

# **Inter-generational Dependency on Social Assistance**

## **Final Report**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Inter-generational dependency on social assistance occurs when young people who grew up in families who had a strong reliance on social assistance develop a similar pattern of dependency when they become adults. In Spring 2003, a study was conducted by New Wave Research Inc. in consultation with the Department of Human Resources and Employment (HRE), to identify:

- the extent to which inter-generational dependency on social assistance exists within the province;
- how individuals who demonstrate inter-generational dependency differ from those who break the cycle of dependency; and
- potential intervention strategies to improve the transition prospects of individuals growing up on social assistance.

To study these issues, children from families who collected social assistance (SA) during 1992-93 were matched to individuals who collected social assistance as young adults during the 1993 to 2001 time period. Four groups were examined. The first group consisted of individuals who had broken the cycle of dependency. They had never collected SA as an adult. The other three groups had exhibited reliance on SA as adults, as follows:

- individuals who collected SA for more than 12 months as an adult, but not during the years 2002 and 2001 (i.e., appeared to break the cycle of dependency after a few years).
- individuals who collected SA for more than 12 months as an adult and received SA during the years 2000 and/or 2001 (i.e., exhibited moderate SA dependency); and
- individuals who collected SA more than two-thirds of the months they were entitled to received it up to the year 2001 (i.e., exhibited heavy SA dependency).

These groups were compared by analyzing data from a telephone survey and information contained in HRE social assistance files.

### **Key Findings – Magnitude of Problem**

- Forty-one percent of the individuals who grew up in families with a strong reliance on social assistance collected social assistance as an adult at some point between the time they turned 18 and the end of 2001.
- Twelve percent of the individuals who grew up in families with a strong reliance on social assistance were heavy users of social assistance, having been on assistance for most of the time since they had turned 18 years of age.
- Children of parents who had shown a heavy reliance on social assistance were almost 3½ times more likely to show a heavy reliance on social assistance as adults than children whose parents were not dependent on social assistance.

### **Key Findings – Education Experience of Study Participants**

- ❑ Individuals who never collected social assistance as an adult were much more likely to have graduated from high school than were those who used social assistance as an adult. Of those interviewed, approximately 75% who never collected social assistance had graduated from high school. Only about 43% of those who collected social assistance at some period in their adult lives had graduated from high school.
- ❑ The most frequent reason for leaving high school before graduation given by individuals who had never collected social assistance as an adult was “to enter the work force.” In comparison, the most frequent reason for leaving high school before graduation given by individuals who collected social assistance at some period in their adult lives was “academic difficulties.” Nine percent of the moderate and heavy users of SA voluntarily mentioned that they had learning problems.
- ❑ Six percent of the moderate and heavy users of SA voluntarily mentioned that they had dropped out of high school because they got into trouble with the law. When later asked a specific question about community experiences, 12% of the moderate and heavy users of SA said that they had gotten into serious trouble with the law when they were teenagers.
- ❑ Ten percent of the young adults who grew up in families with a high reliance on social assistance attended university (versus approximately 38% of the population of the province in their age group).
- ❑ Twenty-nine percent of the young adults who grew up in families with a high reliance on social assistance attended college. About 11% of these dropped out of college before completing their programs.
- ❑ Among those who completed their college courses, 56% of the participants who did not receive social assistance as an adult found work in their area of study, 22% were unemployed and 22% were working in low-skilled jobs unrelated to their area of study. In comparison, only 8% of participants who received assistance during some period of time as an adult were able to find work in their area of study, 60% were unemployed and 32% were working in low-skilled jobs unrelated to their area of study.

### **Key Findings – Work Experience of Study Participants**

- ❑ Nearly all individuals who grew up in families with a heavy reliance on SA had obtained relatively unskilled jobs and were frequently unemployed for periods of time.
- ❑ The majority of individuals who had broken the cycle of dependency were able to keep off social assistance by moving between employment and EI. The majority of individuals who demonstrated some attachment to the labour force, but also collected social assistance as adults, moved between employment, EI, and social assistance on a regular basis.

- ❑ A large percentage of the young adults (46%) who were heavy users of social assistance had never worked. This group included 59% who were females with children (either single females or females living with a partner) and 11% who had severe mental or physical disabilities. However, 32% of the heavy users who had never held a job were single males or single females with neither children nor severe disabilities that might hinder their job-finding endeavours.

### **Key Findings – Failure to Use Available Supports**

- ❑ Few participants to the questionnaire survey had received any assistance from government or community agencies to help them find a job, choose a career, or improve their employment skills. Those individuals who had successfully entered the labour market found their jobs by responding to advertisements, hearing about openings from family and friends, and/or knocking on doors.
- ❑ Focus group sessions were held with (a) young adults on social assistance and (b) youths who were the children of parents on social assistance. These sessions revealed a general lack of knowledge about the government/community services and programs that are available to assist individuals in career planning, job search, and gaining work experience.
- ❑ Focus group sessions with representatives of government and community agencies working with the social assistance population concurred that there was a lack of knowledge in the general population about programs and services offered for career planning, job search, and gaining work experience.

### **Key Findings – Potential Intervention Strategies**

- ❑ Information about career planning must begin early, while the children of social assistance recipients are still attending high school.
  - *It was recommended that the Departments of HRE and Education should begin a dialogue to see how information about these services and programs can be integrated into the school curriculum.*
- ❑ Useful programs and services are available but there are not enough human and financial resources available to implement them successfully. Representatives of government and community agencies working with the social assistance population felt that:
  - the lack of human resources at HRE, especially those involved in Career Development and Career Counselling, limits the number of clients whose needs can be met; and
  - some useful programs, such as Linkages and EAPD, need either additional financial resources or a redistribution of available funds to different parts of the programs.
  - *It was recommended that HRE should conduct a thorough review of how well their resources match the priorities of their mandate.*

- ❑ The cycle of inter-generational dependency on social assistance begins at the high school level. Failure to graduate from high school was the strongest risk factor associated with failure to break the cycle of inter-generational dependency on social assistance. The problems of youths who drop out of school begin long before they actually drop out.
  - *It was recommended that the Departments of HRE and Education should begin a dialogue to see how they can focus on the needs of young people in high school whose families are dependent on social assistance.*

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## **Section One**

# **INTRODUCTION**

Inter-generational dependency on social assistance (SA) occurs when young people who grew up in families who had a strong reliance on social assistance develop a similar pattern of dependency when they become adults. A number of research studies have found that growing up in a household receiving social assistance increases the probability that the child will become dependent on social assistance.<sup>1</sup> In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, as elsewhere, it is likely that a substantial proportion of the young adults who develop a strong reliance on social assistance are involved in a cycle of inter-generational dependency.

A recent Quebec study has attempted to quantify the existence of the problem in that province.<sup>2</sup> This study found a significant causal linkage between parental and child participation in SA. A causal linkage is one that results from an imitation and/or learning effect transmitted from parents to children. The study did not disprove the fact, however, that some inter-generational transmission of reliance on social assistance might stem from shared determinants, i.e., from individual or environment-specific characteristics shared across generations.

The Quebec study was theoretical in nature, designed to show that significant causal linkages form part of the inter-generational dependency problem. The current study is intended to have a more practical focus.

### **1.1 Research Questions**

In Spring 2003, a study was conducted by New Wave Research Inc. in consultation with the Department of Human Resources and Employment (HRE), to identify the extent to which inter-generational dependency on social assistance exists in the province, and investigate ways in which the cycle of dependence can be broken. The study focused on four research issues, as follows:

1. What is the magnitude of the inter-generational dependency problem in the province?
2. What risk factors have been identified as being correlated with reliance on SA as adults?
3. How do young people in the inter-generational dependency group differ from those who broke the cycle of dependency but nonetheless grew up in families reliant on SA?
4. What possible interventions might be used to remove barriers or improve the transition prospects of people who grow up on SA?

### **1.2 Methodology**

Data to answer these four research issues was gathered using:

- an analysis of information contained in HRE social assistance files;
- the identification of risk factors using a literature review and focus group discussions;
- a telephone questionnaire survey comparing individuals who exhibited inter-generational dependency on SA with those who broke the cycle of dependency; and

- focus group sessions to identify possible interventions to improve the transition prospects of individuals growing up on SA.

### **1.2.1 Data Analysis**

The data analysis involved an examination of children who were living in families that received SA during the 1992-93 period. Only children from families with “a strong reliance on social assistance” were included.<sup>3</sup> Families were considered to have a strong reliance on social assistance if they received SA for 13 to 24 months during 1992-93.

The HRE social assistance files were used to match children in families receiving SA during the 1992-93 period with individuals who received SA as young adults.<sup>4</sup> Two types of matching processes were used, forward matching and backward matching. In forward matching, children living in families that received SA during 1992-93 were matched on the basis of name, gender and birth date to individuals who collected SA as young adults during the 1993 to 2001 time period. Since case file numbers can change over time, it was also necessary to match children in order to get a complete history of SA for the child and to prevent the child appearing more than once. Using the forward matched file and the complete database, a single record containing information on the client as a young adult and on their family was created for each person who was on SA both as a child and as an adult. Further information on the matching process is given in Appendix A.

With backward matching, a similar procedure was followed. Young adults who received SA for more than 12 months during 2000-01 were matched back to their families. This matching allowed the determination of the percentage of young adults who were on SA with their parents.

Children from families with a high reliance on SA during 1992-93 were matched to individuals who collected SA as young adults during 1993 to 2001. After an initial examination of the data, these individuals were divided into four groups based on their use of SA during the 1992 to 2001 time period. These groups were defined as follows:

- 1) **“Non-users”** were never on SA as an adult (up to the end of 2001);
- 2) **“Low Users”** were in receipt of SA as an adult for more than 12 months but did not receive any assistance in the years 2000 and 2001;
- 3) **“Part-timers”** received SA for more than 12 months as an adult, and received SA during 2000 and/or 2001, but their total time on SA was less than two-thirds of the months they were entitled to receive it; and
- 4) **“High Users”** received SA for more than 12 months as an adult, and received SA during 2000 and/or 2001, and their total time on SA was more than two-thirds of the months they were entitled to receive it.

The latter three groups had all collected social assistance as an adult, and thus showed inter-generational reliance on SA. The second group, the “Low Users” did not exhibit a “strong inter-generational dependency on SA,” given that they stopped being dependent relatively early in their adult lives. The third and fourth groups, the “Part-timers” and “High Users” both exhibited inter-generational dependency on SA, differing only in the degree to which this dependency was

manifested.<sup>5</sup> The “High Users” were the heaviest users of SA, having been on assistance for most of the time since they had turned 18 years of age.

### **1.2.2 Risk Analysis**

A major goal of this project was to determine how young people in the inter-generational dependency group differ from those who grew up in families reliant on SA but nonetheless broke the cycle of dependency. To achieve this goal, these groups were to be compared on a number of variables associated with inter-generational dependency on SA. Before a measurement instrument could be designed to compare the groups, the relevant variables – or risk factors – had to be identified.

The risk factors were identified using:

- a literature review;
- a focus group session with individuals on SA who had grown up in families reliant on SA (an inter-generational dependency group); and
- a focus group session with representatives of community agencies who work with this population and were therefore knowledgeable about potential risk factors perpetuating the cycle of dependency.

The references used for the literature review and the focus group protocols used for the risk analysis are found in Appendix B.

### **1.2.3 Survey**

Information obtained from the literature review and focus groups that examined risk factors associated with inter-generational dependency on SA was used to design a telephone survey. It gathered information about work history and the methods the individuals used to obtain information about jobs, as well as risk factors such as level of education and attitudes towards education, community experiences, and family background. A copy of the questionnaire used for the survey is provided in Appendix C.

The questionnaire survey was administered to population samples drawn from four groups based on their use of SA during the 1992 to 2001 time period. These population samples were provided by HRE. Further information on these population samples is provided in Appendix D.

### **1.2.4 Focus Groups**

Six focus groups were held to examine the types of interventions needed to break the cycle of inter-generational dependency on SA. The sessions were held in St. John’s, Clarendville, Carbonear, Marystown, Stephenville Crossing and Corner Brook. Two were held with young adult SA recipients, two with youths aged 16 and 17 living in families on SA, and two with representatives of government and community agencies who work with this population. Protocols used for these focus group sessions are found in Appendix E, and information on the samples is found in Appendix F.

## Section Two

# POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Population characteristics for the study were determined through the analysis of HRE social assistance files using the matching processes described in Appendix A of the report.

### 2.1 Magnitude of Inter-generational Use

The degree to which inter-generational use exists in the province was determined by combining results obtained from the forward and backward matching processes.

There were 12,869 children born from 1975 to 1982 whose families were on SA in 1992 and/or 1993. Using the forward matching process, it was found that approximately two-thirds of these children (8,520) were on SA for 13 to 24 months during 1992-93 (i.e., in families considered to have a strong reliance on SA). This group was split into four groups based on their use of SA as adults, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Use of SA as Adults by Individuals Who Grew Up in Families with a Strong Reliance on SA in 1992-93**

	Non-user	Low User	Part-timer	High User	Total
Number	5,013	1,173	1,280	1,054	8,520
Percentage	59%	14%	15%	12%	100%

Approximately 41% of the individuals who grew up in families with a strong reliance on SA during 1992-93 collected SA at some point between the time they turned 18 and the end of 2001. Twelve percent of these individuals were heavy users of SA, having been on assistance for most of the time since they had turned 18 years of age.

Using the backwards matching process, it was found that there were 7,614 young adults born between 1975 and 1982 who received social assistance in 2000-01. More than 60% of these young adults (4,725) were heavily reliant on SA (i.e., on SA for 13 to 24 months during 2000-01). Thirty percent (1,420) of these heavily reliant young adults grew up in families that were heavily reliant on SA in 1992-93.

Thus, 17% of the children of parents who were heavily reliant on SA became heavily reliant as young adults.<sup>6</sup> The dependency rate for the remainder of the children in the population is substantially lower at 5%.<sup>7</sup> Thus, children whose parents were dependent on SA were 3½ times more likely to end up dependent on SA as young adults than those children whose parents were not dependent on SA.

### 2.2 Gender

There were no gender differences between those children who never collected SA as an adult and those who showed reliance on SA as an adult (the Low Users, Part-timers, and High Users

combined), as shown in Table 2. However, there were gender inequities among those groups collecting SA as an adult. In the Low User and Part-timer groups, there were more males than females. The High User Group, which was on SA almost continuously as an adult, was composed of more females than males (59% to 41%). Thus, males are just as likely to exhibit inter-generational reliance on SA as females, but females are more likely to exhibit a strong inter-generational dependency pattern.

