



*Utah Single Mom*

## Single Mom Initiative Enters the Next Phase

PHOTO: MARK PHILBRICK

**T**his year has been an important year for the ESR Center's Single Mom Initiative (SMI). During the year, the SMI began sharing results from the statewide survey of Utah single mothers that it conducted during 2007. The SMI also began the next phase of single mother research—in-depth interviews with approximately thirty of the survey respondents.

A preview of the findings from the statewide survey was shared with participants in the November 2007 ESR Conference. Afterward, the findings were published in the Spring 2008 issue of *ESR Review*. The survey findings highlight the importance of education to the economic self-reliance of Utah's single mothers. The data analysis demonstrated that education is a key predictor of a single mother's economic self-reliance. Average income for Utah single mothers increases with each increase in educational level. However, it is not until a single mother earns a bachelor's degree that she is likely to earn enough to live out of poverty and achieve a degree of self-sufficiency.

The SMI also began the next phase of its research effort during 2008. Five student research assistants began conducting face-to-face interviews with approximately thirty of the single mother survey participants. The interview participants live throughout Utah and include both English- and Spanish-speaking single mothers. The infor-

mation gathered in the interviews will allow the SMI to gain a more in-depth understanding of some of the most interesting findings from the survey surrounding issues of education, finances, support systems, and child care.

The SMI plans to continue sharing research findings with practitioners and researchers as they become available. Analysis of the survey data will be ongoing, and

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an additional report based on survey findings will be available on the ESR Center's web site shortly. The SMI expects the additional results from the survey and follow-up interviews will continue to contribute to a more complete understanding of the lives of single mothers and the best strategies for helping them build their economic-self-reliance. [ESR](#)