

Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 2013

Current Population Reports

By Timothy Grall
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INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on the child support income that custodial parents reported receiving from noncustodial parents living elsewhere and other types of support, such as health insurance and noncash assistance.¹ The most recent data in this report are from the Child Support Supplement (CSS) to the April 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS). It provides demographic information about custodial parents as of 2014, as well as child support and other income or program data for the 2013 calendar year.² The report also shows trends over the past 20 years by comparing data collected from the 1994 April CPS and subsequent biennial surveys. (See text box “Limitations of the Data” for additional survey information.) New population controls based on the results from the 2010 Census were used beginning with the April 2012 CPS-CSS.

HIGHLIGHTS

- An estimated 13.4 million parents lived with 22.1 million children under 21 years of age while the other parent(s) lived somewhere else.
- One of every six custodial parents (17.5 percent) were fathers.

¹ The custodial parent is the parent with whom the child(ren) lived at the time of the survey interview when their other parent(s) lived outside the household. There may also be equal joint- or split-custody arrangements of children between parents, sometimes also known as shared or coparenting. In these types of arrangements, child support may or may not be exchanged between parents.

² The population represented (the population universe) is the civilian noninstitutionalized population living in the United States, 15 years of age or older, who have their own children under 21 years old living with them while the other parent lives outside the household.

- More than one-quarter (26.6 percent) of all children under 21 years of age lived in families with only one of their parents while the other parent lived elsewhere. About half (48.1 percent) of all Black children lived in custodial-parent families.
- Most custodial parents had one child (54.7 percent).
- The proportion of custodial mothers with income below poverty (31.2 percent) was higher than that of custodial fathers (17.4 percent).
- Child support income accounted for over two-thirds (70.3 percent) of the mean annual personal income for custodial parents below poverty who received full child support.
- About half (48.7 percent) of all custodial parents had either legal or informal child support agreements, and custodial mothers were more likely to have agreements (52.3 percent) than custodial fathers (31.4 percent).
- About three-quarters (74.1 percent) of custodial parents who were due child support in 2013 received either full or partial payments and less than half (45.6 percent) received full payments.
- The aggregate amount of child support due in 2013 was \$32.9 billion, a decrease of \$14.0 billion from a decade earlier, when adjusted to 2013 dollars.
- About 68.5 percent of the \$32.9 billion in child support due in 2013 was reported as received, averaging \$3,950 per year per custodial parent who was due support.

Limitations of the Data

Since child support can be ordered by a court in some states until a child is 21 years old or completes college, this report covers parents' own children under 21, rather than applying the Census Bureau's usual definition of children as those under 18 years of age. Some children living with neither biological parent, such as those living with grandparents or foster parents, may also be eligible to receive child support but are not part of the universe in the CPS child support supplement.

Substantial changes made to the April CPS supplement in 1994 do not allow comparisons between these data and CPS data collected before that year. These changes included refining the screening of potential respondents, restructuring the questionnaire to accommodate computerizing the survey, revising terminology that refers to types of child support agreements or awards, increasing the detail in questions about the amount of child support due, including

overdue child support (back support), and adding new questions on pass-through payments (child support collected for public-assistance recipients by a state enforcement office, some of which passes through to recipients). The amount of child support payments received by recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), formerly known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), is likely underreported because some states retain some or all child support collected on behalf of children of custodial parents. Some households in the April CPS supplement sample also participated in the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the 2014 CPS, where additional information, such as income and health insurance coverage in the preceding year, was also collected and matched to the respondent.

Additional information and detailed tables are available via the Internet at the child support page on the Census Bureau's Web site at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/>.

- Over half (61.7 percent) of custodial parents received some type of noncash support on behalf of their children from noncustodial parents.

CUSTODIAL PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

In the spring of 2014, an estimated 13.4 million parents (who are referred to as custodial parents in this report) lived with 22.1 million children under 21 years of age, while the other parent lived somewhere else (Table 1).³ The 22.1 million children living with their custodial parent represented over one-quarter (26.6 percent) of all

83.0 million children under 21 years old living in families.⁴ The proportion of Black children in families who lived with their custodial parent while their other parent(s) lived outside their household (48.1 percent) was about twice as large as the proportion of White children

(23.1 percent).⁵ Among children of other races—including American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander—13.6 percent lived in custodial-parent families. About 29.6 percent of Hispanic children, who may be any race, lived with their custodial parent.⁶

³ The estimates in this report (which may be shown in text, figures, and tables) are based on responses from a sample of the population and may differ from actual values because of sampling variability or other factors. As a result, apparent differences between the estimates for two or more groups may not be statistically significant. All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. All child support income amounts are adjusted to reflect 2013 dollars using the CPS-U-RS. For more information on the CPI, go to <www.bls.gov/cpi/cpirsdc.htm>.

⁴ A family is a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered as members of one family. Beginning with the 1980 Current Population Survey, unrelated subfamilies (referred to in the past as secondary families) are no longer included in the count of families, nor are the members of unrelated subfamilies included in the count of family members.

⁵ Federal surveys give respondents the option of reporting more than one race. Therefore, two basic ways of defining a race group are possible. A group, such as White may be defined as those who reported White and no other race (the race-alone or single-race concept) or as those who reported White regardless of whether they also reported another race (the race-alone-or-in-combination concept). The body of this report (text, figures, and most tables) shows data for people who reported they were the single race White, the single race White and not Hispanic or Latino, the single race Black or African American, and the single race Other that includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. In this report Black refers to Black or African American. Use of the single-race population does not imply that it is the preferred method of presenting or analyzing data. The U.S. Census Bureau uses a variety of approaches. See Detailed Table 12 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html> for a listing of custodial parents by race alone or in combination.

⁶ See Detailed Table 11 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>.

Table 1.

Comparison of Custodial Parent Population and Those With Child Support Awarded, Due, and Received: 1993–2013

(Numbers in thousands as of spring of the following year. Parents living with own children under 21 years of age whose other parent is not living in the home. Amounts in 2013 dollars)

Characteristic	1993		1995		1997		1999		2001		2003		2005		2007		2009		2011		2013	
	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error	Num-ber	Stan-dard error
ALL CUSTODIAL PARENTS																						
Total	13,690	286	13,715	301	13,949	303	13,529	299	13,383	282	13,951	285	13,605	288	13,743	286	13,672	286	14,440	293	13,418	283
Awarded child support	7,800	219	7,967	232	7,876	231	7,945	232	7,916	219	8,376	218	7,802	218	7,428	213	6,914	205	7,057	208	6,528	200
Percent	57.0	1.1	58.1	1.1	56.5	1.1	58.7	1.1	59.1	1.1	60.0	1.0	57.3	1.1	54.0	1.1	50.6	1.1	48.9	1.0	48.7	1.1
Due child support	6,688	204	6,958	217	7,018	218	6,791	215	6,924	205	7,256	210	6,809	204	6,375	197	5,897	190	6,262	196	5,697	187
Average child support due (in dollars)	5,685	135	6,173	161	6,003	132	6,648	190	6,637	309	6,465	118	6,663	146	6,011	128	6,467	169	6,268	141	5,774	124
Average child support received (in dollars)	3,712	137	4,068	138	4,000	124	3,902	115	4,158	167	4,432	171	4,347	126	3,768	112	3,947	235	3,906	126	3,953	138
Received any child support	5,070	178	5,269	190	5,282	190	5,005	185	5,119	177	5,548	184	5,259	180	4,864	173	4,174	160	4,641	169	4,222	161
Percent	75.8	1.3	75.7	1.4	75.3	1.4	73.7	1.4	73.9	1.3	76.5	1.2	77.2	1.3	76.3	1.3	70.8	1.5	74.1	1.4	74.1	1.5
Received full amount of child support	2,466	125	2,945	142	3,240	149	3,066	145	3,093	138	3,290	143	3,192	140	2,986	136	2,428	123	2,716	130	2,595	127
Percent	36.9	1.5	42.3	1.6	46.2	1.6	45.1	1.6	44.7	1.5	45.3	1.5	46.9	1.5	46.8	1.6	41.2	1.6	43.4	1.6	45.6	1.6
Not awarded child support	5,889	192	5,747	198	6,074	203	5,584	195	5,466	183	5,576	185	5,803	189	6,315	197	6,759	203	7,383	212	6,891	205
CUSTODIAL MOTHERS																						
Total	11,505	264	11,607	278	11,872	281	11,499	277	11,291	260	11,587	264	11,406	264	11,356	261	11,237	260	11,797	266	11,069	258
Awarded child support	6,878	207	7,123	220	7,080	219	7,150	220	7,110	208	7,436	213	7,002	207	6,463	199	6,174	194	6,297	196	5,879	188
Percent	59.8	1.2	61.4	1.2	59.6	1.2	62.2	1.2	63.0	1.1	64.2	1.1	61.4	1.1	56.9	1.2	54.9	1.2	53.4	1.1	53.1	1.2
Due child support	5,913	192	6,224	206	6,342	208	6,133	204	6,212	195	6,516	199	6,131	194	5,551	184	5,278	180	5,588	185	5,049	176
Average child support due (in dollars)	5,759	149	6,277	176	6,030	139	6,713	203	6,718	342	6,556	127	6,754	155	6,029	138	6,513	179	6,333	150	5,690	126
Average child support received (in dollars)	3,778	151	4,118	144	4,024	133	4,011	123	4,424	175	4,533	186	4,367	132	3,769	119	4,020	257	4,000	136	3,841	137
Received any child support	4,501	168	4,742	180	4,802	181	4,578	177	4,639	169	5,018	176	4,754	171	4,253	162	3,723	152	4,182	161	3,743	152
Percent	76.1	1.4	76.2	1.4	75.7	1.4	74.6	1.5	74.7	1.4	77.0	1.3	77.5	1.3	76.6	1.4	70.5	1.6	74.8	1.5	74.1	1.5
Received full amount of child support	2,178	118	2,674	136	2,945	142	2,818	139	2,815	132	2,948	135	2,900	134	2,615	127	2,217	117	2,438	123	2,331	120
Percent	36.8	1.6	43.0	1.7	46.4	1.7	45.9	1.7	45.3	1.6	45.2	1.5	47.3	1.6	47.1	1.7	42.0	1.7	43.6	1.7	46.2	1.8
Not awarded child support	4,627	170	4,484	175	4,792	181	4,349	172	4,181	160	4,151	160	4,404	165	4,893	173	5,063	176	5,499	184	5,280	180
CUSTODIAL FATHERS																						
Total	2,184	118	2,108	121	2,077	120	2,030	118	2,092	114	2,364	121	2,199	117	2,387	122	2,435	123	2,643	128	2,350	121
Awarded child support	922	77	844	76	796	74	795	74	807	71	940	77	800	71	965	78	740	68	760	69	739	68
Percent	42.2	2.7	40.0	2.8	38.3	2.8	39.2	2.9	38.6	2.7	39.8	2.5	36.4	2.6	40.4	2.5	30.4	2.3	28.8	2.2	31.4	2.4
Due child support	775	70	733	71	676	68	658	68	712	67	740	68	678	65	825	72	619	62	674	65	648	64
Average child support due (in dollars)	5,120	278	5,277	301	5,736	408	6,033	526	5,554	333	5,663	282	5,841	412	5,886	324	6,083	516	5,724	380	6,435	478
Average child support received (in dollars)	3,208	295	3,650	486	3,781	349	2,883	278	3,791	537	3,543	355	4,166	434	3,756	331	3,322	449	3,123	319	4,821	578
Received any child support	569	60	527	60	479	58	427	54	480	55	530	58	505	56	611	62	451	53	459	53	479	55
Percent	73.4	4.0	71.9	4.4	70.9	4.6	64.9	4.9	67.4	4.4	71.6	4.1	74.5	4.2	74.1	3.8	72.9	4.5	68.1	4.5	73.9	4.3
Received full amount of child support	288	43	270	43	295	45	248	42	278	42	342	46	292	43	371	48	211	36	279	42	264	41
Percent	37.2	4.4	36.8	4.7	43.6	5.0	37.7	5.0	39.0	4.6	46.2	4.6	43.1	4.8	45.0	4.3	34.1	4.8	41.4	4.7	40.7	4.8
Not awarded child support	1,262	90	1,263	93	1,281	94	1,235	92	1,285	89	1,424	160	1,399	93	1,422	94	1,695	103	1,883	108	1,610	100

Note: All child support income amounts are adjusted to reflect 2013 dollars using the CPS-U-RS. For more information on the CPI, go to <www.bls.gov/cpi/cpirsdc.htm>. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 1994–2014.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

In 2014, about five of every six custodial parents were mothers (82.5 percent) and one of every six were fathers (17.5 percent), proportions that were not statistically different from those in 1994 (Table 1).

The distribution of custodial parents by marital status differed between mothers and fathers. Custodial mothers were more likely to have never married (40.2 percent) than to have been divorced (30.8 percent), currently married (16.1 percent), separated (11.7 percent), or widowed (1.2 percent). Custodial fathers were more likely than mothers to be divorced (45.2 percent) less likely to be never married (28.2 percent), while not statistically different proportions were currently married (15.0 percent), separated (10.8 percent), and widowed (0.7 percent).⁷

The age of custodial mothers has increased over the past 20 years. In 1994, one-quarter (25.4 percent) were 40 years or older. By 2014, the proportion had grown to over one-third (38.8 percent). The proportion of custodial mothers under 30 years of age decreased from 30.9 percent in 1994 to 23.9 percent by 2014.⁸

The educational level of custodial mothers has also increased during this period. In 1994, 22.2 percent of custodial mothers had less than

⁷ The current marital status of widowed includes custodial parents who have children from a previous marriage that ended in divorce or from a previous nonmarried relationship and their custodial children are not from their deceased spouse. The proportion of custodial fathers who were currently married (15.0 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion who were separated (10.8 percent).

