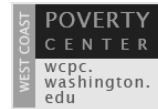


THE CONTINUING RECESSION

Consequences for Single Parent Families

Prepared for the New Mexico State Family Impact Seminar
January 10 & 11, 2012

Jennifer Romich
University of Washington



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Consequences for Single Parent Families

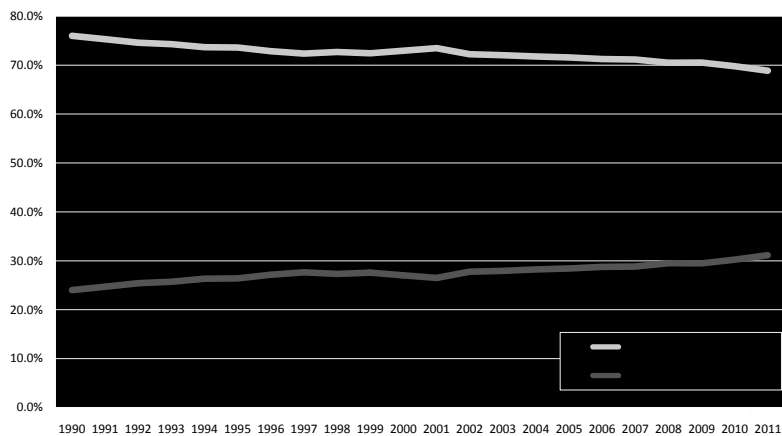
1. BACKGROUND
2. POLICY SUPPORTS
3. STRATEGIES





BACKGROUND on single parent families

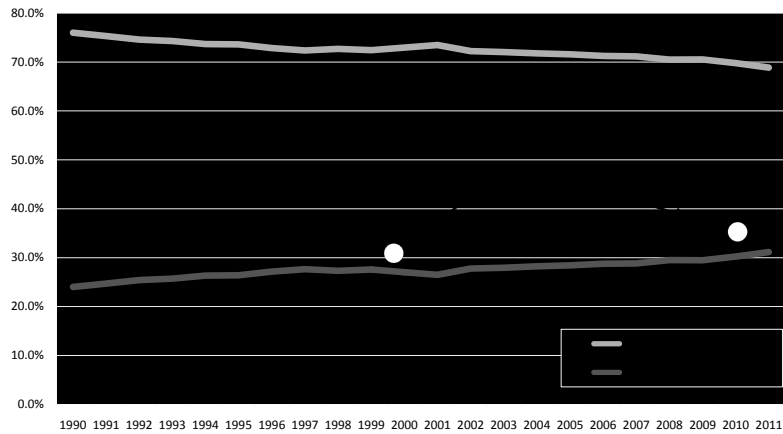
The proportion of families* led
by single parents has increased



Source: US Census.

*"Families" refer to households of adults with related children under age 18.

Single parent families are more common in New Mexico



Single parent families arise from

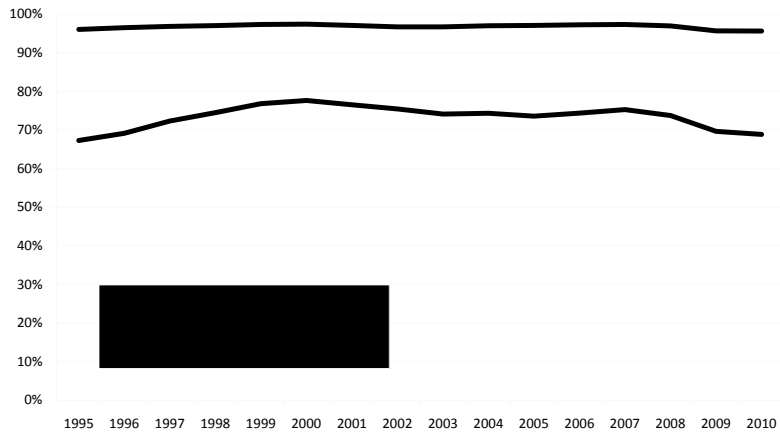
...births to unmarried parents

(Cohabiting couples
are a special case)

