



September 2010

**NORC**  
at the UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## Resident Relocation Survey

Funded by a grant from The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

*Brief*

### *Key Findings*

After relocation, most leaseholders felt better about the opportunities to improve their life

71% of leaseholders reported that the move was beneficial

Two thirds of all leaseholders agreed or strongly agreed that children were doing better after relocation

Most leaseholders felt that their new neighborhood was safer and had better housing and amenities than their old neighborhood

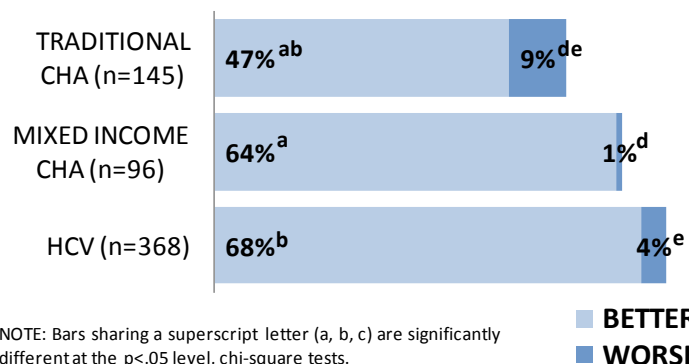
## OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH RELOCATION

In 2000, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) began the Plan for Transformation, an ambitious plan to rebuild or replace substandard high-rise public housing developments in Chicago. During the Transformation, CHA leaseholders were relocated to other housing either in the private market with the assistance of a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) or in other public housing units, including traditional CHA developments as well as new mixed income developments. With support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, NORC at the University of Chicago conducts the Resident Relocation Survey (RRS). The RRS collects data from current and former CHA leaseholders on their experiences with relocation. Leaseholders were asked about their overall satisfaction with the relocation and their living situation. This report presents findings from our fourth survey on how leaseholders in different types of housing perceived their new neighborhoods when compared to their neighborhood before the relocation.<sup>1</sup>

**OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE LIFE** Differences in leaseholders' perceptions of opportunities were examined with the question, "Do you

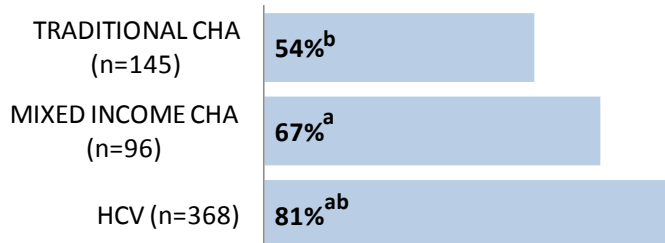
now feel better, worse, or the same about opportunities to improve your life?" **On average, most leaseholders felt better about the**

**FIGURE 1. OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE LIFE**



**opportunities to improve their lives (61%).** However, while about two-thirds of those living in mixed income CHA and HCV units reported feeling better about their opportunities, less than half of respondents living in traditional CHA housing felt the same way (Figure 1).