⁸ The proportion of custodial mothers who were 40 years or older in 1994 (25.4 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial mothers who were under 30 years of age in 2014 (23.9 percent).

a high school education, and 17.1 percent had at least an associate's degree. By 2014, the proportion of custodial mothers who had not graduated from high school decreased to 13.8 percent, and the proportion with at least an associate's degree increased to 32.7 percent.

Less than half (45.7 percent) of custodial mothers were non-Hispanic White, about one-quarter were Black (27.0 percent), and 24.1 percent were Hispanic. Custodial fathers were more likely than custodial mothers to be non-Hispanic White (59.3 percent), less likely to be Black (17.1 percent), and the proportion who were Hispanic (18.7 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial mothers who were Hispanic.⁹

While the majority of custodial parents had one child (54.7 percent), custodial mothers were more likely than custodial fathers to have two or more children living with them in 2014 (47.2 percent and 36.4 percent, respectively).¹⁰

POVERTY

The poverty rate of all custodial-parent families in 2013 was 28.8 percent, about twice as high as the

⁹ The proportion of custodial mothers who were Black (27.0 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial mothers who were Hispanic (24.1 percent). The proportion of custodial fathers who were Black (17.1 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial fathers who were Hispanic (18.7 percent). Hispanics may be any race and, in this report, data for Hispanics overlap slightly with data for the Black population. Based on the 2014 CPS April supplement, 7.2 percent of Black custodial parents were Hispanic. Data for the separate American Indian and Alaska Native populations and the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population are not shown in this report because of their small sample size.

¹⁰ See Detailed Table 4 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>.

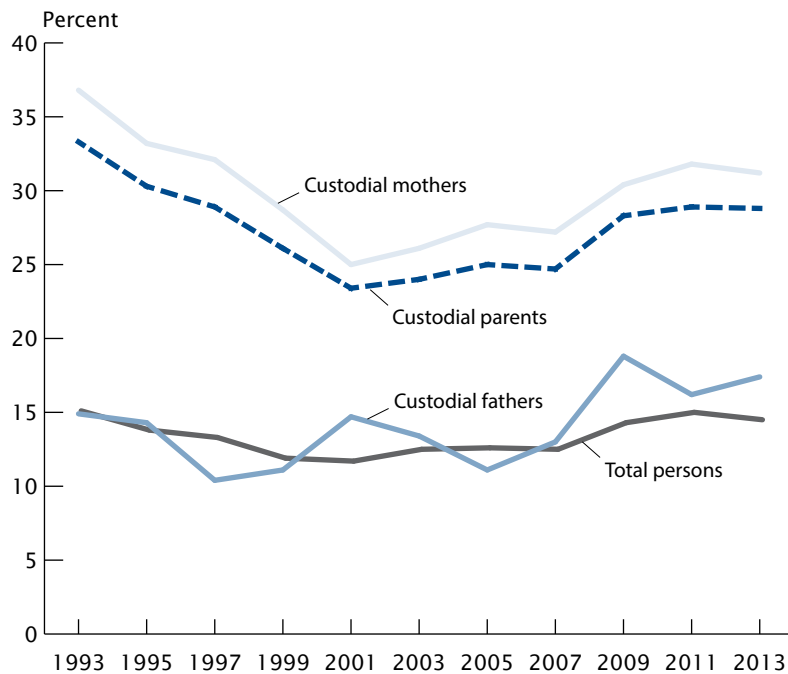
poverty rate of the total population (14.5 percent).¹¹ The poverty level for custodial-parent families declined between 1993 (33.3 percent) and 2001 (23.4 percent), but since has not changed significantly (Figure 1).

Poverty rates vary greatly among types of custodial-parent families. The poverty rate of custodial-mother families in 2013 (31.2 percent) was significantly higher than the poverty rate for custodial-father families (17.4 percent). Some of the highest poverty rates (about 62 percent) were found among custodial-mother families who did not work or who had 4 or more own children. Families in which custodial mothers had full-time, year-round employment or had a Bachelor's degree or higher tended to have much lower levels of poverty (about 12 percent).¹²

¹¹ Carmen DeNavas-Walt and Bernadette D. Proctor, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, P60-249, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2013*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 2014. Estimates for poverty for the total population are from the 2014 ASEC, for which information on the source of the data and accuracy of the estimates is available at <www2.census.gov/library/publications/2014/demo/p60-249sa.pdf>. The 2014 CPS ASEC incorporated a redesign of income questions that split the sample of respondents into those who were asked either traditional income questions or redesigned income questions. Poverty and income estimates in this report use responses from both parts of the split sample combined. Analysis shows there were no statistical differences between poverty rates or mean personal income for custodial parents who were asked either the traditional income questions or the redesigned questions.

¹² The poverty rate of custodial fathers (17.4 percent) was not statistically different than the poverty rate for mothers with a Bachelor's degree or higher (12.0 percent). See Detailed Table 4 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>.

Figure 1.
Poverty Status of Total Persons and Custodial Parents by Gender: 1993–2013



Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 1994 to 2014.

EMPLOYMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The level of full-time, year-round employment for custodial mothers decreased from 52.3 percent in 2001 to 45.9 percent in 2013. Historically, full-time, year-round employment for custodial fathers has been higher and in 2013 stood at 67.4 percent. For custodial-parent families below poverty in 2013, about 15.8 percent were employed full-time, year-round and 44.9 percent were not employed (Figure 2).¹³

The rate of participation in at least one public assistance program has

¹³ The proportion of full-time, year-round employment for custodial fathers in 2013 (45.9 percent) was not statistically different than the proportion of custodial-parent families below poverty who were not employed (44.9 percent).

increased for custodial parents in the last few years.¹⁴ Among custodial mothers, 34.9 percent received at least one form of public assistance in 2007. By 2013, this proportion had increased to 46.5 percent. Custodial fathers were less likely than custodial mothers to participate in at least one public-assistance program in 2013 (24.1 percent). Specifically, receipt of benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly referred to as Food Stamps, increased for custodial mothers from about

¹⁴ Public assistance program participation includes those receiving at least one of the following: Medicaid, food stamps, public housing or rent subsidy, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or general assistance. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), more commonly known as the 1996 Welfare Reform Act, replaced the AFDC Program with the TANF Program.

one-quarter (23.5 percent) in 2007 to over one-third (36.8 percent) in 2013.¹⁵

CHILD SUPPORT AGREEMENTS AND CUSTODY

Approximately half (48.7 percent) of all 13.4 million custodial parents had a court order or some type of agreement to receive financial support from the noncustodial parent(s) in 2014 (Table 2). The majority of the 6.5 million parents with agreements were reported by the custodial parent as formal legal agreements—established by a court or other government entity—(89.8 percent), while 10.2 percent were informal agreements or understandings.¹⁶

The proportion of custodial mothers who had child support agreements or awards in 1994 was 59.8 percent, and increased to 64.2 percent in 2004.¹⁷ Since that time, the percentage has declined to 53.1 percent. The percentage of custodial fathers with child support agreements or awards was 31.4 percent in 2014. Historically, the proportion of custodial fathers with awards has been considerably lower than that of custodial mothers.

