

二零零七年五月三十一日
參考文件

立法會福利事務委員會

對為綜合社會保障援助計劃下的單親家長／兒童照顧者 而設的欣曉計劃進行的評估研究

目的

本文件旨在向委員闡釋有關為綜合社會保障援助(綜援)單親家長及兒童照顧者而設的欣曉計劃進行評估研究(研究)的結果。

背景

2. 欣曉計劃於二零零六年四月推出。在此之前，政府於二零零二年三月至二零零六年三月曾推出欣葵計劃，旨在為育有 15 歲以下子女的領取綜援單親家長提供協助，讓他們有更多機會參與社交及經濟活動。此計劃屬自願參與性質，內容包括就業援助計劃、協助照顧幼兒及經加強的各種支援服務。鑑於欣葵計劃的參加者人數偏低，社會福利署(社署)特別設立了欣曉計劃，以最年幼子女介乎 12 至 14 歲的綜援單親家長和兒童照顧者為對象，旨在讓參加者通過工作，協助他們提升自助的能力、融入社會、邁向自力更生。

3. 現時並沒有規定最年幼子女在 12 歲以下的綜援單親家長及兒童照顧者必須工作。而當這些受助人的最年幼子女年齡介乎 12 至 14 歲，他們則必須參加欣曉計劃，積極尋找每月工作時數不少於 32 小時的有薪工作。當最年幼子女年滿 15 歲時，他們便須參與自力更生支援計劃(支援計劃)，尋找每月工作時數不少於 120 小時及月薪不低於 1,450 元的全職工作。因此，欣曉計劃發揮緩衝作用，為單親家長和兒童照顧者在日後加入支援計劃做好準備。

4. 在欣曉計劃下，社署向參加者提供就業援助服務，協助他們克服就業障礙，盡早覓得有薪工作。此外，社署亦委託非政府機構推行欣曉深入就業援助計劃，為沒有或工作經驗不足的參加者提供適切的就業援助服務，包括基本技能和技能提升訓練等。

5. 截至二零零七年三月底，欣曉計劃的參加人數共有 7 886 人。當中共有 2 215 名參加“欣曉計劃”的綜援單親家長和兒童照顧者找到有薪工作，成功率約為 28%。其中包括 836 人找到全職有薪工作，而 1 379 人則找到兼職有薪工作。當中因成功就業而脫離綜援網的共有 158 人。成功就業的參加者主要從事清潔工人、服務業人員、銷售業人員、家庭傭工及其他非技術性行業。全職工作的平均每月工資為 4,400 元，兼職工作的平均每月工資則為 1,600 元。

6. 在“豁免計算工作入息”的安排下，有 57 名參加者每月工資為 600 元或以下而獲全數豁免計算入息，有 1 758 名參加者每月工資介乎 601 元至 4,399 元而獲部份豁免計算入息。每月工資為 4,400 元或以上而獲最高豁免計算 2,500 元入息的參加者則有 400 名。有 2 215 名透過參加“欣曉計劃”而又找到有薪工作的綜援單親家長和兒童照顧者的生活質素因入息總額增加而得以改善。舉例來說，一個月入 4,400 元的 4 人綜援單親家庭，每月可額外再有 2,500 元可動用入息，比沒有工作的同等家庭的可動用入息多出約 25%。

評估報告

研究目的

7. 香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系獲委託進行有關研究，旨在探討目標參加者的特性、他們尋找工作的行為、就業的障礙及成功就業的因素、就業後的狀況，以及計劃對其本人及子女的影響。有關該研究的摘要載於附件。

方法

8. 研究的設計包括問卷調查、前後測試之比較、深入訪談、聚焦小組討論、並輔以其他國家相關計劃的成效研究。調查於二零零六年十一月至二零零七年三月進行，共訪問了 1 685 名目標參加者。當中 63.6% 為單親家長而 36.4% 則為兒童照顧者。

受訪者分爲三組：(a) 參加欣曉計劃人士；(b) 在職人士；以及(c) 拒絕參加欣曉計劃人士。

9. 爲了解受訪者心理狀況和兒童行爲的轉變及增加對就業援助服務和欣曉深入就業援助計劃成效的認識，研究人員進行深入個人訪談。此外，他們亦曾舉行六次聚焦小組會議，藉以收集社署和非政府機構人員對就業援助服務和欣曉深入就業援助計劃運作的意見，以及僱主對聘用欣曉計劃參加者的意見。深入個人訪談和聚焦小組會議均在二零零七年三至四月期間舉行。

研究的主要結果

10. 在欣曉計劃的參加者中，近半數已在半年內找到最少一份工作。超過 85% 成功找到工作的參加者接納有關工作安排，而大部分(91.8%)在接受訪談時仍然在職。研究結果詳情如下：

(a) 參加者的工作特徵

在欣曉計劃的參加者中，如求職人士爲單親家長(而非兒童照顧者)、女性、45 歲以下、家人較多、得到最年幼子女給予較強的支持、在尋找工作方面較爲積極，而領取綜援的金額又較少，相對地會比其他參加者可能更容易找到工作。

(b) 就業援助服務／欣曉深入就業援助計劃

那些技術水平較低及缺乏工作經驗的人士認爲，欣曉深入就業援助計劃通過個人輔導面談、指導軟性技巧(面試、求職、人際關係)、提供職業技能訓練、與成功求職者交流經驗、提供就業選配服務和就業後的支援等服務，有助了解他們的需要、困難和家庭狀況。

(c) 對子女的影響

單親家長的子女對父母或其照顧者就業大多表示支持。單親家長／兒童照顧者就業使他們本身以至子女的自尊均有所增強。事實上，受訪時正就業的參加者當中，他們的子女大多表示與父母／照顧者的關係良好。研究顯示，把最年幼子女的年齡規定下調至 6 歲是合理的做法，因爲那正是他們入讀全日制小學的年

齡。事實上，大部分國家規定單親家長在最年幼子女年齡不足 6 歲時便要開始尋找工作。大量文獻也顯示，社會援助受助人越早開始就業，他們能繼續就業的機會便越大。然而，大部分欣曉深入就業援助計劃的服務提供機構及參加者均不贊成把年齡限制調低。

(d) 根據子女年齡而訂定的工作時數要求

對於子女已就讀全日制學校(大部分個案)的家長而言，每月兼職工作 60 小時的要求應可輕易達到。此外，如交通所需時間並非太長，尤其是子女已年滿 12 歲或以上，每月 80 至 100 工作小時應該不會影響參加者照顧子女。研究建議的方案之一，是把最年幼子女在 12 歲或以上的目標參加者的每月工作要求提高至 80 至 100 小時或以上。不過，對最年幼子女年齡介乎 6 歲(假設正就讀小學)至 11 歲的參加者，這項要求可以稍為降低，例如，每月工作可不超過 60 小時，讓他們更靈活兼顧工作和照顧子女的需求。

(e) 僱主的評價

聘用欣曉深入就業援助計劃參加者的僱主，對該計劃的營辦機構所付出的努力表示讚賞，並認為向參加者提供的聘用後跟進支援服務尤其有用。大部分僱主表示他們會繼續聘用由社署／非政府機構轉介的欣曉計劃參加者。他們普遍覺得由欣曉計劃介紹的僱員表現合作、友善、勤奮、熱誠，又表示已準備向欣曉計劃參加者提供更多機會，並會優先考慮聘用他們。

(f) 就業援助服務／欣曉深入就業援助計劃的管理人員

管理就業援助服務／欣曉深入就業援助計劃的前線人員，都同意欣曉計劃能幫助不少參加者踏出尋找工作的第一步，並能惠及參加者及其子女。能提供更切合所需及綜合就業服務的欣曉深入就業援助計劃，受訪者認為能有效達到計劃的目標。

至於罰則問題，大部分受訪者認為可按所得的綜援金額和受助家庭成員人數來調整懲罰金額。

(g) 與外國比較

很多國家已逐步實施強制單親家長必須工作的規定，而受規定必須工作的單親家長，其最年幼子女的年齡通常是 6 歲以下。這些國家發現，家長出外工作無論對他們本身及其子女都有好處。外國經驗顯示，當局必須給予家長足夠鼓勵、及早訂立清晰規定和罰則，再加上周詳計劃，切實執行並監控執行情況，計劃才有望成功。因此，當局應審慎研究那些經常求職失敗及受罰的個案，以作參考和改善計劃之用。

報告提出的建議

11. 研究隊提出的建議概述如下：

- (a) 欣曉計劃(即就業援助服務／欣曉深入就業援助計劃)應繼續推行。
- (b) 執行欣曉計劃的人員應多分享經驗及交流可資借鏡的心得。
- (c) 扣減金額亦可調高，每半年倍增直至達至每月 800 元的限額。如在行政上可行，亦可按所領取的綜援金額總數的百分比作比例上的扣減。
- (d) 計劃除要求參加者積極尋找工作之外，亦可要求他們參加工作實習或培訓，以提高他們的就業機會。
- (e) 最年幼子女年齡介乎 12 至 14 歲的人士，其每月工作時數可逐步增至 80 至 100 小時。
- (f) 最年幼子女年齡介乎 6 至 11 歲，並已入讀小學的人士，他們應開始加入欣曉計劃，但其每月工作時數可少於 60 小時。
- (g) 居於天水圍的參加者就業率一直偏低，應對該區的目標參加者另作特別考慮安排。

