

Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

Newsletter #146

85 State Office Building, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

January 1990

(612) 296-8590 or 1-800-652-9747

INTRODUCTION

This is the second part of a summary of the Gender Fairness in the Courts Task Force report published in June 1989. The 30-member task force was established in 1987 to "explore the extent to which gender bias exists in the Minnesota state court system, to identify and document gender bias where found and to recommend methods for its elimination." The Commission's December newsletter summarized the report's findings in the area of family law including maintenance, child support, property division, child custody and access to the court system. This newsletter concentrates on the Task Force's findings and recommendations in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, child victim advocacy, sentencing adult felons, juvenile justice and gender-based employment discrimination. Some of the Task Force's many recommendations have been summarized here to conserve space, but are more detailed and specific in the published report. For a copy of the complete report call the Supreme Court office, (612) 649-5931.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE CIVIL PROCESS

In 1984, 63,000 cases of domestic abuse were reported in Minnesota. Ninety percent of these had female victims. Minnesota has some of the most progressive domestic abuse statutes in the country and a system of advocates who work to see those laws enforced. However, the Task Force found that Orders for Protection (OFPs), used to keep an abuser away from the victim, are rarely enforced. Also, when arrests are made and charges are brought, the cases are often dismissed by prosecutors.

Findings: Civil Process

- 1) Domestic violence is one of the most serious problems faced by our society.
- 2) Minnesota has strong and progressive statutes which are not adequately implemented or enforced.
- 3) Judges, lawyers, court personnel and law enforcement officers are not sufficiently sensitive to the problems of victims of domestic abuse.
- 4) Some judges in Minnesota continue to improperly issue mutual OFPs in situations where only one person has requested an order and there is no evidence of mutual abuse.
- 5) Petitioners for OFPs often do not receive adequate relief.
- 6) In certain cases the process discourages abuse victims from attempting to obtain OFPs. The usefulness of the OFP is undercut at the local level through the absence of clear enforcement procedures and standards.
- 7) Advocates for victims of abuse play a valuable part in the system. Their role should be clarified to ensure their continued participation.

Recommendations: Civil Process

Judges, attorneys, law students, court personnel and law enforcement officers should participate in educational programs on the dynamics of domestic abuse and its affect on victims. The courts should not issue mutual OFPs if both parties have not petitioned the court to do so. Courts should also standardize the role of the domestic abuse advocates, who should be allowed to participate in court proceedings. State funding for hiring and training advocates should be increased.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-- CRIMINAL ENFORCEMENT

The Task Force found that criminal enforcement of domestic violence cases is complicated by prosecutors dismissing the cases. They do this when victims request dismissals or otherwise fail to cooperate. Prosecutors need the cooperation of the witness and the resources to gather other evidence, such as medical information, besides the victim's testimony. Prosecutors should subpoena victims to appear when necessary and not place the burden of bringing the case to trial solely on the victim.

Findings: Criminal Enforcement

- 1) Domestic assault case resolutions are significantly reduced by prosecutors' practice of dismissing them before trial.
- 2) Prosecutors' offices have trouble enforcing the Domestic Abuse Act because of lack of resources and sufficient evidentiary tools.
- 3) Lack of coordination between the civil and criminal enforcement of the Domestic Abuse Act often leads to conflicting or confusing handling of cases.
- 4) Domestic abuse intervention projects increase the number of cases resolved on their merits.

Recommendations:Criminal Enforcement

- 1) Legislation should be enacted that allocates funds for domestic abuse advocacy programs serving each county of the state.

- 2) The state should create a statewide computerized data base on domestic violence. Data would be available to law enforcement officers, prosecutors, courts and probation personnel.
- 3) Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, the courts and probation officers should be required to report domestic abuse information to the statewide data base.
- 4) Legislation should require medical care providers to preserve any evidence of injuries they collect from domestic violence victims and to report incidences they are aware of to law enforcement personnel.
- 5) Pre-sentence investigations of all convictions for domestic violence should be mandated.
- 6) Legislation should require all county and city prosecuting authorities to have plans for the effective prosecution of domestic violence cases.

Also recommended are court policies to: alleviate the problem of discretionary dismissals of cases; encourage victim cooperation and early intervention by advocates; clarify the role of advocates in the proceedings; provide prosecutors with adequate resources to do the job; and enforce the mandatory fine requirement in domestic abuse convictions.

Sexual Assault

The vast majority of sexual assaults in Minnesota are committed by someone the victim knows. However, the Task Force found that the prevailing stereotype of rapes remains that they are perpetrated by violent strangers. This stereotype tends to stymie law enforcement agencies and the judicial system in bringing acquaintance rapes and assaults to the courts.

Cases of acquaintance rape are likely to be seen as unfounded, or dropped or plea-bargained by prosecutors. Jurors don't believe testimony and judges are lenient in setting bail and sentencing. Defense attorneys continue to argue "implied consent" by bringing up the victim's prior sexual history, negative stereotyping of women, and myths about rape in both stranger and acquaintance rape cases.

Findings: Sexual Assault

- 1) A significant number of serious sex offenses are not heard in court due to gender-based stereotypes about acquaintance rape.
- 2) Victim blaming pervades the prosecution of sexual assault offenses, unfairly making the victim's behavior (consent), rather than the defendant's behavior (force) the key issue.
- 3) Penalties imposed against sex offenders in general, and especially against sex offenders known to the victim, are inadequate considering the seriousness of the crime.

Recommendations: Sexual Assault

The Task Force recommends the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and Department of Corrections study acquaintance rape and its prosecution in the state. Increased prosecution by county attorneys of acquaintance rape cases is also recommended. Judicial education programs should be implemented to increase awareness of acquaintance rape and for judges to develop skills in recognizing the difference between a legitimate consent defense and defense tactics which rely inappropriately on gender biases.

Child Victim Advocacy

The interests of child victims in criminal sexual conduct cases are not always adequately protected under the current system.

Recommendation: Child Victim Advocacy

A procedure should be established which would encourage the appointment of a guardian ad litem for the minor child whenever a child is a victim in a criminal sexual conduct case. The guardian ad litem would not be a party to the action, but would provide information to all parties regarding acceptance or rejection of plea agreements, as well as assisting in the preparation of the victim impact statement for sentencing.

Sentencing Adult Felons

Using Minnesota's Sentencing Guidelines data to compare convictions of male and female felons, the Task Force found that the number for both has increased since 1981. Women are more likely to commit property crimes than are men, although this is the most frequent type of crime committed by both sexes. Of all convicted females, 80.8 percent committed property crimes and 6.4 percent committed crimes against a person. Of convicted male felons, 58 percent committed property crimes and 27 percent crimes against persons. Crimes against persons are considered more serious and carry stiffer sentences.

Women have lower imprisonment rates than men because they commit less severe crimes and because they usually have shorter criminal history records. The crimes they commit may not require jail time. Fewer women go to jail and more are granted stays of imposition than similarly situated male felons. Also, once sentenced to jail, they serve less time than males. Women pay restitution more frequently than do male felons.

Judges surveyed said they are less likely to order jail time if a woman has children at home. Also, the inadequacy of jail facilities and jail programs for women are a factor in the lower imprisonment rates of female felons, the judges said.

Findings: Sentencing Adult Felons

- 1) No identifiable gender bias exists in imprisonment of adult men and women convicted of felony offenses in Minnesota. The differing rates of imprisonment of men and women offenders result from the greater percentage of men committing crimes of violence and having higher criminal history scores.
- 2) Sufficient data do not exist to determine whether the broad discretion available to judges in imposing non-imprisonment sanctions on adult felony offenders results in a gender bias in probationary sentences imposed on women.
- 3) Fewer and less adequate educational, vocational and rehabilitative programs exist for women than male adult felony offenders in probationary, imprisonment and supervised release settings.
- 4) Fewer and less adequate jail facilities exist for adult female felony offenders than for adult male felony offenders.

Recommendations: Sentencing Adult Felons

The Task Force recommends that the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission conduct a study of non-imprisonment sentences given to adult female and male felons and to make the findings of this study available to the courts, the legislature and state agencies. Also, correctional programs offered to women in the state should be of a comparable number and type as those provided to convicted male felons.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Previous studies show widespread paternalism in the criminal justice system for juveniles. Girls are more likely than boys to be arrested for "status offenses" such as truancy, incorrigibility and running away. They are also more likely to be institutionalized for these offenses than boys. Judges say this is because parents demand harsher penalties for daughters than for sons. When requested by the parents, institutionalization is usually granted.

Findings: Juvenile Justice

- 1) Interviews and research reveal disparate treatment by gender in cases involving juvenile females in Minnesota.
- 2) Girls are more likely than boys to be arrested and detained for status offenses.
- 3) There is a tendency to punish girls more harshly and more often for status offenses than boys.
- 4) The reasons for this difference between female and male juvenile offenders are difficult to identify and may reflect unstated cultural expectations to which girls are expected to conform.
- 5) Based on research reviewed by the Task Force, it is apparent that the courts are influenced in their disposition of juvenile cases by societal pressure, specifically the wishes of parents and guardians.

Recommendations: Juvenile Justice

The State Court Administrator should collect data on gender differences in juvenile cases and determine what more information is needed. Also, court personnel should receive education to make them aware of their possible biases in this area.

GENDER-BASED EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

Two-thirds of people who experience employment discrimination do nothing about it because the risks of filing a claim usually outweigh the benefits. Discrimination claims are costly to pursue. Most are handled in federal court or in administrative agencies, rather than state court. Judges agree sex-based discrimination cases are more difficult to prove. Lawyers say that judges do not award enough damages when a suit is won to make it worth the effort.

Findings: Employment Discrimination

- 1) Many victims of gender-based employment discrimination never seek relief in the courts.
- 2) Most attorneys agree that attorney fee awards to prevailing parties are insufficient to encourage lawyers to take gender-based employment discrimination cases.
- 3) Some defense attorneys appeal to gender-based stereotypes and a few judges openly express similar biases. Some judges are perceived as giving employment discrimination cases less consideration than other civil matters.

Recommendations: Employment Discrimination

The Task Force recommendations include education programs for judges and attorneys to raise awareness of employment discrimination and the impact of gender-biased stereotypes on these cases. The State Bar Association should encourage increased pro bono or legal aid efforts, increased attorney fee awards, improved job security legislation and increased plaintiff damage awards. The Bar Association should study damage awards and law firms should encourage increased representation of clients with employment discrimination cases.



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IN THIS ISSUE

A SUMMARY OF THE COMMISSION'S LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS for the 1990 session, which began Feb. 12.

The proposals for this short session include:

- funding for the state's Child Care fund;
- improvements in the local government pay equity law;
- issues surrounding child support enforcement;
- implementation of the recommendations of the Gender Fairness in the Courts Task Force, including a review of the state's child support guidelines;
- support for increasing women's small business opportunities, including implementation of recommendations from the Small Business Procurements Commission;
- an increase in the state's minimum wage;
- access to pre-natal care; and
- continued funding of family planning services.

CHILD CARE SLIDING FEE ASSISTANCE

The state's Child Care Fund provides subsidies for low-income families to help pay for their child care costs. That fund is currently about \$34 million, but it is not able to serve all the families who are eligible for help. Nearly two-thirds of the Child Care Fund goes to AFDC recipients or former recipients during their first year off AFDC. In November, 1989, there were 12,000 families with about 19,200 children being served, but there were approximately 6,700 families on waiting lists throughout the state. About 4,000 of these families are not receiving AFDC and will likely have to wait up to three years to get help. This puts them at risk of not being able to continue working.

Some AFDC recipients who want to participate in employment and training programs (STRIDE) to help them move off of AFDC are not able to enter programs because child care assistance is not available. Also, the number of former recipients who are entitled to one year of child care subsidy is expected to increase. Once their year of subsidy is lost, they may have no choice but to revert to AFDC. Some "working poor" families have had their subsidies cut off because there is not enough money to serve the AFDC recipients. The Child Care Fund must be expanded to keep working families working and AFDC recipients moving toward self-sufficiency. An increase of \$10.5 million will expand the availability of child care subsidies to a significant part of both groups.

Goal of Legislation

1. Increase the Child Care Fund to enable continued expansion of the STRIDE program, to encourage eligible AFDC recipients to participate in employment and training programs, and to help more working poor, non-AFDC families obtain help with their child care costs.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

Many women need child care services in order to enroll in and complete educational programs. In 1989, the legislature created a separate fund of \$4 million to help non-AFDC students who need help with their child care costs while attending one of Minnesota's post-secondary institutions. Schools participating in the program reported only 700 students being served by this fund in the fall of 1989. Another 397 students with about 637 children were eligible for assistance but were placed on waiting lists because the schools ran out of funds.

Students who apply for child care funds at their schools are eligible for a maximum of 12 quarters of enrollment. Previous time spent in school is included in the 12-quarter limitation, regardless of whether or not they received child care assistance during that time. The 12-quarter enroll

ment limitation should be changed to 48 calendar months of child care subsidy.

Minnesota's post-secondary institutions have developed on-site child care centers for use by students, staff and faculty. Not every campus has a program and some existing programs need expansion or improvement. These efforts should be encouraged.

Goals of Legislation

1. Expand the \$4 million child care fund administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board for post-secondary students to serve more eligible students.
2. Change the eligibility standard for post-secondary child care assistance from 12 quarters of enrollment to 48 calendar months of subsidy.
3. Encourage expansion and improvement of child care facilities on post-secondary campuses.

CHILD CARE WORKERS PAY

The child care field has one of the highest turnover rates, 42 percent, of any profession and it is 98 percent female. Employee salaries are low and benefits are rarely offered. As one way to raise salaries, child care workers should be encouraged to seek educational opportunities to improve their skills. Child care providers should have incentives to seek accreditation which can reduce turnover rates and increase wages, contributing to the quality of child care.

