



Commission on the Economic Status of Women

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CHILD SUPPORT

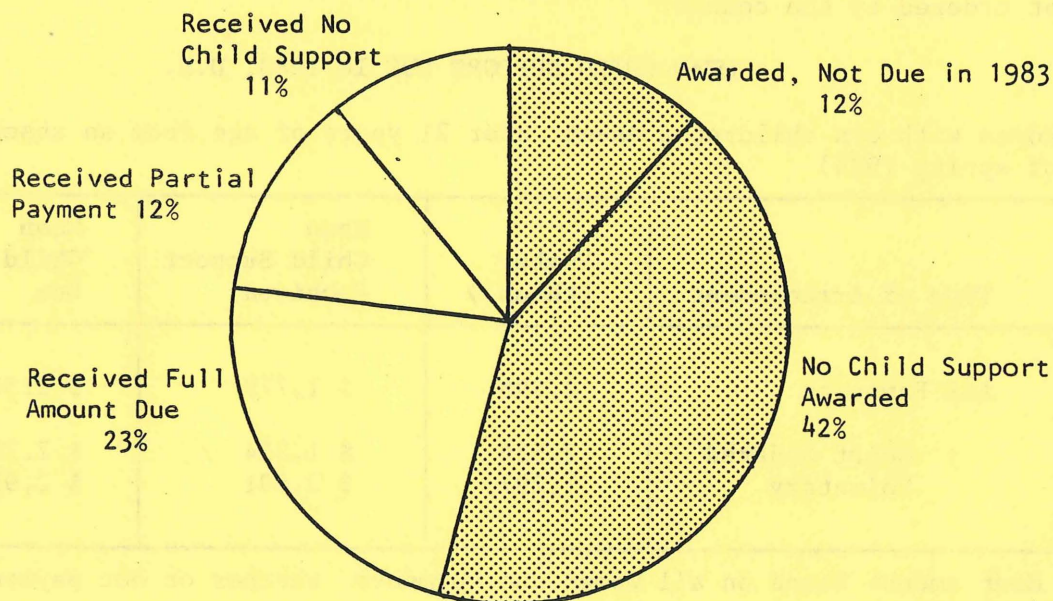
Facts About Collections in the United States and in Minnesota

Child Support In the United States

In 1984 the U.S. Census Bureau conducted a survey of women 18 years of age and older to obtain data on child support.

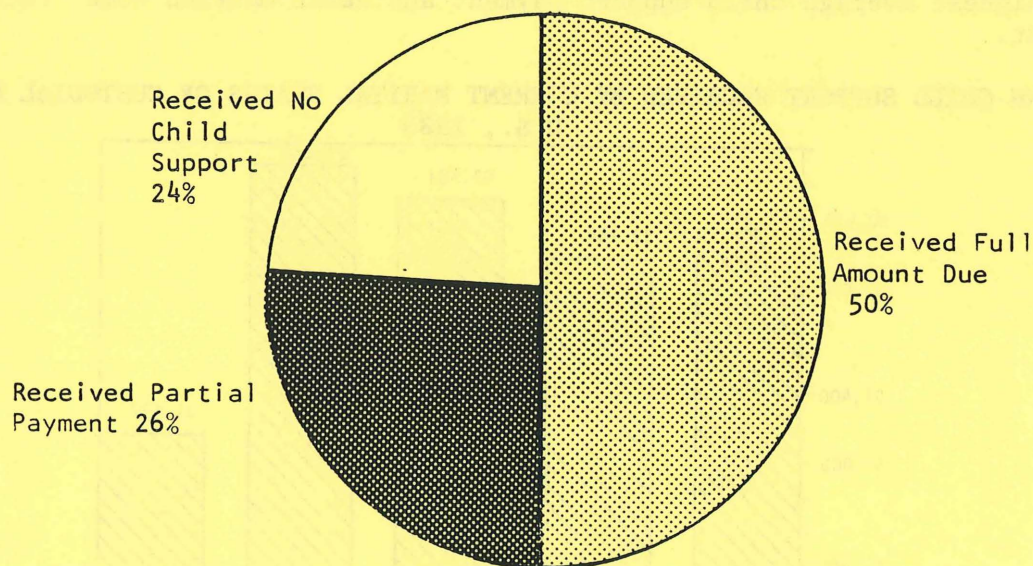
As of spring 1984, 8.7 million women were living with children under 21 years of age whose fathers were not living in the households; 58 percent or about 5.0 million of these women had been awarded child support payments as of that date.

