



Mini Medical School 2020:
Improving Health Outside the
Hospital Walls


Paid Family Leave Policies

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Overview


- Policy details: Paid family leave
- Two case studies
- Other evidence
- Conclusions, implications

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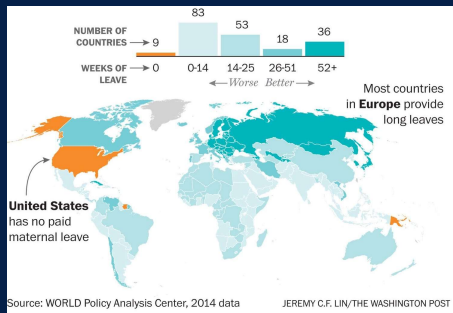
What is Paid Family Leave?

- Wage replacement
- Guaranteed job protection (often)
- Time to care for self or family
- ★ For parents: infant-parent bonding, social support



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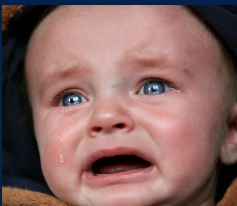
National Paid Family Leave Policies



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U.S. Family and Medical Leave Act



Provides unpaid job-protected leave for qualifying workers

More than 40% of employees don't qualify

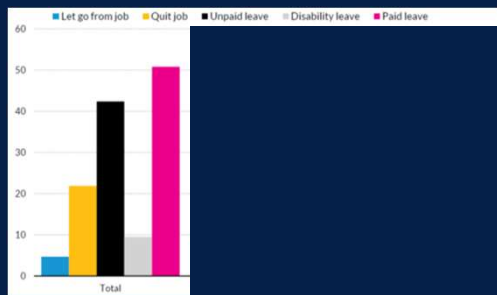
Low-income workers less likely to take leave

U.S. Department of Labor, 2019; Rossin, 2011

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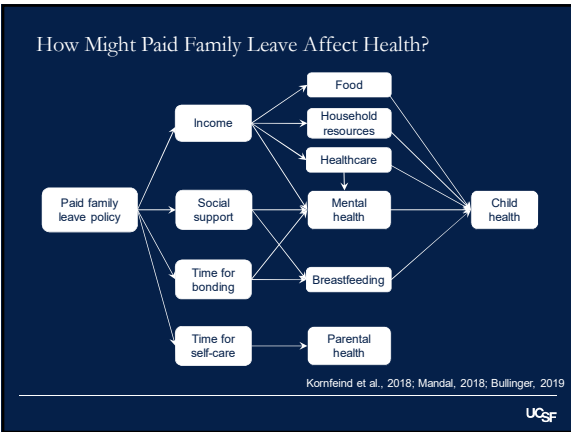
Leave Arrangements for Working Moms



Laughlin, 2011

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Study 1: Paid Family Leave and Breastfeeding

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The Importance of Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is associated with:

- Lower risk of obesity in moms
- Less obesity and metabolic problems in children

Breastfeeding improves:

- Infant-parent bonding
- Behavioral problems in children

Modrek et al., 2016; Yan et al., 2014; Jarlenski et al., 2014

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U.S. Breastfeeding Guidelines



AAP, 2012

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Breastfeeding and Work

60% of women with small children are employed
 A quarter return to work in 2 weeks, a third within 3 months
 This is compared to ~5% in some European countries

Women in full-time employment are less likely to breastfeed than those in part-time employment.

Returning to work early further reduces breastfeeding.

Berger et al., 2005; Ryan et al. 2006; BLS, 2019

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Lack of Paid Leave May Contribute to Black-White Disparities in Breastfeeding

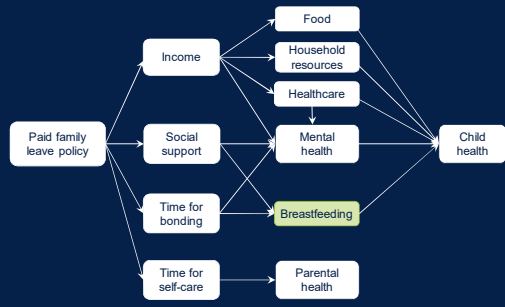
	Percentage of those breastfeeding in the early postpartum period	Percentage of those breastfeeding at 6 months postpartum	% of total labor force	% of low-wage jobs
African American	58.1%	27.5%	13%	18%
White	77.7%	45.1%	65%	51%
Hispanic	80.6%	46%	15%	24%

