

# Texas NCP Choices: Workforce Development for Non-Custodial Parents

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# Overview

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**Background**

**NCP Choices Program**

**Comparison Group Design, Selection**

**Results**

**Summary / Implications**

**Next Steps**



# Background: Previous Programs

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Several previous programs have attempted to engage low-income non-custodial parents (NCPs) in workforce development services.

Results have been equivocal: Sometimes employment and earnings are increased, and sometimes child support payments are increased

Generally, the problem with these programs is related to either implementation or to recruitment, enrollment, and retention of participants

Programs with voluntary participation are not typically very successful



# **NCP Choices Pilot Program**

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**NCP Choices was implemented as a pilot starting in 2005 in four sites**

**Serves low-income non-custodial parents (NCPs) of current or former TANF recipients who are delinquent in their child support payments**

**NCPs are brought before a child support judge and given a choice of either:**

**paying their child support,  
participating in NCP Choices, or  
going to jail**



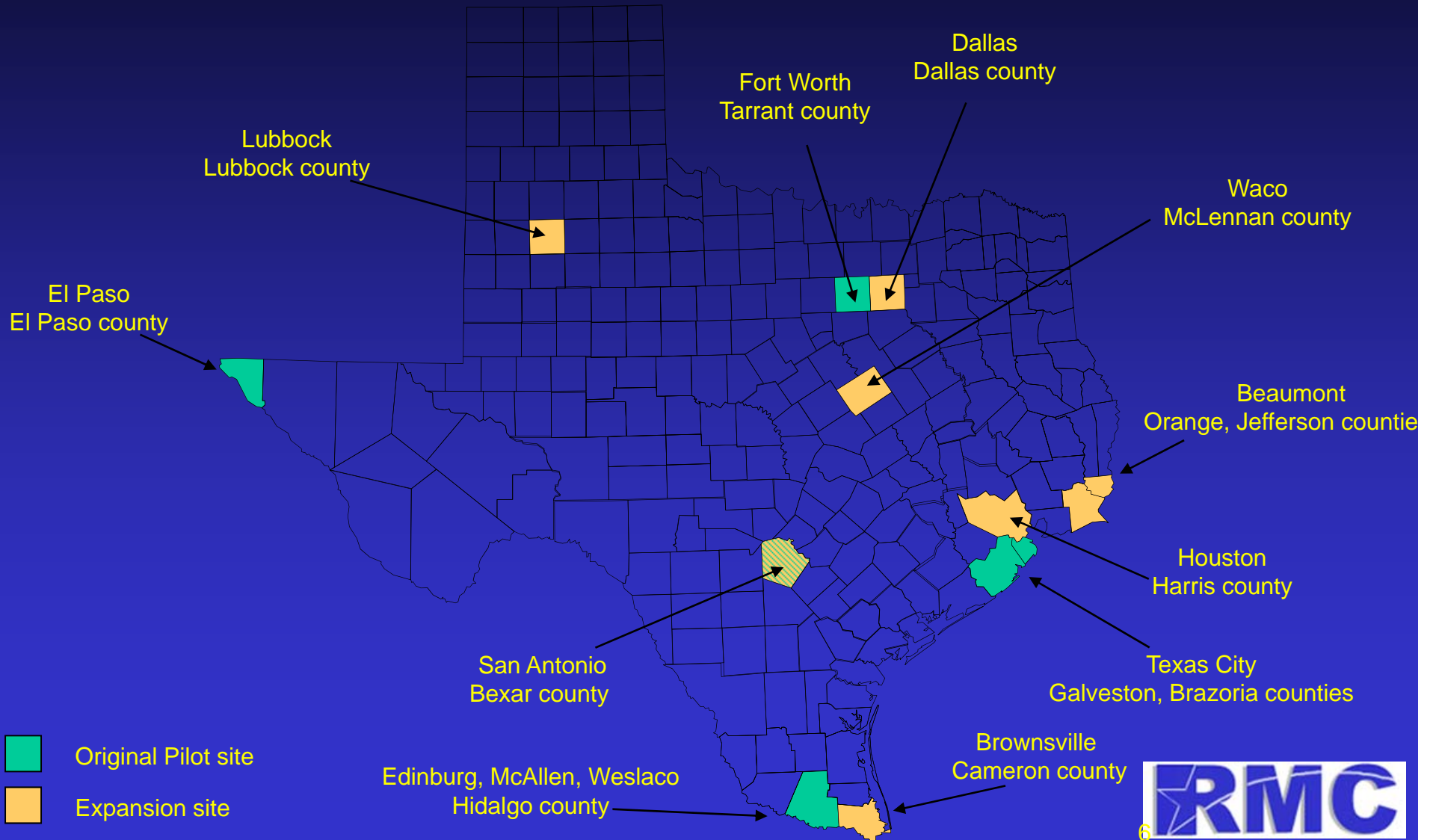
# Critical Program Features

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- Consequences for non-participation
- Co-location of workforce services in court
- Case-management
- Communication among partners
- CHOICES Services offered:
  - Job referrals
  - Support services
  - Short-term training
  - Subsidized employment/work experience
  - GED, ESL classes
  - Retention assistance and career advancement planning



# NCP Choices Pilot Sites



# Comparison Group Design

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An experimental design, with random assignment of NCPs to be ordered into the program or not, would have been ideal

Since random assignment was infeasible, a quasi-experimental comparison group design was used instead

For each NCP in the program, a multivariate “nearest-neighbor” was selected for inclusion in comparison group

Outcomes for NCP Choices clients and comparison group then computed for estimating impact



# Before comparison group selection (1 of 2)

	NCP Choices	All NCPs	
All NCPs in target counties	N=751	N=168,851	
NCP age (years)	34.1	37.5	**
NCP male	96.5%	99.0%	**
NCP number of active CS cases	1.6	1.2	**
Time since first observed NCP earnings (quarters)	20.5	18.7	**
NCP employed at program entry	40.1%	49.2%	**
Percent of time NCP employed over 4 years prior to program	40.6%	50.8%	**
NCP average quarterly earnings over 4 years prior to program	\$1,912	\$3,919	**
NCP experienced earnings dip of at least 20% within prior 2 years	50.5%	24.8%	**
Time since CS first collected on this case (months)	33.3	32.9	**
Time since CS last collected on this case (months)	8.1	4.3	**
Percent of time CS collection was made in prior year	21.4%	50.8%	**
Any CS collection made via federal offset in prior year	14.4%	13.7%	**





# Before comparison group selection (2 of 2)

	NCP Choices	All NCPs	
<b>All NCPs in target counties (continued)</b>	<b>N=751</b>	<b>N=168,851</b>	
Percent of time TANF received by associated CP(s) in prior year	17.5%	4.7%	**
Any Choices participation in year prior to program	1.7%	.7%	**
Any ES participation in year prior to program	4.5%	1.8%	**
Any FSE&T participation in year prior to program	1.7%	.4%	**
Any WIA participation in year prior to program	2.8%	.8%	**
Any Project RIO participation in year prior to program	2.4%	.6%	**
Capias issued for arrest of NCP in 6 months prior to program	21.7%	1.6%	**
Approximate arrears balance at program entry	\$33,256	\$11,887	**
Total current support obligation (PP1) at program entry	\$510	\$332	**
Total arrears obligation (PP2) at program entry	\$123	\$74	**
<b>Those experiencing an earnings dip</b>	<b>N=379</b>	<b>N=70,562</b>	
Time since earnings dip occurred (quarters)	4.6	4.8	**
Percent of earnings which earnings dip represents	85.3%	76.8%	**



# Comparison Group Selection

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Pool of potential comparison group was restricted to NCPs in same counties as the demonstration

Exact matches were required on: county, gender, whether an earnings dip of 20% or more was experienced, and time of entry

Weighted multivariate distance was computed on remaining variables, with greater weight given to those dimensions that more strongly differentiate the two groups

One nearest-neighbor chosen for each NCP Choices participant, and the resulting groups follow



# After comparison group selection (1 of 2)

	NCP Choices	Comparison Group	
All NCPs	N=751	N=751	
NCP age (years)	34.1	33.6	
NCP male	96.5%	96.5%	
NCP number of active CS cases	1.6	1.6	
Time since first observed NCP earnings (quarters)	20.5	21.2	
NCP employed at program entry	40.1%	39.8%	
Percent of time NCP employed over 4 years prior to program	40.6%	42.3%	
NCP average quarterly earnings over 4 years prior to program	\$1,912	\$1,947	
NCP experienced earnings dip of at least 20% within prior 2 years	50.5%	50.5%	
Time since CS first collected on this case (months)	33.3	33.8	
Time since CS last collected on this case (months)	8.1	7.9	
Percent of time CS collection was made in prior year	21.4%	21.5%	
Any CS collection made via federal offset in prior year	14.4%	12.1%	