展望未來

12. 鑑於欣曉計劃反應理想，加上評估研究的正面結果及建議，我們將以現行運作模式繼續推行這項計劃。

13. 我們將因應研究結果探討欣曉計劃的各項措施，以期為有工作能力的單親家長及兒童照顧者提供更適切的服務。

徵詢意見

14. 請委員備悉本文件的內容。

衛生福利及食物局
社會福利署
二零零七年五月

「欣曉計劃」 成效評估研究撮要

「欣葵計劃」由二零零二年三月起推行，旨在鼓勵並協助領取綜合社會保障援助（綜援）而最年幼子女在 15 歲以下的單親家長尋找工作。「欣曉計劃」是在汲取「欣葵計劃」的經驗後展開的。在「欣曉計劃」下，凡領取綜援而最年幼子女年齡介乎 12 至 14 歲的單親家長和兒童照顧者需積極尋找每月工作時數不少於 32 小時的工作。透過就業援助服務及欣曉深入就業援助計劃，參加者可獲得多項的就業援助服務，包括提供尋找工作技巧訓練、就業選配以及就業後的支援服務。

「欣曉計劃」在二零零六年四月開始，並將於二零零七年九月結束。計劃的目的是透過就業援助服務及欣曉深入就業援助計劃，鼓勵、推動及幫助領取綜援的單親家長和兒童照顧者覓得工作，並協助他們克服就業障礙，增加受聘的機會，透過就業融入社會，提升自助的能力，邁向自力更生之路。

社會福利署（社署）委託香港大學對「欣曉計劃」進行評估研究，研究工作於二零零六年八月展開。

評估研究目的

此評估研究主要是探討目標參加者之特性、他們尋找工作行為、分析參加者就業的障礙及成功就業的因素、了解他們就業後的狀況及對自己及其子女的影響。

研究設計

本計劃透過問卷調查（主體調查）、前後測試之比較（基線調查）、深入訪談、聚焦小組討論、並輔以其他國家相關計劃的成效研究，從而得出研究結果。為記錄目標參加者在不同時段的特性（例如自信心、對工作的態度、與子女相處的時間）轉變，所有被獲邀參加「欣曉計劃」少於 1.5 個月之目標參加者（即在二零零六年九月一日至十月七日期間接獲邀請通知的目標參加者）會接受前期間卷調查以作比對之用。六個月後，所有曾接受前期間卷調查的目標參加者會再次被邀請接受後期間卷調查，後期間卷的樣式與前期間卷大致相同。共有 348 名目標參加者完成前期的基線問卷調查；其中 84 位更在二零零七年四月三十日前完成後期間卷調查，其餘的參加者也在五月初完成後期間卷調查。而在二零零六年三月十七日至十月七日期間的參加者，在首次接觸或參加「欣曉計劃」後的六個月，抽樣接受主體問卷調查。整體上，共有 1 685 個個案順利完成是次的問卷調查，其中 63.6% 為單親家長，36.4% 為兒童照顧者。

他們主要來自三個不同的組別：已參加「欣曉計劃」者、已成功就業而獲豁免參加計劃的人士、及拒絕參加「欣曉計劃」的人士。

為了更加明白就業援助服務及欣曉深入就業援助計劃的成效，調查方法亦包括訪問「欣曉計劃」參加者以蒐集意見，並與推行就業援助服務的社署職員、執行欣曉深入就業援助計劃的非政府機構職員、及聘請「欣曉計劃」參加者的僱主進行聚焦小組討論，了解計劃的管理及運作情況。

主體調查結果摘要

在「欣曉計劃」下，社署職員提供的個人就業援助服務及由非政府機構營辦的欣曉深入就業援助計劃旨在幫助參加者克服就業障礙及成功就業。問卷調查結果（表七）顯示，26.2%的「欣曉計劃」參加者曾參與最少一項就業援助服務或欣曉深入就業援助計劃服務。再參照表十四及十五，訂立及檢討個人求職計劃是就業援助服務中被評為最受歡迎的項目，而職業技能訓練課程則是欣曉深入就業援助計劃內最多人參與的熱門課程。概括來說，曾參加欣曉深入就業援助計劃的兒童照顧者較單親家長對活動的滿意程度表示較為欣賞，他們出席活動的平均率亦有兩次或以上。

半數曾參加就業援助服務或欣曉深入就業援助計劃的參加者表示，他們的求職意欲有改善（請參看表十六）。其中，希望增加家庭收入及希望靠個人能力達至自力更生是推動他們改變的最主要原因（請參看表十七）。

調查期間，約半數參加「欣曉計劃」的受訪者已找到工作，其中 78%更在受訪期間仍然受僱，佔所有參加「欣曉計劃」人士的 39%（請參看表十九）。靠個人努力及有工作經驗是受訪者認為能找到工作的關鍵因素（請參看表十）。增加家庭收入及能夠自力更生更是推動他們外出就業的最大原因（請參看表二十）。

至於子女對父母或其照顧者外出工作的態度（請參看表二十一），絕大多數的受訪者表示支持，原因與家庭收入增加及零用錢增加有關。大部份子女更認為與父母或其照顧者的關係及家庭氣氛良好（請參看表二十二）。其中，大部份參加「欣曉計劃」組別及拒絕參加「欣曉計劃」組別的子女更認為，父母或其照顧者在彼此相處的時間、雙方的關係及整體家庭氣氛上較還未參加「欣曉計劃」前，只出現輕微轉變。超過四成在職父母或其照顧者的子女表示，雖然相處時間減少，但與父母或其照顧者關係及家庭氣氛維持不變（請參看表二十七）。

至於家庭經濟狀況，約有三成的受訪子女表示差/貧窮，六成七則認為普通/一般（請參看表二十三）。一般來說，認為家庭經濟屬於差/貧窮的受訪者會較容易認為在交友及學習上出現負面的影響（請參看表二十四）。

須要照顧家庭及個人健康問題是大部份拒絕參加「欣曉計劃」受訪者所提及的原因（請參看表二十八），當被問及如果「欣曉計劃」提高扣減金額以換取他們參加「欣曉計劃」，超過半數被訪者選擇維持現狀，任由綜援金額被扣減；而有三份一人士則表示會嘗試參加計劃（請參看表二十九）。

深入分析結果摘要

在深入分析及比較在職與非在職兩個組別後，研究發現可增加受聘機會的因素有：女性、單親人士、年齡在 45 歲以下、家庭成員數目較多、領取較少綜援金額、有工作經驗、子女對單親家長或其照顧者就業的態度表示支持、居住在觀塘中及觀塘西、及居所地點不在天水圍（請參看表三十七）。

另一方面，在參加「欣曉計劃」的組別裏，女性、單親人士、年齡在 45 歲以下、家庭成員數目較多、領取較少綜援金額、居所地點不在天水圍或西貢、子女對單親家長或其照顧者就業的態度表示支持、及有透過不同途徑主動尋找工作，他們找到工作的機會較高（請參看表三十九）。

在家庭及個人特性方面，所有在職的單親家長和兒童照顧者（包括參加「欣曉計劃」後可找到工作或因受聘而可以豁免參加「欣曉計劃」者）雖然花在陪伴子女的時間較其他組別為少，但他們與家人的關係卻有正面的改變，自尊感提升、對工作抱有更熱誠的態度（例如：較同意能賺取金錢是一種獨立的表現，覺得留在家裏很沉悶等），同時亦因工作而感到較為疲累。其子女在某些範疇的表現亦較其他組別表現理想，不過在自我效能感覺上卻較其他組別低。在受訪期間仍未找到工作的「欣曉計劃」單親家長和兒童照顧者雖然可花上較多時間陪伴子女，但在其他家庭及個人層面的特性進展上卻稍欠理想（請參看表四十及四十一）。

「欣曉計劃」成效評估摘要

研究結果顯示，目標受訪者在參加「欣曉計劃」後的六個月，在週日（即星期一至五）與子女相處的時間較參加計劃前為多，參加者及其子女兩者在自尊感上有所提升，但在工作態度上沒有早前般積極（請參看表四十四）。子女普遍認為家庭經濟狀況改善，家長給予的零用錢增加（請參看表四十五）。在親子關係及家庭氣氛方面，單親家長和兒童照顧者及其子女均認為變化輕微。

個別訪談結果摘要

在四十宗抽選的個案中，我們成功與二十八位受訪者完成訪談。總括而言，「欣曉計劃」能有效地鼓勵一些目標參加者出外工作。他們的經驗更指出，成功就業能為個人及家庭帶來好處。縱然子女對他們外出工作表示支持，但大部份受訪者認為照顧子女是他們的首要責任，不願因工作而受到影響或阻礙。勤奮、勇敢、堅持、思想開放和開朗的態度和品性，是成功就業的重要個人素質。大部份被訪者（二十八位中佔二十三位）表示參加「欣曉計劃」後，能夠融入社會，並對現時的個人、家庭及工作生活表示滿意。

為幫助長期依靠社會援助的受助人和低收入的家庭投身工作，提升他們自我照顧家庭的能力，通過公眾教育，強調「工作是自力更生的最佳途徑」及廣泛宣傳「豁免計算入息」，是鼓勵受助人盡早投身工作的良好方法。超過半數（二十八位中佔十五位）受訪者不認同提高扣減金額是推動他們參加「欣曉計劃」的有效方法。關於扣減金額的數目，接近一半（二十八位中佔十三位）的受訪者建議可因應家中勞動人口的數目而按比例作出扣減。

關於最低工作時數的規定，在職及非在職的受訪者皆認為，增加每月的工作時數至不多於 60 小時是可行的。然而，有約四分之一（二十八位中佔七位）的人士建議維持原有水平，以鼓勵新的參加者投入勞動市場。