**Table 2: Groups by Gender**

	Non-user	Low User	Part-timer	High User	Total
<b>Males</b>	50%	54%	54%	41%	50%
<b>Females</b>	50%	46%	46%	59%	50%

## 2.3 Reason for Assistance

The group differences in Reason For Assistance were similar to the gender differences among groups collecting SA.

The Reason For Assistance of the young adults on SA is shown in Table 3. The majority (59%) were classified as “Employable.”<sup>8</sup> About 20% were “Caring for Spouse and/or Child” and 14% were “Disabled.” However, there were large differences in reason for assistance among groups. Seventy-four percent of the Low User group were “Employable” compared to 35% of the High User group. Only 9% of the Low User group were “Caring for Spouse and/or Child” compared to 34% of the High User group.

**Table 3: Reason for Assistance for Young Adults Receiving SA**

	Low User	Part-timer	High User	Total
<b>Employable</b>	74%	64%	35%	59%
<b>Not Available for Employment</b>	10%	7%	7%	8%
<b>Disability</b>	7%	12%	24%	14%
<b>Caring for Spouse/Child</b>	9%	17%	34%	19%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

These differences could be explained in terms of gender differences among groups. There are more females in the High User group. Overall, 33% of the females who received SA were “Caring for Spouse and/or Child.” About half of these females were in the High User group, as shown in Table 4. Thus, the High User group has a high proportion of females who are caring for a dependent.

**Table 4: Young Adults Receiving SA by Reason for Assistance by Gender**

	Low User		Part-timer		High User		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Employable</b>	83%	64%	71%	57%	42%	30%	68%	49%
<b>Not Available for Employment</b>	9%	10%	8%	7%	8%	5%	8%	8%
<b>Disability</b>	8%	7%	16%	6%	38%	16%	19%	10%
<b>Caring for Spouse/Child</b>	0%	19%	5%	30%	12%	49%	5%	33%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The analysis of social assistance files also included an examination of the Reason For Assistance by parents of children living in families with a strong reliance on SA. In general, most mothers (82%) received SA because they were “Caring for Spouse and/or Child.” Most fathers (74%) in these families were “Employable.” This was consistent for all four groups used in the analysis. Parents of Non-users did not differ from parents of groups exhibiting inter-generational dependency.

## 2.4 Education

The education level of young adults on SA differs among groups, as shown in Table 5. The High User group has a much lower level of education than the Low User and Part-timer groups. All groups, however, have a lower level of education than the provincial norm for this age group (82%).

**Table 5: Education of Young Adults Receiving SA**

	Low User	Part-timer	High User	Total
<b>Grade 11 or less</b>	48%	54%	76%	58%
<b>Grade 12 or higher</b>	52%	46%	24%	42%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Parents of children who grow up in families with a strong reliance on SA have a much lower level of education than the general population of the province in the same age groups as these parents. Only 18% of the mothers and 16% of the fathers in these families had graduated from high school. By comparison, 60% of the females and 62% of the males in the province had graduated from high school in 1991.<sup>9</sup>

## Section Three WORK EXPERIENCE

Information on work history was obtained from the survey. There was a significant difference between groups in terms of their work histories. As shown in Table 6, almost half the individuals who were heavily dependent on SA (the High Users) had never worked, compared to about 10% of those in each of the other three groups. Furthermore, survey participants in the Non-user and Low User groups were more likely to be currently employed. Those in the Part-timer and High User groups were more likely to have collected SA in the 12 months prior to being contacted for the survey. Although a large number of participants in the Non-user and Low User groups were currently unemployed, most were being supported by EI and/or income sources other than SA.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 6: Work Experience, Current Employment, and Use of SA and EI As Income Sources**

	Non-user	Low User	Part-timer	High User	Weighted Total
<b>Worked Since Leaving HS</b>	94%	89%	88%	54%	90%
<b>Never Worked</b>	6%	11%	12%	46%	10%
<b>Currently Employed</b>	43%	49%	30%	14%	40%
<b>Received SA in past 12 months</b>	9%	11%	50%	84%	18%
<b>Received EI in past 12 months</b>	42%	27%	20%	10%	37%

Among those who have worked, participants in the High User group had worked for less time overall than those in the other three groups. The percentage of workers in each group who had worked a total of 12 or more months was:

- 81% in the Non-user group;
- 79% in the Low User group;
- 63% in the Part-timer group; and
- 28% in the High User group.

Almost half the workers in the High User group had only worked a total of six months or less. Nearly all the workers in this group held jobs for very short periods of time (one to six months).

The majority of workers in all groups were working or had worked in jobs that required little education or training. These were jobs such as: sales clerk, general labourer, fish plant worker, lawn care worker, day care worker, home care worker, fisherman, house cleaner, industrial cleaner, welder's helper, call centre worker, warehouse labourer, grocery clerk, and warehouse clerk. These type of unskilled jobs were held by:

- 86% of workers in the Non-user group;
- 88% of workers in the Low User group;

- 84% of workers in the Part-timer group; and
- 95% of workers in the High User group.

Many jobs held by workers in the Non-user and Low User groups were seasonal or short-term in duration and the workers' job histories showed them moving between employment and EI on a regular basis. Most jobs held by workers in the Part-timer and High User groups were also short-term in duration but these workers frequently did not work long enough to collect EI, or exhausted their EI without finding another job, and thus turned to SA for support.

Therefore, the major differences among groups was not in the type of jobs held but in:

- whether or not they had worked since leaving high school;
- the total length of time the workers in these groups had worked ; and
- the degree to which the workers relied on SA between jobs.

### 3.1 Satisfaction With Job Experience

Many of the Non-user survey participants expressed dissatisfaction with the nature of the work they were doing. Three who were currently employed were looking for a new job. Another three were working part-time while taking post-secondary courses part-time. Many, when asked "If you had your life to live over, what would you change" stated that they would have continued with their education. About thirty participants (45%) made such comments as:

*"I would have taken a trade."*

*"I would have found out more about the [college] course I took [and never finished] and taken something else."*

*"I probably would have bit the bullet and stayed in school."*

Not all Non-user participants were dissatisfied with their jobs. There were some who were happy with the type of work they were doing. When asked what they would change if they had their life to live over, ten participants (15%) stated that they would not change anything. They made comments such as:

*"Nothing, I'm doing okay."*

*"I would change nothing. I enjoy the seasonal job I have."*

Only a few Low User participants expressed dissatisfaction with the nature of the work they were doing. When asked what they would change if they had their lives to live over, seven (19%) stated that they would have continued their education. Many of the Low User participants, however, appeared to be satisfied with their lives in general and stated that they would "change nothing" in their lives. One, a general labourer, said:

*"Everything is great. I am lucky I guess. I minded my own business, stuck it out in school and I now have a half decent job."*



Most workers in the Part-timers and High User groups expressed dissatisfaction with their lives in general. When asked what they would change if they had their lives to live over, many said they would have *“graduated from high school.”*

It may be that job satisfaction is linked to expectations. In the focus group sessions, about half of the 16-and-17-year-olds who lived in families on SA were planning to go to college or university after graduating from high school. However, not all planned to take post-secondary studies. They said things like:

*“You could have your life planned out too far and your life can change, then what do you do...or you could have it planned and not have the money for it.”*

*“It’s a waste of time.”*

*“If you go to college, there’s no guarantee you will get a job nor get the work that you want after spending all that money.”*

Without high career expectations, they may be satisfied to obtain and remain in jobs requiring little education or training.

### **3.2 Workers With Skilled Jobs**

Nine of the Non-user workers (14%) held skilled jobs. Seven held jobs that required post-secondary education/training and had completed a university or college course in order to obtain these jobs. Two others, high school graduates who had not taken any post-secondary courses, had worked their way up to positions with a degree of responsibility, and had held these jobs for more than three years.

Three of the Low User workers (9%) held skilled jobs. All had learned these skills “on the job” and had held their jobs for more than three years.

Eleven of the Part-timer workers (16%) had held skilled jobs. Seven had held jobs that required post-secondary training, but four of them were currently unemployed. Another four currently had jobs that required special skills that they had acquired “on the job,” but these jobs were frequently interrupted by periods of unemployment.

Two of the High User workers (5%) had held jobs that required post-secondary training, but both were currently unemployed.

### **3.3 Those Who Had Never Worked**

Only four of the 67 Non-user participants said they had not worked since leaving high school. Two were females who were supported by their families. The other two were single males who were still living with their parents; both stated that their families’ only source of income for the past 12 months was SA.

Four of the 37 Low User participants said they had not worked since leaving high school. Two were currently attending college and two were females with children who were being supported by their partners.

Ten of the 80 Part-timer participants said they had not worked since leaving high school. These were:

- four single males who still lived with their parents;
- two single females who still lived with their parents;
- three female single parents; and
- one female with a child living in a common law relationship.

All ten of the Part-timer participants who had never worked said that SA was their families' sole source of income.

Thirty-seven of the 80 High User participants said they had not worked since leaving high school, as follows:

- twenty-three were individuals with one or more children whose only source of income was SA;
- two were individuals with children who received income from SA and another source; and
- twelve were single individuals without children whose only source of income was SA (four had health problems).

### 3.4 Number Who Had Moved Out of Province

Several survey participants who were contacted had moved out of the province. As shown in Table 7, there were participants in the Non-user, Low User, and Part-timer groups who were living in other provinces at the time survey data was collected. All of those who had moved out of the province were working, but all were working in low-skilled jobs.

**Table 7: Percentage of Survey Participants Who Had Moved Out of Province**

Non-user	Low User	Part-timer	High User	Weighted Total
12%	14%	5%	0%	11%

## **Section Four**

# **RISK FACTORS**

A major goal of this project was to determine how young people demonstrating inter-generational dependency differ from those who grew up in families reliant on SA but nonetheless broke the cycle of dependency. To achieve this goal, study groups were compared on a number of variables associated with inter-generational dependency on SA.

### **4.1 Identification of Risk Factors**

The risk factors were identified using:

- a literature review;
- a focus group session with individuals on SA who had grown up in families reliant on SA (an inter-generational dependency group); and
- a focus group session with representatives of community agencies who work with this population and were therefore knowledgeable about potential risk factors perpetuating the cycle of dependency.

#### **4.1.1 Literature Review**

Most studies looking at the risk factors associated with inter-generational dependency on SA have examined only parent/family factors or neighbourhood variables. Significant correlations have been found with regards to the following variables:

- mother's education level;<sup>11</sup>
- single parent household;<sup>12</sup>
- the mother had a child outside of marriage before the age of 20;<sup>13</sup> and
- the child and his/her family living in a neighbourhood in which 40% or more of the neighbours have low incomes.<sup>14</sup>

Few studies that examine inter-generational dependency on SA identify any risk factors at the individual level. (In other words, the literature does not examine possible risk factors that distinguish individuals who grew up on SA and later collected SA as an adult from those who grew up on SA but did not rely on SA as an adult.)

Nonetheless, it is well known that the educational attainment of working-age adults is highly correlated with poverty.<sup>15</sup> A high percentage of social assistance recipients have low levels of education. The National Council of Welfare reports that low educational attainment is particularly prevalent among social assistance recipients in the Atlantic region of Canada.<sup>16</sup> Dechman's research of Nova Scotia families<sup>17</sup> found three primary factors that determined whether or not young adults required social assistance:

- having left school before completing Grade 12;
- having left home before 18 years of age; and/or
- having a dependent child.

Eighty percent of the young adults in the Dechman study who had ever received SA fit at least one of these characteristics. Many of these young adults fit all three. To date, second-generation young adults in this study are aged 20 years and under. Yet 30 percent of the young adults in the sample who left the school system before completing Grade 12 had received SA by the age of 20 years.

Many young SA recipients are women and lone parenting is the primary factor underlying gender differences in this respect. Research has clearly documented that academic and family problems are usually precursors to, rather than consequences of, teen pregnancy.<sup>18</sup> Young women who become teen mothers typically have lower level of school involvement, early school failures, and/or behavioural problems. Many are either struggling academically or are experiencing interpersonal problems with peers, teachers, and/or parents.

Many SA recipients reside in neighbourhoods that are socially isolated from mainstream society.<sup>19</sup> Socially isolated neighbourhoods are defined as those in which at least 40% of the neighbourhood's residents who are not elderly have low incomes and fewer than 10% of the neighbourhood's workers have professional or managerial jobs. Children growing up in socially isolated neighbourhoods score lower on IQ measures, are more likely to drop out of high school before graduating, and are more likely to have children before the age of 20.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, the examination of the literature suggests that SA usage in young adults is strongly correlated with the following individual factors:

- low education attainment (failure to complete high school);
- being a single parent (female);
- having a child before the age of 20; and
- living in a neighbourhood that is socially isolated from mainstream society.

#### **4.1.2 Focus Group Sessions**

The primary risk factors identified by focus group participants were “low educational attainment” and “living in a neighbourhood that is socially isolated from mainstream society.”

##### ***Education***

Of the nine individuals participating in the inter-generational dependency focus group session, seven had less than Grade 11. When asked what they would change if they had their lives to live over again, all stated that they would “*get an education.*” They also made comments like:

*“Education is the key to all.”*

*“If we had an education things would be different”*

The representatives of community agencies who work with this population stressed that low educational attainment was a major barrier to “escaping the welfare trap.” They said:

*“I think everyone would agree that the first step in breaking the cycle of poverty is getting people educated.”*

### ***Living In Socially Isolated Communities***

The individuals participating in the inter-generational dependency focus group session were asked to describe the community where they live. Their responses indicated that they experienced difficulties living in a community wherein everyone is a social services recipient. They said things like:

*“Here you are stuck. We are known as welfare bums.”*

*“Lots of people think you are on skid row.”*

*“It’s easier to get in here than it is to get out.”*

The representatives of community agencies who work with this population stressed that community pressures also played a part in creating the dependency cycle. They said:

*“In some of these neighbourhoods, there’s easy accessibility to drugs, there’s peer pressure to use these things, there’s peer pressure not to go to school.”*

*“They are actually pulled down from taking opportunities because it makes them different from the people around them.”*

*“There’s support for all the wrong things. We’re talking about children where during those years the peer group becomes more important than anything else. If you have a peer group where all the support is for negative things, that’s what these children are going to learn.”*

## **4.2 Findings: High School Education**

The failure to complete high school has traditionally been identified as one of the strongest risk factors associated with inter-generational dependency. As described earlier in this report (page 6), the education level of young adults on SA is considerably lower than the provincial norm for this age group. High school graduation levels among the survey participants were also below the provincial norm, as shown in Table 8. Non-users were much more likely to have completed high school and High Users were much less likely to have completed high school.