**FIGURE 2. RELOCATION WAS BENEFICIAL**



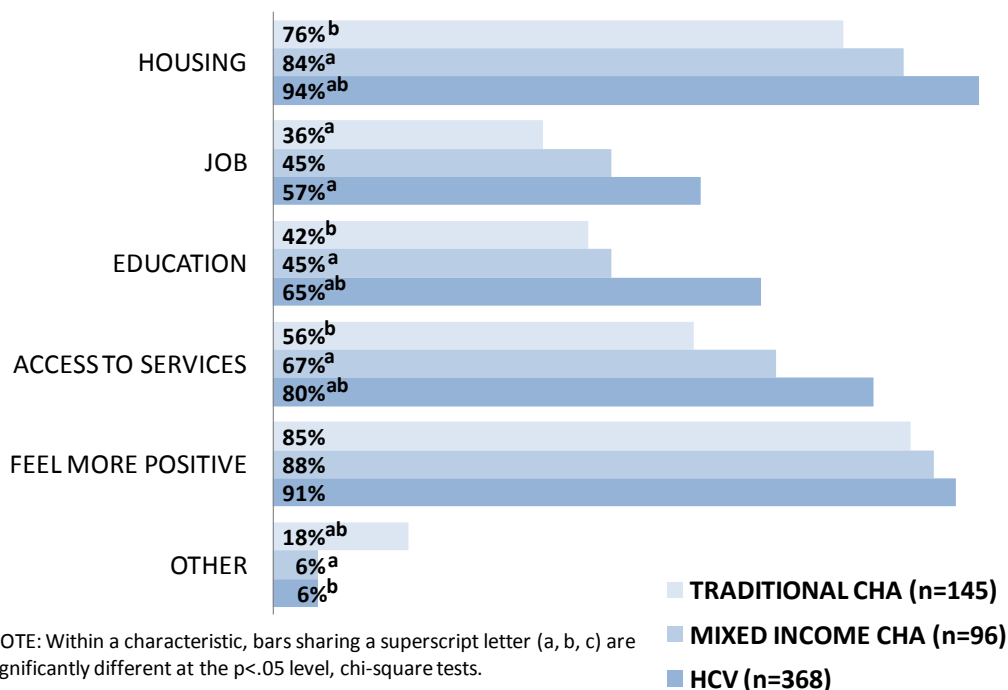
NOTE: Bars sharing a superscript letter (a, b, c) are significantly different at the p<.05 level, chi-square tests.

**BENEFITS OF MOVING** Leaseholders were asked if the move benefited them or their families.

**Overall, 71% said that they benefited from relocating.** Again, there were differences among the types of housing, with a greater number of leaseholders with HCV than traditional and mixed income CHA leaseholders reporting that the move benefited them (Figure 2). The survey also asked about the ways in which leaseholders felt they benefited from the move (including better

housing, jobs, education, access to services, and an increase in positive feelings). Figure 3 shows the results for each housing type.

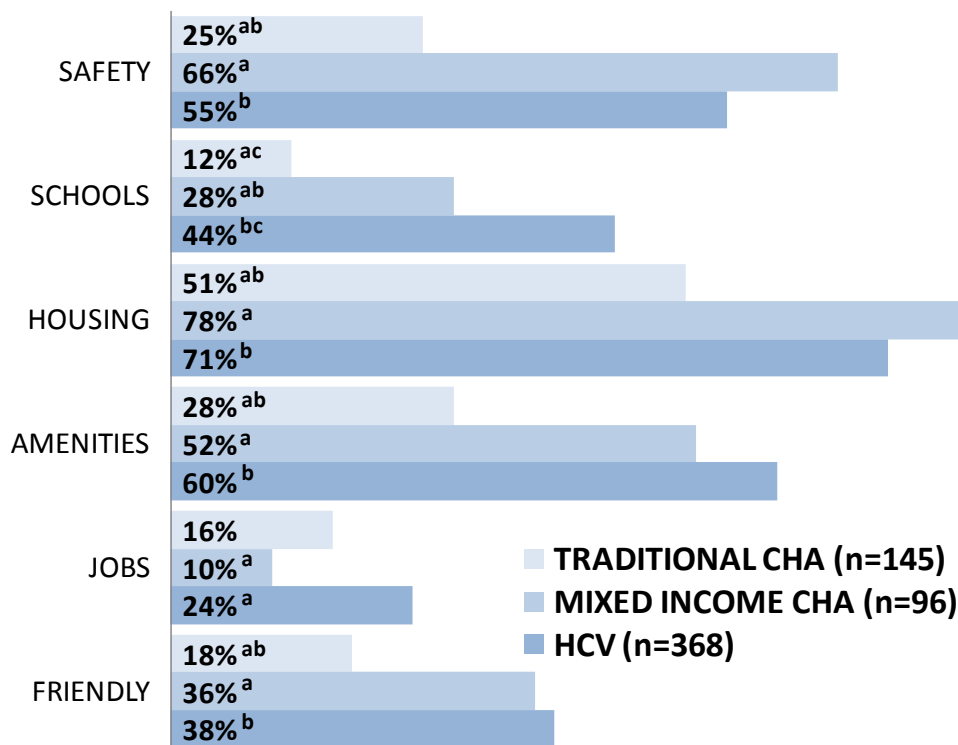
**FIGURE 3. TYPES OF BENEFITS TO RELOCATION**



**EFFECTS OF RELOCATION ON CHILDREN** When asked if they thought children in public housing were doing better because of relocation, **66% of leaseholders agreed or strongly agreed that children were doing better.** Again, there were differences between the housing types. While about three quarters of those in mixed income (76%) and HCV (71%) agreed or strongly agreed that relocation allowed children to do better, only

49% of traditional CHA leaseholders felt the same way.

