

## Small Fortunes: Childhood Poverty and Parental Sacrifice

There is very little direct evidence in Britain about the lifestyles and living standard of British children. This makes it very difficult to assess the impact of changing economic circumstances on children's lives. The first report of findings from a unique nationally representative survey of British children, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, was launched in July.

This brief summary focuses on average spending on children, the results of a new measure of childhood deprivation, and on the extent to which parents themselves go without in order to provide for their children.

### Average Spending on Children

Children have an average of around £3,000 spent on them each year for 'regular' items of spending: holidays; birthdays; Christmas; food; clothing; activities and hobbies; school; childcare and baby sitting; nappies and toiletries; toys, games, books and magazines; and telephone calls. Spending on childcare amounts to just over £4 per week or over £3,500, throughout childhood. A child reaching her/his seventeenth birthday will have cost approximately £50,000 on average. Most of this (90 per cent) will have come from parents.

Ten per cent of average spending on children is provided by other people and is fairly evenly spread among all children, of all ages and in all family circumstances. Grandparents, other relatives, friends or, as the child gets older, the child her/himself all contribute. It seems that when children are at secondary school, those in one parent families, and girls in all families, are learning to budget by being given more control over their own finances. Grandparents make by far the largest non-parental contribution to spending on children, at an average of £2.21 per week. Overall, girls and boys receive almost the same levels of average spending, although spending on some budget areas does vary. Secondary aged girls spend over three times as much on telephone calls as secondary aged boys.

Food accounts for by far the largest proportion of average spending on children but some other areas of spending are surprisingly high. For example, secondary aged children receive an average of £5.92 per week from their parents for 'school'. Such sums are for items and activities which might be regarded as integral to the school curriculum, such as books, educational trips and extra lessons. Spending on children at Christmas is another large budget item. Children receive, on average, over £250 at Christmas, of which 37 per cent is provided by people other than parents.

Childcare is currently high on the political agenda. The Government proposes to increase financial help with childcare costs for working lone parents through the Childcare Disregard in Family Credit calculations. Evidence from the Small Fortunes Survey about average spending on childcare by working lone parents who pay for care suggests that these new levels of assistance could go a long way towards meeting lone parents' childcare costs. However, effort will be needed to improve awareness and take up of the benefit.

Furthermore, the data also show that most lone parents do not use the types of childcare which are eligible for assistance, preferring to rely on family and friends rather than nurseries and childminders. The Government also proposes to increase the availability of childcare through training young people as carers. But our data suggest that among children who do receive 'formal' care, those in lone parent working families are most likely to be cared for by childminders. It may be that lone parents would prefer to use experienced local childminders, who are often mothers themselves, rather than rely on the services of young newly trained carers.

### Poor Children

The new measure of childhood poverty is descended from the Breadline Britain studies of household deprivation. It is based on asking parents which of a list of 32 items and activities they believed to be necessary for children in Britain to have. Twenty one of the items were endorsed as necessities by more than 50 per cent of parents. Parents were asked at a later stage in the interview which of the same list of items and activities their child did not have because of lack of money.

The results suggest that significant numbers of children in Britain went without necessities because their parents could not afford them. One per cent of children did not have a bed and mattress to themselves. Almost one in twenty went without fresh fruit every day or new, properly fitted shoes. A similar proportion lived in damp housing conditions. Thirteen per cent of children over the age of ten years shared a bedroom with a sibling of the opposite sex.

One in nine children were defined as 'poor' on the grounds that they did not have three or more necessities because their parents could not afford them. Three per cent of children were described as 'severely poor' since they went without five or more necessities. Children in one parent families were much more likely to be poor than children in two parent families, irrespective of other family circumstances, including whether or not their parents were in work.

The extent and nature of childhood deprivation were examined further by dividing necessary items into five groups: food; clothing; participation; developmental; and environmental items. Children in one parent families were more likely to go without a greater number of items in each of these groups than children in two parent families. All those children who went without the three food items and three-quarters of children who lacked two of the four 'environmental' items lived in one parent non-working families.