Goal of Legislation

1. Create pilot programs which can increase the wages and benefits for child care workers in accredited programs.

CHILD CARE AND OTHER FAMILY POLICIES IN BUSINESS

Employers can play a key role in helping their employees with family child care responsibilities. They may offer on-site or near-site facilities. They may buy "slots" in already established child care programs or work with other companies to do so. They may offer several types of financial assistance to help their employees pay the high costs of quality child care. They may also offer paid or unpaid leaves to help parents. The state of Minnesota should encourage and provide incentives to those companies which are helping their employees meet their parenting responsibilities.

Goals of Legislation

1. Support efforts to create and improve employers' family-based policies in the areas of sick child leave, disability benefits, parental leave and child care benefits.

PAY EQUITY

The fundamental concept of pay equity is that a job should be paid according to its value, not the sex of the person in it, and that the value of the job should be determined using objective criteria. Minnesota has made a significant commitment to pay equity for state employees and employees of local units of government.

The 1984 legislature passed the Local Government Pay Equity Act requiring local units of government to establish pay equity between female-dominated, male-dominated and balanced classes of employees. Each local unit of government was required to use a job evaluation system to determine comparable work values, identify pay inequities in their workplace and develop a plan to eliminate the inequities. Completion of the implementation of pay equity must occur by December 31, 1991, unless another date has been approved by the state's commissioner of Employee Relations. A fiscal penalty will be imposed upon local units of government which have not implemented by that date.

After preliminary analysis of plans already submitted to the state, questions have been raised about the clarity of the pay equity law and how compliance will be determined. In addition, many local governments have made substantial changes to the implementation plans they have already filed, making determination of compliance difficult without new information.

Goals of Legislation

1. Clarify the definition of implementation of pay equity.
2. Define the procedures for determining compliance and for the resolution of disputes.
3. Require a final report so that implementation can be determined based on current information.

CHILD SUPPORT--INCOME TAX INTERCEPT

A person owed child support can get a court order to intercept the income tax refund of the person whose payments are delinquent. If the person owed child support is a former AFDC recipient and the county has already filed a claim for the income tax refund, the county will receive payment on its claim first. Changing the order of priorities in payment of these funds would further the goal of supporting former AFDC families.

INFORMATION ABOUT CHILD SUPPORT OBLIGORS

People on AFDC who are having their child support payments collected by the Child Support Enforcement Office (IV-D) and who are trying to determine whether or not they can afford to go off AFDC cannot get information from IV-D about the whereabouts, employment and in-

come of the person who pays them child support. Current data privacy laws protect that type of information from being given to child support recipients. The continued likelihood of collecting child support is a critical factor in making a decision to leave AFDC. Upon leaving AFDC, the recipient may not be able to rely on IV-D for child support collection services. If collection services will no longer be available and if the recipient needs the information in order to collect child support this information should be provided.

GARNISHMENT OF BANK ACCOUNTS

Current child support collection efforts do not allow garnishment of bank accounts for the recovery of delinquent payments. This tool should be particularly helpful for self-employed obligors or others for whom traditional collection efforts have not been successful.

Goals of Legislation

1. Provide an exception to the Data Practices Act to allow the child support enforcement agency to provide information about the obligor to a non-AFDC recipient who needs the information to enforce a child support obligation when collection services are not available from the county.
2. Change the order of priority for interception of income tax refunds to place claims for child support by non-AFDC recipients ahead of claims for child support by the county.
3. Make necessary changes to facilitate garnishment of bank accounts of obligors whose child support payments are more than one month in arrears.

GENDER FAIRNESS TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Supreme Court Task Force on Gender Fairness in the Courts, established in 1987 to "explore the extent to which gender bias exists in the Minnesota state court system, to identify and document gender bias where found, and to recommend methods for elimination," issued its report in September, 1989. Some of the recommendations require legislation.

Child support guidelines

The Minnesota child support guidelines which were adopted by the legislature in 1983 were found to be too low to adequately support children. In addition, the Task Force found that the guidelines are used by the court as a maximum amount, rather than the minimum to be awarded.

Goal of Legislation

1. When the Minnesota legislature re-examines its child support guidelines as required by federal law, it should adopt an approach to establishing child support levels that reduces the disparity after divorce be-

tween the standard of living of custodial parents and children and non-custodial parents.

Custody

The Task Force found that the courts do not specify why it is in the best interests of the child to order joint custody over the objections of one of the parents.

Goal of Legislation

1. Judges should use great caution in deciding to order joint custody. It should be imposed over the objections of one of the parents only where the court makes specific findings which identify why such an order is in the children's best interests.

Access to the courts

Women and men do not have equal access to the courts in family law matters such as divorce, child support and custody, primarily because of their different economic status. Experienced family law attorneys require large advance payments. Many women do not have money or credit to pay these initial fees. Judges do not award temporary attorney fees which can cover these costs. This problem leads some women to accept inadequate settlements. Judges also do not award attorney fees in post-divorce actions, such as motions to increase child support, making it virtually impossible for many women to pursue such actions.

Goals of Legislation

1. The law should be amended to encourage the award of temporary attorney fees in marriage dissolution actions where the party has the ability to pay and failure to receive an award would deter the economically dependent spouse from effectively pursuing relief in family courts.
2. State resources should be made available for the funding of legal representation for poor people in family law matters.

Domestic violence

Minnesota has some of the nation's most progressive domestic abuse statutes. It has knowledgeable advocates who are committed to the enforcement of domestic abuse laws. Nevertheless, the Task Force found compelling evidence to conclude that domestic abuse victims do not receive the relief, either civil or criminal, that the legislature intended to provide.

The Domestic Abuse Act allows a victim of domestic abuse to obtain an Order for Protection (OFP). The victim of domestic abuse decides whether to go into civil court to petition for an Order for Protection. A variety of criminal statutes may be used to prosecute an incident of domestic abuse, but only a prosecutor may decide whether to pursue a domestic violence case in criminal court.

Goals of Legislation

1. State funding for the hiring and training of domestic abuse advocates should be increased.
2. State funds should be mandated to make domestic abuse advocacy services available in every county of the state.
3. The state should create a statewide computerized data base on domestic violence, available to law enforcement, prosecutors, courts and probation officers. Information kept should include existing or past OFPS and information on past criminal activities.
4. Police reporting requirements regarding domestic violence should be expanded to require law enforcement officers, prosecutors, courts and probation officers to report to the statewide data base.
5. Medical care providers should be required to report incidents of domestic violence to law enforcement authorities and to preserve and make available physical evidence of injury collected from the victim.
6. Pre-sentence investigations should be mandated in all cases of conviction for domestic violence, without ability to waive the requirement.
7. All city and county prosecutors should be required to have a plan for the effective prosecution of domestic violence cases.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Minnesota has operated a set-aside program for socially or economically disadvantaged businesses since 1975. This program was designed to benefit small businesses owned and operated by socially or economically disadvantaged (SED) persons. A SED person was defined as one "who has been deprived of the opportunity to develop and maintain a competitive position in the economy because of social or economic disadvantage." Women are included in this definition.

A 1989 U.S. Supreme Court decision, (*Croson*) struck down similar set-aside programs in Virginia and Michigan and caused Minnesota to end its set-aside program. The 1989 legislature responded by establishing a Small Business Procurements Commission to determine whether there was sufficient evidence of discrimination in the state to justify a race and gender based program according to the criteria set out by the Supreme Court and to recommend the establishment of a program which would meet these criteria.

Goals of Legislation

1. Support efforts to increase small business and economic development opportunities for women.
2. Enact a race and gender based procurement program for government purchasing based on documenta-

tion in the report of the Small Business Procurements Commission and containing severe penalties for obtaining a contract under false pretenses.

3. Amend the Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination against a business based on the race or sex of its owner.

4. Direct state agencies with oversight of lending institutions to review lending practices to determine where discrimination exists and to take steps to eliminate discrimination where found.

5. Establish additional programs to provide working capital financing for small businesses and to fund surety bond guarantee programs.

MINIMUM WAGE

The minimum wage is important to working women since they represent the majority of adult minimum wage workers and since they are more likely than employed men to have low earnings. Although women are only 46 percent of the work force they constitute nearly two-thirds of all minimum wage workers. These women are important income contributors for their families. Fifty-five percent of female minimum wage workers are over 25 years old and 74 percent are over 20 years old. About ten percent of women maintaining families earn the minimum wage or less.

A full-time year-round worker earning the current (1990) federal minimum wage would receive \$8,216 from large companies and \$7,904 from smaller companies. These annual earnings amount to wages that are below the poverty level for a family of three. When the federal minimum wage rises to \$4.25 per hour in 1991, a family of three will still be \$1,220 below the 1989 poverty level if Minnesota does not raise its minimum wage.

Goals of Legislation

1. Legislation should be enacted to increase the minimum wage.

PRENATAL CARE FOR LOW INCOME WOMEN

In 1989 the legislature increased eligibility for Medical Assistance for low income pregnant women. This increase in eligibility has produced an increased number of low income pregnant women seeking prenatal care. One consequence of the increased number of clients seeking service is that numerous clinics have decided to limit the number of medical assistance cases they will accept. This is partial-

ly due to the low reimbursement rate provided by the system.

Federal law prohibits providers who participate in the medical assistance program from discriminating. This includes a prohibition against treating medical assistance patients differently from private pay patients. It also means doctors cannot limit access to their services by taking only referrals from other doctors, or by taking only cases with a particular diagnosis.

For example, a provider cannot refuse to take all new pregnancy cases, but can limit a practice to taking only a certain percentage of medical assistance cases overall. Many of the new clients seeking service are newly eligible pregnant women.

Goals of Legislation

1. Increase reimbursement to doctors for obstetrical services for medical assistance recipients.
2. Establish or expand maternal and well baby clinics through the public health nursing service in locations where obstetrical care is not available for medical assistance recipients.

FAMILY PLANNING

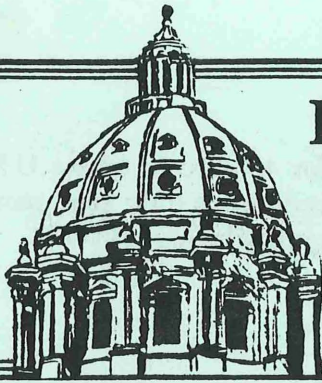
Since 1978 Minnesota has funded Family Planning Special Projects to provide family planning services grants through the Department of Health. For the current biennium slightly more than \$2.3 million in grants were awarded for this purpose to cities, counties and nonprofit corporations. These funds were awarded to 60 agencies which submitted proposals. A total of 70 of the state's 87 counties received some services. Monies from this grant also fund a family planning hotline.

The state Local Public Health Law allows local health boards to provide community health services designed to protect and promote the health of the general population. Funding available under the Local Public Health Law may be used for family planning.

States receive funds from the federal Maternal and Child Health Block Grant. Family planning is one of the three categorical services that can be provided to low-income and high risk populations served by this program. Forty-five of the 47 community health service agencies serving Minnesota received this funding.

Goal of Legislation

1. Provide continued funding through the Minnesota Department of Health for family planning.



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INTRODUCTION

This newsletter examines the work patterns of U. S. women over the last 50 years using historical data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. Included are women's share of the labor force and labor force participation rates of women by age, marital status, and parental status.

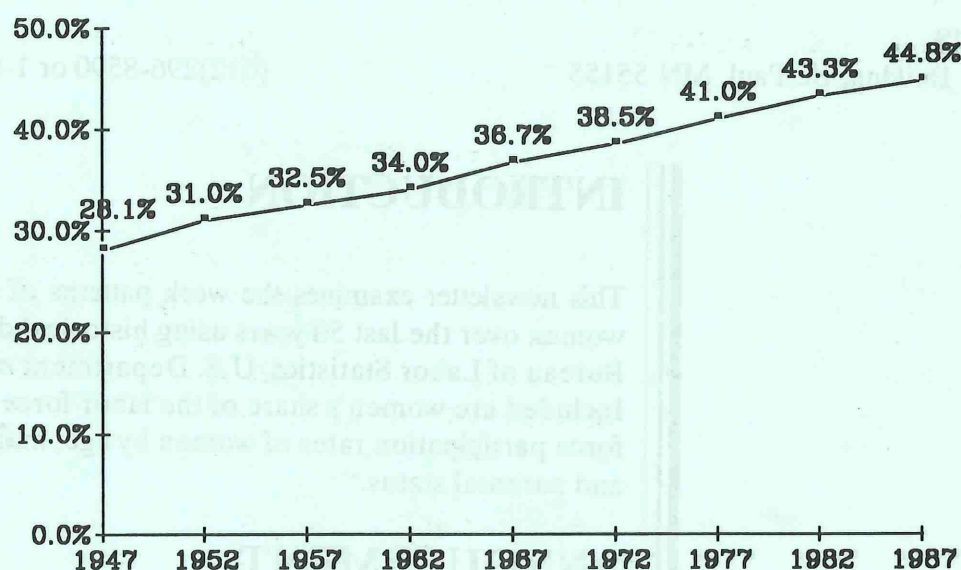
ANNOUNCEMENT

The Commission has just published a packet of information and forms that can help women obtain a cost-of-living adjustment to their child support awards. Cost-of-living adjustments are available every two years unless the child support order specifies otherwise. "A Guide to Child Support Cost-of-Living Adjustments" can be ordered by calling the Commission office.

WOMEN'S SHARE OF THE LABOR FORCE

In 1987, the latest year for which data are available, women accounted for 45 percent of the U.S. labor force. This is a significant difference from 40 years ago, when women were only 28 percent of the total work force. Their participation rates have increased consistently throughout that period.