CDC, 2010, via Echols, 2018; U.S. Census, 2016

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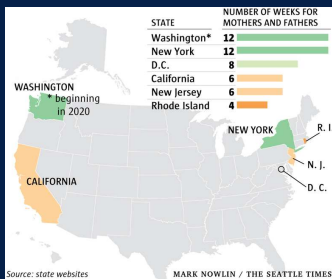
How Might Paid Family Leave Affect Health?



Kornfeind et al., 2018; Mandal, 2018; Bullinger, 2019



State Paid Family Leave Policies



Wage replacement: 50-67%

DC: 90% for low-wage workers
MA: 80% for low-wage workers
CT: 95% for low-wage workers

Source: state websites

MARK NOWLIN / THE SEATTLE TIMES

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California Births and PFL Claims, by Year



Hamad et al., 2020

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Study Design

What are the effects of state paid family leave policies on breastfeeding practices?

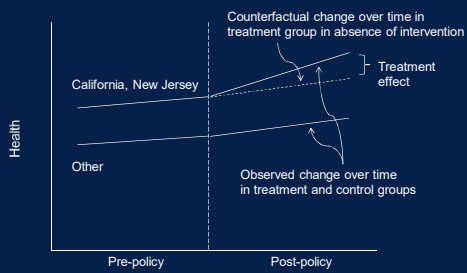
- California (2004) and New Jersey (2009) policies
- Subgroup effects by sociodemographic characteristics
- Data from National Immunization Survey (sample ~300,000)

Hamad et al., 2019

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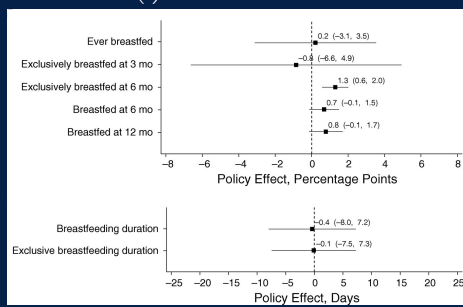
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Difference-in-Differences Analysis



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Main Results (I)

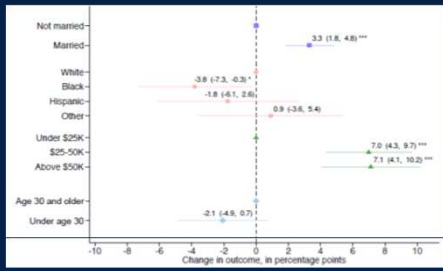


Hamad et al., 2019

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Subgroup Effects, Still BF at 6 months

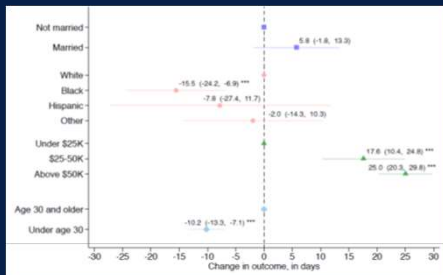


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Subgroup Effects, Any BF Duration

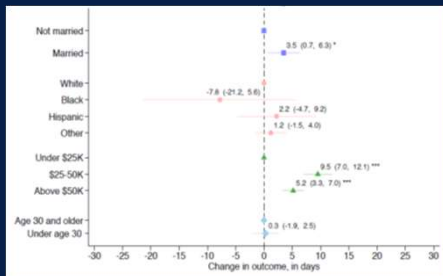


Hamad et al., 2019

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Subgroup Effects, Exclusive BF Duration



Hamad et al., 2019

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Summary

Paid family leave policy increases breastfeeding at 6 months.

Findings are consistent with studies of California and international policies.

Subgroup analyses tend to show larger benefits for:
Middle- and high-income women
Married women

Inconsistent findings for race/ethnicity and age

Increase in health disparities because of policies' design??

Hamad et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2015; Kotwitz et al., 2016

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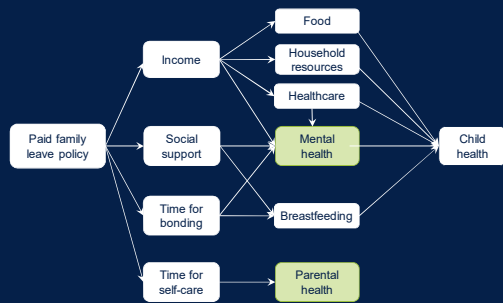


Study 2: Paid Family Leave and Parental Health

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How Might Paid Family Leave Affect Health?



Kornfeind et al., 2018; Mandal, 2018; Bullinger, 2019



Postpartum Depression

1 in 7 women suffers from postpartum depression...
...and 1 in 12 men!

Postpartum depression is associated with worsened child health:

- Depression
- Cognition
- Conduct disorder
- Physical health

Poor mental health is also linked to worse parent health

Essex et al., 2002; Howard et al., 2014; O'Hara et al., 2013



Study Design

What are the effects of state paid family leave policies on parental health?

- California (2004) policy
- Subgroup effects by parent gender
- Data from Panel Study of Income Dynamics (sample ~7,000)

Hamad et al., 2020



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Results

	Effect of California Paid Family Leave Policy
	Overall
Self-rated health	0.11*
Psychological distress	-0.79*
Overweight	-0.082*
Obese	-0.026
Drinks alcohol	-0.12*
3+ drinks daily	-0.057*

* statistically significant effect

Hamad et al., 2020



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Summary

Improved overall health for both parents
More money, more time?

Reduced overweight among moms
Consequence of more breastfeeding, self-care?

Less psychological distress for moms, less alcohol use for dads
Gender differences in the expression of stress?

Hamad et al., 2020

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Limitations

No data on actual leave-taking or eligibility

Did not examine states with more recent paid leave policies

Assume no contemporaneous policies affecting these conditions

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Other Evidence

Improvements in health among children later in childhood

Abusive head trauma

Overweight

ADHD

Hearing problems

Lichtman-Sadot et al., 2017; Klevens et al., 2016

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Overall Conclusions and Implications

Paid leave may be an important lever to improve infant and parent health at the population level.

Future studies can examine more recent state policies

Do more generous policies avoid exacerbating disparities?

How about PFL policies for conditions beyond birth?

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Acknowledgements

Collaborators

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Questions?

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Maternal Characteristics

	California	New Jersey	Other States
	N = 10,030	N = 6,370	N = 289,866
Age under 30	34.4%	31.5%	37.4%
Married	74.2%	69.5%	73.2%
Family income			
\$25,000 or less	29.8%	26.5%	24.6%
\$25,001-\$50,000	19.7%	17.3%	22.9%
More than \$50,000	50.5%	56.2%	52.5%
Race			
White	31.6%	43.0%	59.8%
Black	4.3%	17.5%	11.8%
Hispanic	46.4%	28.5%	18.4%
Other	17.7%	11.0%	10.0%
Birth after paid leave policy	58.8%	24.7%	N/A

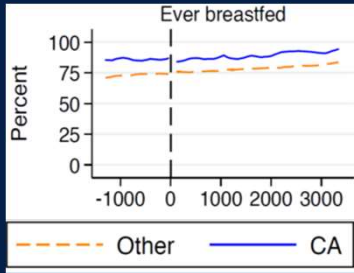
Hamad et al., 2019

Breastfeeding Characteristics

	California	New Jersey	Other States
	N = 10,030	N = 6,370	N = 289,866
Ever breastfed (%)	87.4%	74.9%	77.0%
Exclusively breastfeeding at 3 mos. (%)	51.3%	37.0%	42.1%
Exclusively breastfeeding at 6 mos. (%)	23.0%	15.8%	18.1%
Still breastfeeding at 6 mos. (%)	58.6%	44.3%	46.2%
Still breastfeeding at 12 mos. (%)	30.1%	20.6%	22.3%
Days of any breastfeeding	237 ± 200	174 ± 186	183 ± 187
Days of exclusive breastfeeding	88 ± 84	84 ± 64	73 ± 82

Hamad et al., 2019

Trends in Breastfeeding Relative to Policy Implementation, In Days



Hamad et al., 2019