

Not Just Getting By!: Single Working-Poor Mothers and Education

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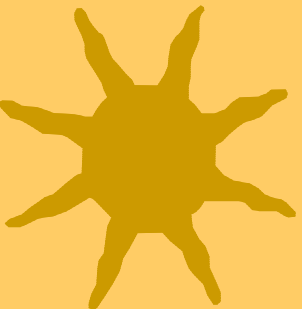


Women in the Workplace

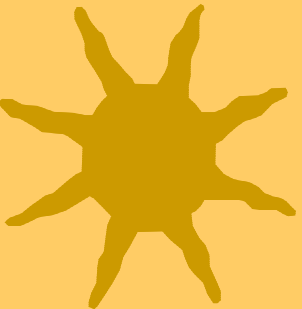


★ Women comprise 46% of labor force.

★ 99% of all American women will work for pay at some point in their lifetime.



★ Women's labor force participation is expected to grow from 1.5 million to over 2.3 million in 2015.



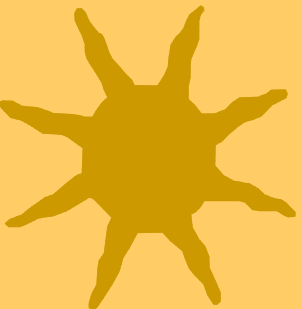


Demographic Characteristics of Women

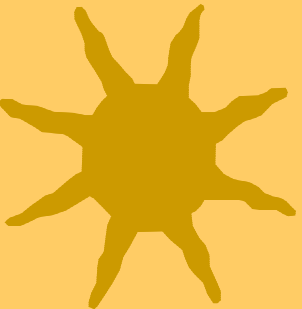


★ 2/3 of married women work.

★ 60.7% of mothers with children under the age of 3 work.



★ 47% of women are on their own. 27% are single and 20% are divorced, separated or widowed.



★ Single women head 18% of all families.



Gender Pay Gap



★ Overall, women earn about 74% of men's wages.

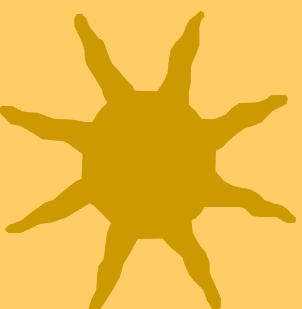


- Compared to men of the same race
 - White women earn 70% of men's wages
 - Black women earn 83% of men's wages
 - Hispanic women earn 87% of men's wages





Gender Pay Gap (continued)



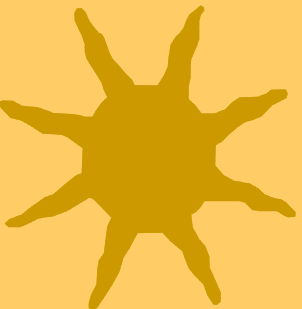
- ★ In the nearly 40 years since the Equal Pay Act passed, the pay gap between men and women has only narrowed by less than a half.



Some More Data:



★ 2 out of 3 working women earn less than \$30,000 per year.



★ 9 out of 10 working women earn less than \$50,000.



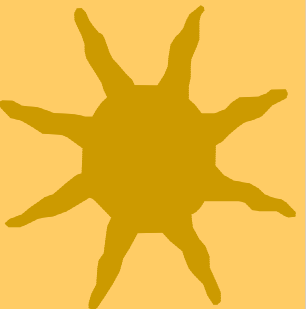
★ Half of all women work in traditionally female jobs.



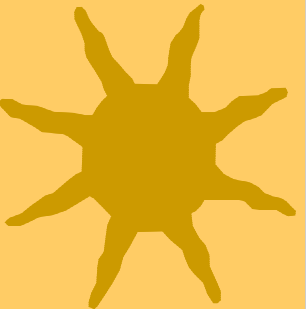
Some More Data (continued):



★ Less than 2 percent of African American women earn more than \$75,000 a year, and 62 percent earn less than \$25,000.



★ About 1 percent of working Latinas earn more than \$75,000, and 75 percent earn less than \$25,000.





Some More Data (continued):



★ Women are one-third more likely than men to be among the working poor.

