



Wider Opportunities for Women: Tools to Measure Needs of Working Families and Elders

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Wider Opportunities for Women

www.WOWonline.org

- WOW is a national advocacy organization celebrating over 40 years of helping women and their families achieve economic independence and equality of opportunity.
- WOW's intergenerational vision and mission of economic independence for women and girls is met through the work of its national and local programs.

WOW's Family Economic Self-Sufficiency (FESS) Project

- Measure the circumstances and obstacles facing low-income families in your community.
- Develop, advocate for, and implement programs and policies that increase opportunities for low-income families that move them towards economic self-sufficiency.
- Provide effective and successful direct service tools for counseling, curriculum development, calculator development, and client benchmarking
- Mobilize communities and policymakers to act with and on behalf of families.
- Discover and share the keys to success and challenges with stakeholders across the country while engaging additional networks.

What is the Self-Sufficiency Standard?

- To illustrate the amount of income required to meet basic needs (including taxes) in the regular “market place” w/o public subsidies or private/informal subsidies
 - Public subsidies = Food Stamps, Medicaid, subsidized child care, etc.
 - Private subsidies = free baby-sitting by a relative, food provided by churches or food banks, shared housing, etc.
 - Lead Researcher: Dr. Diana Pearce, University of Washington

Self-Sufficiency Calculators

- Self-Sufficiency Calculators use the data of the Self-Sufficiency Standard in an interactive web-based tool for utilization by customers and case managers.
- There are a range of calculators that have been developed, from those that calculate the Self-Sufficiency wage to those that allow customers, with case managers, to test the impact on long and short-term economic well-being, benchmark wages against a measure of local costs of living, & identify work supports that can reduce expenses.

Although there are only calculators developed for a few states, Standard data is available for 35 states, the District of Columbia and New York City. Please visit <http://www.sixstrategies.org> or contact Kate Farrar at WOW at kfarrar@wowonline.org for more information about FESS activity in your specific state.

Self-Sufficiency Calculators

- **California, Bay Area:** <http://www.nedlc.org/calcba.htm>
- **Indiana:** <http://www.wdsi.org/calculator/>
- **Illinois:** <http://www.ides.state.il.us/calculator/default.asp>
- **New York City:** www.wceca.org
- **New York State, Erie County:**
<http://www.everywoman.org/sscalculator.html>
- **Pennsylvania:** <http://www.pathwayspa.org>
- **Washington State, Seattle-King County:**
www.seakingwdc.org, **Snohomish County:**
<http://www.worksourceonline.com/js/sscalc.html>, **South Central Washington:** <http://www.co.yakima.wa.us/e&t/ssc/sscmain.htm>
- **Wyoming:**
http://www.wyomingworkforce.org/resources/ss_index.aspx
- **Washington, D.C. in development:**
 - Contact Camille Cormier: ccormier@wowonline.org
- **Colorado in development:**
 - Contact Suzette Tucker-Welch: stuckerwelch@cclponline.org



Self-Sufficiency Calculator Demonstration

How the Standard Has Been Used

MORE THAN NUMBERS...

Policy change, program effectiveness, client services, public debate

- **Wages**
- **Work Supports**
- **Building Prosperity**



Utilizing Self-Sufficiency for Program and Client Success

- The concept and detailed data of the Self-Sufficiency Standard in organizational planning and direct service:
 - Program development, research, and evaluation
 - Staff education and training
 - Client education and counseling
 - Internal organizational policy development and eligibility



The Elder Economic Security Initiative is...

A multi-year project with a conceptual framework and concrete tools to shape public policies and programs to promote the economic well being of older adults, whether or not they have the capacity to be fully self-reliant or are in need of certain public supports to age in place with dignity.



The Goals

To Provide a Framework to help guide:

- Older adults' decisions and choices,
- Families and agencies that help care for them,
- Aging Boomers as they plan for their futures, and
- Public policy and programs at the national, state, and local level.



