

Advancing Fresno County Guaranteed Income **Evaluation Findings**



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Acknowledgments

- The families of Southwest Fresno and Huron
- Fresno EOC
- Fresno State
- College of Social Sciences Emerging Scholars Program
- Funders: The California Wellness Foundation, The California Endowment, James Irvine Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Delta Dental Community Care Foundation, Central Valley Community Foundation, Sierra Health Foundation, the James B. McClatchy Foundation, and Mayors for a Guaranteed Income.



Research design



■ Questions

- How does basic income impact socioeconomic outcomes, family well-being, and parenting experiences?
- Do these effects vary by area between urban and rural communities?

Research design



Sample

- Randomized controlled trial
- Sample drawn from applicant pool
- 150 randomly selected to treatment group
- 150 randomly selected to control group
- Equally divided across zip codes

Research design



Methodology

- Listening sessions prior to program with Fresno County residents
- Mixed methods design
 - Quarterly surveys
 - Focus group interviews
 - Open-ended survey questions
- Quasi-experimental quantitative methods to infer causality
- **“Statistical significance” means the differences were large enough to rule out the possibility of null effects. Failure to rule out this possibility is not proof that there is no real effect.**
- **Participant narratives are essential and valid sources of data.**

Quality of life

■ MAKING ENDS MEET

Participants were significantly more likely to report that it was easier to make ends meet after four months of guaranteed income. Qualitative data supports this finding and participants frequently shared that it was easier to pay for bills.

