

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, February 12, 2014

Contact: [Alexa Garcia-Ditta](#), 512-823-2873

New Report: Too Many Working Mothers in Texas Trapped in Low-Wage Jobs

More than half of Texas women heading low-income working families lack postsecondary education or training

AUSTIN, TEXAS---Due to the Great Recession, the share of female-headed working families that are low-income increased in Texas from 59 percent in 2007 to 61 percent in 2012, according to a new report released today by the [Working Poor Families Project based in Washington D.C.](#)

The new “Low-Income Working Mothers and State Policy: Investing for a Better Economic Future” [report](#) utilizes the latest data from the 2012 Census Bureau’s American Community Survey and also finds that 56 percent of Texas women heading these households lack any postsecondary education—the third highest share of any state.

“With too many working mothers facing barriers to career advancement, Texas has the opportunity to embrace proven tools to increase education and incomes for working mothers,” said Don Baylor, Jr., senior policy analyst at the Center for Public Policy Priorities. “In addition to investing more resources, we should embrace strategies we know are successful, like child care for working parents, and other two-generation approaches to move these families up the economic ladder, which would not only improve the bottom line for these families, but also boost the economic and job activity throughout our state.”

Many factors keeping working mothers in poverty can be addressed at the state level, the report found. State governments have significant authority and opportunity to help low-income working mothers gain the education and skills they need to provide for their children, as well as provide important supports to become economically secure.

“To promote financial independence for more working mothers, Texas must increase investments in need-based financial aid, including options for part-time students and those participating in occupational programs that lead to a credential,” said Leslie Helmcamp, policy analyst at the Center for Public Policy Priorities. “Texas can also promote stronger career pathways by combining adult basic education programs with career and technical skills training at community colleges.”

The report defines “low-income” working families as earning no more than twice the federal poverty income threshold; in 2012, the low-income threshold for a family of three with two children was \$36,966.

“Too many female-headed working families have no pathway out of poverty,” said Deborah Povich, co-manager of the [Working Poor Families Project](#) and one of three authors of the report. “Public policy can and must play a critical role in increasing opportunities so families can achieve economic security. Addressing the needs of low-income working mothers will benefit their children and future generations.”

###