Supporting Student Parent Success in Community Colleges

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SPSI focuses on supporting students with dependent children who are pursuing college.

- Raises awareness of the need for student parent supports.
- Shares knowledge about programs/policy strategies that help low-income parents succeed in college.
- Provides technical assistance to enhance two-generation supports for student parents.
A College Degree Improves Socioeconomic Prospects for Entire Family

Women with an AA earn $427,000 more in their lifetime than women with just a high school diploma.

A mother’s education can improve children’s economic, educational, & social outcomes.

Children of college-educated mothers do better in high school & are more likely to attend college.
4.8 Million Undergrads—26% of All College Students—are also Parents

Number of Student Parents at Public 2-Year Institutions by Sex and Marital Status, 2011-12

- **Student Mothers**
  - Single: 900,000
  - Married: 600,000
  - Total: 1,500,000

- **Student Fathers**
  - Single: 200,000
  - Married: 400,000
  - Total: 600,000

Largest Share of Student Parents Attend Community Colleges

Distribution of Student Parents by Institution, 2011-12

- Public 2-Year Institutions: 45%
- Public 4-Year Institutions: 16%
- Private For-Profit 2-Year Institutions: 25%
- Private Not-for-Profit 4-Year Institutions: 7%
- Other or More than One Institution: 8%

Over Half of Black Women at Community Colleges are Parents

Share of Community College Students with Dependent Children by Race/Ethnicity, 2011-12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Share of Students with Dependent Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian / other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
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<td>17.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than one race</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many Student Parents are Low-Income, Work Full-Time, & Graduate with High Debt

Nearly 70% of 2-year student parents live ≤200% of poverty, compared with half of 2-year students overall.

89% of single student parents at community colleges live ≤200% of poverty.

Two-thirds of student parents at community colleges also work, & 39% work full-time.

Student mothers graduate with the highest student debt ($29,136 compared with $25,227 for all students).
Campus Child Care Declining, Especially at Community Colleges

Percent of Colleges with Campus Child Care, 2002-2013


Student Parent Success Initiative

Institute for Women's Policy Research
Child Care Costs are Too High for Many Student Parents

- Community college student parents who pay for child care spend an average of $415 per month.

- Low-income student parents more likely to use unpaid child care compared with higher-income parents.

- Financial considerations, family care needs, & lack of child care are main reasons for stop outs among parents in college.
Only 26% of 2-Year Student Parents Attain a Degree or Certificate in 6 years

Degree Attainment for Public 2-Year Students by Parent & Dependency Status within 6 Years of Enrollment, 2003-09

- All students: 34.5%
  - Dependent: 38.9%
  - Independent: 28.2%
- Student parents: 26.2%

- All students: 46.1%
  - Dependent: 40.8%
  - Independent: 52.8%

Attained a degree or certificate

Not enrolled, left without a degree

Growing Visibility of Student Parents’ Needs

This simple addition to college campuses could cut costs for a quarter of undergrads

America’s college students have changed. Will federal policy keep pace?

Hillary Clinton Outlines College Plan for Students With Children

**POLITICS** HILLARY CLINTON

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton outlined plans Friday to make it easier for students with children to complete a college degree.

In a town hall in Davenport, Iowa, the Democratic presidential candidate continued her week-long focus on college affordability, what she terms a “new college compact,” announcing she would seek to dramatically increase in federal funding for college child-care centers while creating a new grant program for such students.

Single Moms and Welfare Woes: A Higher-Education Dilemma
“Being a student and a parent is difficult. You have children competing for attention while you try to concentrate on school. I have managed to squeeze 4 classes into 2 hours per week while working online. Time is a luxury most parents do not have.”

MORE THAN FOUR IN TEN STUDENTS WORK WHILE IN SCHOOL

Figure 3.2 Employment Status of Respondents by Parent Status and Race
What Motivates MS Women to Enroll in Community College

“I am thankful that I am able to attend college. After becoming a parent at a young age, I didn’t think I would ever attend college, so it means everything to me. After I complete, I can support my family & hopefully be a role model to my daughter.”

REASONS TO PURSUE COLLEGE:
ECONOMIC SECURITY, FAMILY SUPPORT, AND PERSONAL FULFILLMENT

Figure 2.1. Top Six Reasons Students Give for Pursuing Higher Education by Parent Status

- **Support Myself**: 62% (ALL STUDENTS), 56% (WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18), 39% (WITHOUT CHILDREN UNDER 18)
- **Support My Family**: 75% (ALL STUDENTS), 79% (WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18), 47% (WITHOUT CHILDREN UNDER 18)
- **Find Personal Fulfillment**: 55% (ALL STUDENTS), 48% (WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18), 60% (WITHOUT CHILDREN UNDER 18)
- **Find a Better Paying Job or Field**: 47% (ALL STUDENTS), 48% (WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18), 46% (WITHOUT CHILDREN UNDER 18)
- **Be Better Able to Contribute to My Community**: 26% (ALL STUDENTS), 24% (WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18), 29% (WITHOUT CHILDREN UNDER 18)
- **Be a Role Model/Set a Good Example for My Children**: 81% (ALL STUDENTS)
Supporting the Success of Student Parents in Community College

Outreach & Transition Support

Affordable Housing

Academic Services

Links to Economic, Community & Health Services

On- & Off-Campus Child Care Services

Mentoring, Counseling & Peer Support

Financial Aid & Education

Supports for Student Parents