



**Center for Social Development
Washington University in St. Louis**

Participants in SEED: A Report from Account Monitoring Research

Vernon Loke and Margaret Clancy

November 2005

The Savings for Education, Entrepreneurship and Downpayment (SEED) initiative is a major policy and research project designed to test the efficacy and inform policy for a national system of asset-building accounts for children and youth. The SEED initiative currently works with non-profit community partners to establish and study accounts for low- and moderate-income children across the country and in Puerto Rico. SEED explores varying account structures and financial education across a range of ages and in different demographic, geographic, and organizational contexts. The first full year of operation for SEED was 2004, and the initiative is proposed to end in 2012. This brief provides a snapshot of the demographic profile of SEED participants.¹

As of June 30, 2005, 11 community organizations across the United States enrolled 691 participants in this initiative.² People of color constitute over 90% of SEED participants. African-Americans make up slightly over 60% of the participants; 12% are Hispanics or Latinos; 8% are Native Americans; and 4% are Asian/Pacific Islander. The median age of participants is seven years. With regard to living arrangements, almost 90% live in urban areas, and 44% of participants live in households with only one adult. About 30% of SEED parents are married. The gender distribution of participants is almost equal.

Turning to the educational attainment of the primary caregivers of SEED participants, almost 40% have high school diplomas or less education. Seventeen percent of caregivers never finished high school, and 22% completed high school or the GED credential. With regard to economic circumstances, about 45% of the participants come from households below the federal poverty line, while 83% earn less than two times the federal poverty threshold. About 72% of primary caregivers are employed in some capacity, and 10% are looking for employment. Some 27% of participants report that their households are receiving government income support, 30% receive food stamps, 12% receive TANF, and 14% report receipt of SSI or SSDI.

Vehicles are the most commonly held asset in SEED participant households, with 7 in 10 households reporting ownership. Homeownership is about half that of vehicle ownership, with less than 4 in 10 owning their homes. About 1 in 5 have assets in investments. Over 7 in 10 are banked, owning either a checking account, a savings account, or both.

¹ Participant characteristics are measured at enrollment.

² Full enrollment is projected at over 1,200 accounts.

In general, SEED participants are people of color in working poor families with low resources. As of June, 2005, SEED participants have accumulated more than half a million dollars through a combination of initial SEED deposits, incentive deposits, participant savings, and SEED matches. On average, each child has \$727 “seeded” as an investment for his or her future.

SEED is led by five national partners: CFED, Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis, the Initiative on Financial Security of the Aspen Institute, the New America Foundation, and the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare.

The Initiative is funded by the Ford Foundation, Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation, Jim Casey Youth Opportunity Initiative, Citigroup Foundation, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, MetLife Foundation, Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, and the Edwin Gould Foundation for Children.

For more information please contact:

Margaret Clancy
Center for Social Development, Washington University
Campus Box 1196
One Brookings Drive
St. Louis, MO 63130-4899
314.935.8178
mclancy@wustl.edu
<http://gwbweb.wustl.edu/csd/>

SEED Participant Characteristics as of June 30, 2005

(N = 691)

Participant Demographics	
Gender	
Female	52
Male	48
Age	
0 to 4	16
5 to 9	45
10 to 14	22
15 to 19	18
Ethnicity	
African American	60
Caucasian	10
Latino or Hispanic	12
Asian / Pacific Islander	4
Native American	8
Other	6
Residence	
Rural	11
Urban	89
Household Composition	
One Adult, One Child	15
One Adult, Two Children	13
One Adult, Three Children	9
One Adult, Four Children	7
<i>One Adult with Children</i>	<i>44</i>
≥ Two Adults, One Child	14
≥ Two Adults, Two Children	19
≥ Two Adults, Three Children	14
≥ Two Adults, ≥ Four Children	10
<i>≥ Two Adults with Children</i>	<i>57</i>

Caregiver Characteristics	
Marital Status	
Single	55
Married	30
Widowed	2
Divorced	9
Separated	3
Education	
Completed Grades K - 5	2
Attended Grades 6 - 8	3
Attended Grades 9 - 12	12
High School Diploma/GED	22
Some College	32
Graduated 2-Year College	11
Graduated 4-Year College	12
Attended Graduate School	7
Employment	
More than Full Time	9
Full-Time	51
Part-Time	12
Laid Off, waiting for return	2
In School or Training	5
Seeking Employment	8
Homemaker	7
Disabled	5
Retiree	1
Missing	1

Financial	
Income / Poverty Line	
0 to .49	18
.50 to .74	13
.75 to .99	14
1.00 to 1.24	13
1.25 to 1.49	11
1.50 to 1.74	8
1.75 to 1.99	7
2.00 +	17
Benefit Receipt	
Former AFDC/TANF	36
Current AFDC	12
SSI or SSDI	14
Food Stamps	30
Asset Ownership	
Vehicle	70
Home	36
Investments	22
Bank Account	
Savings Account	54
Checking Account	67
Either	74