回應降低最年幼子女年齡的建議，大部份（二十八位中佔十九位）受訪者均反對，他們認為 12 歲以下的兒童仍未能獨立自處、思想欠缺成熟，仍然需要家人的大量關注及照顧。

聚焦小組討論結果摘要

「欣曉計劃」旨在鼓勵就業而非強制就業。所有參加聚焦小組的成員（十二位非政府機構代表及十九位社署職員）均同意此計劃能幫助參加者踏出求職的第一步，並為他們和其子女帶來正面的影響。不過，能否成功就業也要視乎參加者的動機、就業機會、及其他個人因素等。整體來說，欣曉深入就業援助計劃能為參加者提供更適切的服務，包括提供個人意見、技能訓練和就業網絡資訊，這些服務均被視為能達致「欣曉計劃」目標的有效途徑。

現時，全港共有十八個非政府機構推行共二十個「欣曉深入就業援助計劃」項目。在被訪的五個機構中，八位個案管理員表示會先為參加者進行評估服務（包括了解他們的家庭狀況、工作意欲、情緒狀態等）以方便提供合適的求職訓練、職業技能訓練。除此之外，欣曉深入就業援助計劃更會為參加者提供就業配對、舉辦就業分享會及以個人和小組形式舉行的工作坊，讓新加入的參加者有機會與在職人士分享成功經驗。與參加者建立緊密互信的關係及了解他們獨特的家庭狀況也是幫助參加者踏出成功就業的重要因素。

欣曉深入就業援助計劃的職員（包括八名前線員工及四名主管）指出，大多數的單親家長受制於照顧子女的家務，部份家長更因婚姻失敗而對孩子產生歉疚，因而願意做任何事情來彌補孩子的損失。另外，年紀大而又欠缺工作經驗的參加者要覓得工作亦是一件困難的事情。

至於有關計劃的規範，大多數欣曉深入就業援助計劃的職員（十二位中佔十位）都不贊同降低最年幼子女的年齡、提升最低工作時數和增加扣減綜援金額的數目。不過，仍有多於半數（十二位中佔八位）的受訪者認為，若參加者因沒有遵守計劃規定而需被扣減綜援金額，可考慮因應他們每月領取的綜援金額或家中成員的數目而按比例作出扣減。

僱主訪問結果摘要

六名被欣曉深入就業援助計劃營辦機構推薦的僱主在訪問中表示，他們都對機構有良好的印象，並認為這些機構值得信賴，對他們為參加者提供的就業後支援服務尤為讚賞。因此，大多數僱主樂意聘用由社署或非政府機構引介的求職者，整體而言，受訪僱主認為欣曉學員在工作上表現合作、態度友善、做事勤奮及充滿熱誠。受訪僱主亦願意給予「欣曉計劃」的參加者更多就業機會，亦會優先聘用他們工作。

海外其他國家相關計劃的經驗摘要

強制單親家長就業的政策已逐漸在多個國家推行，一般是在單親家長的最年幼子女滿六歲前已要求他們尋找工作。投入工作能幫助單親家長持續就業，從而達至自力更生。工作被視作可為個人和子女帶來好處。充足的獎勵、清晰的規定和罰則以及良好計劃設計和監管制度對政策的成效十分重要的。在職參加者的成功經驗亦可鼓勵其他未就業的參加者努力尋找工作。對於那些多次未能找到工作或屢次因不履行規定而被扣減綜援金的參加者，要深入探討及了解其背後原因，減少產生不必要的壓力與困難。

討論及建議

在目標參加者及參加者當中，有接近一半（49.8%）的人士在半年內已找到最少一份工作。這些成功就業的人士當中，超過八成五已接受工作，並且大部份（91.8%）在受訪時（即大概參與「欣曉計劃」半年後）仍然在職（請參看表十九）。

對於那些具備較低工作技能及較少工作經驗的參加者而言，欣曉深入就業援助計劃能透過個別輔導、提供基本技能訓練（例如面試、求職、人際技巧）、職業技能訓練、成功求職者的經驗分享、工作選配服務及就業後的支援

等，了解到他們的需要、困難和家庭狀況。曾經接受就業援助服務及參加欣曉深入就業援助計劃活動的參加者中，多於半數表示他們的求職意欲獲得提升。

在參加者中，單親家長（而非照顧者）、女性、年齡在 45 歲以下、家中成員數目較多、子女較支持他們就業、採用較多途徑尋找工作、領取較少的綜援金額及家住天水圍以外地區的人士是較其他組別容易覓得工作。我們需要了解那些較難就業的人士所面對的障礙。例如有負責欣曉深入就業援助計劃的工作人員指出，男性參加者較不願意主動尋求協助，對尋找工作的工作要求較難接受，他們在參加以女性為主的活動時亦容易感到不安。

家庭對目標參加者尋找工作意向和行為擔當重要的角色。若子女支持父母出外工作，對父母成功就業有重大的影響。我們可以預計，家庭的其他成員（如有的話）也同樣扮演著重要的角色。要鼓勵目標參加者就業，我們必須了解其他家庭成員的需要和對工作的觀感，才有助訂出有效而又鼓勵他們工作的求職計劃。

研究結果亦顯示，差不多所有成功就業的參加者，會持續工作。以在職組別為例，九成五的受訪者獲社署邀請參加計劃後的六個月仍然受聘。他們每月的平均工資為 3,000 元（請參看表十二），每月平均工作時數超過 100 小時（請參看表九）。在豁免計算入息的安排下，賺取這入息水平的參加者，每月平均可享有約 2,000 元的豁免計算入息金額，令家庭的總收入增加超過 35%（對比 5,600 元的綜援金）（請參看表十二）。

大多數受訪子女都支持他們的家長和照顧者出外工作。就業亦能提升單親家長和兒童照顧者以及他們的子女的自尊。事實上，那些在受訪期間仍然工作的受訪者的子女指出，他們與父母和照顧者的關係仍能保持良好及沒有因工作而出現變化。然而，工作並不是玩樂，工作是辛勞吃力及需要遵守紀律和堅持才可持續工作。與很多在職的香港家長一樣，本計劃的單親家長和兒童照顧者是需要適應工作和生活上的轉變，偶爾會減少與子女相處的時間，為應付繁重的工作及家庭責任而感到疲累。雖然如此，仍有近半數參加「欣曉計劃」的在職受訪者希望增加工作時數以提升家庭總收入。

建議

1. 「欣曉計劃」應該繼續推行，其中欣曉深入就業援助計劃提供的全面及切合個人需要的服務、培訓課程、就業選配及就業後的支援必須強化，以幫助低技術及缺乏就業經驗的參加者。在欣曉深入就業援助計劃下，短暫經濟援助的安排，既富彈性亦有助提高參加者尋找工作動機，因而應獲延續。

2. 建議多舉辦交流會，讓負責推行「欣曉計劃」的員工有機會分享經驗，包括分享推行計劃的有效策略、釐清相關政策/程序，例如了解全日制學童是否可獲得膳食津貼等。交流會對提高工作人員的士氣、相關知識和技巧頗有幫助。其他國家的經驗，如「達致經濟獨立的漸進階梯」實踐模式可再加探討並考慮是否適合在香港推行。
3. 計劃除了要求參加者積極尋找工作之外，亦可要求他們參加工作實習或培訓，以提高他們的就業機會。

鼓勵和沒有履行承諾的罰則是推動目標參加者積極尋找工作的重要機制。現時的罰則為定額扣減每月綜援金 200 元，扣減金額與個別或全家領取綜援的金額的多少無關。研究結果發現，來自綜援金額較多的目標參加者較不願意主動就業。百分之四十拒絕參加「欣曉計劃」的人士指出，如果扣減額提高，他們會考慮嘗試參加。另外，與綜援所得的金額相比，現時個人的扣減金額並不大，因而減低阻嚇性。如行政上可行的話，扣減額（例如以百分比）跟領取綜援金額掛鈎（例如以百分比而非定額計算）的做法是合理的。另外，對於那些恆常不遵從約則而又不能提供合理解釋的參加者，亦應要提高他們的扣減額。

建議

4. 最近，衛生福利及食物局建議將每月豁免計算入息的「無須扣減」限額由每月 600 元增至 800 元。如參加者拒絕參與「欣曉計劃」或未能提供合理解釋，我們建議應每半年雙倍扣減他們每月的綜援金額直至到達上限，即每月 800 元為止。同時，若行政管理可行的話，扣減額亦可按家庭領取的綜援金額以比例作出調整。

現時大多數的學校已實行全日制，家長在子女入讀後可從事每月不多於 60 小時（以每星期工作五天為例，即每週平均工作 15 小時或每天 3 小時）的兼職工作。事實上，在職組別的受訪者回應，他們每月的平均工時已達 100 小時，而超過四成「欣曉計劃」成功就業的參加者更表示希望尋找一份全職工作（請參看表十一）。若然花在乘搭交通工具的時間不長（以本地工作情況而論，大約 1 小時內），每天平均工作 4 至 5 小時（以五天工作週為例），每月工作 80 至 100 小時，應不會對年滿 12 歲或以上的子女構成太多照顧困難。

建議

5. 最年幼子女年齡介乎 12 至 14 歲的單親家長和兒童照顧者可逐步增加他們的工作規定至每月 80 至 100 小時，（即每週平均工作五天，每天 4 至 5 小時）。

根據主體調查所得的數據顯示，越早投入勞動市場越能容易成功就業，就業出現的負面影響遠低於經濟及心理帶來的好處。同時，年輕的參加者較容易成功就業，因此，當最年幼子女開始入讀全日制小學後，把年齡規定降至 6 歲是合理的做法。事實上，不少已發展的國家規定（例如盧森堡、加拿大、美國、荷蘭、法國、德國、挪威、及瑞典，請參看附件九），單親家長在最年幼子女 6 歲時，必須積極尋找工作。文獻也指出，領取福利援助的受助人越早就業，越能持續工作，並且能自力更生。