**Table 8: Percentage of Survey Participants Who Graduated From High School**

<b>Non-user</b>	<b>Low User</b>	<b>Part-timer</b>	<b>High User</b>	<b>Weighted Total</b>
75%	49%	47%	35%	68%

A small proportion of survey participants (4%<sup>21</sup>) obtained their high school equivalency through ABE or GED.

The main reasons participants gave for quitting high school are shown in Table 9. Participants in the group that had never collected SA as an adult (the Non-user group) were more likely to leave high school before graduating in order to enter the work force. In comparison, participants in the groups exhibiting various degrees of inter-generational dependency (the Low User, Part-timer, and High User groups) were more likely to have left school because of academic problems.

**Table 9: Main Reasons For Quitting High School**

	Non-user	Low User	Part-timer	High User	Weighted Total
<b>Pregnancy/child care</b>	6%	–	10%	13%	6%
<b>Academic problems</b>	12%	73%	35%	29%	19%
<b>To enter work force</b>	69%	13%	20%	5%	57%
<b>Other<sup>22</sup></b>	13%	14%	35%	53%	18%

Information from focus groups held to identify possible intervention strategies backed up this pattern. Two focus groups were held with 16-and-17 year olds whose families were collecting SA. Almost one-third of these participants had already dropped out of high school. Two of the six dropouts were working. Two focus groups were held with young adults on SA. Less than one-third had graduated from high school. Those who had not graduated said that they had left school because of problems in getting along with their parents, getting along with their teachers, academic pressures, peer pressure, and getting pregnant.

The survey found significant differences in high school experiences between those who did not use SA after graduation and those who did. A significantly higher proportion of Non-user participants indicated that:

- they enjoyed school more than their fellow students;
- they worked harder than their fellow students;
- they got better marks than their fellow students; and
- their family placed more importance on education than the families of fellow students.

The groups did *not* differ with respect to:

- the emphasis placed by their family on getting homework done; and
- their participation in after-school activities.

Fifteen participants (9%) in the Part-timer and High User groups voluntarily mentioned that they had learning problems, making statements like:

*“I had a reading disability problem even though I graduated Grade 12. I did that with the help of teachers in special education classes.”*

*“I could not learn no matter how hard I tried. Not even with help from the school.”*

*“I needed help in school and didn’t get it...I have a problem reading.”*

*“I only wish I was able to learn and finish school. I just couldn’t do it and my parents couldn’t help me.”*

*“I failed kindergarten. Teachers couldn’t help me.”*

As well, ten participants (6%) in the Part-timer and High User groups voluntarily mentioned that their high school education was interrupted because they got into trouble with the law. They said things like:

*“I should have stayed out of trouble [with the law] and finished school.”*

*“I was asked to leave school.”*

*“I would have stayed in school and not hung out with hard cases. I cannot work because I am on probation and no one will hire me.”*

*“I would not have gotten into trouble and went to jail. I have a record and my chances of work are much less because of that...I am very unhappy with the way things have turned out and I guess this is really my fault.”*

*“I went to jail...I wish I could find any type of work or get in school. I am drug free for 6½ years and not having anything to do makes it hard to stay off drugs.”*

Later in the survey, participants were asked if they had gotten into any serious trouble when they were a teenager. Nine (11%) of the Part-timer participants and ten (13%) of the High User participants indicated that they had gotten into serious trouble with the law. None of the Non-user or Low User participants said that they had gotten into serious trouble with the law as a teenager.

### **4.3 Findings: Education After High School**

The failure to complete a post-secondary education program has not traditionally been identified as a risk factor. However, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has placed strong emphasis on the fact that a post-secondary education has become increasingly necessary for individuals who compete in the labour market.<sup>23</sup> In a follow-up survey of June 2001 high school graduates, the Department of Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education found that 71% of June 2001 high school graduates were engaged in post-secondary studies. Forty-six percent were attending university and 25% were attending college. As approximately 83% of persons aged 25-34 in the province have completed high school, this means that approximately 38% of the population in the same age group as the survey participants attended university and 21% attended college.

Only 10% of the survey respondents attended university. All these participants, except one, were from the Non-user group. All those who started university had either graduated or were still attending. All university graduates were working.

A larger proportion (29%) of survey participants had attended college. There was no difference among groups in terms of the proportion attending or completing college programs. The High User group was slightly less likely to enroll in or complete a college program, but this difference was not significant.

About 40% of those who started college did not complete their college programs. There were no differences among groups in terms of the proportion of participants who dropped out of college programs. Several participants, including some who had graduated from their college program and some who had dropped out of their college program, made negative comments about these programs. They said things like:

*“I would not have taken the course I took. It was a waste of time.”*

*“I would have chosen the course I took more carefully. There was little guidance given in school about trades, etc. I just took the wrong course.”*

*“I would have found out more about the course I took and taken something else.”*

Among those who completed their college courses, 56% of the Non-user participants had found work in their area of study, 22% were unemployed and 22% were working in low-skilled jobs unrelated to their area of study. In comparison, only 8% of participants from the inter-generational dependency groups (Low Users, Part-timers, and High Users) who had completed their college courses, were able to find work in their area of study. Sixty percent of the college graduates in these groups were unemployed and 32% were working in low-skilled jobs unrelated to their area of study.

The follow-up survey of June 2001 high school graduates by the Department of Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education found that only 6% of high school graduates were attending private colleges; the others were at the College of the North Atlantic or Marine Institute. Information was not collected about the type of college the survey participants attended, but from comments made, and the lengths of the programs, it appeared that many had attended private colleges. Many graduates found that there were no jobs available in their fields of study, or that their skills did not match the needs of employers in their communities.

This inference was supported by findings from the focus group sessions held to identify possible intervention strategies. Eight participants in these focus group sessions, young adults currently receiving SA, had completed college courses, all at private colleges in their region. Some reasons they gave for choosing a private college were:

*“It is easier to get in.”*

*“You don’t need Grade 12 to get in there.”*

*“They are always advertising.”*

*“They spoon feed you.”*

*“If they know you are getting a student loan they will take you right away.”*

*“There is always a waiting list at CONA. There’s no waiting list at the private colleges.”*

Many survey participants emphasized the need to further their education with comments like:

*“It is really tough trying to make it when you haven’t got much education.”*

*“There are not many jobs out there without post-secondary education.”*

Thirty-nine percent of the survey participants said they had considered furthering their education. However, 51% of those who have considered upgrading their education said that tuition costs made this a severe problem for them.

Several mentioned that they had already acquired a student loan debt, which was a factor affecting their decision to pursue further education. They made comments like:

*“I wish I had money to go to school now. However, my student loan is high and I have to get that down a bit first.”*

*“I just cannot afford to go to school because I am in debt...I would have gone on in the course I took and taken advanced courses [if not for the money factor].”*

*“I have a student loan now. I cannot afford another one.”*



*“If I could pay off my student loan, [further education] would be no problem. However, this is a major stumbling block for me.”*

One focus group participant, an young adult SA recipient, said she “owed \$8,000 to CompuCollege in student loans.”

#### **4.4 Findings: Neighbourhood/Community Experiences**

Although community experience has been identified as a risk factor, the survey found few differences among groups with respect to their community experiences. The groups did *not* differ with respect to these statements about their community:

- My community was a fun place to grow up;
- I had a lot of friends in my community; and
- Of the families I knew in my community, in most families there was someone who was working;

There were also no differences among groups with respect to the question: “*Compared to most other people you went to school with, would you say your family was financially better off, worse off or the same as other people?*” Most said their families were financially the “same as others.”

One difference that was found was that the High User group was more likely to have grown up in a rural community (66%) than participants in other groups (46%). High Users were also more likely to still be living in a rural community (59%) than participants in other groups (41%).

Survey participants were asked whether they agreed with the statement “Many of the families I knew had problems” and, if so, “what type of problems.” Responses indicated that:

- a higher proportion of Non-user participants agreed that “many families they knew had problems” (51%) than did participants from the Low User, Part-timer, and High User groups (approximately 30%)<sup>24</sup>;
- the greatest proportion of participants in all groups cited “financial problems,” although this was cited as a problem more frequently by participants in the Non-user and Low User groups than by participants in the Part-timer and High User groups; and
- participants in the Part-timer and High User groups were more likely to cite “family violence” and “drug and alcohol abuse” as problems than were participants in the Non-user and Low User groups.

Participants were also asked “*Was there any adult in your community other than a member of your family who had a positive influence on you?*” About one-quarter of the participants answered “yes” to this question and there were no significant differences among groups. The majority of participants identified the person who had an influence on them as either a teacher or a family friend.

## 4.5 Findings: Single Parents and Teen Pregnancy

Inter-generational dependency on SA has been associated with “single parent households” in which the mother had her first child before the age of 20. As shown in Table 10, participants in the High User group were more likely to have children than participants in other groups and were more likely to have children before the age of 20.

**Table 10: Marital Status and Number of Children**

	Non-user	Low User	Part-timer	High User	Weighted Table
<b>Single or Divorced</b>	68%	73%	79%	71%	70%
<b>Married or Common Law</b>	31%	27%	22%	29%	30%
<b>Still Live With Parents</b>	48%	33%	48%	31%	46%
<b>One or More Children</b>	25%	30%	35%	59%	29%
<b>First Child Before Age 20</b>	13%	8%	12%	33%	14%

Statistics obtained through the analysis of social assistance files indicated that “caring for spouse/child” was listed as the reason for assistance of 34% of the High User group (shown in Table 3 on page 5). Thus, it is probable that many of the 59% High User participants with one or more children were receiving SA as single parents.

It is important to note, however, that a large proportion of High User SA recipients were not single parents. Thirty-two percent were single males or females who still lived with their parents. (This is comparable to the 35% who were found to be classified as “employable” in the analysis of social assistance files.)

## 4.6 Findings: Health Factors

Serious health problems have been identified as a risk factor for inter-generational dependency. About 18% of the survey participants in the Part-timer and High User groups indicated they had serious health problems compared to only 6% of those in the Non-user and Low User groups.

Only 8% of the High User participants said they had health problems that prevented them from working. None of the Part-timer participants stated that their health problems prevented them from working. However, 13 High User and 4 Part-timer individuals, who were contacted because their names were on the sample lists, did not participate in the survey because they had severe mental or physical problems that prevented their participation. (These 13 people represented approximately 9% of individuals contacted in these two groups.) Statistics obtained through the analysis of social assistance files indicated that “disability” was listed as the reason for assistance of 24% of the High User group and 12% of the Part-timer group (shown in Table 3 on page 5).

## Section Five SUPPORTS

As described in earlier sections of this report, young people who have broken the cycle of dependency differ from those who develop an inter-generational reliance on SA in two main ways:

- education; and
- work experience

In terms of education, the failure to graduate from high school was the strongest risk factor associated with inter-generational reliance on SA. Furthermore, the questionnaire survey found that only about 10% of the young adults who grew up in families with a high reliance on SA attended university (versus approximately 38% of the population of the province in their age group).

Although a larger percentage of young adults who grew up in families with a high reliance on SA entered college programs, about 40% dropped out before graduating. More than 50% of those who graduated from their college programs were unable to find a job suited to their training. Thus, in addition to support for improving their education, it appears that children growing up in families with a high reliance on SA need career planning support.

In terms of work experience, the majority of survey participants (90%) had worked since leaving high school. (Only 54% of the High Users, however, had worked after leaving high school.) Many of these participants held jobs that were short-term or seasonal. A large percentage of participants in all groups (60%) were unemployed when the survey was conducted. Many of those who appear to have successfully broken the cycle of dependency shift between employment and EI for income support. Those who fail to break the cycle of dependency shift among employment, EI, and SA for support, or rely entirely on SA. These findings suggest that children growing up in families with a high reliance on SA need both career planning and employment assistance supports.

HRE and other government agencies have many supports in place to help SA clients further their education, obtain career planning, and improve their employment prospects. These include:

### *Education Supports*

- # HRE partners with other government departments and the College of the North Atlantic to provide ABE to clients on income support.
- # HRE provides supports to individuals with disabilities to help them obtain post-secondary training through its current Employment Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) program.
- # Financial assistance is provided to individuals to pursue post secondary education and training through the Canada/Newfoundland Student Loans Program which is administered by the provincial department of Youth, Services and Post-Secondary Education.

- # HRDC provides funding for EI eligible clients to upgrade their skills in post-secondary training programs through its Skills Development program.
- # Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education offers several programs that provide high school and post secondary students with income to pursue their studies. These include the Student Employment Program Levels I, II and III, SWASP (paid employment component and community service component) and the Tutoring Work Experience Program.
- # Several corporate groups, non-profit groups, and government agencies sponsor scholarships and/or bursaries for visible minorities and target groups such as aboriginals, disabled persons and women enrolled in non-traditional trade programs at community colleges.

### ***Career Planning Supports***

- # HRE provides employment and career counselling services on a one-on-one basis through its Career Development Specialists.
- # HRE provides career and job search information to individuals through the Newfoundland and Labrador Work Information Network (NLWIN) via a toll-free telephone service and a web site.
- # HRDC provides information to help individuals develop career plans through their Information Resource Centres, Outreach Offices and several web sites including the Government of Canada and HRDC sites.

### ***Employment Assistance Supports***

- # HRE offers several programs that provide wage subsidies to employers to hire non-EI eligible clients. These include the Employment Generation Program (long-term employment contracts), Linkages (aimed specifically at Youth), NewfoundJOBS (only for income support clients), and the Seasonal Employment Program.
- # HRE, in partnership with HRDC, provides supports to individuals with developmental disabilities to help them obtain employment under the Employment Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) program.
- # HRE provides information to assist individuals with their job search via a toll-free telephone number and a web site (NLWIN).
- # HRE funds more than 20 community agencies across the province to provide clients with pre-employment readiness training and support.
- # HRDC provides employment assistance offices to help students find summer jobs through its Office For Students.
- # HRDC provides information about available jobs that individuals can access through the JobBank (web site), Joblines (telephone service) and Information Resources Centres located throughout the province.

