Selected Human Ecology Outcomes Addressing the Ecology of Poverty

**Food Insecurity and Food and Financial Skills**
- Improved food and financial skills are associated with resilience to the effects of poverty on food security.
- Poverty and food deprivation are associated with obesity in women.
- EFNEP assists limited resource families in acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior change necessary for nutritional well-being, and to contribute to personal development.
- FSNE—Eat Smart New York targets food stamp recipients with education designed to improve nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being on a limited budget.
- Food and Nutrition Education in Communities programs, including EFNEP and FSNE, provided programming to 18,209 adults and 13,602 youth enrolled in nutrition education sessions through CCE during 2006.
- The Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) works to increase fruit and vegetable consumption among low-income families and seniors, and support farmers. During 2006, CCE work to maximize redemption of FMNP checks resulted in 87,000 senior households and 275,000 WIC households redeeming FMNP checks, providing $5.2 million directly to New York farmers.

**Environment of Childhood Poverty**
- Research on developmental impacts of poverty investigates the role of multiple stressor exposure as a factor leading to socioemotional dysfunction and physiological stress among children.
- Stressors are both physical (i.e., housing, crowding, noise) and social (i.e., child separation from family, family turmoil, exposure to violence, peer difficulties).
- A national conference will use a bioecological model of human development to provide a theoretical and organizational framework.

**Morbid Obesity and Welfare to Work**
- Morbid obesity impairs the ability of former welfare recipients to transition from welfare to work.
- It is associated with lower wages, fewer hours worked, a lower probability of employment, and greater reliance on cash benefits among some groups.
- For white females, an additional 65 pounds is associated with 9 percent lower wages.

**Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing**
- Risk behaviors among fathers in fragile families include domestic violence, substance use problems, or incarceration.
- Research indicates that most commonly mothers end the relationship and monitor fathers’ involvement with children.
- Policies aimed at promoting marriage and “responsible fatherhood” could face important challenges.

**People with Disabilities**
- Working-age people with disabilities have a higher risk of poverty than those without disabilities.
- Research data resulted in an program of technical assistance and presentations to government agencies, policymakers, and consumers on the employment and economic well-being of people with disabilities.

**Family and Welfare Policy**
- Faculty are examining family and welfare policy, including marriage promotion initiatives, child support and fatherhood, cohabitation and marriage among unwed mothers, and racial and ethnic disparities in poverty.
- Results from these studies have been presented to policy makers and practitioners.

**Strengthening Families**
- Parenting skills are essential for promoting child well-being, but many parents struggle with how to parent effectively and meet both their own needs and those of their children.
- The Parenting in Context website (www.parenting.cit.cornell.edu) provides educators with research-based curricula, resources, and evaluation tools.
Richard Burkhauser  
Professor, Policy Analysis and Management  
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Effect of public policies on economic behavior and well-being of vulnerable populations including older persons, people with disabilities, and low-income households.

Rachel Dunifon  
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Child and family policy including how children fare in various family living arrangements, the role of grandparents in the lives of youth, and how welfare reform influences children.

John Cawley  
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Economics of obesity including the effect of body weight on labor market outcomes: wage rates, unemployment, employment disability, transition from welfare to work.

Jamie Dollahite  
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Nutrition education for limited-resource audiences that is designed to prevent obesity and chronic disease.

Gary Evans  
Professor, Design and Environmental Analysis  
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Effect of the physical environment on human health and well being, particularly environmental stress, children’s environments, and the environment of poverty.

Daniel Lichter  
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Family and welfare policy, including children’s changing living arrangements and poverty, cohabitation and marriage among unwed mothers, and welfare incentive effects on the family.

Christine Olson  
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Community-based intervention to promote healthy body weight in mothers and infants; relationship of the rural food and physical activity environment to body weight in women and children.

Maureen Waller  
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Marriage, fatherhood, and social policy in low-income communities: transitions in relationships between unmarried mothers and fathers and between unmarried fathers and their children.

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