不過，仍有大多數「欣曉計劃」的服務提供者及參加者都不贊成將最年幼子女的年齡規定降低，這反映照顧年幼子女的責任仍被視為母親的主要角色。是次研究調查，並沒有收集公眾人士對「欣曉計劃」的看法。不過，從 2006 年人口普查的結果顯示，相對 25 至 34 歲的婦女勞動參與率達 81.8%，相對 35 至 44 歲的婦女，她們的勞動參與率只有 69.2% 正可反映這種傾向。有經濟條件的人士，可按自己的意願決定是否擔任全職子女照顧者，對於那些希望享有這項選擇權，但需要社會給予他們財政支持仍具爭議。

單親家長要在學校假期及暑假期間要平衡工作及照顧家庭，需要有較周詳的計劃和安排（如找社會服務機構、社會福利署、親友協助等），特別是那些工作時間長及安排欠彈性的更會面對一定的困難。

其中一個可行的方案是對子女年齡較小的單親家長和照顧者的工作時間訂定相對較低的要求。子女年齡介乎 12 至 14 歲的工時要求可提高至每月 80 至 100 小時（即平均每週工作五天，每天 4 至 5 小時），但子女年齡介乎 6 至 11 就讀全日制小學的人士的工時要求則可設低一點，例如每月 60 小時（即平均每週工作五天，每天 3 小時），方便他們作出安排以平衡工作及照顧子女的需要。

建議

6. 凡家中最年幼子女介乎 6 至 11 歲、並已入讀小學，領取綜援的單親家長和兒童照顧者應可開始參與「欣曉計劃」。但他們的工作時間可訂於每月不多於 60 小時，（即每週平均工作五天，每天 3 小時）。相關機構應提供有關課餘托管的資訊及支援。

除了扣減綜援金額外，就業機會及透過工作而使家庭經濟環境得以改善，都為重要之誘因，推動「欣曉計劃」之參加者積極投入勞動市場。各類型工種的數量及需求於全港各區的分佈都有著明顯的差異。例如，中西區，港島南區及觀塘區有較多要求低技能工作的職位空缺，這類型的的工作，正切合「欣曉計劃」參加者之工作技能水平。相反，天水圍區的職位空缺較少，求職者的就業機會亦相對其他地區為低，情況需要關注。

建議

7. 研究數據及訪問結果都指出，天水圍的職位空缺較其他區域為少，很多居於天水圍的「欣曉計劃」參加者需跨區到元朗或其他地區才能找到工作，到區外工作所需的交通時間及開支減退了參加者出外就業的決心，加上拒絕參加計劃的人數比例亦較其他地區高，因此，對於居住於天水圍的計劃參加者應作出特別的安排。最近政府推出的「交通費支援計劃」有一定的幫助，但政府亦可考慮其他的方案以協助計劃參加者就業。其中一個可行的辦法是鼓勵社會企業開創更多具彈性上班時間而工種亦能切合「欣曉計劃」參加者所具備的技能，以滿足就業的需求。

研究隊

香港大學社會工作及社會行政學

政策二十一有限公司

香港大學

Appendices

Table 7 Status of enrollment in EA and ND IEAP activities (Q25, 26)

	SP		Carers		Total	
Having joined any one ND IEAP/EA activity	181	26.3%	104	26.0%	285	26.2%
Enrolled in one of the EA activities	99	14.4%	46	11.5%	145	13.3%
Enrolled in one of the ND IEAP activities	125	18.2%	76	19.0%	201	18.5%
Enrolled in both EA/ND IEAP activities	43	6.3%	18	4.5%	61	5.6%
Nil entries	506	73.7%	296	74.0%	802	73.8%
All respondents	687	100.0%	400	100.0%	1087	100.0%

Table 9 Work Situations

	Employed		Refusal		ND	
	SP	Carers	SP	Carers	SP	Carers
Total no. of working hours in a month	134.78hrs	139.43hrs	143.8hrs	184.0hrs	107.59hrs	135.59hrs

Table 10 Perceived factors in successful engaging in gainful employment

Perceived factors	Employed (Q.34) ¹		Refusal (Q.31) ²		ND (Q.28) ³	
	SP	Carers	SP	Carers	SP	Carers
Relying on my own effort	21(46.7%)	10(47.6%)	2(18.2%)	2(66.7%)	185(26.9%)	108(27.0%)
Having work experience	5(11.1%)	3(14.3%)	2(18.2%)	0(0.0%)	135(19.7%)	89(22.3%)
Assistance or encouragement from SWD staff	5(11.1%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	78(11.4%)	50(12.5%)
Job matching service according aptitude	2(4.4%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	61(8.9%)	40(10.0%)
Job matching service by Labor Department	5(11.1%)	0(0.0%)	1(9.1%)	0(0.0%)	52(7.6%)	44(11.0%)
Children having self-care ability	3(6.7%)	2(9.5%)	1(9.1%)	1(33.3%)	66(9.6%)	19(4.8%)
Having adequate educational qualification	2(4.4%)	3(14.3%)	2(18.2%)	0(0.0%)	37(6.2%)	24(7.0%)
Luck	6(10.3%)	3(14.3%)	4(36.4)	1(33.3%)	44(6.4%)	17(4.3%)
Having relevant job technique	1(2.2%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	37(5.4%)	22(5.5%)
Assistance or encouragement by NGOs' social worker	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	31(4.5%)	19(4.8%)
Having childcare arrangement	1(2.2%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(33.3%)	33(4.8%)	9(2.3%)
Job matching service according to living area	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	21(3.1%)	16(4.0%)
Job matching service according to family needs	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	20(2.9%)	11(2.8%)
Having a variety of vocational training classes	1(2.2%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	13(1.9%)	9(2.3%)
ND IEAP/EA seminars/courses enhancing my job searching skills	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	9(1.3%)	7(1.8%)
All respondents	45	21	11	3	687	400

¹ Parents in the Employed group who had looked for jobs (Q31-1) in the previous 6 months and were employed at the time of interview (Q32 – 1) were asked to answer this question. Respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses.

² Parents in the Refusal group who were employed at the time of interview (Q13) were asked to answer this question. Respondents could give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses. In addition, the number of respondents reported perceived factors that were useful for them to get a job in the Refusal group was very few. The figures thus calculated were unstable.

³ All parents in the ND group were asked to answer this question. Respondents could give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses.

Table 11 Intention to work longer hours⁴ (Q42c)

Intention to seek full-time job	SP		Carers		Total	
Totally agree	26	8.8%	10	7.9%	36	8.5%
Agree	132	44.4%	50	39.4%	182	42.9%
Disagree	130	43.8%	62	48.8%	192	45.3%
Totally disagree	3	1.0%	1	.8%	4	.9%
Nil entries	6	2.0%	4	3.1%	10	2.4%
All respondents	297	100.0%	127	100.0%	424	100.0%

Table 12 Financial situations

Financial situation	Employed		Refusal		ND	
	SP	Carers	SP	Carers	SP	Carers
<i>Income from CSSA (Employed: Q39, Refusal: Q34, ND: Q44)</i>						
Less than 3000	46(27.7%)	22(36.1%)	16(6.3%)	30(14.8%)	88(12.8%)	69(17.3%)
3001 to 6000	82(49.4%)	22(36.1%)	140(55.6%)	76(37.4%)	359(52.3%)	144(36.0%)
More than 6001	36(21.7%)	14(23.0%)	91(36.1%)	90(44.3%)	231(33.6%)	179(44.8%)
Average	\$4297.5	\$4029.3	\$5697.8	\$5951.2	\$5283.7	\$5760.2
All respondents	166	61	252	203	687	400
Nil entries	2(1.2%)	3(4.9%)	5(2.0%)	7(3.4%)	9(1.3%)	8(2.0%)
<i>Income from other sources (Employed: Q40, Refusal: Q35, ND: Q45)</i>						
Less than 3000	145(87.3%)	32(52.5%)	231(91.7%)	128(63.1%)	609(88.6%)	237(62.2%)
3001 to 6000	9(5.4%)	8(13.1%)	12(4.8%)	41(20.2%)	30(4.4%)	101(26.5%)
More than 6001	6(3.6%)	13(21.3%)	3(1.2%)	19(9.4%)	23(3.3%)	43(11.3%)
Average	\$900.3	\$2917.8	\$407.7	\$2145.5	\$683.3	\$2510.0
All respondents	166	61	252	203	687	400
Nil entries	6(3.6%)	8(13.1%)	6(2.4%)	15(7.4%)	25(3.6%)	19(4.8%)
<i>Income from work (Employed: Q27a, Refusal: Q30a, ND: Q42b)</i>						
Less than 3000	77(48.7%)	23(41.8%)	5(45.5%)	1(33.3%)	203(68.4%)	77(60.6%)
3001 to 6000	63(39.9%)	22(40.0%)	3(27.3%)	1(33.3%)	63(21.2%)	40(31.5%)
More than 6001	14(8.9%)	7(12.7%)	2(18.2%)	1(33.3%)	20(6.7%)	5(3.9%)
Average	\$3593.3	\$3813.7	\$3779.0	\$5166.7	\$2641.5	\$2990.1
All respondents	158	55	11	3	297	127
Nil entries	4(2.5%)	3(5.5%)	1(9.1%)	0(0.0%)	11(3.7%)	5(3.9%)
<i>Income from job, CSSA and other sources</i>						
Less than 3000	1(.6%)	3(4.9%)	7(2.8%)	3(1.5%)	20(2.9%)	10(2.5%)
3001 to 6000	24(14.5%)	9(14.8%)	128(50.8%)	41(20.2%)	284(41.3%)	66(16.5%)
More than 6001	140(84.3%)	48(78.7%)	112(44.4%)	149(73.4%)	381(55.5%)	321(80.3%)
Average	\$8498.1	\$9777.5	\$6274.7	\$8213.9	\$6985.1	\$9015.3
All respondents	166	61	252	203	687	400
Nil entries	1(.6%)	1(1.6%)	5(2.0%)	10(4.9%)	2(.3%)	3(.8%)

⁴ Parents who were employed at the time of interview (Q36) were asked this question.