Although many supports are in place, few of these supports were used by the young adults who participated in the survey. Approximately 11% of all participants had received assistance from a

government or community agency that helped them choose a career, find a job, and/or improve their employment skills. The majority of those who had received assistance cited using the HRDC Job Bank.

Focus group discussions found two main reasons for this failure to use available supports — lack of awareness and the fact that the supports were not matched to the population.

## 5.1 Lack of Awareness

As described earlier in Section 4, comments made by survey participants who attended college suggest many had taken programs at private colleges. All focus group participants who attended college had enrolled in programs at private colleges. These focus group participants said they obtained information about potential careers from these private colleges as well. They chose programs that they thought might result in interesting jobs without examining the prospects for finding work in these fields. Often, these were the types of programs offered by the private colleges. Several participants mentioned that “[a private college] was the most useful source of career information” in their region.

### 5.1.1 Awareness of Education Supports

Focus group participants who were on SA mentioned three sources of support for furthering their education – Student Loans, the HRDC Skills Development Program, and Indian Status Eligibility. The only source any of them had accessed was the HRDC Student Loans program.

The 16-and-17-year-old focus group participants whose parents were on SA were able to name several sources of support for furthering their education, including student loans, part-time work, summer jobs, scholarships, the Work for Tuition program, and working full-time for a year before entering a post-secondary institution. These sources were mentioned by one or more participants, but most participants indicated that they had not thought seriously about financing their post-secondary education. A few individuals who were planning to pursue post-secondary studies had no idea about how to get money to pay for these studies.

### 5.1.2 Awareness of Career Planning Supports

Most focus group participants who were on SA and who had not attended college had not given much thought about possible careers. The few who had thought about possible jobs said they had found “the newspaper” or talking to someone at “a private college” to be their most useful sources of information.

When asked, the focus group participants who were on SA mentioned several sources of information about career planning. However, the only source they had used was talking to a person at a private college. None of the participants was aware of the NLWIN.

A few participants were aware that career planning assistance was available from HRE or from “their social worker.” However, they did not use these supports often. One said:

*“I gave up on getting a job as I tried Job-Search Seminar (HRE) and every time I had an appointment they cancelled so I got tired of trying...so the last time they called I told them*

*that they cancelled all the time and I wasn't interested any more."*

The 16-and 17-year-old focus group participants were able to list a number of sources of information about career planning, but the only ones they had used were:

- searching the Internet;
- Career Day in school; and
- school courses that provided information about potential careers.

None of these 16-and-17-year old focus group participants was aware of the NLWIN.

### **5.1.3 Awareness of Employment Assistance Supports**

Two-thirds of the focus group participants on SA had some work experience and 30% were currently employed. Most had a resume, and several had used the HRDC Job Bank to get information about available jobs. They were not very positive about the Job Bank, however. Some comments they made were:

*"The site is too slow...it takes a long time...and the job advertised there had been there for a long time."*

*"By the time it gets on the Job Bank the jobs are taken."*

*"The information is not updated."*

*"It comes up on a screen, Job Search, and you put in, for example, carpenter, and press an area and it says not available."*

One participant said that:

*"There is a number that I call. It is 643-5752 to get the jobs that are listed...I call it as soon as I get out of bed in the morning and three or four times a day. But I find that the jobs are outdated and left there too long...as soon as jobs come up they are posted to that line though and that is why I call there several times during the day."*

None of these participants had any knowledge of the wage subsidy programs offered by HRE.

Sixty percent of the 16-to-17-year-old focus group participants had resumes and 9% were currently employed. About 40% were aware of community programs that could help them in their job search. One said: *"There are enough programs around, you just got to want to do them."*

However, several of these young focus group participants said that they had not known about the community programs that were identified *"until they were mentioned here [the focus group session]."*

None of these 16-to-17-year-olds had any knowledge about the provincial government programs sponsored by HRE.

When these young participants were asked: “what sort of help is most important for the government to provide and how should the government do this,” the following comments were made:

*“Go into schools and explain what programs are available.”*

*“Have extra group meetings like this one to tell us about what is available. Have them during the school day. Hold sessions where we can learn about what is available.”*

*“Have sessions for those who have dropped out of school.”*

*“Use more advertising... use the TV, radio, and newspapers.”*

*“Have more information centres.”*

*“Have discussion groups like this one.”*

## **5.2 Supports Not Matched To Population**

A number of the professionals attending focus group sessions mentioned that the available supports were not well matched to the population. The focus group session with community representatives held to identify risk factors emphasized the fact that getting an education was not easy for these people, and that additional supports were needed to address their personal problems. The comments these professionals made were:

*“They wouldn’t be able to do it themselves. They need the support. Lots of follow-up.”*

*“The way there are providing educational supports is not necessarily working in that they are not meeting the real needs of the people. Many have learning disabilities, emotional problems, etc.”*

*“We’re talking about a client group that’s on social assistance. But we’re talking about people with learning disabilities, people with prison records, people with mental illness, people who are single parents, people with dependency problems. Within this group, there are a diverse set of circumstances and needs, so it’s hard to come up with a blanket thing. I think that what the system needs is a process of assessment for individual people. What the government needs is a process of assessing people. You can’t talk about this group uniformly as a group.”*

*“These people need ongoing support. They don’t need a one-shot deal to get them through their ABE. They need over a period of time, decreasing, varying support.”*

The focus group session with Government and Community Agency representatives in St. John’s stressed the fact that wage subsidy programs like Linkages were not always well matched to their clients. Again, it was emphasized that additional supports were needed to address the personal problems encountered by youth who have grown up in SA dependent households. They stated:

*“We’ve used Linkages in the past. One of the things we found is that when they changed the criteria from any youth to a person who is in receipt of HRE sources of funding we suddenly encountered – even if they had completed high school – young people who could not get by*

*with a one-week orientation to the workplace. This program in particular could be a good program but because of the criteria they've put in place, it's nearly impossible to have success."*

*"Now it's get them in, give them five days training and get them out and they give you enough money to hire somebody about two hours a week to look after them."*

*"Now that they've changed the criteria – they must not have made any transition into the labour market, can't be EI eligible. That means that they don't have any or very few work skills. They could fix the program by either offering more orientation for the young people who they are offering it to or they could fix it by offering better follow-up throughout the placement period."*

*"In my experience, more than 40% of those in the Linkages program drop out because there is no support. If the proper supports are not there, it is better not to have a program at all."*

*"I've worked with EI eligible clients and non-EI eligible clients. They are very different client groups. The EI eligible client comes in, they've got the previous work experience, they've got an attachment to the labour force, chances are they haven't been sitting at home for a long time. When you're dealing with clients who've been raised on social assistance or have been on social assistance since they've been 18, 19, 20 years old – by the time they get to social assistance they've exhausted every other avenue, so they're really down and out, and they've got all kinds of issues going on in their lives that need to be worked with up front before you can even get to working with the job skills. There's nothing to address any of these issues."*

*"They need basic employability skills. It's knowing what you need to do to keep the job. It's time to help them through a transitional program before we get into work placement. Work placement is important but I think it's the second step."*



## Section Six

# POTENTIAL INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Two focus group sessions were held with representatives of government and community agencies to identify the types of intervention strategies needed to break the cycle of inter-generational dependency on SA. One of these sessions was held in St. John's and one was held in Clarenville. The overall findings from these discussions were:

- HRE needs to promote its services to the children of SA recipients before these children leave school;
- HRE has useful programs and services, but there are not enough resources to implement them successfully; and
- Some HRE programs have barriers that prevent youths from taking advantage of them.

These conclusions are supported by statements made by participants that are reported below.

### 6.1 Promote Services Before Students Leave School

Both focus groups identified lack of promotion around career counselling services provided by HRE as a major gap in service and a primary area in which to focus intervention strategies. In St. John's, the discussion ran as follows:

*“The general response to career planning while they are in high school is that it is the Department of Education’s responsibility. We don’t go there.”*

*“A lot of our services are interventions or after-the-fact services. If you want to prevent people from ending up on social assistance for a long time you are going to have to provide services earlier.”*

*There are too many government agencies and third party agencies doing their own separate piece. A lot of time there’s an overlap of services. Make it more streamlined. Our department [HRE] and other departments have to change their mandates and get into the high schools so that youth are more informed about what’s out there.”*

*“HRE should change its mandate where they should get into high schools and offer counselling. It wouldn’t hurt if HRE and Education crossed over a little bit. That’s the way I think it should be going.”*

*“For career counselling purposes, someone who has graduated from high school can call in and get an appointment to see a career counsellor. They don’t have to be on social assistance for career counselling. BUT, given the number of staff we have and the demand on the services, our first priority will be given to the social assistance recipients.”*

*“One of the major gaps in service for youth is that there is no career counselling available, yet the service is there and we’re not profiling it and letting people know it exists.”*

*“We don’t do any advertising. Our programs and services are the best kept secret in the province.”*

In Clarendville, the discussion took a similar approach as follows:

*“We are not getting the information into the school system. People have all these misconceptions.”*

*“We have a lot of trouble trying to get into schools. It is very difficult to get into the schools to talk to students.”*

*“What you have to do is get the school board on your side, with your program or what you are doing. If you approach the school, they’ll tell you they don’t have time, they’ve got too many things to fit into too small a space, they can’t interfere with instructional time, etc.”*

*“We can even help the teachers if they’re trying to find co-op positions. We’ve done that. But, if they are not going to let us in...it’s a problem. Sometimes it’s more than the school board, it’s the individual school. There are some schools where they won’t have an ISSP meeting with us.....Sometimes you can get the commitment at the board level, but when push comes to shove of actually getting there, certain schools are great and open up the doors for you and others refuse.”*

*“In schools there are enterprise classes and HRE could talk to those students. Basically what they want to talk about is the programs and services that are offered by both levels of government.”*

Thus, government and community representatives are aware that there is a general lack of knowledge about available programs and services at the high school level. These programs and services are available but not being advertised. One reason they are not publicized is “turf protection” that views career planning in high school as the responsibility of the Department of Education. The general consensus of these groups can be summed up in two statements:

*“Our department and other departments have to change their mandates and get into the high schools so that youth are more informed about what’s out there.”*

*“It wouldn’t hurt if HRE and Education crossed over a little bit.”*

## **6.2 Provide More Resources To Implement Programs/Services**

Both focus groups stressed that another reason that available programs and services were not being advertised is that “there are not enough human resources available at HRE to offer these services/programs to all who need them.”

The **first barrier** participants noted was the lack of human resources at HRE – especially those involved in Career Development and Career Counselling – which limits the number of clients whose needs can be met.

In St. John’s, participants stated:

*“The fear of making it more public is that there isn’t enough money.”*

*“We’re run off our feet without ever doing an ad. If you advertise what’s going to happen? It’s not going to be available for them.”*

*“There are not enough [HRE] Career Counsellors.”*

*“It is not more programs that are needed. We need more human resources. Unless you have the time to sit down and go through the hard work of assessing where a client is... If you are a youth and you’re beginning to develop a career plan and your next appointment is six weeks away...we are not meeting client needs.”*

In Clarendville, participants stated:

*“If HRE is going to put more resources into programs and services, they should first start filling some of the positions that are vacant.”*

*“This is a big problem. HRE does not have enough human resources to meet the needs of its programs.”*

A **second barrier** identified by focus group participants was that the amount of money provided to community agencies to administer Linkages is inadequate. This has resulted in a number of agencies opting out of the program.

In St. John’s, participants stated:

*“You are expected to have a coordinator, somebody to facilitate the session, to monitor the program, meet with the clients, do the orientation. And you want an orientation, you want follow-up, you want crisis intervention. Most of the work in Linkages is not what’s done during orientation. It’s done day-to-day – in that, so-and-so just called, so-and-so just stole something, so-and-so just...you know.”*

*“In our organization we used to use a full-time counsellor and do Linkages on top of it but when they changed the criteria so that these young people have not made any transition into the work force – they have very little work experience – that the issue just became so great that we couldn’t keep it up.”*

At the Clarendville session, the discussion about Linkages also stressed the low fee provided to groups facilitating Linkages. The Clarendville participants, however, did not have the problems with lack of work skills experienced by the St. John’s group.

*“We are battling about an 80% success rate right now with Linkages. For the most part it is a good opportunity for youth who have some attachment to the income support program to make that transition into the labour force. The negative side would be the 15% administration. That’s not a lot of money if you have to hire a coordinator. So you are limiting the agencies and organizations that are applying, because if they don’t have a coordinator that they can free up for x percentage of their day, they can’t do a good job... when you have a program that has such a good success, and we’re supposedly focussing on youth, why aren’t we putting the money into the program?”*

*“We administer the Linkages program. Because it is so successful, that’s why we administer it. What we get from it and what we have to put out – it is a challenge. I have one employment counsellor who implements that program – she’s got five successful years – but*

*the amount of time and effort she puts in. I'm sure she could probably do it in less time, but the program would suffer. It means for that time that all the other work has to be divvied up and shared around with the rest of us."*

*"Initially we administered Linkages because we had somebody in the office who could do the coordination, the 15% was an add-on. But now where development associations do not receive any core administration funding for project-based programs, we can't apply for Linkages. The 15% – that's what you get paid, and you're not going to get a good person to administer a program like that for that amount."*

A **third barrier** identified by focus group participants was the long waiting list for EAPD. Participants in St. John's said:

*"EAPD has very, very limited dollars. The wait list for EAPD is two years."*

*"It takes a long time to get someone with a disability to a stage where they are ready to move on and then we have to wait a year or two to access funding."*

*"The waiting period is so long. They meet with a career counsellor. Then they're just sitting at home waiting."*

Participants in Clarendville said:

*"I've got a comment to make about EAPD – Not Enough Money! We've had clients where we had them all set up ready to go to work, who could not go to work because the money was all used up. We had people lose jobs because there is not enough money in this program."*

*"HRE has got to get better at working with the employment corporations to ensure that the mandate of the supported employment program is actually followed through. By that I mean that once you get a person with a developmental disability going to work and you get a job trainer, the goal is to wean away that job trainer, as much as possible, and make the individual with the disability as independent as possible. In a lot of cases we are not seeing that happen. As a result of that, I guess this is why there is always more money needed. Because we're not saving anything by weaning away our job trainers and we've got other clients coming up. A lot of times the employer thinks they're getting two for the price of one."*

Thus, focus group participants felt strongly that either funding for the EAPD program must be increased or HRE must develop ways to improve program operations.