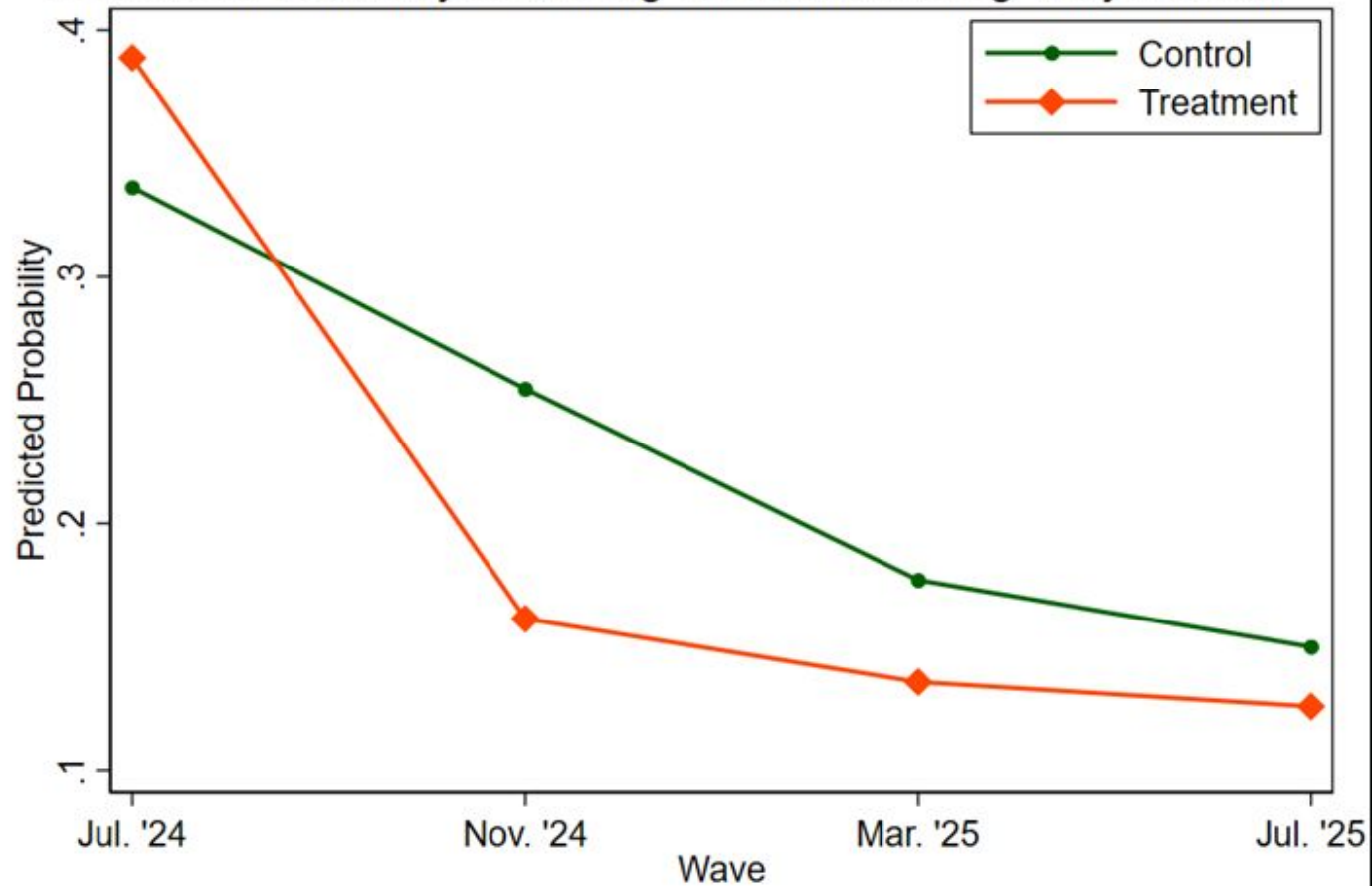
■ FOOD SECURITY

Participants were significantly less likely to report food insecurity throughout the program. Qualitative data supports this finding, with participants sharing that it was easier to pay for groceries.

■ STRESS AND WORRY

Participants were significantly less likely to be bothered by worry after four months of guaranteed income. Participants also shared in interviews that they were less stressed as a result of being able to pay for bills and provide for children.

Predicted Probability of Making Ends Meet Being 'Very Difficult'





That money is actually helping a lot. It helps us pay our PG&E bill and our rent. Like, say we don't have all the money for rent, at least we know that when we get the money in the middle of the month, we can pay right away. That helps us, and it keeps us from being evicted.

————— Brenda, Huron resident, January 2025



Parenting

■ MORE TIME WITH CHILDREN

Qualitative findings show that participants were more satisfied with the time that they got to spend with their children, especially mothers with new babies.