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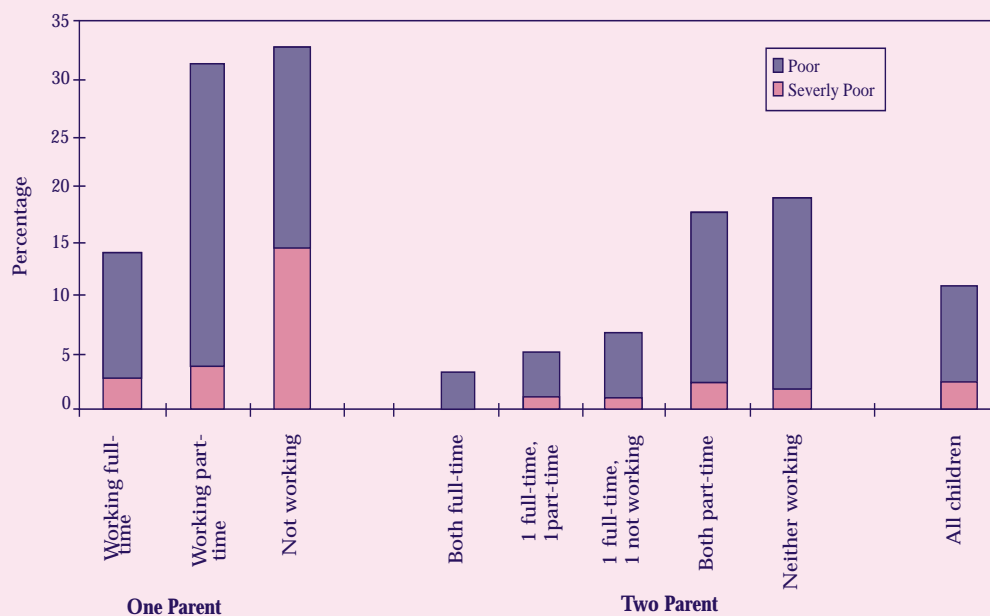
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## Average spending on children

	Per week £s	Birth to 17 years £s
Parents	47.20	41,724.80
Childcare	4.09	3,615.56
Other people	5.72	5,056.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>57.01</b>	<b>50,396.84</b>

The extent to which parents make sacrifices to provide things for their children was also seen in the large number of mothers who claimed often or sometimes to go without clothes and shoes, holidays and entertainment. Moreover as many as one mother in twenty sometimes went without food to meet the needs of their child. Lone mothers on Income Support, in particular, reported making sacrifices. Indeed, they were 14 times more likely to go without food than two parent mothers not on Income Support.

Figure 1 Childhood Poverty and Parent's Work



## Children Come First?

A similar measure of deprivation, based on a list of items considered to be necessary for adults, was used to measure poverty and severe poverty among parents. Sixteen per cent of parents went without three or more adult necessities, compared with the eleven per cent of children who went without three or more childhood necessities. Therefore, parents were more likely to experience adult poverty than their children were to experience childhood poverty.

Parental poverty, as with childhood poverty, was concentrated among the majority of lone parents who did not work.

This suggests that parents were sacrificing their own needs in order to try and provide for their children. This was so for all poor parents. But the small percentage of poor parents who worked were more likely to be able to protect their children from poverty than the much larger percentage of poor parents who did not.

## The Survey and the Report

The survey was based on a random sample of individual children stratified by children's ages, birth order and family type (whether children were living in one or two parent families). The dataset contains information about 1239 children, a response rate of 65 per cent on the issued sample. These data have been weighted to be representative of all children in Britain. Further details of the survey and future publications can be obtained from the authors at CRSP, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU. The Small Fortunes dataset will be lodged in the ESRC Data Archive at Essex University in Autumn 1997.

*Copies of Small Fortunes: Spending on children, childhood poverty and parental sacrifice can be purchased from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, The Homestead, 40 Water End, York YO3 6LP. Tel: 01904 629241. Price £11.95.*

Sue Middleton, Karl Ashworth and Ian Braithwaite

## Income Support Dynamics

The Income Support caseload is neither homogeneous nor stable. Instead, the benefit serves to meet the disparate and changing needs of a vast variety of people whose common characteristic is a shortage of money; a shortage that can result from any combination of a myriad of causes and which may turn out to be short term, long lasting or perhaps, as in the case of seasonal workers, cyclical.

Attempts to study the dynamic nature of the Income Support caseload can easily be frustrated by the heterogeneity of claimants and their experiences. In particular, sample sizes are often too small to capture adequately all this variety. Access to anonymised administrative records can help overcome this problem: CRSP has recently completed an analysis of a sample of almost 48,000 claimants who received Income Support at any time between May 1992 and June 1994.

During the two year period the 'caseload' defined by the sample rose from 27,000 to almost 32,000. Thirty nine per cent of claimants received Income Support throughout the period, 20 per cent were on benefit at the beginning of the period and subsequently moved off (at least once); 20 per cent made a new claim for benefit and were still receiving benefit at the end of the period; and 22 per cent also moved onto benefit during the period but had stopped claiming benefit (at least once) before June 1994.

