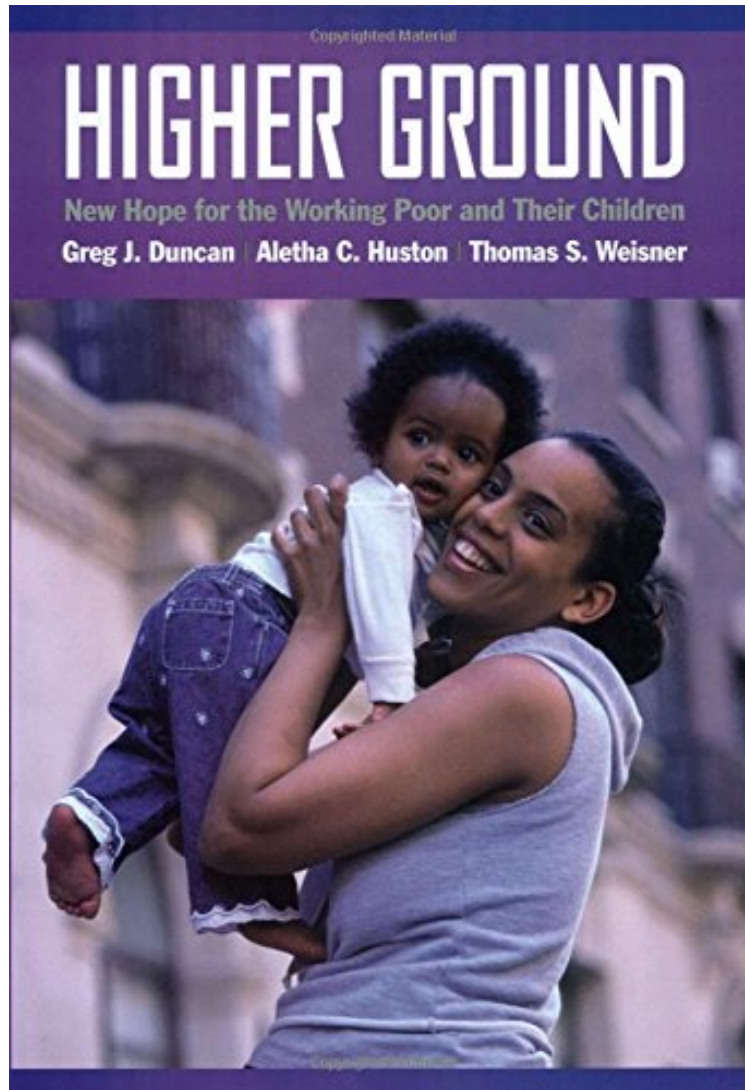


[Online library] Higher Ground: New Hope for the Working Poor and Their Children

Higher Ground: New Hope for the Working Poor and Their Children

Greg J. Duncan, Aletha C. Huston, Thomas S. Weisner
DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1009167 in Books Russell Sage Foundation 2008-11-14Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .60 x 6.00l, .63 #File Name: 087154167X184 pages | File size: 20.Mb

Greg J. Duncan, Aletha C. Huston, Thomas S. Weisner : Higher Ground: New Hope for the Working Poor and Their Children before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Higher Ground: New Hope for the Working Poor and Their Children:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you are interested in povertyBy Jo T.An easy read. New Hope was a three year experimental programme to help impoverished families and adults. Those interested in the issues of poverty as well as policymakers should make this required reading.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