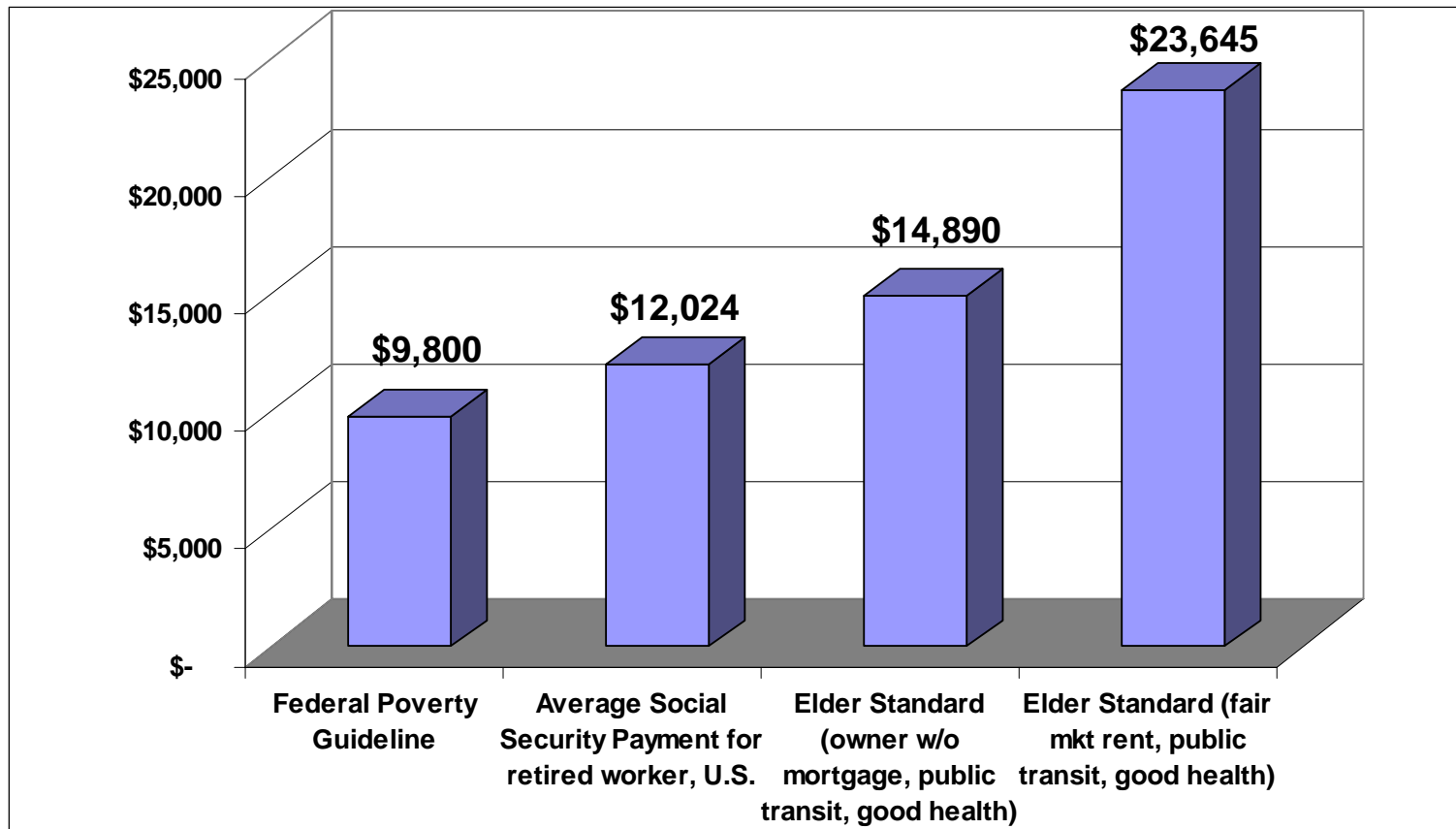
The WOW – GI National Elder Economic Security Standard is...

A new tool that provides a geographically specific and realistic measure of the costs of aging in place. It addresses elements such as long-term care, health care, housing, transportation, and nutrition.

Elder Standard for a Single Elder Boston Area, 2006

Monthly Expenses	Elder Person	
	Owner w/o Mortgage	Fair Market Rent 1BR
	Public Transit	
Housing	\$ 520	\$ 1,128
Food	\$ 206	\$ 206
Transportation	\$ 16	\$ 16
Health Care (Good Health)	\$ 292	\$ 292
Miscellaneous @ 20%	\$ 207	\$ 328
Elder Standard Per Month	\$ 1,241	\$ 1,970
Elder Standard Per Year	\$ 14,890	\$ 23,645

Elder Standard vs. Other Benchmarks: One-Person Households, Boston 2006



Policy Agenda

○ National

- Policy agenda drawn from national data
- Prioritizing national policy agenda to address elder concerns/needs regarding social long-term care insurance, income supports, health care, and affordable rent and homeownership policies
- Congressional briefing on economic security for women across generations in fall 2007

○ Statewide

- Draw upon the state-specific Elder Standard to develop state policy agenda and priorities that complement national agenda
- Support current statewide campaigns using Elder Standard findings



Current State EESI Partners

- MA Association of Older Americans (MA)
- Health and Medicine Policy Research Group (IL)
- Pathways PA (PA)
- National Economic Development and Law Center (CA)
- Wisconsin Women's Network (WI)

How to get more involved in family and elder economic security

○ **Self-Sufficiency=FESS**

- Engage WOW to work with you to integrate self-sufficiency:
 - Developing and integrating Self-Sufficiency Standard and Self-Sufficiency Calculator
 - Gain peer-to-peer network support
 - State specific resource development for organizational strategic planning, evaluation, and client services
 - Training staff
 - Also --- Policy updates and analysis, including federal, regional, and cross-state analyses
- Stay informed and get more information about these tools and networks. **Sign up for FESS Updates** by emailing Kate Farrar at kfarrar@wowonline.org or by phone at 202-464-1596 x103.

○ **Elder Economic Security=EESI**

- Join a statewide coalition.
- Build a statewide coalition.
- Stay informed. Sign up for the **WOW EESI listserv** for up-to-date information on national EESI work and issues affecting elders.
- Regularly check the **WOW website's National Programs** page for info on EESI: <http://www.wowonline.org/content.cfm?link=national>
- For more information, contact Ramsey Alwin, *Associate Director of National Programs and Policy, National Elder Economic Security Initiative (EESI)* by email at ralwin@wowonline.org or by phone at 202-464-1596 x107.