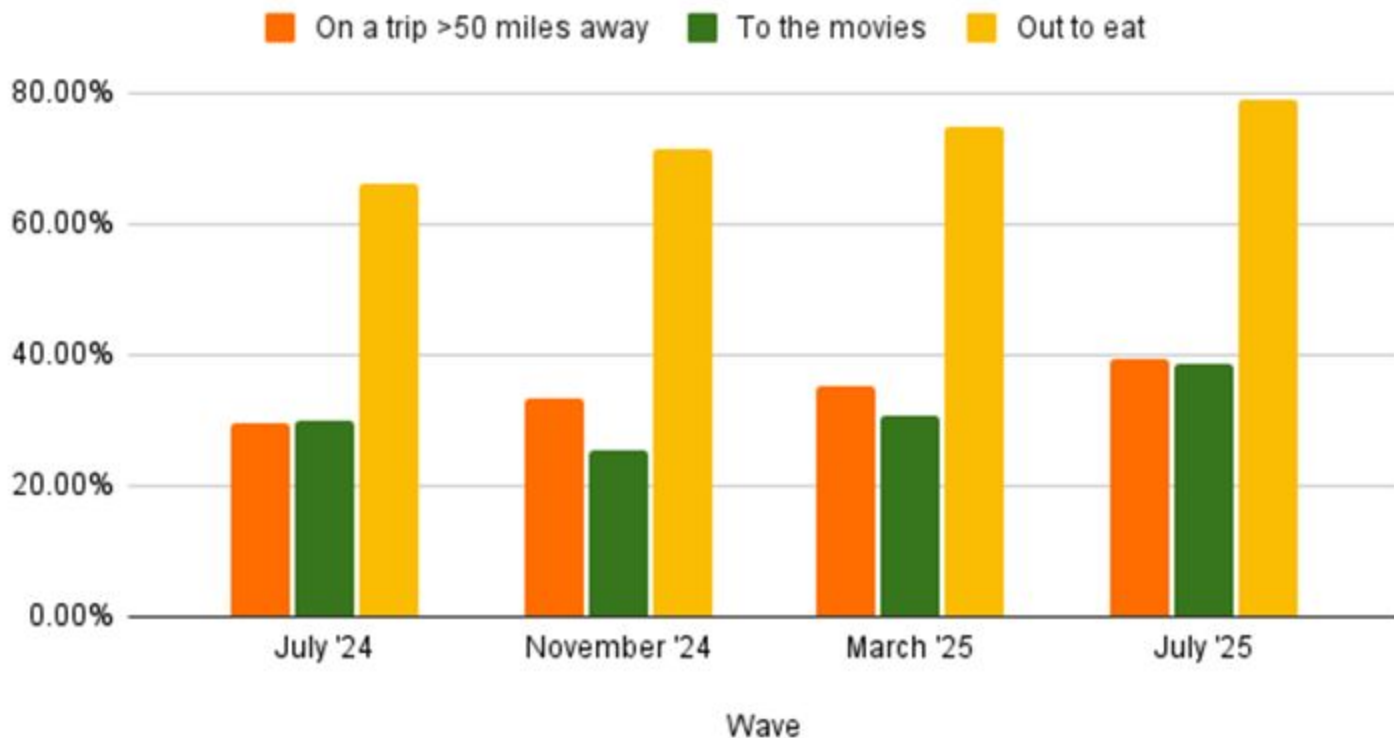
■ MORE PARENT-CHILD ENGAGEMENT

Qualitative findings show that participants were able to do more with their children including going out to eat, going on trips to the zoo, going to the beach, and attending children's sports events.

■ ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR CHILDREN

Qualitative findings show that participants frequently discussed being better able to provide for their children and say "yes" more often, which ranged from buying diapers to paying for new clothes, school supplies, and camping equipment.

In the last four months, participant families went...





Con los 500 dólares de ayuda me estreso menos me ayuda a estar más tranquila y pasar más tiempo con mis hijos.

[With the 500 dollars I am less stressed and it helps me feel calmer and spend more time with my children.]

————— Nadia, Huron resident, March 2025





Family life has changed most definitely...stress level completely...with having the exact money coming in a month the kids get to enjoy more school activities like my daughter alone has joined soccer, basketball and volleyball alone this year and if it wasn't for the extra help it definitely may not have been possible for us to be able to attend every game.

Chrystal, Southwest Fresno resident, March 2025



Financial well-being

■ REDUCED DEBT SPENDING

The most statistically significant finding was that participants dramatically reduced their debt spending throughout the program.