Child support award rates varied by other demographic custodial-parent

¹⁵ The proportion of custodial mothers who received at least some form of public assistance in 2007 (34.9 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial mothers who received SNAP in 2013 (36.8 percent). The proportion of custodial fathers who received at least some form of public assistance in 2013 (24.1 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial mothers who received SNAP benefits in 2007 (23.5 percent).

¹⁶ An informal agreement is any written or verbal agreement or understanding that was never approved or ordered by a court or a government agency and is generally considered not legally binding. See Detailed Table 9 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>.

¹⁷ The proportion of custodial mothers with agreements in 2004 (64.2 percent) was not statistically different from the estimate for 2000 (62.2 percent) and 2002 (63.0 percent).

Figure 2.
Employment Status of Custodial Parents by Gender and Poverty Status: 1993–2013

(In percent)

■ Full-time, year-round □ Part-time or part-year ■ Did not work

Custodial fathers

1993	70.2	20.5	9.3
1995	71.1	19.0	9.9
1997	76.9	16.9	6.2
1999	75.4	15.9	8.7
2001	71.7	19.6	8.7
2003	70.6	19.2	10.2
2005	73.7	18.4	7.9
2007	71.7	18.5	9.8
2009	60.7	24.3	15.0
2011	65.9	19.7	14.4
2013	67.4	20.6	12.0

Custodial mothers

1993	40.9	31.5	27.6
1995	44.3	30.9	24.8
1997	46.8	31.8	21.4
1999	49.8	32.2	18.0
2001	52.3	29.7	18.0
2003	50.5	29.6	19.9
2005	50.1	28.5	21.4
2007	49.8	29.7	20.5
2009	47.1	28.9	24.0
2011	47.0	28.8	24.2
2013	45.9	30.9	23.2

Custodial parents below poverty

1993	11.5	35.9	52.6
1995	14.1	36.9	49.0
1997	13.3	42.7	44.0
1999	16.2	46.4	37.4
2001	18.4	42.5	39.1
2003	15.7	42.2	42.1
2005	14.9	38.8	46.3
2007	17.7	39.1	43.2
2009	15.1	38.1	46.8
2011	15.1	35.9	49.0
2013	15.8	39.3	49.9

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 1994 to 2014.

Table 2.

Demographic Characteristics of Custodial Parents by Award Status and Payments Received: 2013

(Numbers in thousands, as of spring 2014. Parents living with own children under 21 years of age whose other parent is not living in the home)

Characteristics	Total	With child support agreements or awards									
		Total	Percent	Due child support payments in 2013							
				Total	Average due	Average received	Percent received	Received all payments		Did not receive payments	
								Total	Percent	Total	Percent
ALL CUSTODIAL PARENTS											
Total	13,418	6,528	48.7	5,697	\$5,774	\$3,953	68.5	2,595	45.6	1,475	25.9
Standard error	283	200	1.1	187	\$124	\$138	1.5	127	1.6	96	1.5
Sex											
Male	2,350	739	31.4	648	\$6,435	\$4,821	74.9	264	40.7	169	26.1
Female	11,069	5,789	52.3	5,049	\$5,760	\$3,936	68.3	2,331	46.2	1,305	25.8
Age											
Under 30 years	2,971	1,251	42.1	1,072	\$4,185	\$1,925	46.0	325	30.3	320	29.9
30 to 39 years	4,807	2,579	53.7	2,319	\$5,192	\$3,437	66.2	922	39.8	648	27.9
40 years and over	5,640	2,698	47.8	2,305	\$7,100	\$5,414	76.3	1,349	58.5	507	22.0
Race and Ethnicity¹											
White alone	9,173	4,852	52.9	4,202	\$6,000	\$4,341	72.4	2,050	48.8	963	22.9
White alone, not Hispanic	6,454	3,637	56.4	3,167	\$6,166	\$4,668	75.7	1,624	51.3	654	20.7
Black alone	3,393	1,268	37.4	1,138	\$4,567	\$2,320	50.8	383	33.7	405	35.6
Hispanic (any race)	3,103	1,364	44.0	1,164	\$5,411	\$3,341	61.7	484	41.6	326	28.0
Current Marital Status²											
Married	2,131	1,094	51.3	971	\$5,416	\$3,896	71.9	457	47.1	241	24.8
Divorced	4,469	2,577	57.7	2,281	\$6,772	\$5,209	76.9	1,289	56.5	458	20.1
Separated	1,552	634	40.9	530	\$6,517	\$3,584	55.0	192	36.2	158	29.8
Never married	5,117	2,157	42.2	1,863	\$4,486	\$2,538	56.6	635	34.1	603	32.4
Educational Attainment											
Less than high school diploma	1,799	686	38.1	568	\$4,970	\$2,373	47.7	172	30.3	218	38.4
High school graduate	4,274	1,965	46.0	1,690	\$5,374	\$3,232	60.1	588	34.8	501	29.6
Less than 4 years of college	4,706	2,444	51.9	2,132	\$5,554	\$3,912	70.4	1,021	47.9	509	23.9
Bachelors degree or more	2,640	1,434	54.3	1,306	\$7,002	\$5,638	80.5	815	62.4	246	18.8
Selected Characteristics											
Family income below 2013 poverty level	3,859	1,737	45.0	1,474	\$5,021	\$2,918	58.1	513	34.8	495	33.6
Worked full-time, year-round	6,660	3,293	49.4	2,922	\$5,764	\$4,021	69.8	1,414	48.4	680	23.3
Public assistance program participation ³	5,715	2,687	47.0	2,327	\$5,071	\$2,858	56.4	801	34.4	777	33.4
With 1 child	7,333	3,062	41.8	2,593	\$5,741	\$4,050	70.5	1,221	47.1	688	26.5
With 2 or more children	6,086	3,466	57.0	3,104	\$5,802	\$3,871	66.7	1,374	44.3	786	25.3
Child had contact with other parent in 2013	9,316	4,796	51.5	4,168	\$5,937	\$4,363	73.5	2,106	50.5	917	22.0
Child had no contact with other parent in 2013	4,102	1,732	42.2	1,529	\$5,333	\$2,833	53.1	489	32.0	558	36.5
Court ordered physical or legal joint custody	3,503	1,989	56.8	1,771	\$6,013	\$4,839	80.5	1,037	58.6	312	17.6

¹ Includes those reporting one race alone and not in combination with any other race.

