



The Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP) program two decades on: A descriptive cohort study

Smith-Carrier, Tracy and Kerr, Don "The Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP) program two decades on: A descriptive cohort study"
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What the researchers did

The study followed two cohorts of participants in Ontario Work's (OW) Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) program (Cohort One: 2003-2008, Cohort Two: 2009-2014) to explore how many had stayed, shifted programs (e.g., to the disability program) or left the social assistance system entirely.

What the researchers found

The researchers found that after following participants over a 5-year period, the number of participants able to leave income assistance entirely after five years was greater for Cohort One (51.3%; N=1,747) compared to Cohort Two (43.2%; N=1,520). Rates of people leaving the OW program, while higher for Cohort One than Cohort Two, were still low; roughly 10% lower than those leaving the overall social assistance caseload. Compared to the OW caseload in its entirety, LEAP participants were more likely to remain in receipt of benefits over time.

RDC Datasets used

Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services administrative datafiles

Policy areas this research can inform

- Children and youth
- Education, training and learning
- Income, pensions, spending and wealth
- Labour

Policy implications of this research

The LEAP program does not appear to vastly improve the employment prospects of a large proportion of its participants over time. The researchers suggest that active labour market programs (ALMPs), like LEAP, which focus on short-term employment readiness (e.g., resume writing workshops) do not dramatically assist LEAP participants over the long-term. Other researchers have suggested that access to advanced education and skills training, paired with access to affordable childcare and housing, is showing promising results for LEAP participants in the USA.

Read the full article

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