CHILD SUPPORT IN U.S., 1983



Of the 5.0 million women awarded child support, 4.0 million women were supposed to receive child support for their children in 1983. Of those due payments, half received the full amount due, 26 percent received partial payments and 24 percent received no child support payments.

PERCENT OF CHILD SUPPORT RECEIVED IN U.S., 1983¹



¹ This pie only includes child support that was due in 1983.

In 1983, the mean amount of child support received that year, excluding those who received no child support payments, was \$2,340. For women with court-ordered payments, the mean payment due was \$2,290, but the mean amount received was only \$1,330; therefore, women with court orders received only 58 percent of the amount they were due. Women with voluntary written agreements received 88 percent of the amount they were due, and the mean child support payments due (\$2,960) and received (\$2,590) were higher. The Bureau of Census defines a voluntary written agreement as: an agreement voluntarily written between the parties. This agreement may or may not have been recognized by the courts as part of the divorce or separation proceedings, but this type of agreement was not ordered by the courts.

MEAN CHILD SUPPORT DUE IN 1983, U.S.

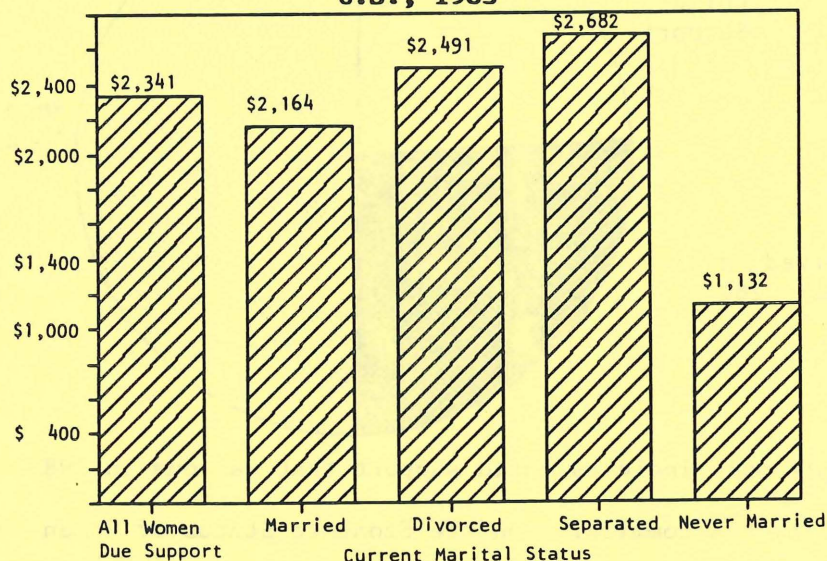
(Women with own children present under 21 years of age from an absent father as of spring 1984)

Type of Arrangement	Number (thous.)	Mean Child Support Received ¹	Mean Child Support Due
All Payments	3,995	\$ 1,779	\$ 2,521
Court Ordered	2,524	\$ 1,334	\$ 2,288
Voluntary	1,297	\$ 2,591	\$ 2,958

¹ Mean amount based on all women due payments, whether or not payments were received.

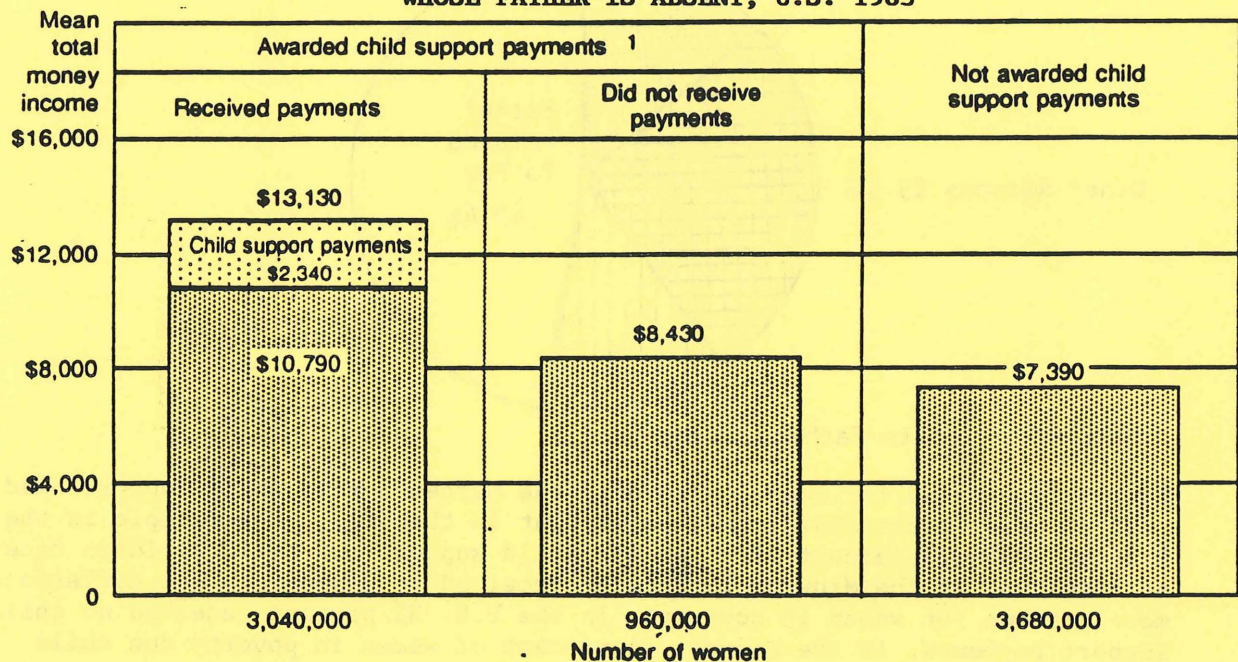
For women who were living below the poverty level the average amount of child support received was \$1,430. The amount of child support received varies by the current marital status of the custodial parent. Separated women received the highest average child support payment and never married women received the lowest.

MEAN CHILD SUPPORT RECEIVED BY CURRENT MARITAL STATUS OF CUSTODIAL MOTHERS U.S., 1983



In general women who receive child support for their children tend to be better off financially than women who did not receive payments. On average the total money income of women due payments but not receiving them (\$8,430) was below the mean income of women receiving payments (\$13,130).

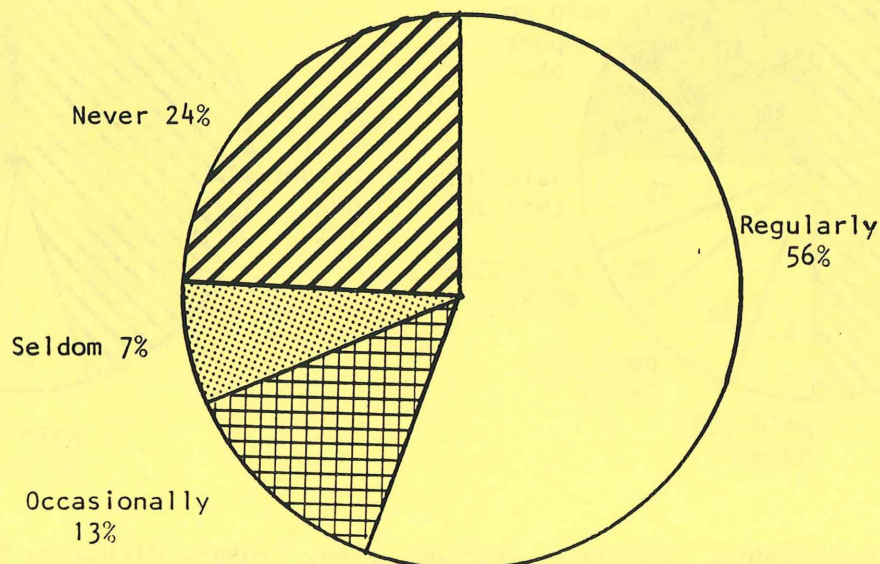
**MEAN INCOME OF WOMEN WITH CHILDREN UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE
WHOSE FATHER IS ABSENT, U.S. 1983**



¹ Excludes women who were awarded payments but were not supposed to receive them in 1983.

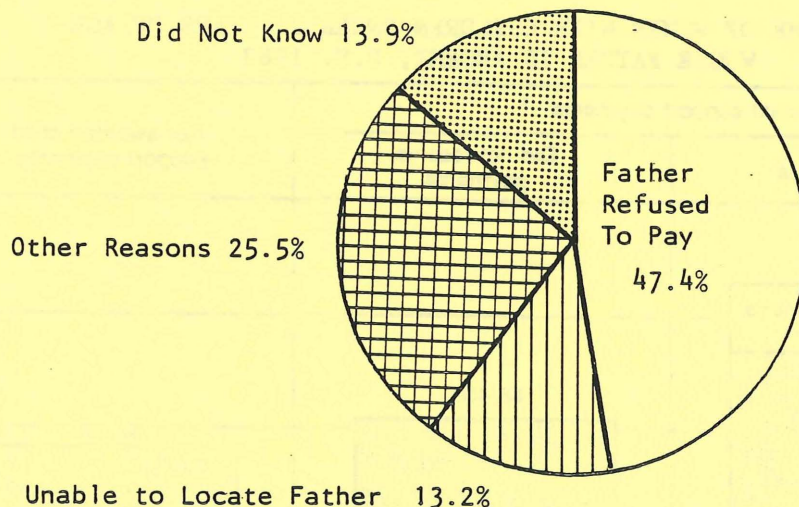
Of women due child support 56 percent answered that they received child support payments regularly. (In some cases regular payment was made of an amount below that awarded.)

RECEIPT OF CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS



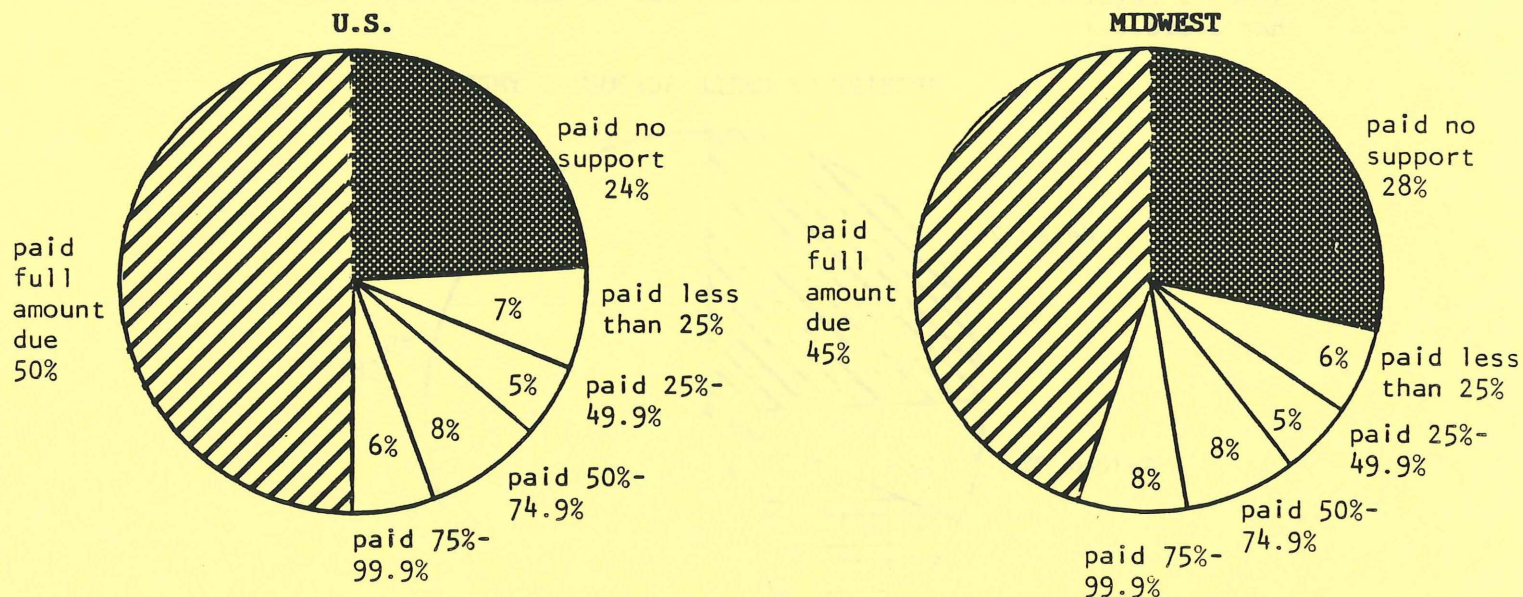
The primary reason for irregular child support payment is that the father refuses to pay support.

REASONS FOR IRREGULAR CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS



For all women and for women in poverty the percentage of child support owed that is paid in the Midwest* is below that in the U.S. For example in the U.S. in 1983, 24 percent of women due child support for their children received no payments, in the Midwest 28 percent received no payments. The difference is more extreme for women in poverty. In the U.S. 38 percent received no child support payments, in the Midwest 54 percent of women in poverty due child support received no payments.

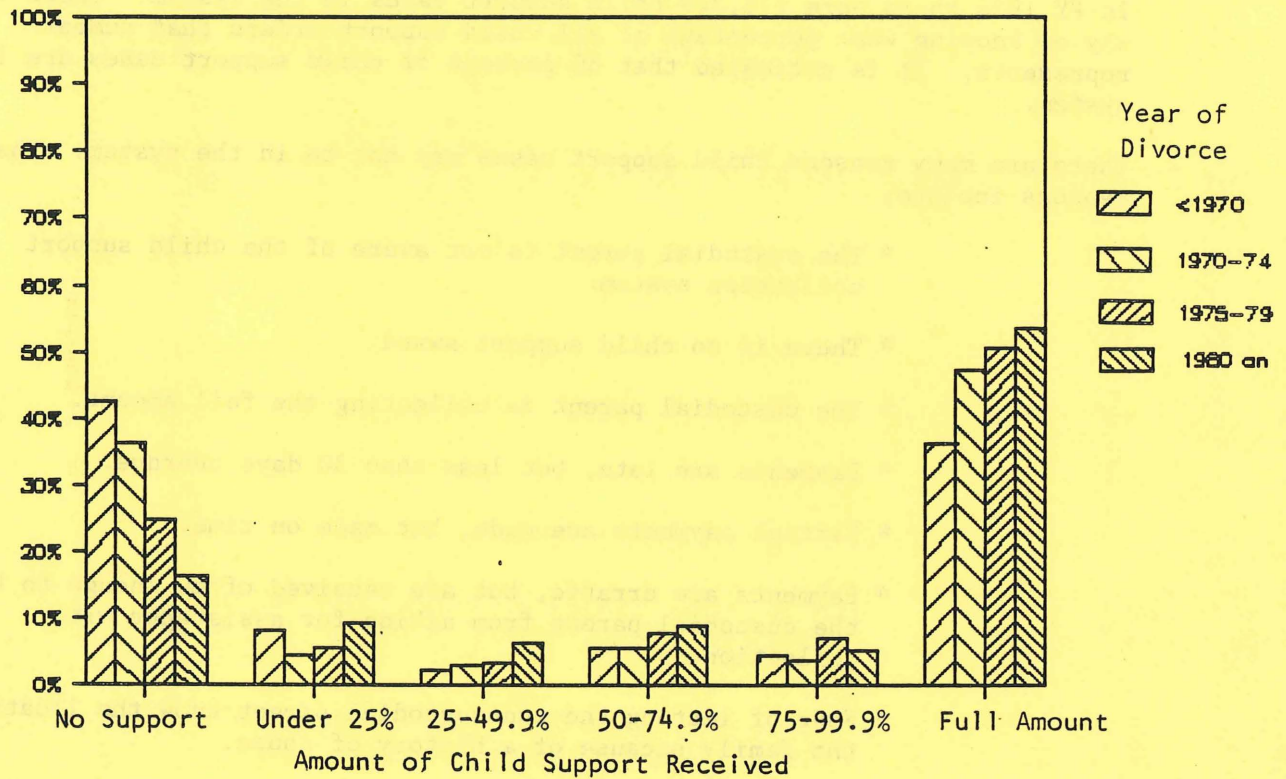
PERCENT OF CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS DUE THAT WERE RECEIVED, 1983



