

From Scarcity to Security: Mental Well-being Outcomes in the First Two Years of a Basic Income Pilot

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Abstract

This article describes the mental health outcomes of participants in the HudsonUP pilot, a five-year basic income initiative for low to mid-income residents of Hudson, NY. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, including both quantitative surveys and qualitative phenomenological interviews, to better understand participants' experiences two years into the pilot. Through the lens of the psychological theory of scarcity, findings indicate that the HudsonUP program has improved the overall mental well-being of the participants by reducing the stress and anxiety associated with financial insecurity and helping them to meet their basic needs, pursue further education, and career opportunities. Despite the challenges of the ongoing pandemic and inflation, participants expressed gratitude for the “undercurrent of stability” provided by the program.

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