The upward trend in the number of Income Support recipients, which accompanied the deepening recession of the early 1990s, was necessarily the net outcome of variable flows on and off benefit (see Figures). Inflows peaked in the months of January and December 1992 and 1993, when flows off benefit were also low, and in the summer months when numbers were boosted by school leavers. The upward trend was driven by high inflows in the earlier part of the period and, in the latter part, by a reduction in outflows.

It is apparent from the diagrams that the trends were dominated by the unemployed - who would nowadays be claiming Jobseeker's Allowance. Indeed, unemployed claimants constituted almost two-thirds of the inflow although, even at the end of the period, they only accounted for a little more than a third of the caseload. The reason for this seeming anomaly is, of course, that unemployed claimants were also much more likely than any other group to leave benefit. The introduction of Jobseeker's Allowance will substantially have reduced the volatility of the Income Support caseload.

The proportion of claimants with a disability increased over the two year period by about 12 per cent, from eight per cent of the caseload to nine per cent. This increase was caused, not by a rise in the number of new claims, but rather by a slowdown in the number of people with disabilities leaving benefit. As a consequence, the average time spent on benefit by claimants with disabilities increased. Even so, a

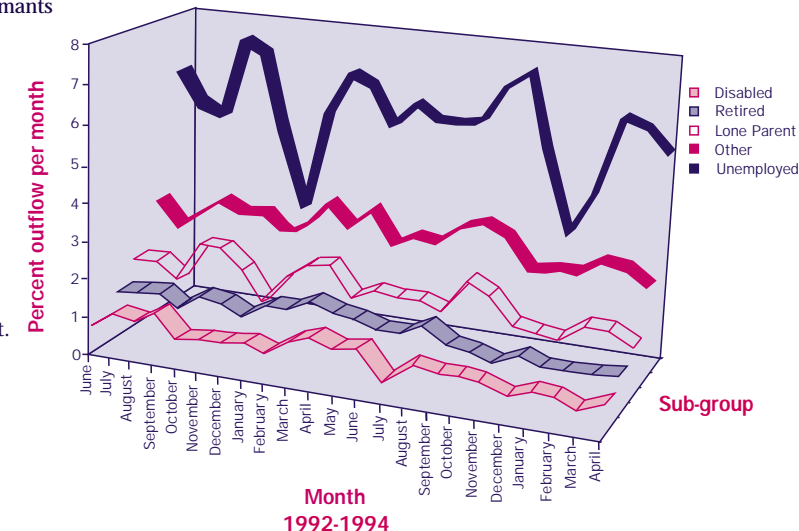
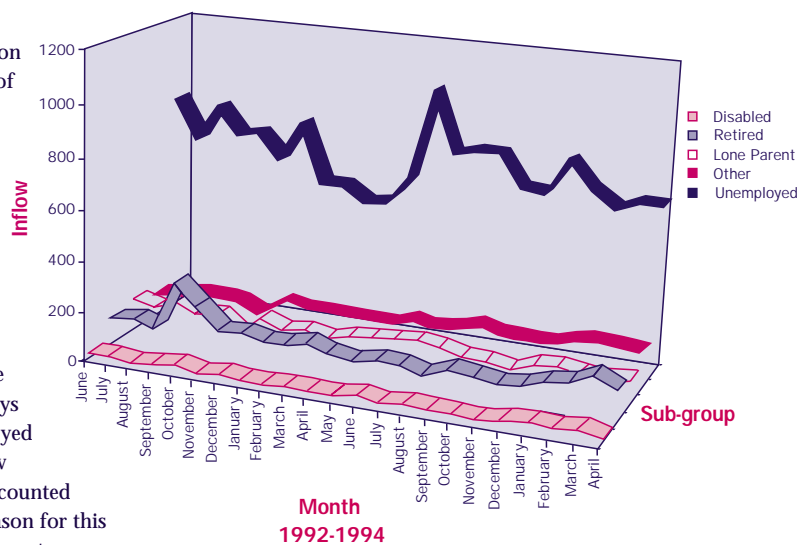
third of claimants with a recognised disability had left benefit by the end of the period. By contrast, very few retired claimants ceased claiming Income Support before they died.

The rate at which lone parents left benefit over the two years was very similar to the outflow of unemployed claimants. Many lone parents who leave Income Support do so by obtaining a job or by finding a new partner (who may be more likely to have employment when the economy is buoyant). The comparatively small number of people termed 'other' (because their heterogeneous characteristics frustrated simple classification) moved off benefit comparatively quickly. In their case, however, the outflows did not follow the same seasonal and secular pattern as the unemployed.

As this analysis demonstrates, it is misleading to view claimants as either a static or discrete group. Moreover, small fluctuations in the size and composition of the flows on and off benefit can eventually result in marked changes to the size and characteristics of the total caseload. Hence, policies to reduce caseloads or target benefits need only to alter flows quite marginally to achieve substantial change.