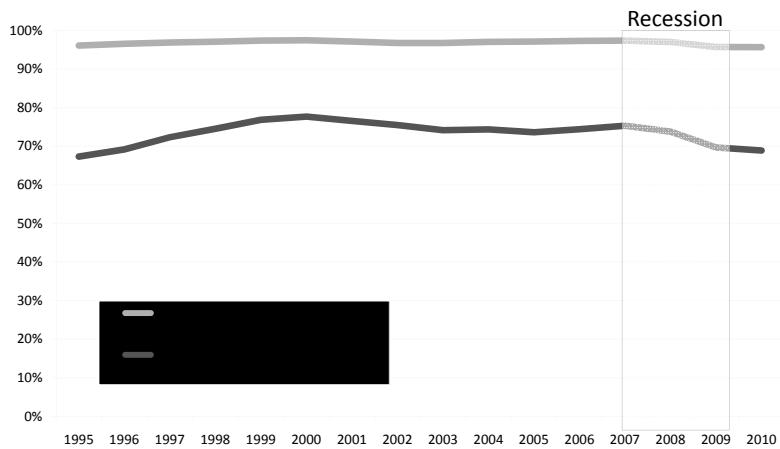
...divorces, separations,
and deaths



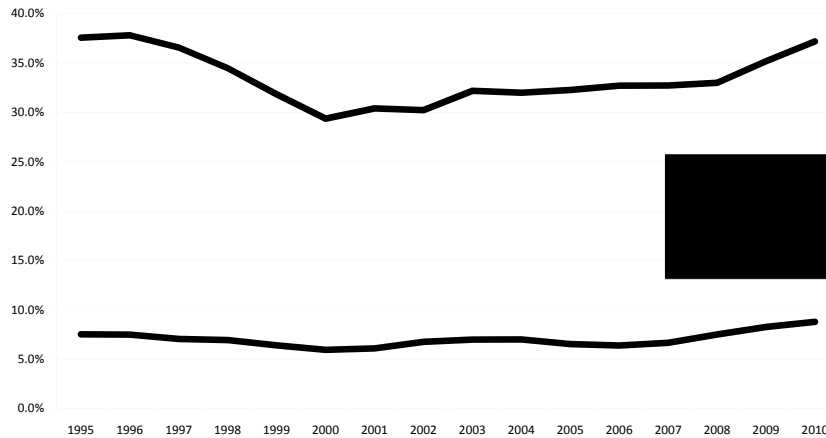
Fewer single parent families have an employed parent



Fewer single parent families have an employed parent

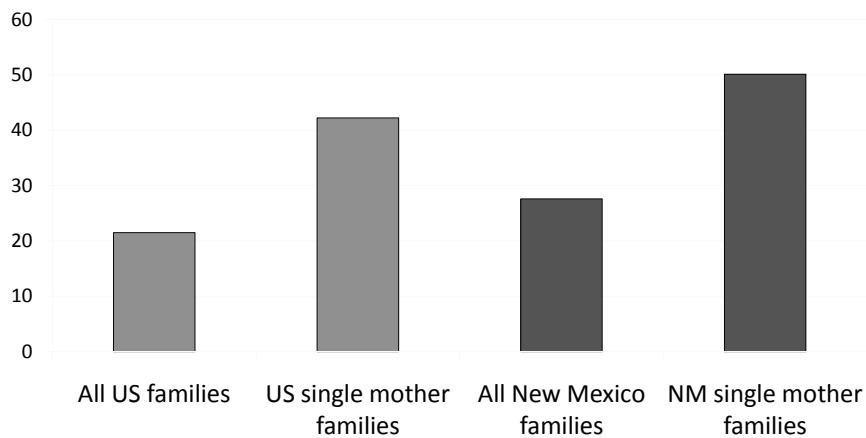


Poverty is higher among single parent families



Note: the 2010 Poverty Thresholds for a two child-family are \$17,600 (one parent) or \$22,100 (two parents)

Half of New Mexico's single mother families were poor in 2010



Source: US Census Bureau. Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement. Tables POV46.4 & 8. Poverty Status by State.

The recession has disproportionately hurt single parent families

- Unemployment
- Material hardship
- Supports



SUPPORTS
in state
policy

Ways to serve single-parent families

- Public services for all
- Incentives
- Safety net



Policy aims

- Encouraging two parents to care for children
- Supporting single parents
- Care and education for children

Encouraging two parents to care for children

- Marriage
 - Avoid disincentives
- Child support enforcement



Supporting single parents

- Supporting single working parents
 - Unemployment Insurance
 - Child care
 - Family and medical leave
 - Food, medical and other assistance
- Supporting single non-working parents
 - TANF
 - Disability / Supplemental Security Insurance

Care and education for children

- Head Start
- Pre-K
- Public school



STRATEGIES
fresh ideas for
supporting
vulnerable families

Build on Affordable Care Act investments

- ACA calls for federal support of state IT infrastructure support
- Provides opportunity improving human services delivery

Maximize federal matches

- Food assistance – SNAP (“food stamps”) and WIC
- Promote Earned Income Tax Credit

Expand early learning

- Early learning supports parents in short run and development in long run



- Key programs
 - Head Start
 - Pre-K
 - Child care



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*Consequences for
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Depend on choices
now

Thank you

romich@uw.edu

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