Table 14 Engagement in EA services⁵

EA programmes	SP	Carer
a Establish personal job seeking plan		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	56(8.2%)	22(5.5%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	3.3	3.9
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	17(30.9%)	6(28.6%)
Not helpful	38(69.1%)	15(71.4%)
Completely not helpful	--	--
b Provide job market information/employment counseling		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	41(6.0%)	23(5.8%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	5.0	3.1
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	1(2.5%)	0(0.0%)
Helpful	12(30.0%)	9(39.1%)
Not helpful	25(62.5%)	14(60.9%)
Completely not helpful	2(5.0%)	0(0.0%)
c Provide job vacancy information/ instruct steps to use job-searching engine		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	30(4.4%)	10(2.5%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	2.8	4.0
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	10(34.5%)	1(11.1%)
Not helpful	18(62.1%)	8(88.9%)
Completely not helpful	1(3.4%)	0(0.0%)
d Job matching service		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	24(3.5%)	12(3.0%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	2.5	2.5
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	10(43.5%)	4(33.3%)
Not helpful	12(52.2%)	8(66.7%)
Completely not helpful	1(4.3%)	0(0.0%)
e Ongoing job support service		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	8(1.2%)	2(.5%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	1.2	2.0
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	5(62.5%)	1(50.0%)
Not helpful	3(37.5%)	1(50.0%)
Completely not helpful	--	--
f After-school supportive programme for young child(ren)		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	5(.7%)	3(.8%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	3.0	2.3
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)
Not helpful	3(60.0%)	1(100.0%)
Completely not helpful	--	--

⁵ Parents who had participated in EA services (Q25) were asked to answer this question.

Table 15 Engagement in ND IEAP services⁶

ND IEAP services	SP	Carer
a Job seeking technique		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	35(5.3%)	25(6.6%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	NA	NA
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	0(0.0%)	1(4.2%)
Helpful	22(66.7%)	12(50.0%)
Not helpful	11(33.3%)	10(41.7%)
Completely not helpful	--	1(4.2%)
b Showing job posting channel/providing job vacancy information		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	32(4.9%)	18(4.7%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	2.6	3.1
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	11(39.3%)	11(61.1%)
Not helpful	16(57.1%)	6(33.3%)
Completely not helpful	1(3.6%)	1(5.6%)
c Providing occupational technical training		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	78(11.9%)	37(9.7%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	2.4	2.4
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	3(4.0%)	2(5.4%)
Helpful	41(54.7%)	20(54.1%)
Not helpful	31(41.3%)	12(32.4%)
Completely not helpful	0(0.0%)	3(8.1%)
d Individual employment counseling		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	8(1.2%)	6(1.6%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	2.8	2.5
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	3(37.5%)	4(66.7%)
Not helpful	4(50.0%)	1(16.7%)
Completely not helpful	1(12.5%)	1(16.70%)
e Job sharing session/seminar		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	30(4.6%)	27(7.1%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	2.6	2.5
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	14(50.0%)	14(53.8%)
Not helpful	11(39.3%)	11(42.3%)
Completely not helpful	3(10.7%)	1(3.8%)
f Job matching service		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	14(2.1%)	5(1.3%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	2.7	2.0
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	5(35.7%)	5(100.0%)
Not helpful	8(57.1%)	0(0.0%)

⁶ Parents who had participated in ND IEAP services (Q26) were asked to answer this question.

ND IEAP services	SP	Carer
Completely not helpful	1(7.1%)	0(0.0%)
g Ongoing job support service		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	1(.2%)	1(.3%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	3.0	3.0
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	--	--
Not helpful	1(100.0%)	1(100.0%)
Completely not helpful	--	--
h Parent-child activities		
<i>Total no of people attended</i>	10(1.5%)	2(.5%)
<i>Average no. of attendance</i>	2.5	2.5
<i>Effectiveness of this service</i>		
Completely helpful	--	--
Helpful	5(50.0%)	1(50.0%)
Not helpful	5(50.0%)	1(50.0%)
Completely not helpful	--	--

Table 16 Changes in job seeking intention after engaging in EA and ND IEAP services (Q27 – only for those who reported having joined EA and ND IEAP services)

	SP		Carers	
No. of people having improvement in job seeking intention after joining the EA	50	50.5%	18	39.1%
All respondents	99	100.0%	46	100.0%
No. of people having improvement in job seeking intention after joining the ND IEAP	64	51.2%	40	52.6%
All respondents	125	100.0%	76	100.0%
No. of people having improvement in job seeking intention after joining the EA/ND IEAP	90	49.7%	48	46.2%
All respondents	181	100.0%	104	100.0%

Table 17 Reasons for having changes in job seeking intention after the participation in EA/ND IEAP services⁷

Q27 1a. Reasons of change	SP	Carer
Want to increase family income	31(34.4%)	16(33.3%)
Want to become self-reliance	26(28.9%)	17(35.4%)
Find a suitable job	16(17.8%)	7(14.60%)
The services/activities of EA/ND IEAP are useful	12(13.3%)	5(10.4%)
Have better self-confidence	11(12.2%)	4(8.3%)
Want to widen social network	11(12.2%)	3(6.3%)
Want to better integrate into the society	11(12.2%)	2(4.2%)
All respondents	90	48

⁷ Respondents who had participated in EA/ND IEAP services (Q25, Q26) were asked to answer this question. Respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses.

Table 19 Employment situations of the respondents in the ND group

	SP		Carers		All respondents	
Q32 Able to find jobs through various channels	371	54.0%	170	42.5%	541	49.8%
Cannot find job through any channel	315	45.9%	230	57.5%	545	50.1%
Nil entries	1	.1%	0	0.0%	1	.1%
All respondents	687	100.0%	400	100.0%	1087	100.0%
Q33 Have taken up the job ⁸	323	87.1%	139	81.8%	462	85.4%
Have not taken up the job	48	12.9%	31	18.2%	79	14.6%
All respondents	371	100.0%	170	100.0%	541	100.0%
Q36 Still working now ⁹	297	92.0%	127	92.4%	424	91.8%
Not working now	26	8.0%	12	8.6%	38	8.2%
All respondents	323	100.0%	139	100.0%	462	100.0%

Table 20 Advantages in successful job placement

Advantages in successful job placement	Employed (Q.38) ¹⁰		Refusal (Q.32) ¹¹		ND (Q43) ¹²	
	SP	Carers	SP	Carers	SP	Carers
Increase in family income	13(27.7%)	7(33.3%)	3(27.3%)	1(33.3%)	84(28.3%)	32(26.0%)
Becoming self reliance	10(21.3%)	3(14.3%)	1(9.1%)	0(0.0%)	50(16.8%)	24(18.9%)
Expanding social network	7(14.9%)	1(4.8%)	1(9.1%)	0(0.0%)	51(17.2%)	17(13.4%)
Leaving CSSA	6(12.8%)	2(9.5%)	3(27.3%)	1(33.3%)	38(12.8%)	17(13.4%)
Having stronger motivation in working	2(4.3%)	4(19.0%)	--	--	21(7.1%)	15(11.8%)
Improving family's standard of living	9(19.1%)	5(23.8%)	4(36.4%)	0(0.0%)	23(7.7%)	10(7.9%)
Better integration into society	3(6.4%)	0(0.0%)	--	--	24(8.1%)	9(7.1%)
Increase in self confidence	6(12.8%)	2(9.5%)	1(9.1%)	0(0.0%)	25(8.4%)	6(4.7%)
Improving mental health	6(12.8%)	2(9.5%)	--	--	23(7.7%)	7(5.5%)
Securing job	5(10.6%)	3(14.3%)	--	--	18(6.1%)	8(6.3%)
Increase in self-esteem and self-efficacy	3(6.4%)	1(4.8%)	1(9.1%)	0(0.0%)	15(5.1%)	4(3.1%)
Lessening discrimination by others	0(0.0%)	1(4.8%)	1(9.1%)	0(0.0%)	9(3.0%)	6(4.7%)
Supported or affirmed by family members	5(10.6%)	1(4.8%)	1(9.1%)	0(0.0%)	7(2.4%)	6(4.7%)
Using rational attitude to cope with problem	1(2.1%)	0(0.0%)	--	--	5(1.7%)	2(1.6%)
No obvious help	1(2.1%)	2(9.5%)	--	--	5(1.7%)	0(0.0%)
All respondents	47	21	11	3	297	127

⁸ Respondents who had found jobs (Q32) through various channels indicated in Q29 a-k were asked this question.

⁹ Respondents who had taken up the job (Q33) and had found jobs (Q32) through various channels indicated in Q29 a-k were asked this question.

¹⁰ Parents in the Employed group who had looked for jobs (Q31) in the previous 6 months and were employed at the time of interview (Q32 – 1 & 3) were asked to answer this question. Respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses.