² Excludes 150,000 with marital status of widowed.

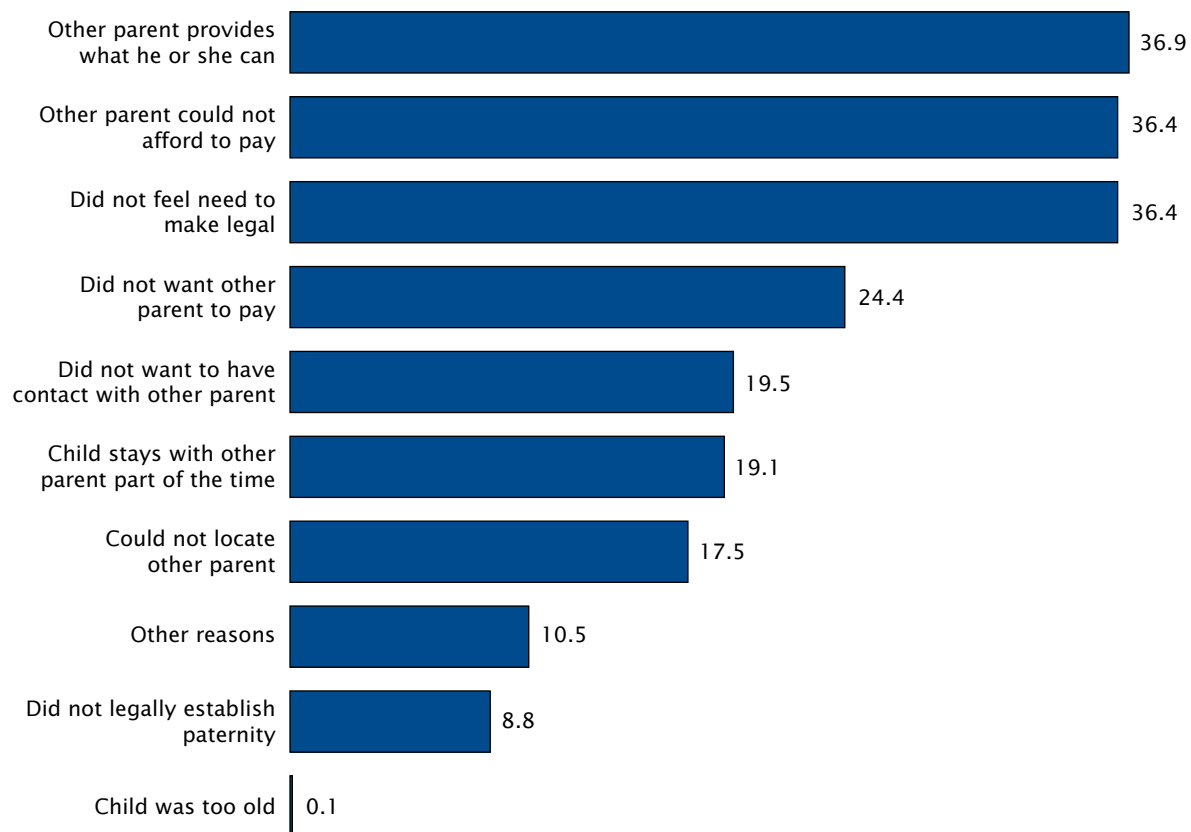
³ Received any of the following: Medicaid, food stamps, public housing or rent subsidy, TANF, or general assistance.

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 2014.

Figure 3.
Reasons No Legal Agreement Established for Custodial Parents: 2014

(In percent)



Note: Universe is 7.3 million custodial parents without agreements or with informal agreements; excludes those with pending agreements. The total exceeds 100 percent because respondents could list more than one reason. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 2014.

characteristics. Custodial parents who were under 30 years of age, Black, never married or separated, lived with one child, or had less than a high school education tended to have lower rates of child support awards or agreements (about 40 percent, Table 2). Custodial parents who were non-Hispanic White, divorced, lived with two or more children from a noncustodial parent in 2014, or had joint physical or legal custody in 2013 had higher rates of child support agreements or awards (about 57 percent).

For about half (52.2 percent) of the 6.5 million custodial parents who had some type of agreement or

award for child support in 2013, noncustodial parents had visitation privileges with their children, but did not have shared legal or physical custody. An additional 30.5 percent included some type of joint-custody arrangement (physical and/or legal), and 17.4 percent had neither noncustodial parental visitation nor any type of joint custody.¹⁸

When the 7.3 million custodial parents without any type of legal agreement and those with informal agreements were asked why a legal child support agreement was not

established, the top reasons cited were that the other parent(s) provided what he or she could for support, that they did not feel the need to have a legal agreement, and that they thought the other parent(s) could not afford to pay child support (about 36 percent each).¹⁹

¹⁸ See Detailed Table 9 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>.

¹⁹ Respondents could choose more than one reason why a formal legal agreement was not established. See Figure 3.

Child Support Paid

In 2010, the CPS ASEC began asking a series of additional questions about a variety of topics in order to develop a Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) to serve as an additional indicator of economic well-being. Included were questions that asked respondents if they had children living elsewhere and how much child support they paid during the previous calendar year.

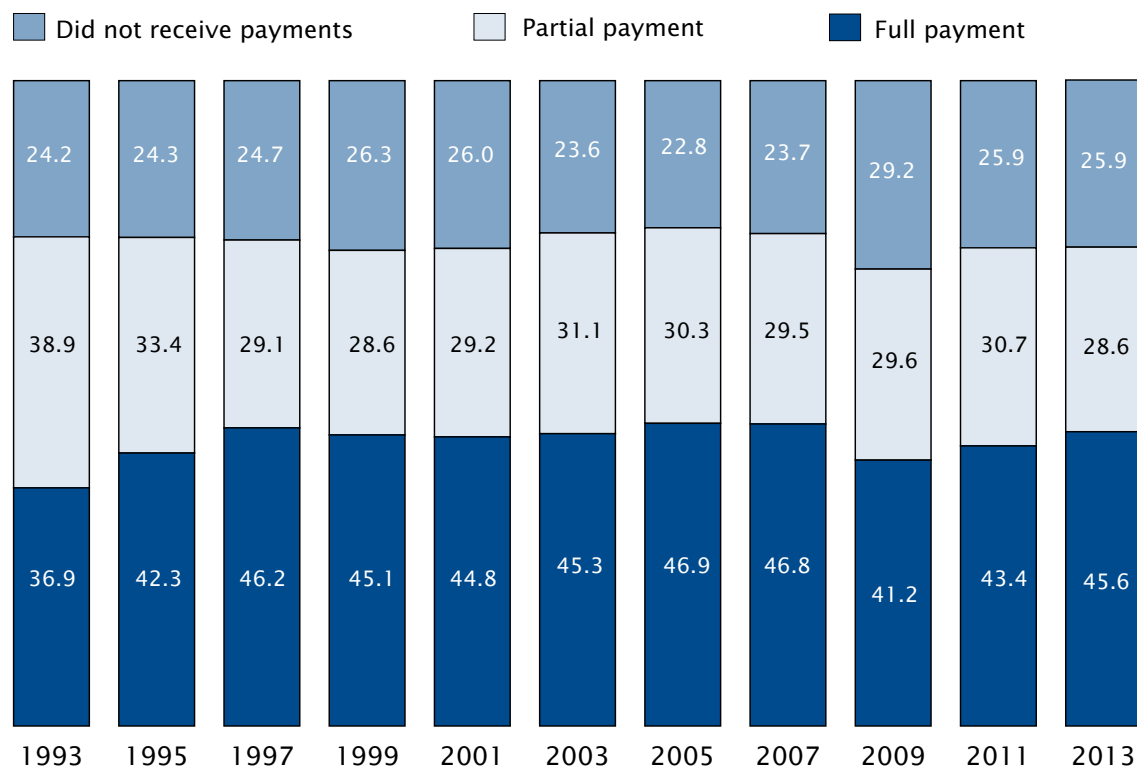
Analysis of these data show that a weighted 2.7 million respondents reported paying an annual mean of about \$6,960 in child support for their children during 2013. These payments may have been paid directly to the custodial parent, or to the state child support enforcement agency, which, depending on the state, may have passed all, some, or none of these payments on to the custodial parent. The number of child support payers was lower and the amount paid was higher in the 2014 CPS ASEC than in the 2014 CPS-CSS.

For additional information about the SPM and the data collected, please see <www.census.gov/hhes/povmeas/methodology/supplemental/research.html>.

CHILD SUPPORT RECEIPT

Of the 6.5 million custodial parents with child support agreements or awards, 5.7 million (87.3 percent) were due child support payments in 2013. The remaining 800,000 custodial parents with child support agreements or awards were not due child support payments because either the child(ren) was too old, the noncustodial parent(s) had died, the family lived together part of the year before the interview, or some other reason. Approximately 88.6 percent of custodial parents who were due child support were mothers, and about half (49.3

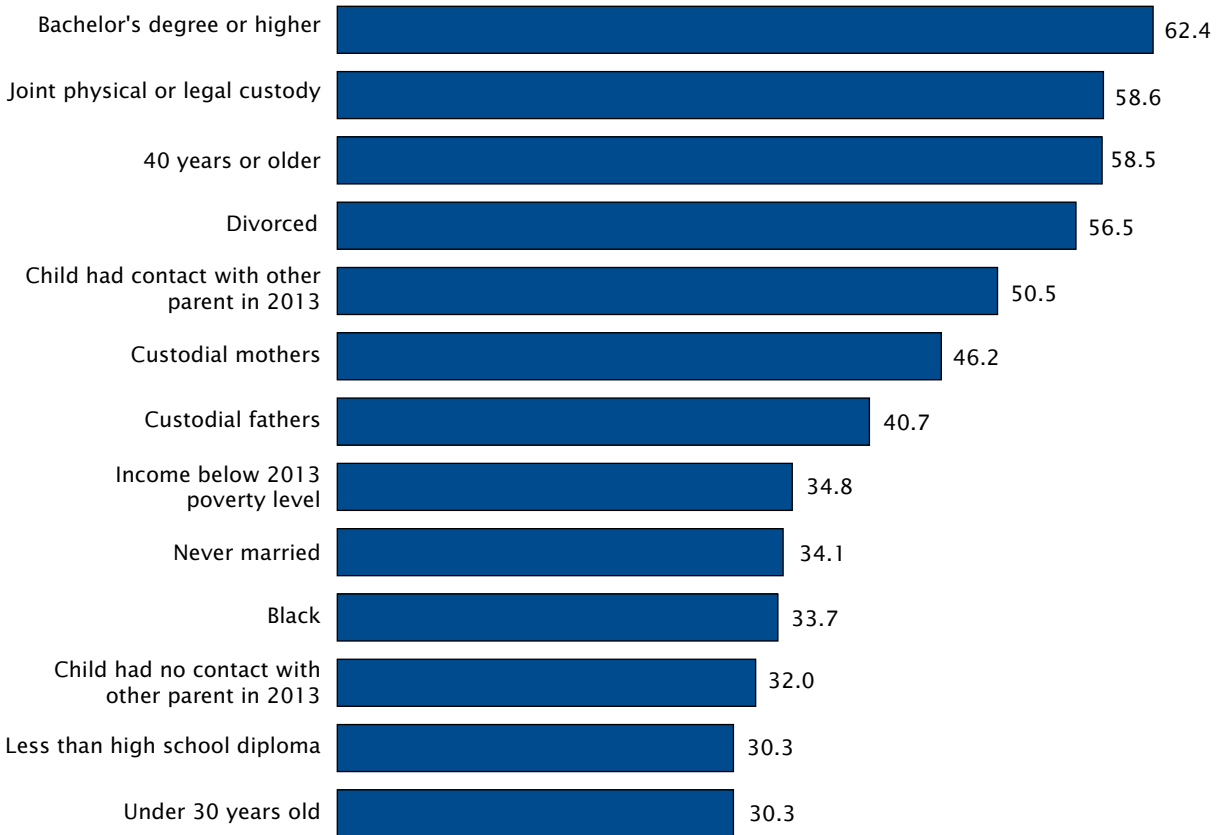
Figure 4.
Custodial Parents Receiving Full, Partial, or No Child Support Payments Due: 1993–2013
(In percent)



Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 1994 to 2014.

Figure 5.
Custodial Parents Due Child Support Who Received Full Amount, by Selected Characteristics: 2013

(In percent)



Note: Total exceeds 100 percent because respondents could list more than one type. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 2014.

percent) were currently divorced or separated (Table 2).²⁰

In 2013, about three-quarters (74.1 percent) of custodial parents who were due child support received either full or partial child support payments. This included approximately 45.6 percent of custodial parents due support who received all payments they were due and

²⁰ The proportion of custodial parents with agreements due child support (87.3 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial parents due support who were mothers (88.6 percent).