authors provide detailed yet readable description of creative anti-poverty program By E. Christian Duncan, Huston, and Weisner's *Higher Ground* evaluates the experimental program New Hope, intended to help Milwaukee's poor lift themselves out of poverty. In 1994, a group of social activists implemented a work-based program they had begun dreaming up in 1979. Calling it a "social contract," rather than welfare, the organizers hoped Project New Hope could motivate people to work without forcing them to choose between a job and their family's wellbeing. As Duncan, Huston, and Weisner explain, 23 million American adults were living in families below the official poverty line in 1994. The state of employment and the economy made it incredibly difficult for men and women with little education to escape poverty. New Hope was innovative in that it provided an array of work supports, including healthcare, childcare, and housing subsidies, rather than enforcing a "one-size-fits-all" plan. And unlike traditional welfare programs, New Hope was available to both males and females working full-time. Though the experiment lasted only four years, its organizers hope it might become a model for national policy. The authors provide a detailed description of the program, as well as a clear explanation of the experiment's outcomes - both positive and negative - in comparison with a control group, and they evaluate its costs and benefits. The book also gives attention to several fascinating indirect consequences of the program. For example, participants in the program saw increased marriage rates and greater marital stability compared with non-participants, as well as decreased levels of domestic violence. Perhaps the most interesting results of the program on participants' families were the surprising improvements in children's grades and behavior at school, even after the program's end. Duncan, Huston, and Weisner's book is informative, interesting, and very readable. They present a compelling analysis of an innovative, exciting, and truly hopeful anti-poverty program.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Higher Ground: New Hope for the Working Poor and their Children* By Jennifer Lewis *Higher Ground: New Hope for the Working Poor and their Children* provides a detailed background of the many obstacles encountered by the working poor and how the New Hope program intended and its ability to eradicate these obstacles. The book articulates an important social phenomenon in a way that would intrigue and enlighten social policy makers and well versed academics as well as an interested reader without any previous sociological knowledge. One of the most captivating aspects of the book is the personal interviews that provide the reader an incredible insight into the hardships and the tenacity of low-income working mothers and women and how the New Hope program distinctly touched each of their lives.

During the 1990s, growing demands to end chronic welfare dependency culminated in the 1996 federal welfare-to-work reforms. But regardless of welfare reform, the United States has always been home to a large population of working poor people who remain poor even when they work and do not receive welfare. In a concentrated effort to address the problems of the working poor, a coalition of community activists and business leaders in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, launched New Hope, an experimental program that boosted employment among the city's poor while reducing poverty and improving children's lives. In *Higher Ground*, Greg Duncan, Aletha Huston, and Thomas Weisner provide a compelling look at how New Hope can serve as a model for national anti-poverty policies. New Hope was a social contract not a welfare program in which participants were required to work a minimum of thirty hours a week in order to be eligible for earnings supplements and health and child care subsidies. All participants had access to career counseling and temporary community service jobs. Drawing on evidence from surveys, public records of employment and earnings, in-depth interviews, and ethnographic observation, *Higher Ground* tells the story of this ambitious three-year social experiment and evaluates how participants fared relative to a control group. The results were highly encouraging. Poverty rates declined among families that participated in the program. Employment and earnings increased among participants who were not initially working full-time, relative to their counterparts in a control group. For those who had faced just one significant barrier to employment (such as a lack of access to child care or a spotty employment history), these gains lasted years after the program ended. Increased income, combined with New Hope's subsidies for child care and health care, brought marked improvements to the well-being and development of participants' children. Enrollment in child care centers increased, and fewer medical needs went unmet. Children performed better in school and exhibited fewer behavioral problems, and gains were particularly dramatic for boys, who are at the greatest risk for poor academic performance and behavioral disorders. As America takes stock of the successes and shortcomings of the Clinton-era welfare reforms, the authors convincingly demonstrate why New Hope could be a model for state and national policies to assist the working poor. Evidence based and insightfully written, *Higher Ground* illuminates how policymakers can make work pay for families struggling to escape poverty.

From the Back Cover "Higher Ground describes the results of the New Hope demonstration project in Milwaukee, one of the most creative social experiments of the past 25 years. It tells how New Hope was designed to help participants move into jobs, retain health insurance, and find effective child care. While not all results of the program were positive, they do show that good policies can make a difference in providing economic stability to low-income families. The lessons from New Hope, described in this book, should be part of the current public discussion. This is a book that students, researchers, and policy analysts will all find useful." -- Rebecca M. Blank, Joan and Sanford Weill Dean of Public Policy, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan About the Author GREG J.

DUNCAN is the Edwina S. Tarry Professor of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University and a faculty fellow at the Institute for Policy Research. ALETHA C. HUSTON is the Priscilla Pond Flawn Regents Professor of Child Development in the department of human ecology at the University of Texas, Austin and associate director of the Population Research Center. THOMAS S. WEISNER is professor of anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles.