

CHAPTER II: RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS AND WELFARE HISTORY

This chapter presents data on the characteristics and welfare experience of respondents who were *still off welfare* when they were surveyed. These persons represent approximately 80 percent of all respondents to the survey. Data are presented for the six major counties in the study. Data on the two small counties are presented in the final chapter of the report. The chapter is organized as follows:

- Section A provides data on basic demographics of the respondents, such as gender, age, ethnicity, and education.
- Section B presents data on household composition.
- Section C presents survey data on self-reported reasons why respondents left Work First.
- Section D presents administrative data on the number of months respondents had left on their time clocks.
- Section E presents a summary demographic profile for each county.

A. BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

This section presents data on basic demographics of respondents who were still off welfare at the time of the surveys. The key findings in this section are as follows:

Gender

- As shown on Exhibit II-1, nearly all (96.4 percent) of respondents were female. County C (5.7 percent) and County D (5.2 percent) had the highest percentage of male respondents. County B (1.6 percent) and County E (2.1 percent) had the lowest percentage of male respondents.

Ethnicity

- Exhibit II-2 shows that the counties varied in terms of the ethnicity of the respondents. Of all respondents, 64.0 percent were black, 31.9 percent were white, and 4.2 percent were in other ethnic groups. The percentage of black respondents was highest in County A (84.8 percent), County B (79.9 percent), and County E (75.4 percent). The counties with the highest percentage of whites were County C (63.8 percent) and County F (52.1 percent).

- Slightly more than half (53.8 percent) of the respondents were under 30 years old as of April 2000 (Exhibit II-3). The median age was 29. In County B, respondents were older with a median age of 30. Respondents in County A, County E, and County D had a slightly lower median age of 28. In County D, a relatively large percentage of respondents (29.8 percent) were under age 25.

EXHIBIT II-1
GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS, BY COUNTY

County	Female	Male	Total
County A	96.4%	3.6%	100.0%
County B	98.4%	1.6%	100.0%
County C	94.3%	5.7%	100.0%
County D	94.8%	5.2%	100.0%
County E	97.9%	2.1%	100.0%
County F	95.8%	4.2%	100.0%
TOTAL	96.4%	3.6%	100.0%

EXHIBIT II-2
ETHNICITY OF THE RESPONDENTS, BY COUNTY

County	Black	White	Other	Total
County A	84.8%	10.8%	4.3%	100.0%
County B	79.9%	17.2%	2.9%	100.0%
County C	31.2%	63.8%	5.0%	100.0%
County D	50.4%	45.2%	4.4%	100.0%
County E	75.4%	20.4%	4.2%	100.0%
County F	43.7%	52.1%	4.2%	100.0%
TOTAL	64.0%	31.9%	4.2%	100.0%

**EXHIBIT II-3
AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS, BY COUNTY***

County	Median	18-24	25-29	30-34	35- 39	40 +	Total
County A	28.0	27.1%	28.9%	17.7%	14.1%	12.3%	100.0%
County B	30.0	22.1%	27.3%	19.5%	16.6%	14.6%	100.0%
County C	29.0	25.8%	25.1%	21.5%	16.5%	11.1%	100.0%
County D	28.0	29.8%	27.8%	17.7%	13.3%	11.3%	100.0%
County E	28.0	24.6%	31.2%	22.8%	9.1%	12.3%	100.0%
County F	29.0	16.9%	38.0%	21.1%	11.3%	12.7%	100.0%
TOTAL	29.0	25.3%	28.5%	20.0%	13.8%	12.4%	100.0%

*Age as of April 2000.

Education

- Data in Exhibit II-4 and Exhibit II-5 show that across counties, 31 percent of respondents did not have a high school diploma or GED. The percentage of respondents who had not completed high school or a GED was highest in County A (34.7 percent), County C (32.4 percent) and County D (34.4 percent).
- Overall, 28.7 percent of respondents had attended college, although only 7.4 percent had obtained a two-year or four-year degree. The percentage who had attended college was highest in County E (36.7 percent).