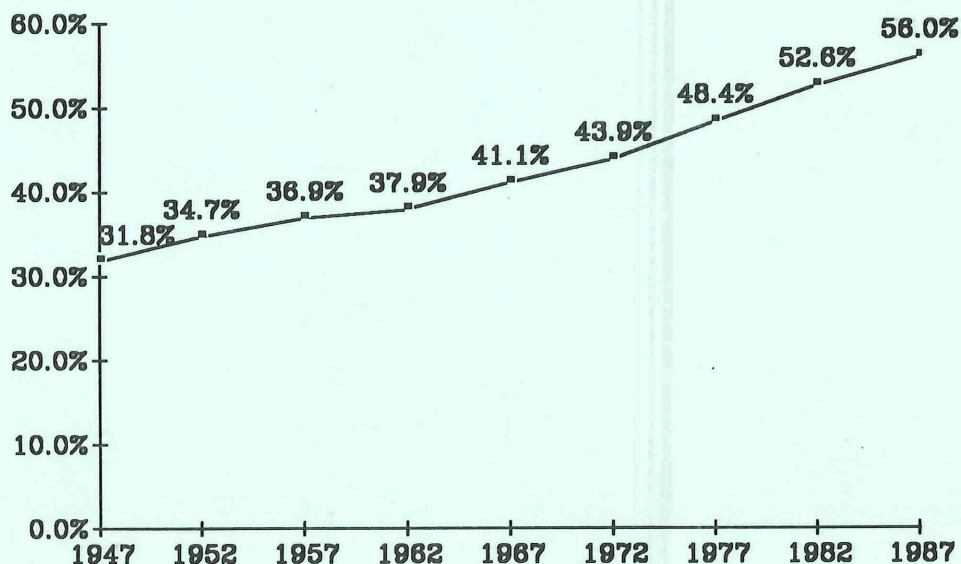
**Women's Share of the Labor Force
1947-1987**



WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION RATES

Just after World War II only 32 percent of all women ages 16 and over were in the paid labor force. By 1987, 56 percent of women were working outside the home. For women age 20 to 64 the rate was 67 percent. Although women's participation has been increasing steadily throughout these years, the rate of increase has been greatest in the years since 1972.

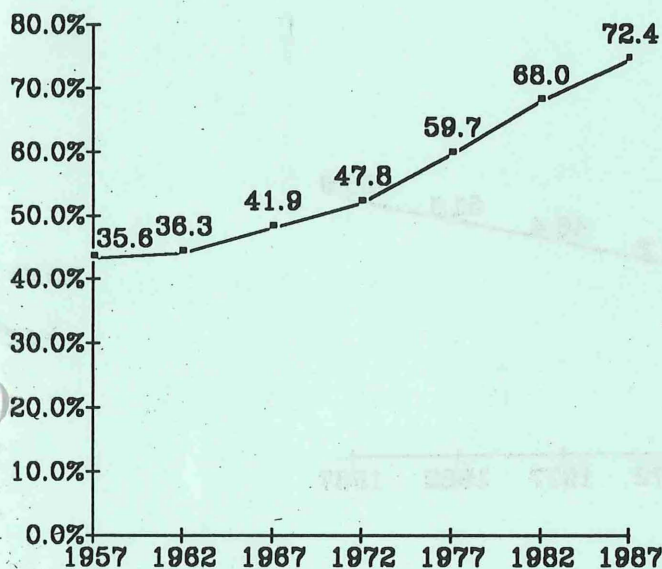
**Labor Force Participation Rates
1947-1987**



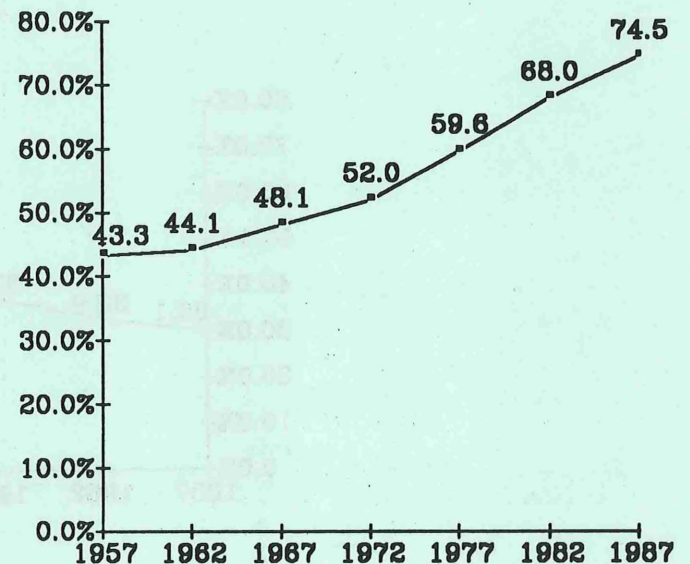
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY AGE

Although the labor force participation rate for all women over age 16 was 56 percent, the rates are much higher for the younger age groups. While 43 percent of women ages 55-64 were in the labor force, 72 percent of women ages 25 to 34 were working. The difference in participation rates by age is much greater now than 30 years ago, when women of all ages had rates that were more similar. For example, 36 percent of women age 25 to 34 in 1957 were in the paid work force, while 34 percent of women age 55 to 64 had paid employment.

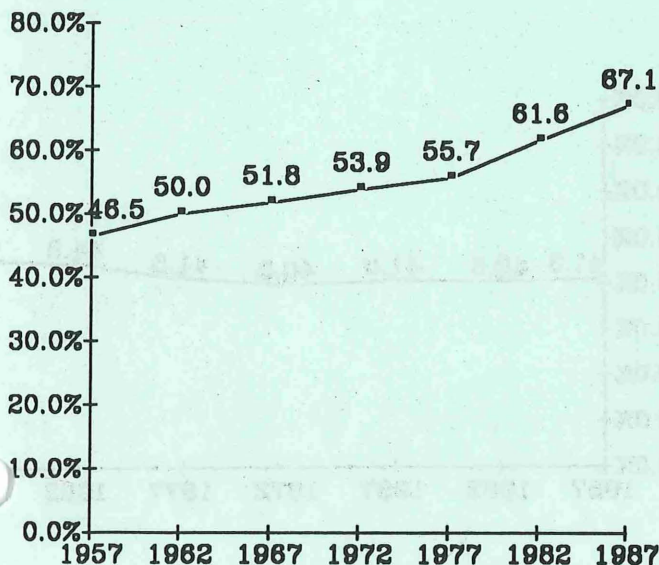
**Women Age 25-34
1957-1987**



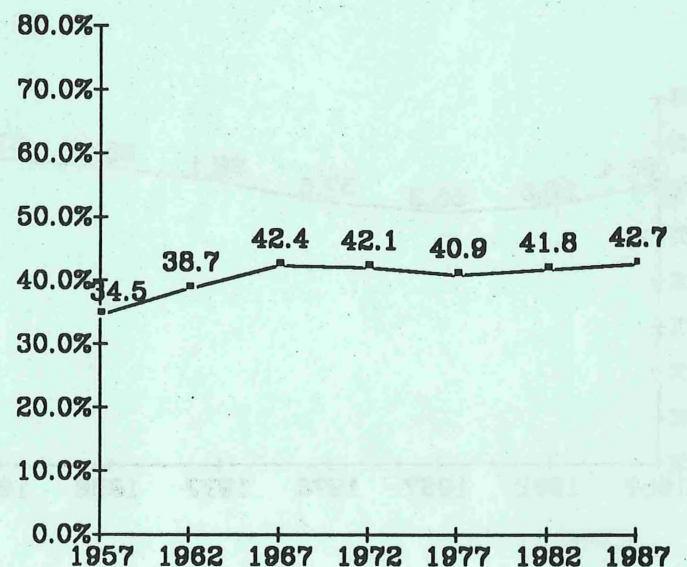
**Women Age 35-44
1957-1987**



**Women Age 45-54
1957-87**



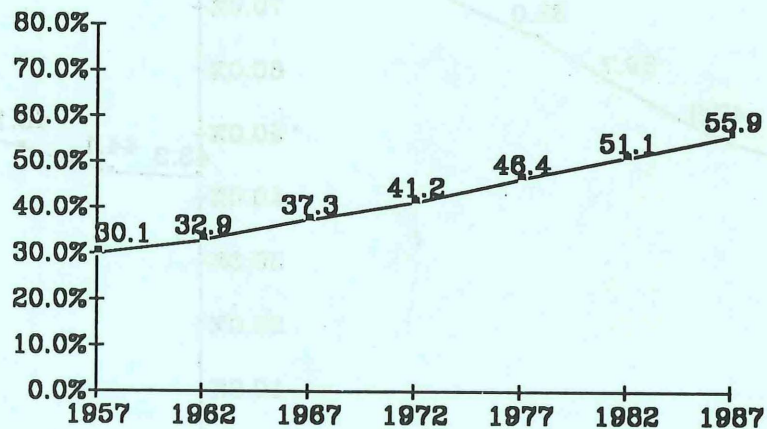
**Women Age 55-64
1957-1987**



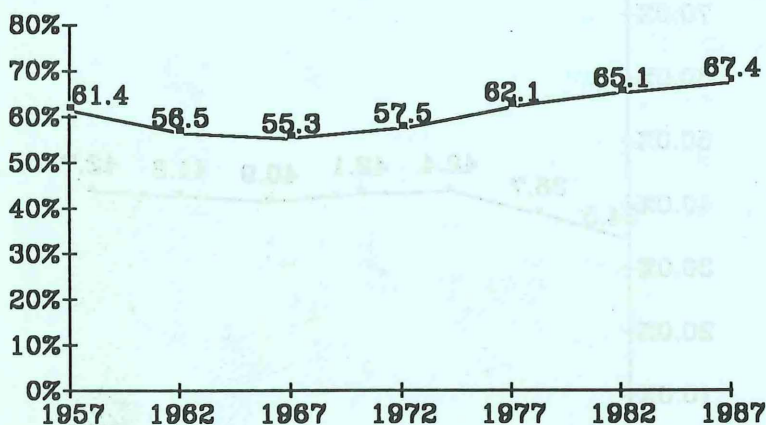
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY MARITAL STATUS

Married women have increased their labor force participation substantially since 1957, compared to single (never married) or divorced, separated or widowed women. While only 30 percent of married women were in the work force in 1957, thirty years later 57 percent had paid employment. The percentage of single women in the labor force during those same years did not change dramatically, from 61 percent in 1957 to 67 percent in 1987. Similarly, women who were widowed, divorced or separated had only a slight increase in their participation, with 41 percent in 1957 and 46 percent in 1987.

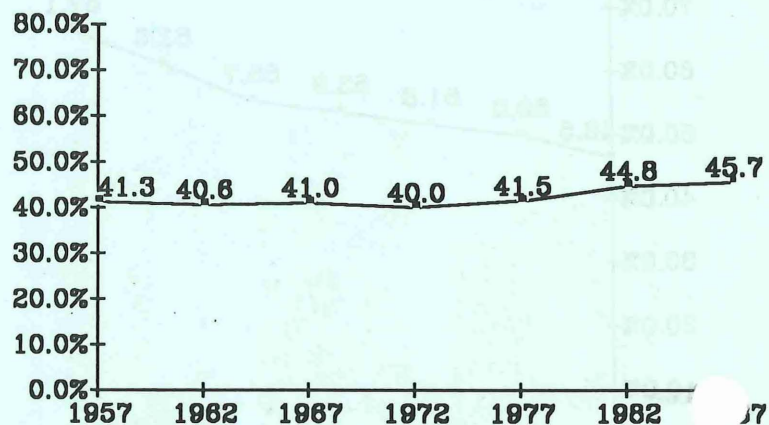
**Married Women
1957-1987**



**Single (Never-Married) Women
1957-1987**



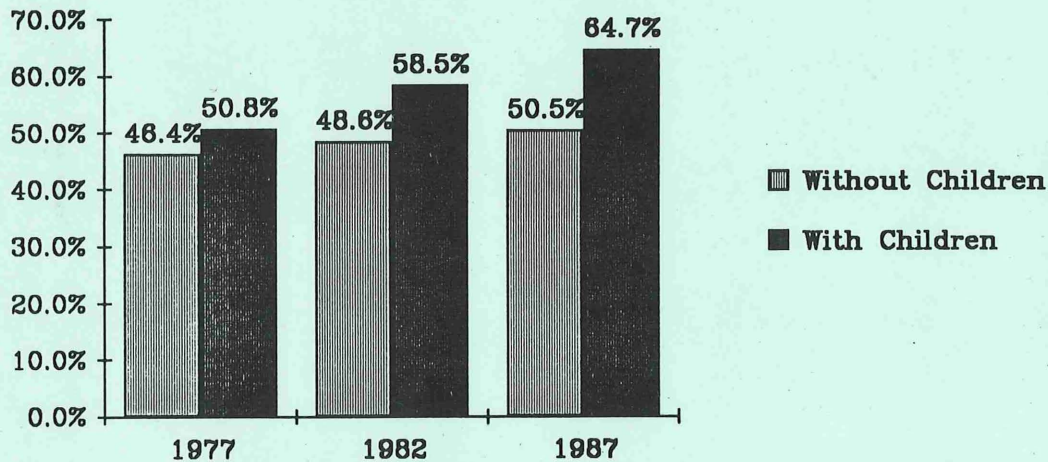
**Divorced, Widowed, Separated Women
1957-1987**



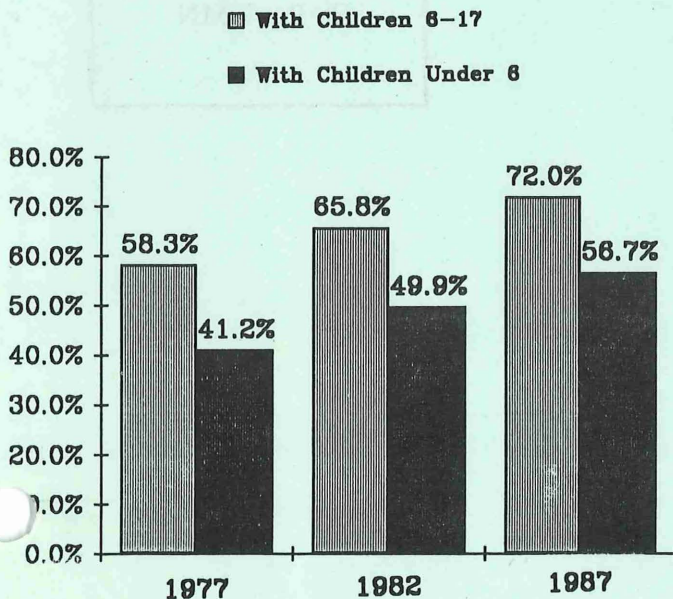
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY PARENTAL STATUS

While the labor force participation of women without children has remained relatively unchanged over the last 10 years, women with children have substantially increased their numbers. Half of all mothers had paid employment in 1977. By 1987, two-thirds of women with children had paid work. As children grow older, labor force participation of the mother increases. However, even for mothers of young children (under age 6) rates grew from just over two-fifths (41 percent) in 1977 to nearly three-fifths (57 percent) in 1987.

