

Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers

A Single Parent is an individual who is unmarried or legally separated from a spouse; has a minor child or children for which the parent has either custody or joint custody or is pregnant.

A displaced homemaker is an individual who is an adult and has worked primarily without remuneration to care for home and family and for that reason has diminished marketable skills; has been dependant on public assistance or the income of a relative but is no longer supported by such income; or is a parent whose youngest dependant child will become ineligible to receive assistance under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act and is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Possibilities

Single Parent Students can...

- Expand Career options beyond those that are traditionally held by females
- Solve the critical need to earn a family wage
- Develop habits related to the dual roles of the family and workplace

Displaced Homemaker Students can...

- Identify transferable skills gained as a parent or head of household and see how these can be adapted to the paid workforce
- Focus beyond the perceived limitations of age and gender roles that confine females to a narrow list of low-paying occupations
- Practice job search skills and link with specialized career assistance programs

Two of the special populations identified in the Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act are single parents and displaced homemakers. In certain respects these groups are similar and in other ways they differ. **Single parents** may be teens with all that implies or they may be adults. They may be mothers or fathers, but tend to be the former. What they have in common is the need to be able to support a family, often on their income alone. **Displaced Homemakers** are often older, but not always. They have relied on another's income or on public assistance for their main support, and now have been displaced and must support themselves. They may or may not have dependent children.

A major barrier to self-support is that occupations traditionally held by women tend to be the lowest paid in the workforce, insufficient for supporting a family or household. Single parents often have the added challenges of childcare needs. Displaced Homemakers have limited workplace experience and often lack the confidence to pursue challenging occupations. They also may have untreated vision and/or dental problems that can lend a sense of embarrassment or shame.

CTE programs that deal with such issues through support services or outside referrals will have far greater success and better completion rates. The Perkins Act of 2006 recognizes that special populations, including single parents and displaced homemakers, may need direct assistance to be able to participate successfully in career and technical education.

More than half the children born in the United States today will live in a single parent home before the age of 18.

Single parents may be mothers or fathers, but the vast majority of custodial parents in single parent households are women. Traditionally two-thirds of single mothers in Hawai'i are in one of three occupations categories: service, clerical, and sales.

Supports for Success

Pregnant and Parenting Teens

- Get to know each teen parent as an individual, and let them know that you are on their side.
- Remember, pregnant teens are doing something very difficult. Give them credit for the responsibility they are taking on.
- Be prepared to provide home instructional work for the two to six weeks the teen is out during delivery of the baby.
- A pregnant student may need a separate chair and desk late in her pregnancy. Try to make things comfortable.
- Near the end of her pregnancy, your student may need extra time to get to class or use the bathroom.
- Keep the expectations high. Don't baby the student.

Jolene Cruz attended Campbell High before getting married and starting a family. She unexpectedly became both a single parent and a displaced homemaker when the marriage ended. Forced on to welfare, TANF then told her she had to find work. Helpful counselors at Honolulu Community College provided the encouragement she needed to finish a degree in Human Services; she then went on to earn a BSW at UH Manoa.



Adult Single Parents

- They may not have a place or any quiet time to study. They may have problems with getting a babysitter. Their child may be sick. If on public assistance, they may have to do volunteer work to qualify for benefits. They may not have medical insurance.
- Single parent students usually benefit from easy access to the teacher. They may need a place to call if they have to miss a class.
- Learn who the appropriate on-campus support person is for seeking specialized support. It may be a single parent counselor, the health room aide, a teen parent teacher, or an outreach resource. Become familiar with campus support systems for single parents, and get to know who is the best resource for childcare or special financial aid. The “soft services” provided to single parent and displaced homemaker students is one of the greatest indicators of student completion.
- Encourage your students to support each other, exchange phone numbers, develop a network for getting information about class work, homework, information about childcare, etc.
- Where appropriate use group activities in class.
- Encourage parenting students to plan ahead for possible times they will be away from school when giving birth, caring for sick children, or loss of child care. Be prepared to provide work for students that they can do from home for such moments.
- Evaluate your classroom policies and instructional methods that may impose undue hardships on parenting students.

Awareness Activity: The Employer's Side

Directions: You are the manager at a mini-market that also prepares and sells bento lunches.
Which reasons would you accept from employees that miss work?

	Reasons			Notice	
	Good Reason	OK, If Not Done Often	Poor Reason	Same Day	1-2 Weeks
1. I'm sick in bed with the flu.					
2. My child is sick.					
3. I have a doctor's appointment.					
4. We're going on vacation.					
5. I have to help my brother move.					
6. I have to go to court.					
7. My brother came in unexpectedly last night. I haven't seen him in a year. He's leaving tomorrow.					
8. I have to go to my sister's graduation.					
9. There was a death in my family. I have to go to the funeral.					
10. I have a dentist's appointment.					
11. My car broke down.					

12. I just don't feel good.					
13. Someone I really like asked me out tonight.					
14. I can't find a babysitter.					
15. My dad wants me to help him today.					
16. I missed my bus.					
17. I was up late last night. I'm too tired to go to work.					
18. I didn't call in because we don't have a phone.					

Break the class into small groups to discuss answers from the perspective of the employer, the family at home, and the individual student.

This activity is meaningful for all students, but has greater significance for students that also have parenting family care responsibilities.

Resources

<http://www.hawaii.edu/bridgetohope/resources>

<http://www.womenwork.org>

<http://www.lighthousedad.com/>

<http://parenting.ivillage.com/>

<http://www.goodbeginnings.org/>

<http://www.childfun.com/>

Other CTE Resources Available

Brochures

- Health Science Professions in Hawaii
- Career Pathway 3-Panel Brochure

DVD

- Hawaii's CTE Standards Performance-Based Assessment

Special Population Teaching Resources

- Economically Disadvantaged Students
- English Language Learners
- Nontraditional Occupations
- Single Parents/Displaced Homemakers
- Special Education/Students with Disabilities

Other Products

- Career Pathways Handbook (8.5" x11" - 18 pages)

Dual Credit Articulated Program of Study Brochures

- Entrepreneurship
- Marketing
- Retailing

Core Standards Posters

- Business
- Health
- Industrial and Engineering

Posters

- Arts and Communication
- Business
- Health Services
- Industrial & Engineering
- Natural Resources
- Public & Human Resources
- Career Pathway System Poster

Resources are available by logging on to <http://www.hawaii.edu/cte/publications>



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