**EXHIBIT II-4
EDUCATION OF THE RESPONDENTS, BY COUNTY**

County	Did Not Complete High School or GED	Completed High School Only	Completed GED Only	Attended College – Did Not Graduate	Graduated Two-Year College	Graduated Four-Year College	Total
County A	34.7%	29.9%	8.8%	19.7%	4.4%	2.6%	100.0%
County B	28.8%	36.3%	5.9%	20.6%	5.6%	2.9%	100.0%
County C	32.4%	28.1%	14.0%	19.8%	1.8%	4.0%	100.0%
County D	34.4%	32.0%	7.8%	20.1%	3.3%	2.5%	100.0%
County E	26.9%	29.7%	6.7%	26.5%	6.0%	4.2%	100.0%
County F	25.7%	41.4%	7.1%	21.4%	2.9%	1.4%	100.0%
TOTAL	31.0%	31.8%	8.5%	21.4%	4.2%	3.2%	100.0%

**EXHIBIT II-5
GROUPED EDUCATION OF THE RESPONDENTS, BY COUNTY**

	Did Not Complete	Completed High		
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County	High School or GED	School or GED Only	Attended College	Total
County A	34.7%	38.7%	26.6%	100.0%
County B	28.8%	42.2%	29.1%	100.0%
County C	32.4%	42.1%	25.5%	100.0%
County D	34.4%	39.8%	25.8%	100.0%
County E	26.9%	36.4%	36.7%	100.0%
County F	25.7%	48.6%	25.7%	100.0%
TOTAL	31.0%	40.3%	28.7%	100.0%

B. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

This section presents findings on household composition. The major findings in this section are as follows:

Number of Other Adults in the Household

- As shown in Exhibit II-6, 41.9 percent of all respondents had one or more other adults living in the household. The percentage of respondents who were living with another adult was highest in County F (55.7 percent), County B (47.5 percent) and County D (47.1%).
- Exhibit II-7 shows the actual number of other adults living in the household. The data show that 29.1 percent of the respondents were living with one other adult. In County F, 45.7 percent of respondents were living with one other adult. The percentage of respondents living with two or more other adults was highest in County B (16.3 percent) and County D (15.4 percent).
- Exhibit II-8 presents data on the relationship of the other adults to the respondents. The data show that 21.9 percent of respondents were living with a parent or grandparent (mostly with the parent). The percentage was highest in County B (26.8 percent).
- The data show that 9.5 percent of respondents were living with a spouse. The percentage who were living with their spouse was highest in County C (14.7 percent), County F (14.3 percent), and County D (11.7 percent).
- Overall, 14.9 percent reported living with a spouse or partner. The percentage living with a spouse or partner was highest in County F (25.7 percent).

**EXHIBIT II-6
PRESENCE OF OTHER ADULTS IN THE HOUSEHOLD, BY COUNTY**

County	One or More Other Adults	No Other Adults	Total

County A	33.2%	66.8%	100.0%
County B	47.5%	52.5%	100.0%
County C	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%
County D	47.1%	52.9%	100.0%
County E	36.7%	63.3%	100.0%
County F	55.7%	44.3%	100.0%
TOTAL	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%

**EXHIBIT II-7
NUMBER OF OTHER ADULTS IN THE HOUSEHOLD, BY COUNTY**

County	None	One	Two	Three +	Total
County A	66.8%	22.3%	8.4%	2.6%	100.0%
County B	52.5%	31.1%	14.0%	2.3%	100.0%
County C	58.1%	28.7%	9.6%	3.7%	100.0%
County D	52.9%	31.7%	10.4%	5.0%	100.0%
County E	63.3%	27.6%	6.7%	2.5%	100.0%
County F	44.3%	45.7%	8.6%	1.4%	100.0%
TOTAL	58.1%	29.1%	9.8%	3.1%	100.0%

**EXHIBIT II-8
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS LIVING WITH
SPECIFIC ADULTS, BY COUNTY**

County	Spouse	Partner	Parent/ Grandparent	Adult Child	Sibling	Other Relative	Unrelated Adult
County A	5.1%	3.6%	18.6%	4.7%	5.5%	3.6%	5.5%
County B	6.7%	3.4%	26.8%	5.4%	8.1%	6.7%	8.4%
County C	14.7%	5.9%	24.3%	1.8%	2.6%	3.7%	5.9%
County D	11.7%	10.0%	22.9%	5.0%	6.7%	2.9%	7.5%
County E	8.8%	3.2%	17.0%	3.9%	6.0%	5.3%	4.2%
County F	14.3%	11.4%	21.4%	2.9%	4.3%	4.3%	8.6%
TOTAL	9.5%	5.4%	21.9%	4.1%	5.7%	4.5%	6.4%

Number of Children

- As shown in Exhibit II-9, respondents had an average of 2.1 children in their households at the time of the surveys. Slightly less than a third had one child, another third had two children, and the remaining third had three or more children.

- The percentage with three or more children was highest in County B (35.7 percent) and lowest in County D (27.8 percent).

