

Students Who Are Single Parents or Single and Pregnant

Defined:

Individuals who are unmarried or legally separated and have custody or joint custody of one or more minor children; including single, pregnant women.

Access and Equity Considerations:

- Ensuring student parents have access to affordable, quality child care. (Research indicates this can triple their likelihood of on-time graduation).
- Providing support services like coaching, affordable family housing, emergency financial aid, mentoring and peer support, and physical and mental health care.
- Improve student persistence and completion by fostering a more family-friendly culture on campus.
- Provide students with specific child-friendly spaces for studying or playing.
- Create a single-parent, inclusive, and friendly environment.
- Identify the current limitations of your system and assess ways to address the limitations.
- Identify options or alternative solutions for single parents when childcare issues fall through.
- Consider ways that provide flexibility when single-parent students have circumstances they need to address involving their children.

- More than one in five (22 million undergraduate students) are parents.
- Nearly half of student parents (42%) attend community college.
- 9 in 10 single mother students live at or near the poverty line.
- For single mothers families, who are especially likely to live in poverty, college attainment is a game-changer for improving family well-being and meeting the demands of a changing economy.
- Single Parents drop out of college more than other college students.

*2023 Data

Population-Specific Considerations:

- The Family Friendly Campus Toolkit: Using Data to Improve Outcomes is an award-winning self-assessment system and guide for improving support and outcomes for students who are raising children. It is intended for those in higher education—staff, faculty, and students—who want to improve outcomes and conditions for student parents and others. The Toolkit offers a flexible process and set of tools designed for any institution.
- Family Friendly Campus Taskforce: Bringing individuals together from across the campus to talk about student parents regularly raises awareness and sparks new dialogue, regardless of other data collection activities.



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Project Examples and Additional Information

Additional Information

Organizations

- Buckner International and Buckner Family Pathways
- ECMC Foundation
- Helping Hands for Single Moms
- Single Mom Planet
- SingleMom.Com
- Single Parent Advocate
- Single Parent Rights
- Texas WIC

Program Examples

- Austin Community College, the Parenting Students Project
- McLennan Community College Support and Empowerment Program
- College Success for Single Mothers
- South Texas College - PASS

Initiatives

- Crossways Community, Inc., Kensington, MD - Crossways Community, Inc. works to reduce poverty and create social change in Washington, DC. Single mothers in Crossways' Family Leadership Academy (FLA) live in on-campus housing and receive support to succeed in education, the workplace, and the global economy.
- The Jeremiah Program, Minneapolis, MN - The Jeremiah Program expands access to higher education for single mothers to ensure a career-track livable wage. The approach incorporates high-quality early childhood education, safe and affordable housing, and life skills education into a comprehensive program of accessible, wraparound services. The program provides single parents with a stable, safe community from which they can pursue postsecondary education.
- Single Mom College Community: The Single Mom College Community provides a venue for these moms to meet and build mutually supportive relationships. Rethinking community college support for single moms at Delgado Community College, Monroe
- College Success for Single Mothers - The project aimed to increase colleges' capacity to collect data to identify parenting students, with particular attention to single mothers students, and use that data to address their needs by implementing targeted action plans.

Services

- Assistance for Single Moms in Texas
- Children's Health and Insurance Program (CHIP)
- Single Mother's Guide
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Cash Help
- Texas Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC)



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Current Research and Literature

Current Literature and Research:

- 4 Ways Community Colleges Can Address the Needs of their Single Mother Students.
By EMC Foundation. March 2022
- Community Colleges Can Help Parenting Students Succeed by Creating Supportive, Welcoming Environments.
By Higher Education. October 2022
- Engaging Families and Communities to Support Special and Underserved Populations in CTE.
By ACTE. September 2021.
- Investing in Single Mothers' Higher Education: Costs and Benefits to Individuals, Families, and Society.
By Barbara Gault, Jessica Milli, and Lindsey Reichlin Cruse. May 2022
- Low-Income Single Mothers at Community College: Recommendations for Practices to Improve Completion.
By Women Employed. 2012
- Parents in College by the Numbers. By the Institute for Women's Policy Research and Ascend
at the Aspen Institute. 2018
- Support Single Mothers in College to Make Education More Equitable for All. By Barbara Gault and Jennifer
Zeisler, Stanford Social Innovation Review. May 2019
- Transforming Data into Action: Fostering College Success for Single Mothers and Parenting Students.
By Sandy Goodman, Elizabeth Osche, and Meredith Archer Hatch. September 2023.



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