*Midwest includes: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Other factors also had an effect on the amount of the child support payment that was received. The more recent the divorce the more likely the custodial parent was to receive all or a large proportion of the amount of support due for the child/children.

PERCENT OF CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS DUE THAT WERE RECEIVED, 1983
BY YEAR OF DIVORCE



Three-fourths of males 15 years and older with income have income from wages and salary. In 1984, only 11 percent of males 15 and over had some or all of their income from farm or non-farm self-employment (9 percent had income from non-farm self employment and 2 percent had income from farm self-employment). Self-employment is somewhat higher in Minnesota than nationally because a larger percentage of Minnesotans have income from farming. In Minnesota in 1979, 17 percent of males 16 and over had income from self-employment.

It is important to note that many people have more than one source of income. Some self-employed persons may have additional income from wages and salary.

Child Support in Minnesota

The Minnesota Office of Child Support Enforcement (referred to as the IV-D Program) through county child support enforcement offices: obtains court orders for child support, determines the ability of the absent parent to meet the child support obligation and enforces the court's order for child support.

In FY 1986 there were 116,329 child support cases in the system. There is no way of knowing what percentage of all child support orders that number represents. It is estimated that 50 percent of child support cases are in the system.

There are many reasons child support cases may not be in the system. These reasons include:

- * The custodial parent is not aware of the child support collection system.
- * There is no child support award.
- * The custodial parent is collecting the full amount.
- * Payments are late, but less than 30 days overdue.
- * Partial payments are made, but made on time.
- * Payments are erratic, but are received often enough to keep the custodial parent from asking for assistance with collection.
- * Fear of letting the non-custodial parent know the location of the family because of a history of abuse.
- * Frustration with the child support collection system.

Of the 116,329 child support cases in the system in Minnesota three-fourths were AFDC cases and the remainder were non-AFDC cases. Of these cases, 30,000 are solely AFDC arrearage collections.

Seventy-nine percent of the cases in the system had child support orders. Of the cases with support orders 36 percent are paying child support. Fifty-three percent of the non-AFDC cases are paying and 29 percent of the AFDC cases are paying. "Paying" includes both partial and full child support payments.

In fiscal year 1986, \$42.5 million of current child support due was collected by the child support collection system. This represents a little more than one-third of the total current child support due.

[Data are from: Child Support and Alimony: 1983, Current Population Reports, Series P-23, Nos. 141 and 148, U.S. Bureau of the Census; Money Income of Households, Families and Persons in the United States: 1984, Consumer Income, Series P-60, No. 151, U.S. Bureau of the Census; and The Minnesota Office of Child Support Enforcement.]