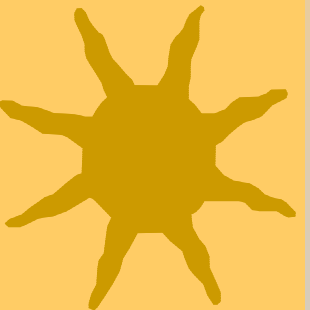


★ The key here is the **WORKING** poor...A woman can work full-time in a minimum wage job and earn only about \$14,500 a year.

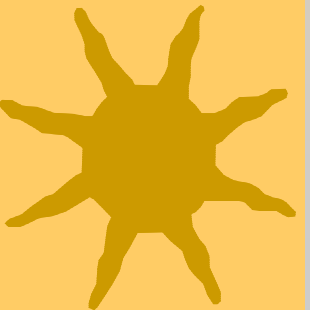




*Online Learning for Single
Working-Poor Mothers*



New Jersey Pilot Program

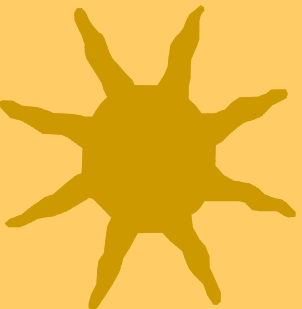




Major Factor Explaining Low Incomes is Low Skills

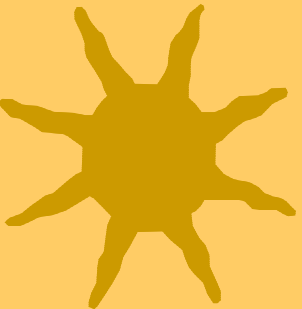


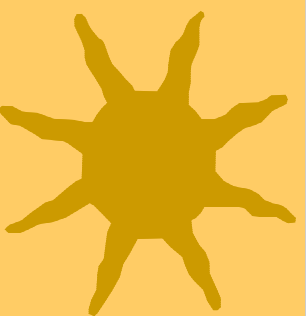
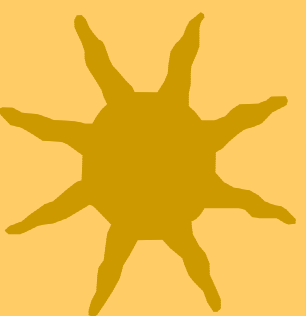
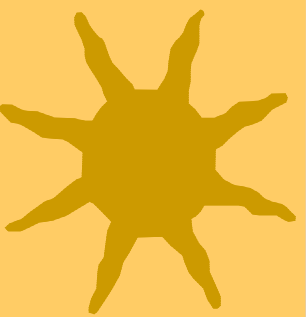
★ Jobs that require advanced skills are experiencing significant growth.



★ High level skills are required across industries.

– 60% of sales-related jobs in the service sector require skills beyond high school





★ While few doubt that education and skills training have positive effects on labor-market rewards and economic self sufficiency, the real challenge for low wage workers is attaining that education and training.



Barriers to Traditional Training



★ Childcare Needs – “Off hours and Affordable”

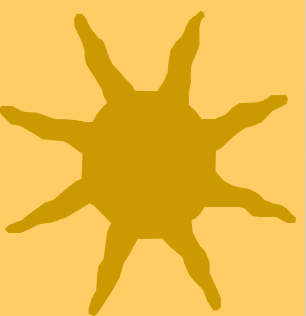
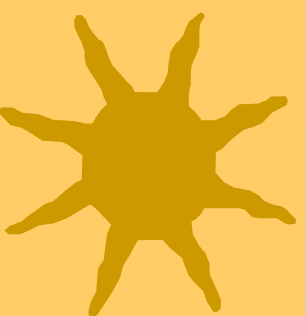
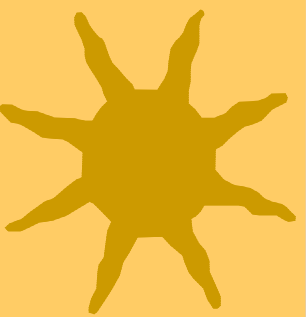


★ Irregular Work Schedules

★ Transportation

★ Little Access to Employer Sponsored Training





★ What is the best way to deliver skills training to working-poor single mothers?



Why Online Learning?



★ Flexibility in time and location

★ Saves money on childcare



★ Addresses transportation needs

★ Access to classes not locally available

★ Alleviates some of the discomfort felt in traditional classes

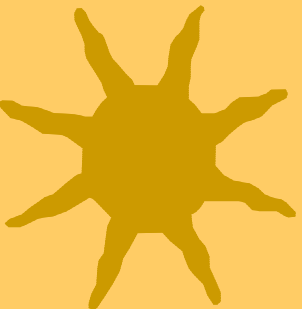




NJ Program of Online Learning



★ Single mothers earning 250% or less of poverty level were eligible.



★ Each participant received computer, printer, Internet access, and courses for a year.



★ Each participant received access to One Stop Center's resources.



Who Are the Women?



- ★ Currently enrolled – 128 women
- ★ Average age – 32
- ★ Average income - \$16,900
- ★ Average number of children – 2
- ★ English as a second language – 19
- ★ Disabilities – 7



EDUCATION

- ★ Less than high school – 7 women
- ★ High school graduates/GED – 68
- ★ Some college – 24
- ★ Associates degree – 18
- ★ College graduate – 6
- ★ Technical degree – 15
- ★ Law degree [non US] – 2



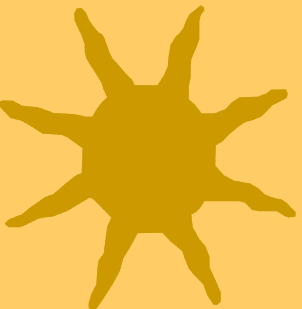


More Demographic Information



★ Race/Ethnicity

- African American – 56 women
- White – 47
- Hispanic – 24
- Native American – 1



★ Occupation

- Administrative Support – 58 women
- Retail/Food Service/ Housecleaning – 27
- Childcare – 15
- Health Care – 16
- Factory work – 3
- Bus Driver – 2
- Bank Tellers – 5
- Mail Carrier – 1





Previous Computer Experience



❖ Used the Internet before – 100 women

❖ Used e-mail before – 90 women



❖ Used chat rooms before – 61 women

❖ Sent a file as an attachment before – 40 women





Findings



★ High Retention Rate – 128 participants, only 11 left the program



★ Average wage increase – 14%



★ Women also entered college and community college programs



More Findings

ALL the women felt they would not have had the opportunity to take courses and increase their technological skills without this online program

★ Flexibility in time and location

- Work around their schedules
- Laptop computers

★ Helps alleviate childcare demands

- Age of children is important
- Family literacy effects

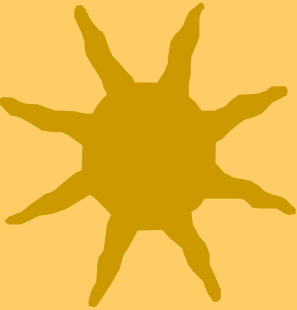
★ Helps alleviate transportation demands

- Access to courses not available in local area

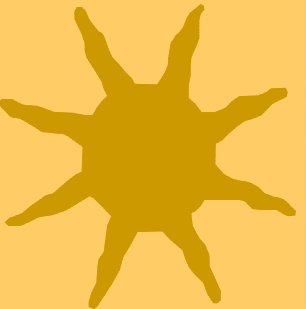
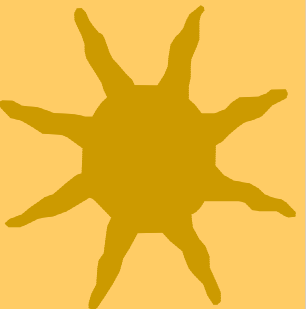
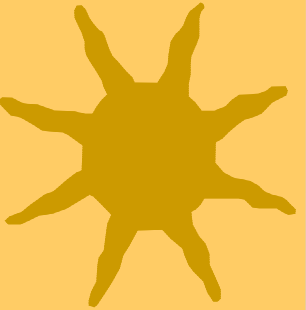
★ Participation in the program increases women's confidence and self-esteem



Role of the Sloan Center for Innovative Learning and Workforce Development



- ★ Scale up the project nationally
- ★ Promote awareness of the project and the findings of the New Jersey pilot program
- ★ Provide technical assistance to implement the online program in other states
- ★ Provide Sloan Start-Up Grants to small number of states



Questions or
Comments...