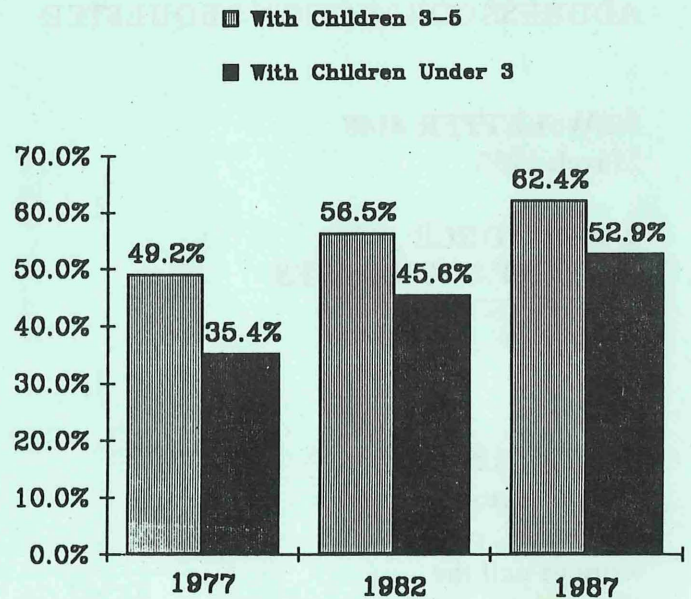
**Women With and Without Children
1977-1987**

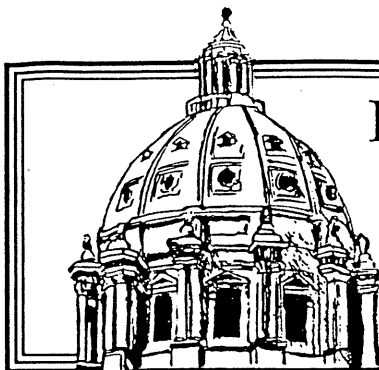


**Women with School-Age and Pre-School-Age
Children
1977-1987**



**Women with Pre-School Age Children
1977-1987**





Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

Newsletter #149

85 State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155

April 1990

(612)296-8590 or 1-800-652-9747

INTRODUCTION

This newsletter examines the work patterns of U. S. women over the last several decades using historical data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. Included are women's labor force participation by marital and parental status, and educational attainment. Also included is information about full- and part-time status and occupations. This newsletter is a continuation of historical labor force data begun in the March 1990 edition.

NEXT MONTH

The newsletter will feature a summary of the 1990 legislative session, with a focus on issues supported by the Commission. Other legislation of particular interest to women will also be noted.

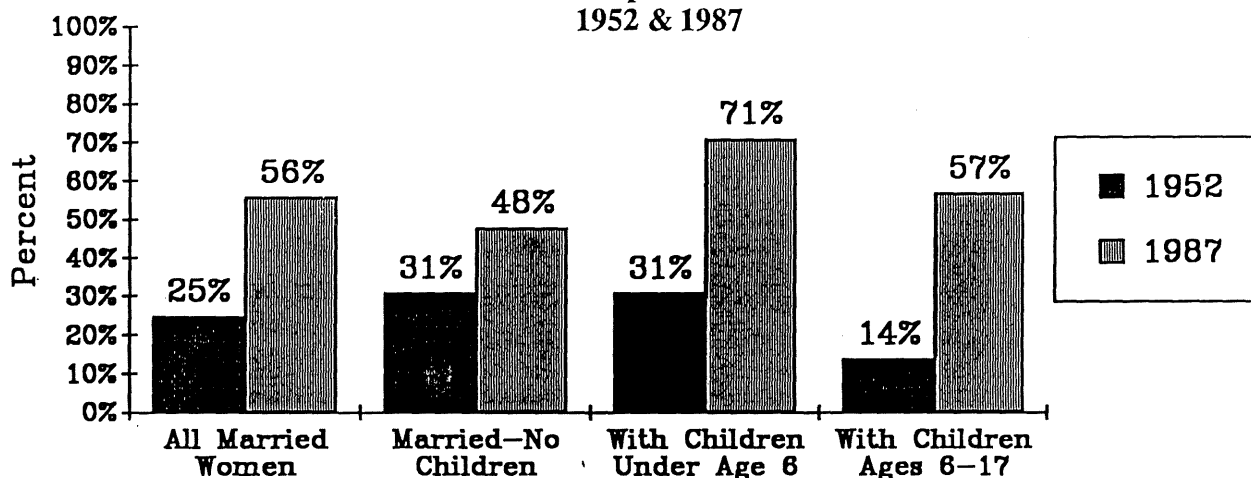
INTRODUCTION

Over the last 35 years, women have entered the paid labor force in greater numbers and a large percentage are working full-time. This trend is true for women regardless of whether or not they are married or have children. While their labor force participation has steadily increased, however, their representation in various occupations has not changed dramatically. Women still hold traditionally female-dominated jobs, while men continue to hold traditionally male-dominated jobs. Only in a few areas has the gender balance changed significantly.

MARRIED WOMEN

Fifty-seven percent of married mothers and 56 percent of all married women were in the labor force in 1987. Married women with children under age 6 have labor force participation rates nearly the same as the average for all married women. In fact, married women with children under age six are more likely to work than married women with older children. Married women with children have substantially increased their participation in the work force, but the group with the largest increase (43 percent) in the last 35 years has been those with the youngest children.

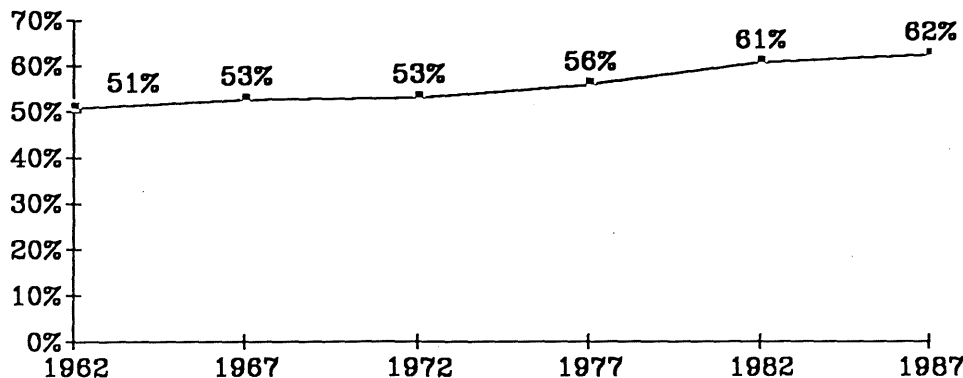
**Labor Force Participation--Married Women
1952 & 1987**



WOMEN MAINTAINING FAMILIES

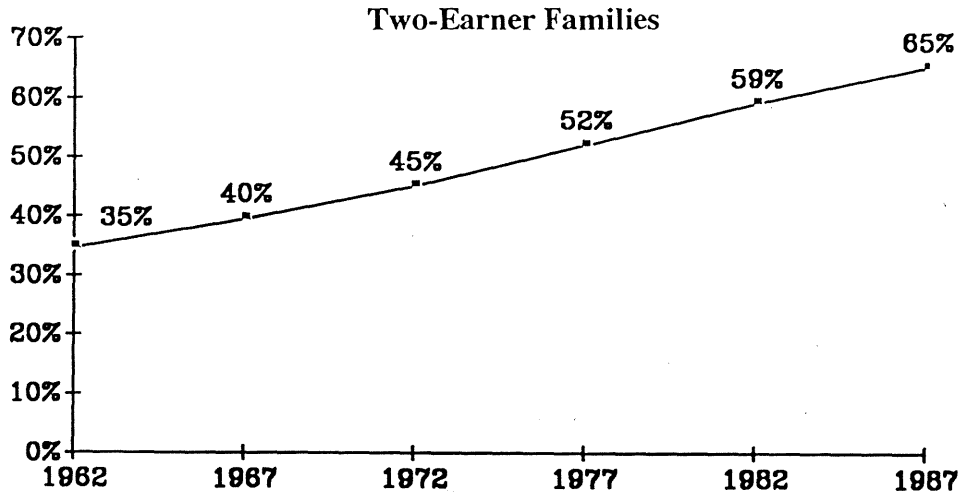
Women who maintain families have slightly higher labor force participation rates than married women and also have entered the work force in greater numbers in the last several decades. In 1962, one half of women who headed families were in the work force, but by 1987 that percentage had reached 62 percent. In 1987, women heading families with children were much more likely to be in the paid work force than women heading families with no children. More than two-thirds of the women who supported families with children were in the paid labor force, while only about one-half of women heading families without children were working. (These families include relatives living together, but do not include married couples.)

Labor Force Participation--Women Maintaining Families (with and without children)



TWO-EARNER FAMILIES

It is now the norm for both the husband and wife in a married couple to be working in the paid work force. The percentage of married couple families with both husband and wife working outside the home has nearly doubled since 1962. Two-thirds of married couples in 1987 had both spouses in the labor force, compared to just 35 percent in 1962. This increase has been steady throughout the intervening years, with a 5 to 7 percent increase in two-earner couples every 5 years.

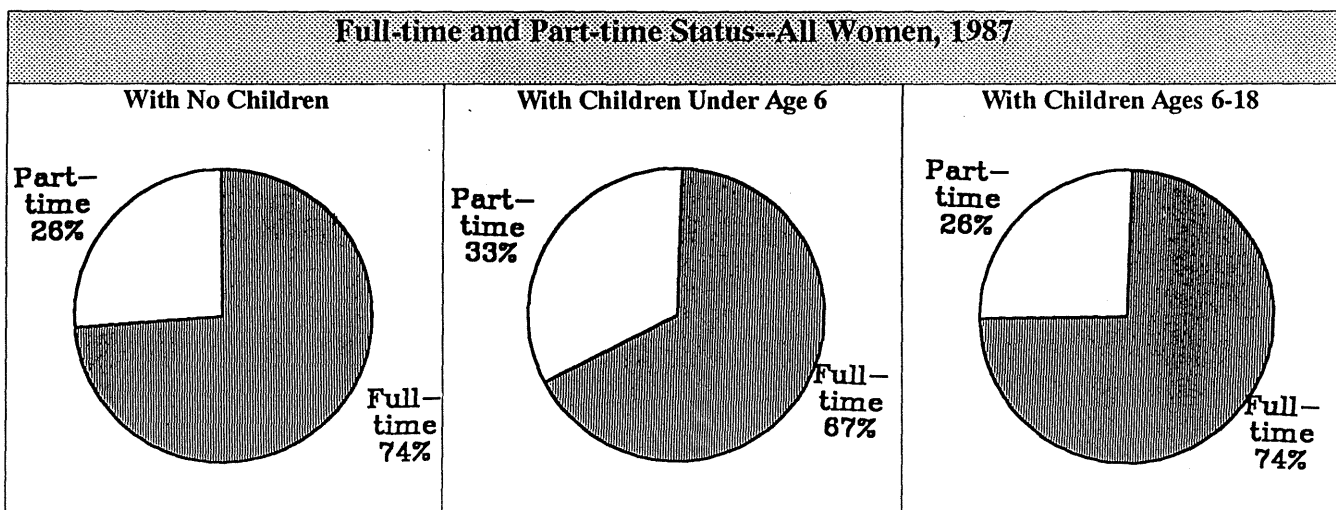


FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STATUS

The majority of all people in the work force work full-time. Overall, the percentage of women working full-time has not changed much in the last 10 years. In 1977, 72 percent of all working women were full-time workers, compared to 74 percent in 1987.

The majority of mothers in the work force are also working full-time. Mothers of younger children are only slightly less likely than those with older children to work full-time. In 1987, 67 percent of mothers of children under age 6 worked full-time, compared with 74 percent of mothers of older children and 74 percent of women with no children.