### **6.3 Other Barriers**

Focus group participants mentioned other barriers that prevented youths from accessing programs offered by HRE.

At the St. John's session, participants noted that many of their clients do not qualify for programs because of a lack of education or a lack of experience. They said:

*"Linkages is only for youth who have completed Level 3. That's a major problem because most of my clients don't have Level 3...and most feel disjointed from all these programs"*

*because of the educational barrier. So while we do use some programs – with the offender population – there’s major, major barriers there. Young people feel totally disjointed, uninformed, can’t get access to programs.”*

*“The population that the [agency] serves, their biggest barrier is that they have little or no experience and oftentimes that becomes a barrier and they cannot get the experience, which sustains the barrier. For example, the Office For Students, that’s a service we use but that doesn’t necessarily mean that our young people are able to get jobs because they may not meet the criteria.”*

*“The failure to graduate from high school. That has become one of the major barriers. The criteria has changed for our programs so young people who have dropped out, trying to get back, those programs are no longer there.”*

Participants in the Clarendville session were positive in general about NewfoundJOBS, but felt that because it was restricted to income support clients only, those clients who were “borderline” were prevented from accessing a valuable program. They said:

*“NewfoundJOBS has been fairly successful in this office. For clients who are non-EI eligible, NewfoundJOBS is a good means for them to get into the work force. The positive with NewfoundJOBS is that it is client-centred, and we can think outside the box. We can do very creative things. We’re not required to go 40 hours a week for x number of weeks or anything like that. We can gear our number of hours and weeks to the client’s needs. We don’t have to follow a structure.”*

*“The negative to NewfoundJOBS is that it is for income support clients only. I work with clients who are borderline. They could be on income support but they don’t necessarily want to come through that door and take the cheque or fill in an application, and I respect them for that.”*

## Section Seven

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Inter-generational dependency on social assistance occurs when young people who grew up in families who had a strong reliance on SA develop a similar pattern of dependency when they become adults. A number of research studies have found that growing up in a household receiving SA increases the probability that the child will become dependent on SA.

The purpose of the current project was to identify:

- the extent to which inter-generational dependency on SA exists in the province;
- how individuals who demonstrate inter-generational dependency differ from those who break the cycle of dependency; and
- potential intervention strategies to improve the transition prospects of individuals growing up on SA.

### 7.1 The Magnitude of the Problem

The magnitude of the problem of inter-generational dependency on SA was examined through an analysis of information contained in the HRE social assistance files.

Individuals who grew up in families with a strong reliance on SA in 1992-93 were matched against adults who collected SA during the 1993 to 2001 time period. Forty-one percent of these individuals collected SA as an adult at some point between the time they turned 18 and the end of 2001. Twelve percent of these individuals were heavy users of SA, having been on assistance for most of the time since they had turned 18 years of age.

Young adults who received SA in 2000-01 were matched against children in the 1992-93 file. Seventeen percent of these young adults were the children of parents who had shown a heavy reliance on SA in 1992-93. Given that approximately 5% of children in the population (using 1991 Census data) showed a heavy reliance on SA in 2000-01, this means that **the children of parents who had shown a heavy reliance on SA were almost 3½ times as likely to show a heavy reliance on SA as adults than those children whose parents were not dependent on SA.**

### 7.2 Differences Between Groups

A telephone survey was used to examine differences between (1) individuals who grew up in families with a heavy reliance on SA and became dependent on SA as adults and (2) those who grew up in families with a heavy reliance on SA but broke the cycle of dependency.

**The primary difference between groups was found with respect to whether or not they graduated from high school.** Individuals demonstrating inter-generational dependency were much less likely to have graduated from high school (43%)<sup>25</sup> than were individuals who broke the cycle of dependency (75%). A significantly greater proportion of those who never collected SA as an adult said:

- they enjoyed school more than their fellow students;
- they worked harder than their fellow students;
- they got better marks than their fellow students; and
- their family placed more importance on education than the families of fellow students.

The only other differences between groups found in the survey were that those individuals showing a heavy reliance on SA were:

- more likely to have grown up in rural communities and are still living in rural communities;
- more likely to have children; and
- more likely to have serious health problems.

### 7.3 Education/training After High School

The telephone survey was used to examine the post-secondary education/training experiences of individuals who grew up in families with a heavy reliance on SA.

Twelve percent of the group who had broken the cycle of dependency were enrolled in or had graduated from university programs, whereas only one individual who demonstrated inter-generational dependency was enrolled in a university program. However, the proportion of individuals in the survey who attended university (10%) was much lower than the proportion of the population in this age group who attended university (approximately 38%<sup>26</sup>). Based on the findings from the questionnaire survey, it appears that **most individuals who grew up in families with a heavy reliance on SA did not attend university**. As one participant, who has been working part-time and attending university part-time for more than five years, stated:

*“I am from a poor family.... I am trying to do the best with what I have.”*

About 29% of the questionnaire participants had attempted a college program after leaving high school. This is comparable to the proportion in this age group who attend college (approximately 21%<sup>27</sup>). There were no significant differences among groups with respect to attempting, completing, or dropping out of college programs. However, there were differences among groups with respect to getting applicable jobs after completing their college program, as follows:

- Among participants who never collected SA, 56% had found work in their area of study. The others who completed their college courses were unemployed (22%) or working in low-skilled jobs unrelated to their area of study (22%);
- Among participants who received SA as adults, only 8% were able to find work in their area of study. The others who completed their college courses were unemployed (60%) or working in low-skilled jobs unrelated to their area of study (32%).

## 7.4 Work Experience

The telephone survey was also used to examine the work experience of individuals who grew up in families with a heavy reliance on SA.

As would be expected, the individuals who broke the cycle of dependency had much greater work experience than those who demonstrated inter-generational dependency on SA. Nearly all individuals who broke the cycle of dependency had work experience.

A large percentage of young adults (46%) who were heavy users of SA, having been on assistance for most of the time since they had turned 18, had never worked. Many of these (47%) were females with children (either single females or females living with a partner). However, 32% of the heavy users who had never held a job were single males or single females.

There were few differences among groups in terms of the types of jobs held. The majority of all questionnaire participants held or had held jobs that required little education or training. These were jobs such as: sales clerk, waitress, general labourer, fish plant worker, day care worker, home care worker, call centre worker, tree planter, janitor, and fast food restaurant worker. Most of these jobs were seasonal, part-time, or short-term in duration, and the workers' job histories showed them moving among employment, EI, and SA on a regular basis. Based on the findings from the questionnaire survey, it appeared that **nearly all individuals who grew up in families with a heavy reliance on SA did not obtain professional or managerial jobs. Most had obtained relatively unskilled jobs and were frequently unemployed for periods of time.**

The individuals who had broken the cycle of dependency were able to keep off SA by moving between employment and EI. The individuals who demonstrated an attachment to SA as adults, but were not totally dependent on SA, also moved between employment and EI, but sometimes turned to SA for support.

## 7.5 Potential Intervention Strategies

Potential intervention strategies for improving the transition prospects of individuals growing up on SA were identified through the survey and explored in depth using six focus groups.

Information gathered using the survey indicated that:

- inter-generational dependency on SA might be decreased by encouraging the children of SA recipients to stay in school until they graduate; and
- the transition prospects of individuals growing up on SA might be improved by increasing their awareness of the career planning, job search, and work experience opportunities available to them through government/community agencies.

### 7.5.1 Encouraging Youth To Stay In School

Failure to graduate from high school was the strongest risk factor associated with failure to break the cycle of inter-generational dependency on SA. Many of the heavier users of SA do not “stick it out in school” and their school failures are carried over into a failure to successfully enter the labour force. The heavy users of SA tend to leave school because of:



- academic problems; and
- behaviour problems (failure to conform to family, school, and/or community norms).

When focus group participants who had left school before graduating were asked what would have encouraged them to stay in school, none could articulate a response. They simply said that they “wanted out” and that “the time had come to leave school.” This suggests that their problems with school began long before they actually dropped out. A number of questionnaire survey participants and focus group participants were only in Grade 8 or 9 when they dropped out of school at age 16 or 17. They had mentally “dropped out” of the school system several years prior to physically “dropping out.” The early warning signs of “dropping out” may not be monitored adequately by the SA system. As one government representative who was a focus group participant stated:

*“A lot of our services are interventions or after-the-fact services. If you want to prevent people from ending up on SA for a long time you are going to have to provide services earlier.”*

### 7.5.2 Increasing Awareness of Available Opportunities

Few participants to the survey had received any assistance from government or community agencies to help them find a job, choose a career, or improve their employment skills. Those individuals who had successfully entered the labour market found their jobs by responding to advertisements, hearing about openings from family and friends, and/or knocking on doors. They did not appear to have taken advantage of career planning opportunities. Their lack of career planning was demonstrated in two ways, as follows:

- 1) Many held jobs that required little training or education; and
- 2) Many enrolled in post-secondary training programs that did not meet their needs, and ended up without suitable jobs coupled with large student loan debts.

Focus group sessions with young adults on SA and youths aged 16 and 17 who were the children of parents on SA revealed a **general lack of knowledge about government/community services and programs available to assist individuals in career planning, job search and gaining work experience.** Many young adults on SA received information about career planning from private colleges. Often, those who had upgraded their education or planned to upgrade their education tended to go to private colleges because they were “*easier to get into*” and they “*advertised constantly in the newspaper.*”

Many youths in high school tended to approach family and friends, or their high school guidance counsellors, to obtain information about potential careers. Although a number wanted to pursue post-secondary education programs, they did not have firm plans about how to finance their chosen programs. Many were unaware of the fact that there were various opportunities other than the student loan program that could be used to help them finance a post-secondary education.

Focus group sessions with representatives of government and community agencies that work with the SA population concurred that there was a lack of knowledge in the general population about programs and services offered for career planning, job search and gaining work experience.

As two participants stated:

*“We don’t do any advertising. Our programs and services are the best kept secrets in the province.”*

*“One of the major gaps in service for youth is that there is no career counselling available, yet the service is there and we’re not profiling it and letting people know it exists.”*

However, participants stressed that at least part of the reason these programs and services were not advertised was because HRE did not have enough human resources to meet the needs of all who should avail of them. They said:

*“We’re run off our feet without ever doing an ad.”*

*“The fear of making it more public is that there isn’t enough money.”*

*“This is a big problem. HRE does not have enough human resources to meet the needs of its programs.”*

Participants at both of the government/community agency focus group sessions stressed that **information about career planning must begin early, while the children of SA recipients are still attending high school.** They said:

*There are too many government agencies and third party agencies doing their own separate piece. A lot of time there’s an overlap of services. Make it more streamlined. Our department [HRE] and other departments have to change their mandates and get into the high schools so that youth are more informed about what’s out there.”*

*“HRE should change its mandate where they should get into high schools and offer counselling. It wouldn’t hurt if HRE and Education crossed over a little bit. That’s the way I think it should be going.”*

*“We are not getting the information into the school system. People have all these misconceptions.”*

## 7.6 Recommendations

1. A major finding of this study was that there was a general lack of knowledge about government and community services/programs available to assist individuals in career planning, job search and gaining work experience among both young adults on SA and youths who are growing up in families on SA. Information about these programs should be provided while the children of SA recipients are still attending high school. When they are still in high school, the children of SA recipients have fewer obstacles to overcome and are more likely to use these services/programs to obtain further training/education or work experiences that will provide them with a successful transition into the labour force. Once they have dropped out of school and/or have family responsibilities, they have many obstacles to overcome and are more likely to become entrenched in the SA system.

*Consequently, the Departments of HRE and Education should begin a dialogue to see how information about these services and programs can be integrated into the school curriculum.*

2. Professionals working with the SA population feel that useful programs and services are available but there are not enough resources to implement them successfully.

Some useful programs, such as Linkages and EAPD, need either:

- additional financial resources; or
- a redistribution of available funds to different parts of the programs.

The lack of human resources at HRE, especially those involved in Career Development and Career Counselling, limits the number of clients whose needs can be met. If youths are made aware of the services and programs that are available, as recommended above (Recommendation #1), current human resources will not be sufficient to meet the increased demand for these services.

*Consequently, HRE should conduct a thorough review of how well their resources match the priorities of their mandate.*

3. The cycle of inter-generational dependency on SA begins at the high school level. Failure to graduate from high school was the strongest risk factor associated with failure to break the cycle of inter-generational dependency on SA. The data suggests that the problems of youths who drop out of school begin long before they actually drop out. Early warning signs of “dropping out” may not be monitored adequately by the SA system. There are possibly barriers at the Department of Education level that prevent adequate performance monitoring of children growing up in families who have a strong reliance on SA.

*Consequently, the Departments of HRE and Education should begin a dialogue to see how they can focus on the needs of young people in high school whose families are dependent on SA. The two departments need to form a partnership to develop ways to overcome any barriers that prevent collaboration on cases of mutual concern.*

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2. Beaulieu, N, Duclos, J.-Y., Fortin, B. and Rouleau, M. (2001). "An econometric analysis of intergenerational reliance on social assistance, 2001."
3. Child welfare clients were excluded from this analysis.
4. Normally at 18 years of age a young adult receives SA in their own name. Children who are still in school at age 18 and living at home can continue to receive assistance as a member of the family.
5. Half (50%) of the "Part-timers" who took part in the questionnaire survey indicated that they had collected SA during the past twelve months. In comparison, 84% of the "High Users" taking part in this survey indicated that they had collected SA during the past twelve months.
6. 1,420 as a percent of 8,520 children on social assistance for 13 plus months in 1992-93.
7.  $(4,725-1,420)$  as a percent of the total children 9 to 16 years old in 1991 minus 8,520.  $\{(4,725-1,420)/(78,050-8,520)\} \times 100 = 5\%$ . The 78,050 figure is the population provided for 9 to 16 year olds in the 1991 Census.
8. HRE uses the grouping "Employable" in its social assistance file. This grouping includes the following: affected by strike, awaiting EI, needs supplement to EI, not eligible for EI, part-time employed, self-employed, fully employed, EI terminated, unemployed no occupation history, and spouse away from home in search of employment.
9. Based on the population aged 25 to 54 years. Source: 1991 census.
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  21. All percentages representing the four groups combined are weighted to the population and not based on sampling strata. Percentages representing single groups or sub-populations (two or three groups combined) are not weighted.