¹¹ Parents in the Refusal group who were employed at the time of interview (Q13) were asked to answer this question. Respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses. In addition, the number of respondents in the Refusal group answering this question was very few. The figures thus calculated are not stable.

¹² Parents who were employed at the time of interview (Q36) were asked to answer this question. Respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses.

Table 21 Children’s view of the employment of his/her parent/child carer (SQ18 and SQ28)¹³

	Employed		Refusal		ND	
	SP	Carers	SP	Carers	SP	Carers
Views of parent/child carer’s working by children						
Supportive	154(92.8%)	54(88.5%)	166(65.9%)	141(69.0%)	557(81.1%)	302(75.5%)
Not supportive	12(7.2%)	7(11.5%)	85(33.7%)	62(30.5%)	127(18.5%)	92(23.0%)
Support father, but not mother	--	--	0(0.0%)	1(.4%)	0(0.0%)	2(.5%)
Nil entries	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(.4%)	0(0.0%)	3(.4%)	4(1.0%)
All respondents	166	61	252	203	687(100.0%)	400(100.0%)
Reasons for being supportive to their parent/child carer’s working¹⁴						
Increase in family income	84(54.5%)	22(44.4%)	86(51.8%)	63(44.7%)	300(53.9%)	178(58.7%)
Having more pocket money	39(25.3%)	18(35.2%)	39(23.5%)	49(34.8%)	127(22.8%)	81(26.6%)
Improvement in standard of living	9(5.8%)	7(13.0%)	36(21.7%)	29(20.6%)	103(18.5%)	66(21.7%)
Leaving CSSA	13(8.4%)	4(7.4%)	26(15.7%)	11(7.8%)	69(12.4%)	32(10.5%)
Becoming happier	27(17.6%)	7(13.0%)	21(12.7%)	12(8.5%)	70(12.6%)	27(8.9%)
Expanding social network	11(7.1%)	3(5.6%)	14(8.4%)	14(9.9%)	50(9.0%)	29(9.5%)
Better integration into society	8(5.2%)	5(9.3%)	9(5.4%)	7(5.0%)	42(7.5%)	24(7.9%)
Work can be handled easily	9(5.8%)	2(3.7%)	11(6.6%)	14(9.9%)	29(5.2%)	22(7.2%)
Improvement in mental health	4(2.6%)	0(0.0%)	3(1.8%)	2(1.4%)	21(3.8%)	6(2.0%)
Enhancing self-confidence	1(.6%)	3(5.6%)	2(1.2%)	3(2.1%)	18(3.2%)	4(1.3%)
All respondents	154(100.0%)	54(100.0%)	166(100.0%)	141(100.0%)	557(100.0%)	304(100.0%)
Reasons for not supporting their parent/child carer’s working¹⁵						
Worsening of their health	2(16.7%)	3(42.9%)	26(30.6%)	27(43.5%)	42(33.1%)	36(38.3%)
Less time meeting them	6(50.0%)	3(42.9%)	33(38.8%)	20(32.3%)	50(39.4%)	23(24.5%)
Less time talking with them	5(41.7%)	2(28.6%)	17(20.0%)	6(9.7%)	32(25.2%)	15(16.0%)
Work being too heavy for them	3(25.0%)	1(14.3%)	18(21.2%)	12(19.4%)	29(22.8%)	17(18.1%)
Parent-child relationship becoming detached	--	--	10(11.8%)	7(11.3%)	15(11.8%)	6(6.4%)
Worsening of their mental health	1(8.3%)	0(0.0%)	5(5.9%)	4(6.5%)	9(7.1%)	4(4.3%)
Unreasonably low wages	--	--	1(1.2%)	1(1.6%)	9(7.1%)	3(3.2%)
Easily wounded in work	--	--	0(0.0%)	3(4.8%)	0(0.0%)	3(3.2%)
No change in pocket money	--	--	--	--	0(0.0%)	2(2.1%)
No change in family income	--	--	1(1.2%)	--	0(0.0%)	2(2.1%)
No improvement in quality of life	1(8.3%)	0(0.0%)	1(1.2%)	1(1.6%)	2(1.6%)	0(0.0%)
All respondents	12(100.0%)	7(100.0%)	85(100.0%)	62(100.0%)	127(100.0%)	94(100.0%)

¹³ Items with the prefix “SQ” represent the corresponding questionnaire items for children while prefix “Q” represent those for parents/carers.

¹⁴ Children who reported “support parents working” (SQ18 & SQ28) were asked to answer this session. Respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses.

¹⁵ Children who reported “not support parents working” (SQ18 & SQ28) were asked to answer this session. Respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses.

Table 22 Children's views regarding impacts to themselves as a result of their parent/carer's changes in employment status

	Employed		Refusal		ND	
	SP	Carers	SP	Carers	SP	Carers
SQ13/SQ23. Children's views on parent-child relationship as a result of their parent/carer's changes in employment status/ the elapse of one year/ the participation in the ND Project						
Very poor	0(0.0%)	1(1.6%)	2(.8%)	0(0.0%)	2(.3%)	0(0.0%)
Poor	8(4.8%)	4(6.6%)	12(4.8%)	8(3.9%)	30(4.4%)	7(1.8%)
Good	154(92.8%)	55(90.2%)	220(87.3%)	179(88.2%)	611(88.9%)	364(91.0%)
Very good	3(1.8%)	1(1.6%)	13(5.2%)	14(6.9%)	17(2.5%)	14(3.5%)
Nil entries	1(.6%)	0(0.0%)	5(2.0%)	2(1.0%)	27(3.9%)	15(3.8%)
All respondents	166(100.0%)	61(100.0%)	252(100.0%)	203(100.0%)	687(100.0%)	400(100.0%)
SQ14/SQ24. Children's views on their family lives as a result of their parent/carer's changes in employment status/ the elapse of one year/ the participation in the ND Project						
Very poor	0(0.0%)	1(1.6%)	1(.4%)	0(0.0%)	2(.3%)	0(0.0%)
Poor	8(4.8%)	2(3.3%)	9(3.6%)	9(4.4%)	27(3.9%)	11(2.8%)
Good	154(92.8%)	55(90.2%)	226(89.7%)	180(88.7%)	617(89.8%)	362(90.5%)
Very good	3(1.8%)	3(4.9%)	11(4.4%)	12(5.9%)	14(2.0%)	11(2.8%)
Nil entries	1(.6%)	0(0.0%)	5(2.0%)	2(1.0%)	27(3.9%)	16(4.0%)
All respondents	166(100.0%)	61(100.0%)	252(100.0%)	203(100.0%)	687(100.0%)	400(100.0%)

Table 23 Children's perceived financial conditions of their family (SQ7)

	Employed				Refusal				ND			
	SP		Carers		SP		Carers		SP		Carers	
Poor	66	39.8%	22	36.1%	76	30.2%	35	17.2%	162	23.6%	94	23.5%
Fair	80	48.2%	35	57.4%	157	62.3%	153	75.4%	477	69.4%	282	70.5%
Adequate	13	7.8%	4	6.6%	14	5.6%	12	5.9%	32	4.7%	20	5.0%
Nil entries	7	4.2%	0	0.0%	5	2.0%	3	1.5%	16	2.3%	4	1.0%
All respondents	166	100.0%	61	100.0%	252	100.0%	203	100.0%	687	100.0%	400	100.0%

Table 24 Children's views regarding impacts to them as a result of their family's financial situation

	Employed		Refusal		ND	
	SP	Carers	SP	Carers	SP	Carers
SQ9 & SQ7 Impact on children's social network in relation to family's financial situation						
<i>Poor financial status</i>						
Entirely affected	1(1.5%)	0(0.0%)	2(2.6%)	0(0.0%)	10(6.2%)	5(5.3%)
Affected	49(74.2%)	14(63.6%)	44(57.9%)	16(45.7%)	67(41.4%)	43(45.7%)
General/ordinary	8(12.1%)	5(22.7%)	5(6.6%)	4(11.4%)	24(14.8%)	10(10.6%)
Not affected	8(12.1%)	3(13.6%)	25(32.9%)	15(42.9%)	50(30.9%)	27(28.7%)
Entirely unaffected	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	11(6.8%)	8(8.5%)
Nil entries	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(1.1%)
All respondents	66(100.0%)	22(100.0%)	76(100.0%)	35(100.0%)	162(100.0%)	94(100.0%)
SQ10 & SQ7 Impact on children's learning attitude in relation to family's financial situation						
<i>Poor financial status</i>						
Entirely affected	2(3.0%)	0(0.0%)	5(6.6%)	1(2.9%)	10(6.2%)	6(6.4%)
Affected	45(68.2%)	15(68.3%)	39(51.3%)	14(40.0%)	74(45.7%)	43(45.7%)
General/ordinary	11(16.7%)	3(13.6%)	7(9.2%)	5(14.3%)	20(12.3%)	10(10.6%)
Not affected	8(12.1%)	3(13.6%)	25(32.9%)	15(42.9%)	45(27.8%)	25(26.6%)
Entirely unaffected	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	13(8.0%)	8(8.5%)
Nil entries	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(2.1%)
All respondents	66(100.0%)	22(100.0%)	76(100.0%)	35(100.0%)	162(100.0%)	94(100.0%)

Table 27 Family relationship

	Employed		Refusal		ND	
	SP	Carers	SP	Carers	SP	Carers
SQ19/29. Changes in the amount of time in getting along with father/male carer, mother/female carer before and after the employment/elapse one year/participation in the ND Project						
More time	3(1.8%)	0(0.0%)	28(11.1%)	20(9.9%)	62(9.0%)	38(9.5%)
Less time	77(46.4%)	25(41.0%)	19(7.5%)	15(7.4%)	94(13.7%)	36(9.0%)
Unchanged	85(51.2%)	35(57.4%)	203(80.6%)	166(81.8%)	507(73.8%)	310(77.5%)
Nil entries	1(.6%)	1(1.6%)	2(.8%)	2(1.0%)	24(3.5%)	16(4.0%)
All respondents	166(100.0%)	61(100.0%)	252(100.0%)	203(100.0%)	687(100.0%)	400(100.0%)
SQ20/30. Changes in relationship with father/male carer, mother/female carer before and after the employment/elapse one year/participation in the ND Project						
Better	9(5.4%)	1(1.6%)	18(7.1%)	14(6.9%)	49(7.1%)	24(6.0%)
Worsen	11(6.6%)	1(1.6%)	9(3.6%)	6(3.0%)	24(3.5%)	19(4.8%)
Unchanged	145(87.3%)	58(95.1%)	223(88.5%)	181(89.2%)	590(85.9%)	341(85.3%)
Nil entries	1(.6%)	1(1.6%)	2(.8%)	2(1.0%)	24(3.5%)	16(4.0%)
All respondents	166(100.0%)	61(100.0%)	252(100.0%)	203(100.0%)	687(100.0%)	400(100.0%)
SQ21/31. Changes in family atmosphere before and after the employment/elapse one year/participation in the ND Project						
Happier	5(3.0%)	1(1.6%)	13(5.2%)	12(5.9%)	46(6.7%)	23(5.8%)
Less happier	8(4.8%)	1(1.6%)	9(3.6%)	7(3.4%)	28(4.1%)	16(4.0%)
Unchanged	152(91.6%)	58(95.1%)	228(90.5%)	182(89.7%)	585(85.2%)	344(86.0%)
Nil entries	1(.6%)	1(1.6%)	2(.8%)	2(1.0%)	28(4.1%)	17(4.3%)
All respondents	166(100.0%)	61(100.0%)	252(100.0%)	203(100.0%)	687(100.0%)	400(100.0%)

Table 28 Reasons of not joining the ND Project given by the Refusal group (Q36)

Status	SP	Carer
Not being required to join	12(4.8%)	10(4.9%)
Unwilling to join	238(94.4%)	189(93.1%)
Nil entries	2(.8%)	4(2.0%)
All respondents	252(100.0%)	203(100.0%)
Reasons of their unwillingness to join ¹⁶		
Having to take care of family members	165(69.3%)	116(61.4%)
Having health problem	54(22.7%)	52(27.5%)
Avoiding children develop deviant behaviors	51(21.4%)	23(12.2%)
Not having enough time	24(10.1%)	18(9.5%)
Avoiding the restrictions of the ND requirements	10(4.2%)	19(10.1%)
Not being interested	8(3.4%)	7(3.7%)
Not being sure about one's ability to handle the work	6(2.5%)	8(4.2%)
Troublesome	7(2.9%)	5(2.6%)
Not having sufficient confidence	3(1.3%)	6(3.2%)
Not wanting to join	6(2.5%)	3(1.6%)
Having language barrier	1(.4%)	7(3.7%)
Having secured job already	6(2.5%)	2(1.1%)
All respondents	238(100.0%)	189(100.0%)

Table 29 Responses to an increased amount of sanction if participants are not joining the ND Project (Q37)

	SP	Carer
Leaving CSSA	9(3.6%)	5(2.5%)
Allowing the government to reduce the CSSA amount	129(51.2%)	120(59.1%)
Trying to enroll in the ND Project	113(44.8%)	73(36.0%)
Nil entries	1(.4%)	5(2.5%)
All respondents	252(100.0%)	203(100.0%)

Table 37 Variables in the model for predicting the employment status of the respondents

	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 8 Single parent/Child carer (SP=1, CC=0)	0.825	0.000	2.282
Family size	0.264	0.000	1.302
Sex (Female=1 Male=0)	1.451	0.000	4.266
Aged over 44 (Yes=1 No=0)	-0.248	0.035	0.780
Previous working Experience (Yes=1, No=0)	0.778	0.000	0.459
Amount of CSSA received	-0.300	0.000	0.741
District			
• District(3) (CW/HKS/KT/WTS=1, Others =0)	0.425	0.010	1.530
• District(4) (TSW/SK=1, Others=0)	-0.510	0.013	0.600
Children's support (Low=1... High=4)	0.812	0.000	2.251
Constant	-4.199	.000	0.015

- CSSA was recoded by dividing the value by 1000 to increase the B value for easy reference; such changes had no impact to the overall significance of the model
- District and education were categorical variables and were thus entered as dummy variables. The districts were regrouped according to Table 35 into six groups. Subsequently, they were entered into the model as five dummy variables. For example for district(1): YTM, Island=1, Others=0; district(4): TSW, SK=1, Others=0 and so forth

¹⁶ Parents who reported "unwilling to join" the ND Project (Q36) were asked to answer this session. Respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. The figures of all respondents are not the sum of each of the responses.

- The negative value of B denotes that an increase in the value of the independent variable will result in a decrease in the outcome (employment in this case)
- Exp (B) is the exponential of B. It is a positive value and denotes the increase in total odd ratio of prediction by change in a unit of the independent variable

Table 39 Variables in the prediction model for the employment status of the ND Project participants

	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 8 Single parent/Child carer (SP=1, CC=0)	0.840	0.000	2.315
Family size	0.337	0.000	1.401
Aged over 44 (Yes=1 No=0)	-0.297	0.044	0.743
Sex (Female=1 Male=0)	1.261	0.000	3.529
Amount of CSSA received	-0.291	0.000	0.747
District			
• District(4) (TSW/SK=1, Others=0)	-0.855	0.003	0.425
Children's support (Low=1...High=4)	0.531	0.000	0.588
No. of means taken to find jobs	0.236	0.000	1.267
Constant	-3.167	0.000	0.042

- CSSA was recoded by dividing the value by 1000 to increase the B value for easy reference; such changes had no impact to the overall significance of the model
- District and education were categorical variables and were thus entered as dummy variables. The districts were regrouped according to Table 35 into six groups. Subsequently, they were entered into the model as five dummy variables. For example for district(1): YTM, Island=1, Others=0; district(4): TSW, SK=1, Others=0 and so forth
- The negative value of B denotes that an increase in the value of the independent variable will result in a decrease in the outcome (employment in this case)
- Exp (B) is the exponential of B. It is a positive value and denotes the increase in total odd ratio of prediction by change in a unit of the independent variable

Table 40 Comparison of family and individual characteristics (continuous variables)

	Groups of respondents			
	Employed (227)*	Refusal (455)	ND – employed (462)	ND - Not employed (625)
	Mean			
Amount of time spent (hrs) with children in weekdays (View of children)	6.16	8.16	7.78	8.51
Amount of time spent (hrs) with children in weekend (View of children)	8.28	10.12	10.11	10.71
Amount of time spent (hrs) with children in weekdays (View of parents)	6.25	8.45	7.87	8.83
Amount of time spent (hrs) with children in weekend (View of parents)	8.09	10.40	10.14	10.93
Attitudes towards family relationship	23.35	21.52	21.41	21.47
Rosenberg self-esteem scores (parents)	28.14	27.73	27.99	27.53
Rosenberg self-esteem scores (children)	28.54	28.56	28.81	28.56
Work attitude - Feeling of Tiredness	10.04		10.04	9.55
Work attitude – Want to be independent	6.35		6.04	5.93
Work attitude - Feeling depressed and idle for not working	9.88		9.83	9.55
Children self-efficacy	85.05	89.34	87.95	88.06
Children perceived level of performance	28.14	27.43	27.21	27.22

*Figures in the bracket are the highest number of cases in that category

Table 41 Comparison of family and individual characteristics (categorical variables)

	Groups of respondents							
	Employed		Refusal		ND - employed		ND - Not employed	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Amount of pocket money (youngest child) $\chi^2=24.0^*$								
None	53	23.3	132	29.3	97	21.3	170	27.2
Under \$200	147	64.8	249	55.3	270	59.3	351	56.3
\$200-499	21	9.3	44	9.8	64	14.1	79	12.7
\$500-999	5	2.2	25	5.6	22	4.8	24	3.8
Over \$1000	1	0.4			2	0.4		
Children perception about their family financial condition $\chi^2=60.5^{***}$								
Very bad/poor			6	1.3	6	1.3	21	3.4
Bad/poor	88	40.0	105	23.5	83	18.5	146	23.6
Average/fair	115	52.3	310	69.4	329	73.3	430	69.6
Good/Adequate	17	7.7	26	5.8	31	6.9	21	3.4
Changes in time spent with children (View of children) $\chi^2=236.0^{***}$								
Better	3	1.3	48	10.6	37	8.1	61	10.3
Less	102	45.3	34	7.5	97	21.3	34	5.7
No Change	120	53.3	369	81.8	321	70.5	497	84.0
Changes in relationship with parents (View of children)								
Better	10	4.4	32	7.1	34	7.5	36	6.1
Less	12	5.3	15	3.3	16	3.5	27	4.6
No Change	203	90.2	404	89.6	405	89.0	529	89.4
Changes in family atmosphere (View of children)								
Better	6	2.7	25	5.5	32	7.1	38	6.4
Less	9	4.0	16	3.5	22	4.9	20	3.4
No Change	210	93.3	410	90.9	398	88.1	532	90.2
Previous relationship with children (View of parents)								
Very good	12	5.3	33	7.3	42	9.1	48	7.7
Good	199	88.1	397	87.3	395	85.9	531	85.6
Poor	15	6.6	24	5.3	22	4.8	39	6.3
Very poor			1	0.2	1	0.2	2	0.3
Current relationship with children (View of parents)								
Better	40	17.6	71	15.6	51	11.1	51	8.2
Worse	9	4.0	25	5.5	22	4.8	27	4.4
No change	178	78.4	359	78.9	387	84.1	541	87.4
Previous family atmosphere (View of parents)								
Very happy	15	6.7	36	7.9	21	4.6	30	4.9
Happy	184	82.1	357	78.8	356	78.4	480	79.1
Unhappy	24	10.7	57	12.6	75	16.5	95	15.7
Very unhappy	1	0.4	3	0.7	2	0.4	2	0.3
Current family atmosphere (View of parents) $\chi^2=24.6^{***}$								
Happier	14	6.2	41	9.1	26	5.7	27	4.4
Not so happy	7	3.1	47	10.4	29	6.4	41	6.7
No change	204	90.7	363	80.5	399	87.9	542	88.9

