IMPACT OF SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS PROGRAM ON FAMILY COHESION

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RESEARCH GOALS & RATIONALE

• SAWP AND TRANSBORDER FAMILIES AND PARENTING
• FAMILY FOCUS AS BASIS OF POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR POLICY IMPROVEMENTS
• RESEARCH METHODS
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

• MEXICAN INTERVIEWEES: BENEFITS FOR FAMILIES: SCHOOLING, CLOTHING, FOOD, HOUSING, HEALTH CARE

• COSTS FOR FAMILIES:
• ESTRANGEMENT (“LIKE SANTA CLAUS”)
• NOT BEING “GOOD FATHERS”
• CHILDREN “RUN IN THE STREETS”
• CHILDREN LOSE RESPECT FOR FATHERS
• WORK STRESS IS TAKEN BACK TO MEXICO
COSTS TO FAMILIES

• SPOUSE IS “GOING WITH OTHERS”

• JAMAICAN INTERVIEWEES:
  • INADEQUATE REMITTANCES LEAD FAMILIES TO BLAME WORKERS
  • MORE VARIED FAMILY STRUCTURES ARE MORE FRAGILE?

• NEW FAMILIES IN CANADA
POTENTIAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS

• COMPASSIONATE LEAVE
• RIGHT TO VISIT FAMILY DURING CONTRACT
• RIGHTS TO ACCESS INTERNET AND TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS WITH FAMILIES
• ACCESS TO FAMILY BENEFIT ENTITLEMENTS
• PRIORITY HIRING OF FAMILY MEMBERS
POTENTIAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS (CONTINUED)

• REDUCED PRECARITY OF WAGES
• IMPROVED HEALTH CARE ACCESS, INCLUDING FOR STRESS PROBLEMS
• CHOICE OF CONTRACT DURATIONS
• INADEQUATE ADVOCACY BY GOV’T & CONSULAR OFFICIALS IN CONTEXT OF GROWING COMPETITION FOR JOBS; NEED FOR UNION REPRESENTATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
• OPEN, FLEXIBLE WORK PERMITS, JOB SECURITY, AND MOBILITY RIGHTS
• PATHWAYS TO IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP FOR WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES