

On his [website](#), Stephen Goldsmith provides summaries of current academic research that is most relevant to practitioners, policy advisors, and policy makers.

This document summarizes: Gassman-Pines, Anna and Hirokazu Yoshikawa. "Five-Year Effects of an Anti-Poverty Program on Marriage Among Never Married Mothers." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* No.1 (2006) 11-30.

*Human service officials at the state and local level, in particular those responsible for family and child welfare programs, will be interested to learn more about the intangible effects of income on households.*

Studies show that children fare better academically and socially in married, two-parent families than in single-parent or cohabitating two-parent families. Only recently, however, has research focused on marriage among low-income individuals. The authors study the impact of New Hope, a voluntary anti-poverty program, on marriage rates for never-married, low-income participants. New Hope, which had successfully increased employment and income among its clients, worked outside of the welfare system in Milwaukee in the mid- and late-1990s.

Since financial stability is typically a prerequisite for marriage, the authors hypothesized that New Hope would also increase marriage rates among low-income women over a relatively long timeline (five years). The authors found that marriage rates were 9 percent higher for women participating in New Hope than for those in a control group. The program also increased income, wage growth, and goal efficacy while decreasing rates of depression. The study then asks which factors might explain the New Hope impact on marriage. Though one cannot know exactly how an increase in income affects marriage rates, reasons may include increased confidence and relationship quality.

It is important to recognize that the authors used a relatively small sample size, looked at only one site of one program, and used a sample population that was better off than the typical welfare population. Furthermore, the association between marriage and increased income may be explained by selection bias and/or outside factors. Though more research is needed to determine the strength of this link, the authors believe that this study could have implications for family welfare programs and policy.