Further findings from this research are published in CRSP Working Papers 257aS, 261aS and 262aS.

Karl Ashworth, Robert Walker and Stephen McKay



## Jobseeker's Allowance Evaluation: Qualitative Research on Disallowed and Disqualified Claimants

### Introduction

This study relates to the benefits available to unemployed people before Jobseeker's Allowance: Unemployment Benefit, Income Support and National Insurance Credits. People who were disallowed or disqualified from unemployment-related benefit were interviewed.

As with the other elements of the evaluation of Jobseeker's Allowance, the study is in two phases, before and after the introduction of the benefit in October 1996. It will be repeated for claimants sanctioned under the rules of Jobseeker's Allowance. The evaluation was commissioned by the Department for Education and Employment, Department of Social Security, the Benefits Agency and the Employment Service.

Eligibility for Unemployment Benefit depended on a sufficient record of National Insurance contributions; ineligible claimants could apply for Income Support, a means-tested benefit. Receipt of these benefits protected claimants' National Insurance record. Those not eligible for cash benefit but still fulfilling the labour market conditions could have their National Insurance contributions credited to them during the period of unemployment.

Claimants' entitlement to unemployment-related benefit depended on their fulfilling two market conditions: they had to be available for employment and actively seeking work. People who failed to satisfy either of these conditions lost their entitlement and were disallowed. To regain entitlement they had only to change their behaviour.

Those who were entitled to benefit might take, or fail to take, some action which unreasonably caused or prolonged their unemployment. Four reasons were relevant to this study: unreasonable refusal of a job interview or employment; leaving a job voluntarily, without just cause; losing a job through misconduct; and failure to carry out a mandatory employment programme.

Disqualification brought the penalty of a reduction in benefit. Disqualification was imposed for a period and ran its course, regardless of the claimant's subsequent behaviour, for those sanctioned for unreasonable refusal of an interview/job, leaving employment voluntarily or losing employment through misconduct. However, those who gave a valid reason for failing to carry out an employment programme could arrange a new date and escape penalty, provided they attended as arranged. Their benefit was reduced for the week(s) they persisted. All claimants could make a formal appeal against disallowance or disqualification.

### The research

The aim of the research was to provide: a detailed understanding of the attitudes of disallowed or disqualified people; their decision making; their knowledge and acquisition of knowledge about the conditions of entitlement to benefit, and the rules governing disallowance and disqualification; and the shorter and longer-term

consequences of their penalty. Respondents were grouped according to the two reasons for disallowance and the four for disqualification.

The sample (30 respondents) reflected the distribution by reason for disallowance or disqualification and by benefit receipt in the Adjudication Statistics for 1994/1995. Recruitment difficulties were anticipated because of refusals and changes of address. Additional difficulties were met, largely because respondents were unclear about their benefit and the reason they were disallowed or disqualified.

Respondents' age, sex and family circumstances differed. Most of them were less than 30 years old; two-thirds were men; ten lived with their parents and another six lived with their parents and siblings. However, seven households were comprised of the respondent, their partner and dependent children.

### Findings

Respondents' knowledge of the rules and conditionality of benefits and the reasons they had been penalised was patchy. Respondents differed in their knowledge of the benefit they received. Most of those receiving Unemployment Benefit or Income Support were correct in their understanding; receipt of Credits or Hardship Payments was not understood well. Equally, respondents' accounts of the reason they were sanctioned were not always correct. This was due to their failure to grasp the rules and conditionality of benefit receipt. Consequently they were often surprised when they were penalised. Respondents who had been disallowed often appeared not to know what they should do in order to have their benefit reinstated. Few of those who had been disqualified felt they could have acted in any other way.

Respondents with caring responsibilities, people who had to give up work for health reasons, were studying or were members of minority ethnic groups appeared to face particular difficulties understanding and meeting the conditions and other rules for receipt of benefit. In addition, jobs which were not as advertised created problems for some respondents.

*'They wrote and said something like you've been penalised, they don't give the reason ... I did ask next time I went in and they told me that it was the fact that I was restricting my availability for work'.*

*(Not available for work)*

Few made formal appeals, but many contested decisions. The system was complex in practice and respondents failed to differentiate between responding to requests for information and initiating a formal appeal. Respondents who had been disallowed and those sanctioned for refusal to carry out an employment programme were most able to resolve their difficulties face-to-face with Benefits Agency staff. Some respondents reluctantly accepted their penalty, while others reacted with hurt and anger.