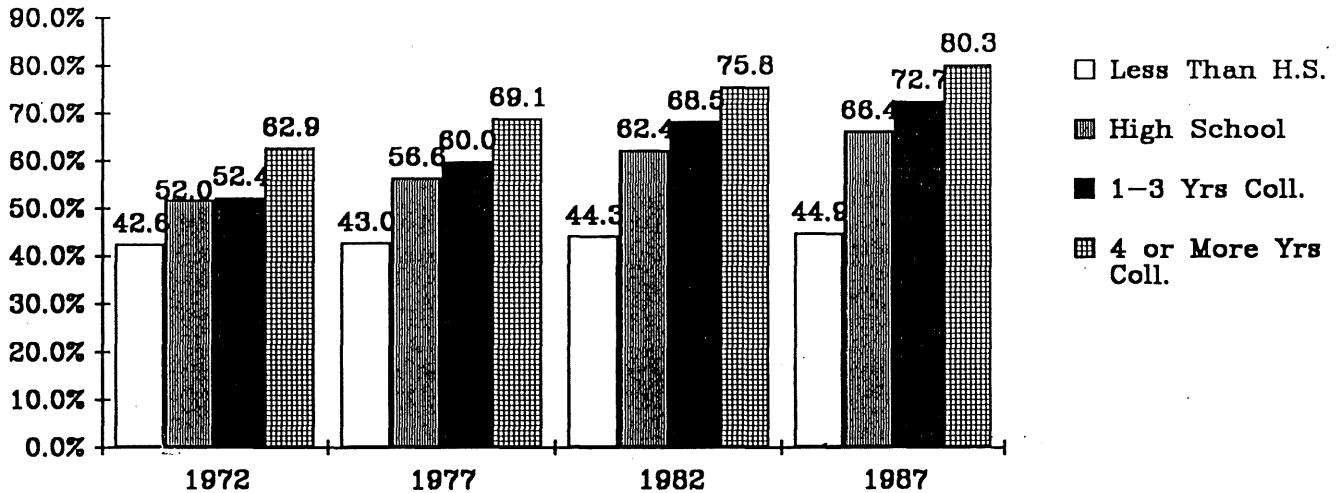
While married women with children have substantially increased their labor force participation since 1962, the proportion of full-time to part-time workers has remained fairly constant at about two-thirds. In 1962, 69 percent of married women in the work force with children under six worked full-time. By 1987, this percentage decreased somewhat to 64 percent.



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Women with 4 or more years of college education have always had higher labor force participation rates than women with less education. They have also entered the paid work force in greater numbers in the past 15 years. In 1972, only 63 percent of women with 4 years of college were in the paid work force, compared with 80 percent in 1987. Women without high school diplomas, however, had nearly constant rates of labor force participation levels during that same period, with 43 percent in 1972 and 45 percent in 1987. While close to half of high school graduates were in the work force in 1972, by 1987 two-thirds were working.

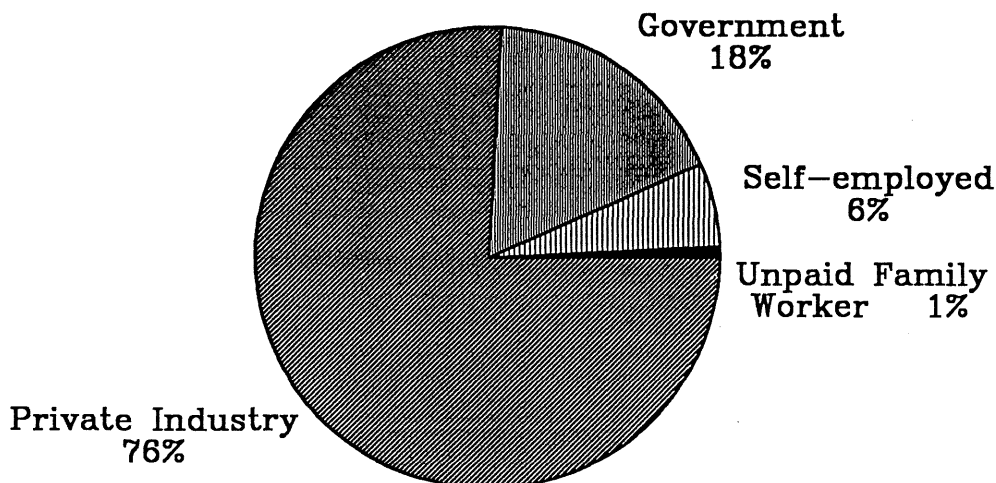
Women in the Work Force by Educational Attainment



WORK CLASSIFICATION

The vast majority of women workers are in private industry, as are their male counterparts. The percentage of women who are self-employed increased slightly since 1972, while the percentage of self-employed men has remained constant. In 1972, 5 percent of women workers were self-employed. By 1987, 6 percent were self-employed.

Classifications of Working Women-1987



OCCUPATIONAL GENDER BALANCE

The gender balance of most occupations has not changed dramatically in the last decade. The service industry remains the most female-dominated with 65 percent women, while the occupations in the precision, production and craft area remain the most male-dominated with 91 percent men. In the last 15 years, women have gained a greater share of the jobs in the managerial, professional specialty occupations, from 33 percent in 1972 to 44 percent in 1987. Smaller gains have been realized in the other male-dominated occupations of precision, production and craft, operators, handlers, and farming, forestry and fishing.

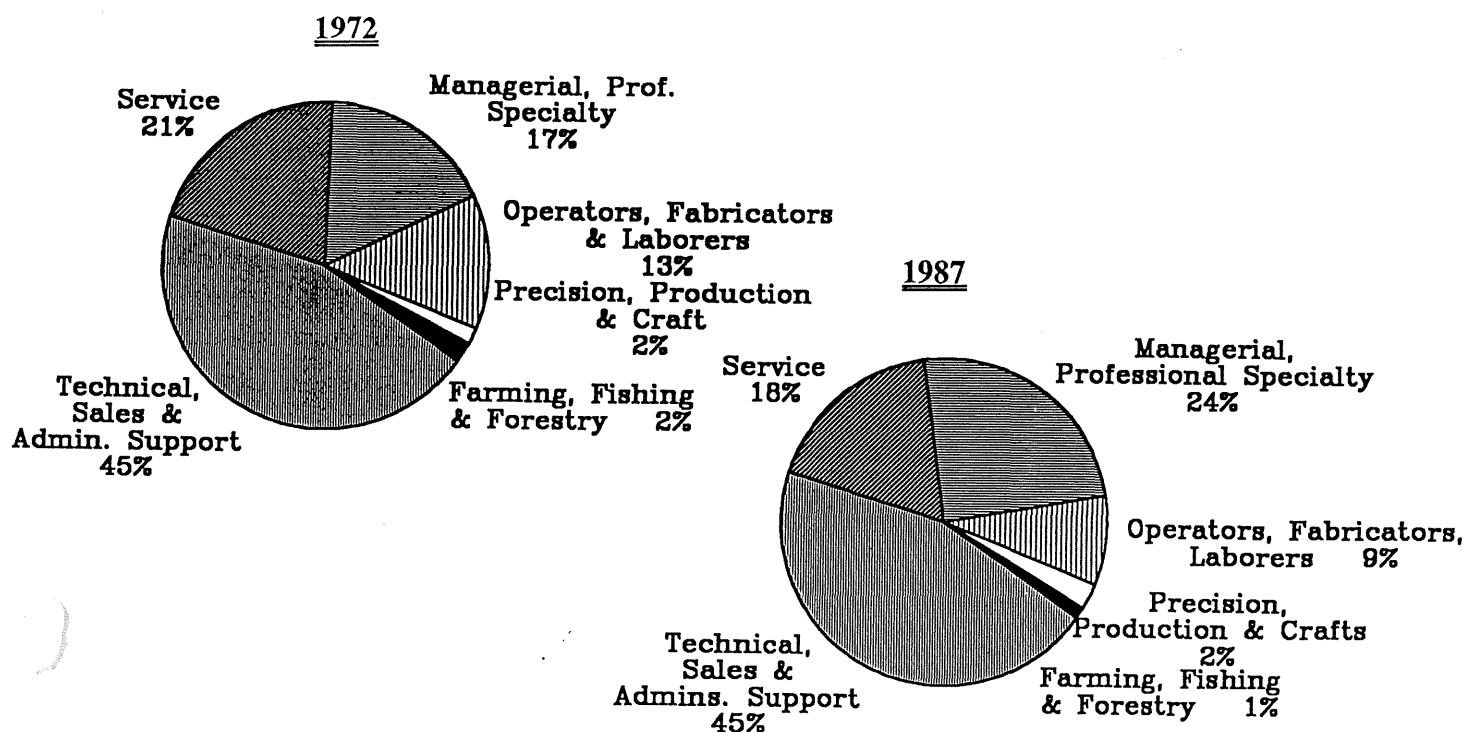
Occupations-Percent Female

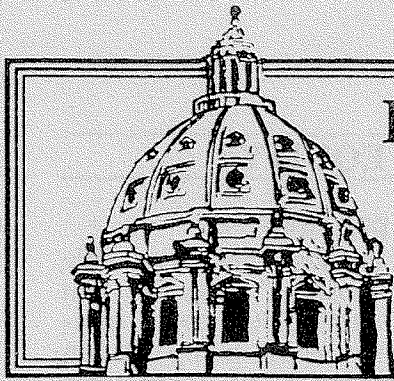
Occupational Group	1972	1977	1982	1987
Managerial, Professional Specialty	33	34.4	40.5	44.3
Technical, Sales & Admin. Support	59.5	62.6	64.3	64.7
Service (private household and protective services)	56.2	64.3	45.1	60.6
Other Service	62.6	63.9	64.6	65.2
Precision, Production and Craft	4.8	5.6	7.1	8.5
Operators	27.2	28.4	29.8	25.8
Handlers	15.4	17.8	19.2	17.1
Farming, Forestry & Fishing	15.4	15.1	15.6	15.8

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

The largest share of women remain in the technical, sales and administrative support occupations, with 45 percent. This occupational group includes clerical jobs. A slightly smaller percentage of women were in the service industry in 1987 than in 1972 and a greater percentage were in the managerial, professional specialty occupations. There is a smaller percentage of women working today as operators, fabricators and laborers than there was in 1972.

Occupational Distribution





Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

Newsletter #150

85 State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155

May 1990

(612) 296-8590 or 1-800-652-9747

HISTORICAL NOTE

This newsletter marks the 150th printing of this monthly publication. The first publication appeared in November 1976, the same year the Commission (then called the Council) on the Economic Status of Women was formed. At that time the council had eight public members and 10 legislative members. Representative (now Senator) Linda Berglin was its chair. Of the 10 original legislative members, five remain in the legislature. They are Senators Berglin, Jerome Hughes and Nancy Brataas and Reps. Phyllis Kahn and Mary Forsythe. In 1983, the Council was changed to a Commission and discontinued having public members.

The first newsletter was dedicated to explaining the history of the creation of the Council, (which dates back to 1964 under Governor Karl Rolvaag), a list of the members, reports of the organizational meetings in June and September of 1976, hiring the director, comments from the first public hearing on women in state employment and outlining the Council's mission.

That mission has remained relatively unchanged since 1976. It is:

"[To] study all matters relating to the economic status of women in Minnesota, including economic security of homemakers and women in the labor force, opportunities for educational and vocational training, employment opportunities, the contributions of women in the economy, their access to benefits and services provided to citizens of this state, and laws and business practices constituting barriers to full participation of women in the economy. In addition, the commission shall study adequacy of programs and services relating to families in Minnesota, including single-parent families and members beyond the nuclear or immediate family."

SESSION '90: LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

The following summary features enacted legislation related to the Commission's 1990 legislative proposals. The session ended April 25. Chapter numbers after the headings refer to the section of Minnesota law where the new legislation will appear.

CHILD CARE

The Child Care Fund

(CHAP. 568) Appropriates \$5.6 million to the Child Care Fund to be used to pay child care costs of AFDC-STRIDE program participants, to re-instate some low-income, non-AFDC recipients to the basic sliding fee subsidy program, to prevent current sliding fee recipients from having their benefits discontinued unless they become ineligible, to maintain the current level of rate reimbursement to child care providers serving subsidized clients and to add one staff member.

Excludes AFDC recipients from receiving subsidies through the basic sliding fee program. Counties may limit applications to the basic sliding fee program if they believe over 95 percent of their state allocation will be spent before the end of fiscal year 1991.

Child care in higher education

(CHAP. 591) Requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to study the feasibility of a loan program for students whose child care subsidy has run out. The HECB will also study ways to redefine the cost of living

allowance used to determine eligibility for state grants, to more accurately reflect living costs for students with varying living arrangements and family responsibilities, including child care costs. HECB must conduct a review and recommend changes in the amount schools and HECB can deduct from the \$4 million student child care fund for administrative costs. HECB must work with the MN Association of Financial Aid Officers to simplify the procedures to calculate eligibility for the child care grants. All reports must be made to the legislature before the 1991 session begins.

STRIDE-welfare reform

(CHAP. 569) Changes STRIDE program eligibility guidelines. After May 1, 1990 those who can volunteer for STRIDE enrollment are limited to:

1. Caretakers under age 20 who have not completed a high school education or a high school equivalency program;
2. AFDC-Unemployed Parent principal wage earners;
3. Caretakers who have been receiving AFDC for 48 or more months out of the last 60 months;
4. Caretakers who began participating in STRIDE prior to May 1, 1990, and have not completed their Employment Development Plan (EDP);
5. Caretakers whose youngest child is age 16 or older;
6. Participants in two special programs, the Self Employment Demonstration and New Chance;
7. After September 1, 1990, custodial parents ages 20 and 21 with no diploma or little or no work experience will also be eligible.

Allows the Department of Human Services to expand entrance into STRIDE beyond the above categories if there are not enough participants to use the allocations or to meet federal requirements.

AFDC study

(CHAP. 568) Orders a study of items that should be included in calculating the AFDC standard of need and appropriates \$50,000--part of which shall be used for this study.

PAY EQUITY

Local government pay equity

(CHAP. 512) Clarifies that "equitable compensation relationships" means that "compensation for female-dominated classes is not consistently below compensation for male-dominated classes of comparable work value." Also makes clear that the purpose of the pay equity statute is to eliminate sex-based wage disparities in public employment.

Provides for a negotiation process between the Commissioner of Employee Relations and local units of government when there is a disagreement over compliance.

Requires that job studies be updated and maintained and that local governments file an implementation report after the compliance deadline of Dec. 31, 1991 (or other date approved by the commissioner). Requires the commissioner, in determining compliance with the pay equity law, to consider additional factors which are unrelated to gender, but may cause a local government to be out of compliance. The commissioner must report to the legislature before a non-compliance penalty will actually be assessed.

GENDER FAIRNESS IN THE COURTS

Legal services for low-income clients

(CHAP. 568) Appropriates \$890,000 to improve access of low income persons to legal representation in family law matters.

Battered women

Appropriates \$175,000 for battered women's services.

Domestic abuse

(CHAP. 583) Expands temporary Orders for Protection (OFPs) to allow exclusion of the offender from the petitioner's place of employment.

Allows the court to require an abuser who violates the terms of the OFP to acknowledge an obligation to obey the OFP on the court record or to post a bond that is forfeited if the OFP is violated. If the abuser

fails to comply the court may commit the abuser to jail.

Expands the definition of first degree murder to include a death caused by someone while committing domestic abuse, if that person has engaged in a past pattern of domestic abuse and the death occurs under circumstances manifesting an extreme indifference to human life.

Domestic abuse prosecution plans

(CHAP. 583) Creates a five-county and five-city pilot program for prosecutors to develop prosecution plans and procedures for increased efficiency in prosecuting domestic abuse cases. Counties eligible to participate must have a record of dismissing 50 percent or more of the domestic abuse cases in that county. Advocates must be allowed to help develop these plans.

The plans must include provisions relating to early assignment of trial prosecutors, early contact with the victim, enhanced methods of gathering evidence and use of subpoenas. The plans must be reviewed annually.

Requires a prosecutor who dismisses criminal charges against someone accused of domestic assault to make a record of the specific reasons for the dismissal. If the dismissal is caused by the unavailability of the witness, the prosecutor shall indicate the specific reasons that the witness is unavailable.

The commissioner of public safety shall, by Feb. 1, 1991, evaluate the feasibility of establishing a statewide computerized data system containing information on domestic assault crimes and domestic abuse orders for protection. The data base should include perpetrators' information and the names of their victims; prior arrests for serious crimes; pretrial release conditions; probation and supervised release conditions; identifying information on those named in OFPs; and terms and conditions of the OFPs.

Family law

(CHAP. 574) Requires the court to award attorneys fees to help parties pay the costs of court proceedings if they are unable to carry on or contest a proceeding due to

financial considerations. The court can do this after considering the financial resources of both parties. Also allows fees to be awarded to one party if the other party unreasonably contributes to the length or expense of court proceedings.

Requires the court to make specific findings when it awards joint legal or physical custody over the objection of one of the parties. Creates a rebuttable presumption that joint legal custody is not in the best interests of the child when there has been domestic abuse.

Clarifies what constitutes mediation and does not allow a mediation agreement to be enforced until reviewed by attorneys and accepted by the court.

Gives persons convicted of certain violent crimes and who have either custody or visitation rights the burden of proving that continued custody or visitation rights will be in the best interests of the child.

Child support

(CHAP. 574) Amends the child support guidelines to exclude income from a second job in determining the net income available for child support and modifications of the original support order. Second income is excluded only if: the job began after the dissolution action began; the job is in addition to a 40-hour work week; the support ordered is at least at guideline level; the additional employment is voluntary; the compensation is by the hour or fraction of an hour; the obligor's pay structure is not different from what it is had been for the two years prior to the dissolution action.

(CHAP. 568) Amends the definition of net income when determining child support amounts to include "in-kind" payments received by the obligor from an employer if the payments reduce the obligor's living expenses. (For example, an apartment caretaker who receives a reduction in rent would have to include the value of that reduction in his or her income.)

Allows the court to order a child support obligor to identify or establish a child support deposit account at a bank when that person's child support payment cannot be made through income withholding. (For

example, an obligor who is self-employed or receives fee payments as income, rather than receiving a regular paycheck through an employer.) Child support payments can then be automatically transferred from the account to the Child Support Enforcement Office, which will forward it to the recipient. If the bank fails to transfer available funds the bank is liable to the obligee.

Requires employers who are withholding income for an employee who owes child support to notify the child support enforcement agency if the employee is to receive a lump sum payment of more than \$500 from the employer. The employer must hold the payment until the court determines how much must go toward the child support obligation. Allows the state to pay a bonus to county child support enforcement offices for identifying and enforcing any dependent health care coverage that a child support obligor might have available, when that obligor is under court order to pay for health care and the dependents are currently on medical assistance.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Small-business procurements

(CHAP. 541) Establishes a program for state purchasing from small, targeted businesses and businesses in economically disadvantaged areas of the state. Targeted businesses include those owned and operated by women, persons with disabilities and specific minority groups. Targeted businesses shall be given a six percent preference when submitting bids. The purpose of this legislation is to remedy the effects of past discrimination. State purchasing from these groups is to be reviewed every two years.

MINIMUM WAGE

(CHAP. 418) Raises Minnesota's minimum wage from \$3.95 to \$4.25 per hour beginning January 1, 1991, for those working for larger employers. For smaller employers, the wage rises to \$4 per hour. Eliminates the sub-minimum wage for minors and sets their minimum wage at \$4 an hour.

PRE-NATAL CARE FOR LOW-INCOME WOMEN

Prenatal care, preventative care for children

(CHAP. 568) Requires the Commissioner of Health, along with other state agencies, to prepare a state plan to increase the usage of prenatal care and preventive health care services for children and make a report to the legislature by Dec. 15, 1990.

Obstetrical and pediatric services

(CHAP 568) Increases the reimbursement rate paid to medical providers under Medical Assistance for obstetrical and pediatric services by 15 percent.

Includes a provision for more outreach under the Children's Health Plan to improve access to prenatal and infant medical care.

Maternal child health

(CHAPS 542 and 568) Appropriates \$900,000 to fund maternal child health block grants and social service programs designed to reduce incidences of medical complications of children born to alcohol or drug-using mothers.

OTHER

The following legislation is of interest to women but was not part of the Commission's 1990 legislative proposals.

Family and medical leave

(Chapter 577) Requires all employers to allow their employees up to 16 hours of leave during any school year to attend school conferences or classroom activities if they cannot be scheduled during non-work hours. The leave can be unpaid, unless an employee chooses to use vacation or other paid leave as appropriate.

For employers with 21 or more employees at least one site, employees must be allowed to use any of their own accrued sick time to care for their sick children.

Nursing grants

(CHAP. 591) Creates a grant program, administered by HECB, for students entering or enrolling in registered nurse or licensed

practical nurse programs with no previous nursing training or education, and who agree to practice in a designated rural area. To be eligible they must serve at least three of the first five years following licensure in a designated rural area and have financial need.

Establishes a grant program for already licensed practical nurses who are enrolled in a program leading to licensure as a registered nurse. Registered nurses may seek grants for a B.A., M.A. or other advanced nursing program.

Early Childhood Family Education

(CHAP. 562) Creates a grant program for local school districts that want to expand Early Childhood Family Education programs beyond kindergarten to third grade. Services must integrate the roles of families, regular classroom teachers, and community-based social service agencies.

Criminal sexual conduct

(CHAP. 492) Expands the definition of fifth-degree criminal sexual contact to include the intentional removal or attempted removal of clothing covering a person's intimate parts or undergarments.

Auto insurance for child care providers

(CHAP. 496) Prohibits insurance companies which provide no-fault automobile coverage from excluding vehicles used to transport children as part of a family or group family day care program.

Women offenders

(CHAP. 568) Appropriates \$1.8 million for services to adult women offenders. Adds prison facilities for women in Moose Lake.

Human rights

(CHAP. 567) Requires an employer to make "a reasonable accommodation" for an employee's pregnancy or childbirth related disability, just as with other types of disabilities. To fail to do so would constitute an unfair labor practice.

States that it is an unfair discriminatory practice for a person engaged in trade, business or providing a service to refuse to do business with, to refuse to contract with, or to change the terms of a contract because of a person's race, color, sex or disability unless it can be shown that there is a legitimate business purpose for this discrimination.

"Drop in" child care

(CHAP. 568) Changes the definition of "drop in" child care programs to include only non-residential programs in which a child participates a maximum of 45 hours per month. Eliminates the five-hour daily limit.

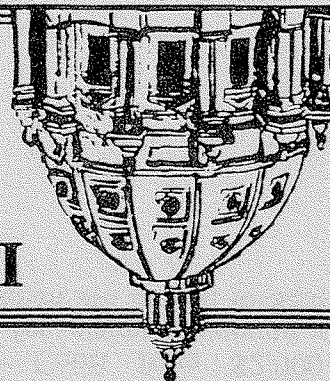
Affirmative action in state agencies

(CHAP. 571) Requires that the Governor, when reviewing the performance of state agency department director, to review their department's attainment of its affirmative action goals. Requires the boards of the higher education systems (community colleges, technical colleges, state universities), to do the same with system directors.

Conciliation court limit

(CHAP. 575) Increases amounts for claims in Conciliation Court from \$2,000 to \$4,000, except for claims involving consumer credit, which are limited to \$2,500.

**Legislative
Commission on the
Economic Status
of Women**



Commission on the Economic
Status of Women
85 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

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NEWSLETTER #150
May 1990

**SESSION '90: LEGISLATIVE
SUMMARY**

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Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

Newsletter #151

85 State Office Bldg, St. Paul, MN 55155

June 1990

(612) 296-8590 or 1-800-652-9747

IN THIS ISSUE

This newsletter includes detailed 1988 data on divorces in Minnesota, including maintenance and child support awards and child custody arrangements. This is the first time some of this data has been available. It was gathered by the state's Department of Health from a form filled out at the time of filing final marriage dissolution decrees. For some topics included here, information was incomplete and does not reflect all dissolutions.

Also included is information from a 1986 study of Minnesota data, published in "The Economic Consequences of Divorce for Men, Women, and Children in Minnesota," by Lois Yellowthunder, Kathryn Rettig, Donna Hendrickson Christensen and Carla Dahl of the University of Minnesota's Department of Family Social Science.

ANNOUNCEMENT

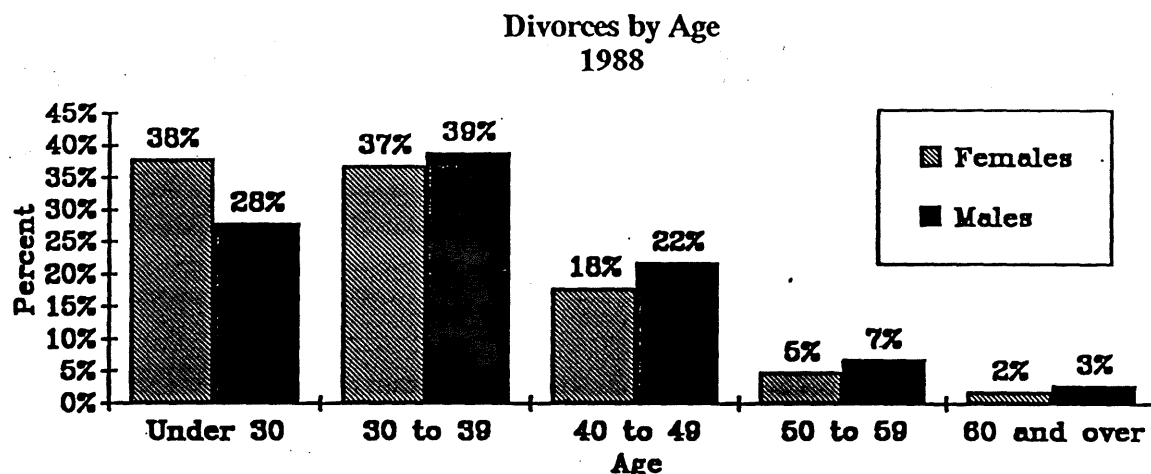
The Commission will hold a public hearing June 25 at 2 p.m., in the Alumni Lounge of Winona State University, Kryzko Commons. Commission members will hear testimony on issues relating to the economic status of women including child care, pay equity, the STRIDE program, rural women, child support and health care. For more information, contact the Commission office or local hearing coordinator, Loretta Frederick, at 507-454-6660.

DIVORCES IN MINNESOTA

In 1988 there were 15,245 divorces in the state of Minnesota, only slightly more than the previous year when 14,931 divorces occurred. More divorces occurred in the 7-county metro area (59 percent) than in the remainder of the state.

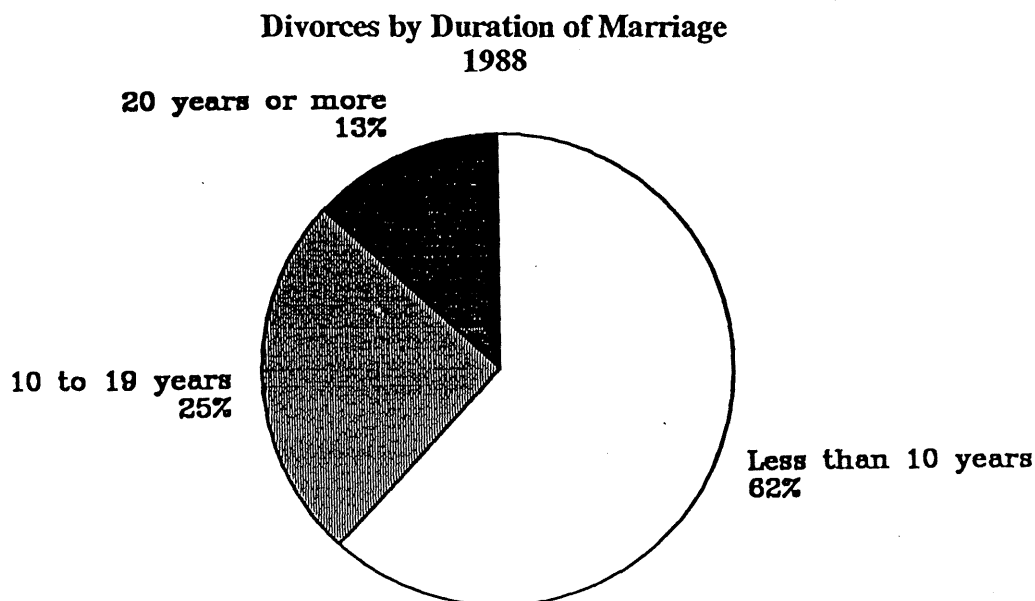
The Minnesota Health Department collects information on each divorce filed in the state, including any child support and maintenance awards, and child custody arrangements. Some of the data on these issues are incomplete and are not available for all the divorces in the state during that year.