**FIGURE 4. IMPROVEMENT IN NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS BY HOUSING TYPE**

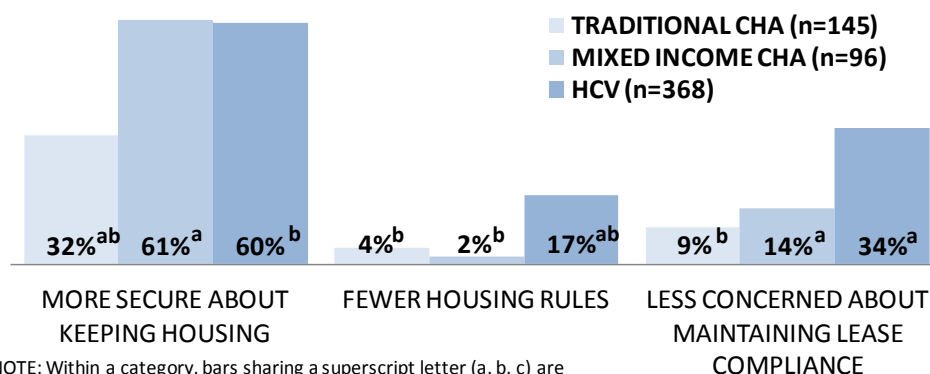


NOTE: Within a neighborhood characteristic, bars sharing a superscript letter (a, b, c) are significantly different at the p<.05 level, chi-square tests. Percentages represent leaseholders reporting that the current neighborhood is better.


**NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS** Leaseholders reported on the characteristics of their current neighborhood as compared to where they lived before relocation. **In terms of safety of their new neighborhood, housing, and amenities, most leaseholders reported that they felt the new neighborhood was better.** However, with regard to schools, job opportunities, and friendliness, most leaseholders felt that their neighborhoods were about the same. Very few leaseholders reported that the new neighborhood was worse than their old one. However, there were differences between the types of housing (Figure 4).

**HOUSING** Regarding their current housing situation compared to where they lived prior to relocation, the RRS asked leaseholders how secure they felt about keeping their housing, the housing rules, and lease compliance. **Most leaseholders reported that they were more secure in keeping their housing than before the move (53%), while only 11% felt less secure.**

**FIGURE 5. HOUSING SECURITY, RULES, AND COMPLIANCE**



NOTE: Within a category, bars sharing a superscript letter (a, b, c) are significantly different at the p<.05 level, chi-square tests.



**The majority felt that the housing rules were about the same as their old housing (61%) and 28% felt there were more rules.** While many leaseholders had about the same concerns about lease compliance as before relocation (56%), one quarter of respondents reported less concern (25%). There were differences, however. Traditional CHA leaseholders felt less secure in their housing than those in the other two housing types, and those living in HCV housing experienced fewer rules and less concern over lease compliance (Figure 5).

**REPORTS ABOUT HOUSING** Overall, very few leaseholders reported that they knew someone who had lost their right to housing because the CHA could not locate them or they did not get important information from the CHA (12%). A greater number of traditional CHA leaseholders (15%) than those in HCV housing (9%) reported knowing someone who lost their housing. Only 16% of all leaseholders knew someone who had become homeless because of relocation and there was little difference between the housing types. **On the other hand, more than one quarter (27%) knew someone who had experienced problems tied to an overlapping of gang turf due to relocation.** A greater percentage of traditional CHA leaseholders (36%) knew someone affected by this, compared to 15% of mixed income and 25% of leaseholders in HCV units.

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<sup>i</sup> Only leaseholders who reported that their preferred choice was subsidized housing were included in the analysis (n=661). Number of cases reported is unweighted and percentages are weighted.