

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE
Committee on Population
Board on Children, Youth, and Families

Reducing Intergenerational Poverty: Seminar on Examining the Long Term Effects of Investments in Children and Youth

Promoting intergenerational mobility requires knowing what kinds of interventions generate long-run improvements in children's life chances and whether their benefits exceed their costs. There is a wealth of results from RCTs and quasi-experimental work on the short-term effects (STEs) of preschool, K-12 and other investments in children and youth. Particularly well-known longer-term effects (LTEs) come from preschool programs such as Perry and Abecedarian, etc.

What is lacking is credible evidence on the likely LTEs of current program options because of: 1) external validity issues associated with the evidence base for existing LTEs; 2) dramatic improvements in counterfactual conditions (e.g., in home environments and alternative programs) faced by control-group children over the past 60 years; 3) the time and expense of doing high-quality LTE follow ups of study children; 4) difficulty of understanding dynamic or interactive effects of simultaneous or sequential interventions (are they complements or substitutes?); and 5) the need of policy makers to be able to compare the benefits and costs of different interventions in a common framework.

This has led to a variety of efforts to fill the gap and to estimate LTEs and even intergenerational effects of current investments in children, their upfront costs and long-term benefits. This seminar, organized by the National Academies' Committee on Population (CPOP) and Board on Children, Youth, and Families (BCYF), will take an in-depth look at intergenerational poverty and address issues such as forecasting Long-Term Effects through the work of the Surrogate Index and the Social Genome Project, look at different approaches to cost/benefit analyses and examine lessons learned.

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SEMINAR AGENDA

May 18, 2:00 – 4:00 pm (EDT)

Welcome

2:00 – 2:10 pm

- *Greg Duncan* (BCYF), Distinguished Professor, University of California – Irvine (seminar facilitator)
- *Isabel Sawhill* (CPOP), Senior Fellow - Economic Studies, Center on Children and Families, Future of the Middle Class Initiative, Brookings Institute (seminar facilitator)

Forecasting Long-Term Effects of Investments in Children and Youth

2:10 – 2:50 pm

- *Greg Acs*, Urban Institute
- *Jesse Rothstein*, University of California – Berkeley

Benefit/Cost Approaches

2:50 – 3:30 pm

- *Nathaniel Hendren*, Harvard University
- *Michael Hirsch*, Washington State Institute for Public Policy

Lessons Learned and Future Directions

3:30 – 4:00 pm

- *Ian Rowe*, American Enterprise Institute
- *Jason DeParle*, New York Times

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Participant Biosketches

Gregory Acs is vice president for income and benefits policy at the Urban Institute, where his research focuses on social insurance, social welfare, and the compensation of workers. Previously, he served as unit chief for Labor and Income Security in the Congressional Budget Office's Health and Human Resources Division and as vice president of the Association for Policy Analysis and Management. His recent work examines economic and social mobility and economic security with a focus on low-income working families. In the past, he has studied the employment patterns of young women to determine the paths women take to obtain jobs paying enough to leave them better off working than on welfare. He has also examined the well-being of children across living arrangements, the ways welfare policies influence family composition, the status of families leaving welfare, and how policies affect the incentives families face as they move from welfare to work. Acs has a PhD in economics and social work from the University of Michigan.

Jason DeParle is a reporter for The New York Times and has written extensively about poverty and immigration. His book, *American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids, and a Nation's Drive to End Welfare* was a New York Times Notable Book and won the Helen Bernstein Award from the New York City Library. He was an Emerson Fellow at New America. He is a recipient of the George Polk Award and is a two-time finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

Greg Duncan is a distinguished professor of education at the University of California, Irvine. Dr. Duncan spent the first 25 years of his career at the University of Michigan, working on and ultimately directing the Panel Study of Income Dynamics project. He held a faculty appointment at Northwestern University between 1995 and 2008. Dr. Duncan's recent work has focused on assessing the role of school-entry skills and behaviors on later school achievement and attainment and the effects of increasing income inequality on schools and children's life chances. Dr. Duncan was president of the Population Association of America in 2008 and the Society for Research in Child Development between 2009 and 2011. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2010. Dr. Duncan earned a B.A. in economics from Grinnell College and a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Michigan. He has an honorary doctorate from the University of Essex.

Nathaniel Hendren is a Professor of Economics at Harvard University and a Founding Co-Director of Opportunity Insights. His work is motivated by the question: Do markets provide equal opportunity? Using a combination of theoretical and empirical analysis, he documents and evaluates the potential for opportunity in various situations including insurance markets and intergenerational mobility. His work seeks to understand when and why markets fail to provide opportunity, quantify the impact of these market failures, and provide tools

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to normatively evaluate potential policy solutions. In 2019, he was awarded the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) having been nominated by the National Science Foundation. In his ongoing work with Opportunity Insights, he seeks to develop scalable policy solutions that will empower families throughout the United States to rise out of poverty and achieve better life outcomes. Hendren earned a B.S. in mathematics and economics from the University of Chicago, and a Ph.D. in economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Michael Hirsch is a Senior Research Associate for the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, a non-partisan group working at the behest of the state legislature. Michael joined WSIPP in 2015 and has been focused on benefit-cost modeling for WSIPP. Michael received his B.A. in Public Policy from the University of Chicago and his M.A. in Public Policy from Georgetown University.

Jesse Rothstein is professor of public policy and economics at the University of California, Berkeley, with affiliations in the Department of Economics and the Goldman School of Public Policy. He is also the co-director, with Till von Wachter (UCLA) of the California Policy Lab. He previously served as Chief Economist at the U.S. Department of Labor and as Senior Economist with the Council of Economic Advisers, Executive Office of the President, both in the Obama Administration. From 2015-2020, he served as director of the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE) at UC Berkeley.

Rothstein's research focuses on education policy and on the labor market. His recent work includes studies of teacher quality, of school finance, of intergenerational economic mobility, and of the labor market during the Great Recession. His work has been published in leading journals in economics, public policy, education, and law. He has served as an expert witness in several cases regarding teacher evaluation and school finance. Rothstein received a Ph.D. in economics and a Masters in Public Policy, both from the University of California, Berkeley, and an A.B. from Harvard. He is a member of the editorial boards of the *American Economic Review*, *Industrial Relations*, the *Review of Economics and Statistics*, and the National Education Policy Center. He was named the John T. Dunlop Outstanding Scholar by the Labor and Employment Relations Association in 2011. He is a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research and a fellow of the National Education Policy Center, the CESifo Research Network, the IZA, and the Learning Policy Institute.

Ian Rowe is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, where he focuses on education and upward mobility, family formation, and adoption. Mr. Rowe is also the cofounder of Vertex Partnership Academies, a new network of character-based International Baccalaureate high schools opening in the Bronx in 2022; the chairman of the board of Spence-Chapin, a nonprofit adoption services organization; and the cofounder of the National Summer

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School Initiative. He concurrently serves as a senior visiting fellow at the Woodson Center and a writer for the 1776 Unites Campaign. Until July 1, 2020, Mr. Rowe was CEO of Public Prep, a nonprofit network of public charter schools based in the South Bronx and Lower East Side of Manhattan. Before joining Public Prep, he was deputy director of postsecondary success at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, senior vice president of strategic partnerships and public affairs at MTV, director of strategy and performance measurement at the USA Freedom Corps office in the White House, and cofounder and president of Third Millennium Media. Mr. Rowe also joined Teach for America in its early days. Mr. Rowe has been widely published in the popular press, including in the New York Post, The Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Examiner. He is often interviewed on talk radio programs. He is also the author of a forthcoming book tentatively titled “Agency” (Templeton Press), which seeks to inspire young people of all races to build strong families and become masters of their own destiny. Mr. Rowe has an MBA from Harvard Business School, where he was the first black editor-in-chief of *The Harbus*, the Harvard Business School newspaper; a BS in computer science engineering from Cornell University; and a diploma in electrical engineering from Brooklyn Technical High School (Brooklyn Tech), one of New York City’s elite public schools, which specializes in science, technology, and mathematics.

Isabel V. Sawhill is senior fellow in economic studies at the Brookings Institution. Prior to this, she served as vice president and director of the Economic Studies program. Dr. Sawhill has also been co-director (with Ron Haskins) of the Center on Children and Families. Prior to joining Brookings, she was senior fellow at The Urban Institute. She also served in the Clinton administration as associate director of OMB, where her responsibilities included managing all of the human resource programs of the federal government, accounting for one third of the federal budget. Her research has spanned a wide array of economic and social issues, including fiscal policy, economic growth, poverty, and inequality. Over the past decade, Dr. Sawhill’s major focus has been on how to improve opportunities for disadvantaged children in the U.S. She has authored or edited numerous books and articles, including: *Generation Unbound: Drifting Into Sex and Parenthood Without Marriage*; *Creating an Opportunity Society*, with Ron Haskins; *Restoring Fiscal Sanity 2005: Meeting the Long-Run Challenge* and *Restoring Fiscal Sanity: How to Balance the Budget*, both with Alice Rivlin; and *One Percent for the Kids: New Policies, Brighter Futures for America’s Children*. Dr. Sawhill has a Ph.D. from New York University.