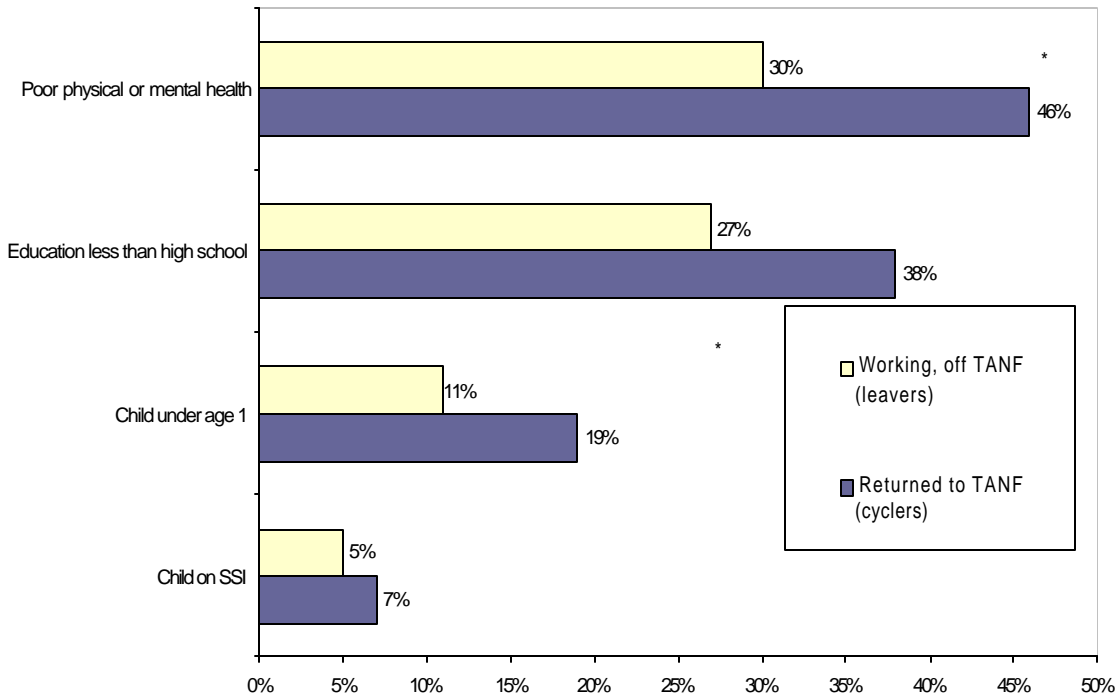




Fast Facts on Welfare Policy

Welfare "Cyclers" More Likely to Have Barriers to Work than "Leavers"



Source: [National Survey of America's Families](#), 1999.

* The two groups are significantly different at the 90 percent confidence level.

Returns to welfare are of greater concern in the post-reform era because lifetime benefits are limited and recipients are using up those benefits when they return to welfare. Yet those who leave welfare and return (cyclers) generally have more barriers to work than those who leave welfare and continue working (leavers). Of those who had returned to welfare between 1997 and 1999, 46 percent were in poor mental or physical health (compared to 30 percent of working former recipients), and 19 percent had a child under age 1 (compared to 11 percent of working former recipients). This highlights the difficulties some recipients experience making a permanent transition to the labor market.

Source: Chart appears in Loprest, Pamela J. 2002. "Making the Transition from Welfare to Work: Successes but Continuing Concerns." In [Welfare Reform: The Next Act](#) edited by Alan Weil and Kenneth Finegold (17-31). Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press.

Additional resources:

- Zedlewski, Sheila R. [Work Activity and Obstacles to Work Among TANF Recipients](#). Policy Brief B-2. September 1999.