28.6 percent who received some, but not all, payments due. Approximately one-quarter (25.9 percent) of custodial parents due child support received no payments from their children's noncustodial parent(s) in 2013, with no statistical difference between mothers and fathers (Figure 4, Table 2).²¹

²¹ The proportion of custodial parents who received partial child support due in 2013 (28.6 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial parents due support who did not receive any payments (25.9 percent).

For the 1.5 million custodial parents below the poverty level and due child support in 2013, 34.7 percent received all support that was due, not statistically different from the proportion 20 years earlier.

Except for gender, where the proportion of custodial mothers who received full support payments in 2013 (46.2 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial fathers receiving full payments (40.7 percent), the

receipt of full child support due differed by the demographic characteristics of the custodial parent.²²

In 2013, some of the lowest rates of receiving all child support that was due belonged to custodial parents who were under 30 years old (30.3 percent), who had less than a high school education (30.3 percent), whose child had no contact with their other parent (32.0 percent), who were Black (33.7 percent), or who had never married (34.1 percent). These rates were not statistically different from each other (Figure 5).

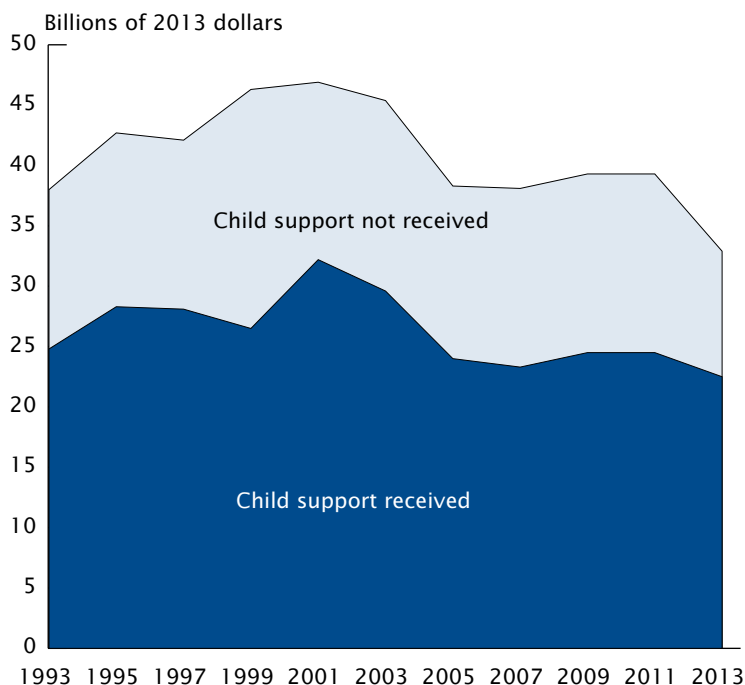
Custodial parents who had at least a Bachelor's degree (62.4 percent), who had joint legal or physical custody of their child(ren) (58.6 percent), who were 40 years or older (58.5 percent), or who were divorced (56.5 percent) had some of the highest rates of receiving all child support payments that were due in 2013.

AMOUNT OF CHILD SUPPORT DUE AND RECEIVED

In 2013, custodial parents who were due child support under the terms of legal awards or informal agreements were due an annual mean of \$5,770, or approximately \$480 per month. The median amount of child support due in 2013 was \$4,370, meaning half of custodial parents were due less than that amount and half were due more. Among custodial parents who had agreements for child support, a total of \$32.9 billion in child support payments was due in 2013, a decrease of \$14.0 billion from 2003. Much of the decrease

²² The proportion of all custodial parents below poverty who received full child support in 2013 (34.7 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial fathers who received full child support payments in 2013 (40.7 percent).

Figure 6.
Average Aggregate Child Support Received and Not Received for Child Support Due: 1993–2013



For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 1994 to 2014.

in the aggregate amount of child support due over the past decade can be attributed to the drop in the number of custodial parents who were due support, which fell from 7.3 million to 5.7 million between 2003 and 2013.²³

The mean annual amount of child support received by custodial parents with agreements who were due support payments in 2013 was \$3,950, or about \$330 per month. The median annual amount of child support received was lower, \$2,260. A total of \$22.5 billion of child support due was reported as received, or about 68.5 percent of the \$32.9 billion that was due. The 2013 proportion and amounts were not statistically different

²³ See Detailed Table 1 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>.

from 1993, when \$24.8 billion of the \$38.0 billion (65.3 percent) of child support due was reported as received (Figure 6).²⁴

In 2013, custodial mothers received \$19.4 billion of the \$28.7 billion in support that was due (67.5 percent), and custodial fathers received \$3.1 billion of the \$4.2 billion that was due (74.9 percent). These proportions of child support

²⁴ Overall, custodial parents reported receiving \$24.8 billion directly from the non-custodial parent for support of their children in 2013, which included \$2.3 billion received by 611,000 parents without current awards or agreements. Custodial parents receiving child support without current awards include those with awards for children past the age of eligibility for payments, those with awards officially starting after 2013, and those with no legal awards or informal arrangements. These parents received a mean of \$3,740 in annual child support in 2013, an amount not statistically different from the mean child support received by custodial parents due child support in 2013 (\$3,950). Amounts from 1993 are in 2013 CPI-U-RS adjusted dollars.

received by mothers and fathers were not statistically different from each other.

CHILD SUPPORT AND INCOME

For the 5.7 million custodial parents due child support, 2013 mean annual personal income amounted to \$35,580, median personal income was \$25,480, and median annual household income was \$45,440. The 2013 median household income for custodial fathers due child support (\$70,060) was statistically higher than the median household income for custodial mothers (\$44,000).²⁵

The mean annual amount of child support received by the 4.2 million custodial parents who received at least some of the support they were due (\$5,330) represented 14.3 percent of their mean annual personal income in 2013 (\$37,370). Child support represented 7.7 percent of income for the 1.6 million parents who received part of the full support they were due and 17.7 percent for the 2.6 million custodial parents who received all child support that they were due.

Child support represented a higher proportion of income for some lower income parents. For example, among custodial parents below the poverty level who received full payments, the mean child support received in 2013 represented over two-thirds (70.3 percent) of their mean annual personal income.²⁶

The 2013 mean personal income for the 1.5 million custodial parents

who had support agreements but received no child support payments was \$31,000, and for the 6.9 million custodial parents with no support agreements, the mean personal income was \$30,550, amounts not statistically different from each other.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Of the 6.5 million custodial parents who had child support awards or agreements in 2013, 54.0 percent of their agreements specified who was to provide health insurance for their children. In half (51.1 percent) of these 3.5 million agreements, the noncustodial parent provided the health insurance coverage.²⁷ Among the 2.5 million custodial parents with agreements where health insurance was not included in the child support award, 14.9 percent received health care coverage for their children from the noncustodial parent(s). For the 6.9 million custodial parents without a child support agreement, 19.4 percent had health insurance coverage for their children through the noncustodial parent(s). Overall, approximately 3.5 million noncustodial parents provided some type of health insurance for their children in 2013.²⁸

²⁷ Health insurance coverage could be through a Health Maintenance Organization, a regular insurance policy, or some other plan. In many states, one or both parents could be obligated in a child support agreement to carry health insurance for their children. If the custodial parent is required to carry the coverage, the noncustodial parent(s) may be required to contribute toward the cost of family coverage.