*'I didn't refuse not to do it, it's that at the time I couldn't do it for two reasons, I couldn't commit myself to a full week to do the course and the other one was I couldn't afford to do it anyway because I didn't have the money ... I did (appeal) a few times. Got nowhere ... I put an appeal in, social sent me the letters back, there is no reason for you not to go on the course because your wife is living with you. My wife had left months ago ... Not only that, she was claiming her own benefit.'*  
(Failure to attend mandatory programme)

Many respondents said they received little or no explanation of the conditions of benefit or why the penalty was imposed. Written explanations were criticised, and it is likely that literacy was an issue for some. Explanations sometimes were given only after the penalty had been imposed.

*'People come into this country ... they can get £100 a week and get lodgings ... I've paid 26 years stamp and I can't even get medicine free ... whoever brings someone into this country ... should be responsible for them ... if the sponsor can't pay then they should be sent back.'*  
(Not actively seeking work)

*'It was quite an experience, actually, going into the employment office and seeing people there that were quite obviously seriously looking for work and having difficulty finding work and not having the same cushion that I've got. One could sympathise with those quite a bit ... it felt as though they were actually more or less prostituting themselves just to try to get work itself ... it felt degrading ... and I really felt sorry for those individuals who are in that position.'*  
(Left job voluntarily)

Respondents believed that rules were necessary and should be enforced. However, most of them thought that, in their case, the penalty was not fair and their actions were justified. Few knew anyone else who had been disallowed or disqualified. Those who had paid regular National Insurance contributions felt particularly cheated.

Some respondents said that signing on and being put under pressure to seek work was a degrading process; others felt that the rules for benefit receipt and the penalties for contravening them were part of a concerted effort to force people to take low paid and private agency work.

*'We had to keep borrowing off his mother and I don't like to do that. I don't like borrowing money at all because sometimes you can't pay it back and you're really stuck ... It's still difficult now, I'm borrowing next weeks money to pay for this week'*  
(Not available for work)

*'I couldn't even go down town for a newspaper. I hadn't even got 27p to go and buy a newspaper ... My mum paid the bills, I was stopping here for nothing ... we were just surviving on my mum's widow's pension. It's not enough for two people.'*  
(Refusal of job)

The penalties brought considerable effects. Indebtedness was nearly universal. Parents with young children borrowed, fell into debt and failed to keep up with regular outgoings. Adults without children were fearful of debt, changed their lifestyles and, in some cases, borrowed and went into debt. Young people at home worried about the family income, changed their lifestyles, fell into debt and were supported by their parents.

*'(I thought) what are we going to do if I don't get the job and they cut my benefit, how would I survive with my kids and my wife. That was actually the worst part ... You haven't got any other choice but to do what they say to you.'*  
(Failure to go on mandatory programme)

The short-term effects on attitudes and behaviour varied. Three respondents said they were working while claiming benefit. Some expressed mild feelings of disappointment and annoyance, but others felt more strongly and acted accordingly. Many said they were depressed, and a minority had been frightened by their experience.

*'If it's a matter of surviving or not surviving you have to go through this rigmarole, but (otherwise) I'd seriously think twice about it because it's so much hassle ... I'm pretty cynical about it. Just the process you have to go through and the fact that it feels as though they are trying to catch you out all the time and they'd rather just get you out the door and get you working in a chippy than actually helping you.'*  
(Not available for work)

*'To be honest with you if I did lose my job again I wouldn't sign on ... I'd sort something out, but I wouldn't sign on. I think it's just a big farce, a rip off. The money I've paid in over the last 12 or 13 years on National Insurance and everything and you get nothing out of it.'*  
(Not actively seeking work)

The longer-term and lasting effects differed in relation to the conduct and circumstances which caused the sanction. Some had not changed their views and would act the same way again; many so disliked being unemployed and signing on they would avoid it if possible; some had become wary of applying for or taking a job because of their experiences; few felt they would respond differently in the future, given the same circumstances.

The study suggests that ignorance of the rules and conditionality of benefit militates against the deterrent effect of disallowance and disqualification.

The report concludes that it is important to create clear rules and ensure they are known and understood by Jobcentre staff and claimants. The rules governing benefit and its conditionality, and the sanctions which will follow when the rules are broken, lose their deterrent effect when they are not known in advance.

*Copies of the full report ISBN 0 85522 612 9 - priced £4.95 - are available from Cambertown Ltd, Goldthorpe Industrial Estate, Goldthorpe, Rotherham, S63 9BL. (01709 888688).*

Jill Vincent and Barbara Dobson

## Making Jobseeker's Allowance Work

Jobseeker's Allowance, which has replaced Unemployment Benefit and Income Support for the unemployed, is designed to emphasise and enforce the labour market obligations inherent in the receipt of benefits. As part of the ongoing evaluation of the new benefit, 5,000 unemployed claimants were interviewed in Autumn 1995, before Jobseeker's Allowance was introduced. Among other things respondents were asked about their understanding of the conditionality of benefit and what emerged has important ramifications.