**EXHIBIT II-9
NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD, BY COUNTY***

County	None	One	Two	Three +	Total	Average
County A	3.6%	31.6%	32.0%	32.7%	100.0%	2.2
County B	3.6%	28.5%	32.1%	35.7%	100.0%	2.2
County C	4.7%	33.8%	33.1%	28.4%	100.0%	1.9
County D	3.7%	31.0%	37.6%	27.8%	100.0%	2.0
County E	2.1%	33.5%	31.3%	33.1%	100.0%	2.1
County F	2.8%	28.2%	35.2%	33.8%	100.0%	2.2
TOTAL	3.5%	31.5%	33.2%	31.8%	100.0%	2.1

* At the time of the survey

Age of the Youngest Child

- Exhibit II-10 shows that about half of the respondents had children aged three or under and that almost two-thirds (64.2 percent) had children under six years old.
- The median age of children across all counties was four. However, the median age in County F was only two.
- Counties with a high percentage of children under four included County F (58.0 percent), County D (53.4 percent), and County A (53.2 percent).

**EXHIBIT II-10
AGE OF THE YOUNGEST CHILD IN THE HOUSEHOLD, BY COUNTY**

County	Median Age	0-3 years	4-5 years	6-12 years	13+ years	Total
County A	3	53.2%	15.8%	26.0%	4.9%	100.0%
County B	4	44.6%	15.3%	33.7%	6.5%	100.0%
County C	4	48.7%	13.6%	32.8%	4.9%	100.0%
County D	3	53.4%	15.3%	25.0%	6.4%	100.0%

County E	4	48.7%	13.0%	30.3%	7.9%	100.0%
County F	2	58.0%	8.7%	29.0%	4.3%	100.0%
TOTAL	4	49.9%	14.3%	29.7%	6.0%	100.0%

C. YEAR WHEN RESPONDENTS FIRST RECEIVED WELFARE IN NORTH CAROLINA

- About 22 percent of respondents had first received welfare in North Carolina before 1990 (Exhibit II-11). The percentage was highest in County B (28.1 percent), County E (24.4 percent) and County A (23.6 percent).
- Overall, 58.3 percent of respondents had first received welfare before 1996 and 39.3 percent had first received welfare before 1993.
- About 43 percent of respondents had first received welfare since 1996. The percentage was highest in County D (51.6 percent) and County C (51.1 percent). In County B, only about one-third of respondents had first received welfare since 1996.

**EXHIBIT II-11
YEAR WHEN RESPONDENT FIRST RECEIVED WELFARE IN
NORTH CAROLINA, BY COUNTY**

County	Median	Before 1990	1990-1992	1993-1995	1996-1999	Total
County A	1994	23.6%	20.4%	18.2%	37.8%	100.0%
County B	1993	28.1%	20.3%	19.0%	32.7%	100.0%
County C	1996	18.0%	17.6%	13.3%	51.1%	100.0%
County D	1996	16.4%	12.7%	19.3%	51.6%	100.0%
County E	1995	24.4%	14.1%	19.1%	42.4%	100.0%
County F	1995	16.9%	16.9%	22.5%	43.7%	100.0%
TOTAL	1994	22.1%	17.2%	18.0%	42.8%	100.0%

D. REASONS FOR LEAVING WORK FIRST

For persons who were still off welfare when surveyed, Exhibit II-12 presents survey findings on the self-reported reasons for leaving welfare.

- The data show that 59.2 percent of all respondents left welfare to take a job or return to a job, and another 4.4 percent got a higher paying job or more work hours. The percentage who left to get a job was highest in County B (66.6 percent) and lowest in County F (43.7 percent)

**EXHIBIT II-12
SELF-REPORTED REASONS FOR LEAVING WELFARE AMONG
RESPONDENTS STILL OFF WELFARE, BY COUNTY***

Reason	County A	County B	County C	County D	County E	County F	Total
Found a job/returned to work	57.2%	66.6%	56.8%	57.5%	60.8%	43.7%	59.2%
Didn't follow rules or couldn't meet requirements	16.2%	7.1%	12.9%	14.2%	10.1%	14.1%	12.0%
Did not want to be on welfare or use up benefits	9.7%	8.8%	9.3%	6.1%	9.4%	9.9%	8.8%
Change in household situation or make-up	2.2%	4.5%	6.8%	5.3%	6.3%	7.0%	5.1%
Increase in assets or income	3.2%	3.2%	6.4%	5.7%	4.2%	11.3%	4.8%
Got a higher paying job/more hours	2.5%	4.5%	3.6%	6.1%	5.6%	4.2%	4.4%
Issues with the program or case worker	4.7%	1.6%	2.5%	1.2%	1.7%	0.0%	2.2%
Moved out of state	0.7%	2.6%	1.1%	2.4%	1.0%	1.4%	1.6%
Other	6.1%	3.9%	6.4%	3.2%	6.6%	9.9%	5.5%

*Percentages add to more than 100% because more than one answer was allowed.

E. MONTHS ON THE 24-MONTH TIME CLOCK

For respondents still off welfare at the time of the surveys, we examined administrative data on the number of months that clients had accumulated on their 24-month time clocks at the time when they left welfare.

- As shown in Exhibit II-13, the administrative data indicate that about 35.7 percent of all respondents had not been activated on the 24-month time clock. The percentage who had not been activated was highest in County B (53.4 percent), County E (45.5 percent) and County F (42.3 percent).
- There may have been several reasons why the time clocks were not activated. Recipients may have been exempt from the time limits due to having a child under 1 or because of medical problems. In the case of County B and County E, large numbers of Work First recipients were not activated during the first 2-3 years of the Work First program due to backlogs and other problems. Under Work First, recipients cannot be activated on the time clock unless they can also be provided with Work First Employment Services on a month-by-month basis.
- The data in Exhibit II-13 show that relatively few of the respondents had more than 20 months on their time clocks when they left (3.6 percent). The percentage who had reached 21 months on their time clocks was highest in County D (6.4 percent).

- About 51.6 percent had been activated but had less than 11 months accumulated on their time clocks when they left Work First. About 9 percent had between 11 and 20 months accumulated.
- The fact that relatively few of the respondents had used up most of their time clocks has implications for the recidivism patterns among the sample. Specifically, the large majority of respondents would have been able to return to Work First within the survey time frame if eligible.

**EXHIBIT II-13
NUMBER OF MONTHS ON THE 24-MONTH TIME CLOCK –
RESPONDENTS STILL OFF WELFARE WHEN SURVEYED**

Months	County A	County B	County C	County D	County E	County F	Total
Not activated	26.6%	53.4%	21.8%	26.3%	45.5%	42.3%	35.7%
0	2.5%	3.9%	2.1%	3.6%	2.8%	0.0%	2.9%
1-10	56.8%	33.3%	65.7%	51.4%	40.6%	39.4%	48.7%
11-20	11.2%	7.1%	8.9%	12.1%	5.9%	12.7%	9.1%
21	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	0.3%	2.8%	0.5%
22	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	0.0%	0.6%
23	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.8%	1.0%	0.0%	0.5%
24+	1.4%	1.3%	0.7%	3.6%	3.1%	2.8%	2.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

F. SUMMARY PROFILES OF EACH COUNTY

Below is a summary profile of the survey respondents in each county:

County A

- 96.4 percent were female and 84.8 percent were black, with a median age of 28;
- 34.7 percent had not completed high school or a GED;
- 33.2 percent had another adult living in the home and 8.7 percent lived with a spouse or partner;
- The average number of children was 2.2, with a median age of three; and
- 62.2 percent first received welfare before 1996.

County B

- 98.4 percent were female and 79.9 percent were black, with a median age of 30;
- 28.8 percent had not completed high school or a GED;
- 47.5 percent had another adult living in the home and 10.1 percent lived with a spouse or partner;
- The average number of children was 2.2, with a median age of four; and
- 67.3 percent first received welfare before 1996.

County C

- 94.3 percent were female and 63.8 percent were white, with a median age of 29;
- 32.4 percent had not completed high school or a GED;
- 41.9 percent had other adults living in the home and 20.6 percent lived with a spouse or partner;
- The average number of children 1.9, with a median age of four; and
- 48.9 percent first received welfare before 1996.

County D

- 94.8 percent were female and 50.4 were percent black, with a median age of 28;
- 34.4 percent had not completed high school or a GED;
- 47.1 percent had other adults living in the home and 21.7 percent lived with a spouse or partner;
- The average number of children was 2.0, with a median age of three; and
- 48.4 percent first received welfare before 1996.

County E

- 97.9 percent were female and 75.4 were percent black, with a median age of 28;
- 26.9 percent had not completed high school or a GED;
- 36.7 percent had other adults living in the home and 12.0 percent lived with a spouse or partner;
- The average number of children was 2.1, with a median age of four; and
- 57.6 percent first received welfare before 1996.

County F

- 95.8 percent were female and 52.1 percent were white, with a median age of 29;
- 25.7 percent had not completed high school or a GED;
- 55.7 percent had other adults living in the home and 25.7 percent lived with a spouse or partner;
- The average number of children 2.2, with a median age of two; and
- 56.3 percent first received welfare before 1996.