*p ≤ 0.05, **p ≤ 0.01, ***p ≤ 0.001

Table 44 Comparison of ND Participants before and after joining the ND Project

Items	All ND Participants		ND employed at post-test	
	Paired -t	df	Paired -t	df
Amount of time spent (hrs) with children in weekdays (View of children)	-5.787 ^{***}	48	-3.536 ^{**}	22
Amount of time spent (hrs) with children in weekend (View of children)	-1.861	48	-0.310	22
Amount of time spent (hrs) with children in weekdays (View of parents)	-4.978 ^{***}	51	-3.096 ^{**}	23
Amount of time spent (hrs) with children in weekend (View of parents)	-1.427	52	-1.365	23
Attitudes towards family relationship	1.514	51	0.941	23
Rosenberg self-esteem scores (parents)	-3.312 ^{**}	52	-3.428 ^{**}	23
Rosenberg self-esteem scores (children)	-4.603 ^{***}	52	-3.633 ^{***}	23
Work attitude - Feeling of tiredness	-2.327 [*]	52	-2.145 [*]	23
Work attitude - Want to be independent	5.742 ^{***}	52	2.744 [*]	23
Work attitude - Feeling depressed and idle for not working	4.714 ^{***}	52	1.484	23
Children self-efficacy	-1.730	51	-0.886	23
Children perceived level of performance	0.166	51	1.355	23

*p ≤ 0.05, **p ≤ 0.01, ***p ≤ 0.001

Table 45 Comparison of ND Participants before and after joining the ND Project (Cont'd)

	ND Group Members			
	Pre-test		Post-test	
	N	%	N	%
Amount of pocket money (youngest child) $\chi^2=10.25^*$				
None	25	47.2	14	26.9
Under \$200	24	45.3	38	73.1
\$200-499	2	3.8		
\$500-999	2	3.8		
Children perception about their family financial condition $\chi^2=8.37^*$				
Very bad/poor	3	5.9	1	1.9
Bad/poor	10	19.6	5	9.4
Average/fair	28	54.9	43	81.1
Good/Adequate	10	19.6	4	7.5
Changes in time spent with children (View of children) $\chi^2=13.05^{***}$				
Better	5	10.0		
Less	6	12.0		
No Change	39	78.0	53	100.0
Changes in relationship with parents (View of children) $\chi^2=9.19^{**}$				
Better	3	6.0		
Less	5	10.0		
No Change	42	84.0	53	100.0
Changes in family atmosphere (View of children) $\chi^2=9.19^{**}$				
Better	4	8.0		
Less	4	8.0		
No Change	42	84.0	53	100.0
Previous relationship with children (View of parents)				
Very good	8	15.1	8	15.1
Good	39	73.6	39	73.6
Poor	6	11.3	6	11.3
Current relationship with children (View of parents)				
Better	11	20.8	6	11.3
Worse	8	15.1	4	7.5
No change	34	64.2	43	81.1
Previous family atmosphere (View of parents)				
Very happy	3	5.8	6	11.3
Happy	28	53.8	28	52.8
Unhappy	21	40.4	19	35.8
Current family atmosphere (View of parents) $\chi^2=7.19^*$				
Happier	6	11.3	2	3.8
Not so happy	10	18.9	3	5.7
No change	37	69.8	48	90.6

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

Appendix 9 – A preliminary information of social assistance for single/lone parents schemes in other countries

	UK	Norway	Netherland	New Zealand	USA	Australia	Hong Kong
1. Name of major Scheme	New Deal for Lone Parents	Brukermedvirkningsordningen (BMO)	General Social Assistance Act	New programmes implemented in 2006	TANF Max 60 months	Parenting Payment Single	New Dawn
2. Age of youngest child	Under 16	3 years or above	5 years or above	Over 6	2 years or above in some States	7	12-14
3. Compulsory	No	Yes, but no work obligation	Yes, but no work obligation	Yes	Yes (30hrs /week)	Yes PT (15 hrs/week) Job Network	Yes (32 hrs/month)
4. Sanction	No penalties	No penalties	No penalties (Labor market participation is voluntary, the work obligation for lone parents is on political agenda)	Yes	Reduction of state allowance – 5% for the 1st year and 2% for each consecutive year, maximum penalty is 21%	No penalties (From 1 July 2006, participation is voluntary until 1 July 2007 and all remaining Parenting Payment breach penalties was ceased to apply from 1 July 2006.)	HK200 (very small percentage)
5. Child care	National Childcare Strategy (for children aged 0 to 14)	Child-care benefits (for children under the age of 18, covered 70% of the childcare expenses)	- Childcare and After School Care for Lone Parents on Welfare (KOA) (for children under 13)	Available within standard working hours on fee-paying basis	Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) US 200 (under age of 2) US 175 (over age of 2)	Child Care Benefit (20-24 hours per child per week)	Yes
6. Other support provided	Transitional income support, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, National Minimum Wage, National Insurance	Transitional allowance (limited to 3 years with an extension of 2 more years if the recipient took up education. Support was restricted to families where the youngest child is under	Jobseekers Employment Act (I/D-jobs)	Personal Development and Employment Planning Plan	Earned Income Tax Credit,	Job Network Services, Newstart Allowance, Childcare Tax Rebate, Pharmaceutical Allowance, Education Entry Payment,	ND IEAP

	UK	Norway	Netherland	New Zealand	USA	Australia	Hong Kong
	Contributions, Jobcentre Plus with Personal Adviser	8 years of age), Educational allowance, reduction in taxation				Employment Entry Payment, Pensioner Education Supplement, Jobs, Education and Training Programme (JET)	
7. Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lone parents with younger children and with larger numbers of children had lower outcomes - Rural area was associated with lower participation in work outcomes - Job quality and sustainability of jobs gained from NDLP were generally better than those for non-participants - Significant improvement of lone parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work-participation rate for lone mothers has increased - number of persons receiving transitional allowance is decreased - Create an opportunity to build social contacts with other lone parents - Some lone parents felt they are difficult to get paid work, get enough work, achieve stable income, and/or managing full-time work. They also face the problem of meeting their children's needs in this situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20% of lone parents ended Social Assistance dependency - 6% of lone parents ended Social Assistance dependency and being employed - 70% of lone parents entered a job and still partly dependent on Social Assistance - Lone parents' problems in getting out of poverty result from their reliance on part-time work and from the low educational level - Studies showed lone parents who have at maximum a lower vocational education will have to work at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work-test regime found that the proportion moving into part-time work increased slightly - Full-time work-test increased the participants' job search behavior - Work-test regime found income gains from working were very slightly - Some clients reported increased stress and concern about the behavior of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drop in welfare caseloads - Employment rate of lone parents with children grew from 57% in 94 to 70% in 2000. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the employment participation - Those with youngest child in school work in part-time - At-work PPS recipients are somewhat financially worse off by going on to lower payments than those commenced receipts which is controversial and inequity 	On-going

	UK	Norway	Netherland	New Zealand	USA	Australia	Hong Kong
	<p>employment rate from 45.6% in 97 to 56.6% in 05</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employer offer much greater flexibility and support for workers with caring responsibilities 		<p>least 32 hours per week to earn an income that will make them independent of Social Assistance while lone parents with a higher professional or academic level can do 21 hours per week to leave from Social Assistance.</p>	<p>older children left alone, and for younger children left in the care of older siblings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case managers reported problems in finding work opportunities to fit clients' childcare commitments - Majority of lone parents who found work were required to work outside of standard hours and/or in non-permanent positions - The childcare infrastructure was insufficient to support. 			

Note: Major source of information - Department of Work and Pensions (2003) Lone parents and employment: international comparisons of what works, supplemented by more recent web sources

Table 9 Work tests for lone parents, selected countries, in around 2006⁶²

No work Test	Work Test	
	Independent of child age	Dependent on age of youngest child (age limit in years)
Portugal	Belgium (Discretion)	Ireland (18 or 22 if child in full-time education)
Spain	Denmark (subject to childcare)	New Zealand (18)
	Finland	United Kingdom (16)
	Japan (Discretion)	New Zealand (18)
	Sweden	Australia (16/7)
		Luxembourg (6)
		Canada (0.5-6)
		Netherlands (5)
		Czech Republic (4)
		Austria (About 3)
		France (3)
		Germany (3)
		Norway (3)
		Switzerland (3)
		United States (usually 0.25-1, with some exceptions)

(Source: Carcillo & Grubb, 2006)