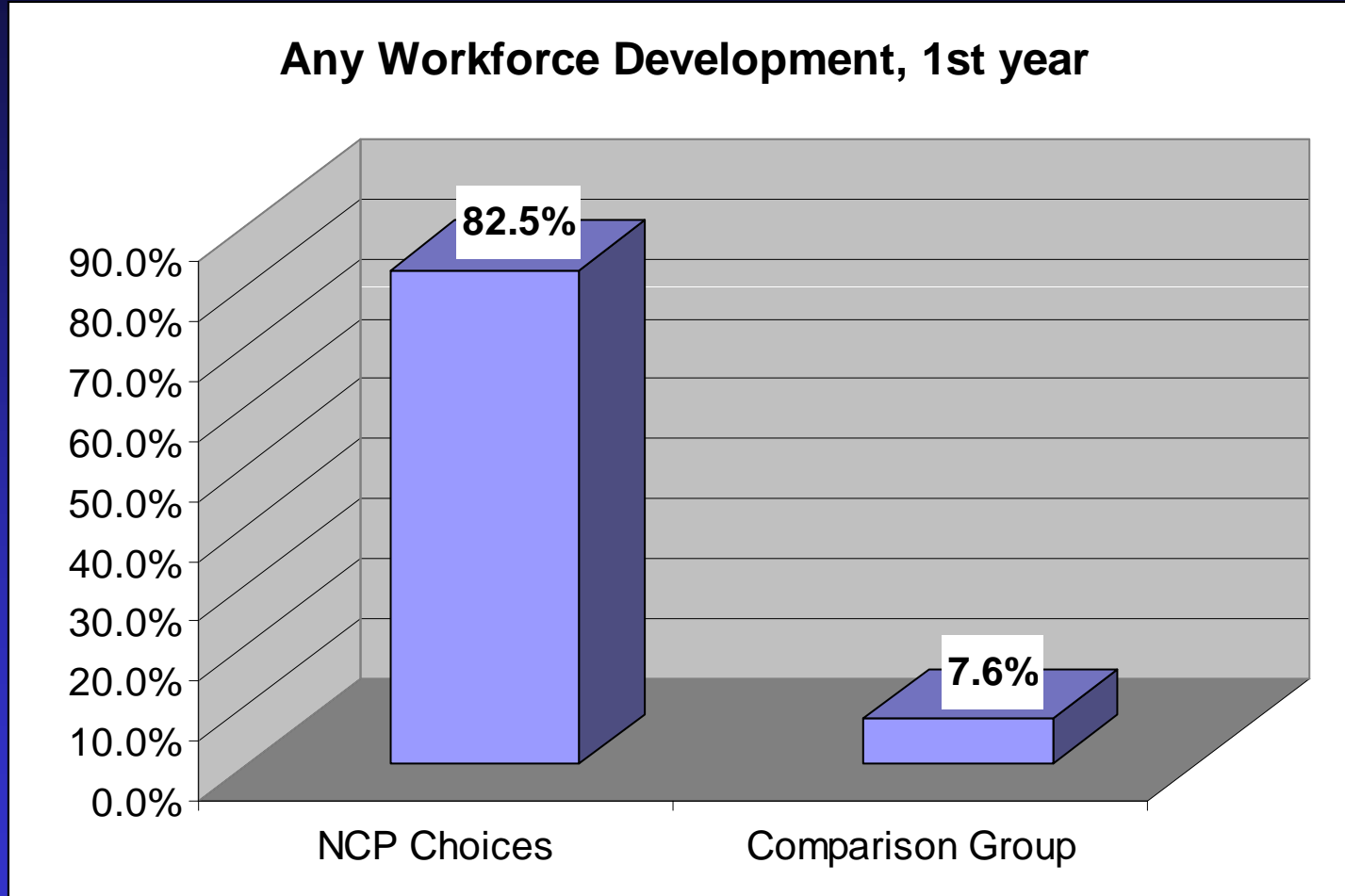


# After comparison group selection (2 of 2)

	NCP Choices	Comparison Group	
<b>All NCPs</b>	<b>N=751</b>	<b>N=751</b>	
Percent of time TANF received by associated CP(s) in prior year	17.5%	14.6%	
Any Choices participation in year prior to program	1.7%	2.4%	
Any ES participation in year prior to program	4.5%	2.7%	
Any FSE&T participation in year prior to program	1.7%	.7%	
Any WIA participation in year prior to program	2.8%	2.5%	
Any Project RIO participation in year prior to program	2.4%	.8%	*
Capias issued for arrest of NCP in 6 months prior to program	21.7%	21.7%	
Approximate arrears balance at program entry	\$33,256	\$28,562	
Total current support obligation (PP1) at program entry	\$510	\$452	
Total arrears obligation (PP2) at program entry	\$123	\$111	
<b>Those experiencing an earnings dip</b>	<b>N=379</b>	<b>N=379</b>	
Time since earnings dip occurred (quarters)	4.6	4.7	
Percent of earnings which earnings dip represents	85.3%	84.9%	



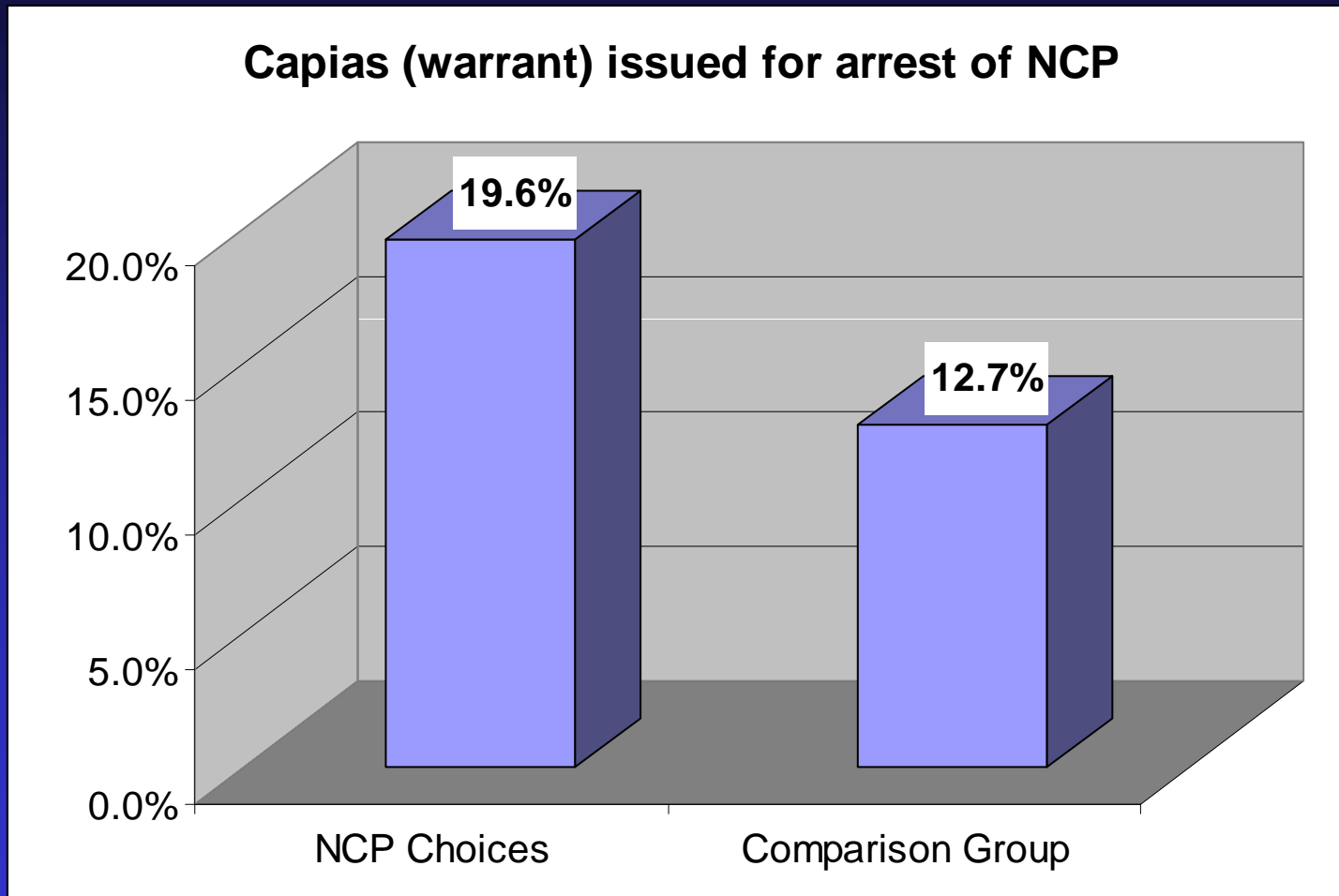
# Results: Workforce Development



Over 82% participated in workforce development (a 10-fold increase;  $p < .01$ )



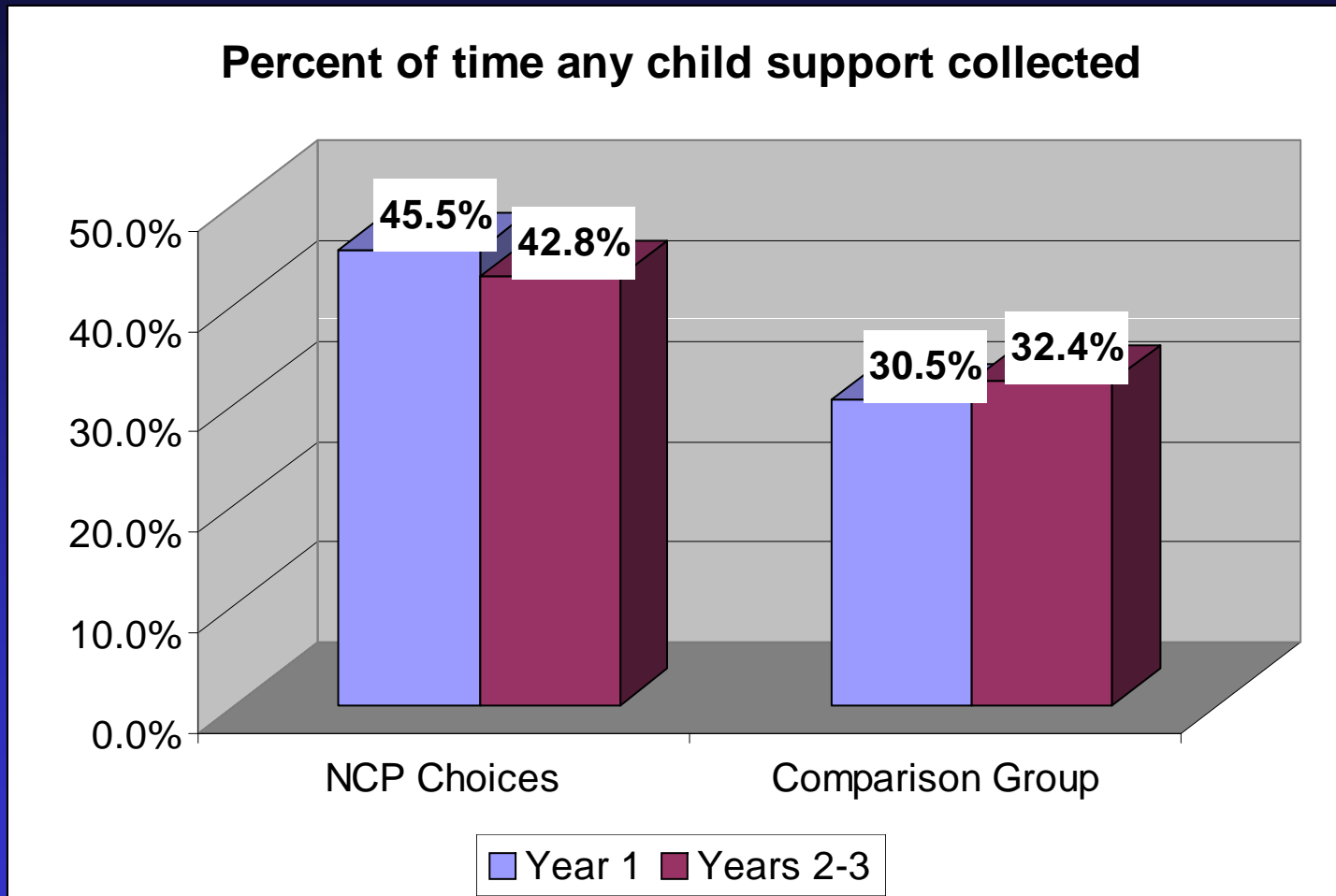
# Results: Capias (Warrant)



A 54% increase in rate of capias issuance (6.9 pct points,  $p < .01$ ), but this is not the best measure of jailing rate...

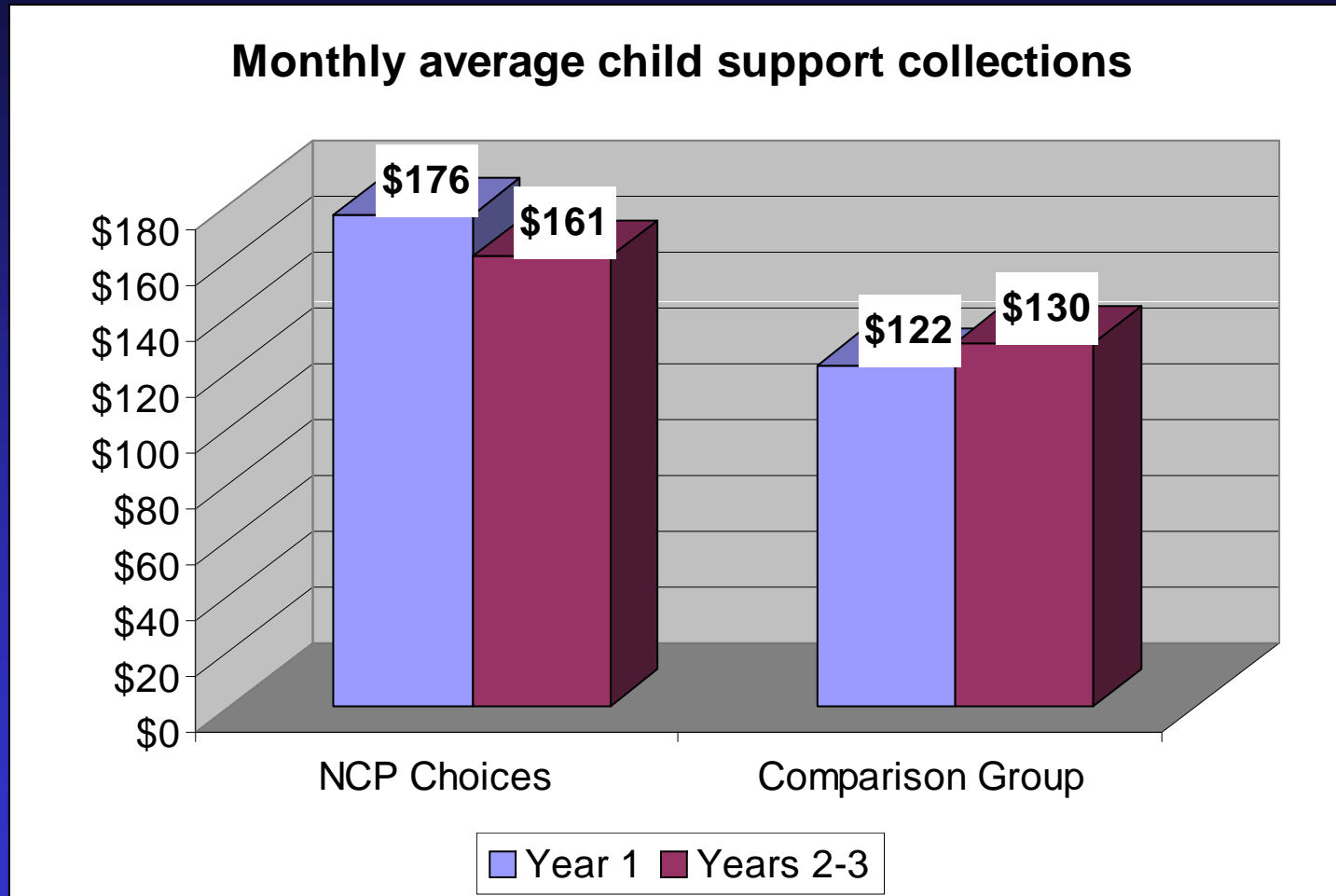


# Results: Child Support Collections



A 49% increase in frequency of collections in year 1 ( $p < .01$ )

# Results: Child Support Collections

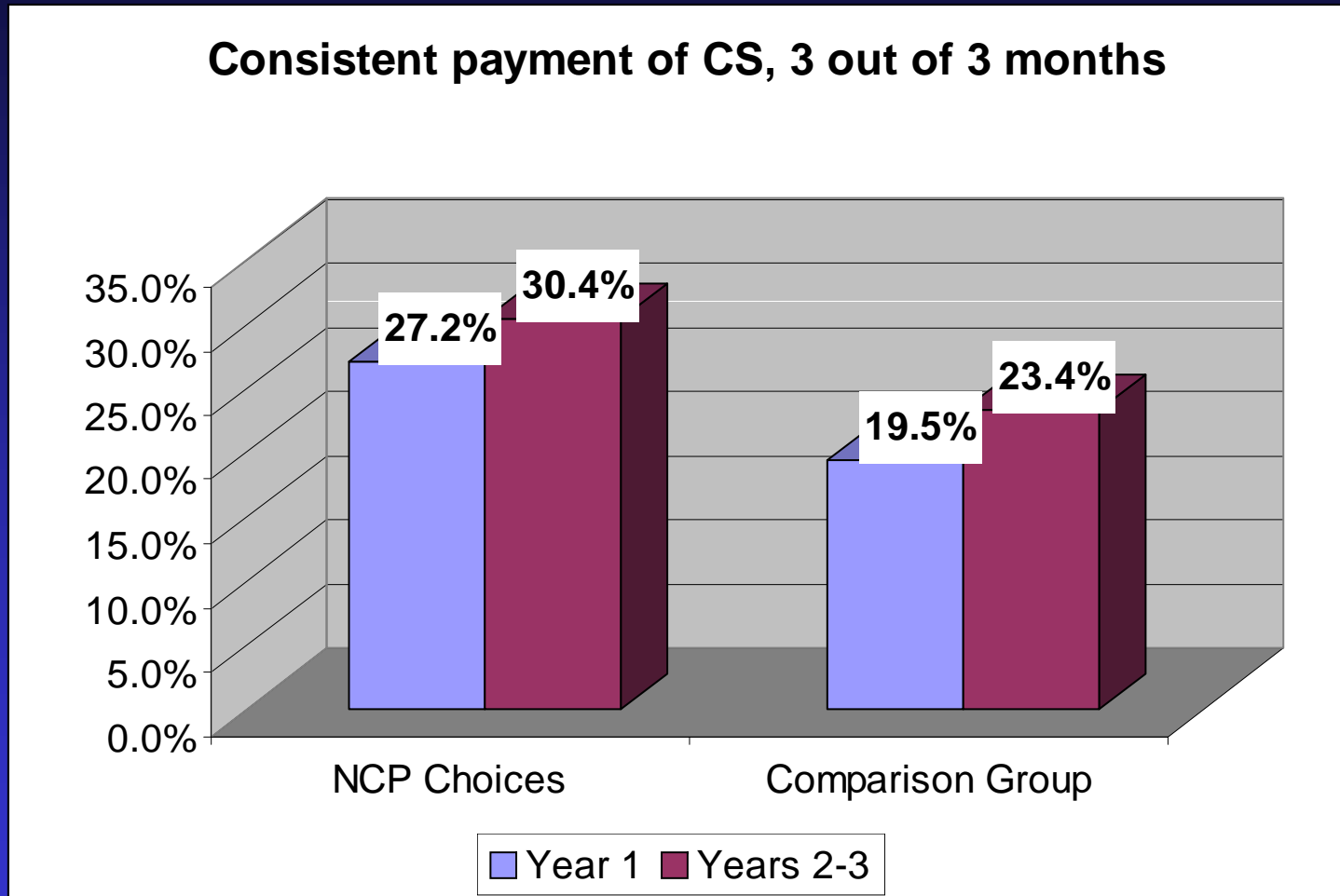


A 44% increase in amount of collections, year 1 (\$54 per month,  $p < .01$ )





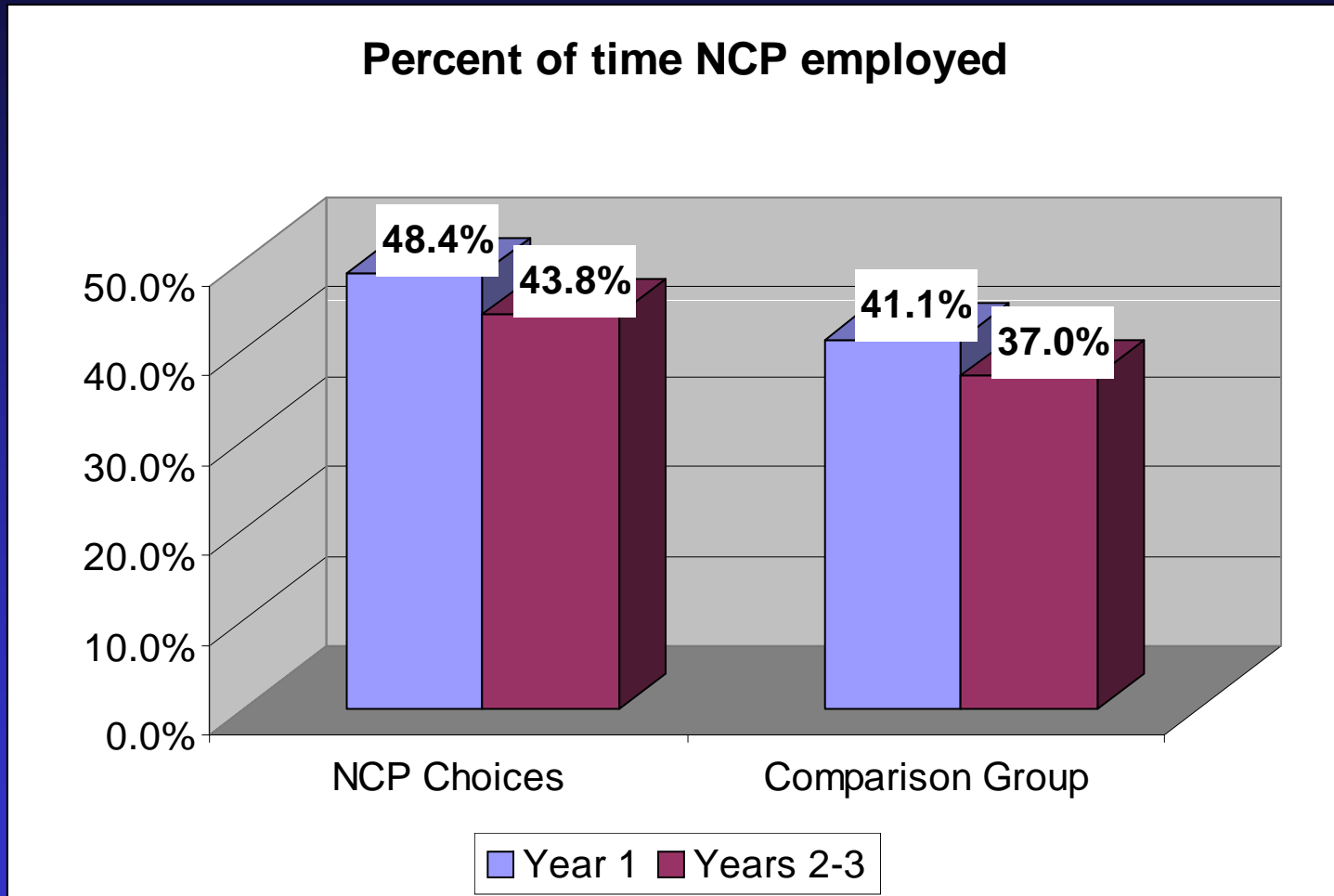
# Results: Child Support Consistency



40% increase in consistency of collections, year 1 (8 pct points,  $p < .01$ )



# Results: Employment

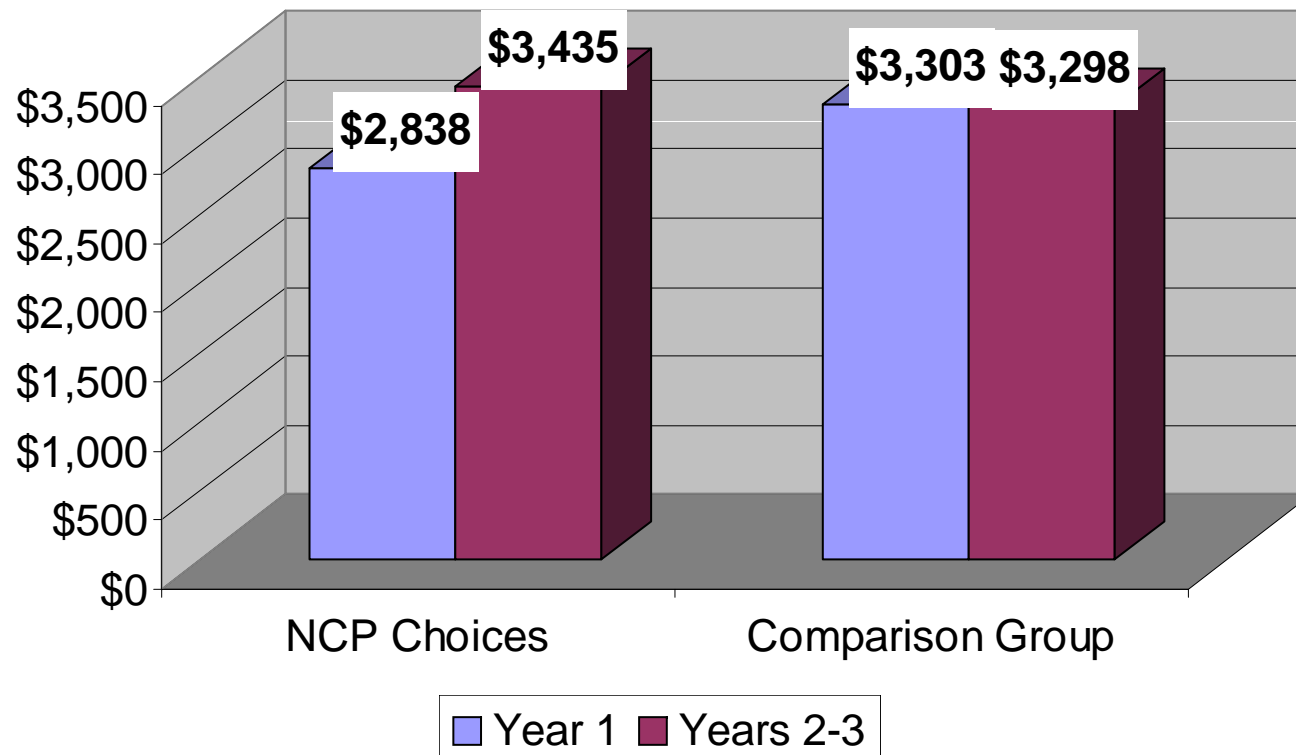


18% increase in employment rate in year 1 (7.3 pct points,  $p < .01$ )



# Results: Earnings of the Employed

Avg quarterly earnings, among employed NCPs

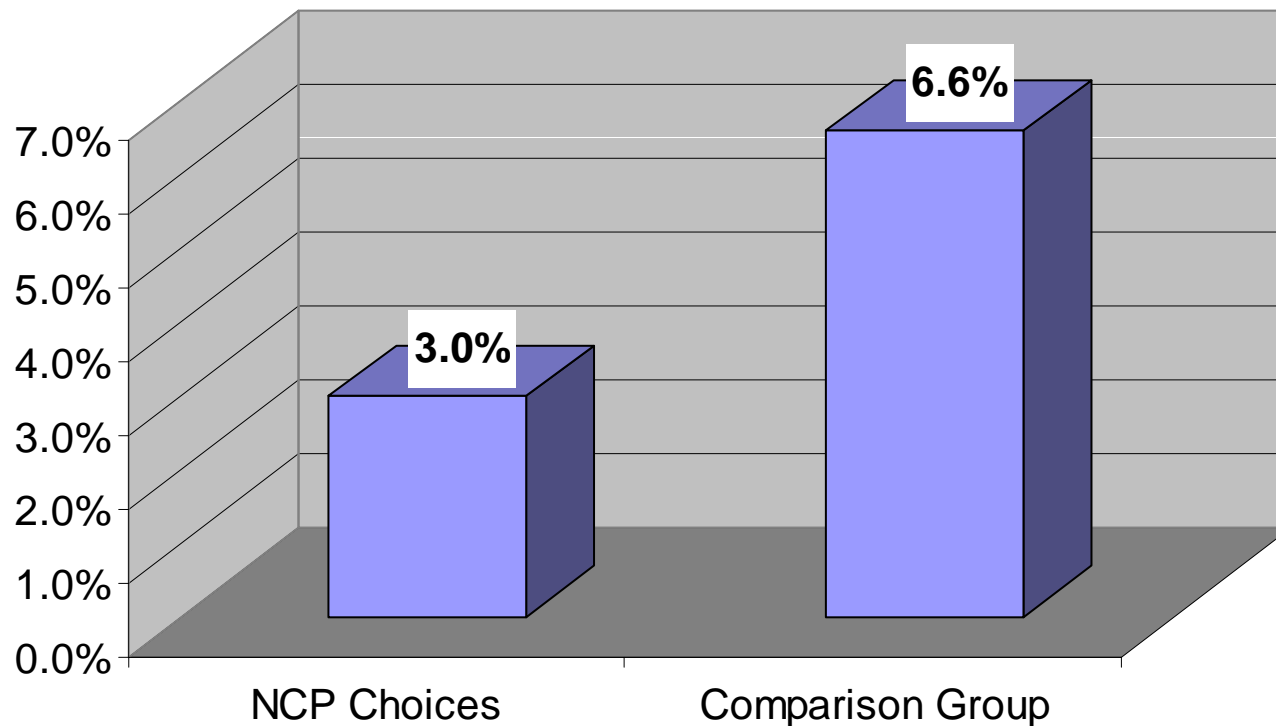


Initial decrease in earnings of employed NCPs disappears  
In later years



# Results: Unemployment Claims

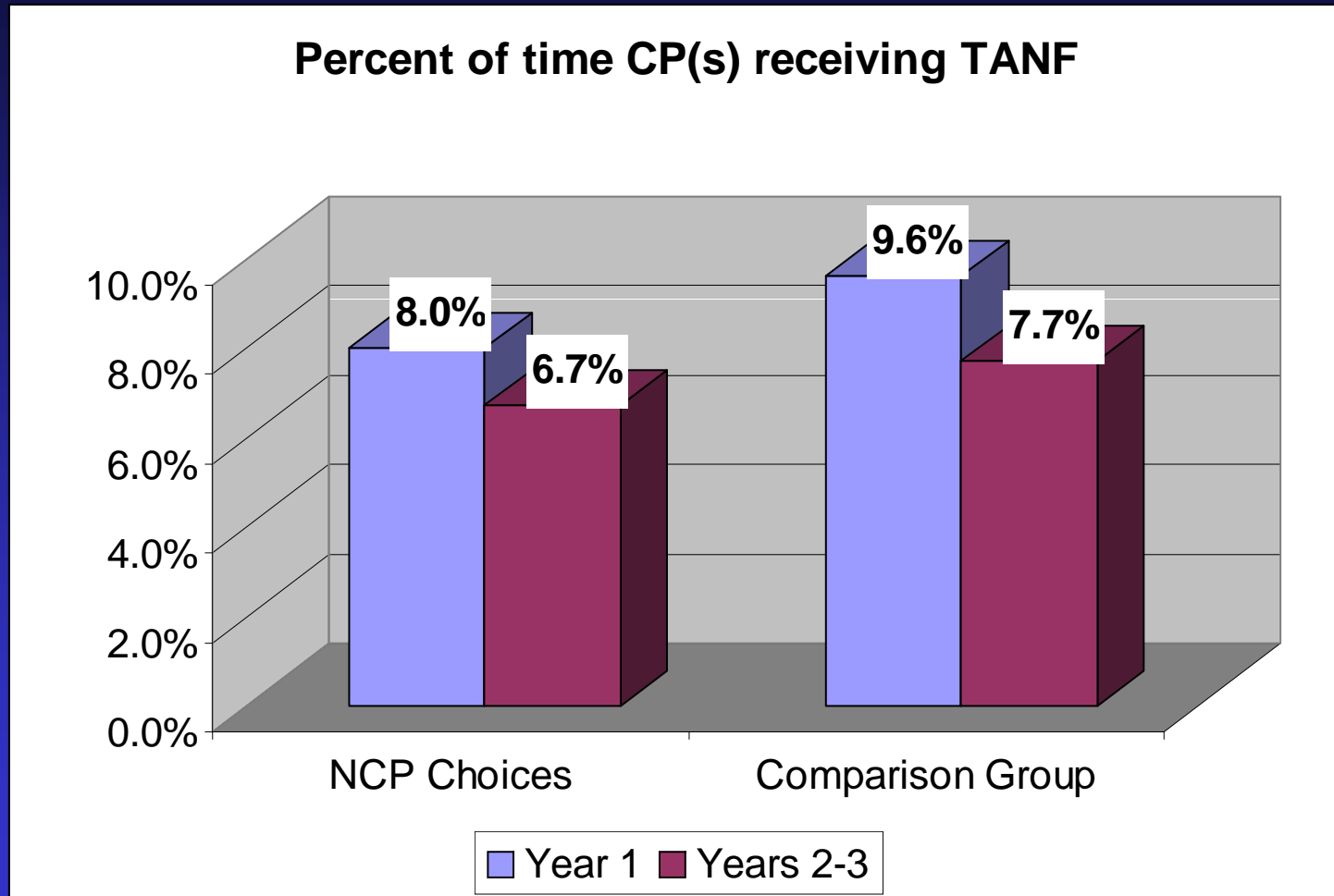
NCP files unemployment claim within 1 year of program entry



A 55% decrease in unemployment insurance claims filed (3.6 pct points,  $p < .01$ )



# Results: Welfare (TANF) Receipt



An 17% decrease in TANF receipt among associated custodial parents in year 1 (1.6 pct points,  $p < .01$ )



# Summary and Implications

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**NCP Choices met most of its program goals:**

**NCP Choices clients far more likely to participate in workforce development**

**Increased frequency, amount, and consistency of child support payments**

**Increased employment rates; reduced earnings levels of the employed, but effect goes away in later years**

**Reduced rate of filing unemployment claims**

**Reduced TANF receipt among custodial parents**



# Next Steps

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Presently working on final report that expands the evaluation to include six additional sites that started in 2007

Ultimately, given the success so far, the goal is to expand the program statewide

Future evaluation will include a modification of the program to target low-income NCPs in *establishment* cases, in hopes of serving them before they get behind on their CS payments



# Contact

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**Latest report available:**

<http://www.utexas.edu/research/cshr/pubs/pubs.htm>

**Updated impacts to be posted in Sep 2009**