22. Other problems included “health problems,” “family problems,” “being bullied by other students,” “hated school,” and “not interested in school.” Many participants in the Part-timer and High User groups said that they “hated school” or “were not interested in school.”
23. “Beyond High School: The Report of the Follow-up Survey of June 2001 High School Graduates.” Department of Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.
24. This finding is counter-intuitive. Possibly the survey participants who had never used SA as adults were more “aware” of financial problems in the communities in which they grew up.
25. Similarly, the analysis of the social assistance files found that only 42% of those who collected SA as an adult had graduated from high school.
26. The Follow-up Survey of June 2001 High School Graduates only looked at their first year after high school graduation. Presumably additional members of this cohort would attend university at a later period.
27. The Follow-up Survey of June 2001 High School Graduates only looked at their first year after high school graduation. Presumably additional members of this cohort would attend college at a later period.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **Definitions and Matching Process Used For The Database Analysis**

## **Definitions**

In order to undertake the matching it was necessary to define young adults, children in 1992-93, and reliance on Social Assistance for young adults in 2000-01 and cases with children in 1992-93. A number of computer runs were made for 1992 and 2001 in order to develop the following definitions.

- 1) The time period for the study is the ten years 1992 to 2001. The year 1991 had to be excluded because it does not contain information on name and date of birth of children.
- 2) Young adults are persons who received assistance in 2000 and/or 2001 and are aged 19 to 26 years in 2001 (born 1975 to 1982).
- 3) Children to be chosen for the matching were 10 to 17 years in 1992 (Born 1975 to 1982).<sup>1</sup>
- 4) Persons aged 19 to 26 years and on Social Assistance for more than 12 months during 2000 and 2001 are considered to be dependent on SA.

Two years gives a sufficient period of time to examine their dependence and also provides a reasonable size population.

- 5) Children aged 10 to 17 years on Social Assistance cases for more than 12 months during 1992-93 are considered to be dependent on SA. This means that dependency would be based on a period of 24 months.

Two years gives a sufficient period of time to examine their reliance and also provides a reasonable size population

## **Population**

### **2000-01**

The first population was recipients aged 19 to 26 years from the 2000-01 Social Assistance file. (The recipient in that age group could be either Person 1 or Person 2 or Person 3 in the file.) Persons aged 19 to 26 years were selected because these are people who are in a position to have received social assistance for a period of at least two years<sup>2</sup> and would have been a child, less than 18 years, during the 1992 to 1999 period. It is felt that a time period of less than two years would not generally be sufficient to determine a dependence on social assistance.

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<sup>1</sup> The same age cohort is being used in both the forward and backward matching, those persons born in 1975 to 1982.

<sup>2</sup> Persons who became 19 years old in 2001 will would only have turned 18 years in the past year. and in most cases will not have had the opportunity to have received assistance for 24 months.



This involved creating a file of Persons 1, 2 and 3, aged 19 to 26, from the 2000-01 database. This file contained information such as birth date, gender and complete name for matching plus additional information on the person such as education, and marital status. The case number and identification number are also required along with the family name of a spouse where applicable. See Table 1 for a complete list of variables.

### **1992-93**

The population for 1992-93 was selected from all children aged 10 to 17 who were in families on social assistance. As well, the age grouping was selected with the view of only choosing children who were in a family which could be on social assistance for at least two years in the early nineties.

This involved creating a file of children aged 10 to 17 from the 1992-93 database. This file contained information such as child's birth date, gender and name for matching along with information on parents such as education and months on assistance. The case number and identification number were also taken along with the family name and the spouse's family name where different. See Table 1 for a list of variables.

## ***Matching***

### **2000-01**

Young adults were matched against children in families from 1992 to 1999 to determine whether or not they were in families on social assistance during the study period. This computer matching process was based on name, birth date, and gender.

These matches allowed for small differences in name and birth date. Rules regarding matches on last name, given name(s) and birth dates, are given in Table 2

Then, research assistants were trained by a principal researcher on how to manually check matches so as to eliminate false matches. These research assistants manually examined printouts of matches generated by the computer matching process. Each day, the work of these research assistants was checked by a principal researcher.

At the conclusion of this matching process, the Department created a SPSS file for the consultants. This file contained information, Table 3, on those participants who were matched along with those for whom a match was not obtained. These files were used to generate further information on the clients and their parents.

### **1992-93**

Children were matched against adults (Persons 1, 2 or 3) on social assistance during the period 1993 to 2001.

These matches allowed for small differences in name and birth date. Rules regarding

matches on last name, given name(s) and birth date, are given in Table 2.

Research assistants were trained by a principal researcher on how to manually check matches so as to eliminate false matches. These research assistants manually examined printouts of matches generated by the computer matching process. Each day, the work of these research assistants was checked by a principal researcher.

At the conclusion of this exercise the Department created a SPSS file which was given to the consultants. This file contained information, Table 3, on those persons who were matched and those who were not matched. These files were used to generate further information on the clients and their parents.

**TABLE 1**  
**Variables Selected for Young Adults and Children**

	<b>Young Adults</b>	<b>Children</b>
1) Surname	Yes	Yes
2) Christian Name	Yes	Yes
3) Birth Date	Yes	Yes
4) Gender	Yes	Yes
5) Education	Yes	
6) Family Status	Yes	
7) Employment Status	Yes	
8) Accommodation Case	Yes	Yes
9) Income Source (Employment and Other)	Yes	
10) Spouse Education	Yes	
11) Spouse Employment Status	Yes	
12) Spouse Income Source (Employment and Other)	Yes	
13) Actual & Total Months on Ass. as a Child (All Years)		Yes
14) Total Months on Assistance as a Child 1992 & 1993		Yes
15) Actual & Total Months on Ass. as a Young Adult (All Years)	Yes	Yes
16) Total Months on Assistance as a Young Adult 2000& 01	Yes	
17) SA Region	Yes	Yes
18) Age Young Adult First Received Social Assistance	Yes	
19) Child Ages <sup>3</sup> When Parent Received SA		Yes
20) Father's Education		Yes
21) Mother's Education		Yes
22) Parent/s Family Status		Yes
23) Father's Employment Status		Yes
24) Mother's Employment Status		Yes
25) Case Number	Yes	Yes

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<sup>3</sup> To indicate if child's parents received SA when she was 10 years, 11 years etc

## **TABLE 2** **Matching Children Forward and Young Adults Backward**

The variables used in matching were gender, birth date, surname, given name/s and initials of given name. In all possible matches the full information will be given for each record that may be matched by the computer. In the case of females the spouse's name should also be given and in the case of children their parent/s surnames. The case numbers and identification number are also required so we can identify the cases and persons for the matches.

The Person 2 and 3 fields should also be checked for children. In all instances if the child's surname is given, it should be used in the matching process.

The gender will have to be the same for records to match.

The matching process will be done in rounds. The matches will be listed in order of first to last record for a match.

- 1) A match in the first round will require the following variables to match: surname, one of the given names, birth date.
- 2) The next will require matching on: surname, one initial, birth date.
- 3) The next will require matching on: surname and birth date.
- 4) The next will require matching on: given name and birth date.
- 5) The next will require matching on: initial and birth date (NOT USED)
- 6) The next will be on surname, given name and date of birth date within 5 days, if day of birth 25th allow 20th to 30th.
- 7) The next will require matching on: surname, and date of birth within 5 days.
- 8) The last will match be on first name, surname and month of birth.

Note: The difficulty of determining matches is that certain information is not included on the SA files. For most children a surname will not be present. As well the maiden name of married females is not available.

**TABLE 3**  
**Variables for SPSS File**

The variables in the SPSS file contain those in Table 1, the young adults' and the children's files, plus some additional ones. The additional variables identify the matches. As well in the case of matches the information on the person as a child and as a young adult will be combined. The items that are in *Italic* indicate new variables and clarification of variables from the child and young adult file.

1) Surname	<i>Child , Young Adult</i>
2) Christian Name	<i>Child, Young Adult</i>
3) Birth Date	<i>Child , Young Adult</i>
4) Gender	
5) Education	<i>Young Adult</i>
6) Family Status	<i>Young Adult</i>
7) Employment Status	<i>Young Adult</i>
8) Accommodation Case	<i>Young Adult</i>
9) Income Source	<i>Young Adult</i>
10) Spouse Education	
11) Spouse Employment Status	
12) Spouse Income Source	
13) Total Months on Ass. as a Child (All Years)	
14) Total Months on Assistance as a Child 1992 & 1993	
15) Total Months on Ass. as a Young Adult (All Years)	
16) Total on Assistance as a Young Adult 2000& 01	
17) SA Region	<i>Child, Young Adult</i>
18) Community Code	<i>Child, Young Adult</i>
19) Age Young Adult First Received Social Assistance	
20) Child Ages <sup>4</sup> When Parent Received SA	
21) Father's Education	
22) Mother's Education	
23) Parent/s Family Status	
24) Father's Employment Status	
27) Mother's Employment Status	

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<sup>4</sup> To indicate if child's parents received SA when she was 10 years, 11 years etc

# **APPENDIX B**

## **Risk Analysis Bibliography and Focus Group Protocols**

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## **Focus Group Protocol for Inter-generational Dependency Group**

Introduction: Welcome participants and thank them for agreeing to participate in this discussion.

1. Tell us your name and whether there is another family member or relative here with you.

2. Birth:

Now give us some idea of the circumstances of your birth.

- Where were you born? (community and province)
- Where do you come in the family? (eldest, middle, youngest)
- How many brothers and sisters in your family?
- Were there any other members who grew up in your family with you? (cousins, adopted children, foster children, etc.)

To the moms:

- How old were you when you had your first child?
- Were you living at home at that time or elsewhere?
- What supports did you have?
- What particular circumstances surrounded the birth of your children? (premature birth, particular disability, etc.)

3. Early Childhood:

- What were some of the fun things you did as children?
- When I ask you to describe your early childhood experiences, what comes to mind?
- Share with us something from your childhood that meant a lot to you.

4. Your Community:

- What was it like growing up in your community?
- Did your friends live close to you?
- What were some of the fun things you and your friends did while growing up?
- Did your family move while you were growing up?
- If so, how many times? Why?
- If you had to move many times, what changes did you have to make in adjusting to the new locations?
- Describe the community you grew up in?
- Are you still living there? How long have you lived here?

5. School:

- What comes to mind when you think about school?
- Where did you go to school?
- How old were you when you first started school?
- What did you like best about school? What did you dislike?
- What school activities did you enjoy participating in?
- What were your hopes and dreams (goals and aspirations) while you were in school?
- When did you finish high school?

6. Adulthood:

- Describe how you fulfilled your hopes and dreams as an adult?
- Where did you choose to live as an adult?
- What are the things in life that mean a lot to you?
- What pressures (alcohol, drugs, etc.) did you have to overcome or try to overcome growing up and as a young adult?
- Which job opportunities did you seek out?

7. Family Life:

- Describe what you remember about your own family?
- How was reading and playing games encouraged in your own family?
- How do you encourage reading and playing games in your family now?
- Where do you take your family on a holiday now? What do you do on a holiday?
- If you were planning a nutritious meal, what would you serve?
- Describe your hobbies?
- Which community organizations do you participate in?
- Did your family have alternative ways of supplementing your families income? If so, what were they?

8. General:

- What was it that had the greatest influence on your life growing up (school, coach, teacher, religious leader, police officer?)
- What is having the greatest influence on your life now?
- What challenges are you facing as a family today?

9. Conclusions:

Let's summarize the things (factors) that led you to where you are today.

- If you had your life live once again, what would you change?
- What things would have made it easier for your to be healthy and independent? (review the life cycle areas)

## **Focus Group Protocol for St. John's Group of Professionals**

Introduction: Welcome participants and thank them for agreeing to participate in this discussion.

1. Provide list of risk factors that may be relevant to inter-generational dependency on social assistance.
2. Discuss each, in turn, and its relevance to inter-generational dependency on social assistance within the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.
3. Summarize as a group:
  - those factors most important in terms of influencing inter-generational dependency on social assistance in this province.
  - those factors of some importance in terms of influencing inter-generational dependency on social assistance in this province.
  - those factors which the group feels are of little importance in terms of influencing inter-generational dependency on social assistance in this province.

# **APPENDIX C**

## **Copy of Questionnaire Used in Telephone Survey**

# Survey Questionnaire

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

## **Attempts to contact:**

### First Attempt

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for not contacting:

- Telephone out of service (**CEASE INTERVIEW ATTEMPTS**)
- No answer
- Not at home
- Not convenient to talk (ask for new time) \_\_\_\_\_
- Can be best contacted at the following number \_\_\_\_\_
- Did not want to be interviewed (**CEASE INTERVIEW ATTEMPTS**)

### Second Attempt

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for not contacting:

- No answer
- Not at home
- Not convenient to talk (ask for new time) \_\_\_\_\_
- Can be best contacted at the following number \_\_\_\_\_
- Did not want to be interviewed (**CEASE INTERVIEW ATTEMPTS**)

### Third Attempt

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for not contacting:

- No answer
- Not at home
- Not convenient to talk (ask for new time) \_\_\_\_\_
- Can be best contacted at the following number \_\_\_\_\_
- Cannot be contacted
- Did not want to be interviewed (**CEASE INTERVIEW ATTEMPTS**)

### Fourth Attempt

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for not contacting:

- No answer
- Not at home
- Not convenient to talk (ask for new time) \_\_\_\_\_
- Can be best contacted at the following number \_\_\_\_\_
- Did not want to be interviewed (**CEASE INTERVIEW ATTEMPTS**)

### Fifth Attempt

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for not contacting:

- No answer
- Not at home
- Not convenient to talk (ask for new time) \_\_\_\_\_
- Can be best contacted at the following number \_\_\_\_\_
- Cannot be contacted
- Did not want to be interviewed (**CEASE INTERVIEW ATTEMPTS**)

**CEASE INTERVIEW ATTEMPTS**

*Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling on behalf of New Wave Research Inc. We are conducting a survey for the Department of Human Resources and Employment on youth, training and employment. May I ask you some questions?*

(IF ASKED, “THE INTERVIEW WILL TAKE APPROXIMATELY 15 TO 20 MINUTES.”)

(IF ASKED, “THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY WILL HELP THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT DECIDE ON CHANGES TO PROGRAMS THAT HELP PEOPLE GET EMPLOYMENT.”)

*Agreeing to be interviewed is voluntary. You may stop the interview at any time or refuse to answer any questions that may be uncomfortable for you. Your participation will not affect any other programs with which you may be involved and it is not related to any services, including any income programs, that you may be receiving.*

*Before we start we want you to know that we will protect the confidentiality of any information you might share with us. You will not be identified by name in any reports or publications nor will your name or the name of any other people we interview be shared with any other group or agency.*

**ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE PART IN THIS SURVEY?**

**G** Yes (Fill in identification number after the survey is completed)

**G** No

Identification Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE FIRST PART OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE ASKS SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COMMUNITY YOU LIVED IN DURING THE EARLY 1990s.**

1. **What community or communities did you live in during the early 1990s?** (Use probes to get dates if more than one community is mentioned.)

*(Interviewer: Circle one item from part A and one and from part B after the interview has been completed)*

**Part A:**

- 1 Urban
- 2 Rural
- 3 Moved between

**Part B:**

- 4 Avalon Peninsula
- 5 Central Region
- 6 Western Region
- 7 Northern Region
- 8 Labrador
- 9 Moved between

**THINKING ABOUT THE COMMUNITY YOU LIVED IN DURING THE EARLY 1990s, PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER YOU STRONGLY AGREE, AGREE, DISAGREE, OR STRONGLY DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:** *(Interviewer: Read “Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree” after each statement.)*

2. **My community was a fun place to grow up.**

- 1 Strongly Agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly Disagree
- 5 Don't know
- 6 Refused to answer

3. **Of the families I knew in my community, in most families there was someone who was working.**
  - 1 Strongly Agree
  - 2 Agree
  - 3 Disagree
  - 4 Strongly Disagree
  - 5 Don't know
  - 6 Refused to answer
  
4. **I thought that I would need college or university training to find a job in my community.**
  - 1 Strongly Agree
  - 2 Agree
  - 3 Disagree
  - 4 Strongly Disagree
  - 5 Don't know
  - 6 Refused to answer
  
5. **I thought that there would be a job in my community for me when I left school.**
  - 1 Strongly Agree
  - 2 Agree
  - 3 Disagree
  - 4 Strongly Disagree
  - 5 Don't know
  - 6 Refused to answer
  
6. **I had a lot of friends in my community.**
  - 1 Strongly Agree
  - 2 Agree
  - 3 Disagree
  - 4 Strongly Disagree
  - 5 Don't know
  - 6 Refused to answer
  
7. **Many of the families I knew had problems.**
  - 1 Strongly Agree
  - 2 Agree
  - 3 Disagree (*Skip to Question 9*)
  - 4 Strongly Disagree (*Skip to Question 9*)
  - 5 Don't know (*Skip to Question 9*)
  - 6 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 9*)
  
8. **What sort of problems?** (*Do not read list; allow multiple answers.*)
  - 1 Financial
  - 2 Family violence
  - 3 Drug and alcohol abuse
  - 4 Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. **Did you get into any serious trouble when you were a teenager?**
  - 1 Yes
  - 2 No (*Skip to Question 11*)
  - 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 11*)
  
10. **With whom?** (*Allow multiple answers.*)
  - 1 Parents
  - 2 School
  - 3 Law
  - 4 Other: \_\_\_\_\_



11. **Was there any adult in your community other than a member of your family who had a positive influence on you?**
  - 1 Yes
  - 2 No (*Skip to Question 13*)
  - 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 13*)
  
12. **Who was this person, and what did he/she do?** (*Probe for ways in which this person may have assisted the respondent*)
  
13. **Are you still living in the community you lived in while you were going to school?**
  - 1 Yes (*Skip to Question 16*)
  - 2 No
  - 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 16*)
  
14. **Did you move away by yourself or with others?** (*Allow multiple answers*)
  - 1 Self
  - 2 Parents
  - 3 Partner
  - 4 Friends
  - 5 Refused to answer
  
15. **What is the main reason you moved from your community?** (*Follow up when possible*)

**THE NEXT PART OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE ASKS SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL EXPERIENCES.**

16. **What is the highest grade you completed while in school?**
  - 1 Grade 8 or less
  - 2 Grade 9 or 10
  - 3 Grade 11
  - 4 Grade 12
  - 5 Refused to answer
  
17. **Did you graduate from high school?**
  - 1 Yes (*Skip to Question 19*)
  - 2 No
  - 3 Obtained GED
  - 4 Completed ABE
  - 5 Refused to answer
  
18. **Why did you leave school before graduating?** (Check any boxes below which are applicable. Write answer if it does not clearly fall into these categories. DO NOT READ OUT THESE OPTIONS. ALLOW THE RESPONDENT TO PRODUCE ANSWER IN HIS/HER OWN WORDS.)
  - 1 Pregnancy/child care
  - 2 Academic problems
  - 3 To enter the work force
  - 4 Health problems
  - 5 Problems with family
  - 6 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 7 Refused to answer
  
19. **How old were you when you left school?**
  - 1 15 or younger
  - 2 16
  - 3 17
  - 4 18
  - 5 19
  - 6 20 or older

20. **Compared to other students in your class, would you say that you enjoyed school more, less, or about the same as your fellow students?**
- 1 More
  - 2 Same
  - 3 Less
  - 4 Don't know
  - 5 Refused to answer
21. **Compared to other students in your class, would you say that you worked at your schoolwork harder than, less than, or about the same as your fellow students?**
- 1 Harder
  - 2 Same
  - 3 Less
  - 4 Don't know
  - 5 Refused to answer
22. **Compared to other students in your class, would you say that you got better marks, poorer marks, or about the same marks as your fellow classmates?**
- 1 Better
  - 2 Same
  - 3 Poorer
  - 4 Don't know
  - 5 Refused to answer
23. **Compared to other students in your class, would say your family placed more importance, less importance or about the same on getting a good education?**
- 1 More
  - 2 Same
  - 3 Less
  - 4 Don't know
  - 5 Refused to answer
24. **Did your family make sure you got your homework done – always, most of the time, some of the time, or never?**
- 1 Always
  - 2 Most of the time
  - 3 Some of the time
  - 4 Never
  - 5 Don't know
  - 6 Refused to answer
25. **Did you participate in any school-organized, after-school activities?**
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No
  - 3 Refused to answer
26. **Have you taken any training courses since leaving school?**
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No (*Skip to Question 32*)
  - 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 32*)
27. **What training courses have you taken since leaving school?**
- 1 ABE
  - 2 College level
  - 3 University level
  - 4 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
28. **Have you completed any training since leaving school?**
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No

3 Refused to answer

Interviewer: Ask Question 29 only if they took training (Q 26) or completed training (Q 28).

29. Can you provide a list of all the training programs you started or completed? (Get dates when possible)

Dates Started/ Stopped	Program	Completed?
		Y / N
		Y / N
		Y / N
		Y / N
		Y / N

Interviewer: Fill in the following **after** the interview has been completed.

Respondent has completed the following: (Allow multiple answers)

29. 1 ABE  
 2 College diploma or certificate  
 3 University degree  
 4 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

30. Are you currently enrolled in any courses?

- 1 Yes  
 2 No (*skip to Question 32*)

31. What courses are you enrolled in? [After answering Question 31, skip to Question 39]

Interviewer: Fill in the following **after** the interview has been completed.

31. 1 ABE courses  
 2 College level courses  
 3 University level courses  
 4 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

32. Have you considered furthering your education?

- 1 Yes  
 2 No (*Skip to Question 39*)  
 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 39*)

33. What type of studies have you considered doing?

- 1 ABE (completing high school)  
 2 Post-secondary studies  
 3 Both ABE and post-secondary  
 4 Refused to answer

**Of the following things that might make furthering your education difficult, please tell me which would be a problem for you, and how big a problem it is.**

34. Child care

- 1 Severe  
 2 Mild  
 3 Not a problem

35. Travelling to school (either commuting or moving temporarily)

- 1 Severe  
 2 Mild  
 3 Not a problem

36. Affording tuition

- 1 Severe  
 2 Mild

- 3 Not a problem
- 37. Affording other costs while in school
  - 1 Severe
  - 2 Mild
  - 3 Not a problem

38. Is there anything else that might make furthering your education difficult?

**NOW, I AM GOING TO ASK YOU ABOUT YOUR FAMILY EXPERIENCES.**

39. **During the early 1990s, did you live with both parents, just one of them, or with someone other than a parent?** *(If family status changed during this time period, get approximate time periods for each different family status, and circle the answer which had the longest time period. Mark time periods on answer sheet.)*

- 1 Both parents
- 2 Mother only
- 3 Father only
- 4 Father and partner
- 5 Mother and partner
- 6 Relative other than parent (specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
- 7 Foster Care
- 8 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Refused to answer

40. **Do you know the highest grade your mother completed in school? If yes, what was it?**

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Refused to answer
- 4 Grade 8 or less
- 5 Grade 9 or 10
- 6 Grade 11
- 7 Grade 12
- 8 Refused to answer

41. **From the early 1990s till you left home would you say your (step)mother worked outside the home ...***(tell respondent to count both part- and full-time employment)*

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little
- 3 About half of the time
- 4 Most of the time
- 5 All of the time
- 6 Don't know
- 7 Refused to answer

42. **Do you know the highest grade your father completed in school? If yes, what was it?**

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Refused to answer
- 4 Grade 8 or less
- 5 Grade 9 or 10
- 6 Grade 11
- 7 Grade 12
- 8 Refused to answer

43. **From the early 1990s till you left home would you say your (step)father worked outside the home ...***(tell respondent to count both part- and full-time employment)*

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little
- 3 About half of the time
- 4 Most of the time
- 5 All of the time
- 6 Don't know
- 7 Refused to answer

44. **Did one or more members of your immediate family have serious health problems when you were growing up?**
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No (*Skip to Question 47*)
  - 3 Don't know (*Skip to Question 47*)
  - 4 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 47*)
45. **What type of problems?**
46. **Did either of your parents have to stay home to look after other family members who had serious health problems when you were growing up?**
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No
  - 3 Don't know
  - 4 Refused to answer
47. **Compared to most of the other people you went to school with, would you say your family was financially better off, worse off or the same as other people's?**
- 1 Better off
  - 2 Same as others
  - 3 Worse off
  - 4 Don't know
  - 5 Refused to answer
48. **Was there any member of your family you looked up to for guidance?**
- 1 Yes: Who? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2 No
  - 3 Refused to answer
49. **How old were you when you stopped living with your parents or guardians?**
- 1 Under age 16
  - 2 16
  - 3 17
  - 4 18
  - 5 19 or older
  - 6 Still live with parents (*Skip to Question 51*)
  - 7 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 51*)
50. **Why did you stop living with your parents or guardians?** (*Follow up where possible.*)

**NOW, I AM GOING TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR JOB EXPERIENCE**

51. **Have you worked since you left high school?**
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No (*Skip to Question 54*)
  - 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 54*)

52. **Could you give me a brief description of any jobs you have held since you left school?** (Get dates and duration of jobs whenever possible. Start with last job first.)

Year	Job Type	Duration	Was EI Received When Job Stopped?
			Y / N
			Y / N
			Y / N
			Y / N
			Y / N
			Y / N
			Y / N

Interviewer: Do the following **after** the interview has been completed:

Add up the total months of employment and insert here:

52a: \_\_\_\_\_

If they have a current job, enter the total months of employment here:

52b: \_\_\_\_\_

53. **How did you find out about these jobs?** (Allow multiple answers.)

- 1 Responding to advertisements
- 2 Help from family
- 3 Help from friends
- 4 Help from neighbours
- 5 Help from organizations/programs (Skip to Question 55)
- 6 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refused to answer

54. **There are several organizations in the province that offer programs to help people get jobs. Were you ever involved with a course or program that helped you choose a career, helped you find a job, or helped you improve your employment skills?**

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (Skip to Question 56)
- 3 Refused to answer (Skip to Question 56)

55. **What organizations/programs?**

Year	Program/Organization	How Did They Help?

56. **Are you currently employed?**

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Refused to answer

57. **Are you currently searching for a job?**

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (Skip to Question 60)
- 3 Refused to answer (Skip to Question 60)

58. **Is any person or agency helping you look for work at the moment?**

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (*Skip to Question 60*)
- 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 60*)

59. **What organization, and what are they doing to help?**

**NOW, I AM GOING TO ASK YOU A FEW PERSONAL QUESTIONS.**

60. **If you had your life to live over, what would you change?**

61. **What is your marital status?**

- 1 Single (*Skip to Question 63*)
- 2 Married
- 3 Common law
- 4 Single parent (*Skip to Question 63*)
- 5 Divorced (*Skip to Question 63*)
- 6 Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (*Skip to Question 63*)
- 7 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 63*)

62. **What is your spouse's highest education level?**

- 1 Below Grade 8
- 2 Grade 8 to 10
- 3 Grade 11
- 4 High School Graduation
- 5 ABE
- 6 Some post-secondary courses
- 7 College certificate or diploma
- 8 University degree
- 9 Don't know
- 10 Refused to answer

63. **Do you have any children?**

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (*Skip to Question 66*)
- 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 66*)

64. **How many children do you have?**

- 1 One
- 2 Two
- 3 Three
- 4 More than three
- 5 Refused to answer

65. **How old were you when your first child was born?**

- 1 15 or younger
- 2 16 or 17
- 3 18 or 19
- 4 20 or older
- 5 Refused to answer

66. Do you have now, or recently had, any serious health problems?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (*Skip to Question 68*)
- 3 Refused to answer (*Skip to Question 68*)

67. What type of health problems?

68. During the past 12 months, what have been your family's sources of income? (Check all applicable boxes)

- 1 Employment
- 2 Spouse/partner is working
- 3 Social Assistance
- 4 Unemployment Insurance
- 5 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Refused to answer

69. Do you have any other comments you would like to make which would help us with this survey?

---

[Interviewer: Do not ask, but fill in **after** completing the interview.]

