



A Decade of Voluntary Paternity Acknowledgment in Wisconsin: 1997-2007

Patricia Brown & Steven Cook

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*Institute for Research on Poverty
University of Wisconsin - Madison*



Previous Findings:

- Using KIDS and CRD data
- Births in Year 2000
- Child support order & receipt data for 2 years
- Results:
 - VPA fathers less likely to have CS order
 - If an order, more likely to pay CS
 - VPA fathers more likely to have placement with their child.



This report expands previous analysis:

- Birth record data from Vital Records.
 - All births in years 1997, 2000, and 2005, which allows comparison of birth cohorts in relation to different time periods in implementation of the VPA process.
 - The “universe” of births allows us to more accurately measure paternity establishment for the full state-wide population.
 - VR also provides additional information on parent demographics.
- Additional years of child support history extracted from KIDS:
 - 6 years of history for children born in 2000.
 - 9 years of history for children born in 1997.
- Merged Birth record and KIDS data:
 - Which provides improved context for understanding of KIDS data.



Finding #1: Increase in life-time rates of paternity establishment.

Age of Child	1997 Birth		2000 Birth		2005 Birth	
	VPA	Adjud	VPA	Adjud	VPA	Adjud
Legal Father:						
by 1 month	9.9%	0.5%	22.9%	0.2%	25.5%	0.2%
by 6 months	16.3%	12.0%	36.2%	10.6%	41.3%	13.7%
by 12 months	19.9%	23.8%	40.0%	21.1%	44.6%	26.9%
by 24 months	23.5%	32.8%	42.5%	30.0%	46.1%	33.4%
No legal Father:						
by age 2 years	42.7%		26.7%		20.0%	
by age 7 years	21.2%		14.6%		NA	
by age 10 years	18.9%		NA		NA	



Finding #2: Decrease in child's age at paternity establishment.

Mean Child Age at Time of Paternity Establishment

	<u>1997 Birth</u>	<u>2000 Birth</u>	<u>2005 Birth</u>
Legal Father:			
within 2 years	227 days	172 days	146 days
within 7 years	546 days	331 days	NA
within 10 years	616 days	NA	NA



Finding #3: Increase in VPA use with age of parents: 2000 birth cohort

	2000 Births		
	<u>VPA</u>	<u>Adjudicated</u>	<u>No Legal FA</u>
Mother's Age:			
12-17 years	25.5%*	54.4%	18.7%
18-20 years	44.2%	42.5%	11.9%
21-24 years	44.6%	40.1%	13.4%
25-29 years	48.9%	33.5%	15.8%
30-34 years	51.5%	30.8%	15.5%
35 and older	53.7%	25.4%	19.1%
Father's Age:			
12-17 years	24.5%*	74.3%	NA
18-20 years	45.7%	52.8%	NA
21-24 years	51.7%	46.4%	NA
25-29 years	55.9%	41.6%	NA
30-34 years	57.0%	40.9%	NA
35 and older	59.6%	38.4%	NA

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Finding #4: Increase in VPA use with education of mothers.

	Year 2000 Births		
	<u>VPA</u>	<u>Adjudicated</u>	<u>No Legal FA</u>
Mother's Education:			
Less than high school	33.0%	49.4%	16.4%
High school	48.8%	36.6%	12.9%
Some college	56.1%	28.3%	13.1%
4+ years college	63.2%	18.0%	15.8%



Finding #5: Large differences in VPA use by race/ethnicity.

	Year 2000 Births		
	<u>VPA</u>	<u>Adjudicated</u>	<u>No Legal FA</u>
Mother's Race/ethnicity:			
Native American	43.7%	40.2%	14.5%
Hispanic	45.1%	29.4%	23.0%
African American	20.4%	61.3%	17.8%
White	55.1%	30.4%	12.3%
Hmong	44.2%	29.5%	21.1%
Other Asian	51.3%	20.6%	25.6%



Finding #6: VPA fathers less likely to have a CS order: 1997 birth cohort.

Child Support Orders:	Percentage with Child Support Order in Year		Logit Model
	<u>VPA</u>	<u>Adjudicated</u>	<u>Odds Ratio (VPA/Adjudicated) Controlling for Demographics</u>
Year 1	11%	31%	0.33
Year 2	19%	46%	0.37
Year 3	24%	54%	0.41
Year 4	27%	59%	0.43
Year 5	30%	64%	0.44
Year 6	33%	68%	0.47
Year 7	34%	68%	0.50
Year 8	35%	68%	0.54
Year 9	36%	68%	0.58



Finding #7: VPA fathers (with CS orders) more likely to pay CS.

A Child Support Payment:	Child Support Payment in Year		Odds Ratio (VPA/Adjudicated) Controlling for Demographics
	<u>VPA</u>	<u>Adjudicated</u>	
Year 1	75%	64%	1.08
Year 2	87%	75%	1.23
Year 3	90%	78%	1.27
Year 4	90%	76%	1.39
Year 5	88%	73%	1.33
Year 6	89%	72%	1.38
Year 7	88%	72%	1.30
Year 8	88%	73%	1.25
Year 9	89%	74%	1.36



Finding #8: VPA fathers (with CS orders) pay more in child support \$\$.

Child Support Amounts:	Year 1997 Birth Cohort		
	Amount of Child Support Payment in Year		OLS Model Coefficient of VPA Status Controlling for Demographics
	VPA	Adjudicated	
Year 1	\$1,098	\$759	95.38
Year 2	\$2,147	\$1,647	-68.25
Year 3	\$2,526	\$1,798	19.13
Year 4	\$2,793	\$1,756	228.18
Year 5	\$2,819	\$1,772	187.56
Year 6	\$2,926	\$1,765	286.51
Year 7	\$3,038	\$1,767	374.55
Year 8	\$3,112	\$1,799	415.46
Year 9	\$3,160	\$1,833	408.61



Conclusions:

- VPA process a very successful method for establishing paternity.
- VPAs have increased the percentage of non-marital children who eventually gain a legal father.
- VPAs have contributed to earlier identification of legal fathers.
- Evidence from vital records shows significant differences in the types of mothers and fathers who chose VPAs:
 - Older parents
 - More educated mothers (education data not available on fathers)
 - Differences in racial/ethnic groups: high take-up by whites, and low take-up by African Americans.
 - This has implications for targeting subgroups for improved take-up.



Conclusions, cont.

- VPAs are associated with fewer child support orders:
 - But there is evidence of higher marriage rates of VPA parents.
- VPAs are associated with higher rates and amounts of child support payment:
 - Even when controlling for other characteristics, such as education, income, race/ethnicity, other children, residential location, and hospital size.
 - These higher payments are sustained over the long-term (9 yrs).
 - These higher payments increase over time.