In summary, the vast majority of respondents accepted that it was their responsibility to look for work. Most were happy that claimants should be penalised if they did not fulfil their obligations. On the other hand, it was clear that respondents had only the broadest understanding of the rules associated with signing on for benefit, actively seeking or being available for work. Or, at least, they were only able to talk in generalities about them.

It follows that many of the principles underlying Jobseeker's Allowance may prove to be acceptable to, and indeed supported by, unemployed claimants. However, the real challenge is how to convey the details relating to conditionality to people who had not grappled with them in the past and who may feel they have more important things to worry about.

The research points to some possibilities based on procedures already in place before the introduction of Jobseeker's Allowance and also some limitations. To begin with the latter, a large majority of respondents told interviewers that they followed, at least in part, a Back to Work Plan agreed with the Employment Service. Under Jobseeker's Allowance a not dissimilar Jobseeker's Agreement has become a condition of benefit. The process by which the agreement is drawn up is different, as is the focus and mode of review.

However, it was evident that even those who adopted the plan generally followed it without any conviction that it would do any good. There were exceptions to this rule, most notably people who had had no prior experience of unemployment, but large numbers of respondents thought that the plan was 'no more than common sense' and comparatively few admitted to changing their behaviour as a result of agreeing the plan.

Jobseeker's Agreements are more detailed than Back to Work Plans. This may make them more difficult to follow in only broad terms. Claimants need to be made to feel that their Agreement has greater intrinsic value than their previous plans otherwise being made to follow the details is likely to become irksome and increase antagonism towards, and perhaps non-compliance with, the system.

On a more positive note, it is apparent that the active signing procedures - when the signing on interview is used by staff as an opportunity to monitor and assist with job-search - may have had some noticeable effects. Active signing is continued under Jobseeker's Allowance under the label 'Fortnightly Attendance'. Respondents mentioned taking action as a direct result of their last signing on interview, ranging from what might be considered very basic search activity, such as scanning the vacancy notice-boards in the Jobcentre, to applying for specific jobs and training courses.

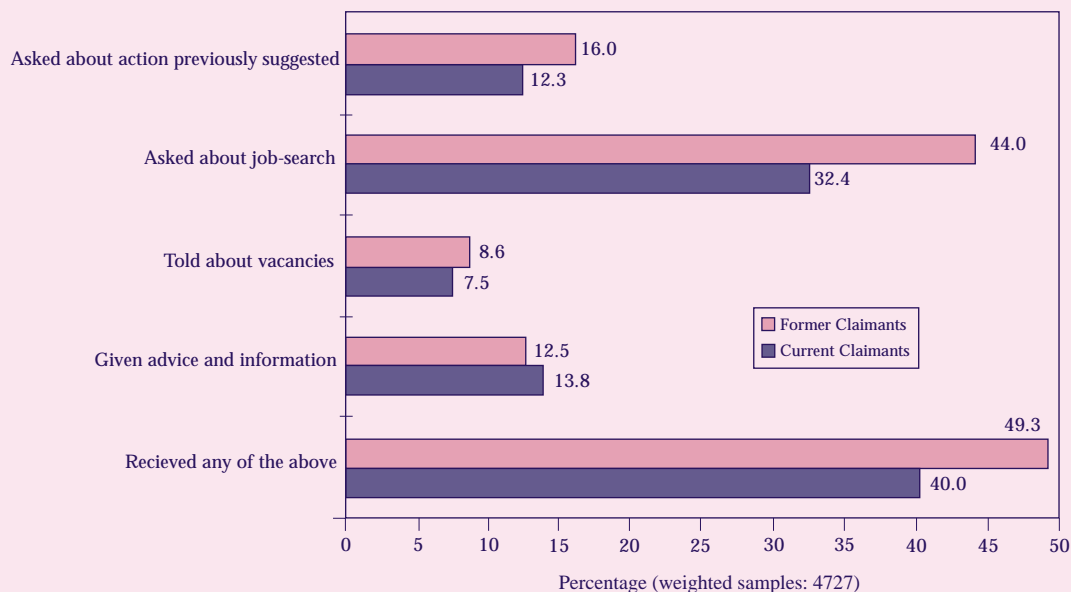
While it is not possible at this stage to assess whether the increased job-search activity that probably results from active signing bears fruit in the form of people moving into work, it seems unlikely to have the opposite effect. Indeed, respondents who had already moved off benefit before being interviewed were more likely than others to report that staff had been proactive when they last signed on.

Similarly, it is impossible to say whether the positive impact of active signing can be sustained under Jobseeker's Allowance. Individuals may become bored and annoyed by constant checking and intervention, something that the next wave of research will investigate. Also, theoretically, it is possible that active signing will raise the overall level of job-search which, once the less difficult to fill vacancies have been filled, establishes a new equilibrium in which jobseekers are working harder at finding jobs but no more vacancies are being filled.

*Bottomley, D., McKay, S. and Walker, R., (1997), Unemployment and Jobseeking in 1995: A National Survey in 1995, Department of Social Security Research Report No 62. London: HMSO.*

Stephen McKay and Robert Walker

**Figure 1 Responses to Signing On Among Current and Former Claimants**



## An Earned Income Tax Credit?

The Taylor review is considering the advantages of introducing a new in-work tax credit for low-paid workers based on the US Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The reason is dissatisfaction with Jobseeker's Allowance (for people working less than 16 hours) and Family Credit (for those on low incomes working longer) and reports from the USA that the EITC is a more effective scheme. Both the British schemes are income-tested and hence contribute to work disincentives. Family Credit is also expensive and expenditure is rising; the interaction with the tax system means some people are receiving benefit at the same time as they pay income tax ('churning'); and there is little evidence of much movement off Family Credit into better paid jobs. Even so it should not be forgotten that Family Credit is designed to minimise the poverty trap, serves to lessen the unemployment trap created by Jobseeker's Allowance and provides immediate financial help to families which is targeted on children by making payments to the mother. It is also comparatively simple to administer.

approached. US families with earnings above a third of the median can have higher disposable income than those in Britain.

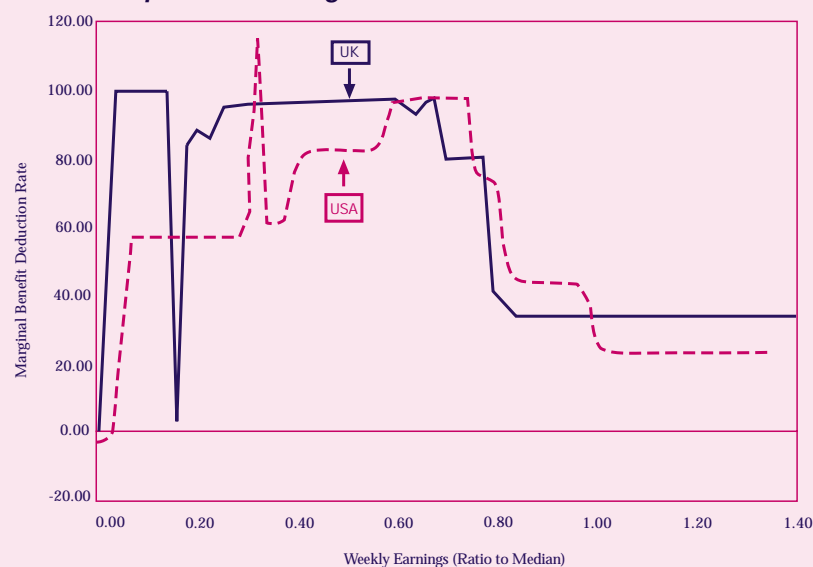
EITC is expensive (expenditure exceeds AFDC), subject to excessive fraud, may have perverse effects on labour supply and offers little direct financial reward during the difficult transition from welfare to work.

### A British EITC?

The case for a British EITC is not, therefore, overwhelming. Moreover introducing an Earnings Credit, particularly one aimed to achieve real time payments, would be extraordinarily difficult. Key obstacles are:

- the annual accounting employed by Inland Revenue and the need for the more frequent payment of credit;
- the mismatch between individual assessment for tax and household assessment for benefits;
- the requirement (if the precedent set by Family Credit is followed) to pay benefits to the mother even if it is her partner who is employed;
- the need to be responsive to the short-term nature of much employment.

**Figure 1 UK and USA comparison of marginal benefit deduction rate for all benefits including EITC**



### The US System

The US federal income tax scheme requires most adults to file an annual end of year return and those with low earnings are eligible to receive a credit, meaning a positive payment if the credit exceeds their tax liability. There are three separate schedules for taxpayers with no children, one child and with two or more children. Tax assessment is based on the household (not on individuals as in Britain) and couples with two children can receive credit on earnings up to \$28,495 (£17,062) per year; the credit would increase with income up to a maximum of \$3,356 (£2,010) on earnings of \$8,890 (£5,323).

Predominantly annual payment means that the EITC provides a bonus for working, rather than an immediate incentive to work or take up work. The working poor rely on food stamps to meet their day to day needs. EITC interacts with food stamps, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) (now Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)) and housing subsidies to generate high effective tax rates. These peak at around two-thirds of median earnings and are higher than in Britain as median earnings are

There are also strong grounds for preferring the assessment of family circumstances to be made by the Benefits Agency (or a special agency) rather than employers or the Inland Revenue.

If ministers were to pursue this idea on the basis of a recommendation in the Taylor review, one option that might be worth exploring is a partial scheme linked to the amalgamation of Family Credit and Jobseeker's Allowance. Family support costs would be met by a new parental responsibility benefit, straddling the employment divide; an out-of-work benefit would provide for the unemployed; while a wage subsidy, in the form of a tax credit, could be paid to one earner in families.

*Walker, R. and Wiseman, M., (1997), An Earned Income Tax Credit for Britain: Possibilities and Alternatives - priced £9.00 - Centre for Research in Social Policy Working Paper CRSP303S.*

Robert Walker and Michael Wiseman

# CRSP News Update

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## New Projects

Since our last Briefings, CRSP has been delighted to receive funding for the following research projects:

- Helping Unemployed People into Self-Employment
- Labour Experiences of Young Men
- Obligations in Social Assistance in Europe
- Leicester Food and Health Project
- Social Policy, Diet and Health in Low Income Households
- Moving out of Unemployment: Third Wave of Interviews with Pre-Jobseeker's Allowance Claimant Cohort

## Staff Matters

Matt Barnes, Research Assistant, left CRSP on 30th April to take employment at Bath University as a Research Officer.

CRSP also said goodbye to this year's student researchers, Rachel Youngs, from Loughborough University and Nicola Croden, from Surrey University. We welcome their replacements, Rebecca Warton (Loughborough) and Charlotte Bates (Bath).

Ian Braithwaite, one of our 1995/96 students returned to CRSP temporarily, as a research assistant after gaining a 2:1 at Surrey University. He left in August to join Pinnacle Insurance as a Researcher.

Dr Katharine Gaskin, Senior Research Fellow, left the centre in June to devote more time to her freelance activities.

Since the last issue of Briefings the following staff have joined the centre: Heather Trickey, Research Associate who started on 14th April; Alison Smith, Research Assistant who started on 7th July; Julia Shropshire, Research Associate who started on 14th July; David Abbott, Research Associate who started on 1st September; and Suella Harriman, Secretarial/Clerical Assistant who started on 16th June.

Zoë Irving joined CRSP on a six month temporary contract to work on the Housing Benefit and Supported Accommodation project. She left on 19th September to take up a lecturing post at the Faculty of Health & Environment, Leeds Metropolitan University.

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## Secondment

Karen Kellard has recently returned from a seven month secondment as a Research Officer at the Department of Social Security's Social Research Branch within the Analytical Services Division. During the secondment, she was part of a small team of researchers based at the Benefits Agency's headquarters in Leeds. The post of Research Officer in the Social Research Branch involves managing research, acting as liaison between research contractors and research customers within the Department, and ensuring that research meets policy objectives

or requirements. During the secondment, Karen worked on a number of projects, mostly relating to benefit delivery and operational efficiency, feeding in to the Departmental Change Programme and other policy initiatives. The secondment was a valuable and successful experience and it is hoped that there will be future opportunities to build on links between the Department and the Centre.

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## Forthcoming Publications

### Customer Contact with the Benefits Agency

Research commissioned by the DSS, to investigate the nature of contacts customers have with the Benefits Agency, has now been completed. The report, which includes both qualitative and quantitative findings, is to be published in the DSS Research Series in the Autumn.

### Jobseeker's Allowance Evaluation: Employment Service/ Benefits Agency Interface Qualitative Research

The findings of pre-Jobseeker's Allowance qualitative research to investigate customers' understanding of the role of, and interface between, the Employment Service and the Benefits Agency will be published in the DSS Research Series, also in the Autumn.

### A Dynamic Book

The Dynamics of Modern Society: Policy, Poverty and Welfare, edited by Robert Walker and Lutz Leisering of Bremen University, is due to be published by Policy Press early next year.

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## Long-Term Unemployment and the Threat of Social Exclusion

The above report is now available from *Policy Press*, University of Bristol, Rodney Lodge, Grange Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 4EA, Tel: 0117 973 8797, Fax 0117 973 7308 Email [tpp@bris.ac.uk](mailto:tpp@bris.ac.uk), ISBN 1-86134-062-1 for £11.95.

*CRSP, founded in 1983, is an autonomous research centre based in the Social Sciences Department of Loughborough University.*

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