The largest share of women who were divorced in 1988 were under age 30, while the largest group of men were between the ages of 30 and 39. The chart below shows the percentage of women and men in each age group for divorces occurring in 1988.

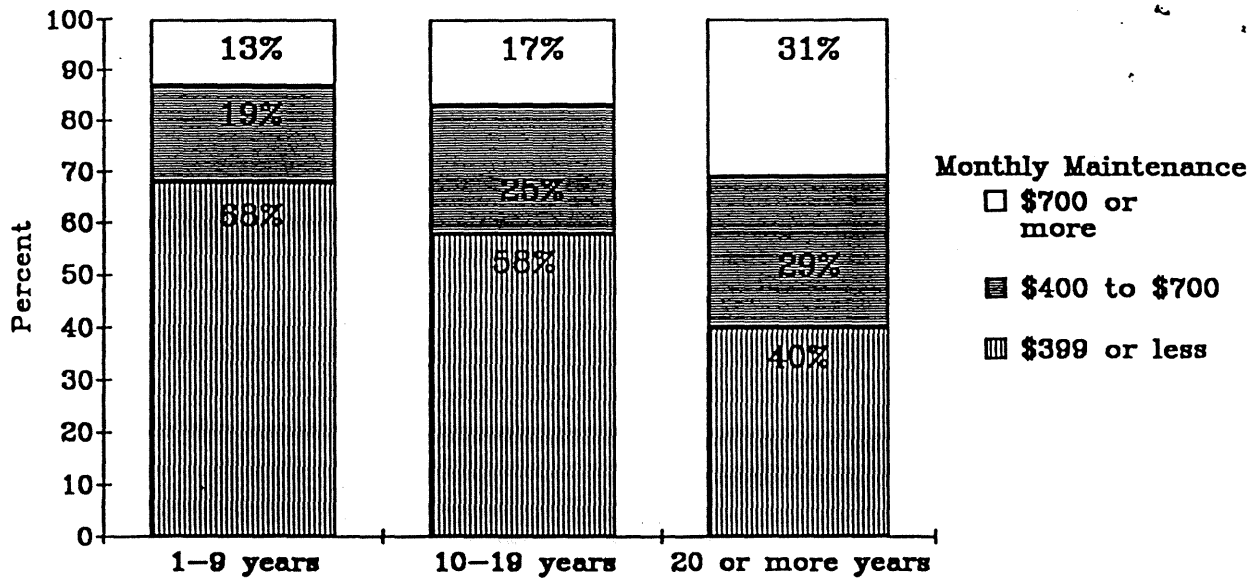


DURATION OF MARRIAGES

Most divorces occur before the tenth year of marriage, with the largest number taking place between one and four years. However, 13 percent of all Minnesota divorces occurred in marriages lasting longer than 20 years. The chart below shows the percentage in each group.



Maintenance by Length of Marriage

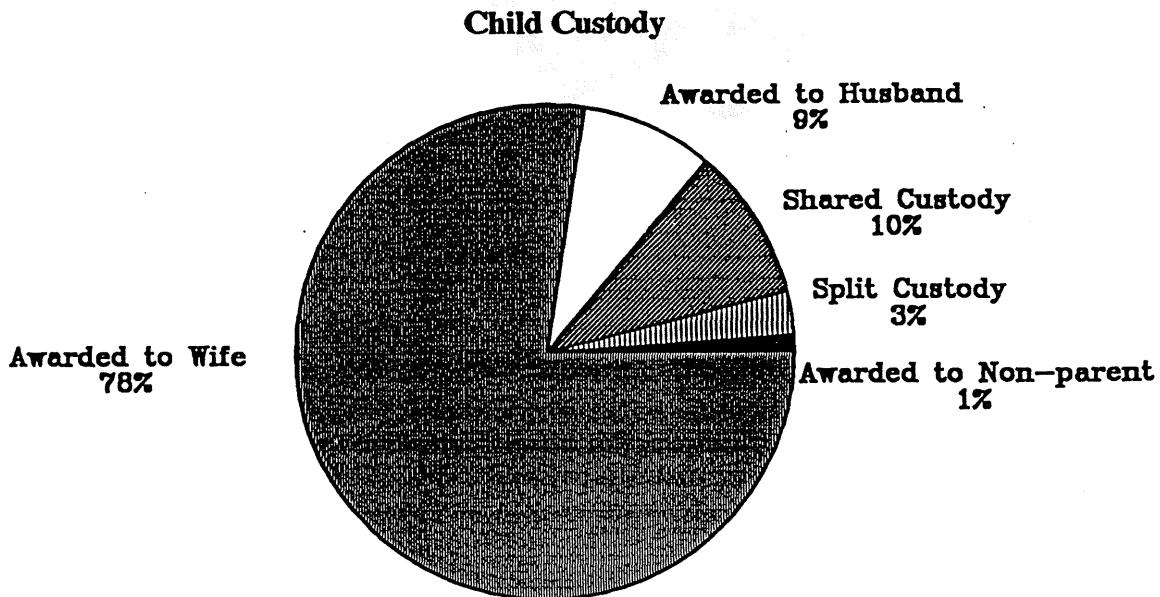


CHILDREN AND DIVORCE

About half of the couples divorced in 1988 had children. This included approximately 13,660 children, for an average of 1.8 children per divorce case. An equal percentage of divorces involved one and two children, both at 41 percent. Fourteen percent had three children and 4 percent had four or more children.

CHILD CUSTODY

Women received custody of the children in more than three-quarters of the divorces reportedly involving children in 1988. In the remaining cases, custody was shared, awarded to the husband, split between the parents, or awarded to a non-parent. The chart below indicates who received custody of the children.



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

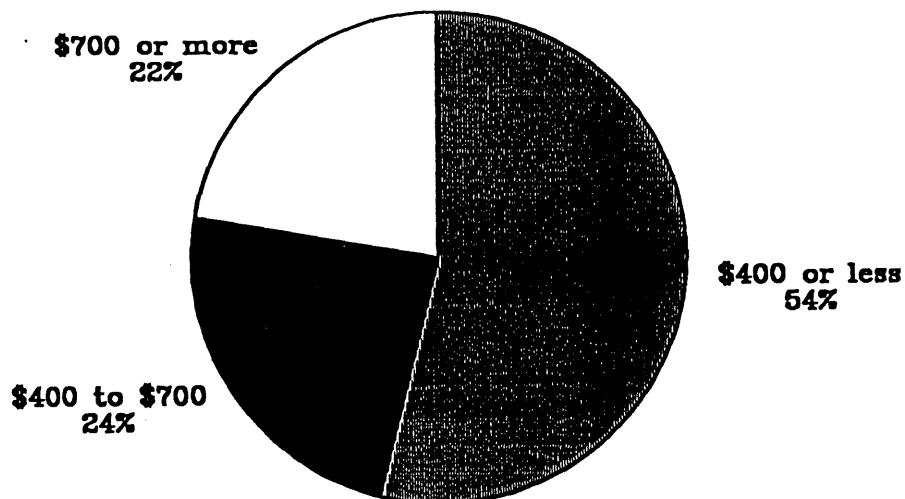
The majority, 57 percent, of women divorced in 1988 were high school graduates and their husbands were also high school graduates. Thirty-one percent of women had attended one to four years of college and 4 percent had 5 or more years of a college education. Only eight percent of these women had no high school diploma.

MAINTENANCE AWARDS

Awards of spousal maintenance (formerly called alimony) were made to 976 women and 10 men. Over half of the women had maintenance awards of less than \$400 per month and 24 percent received \$400 to \$700 monthly. About half of the women reportedly awarded maintenance had husbands with incomes greater than \$35,000 annually.

No data are available regarding the length of the maintenance award, whether it was temporary or permanent. However, a 1986 study, "The Economic Consequences of Divorce for Men, Women and Children in Minnesota," by Lois Yellowthunder, Kathryn Rettig, et. al, showed that nearly all maintenance awards were temporary, with an average duration of 36 months.

Monthly Maintenance Awards



MAINTENANCE AND LENGTH OF MARRIAGE

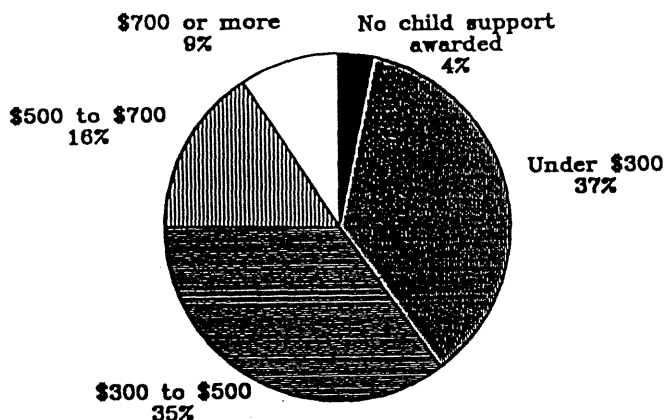
Women were more likely to be awarded maintenance after many years of marriage than those married fewer years. Nearly 40 percent of women with maintenance awards had marriages lasting 20 years or more. In marriages lasting 10 to 19 years, 36 percent of women received maintenance and 24 percent of those married one to 9 years had maintenance awards. No maintenance was awarded in marriages of less than one year.

The length of the marriage also had an effect on the amount of the maintenance award, with higher awards in longer marriages. The chart at the top of the next page shows the amount of maintenance awards compared to the number of years of marriage.

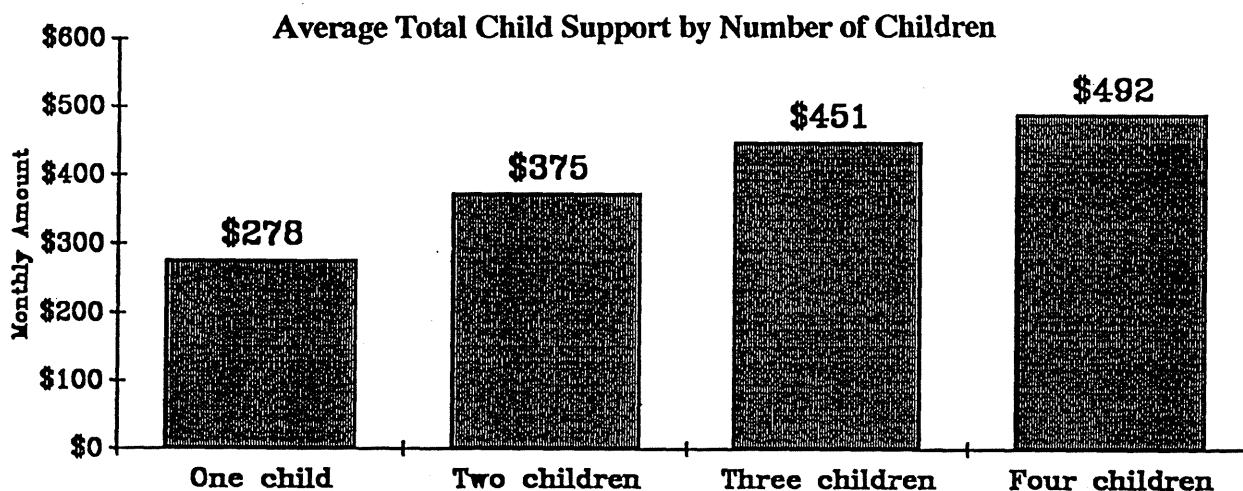
CHILD SUPPORT

Of the 5,987 divorces where women had custody of the children, over three-quarters of child support awards were \$500 or less per month. In 4 percent of the cases no child support was awarded. The chart below indicates the percent of women awarded child support by the monthly amount. The median child support amount for the cases in which the child support amount was known was \$194 per month per child.

**Child Support Awards to Children
in Mother's Custody**

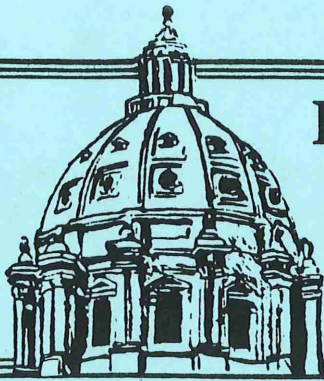


The largest share of custodial parents with one child were awarded \$200 to \$299 monthly, those with two children were awarded \$300 to \$399 and those with three children were awarded \$400 to \$499 monthly. The chart below shows the average total support awarded by the number of children. When calculated on a per child basis, the awards decline as the number of children increases. For example, a custodial parent with one child was awarded an average of \$278, while the child support amount for two children was \$188 per child, for three was \$150 per child and for four was \$123 per child.



CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES

In a study of divorces in Minnesota, researchers at the University of Minnesota examined the relationship between the child support actually awarded and the child support guidelines in Minnesota law. While the actual awards deviated from the guidelines by being both higher and lower than the suggested amounts, the average discrepancy was downward by \$175 a year. It was also found that non-custodial parents earning higher incomes more frequently had child support awards which were less than suggested by the guidelines.



Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

Newsletter #152

85 State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155

July 1990

(612) 296-8590 or 1-800-652-9747

IN THIS NEWSLETTER

"Reflections of Risk"

The basis for this newsletter is "Reflections of Risk: Growing Up Female in Minnesota," a recent report by the Minnesota Women's Fund. The information for the report came from an adolescent health survey conducted during the 1986-87 school year by researchers at the University of Minnesota's Adolescent Health Program, in conjunction with the Minnesota Departments of Education and Health. Over 36,000 public school students in grades 7 through 12 participated in the survey during the 1986-87 school year.