²⁸ See Detailed Table 8 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>. The number of custodial parents with child support agreements or awards in 2013 (6.5 million) was not statistically different from the number without agreements (6.9 million). The proportion of custodial parents whose agreements specified who was to provide health insurance in 2013 (54.0 percent) was not statistically different from the 51.1 percent of that group in which the noncustodial parent provided health insurance.

NONCASH CHILD SUPPORT

In 2013, 61.7 percent of all custodial parents reported receiving at least one type of noncash support for their children, such as gifts or coverage of expenses, from the noncustodial parent(s). Custodial fathers were more likely than custodial mothers to receive some type of noncash child support (70.3 percent and 59.9 percent, respectively). Custodial parents with some type of child support agreement were also more likely to receive some type of noncash support (65.7 percent) than those without agreements (57.9 percent).²⁹

The most common type of non-cash support received was gifts for birthdays, holidays, or other occasions (59.0 percent), followed by clothes (45.1 percent), food or groceries (33.4 percent), medical expenses other than health insurance (21.9 percent), and full or partial payments for child care or summer camp (11.6 percent, Figure 7).³⁰

CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT FOR ASSISTANCE

In 2014, less than one-quarter (22.4 percent) of all custodial parents had ever contacted a child support enforcement office (IV-D office), state department of social services, or other welfare or TANF office for child support-related assistance. This was a decrease from 1994, when 42.2 percent of custodial parents had ever contacted a government agency for

²⁹ The proportion of all custodial parents receiving at least some noncash support in 2013 (61.7 percent) was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial mothers who received at least some noncash support (59.9 percent), which was not statistically different from the proportion of custodial parents without agreements that received noncash support (57.9 percent).

³⁰ The total of percentages exceeds 100 because more than one type of noncash support may have been received. See Detailed Table 10 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>.

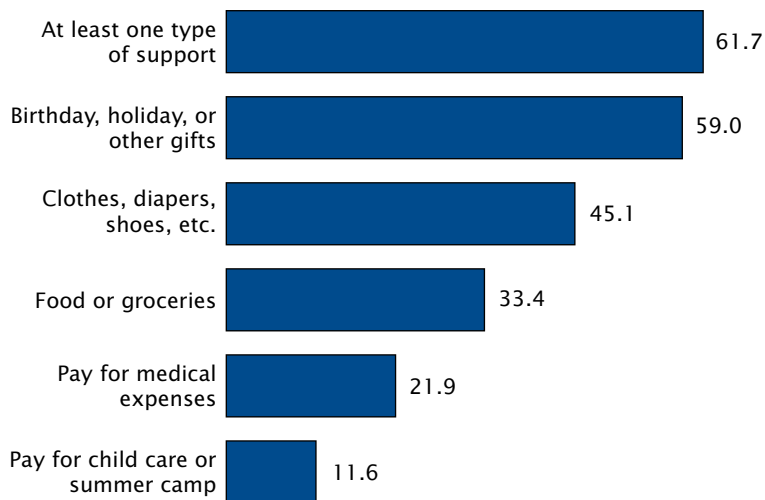
²⁵ See Detailed Table 1 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>. The 2013 annual median household income for all custodial parents due child support (\$46,070) was not statistically different from the 2013 annual median household income for custodial mothers due support that year (\$44,020).

²⁶ See Detailed Tables 4, 5, and 6 at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/data/detailedtables.html>.

Figure 7.

Noncash Support Received by Custodial Parents: 2014

(In percent)



Note: Total exceeds 100 percent because respondents could list more than one type. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf>. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, April 2014.

help. In addition, the total number of individual contacts for related assistance decreased over one-third (36.4 percent) during this time, from 13.0 million to 8.3 million. Contacts were made for many reasons, and the reason provided most frequently was to collect child support that was due (27.2 percent). Other reasons included to establish a legal agreement or court award (24.3 percent), to obtain welfare or public assistance (18.1 percent), and to locate the noncustodial parent(s) (10.6 percent).

SOURCE OF THE DATA

The population represented (the population universe) in the Child Support Supplement to the April 2014 CPS is the civilian noninstitutionalized population living in the United States. The institutionalized population, which is excluded from the population universe, is

composed primarily of the population in correctional institutions and nursing homes (94 percent of the 4.0 million institutionalized people in Census 2010). Approximately 0.3 percent of all children under 21 years old were institutionalized in Census 2010.

The estimates in this report are from the 1994 through 2014 April biennial supplements to the CPS. The Census Bureau conducts the April supplement sponsored, in part, by the Office of Child Support Enforcement of the Department of Health and Human Services. Data from the April 1992 and earlier supplements are not directly comparable with data from 1994 and later years because of changes made to the questionnaire (see Text Box “Limitations of the Data” for more detail). Because of changes made to the allocation procedures, data for custodial parents due

and receiving child support were revised starting with the April 1994 survey. Reported estimates may differ from those published previously due to these changes.

ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES

Statistics from sample surveys are subject to sampling error and nonsampling error. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level. This means the 90 percent confidence interval for the difference between estimates being compared does not include zero. Nonsampling error in surveys may be attributed to a variety of sources, such as how the survey was designed, how respondents interpret questions, how able and willing respondents are to provide correct answers, and how accurately answers are coded and classified. To minimize these errors, the Census Bureau employs quality control procedures in sample selection, the wording of questions, interviewing, coding, data processing, and data analysis.

The CPS weighting procedure uses ratio estimation whereby sample estimates are adjusted to independent estimates of the national population by age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. This weighting partially corrects for bias due to undercoverage, but biases may still be present when people who are missed by the survey differ from those interviewed in ways other than age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. How this weighting procedure affects other variables in the survey is not precisely known. All of these considerations affect comparisons across different surveys or data sources.

Further information on the source of the data and accuracy of the estimates, including standard errors and confidence intervals, can be found at <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsapr14.pdf> or by contacting James Farber of the Demographic Statistical Methods Division via

e-mail at <dsmd.source.and.accuracy@census.gov>.

MORE INFORMATION

Detailed tabulations, related information, and historic data are available on the Internet at the child support page on the Census

Bureau's Web site at <www.census.gov/people/childsupport/>.

For additional questions or comments, contact Timothy Grall at (301) 763-3189 or via e-mail at <Timothy.Scott.Grall@census.gov>.