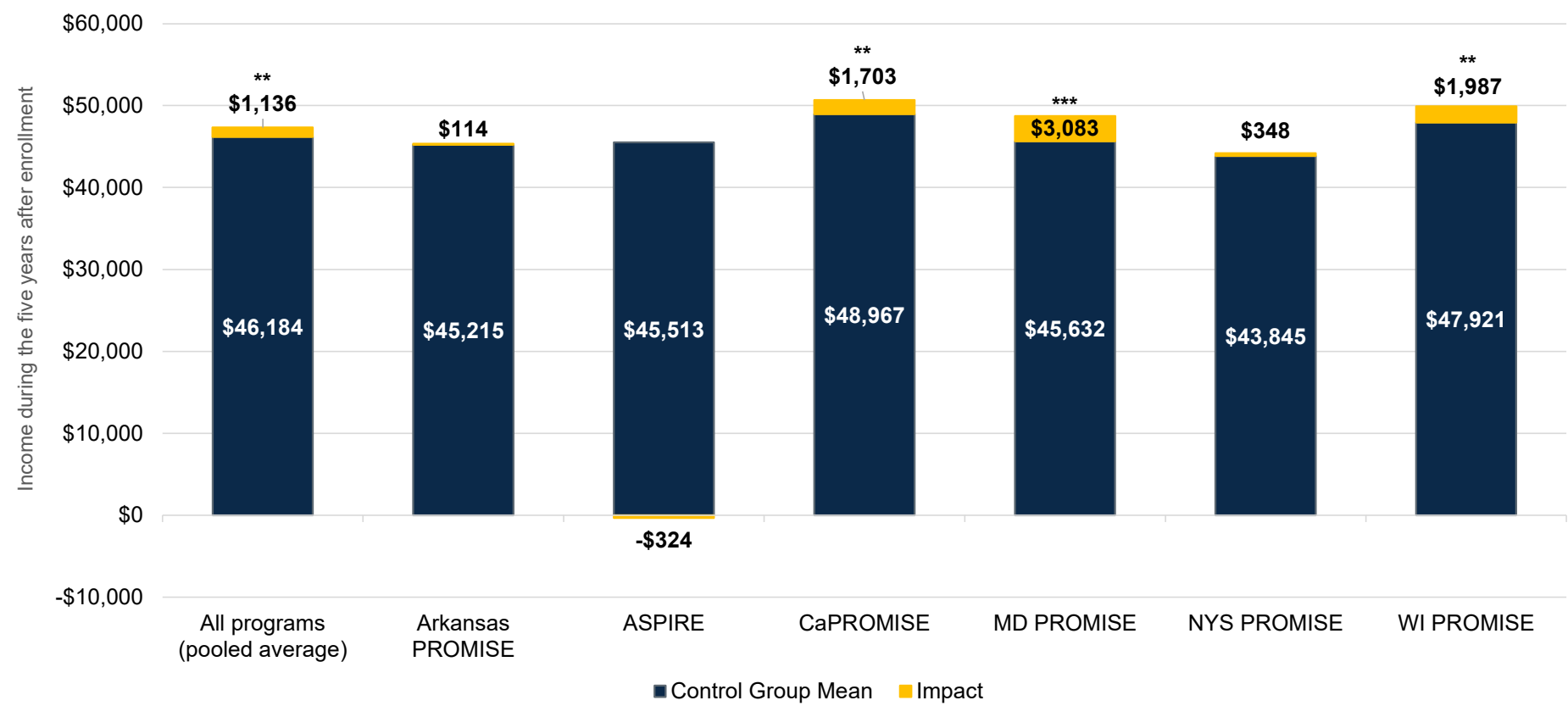


On average, the PROMISE programs increased youth employment in the fifth year; two programs had statistically significant impacts





On average, the PROMISE programs increased youth income during the five-year period; three programs had statistically significant impacts





PROMISE programs had inconsistent impacts on employment and income

/ **Only WI PROMISE increased both youth employment and income**

- What did it do differently?

/ **For other programs, we found impacts on related outcomes, for example:**

- MD PROMISE increased labor force participation
- CaPROMISE increased youth's use of supports or services to get or keep a job



PROMISE generally did not impact other outcomes

- / **No program increased youth's educational attainment**
- / **No program reduced youth's participation in SSA programs or the amount of SSA payments that they received**
 - Youth were still young (19-21 years old) and could use SSI program incentives that allowed them to work without losing or reducing benefits
- / **No consistent impacts on youth's self-determination, expectations of the future, health insurance coverage, and Medicaid/Medicare participation, or on parents' outcomes**



Questions?

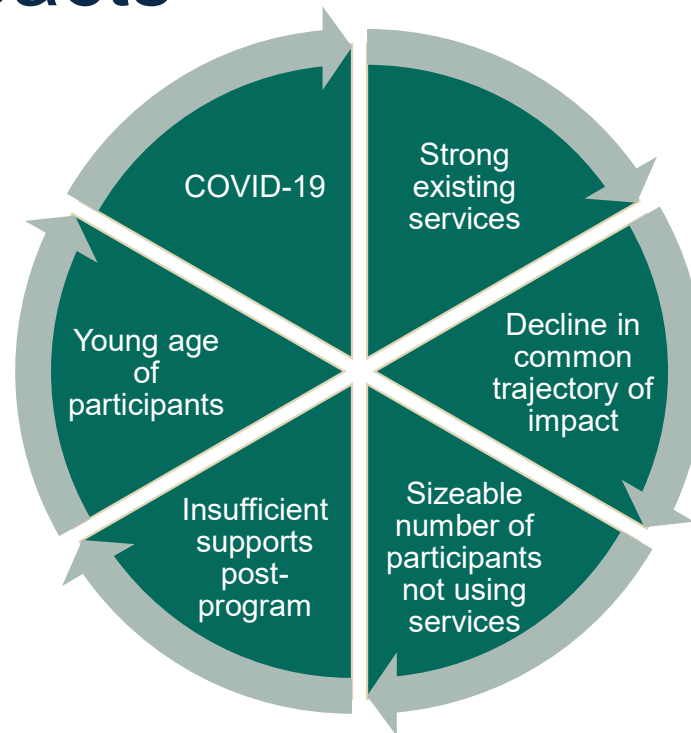
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Possible explanations for absence of consistent impacts





Youth's engagement in work experiences supported program impacts on youth outcomes

/ **Early impacts on use of transition services and early work experiences helped explain the five-year impacts on youth's education and economic outcomes**

- Among the required youth services, employment-promoting services were most important
- Paid work experience during the first 18 months after RA was the most important explanatory factor



Youth perceived challenges with further education and job matches, which might have hindered impacts

/ Youth reported educational challenges

- 60 percent of youth cited physical or mental health issues that would make it difficult to continue their schooling
- Many also cited a lack of knowledge of options after high school
- Findings suggest a need for tailored education services

/ Finding an appropriate job was also challenging

- Among youth not currently working, many said they could not find a job they want (48 percent) or for which they were qualified (47 percent)
- Findings highlight the importance of employment services that help connect youth to appropriate work



The COVID-19 pandemic likely dampened programs' impacts on labor market outcomes

/ Impacts on labor market outcomes were larger among pre-pandemic respondents than during-pandemic respondents

