



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

Participants in SEED: A Report from Account Monitoring Research

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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.

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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 |