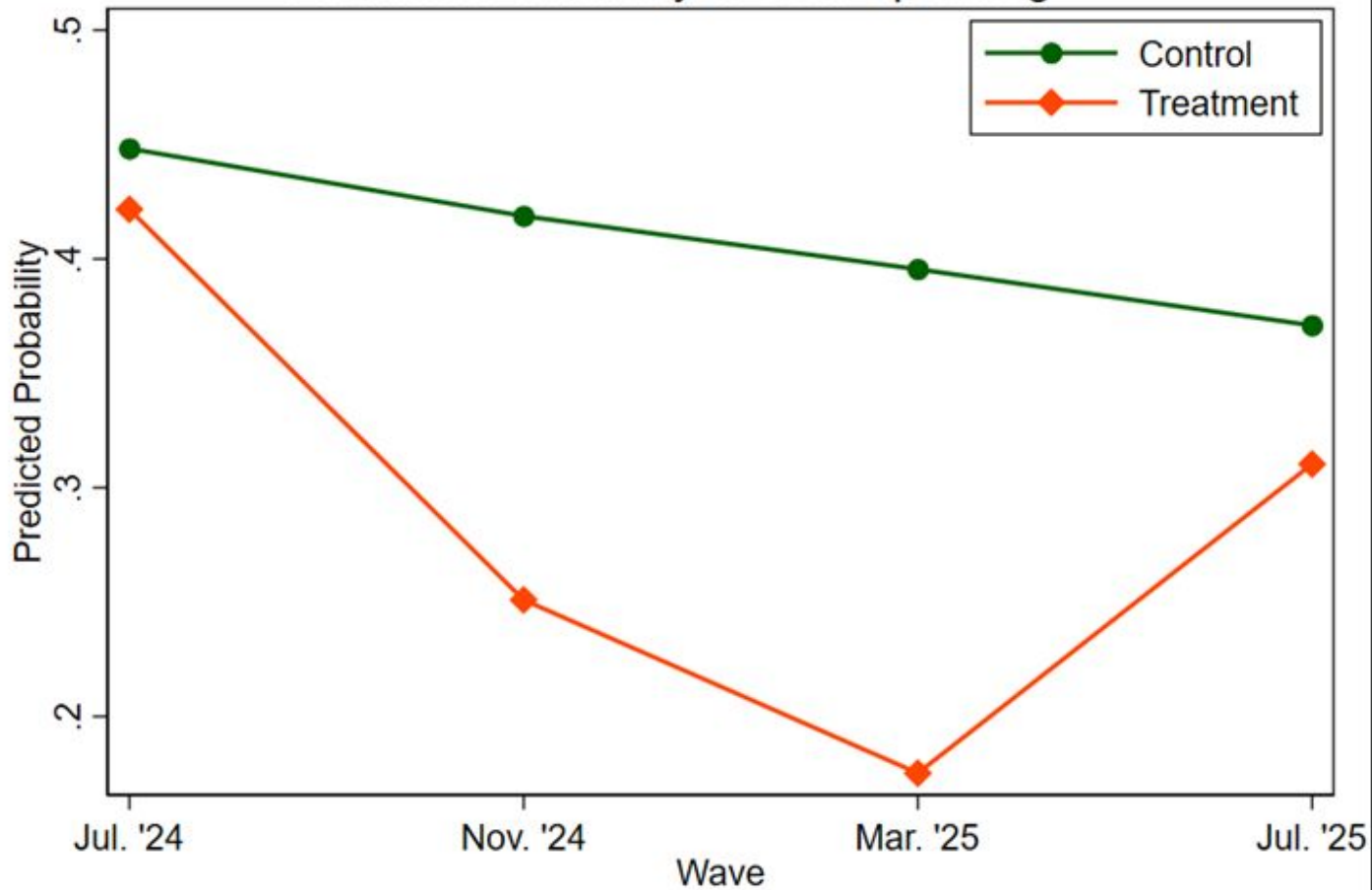
■ DEBT RELIEF

In interviews, some participants shared how the money helped them resolve student or utility debt.

■ INCOME STABILITY

Huron residents who rely on seasonal agricultural work shared how the guaranteed income helped them cope with the income volatility.

Predicted Probability of Debt Spending





Because of this program I'm done paying my school loan off...it has helped me a lot and like it was good for me to pay off my school debt.

————— Rosalyn, Southwest Fresno resident, January 2025



Employment, education, opportunity

■ STABLE EMPLOYMENT

Employment outcomes did not significantly change, which means that participants were no more or less likely to be employed.

■ NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Qualitative findings show that some participants sought out new career opportunities including trainings or better jobs. Some participants enrolled in school or completed their high school education.

■ MATERNAL CARE

Mothers who had recently given birth reported being able to spend more time their newborns before returning to work. Avoiding overwork also helped at least two high-risk pregnancies.



Estoy en busca de trabajo y estudiando para sacar mi GED y encontrar un mejor trabajo.

[I am looking for work and studying for the GED so that I can find a better job.]

————— Natalia, Southwest Fresno resident, March 2025





I've had 9 months to focus solely on my kids, being pregnant, and spend my first 3 months with my baby before I take the time to go back to school.

————— Jessica, Southwest Fresno resident, March 2025



RURAL EXPERIENCES

■ BARRIERS TO ACCESS

Huron participants frequently described difficulties with accessing childcare, educational opportunities, jobs, and healthcare.

■ JOB VOLATILITY

Huron participants who relied on seasonal agricultural work struggled with unstable employment, and women described employers preferring men.

■ IMMIGRATION FEARS

Immigration enforcement intensified in 2025 and made it more difficult for Huron participants to go to work or take their children outside of the house.



I did get a better job, but it is further away from my home. So it is time consuming to get there. It's about 40 minutes from my house. And gas is very expensive...versus when I was working closer to home, I was earning less but I was closer to home. So yeah, it is a little tough away from my kids. I don't have a lot of time to get home and cook every day. So it's kind of exhausting.

————— Elena, Huron resident, July 2025





I heard they took 40 people. That's why I haven't left my house for days, because I'm undocumented and I'm afraid. My kids tell me, 'Mom, we want to go to the park,' but I don't want to go because ICE might show up at the park.

————— Nadia, Huron resident, January 2025



“My kids have way more and have been able to do way more than ever. I’m truly blessed to have been a part of this community. I thank you guys for the opportunity to share with me and my children.”

- Aliyah, Southwest Fresno resident, July 2025



SUMMARY

- Debt spending - a statistically significant impact.
- Stress and daily life improved in qualitatively meaningful ways.
- Parenting experiences show promise of brighter intergenerational futures.
- Ramps to opportunity.
- Cash alone cannot overcome structural barriers in a rural farmworker community.
- Consistency and predictability are key.

FINAL TAKEAWAY

- Guaranteed income is an effective component of the social safety net.
- While all families shared a need for more support with food, bills, and rent, they were much more varied on their other responsibilities, goals, and dreams.
- The flexibility of GI makes it possible for families to focus on the dimensions of their lives that need the most attention while also allowing them to create joyful experiences with each other.
- AFCGI demonstrated that this approach has the potential for intergenerational impact, because nearly every respondent was able to describe how the cash was being used to nurture their children and set them up for better opportunities.
- While guaranteed income cannot overcome every barrier and it cannot alone eliminate poverty, it is an important part of the anti-poverty agenda.

Thank You!