70. Gender

- 1 Male
- 2 Female

71. Group

- 1 One
- 2 Two
- 3 Three

72. Current Location

- 1 Urban community in province
- 2 Rural community in province
- 3 Out of province (*Skip Question 73*)

73. For those who are in the province:

- 1 Avalon Peninsula
- 2 Central Region
- 3 Western Region
- 4 Northern Region
- 5 Labrador

**NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: Go back and insert identification number (at beginning) and code Questions 1, 29, 31, and 52.**



# **APPENDIX D**

## **Population Samples Used in Questionnaire Survey**

**“No SA” Sample**

A target of 80 completed interviews with “No SA” individuals was set. Forty of these interviews were to be conducted with individuals whose parents were currently receiving SA (named “No SA, Parents on SA”) and 40 were to be conducted with individuals whose parents were not currently receiving SA (named “No SA, Parents not on SA”).

The 80 interviews were completed, but after the data were entered into the computer database it was discovered that 13 of the interviews had been conducted with individuals who did not meet the criteria established to define “dependency on SA during the 1992-93 time period.” Thus, only 67 of the completed interviews could be used for the survey analysis, as shown in Table D1.

**Table D1: “No SA” Questionnaire Survey Participants**

	Total on List	Completed the Survey	Individual Met Criteria
Males – No SA, Parents on SA	248	18	16
Females – No SA, Parents on SA	304	22	20
Males – No SA, Parents not on SA	73	16	12
Females – No SA, Parents not on SA	82	24	19
No SA Total Males	321 (45%)	34 (43%)	28 (42%)
No SA Total Females	386 (55%)	46 (57%)	39 (58%)
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>67</b>

**“Low SA” Sample**

A target of 40 completed interviews with “Low SA” individuals was set. The 40 interviews were conducted, but after the data were entered into the computer database it was discovered that three of the interviews had been conducted with individuals who did not meet the criteria established to define “dependency on SA during the 1992-93 time period.” Thus, only 37 of the completed interviews could be used for the survey analysis, as shown in Table D2.

**Table D2: “Low SA” Questionnaire Survey Participants**

	Total on List	Completed the Survey	Individual Met Criteria
Males	116 (52%)	21 (52%)	20 (54%)
Females	107 (48%)	19 (48%)	17 (46%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>

**“Moderate SA” Sample**

A target of 80 completed interviews with “Moderate SA” individuals was set. These interviews were to be conducted with individuals in age groups that were roughly proportional to the number of individuals on the sample list supplied to the consultants. A total of 82 interviews

were conducted, but after the data were entered into the computer database it was discovered that two interviews had been conducted with individuals who did not meet the criteria established to define “dependency on SA during the 1992-93 time period.” Thus, only 80 of the completed interviews could be used for the survey analysis, as shown in Table D3.

**Table D3: “Moderate SA” Questionnaire Survey Participants**

	Total on List	Completed the Survey	Individual Met Criteria
<b>Males</b>	235 (58%)	46 (56%)	44 (55%)
<b>Females</b>	169 (42%)	36 (44%)	36 (45%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>80</b>

***“High SA” Sample***

A target of 80 completed interviews with “High SA” individuals was set. These interviews were to be conducted with individuals in age groups that were roughly proportional to the number of individuals on the sample list supplied to the consultants. A total of 82 interviews were conducted, but after the data were entered into the computer database it was discovered that two interviews had been conducted with individuals who did not meet the criteria established to define “dependency on SA during the 1992-93 time period.” Thus, only 80 of the completed interviews could be used for the survey analysis, as shown in Table D4.

**Table D4: “High SA” Questionnaire Survey Participants**

	Total on List	Completed the Survey	Individual Met Criteria
<b>Males</b>	290 (43%)	33 (40%)	32 (40%)
<b>Females</b>	382 (57%)	49 (60%)	48 (60%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>80</b>

# **APPENDIX E**

**Copies of protocols used in focus groups used to  
identify possible intervention strategies**

## **Focus Group Protocol For Young Adults Who Are Social Services Recipients**

### **Stephenville Crossing and Marystown**

**1½ hours**

**A. Introduction**

Welcome participants and thank them for agreeing to participate in this discussion.

**B. Purpose**

To explore options for young people after leaving school and any barriers they experience in making a successful transition into the work force.

**C. Background**

Facilitator will provide a brief explanation of the study noting in particular:

- Focus groups are part of a study to help design employment assistance services to young people. The four main areas where help can be provided are:
  - Career planning
  - Job search (how to look for a job)
  - Training and money for training
  - Work experience

**D. Themes and Questions**

1. First we'd like to know a bit about you and your work experience.

- First name
- What, if any, work experience have you had?

2. Did you graduate from High School?

NO:

- What would have encouraged you to stay in school?

3. Have you given any thought to the type of job you would like to have?

YES:

- Has anyone helped you make this decision? Is yes, who and how did they help you?
- Who, or what information, have you found the most useful?

ALL:

- If you are interested in learning more about different occupations, what would you do? (Where would you go, who would you talk to?)
- Have you used any Web sites to get information on careers or jobs? If so, which ones?
- Have you used the Career Hotline (NLWIN) to get information on careers or jobs?
- Have you dealt with someone in HRE who could help you? (Career Development Specialist)

4. What do you know about how to look for and get a job? Do you know how to get help looking for a job?

Prompts:

- Do you have a resume?
- Are you aware of any government or community programs and services that can help you with looking for a job? If so, which ones? Were they useful? Why would you use/not use them?

5. Many careers require college or university training. Do you think you will go to college or university?

YES:

- Do you know what type of program you are likely to take? If yes, what type?
- Do you think you are most likely to take this program at a university, College of the North Atlantic, or a private college?
- Do you know what type of job you are likely to get after completing this program? If yes, what type?
- How will you get the money for training? (What assistance do you know is available?)

NO:

- Do you have any particular reasons why you are not intending to do any more studying?

6. Government and community groups offer a number of programs to help young people:

- (1) Search for jobs;
- (2) Provide assistance so you can get work experience;
- (3) Provide assistance to get summer jobs so you can get money to continue your education.

What programs are you aware of?

- Have you used any of these? If you know about them, but haven't used them, is there a reason for this?

7. Choosing an occupation and finding a job is one of the hardest things you will ever have to do. Thinking about career planning, job search, training and work experience, what sort of help do you think it is most important for the government to provide, and how do you think it should do this?

## **Focus Group Protocol For 16 and 17 Year Olds Whose Families are Social Assistance Recipients**

### **Corner Brook and Carbonear**

**1½ hours**

**A. Introduction**

Welcome participants and thank them for agreeing to participate in this discussion.

**B. Purpose**

To explore options for young people after leaving school and any barriers they experience in making a successful transition into the work force.

**C. Background**

Facilitator will provide a brief explanation of the study noting in particular:

- Focus groups are part of a study to help design employment assistance services to young people. The four main areas where help can be provided are:
  - Career planning
  - Job search (how to look for a job)
  - Training and money for training
  - Work experience

**D. Themes and Questions**

1. First we'd like to know a bit about you and your plans after leaving school (or now if you have already left school)
  - First name
  - If attending school:
    - Do you expect to graduate?
  - If not attending school:
    - How far did you get in school?
    - What would have encouraged you to stay in school?
2. Have you given any thought to the type of job you would like to have?  
YES:
  - Has anyone helped you make this decision? If yes, who and how did they help you?
  - Who, or what information, have you found the most useful?ALL:
  - If you are interested in learning more about different occupations, what would you do? (Where would you go, who would you talk to?)
  - Have you used any Web sites to get information on careers or jobs? If so, which ones?
  - Have you used the Career Hotline (NLWIN) to get information on careers or jobs?
3. Whether you're expecting to work after school or in the summer while you studying, you'll probably be looking for work at some point. What do you know about how to look for and get

a job? Do you know how to get help looking for a job?

Prompts:

- Do you have a resume?
- Are you aware of any government or community programs and services that can help you with looking for a job? If so, which ones? Were they useful? Why would you use/not use them?

4. Many careers require college or university training. Do you think you will go to college or university?

YES:

- Do you know what type of program you are likely to take? If yes, what type?
- Do you think you are most likely to take this program at a university, College of the North Atlantic, or a private college?
- Do you know what type of job you are likely to get after completing this program? If yes, what type?
- How will you get the money for training? (What assistance do you know is available?)

NO:

- Do you have any particular reasons why you are not intending to do any more studying?

5. Government and community groups offer a number of programs to help young people:

- (1) Search for jobs;
- (2) Provide help to get work experience;
- (3) Provide summer jobs so you can get money to continue your education.

What programs are you aware of?

- Have you used any of these? If you know about them, but haven't used them, is there a reason for this?

6. Choosing an occupation and finding a job is one of the hardest things you will ever have to do. Thinking about career planning, job search, training and work experience, what sort of help do you think it is most important for the government to provide, and how do you think it should do this?



## **Focus Group Protocol For Government and Community Professionals Who Work With Young Social Assistance Recipients**

### **St. John's and Clarenville**

**1½ hours**

#### **A. Introduction**

Welcome participants and thank them for agreeing to participate in this discussion.

#### **B. Purpose**

To explore programs to help young people from families in receipt of SA make a successful transition into the work force.

#### **C. Background**

This focus group is part of a study of inter-generational dependence on social assistance and has included a telephone survey of clients. Most clients go on to reasonably steady employment, though few get “good” jobs. Many have trouble getting “steady” work. A small proportion never work at all and a proportion get in trouble with the law. This part of the study is intended to focus on help that could be provided to help these young people get a better chance at entering the workforce.

#### **D. Themes and Questions**

1. Introductions
2. **Pass out a list of programs/services that are used to serve the clientele in question.**

After the focus group participants have had time to examine this list, ask them:  
Thinking specifically about clients from disadvantaged backgrounds,

  - Which of these programs have you found most useful? How?
  - Have you run into any difficulties getting young Social Assistance recipients into any of these programs? If so, which ones and what type of difficulties have you (or they) had? Have they had problems completing the programs?
3. What additional types of programs would you like to see offered by government and community groups to help young people from Social Assistance families get into the work force, or how could existing programs be modified to better meet the needs of these clients?
  - What gaps do you see?
  - What other programs might be useful in helping clients choose a career path?
  - What other programs might be useful in helping clients enter the job market?
4. Do you get sufficient information about programs that assist you in referring young people to them. What is an example of a program that provides good information, and what makes it better than other programs?
5. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

# **APPENDIX F**

## **Samples used for the focus group sessions**

Six focus groups were held to examine the types of interventions needed to break the cycle of inter-generational dependency on Social Assistance. Four focus group sessions were held with Social Assistance recipients – two with young adults and two with youths aged 16 and 17. One focus group session with young adults was held with residents of the Stephenville Crossing area and the other was held with residents of the Marystown area. One focus group session with youths aged 16 and 17 was held with residents in the Corner Brook area and the other was held with residents in the Carbonear area.

Two focus group sessions were held with representatives of government and community agencies who work with this population. One of these sessions was held in St. John's and the other was held in Clarenville.

### ***Focus Groups With Young Adults***

For the focus group held with young adults in the Stephenville Crossing area, a list of 46 names was provided by HRE. Thirty-three of the individuals on this list were classified as “heavy users” of social assistance and 13 of the individuals were classified as “light users” of social assistance. The consultants were instructed to use only “heavy users” for this focus group, if possible, and include “light users” in the group only if there were not enough “heavy users” available to complete the group.

For the focus group held with young adults in the Marystown area, a list of 67 names was provided by HRE. Forty-one of the individuals on this list were classified as “heavy users” of social assistance and 26 of the individuals were classified as “light users” of social assistance. The consultants were instructed to use only “light users” for this focus group, if possible, and include “heavy users” in the group only if there were not enough “light users” available to complete the group.

All names on the list were phoned. Individuals were offered a \$20 honorarium and refreshments for participating in the focus group. Those who agreed to participate were phoned the evening before the focus group was held to confirm that they would be coming. Of the 46 individuals on the Stephenville Crossing list, nine agreed to participate and six actually turned up for the focus group. Of the 67 individuals on the Marystown list, twelve agreed to participate and seven actually turned up for the focus group.

Of the six individuals who participated in the Stephenville Crossing focus group, five were females (two heavy users and three light users) and one was a male (a light user). All six participants were single parents who had one to three children. Two participants had graduated from Grade 12. The other four had quit school in Grade 11.

Of the seven individuals who participated in the Marystown focus group, five were females (one heavy user and four light users) and two were males (both light users). All seven participants were single parents who had one to three children. Two participants had graduated from Grade 12, two had quit school in Grade 10, and three had quit school in Grade 9.

Each focus group took approximately 1½ hours.

### ***Focus Groups With 16-17 Year Olds***

For the focus group held with youths in the Corner Brook area, a list of 46 names was provided by HRE, 24 males and 22 females.

For the focus group held with youths in the Carbonear area, a list of 55 names was provided by HRE, 36 males and 19 females.

All names on the list were phoned. Individuals were offered a \$20 honorarium and refreshments for participating in the focus group. Those who agreed to participate were phoned the evening before the focus group was held to confirm that they would be coming.

Of the 46 individuals on the Corner Brook list, 15 agreed to participate (eight males and seven females). Fourteen actually turned up for the focus group (eight males and six females). In terms of education :

- two were completing Grade 12 (one male and one female);
- four were completing Grade 11 (three males and one female);
- two were completing Grade 10 (one male and one female);
- one was completing Grade 9 (a female); and
- five had dropped out of school (two females and one male had dropped out in Grade 9, one male had dropped out in Grade 10, and one male had dropped out in Grade 11).

Of the 55 individuals on the Carbonear list, 12 agreed to participate (six males and six females). Eight actually turned up for the focus group (five males and three females). In terms of education:

- two were completing Grade 12 (one male and one female);
- one was completing Grade 11 (a male);
- two were completing Grade 10 (one male and one female);
- two were completing Grade 9 (one male and one female); and
- one had dropped out of school in Grade 11 (a male).

Each focus group took approximately 1½ hours.

### ***Focus Groups With Representatives of Government/Community Agencies***

Two focus groups were held with representatives of government and community agencies that work with the social assistance population. One of these was held in St. John's and the other in Clarenville.

Eleven individuals had agreed to attend the St. John's session, but two cancelled at the last moment and consequently there were nine participants. These nine participants represented HRE (three representatives), the John Howard Society (three representatives), Stella Burry Community Services (one representative), the Brother T.I. Murphy Centre (one representative), and the YMCA/YWCA of St. John's (one representative).

Eight individuals had agreed to attend the Clarendville session, but two cancelled at the last moment and consequently there were six participants. These six participants included two representatives from HRE, and one each from HRDC, the Random North Development Association, Bridging the Gap, and the Ability Employment Corporation.

Each focus group took approximately 1½ hours.