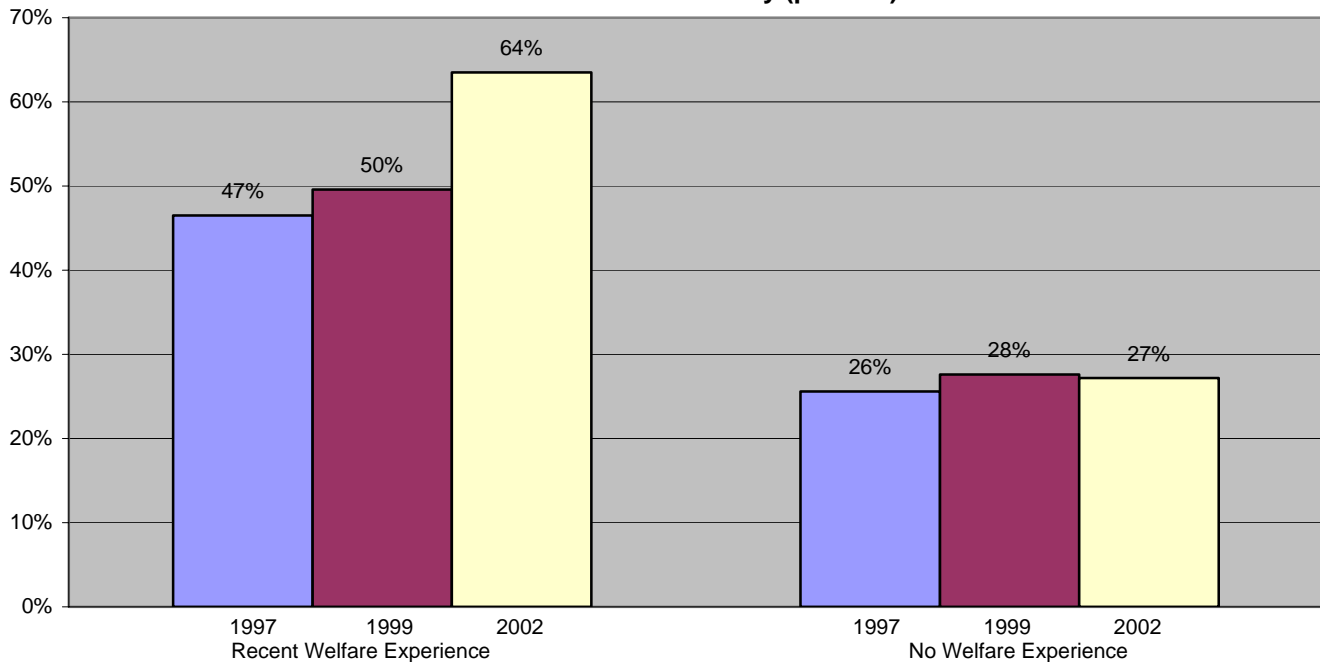


Fast Facts on Welfare Policy



Food Stamp Participation Rates Increase for Recent Welfare Leavers But there was no change for Families without Welfare Experience

Food Stamp Participation among Families with Children and Current Monthly Income
below 50 Percent of Poverty (percent)



Source: Urban Institute calculations based on the 1997, 1999, and 2002 National Survey of America's Families.
Notes: Income includes current earnings and cash welfare for the respondent and his/her spouse or partner plus other sources of income received in prior year by the respondent, her spouse or partner, and other family members, adjusted to monthly values and indexed to CPI. Includes families with children with current income below 50 percent of federal poverty line.

[Recent Trends in Food Stamp Participation: Have New Policies Made a Difference?](#); Policy Brief B -58;
Sheila R. Zedlewski

Food stamp participation rates increased from 47 percent in 1997 to 64 percent in 2002 for extremely poor families with children and recent welfare experience. In contrast, the participation rate for extremely poor families with children and no connection to welfare, nearly two-thirds of the food stamp eligible families in this income category, did not change between 1997 and 2002. Less than three out of ten extremely poor families without welfare experience received food stamps in 1997, 1999, and 2002. This suggests that new food stamp program rules and procedures designed to facilitate access to benefits are only making a difference for families with experience in the cash welfare system.