"Reflections of Risk" includes recommendations for changing the factors that seem to be putting Minnesota's teenage girls "at risk" for behaviors that may not lead to productive, healthy lives as adults. To develop the recommendations, the Women's Fund convened a group including teachers, policy makers, advocates and health and social service professionals. Some of these recommendations are included in this newsletter, along with a summary of the survey's findings.

Child care resource and referral agencies

The state of Minnesota currently funds 25 resource and referral programs throughout the state to help parents find available child care in their area and to know how to choose an appropriate program. The agencies also provide technical assistance to people who want to start child care programs and training for those already in the business. The agencies are listed on page 4 of this newsletter.

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Researchers analyzing the answers given by the teenagers in the Adolescent Health Survey concluded that boys and girls react differently to the world.

Girls tend not to seek help when they need it. When problems arise, girls often direct them inward, developing self-destructive behaviors such as a negative image of their body, eating disorders, emotional stress and attempts at suicide. The report labels these behavior patterns as "quietly disturbed" and notes that these types of psychological behaviors can often go unnoticed by adults.

In contrast, boys tend to "act out" their problems, resulting in alcohol abuse, drug abuse, accidental injury and delinquency. These behaviors are more likely to attract the attention of adults and the boys, therefore, eventually get help, the report finds.

ABUSE

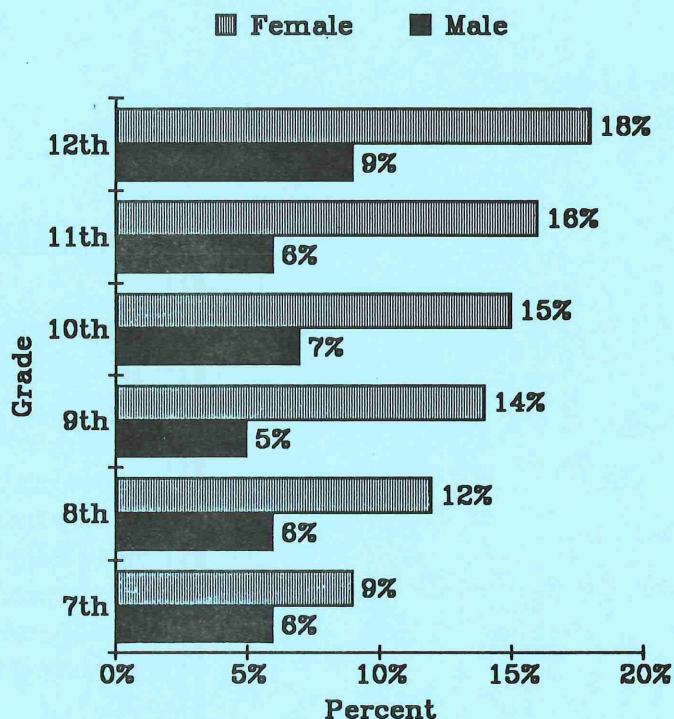
Four times as many girls as boys reported having been physically or sexually abused. About 15 percent of junior high and almost 25 percent of senior high girls reported that someone in their lives had abused them physically, sexually or both. In contrast, four percent of junior high and six percent of senior high boys reported abuse, most of it physical.

SUICIDE

A higher percentage of girls reported having attempted suicide than did boys, although other studies have shown that more boys than girls carry through with suicide. Of all 12th grade students, twice as many girls (18 percent) indicated that they had attempted

suicide at least once as did boys (nine percent). Additionally, girls who have attempted suicide are more likely than the boys to say they think seriously about trying again.

Students Attempting Suicide



STRESS LEVELS

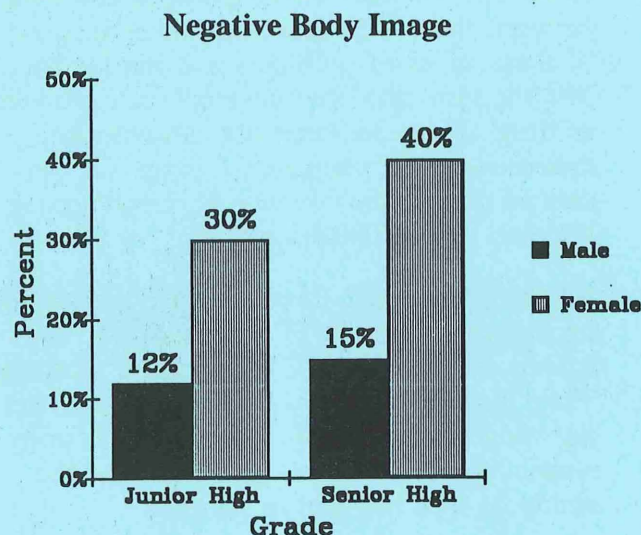
Close to twice as many girls as boys say that they are under high or very high levels of stress. Twenty-five percent of junior high and over 33 percent of senior high girls fall into the highest stress categories, compared with 13 percent of junior high and 20 percent of senior high boys.

FAMILY CONNECTEDNESS

More girls than boys say that they feel disconnected from their families. "Connectedness" in the survey was defined as "the extent to which a student feels emotionally connected to her family members, and feels that her family cares about her." If girls rely on anyone for "support, validation, and advice," it is more often their peers than their parents, they said.

BODY IMAGE

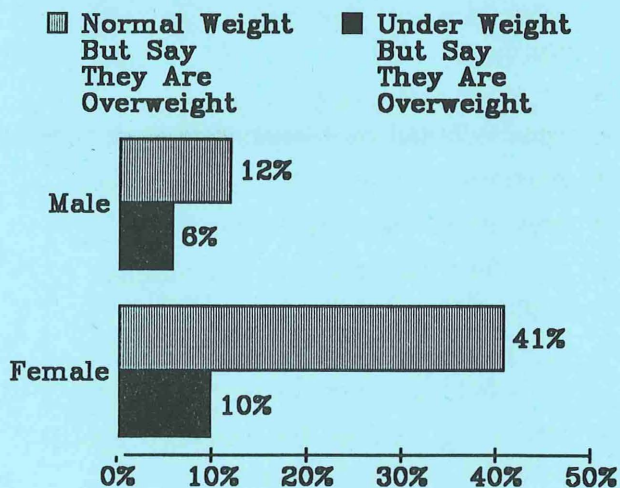
Almost three times as many girls as boys have a negative image of their own bodies. Thirty percent of junior high and 40 percent of senior high girls view their bodies negatively, compared with 12 percent of junior high and 15 percent of senior high boys.



WEIGHT

Weight is a key factor in girls' view of themselves. Girls are more likely than boys to say that they are overweight, even though they are within normal weight or even underweight based on average weight tables for reported height. Specifically, 51 percent of the girls said that they were overweight as compared to 18 percent of the boys.

Self-Evaluation and Body Weight



EATING DISORDERS

Over-concern about weight issues can lead to common but serious eating disorders, such as bulimia and/or anorexia nervosa. Based on answers to survey questions regarding body image and weight image, researchers calculated the likelihood of developing eating disorders. Compared with boys their own age, five times as many junior high and nine times as many senior high girls fall into the high-risk category for eating disorders. Further, almost twice as many girls fall into the moderate risk category.

Ten percent of junior high and 16 percent of senior high girls reported having been on 10 or more diets in the previous year. Almost one-third of all females reported having had episodes of over-eating followed by induced vomiting. Finally, 14 percent say they vomit after eating at least once a month.

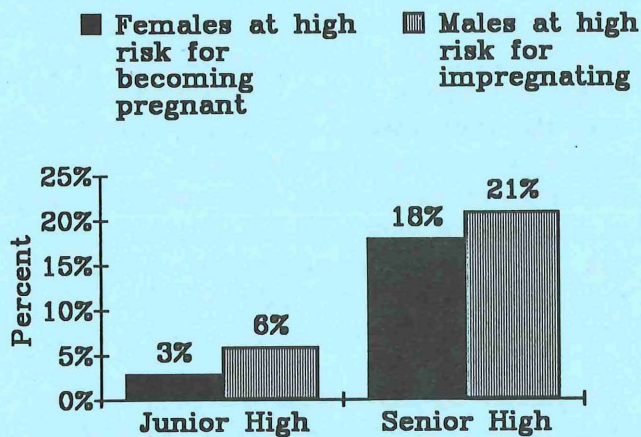
PREGNANCY RISK

The survey revealed that boys are somewhat more likely than girls to be at "moderate to high risk for pregnancy"--that is, a greater percentage of boys are likely to engage in frequent, unprotected sex and risk impregnating someone, than girls are likely to get pregnant.

Six percent of junior high and 21 percent of senior high boys fell into the high risk category for pregnancy, compared with 3 percent of junior high and 18 percent of senior high girls. Other studies have shown that about 10 percent of adolescent females in Minnesota become pregnant each year.

The chart at the top of the next page indicates the percentage of girls and boys reported at high risk for pregnancy or for causing a pregnancy, divided by grade level.

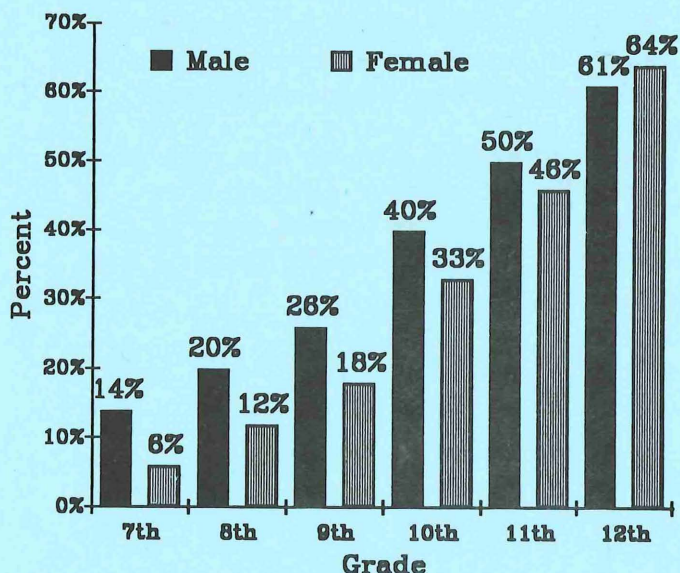
Students at High Risk for Causing Pregnancy or Becoming Pregnant



SEXUAL ACTIVITY

The reason more adolescent boys are at high risk for pregnancy than girls is that a greater percentage are engaging in sexual intercourse. Among adolescents, sexual activity is greater for younger boys than for younger girls, but this reverses by the 12th grade level, when a greater percentage of girls than boys reported having had sexual intercourse. The chart below indicates the percentage of students at each grade level who reported having had sexual intercourse. Average age for first intercourse in Minnesota is about 14 for boys and 14 and a half for girls.

Students Reporting Sexual Intercourse



CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of the survey's findings conclude that about 80 percent of all Minnesota girls are at high risk for developing one of the "quietly disturbed" behaviors such as negative body image, eating disorders, emotional stress and suicide. There is also a correlation between those who may have more than two of these types of problems and the likelihood that the girls may also develop such problems as drug abuse, accident risk, absenteeism, delinquency and pregnancy. Sixty-five percent of girls in the "quietly disturbed" group also "act out" in these ways.

Researchers found, however, that certain life experiences reported by the teenagers can reduce the risk of developing these problems. They include good school performance, feeling connected to family, low levels of family stress, high levels of religiousness and the ability to seek the help of parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey's recommendations for preventing these types of problems in teenage girls include:

- school curriculum that focus on the contributions, accomplishments and concerns of women from diverse ethnic and racial groups;
- programs to increase girls' skills in math;
- peer counseling programs to help girls break their isolation and get help;
- more personal and educational choices for girls;
- more opportunities for economic independence and professional success;
- preventing violence against females;
- preventing teen pregnancy;
- providing financial and community support for families;
- replacing negative media images of females with more realistic ones, and
- increasing funding for programs specifically for girls and women.

MN CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCIES

Patrick Gannon-Statewide Director
2116 Campus Dr. SE
Rochester, MN 53904
(507) 287-2497

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.
Preschool Program
102 N. Broadway, Box 607
Crookston, MN 56716
(218) 281-6672

Mahube Community Council, Inc.
Box 747
Detroit Lake, MN 56502
(218) 847-1385

Carlton County Human Services
1215 Ave. C
Cloquet, MN 55720
(218) 879-4583 or 1-800-642-9082

Itasca County Social Services
Courthouse
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 327-2941

St. Louis County Social Services
320 W. Second St.
Duluth, MN 55802
(218) 726-2072

Lakes and Prairies CCRR
Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council
2700 12th Ave. S.
Box 919
Moorhead, MN 56560
(218) 233-7514 or 1-800-452-3646

Wadena Technical College
405 SW Colfax
Box 566
Wadena, MN 56482
(218) 631-3530 or 1-800-247-2007

Satellite:
Leech Lake Indian Reservation
Rural Route 3, Box 100
Cass Lake, MN 56633
(218) 335-8278

**Heartland Community
Action Agency**
310 S. 1st. St
Box 1359
Willmar, MN 56201
(612) 235-0850 or 1-800-992-1710

**Prairie Five Community Action
Council**
Box 695
Montevideo, MN 56265
(612) 269-6578

**East Central Regional
Development Commission**
100 S. Park St.
Mora, MN 55051
(612) 679-4065

Satellite:
Family Resource Center
Box 836
12815 1st Ave. N.
Lindstrom, MN 55045
(612) 257-2400

Central Minnesota Child Care
102 Doctors Park
Box 1797
St. Cloud, MN 56302
(612) 251-5081

**Southwestern MN Opportunity
Council, Inc.**
515 10th St. Box 787
Worthington, MN 56187
(507) 376-4195

Western Community Action, Inc.
203 W. Main
Box 246
Marshall, MN 56258
(507) 537-1416

South Central Plus
1610 Commerce Drive.
N. Mankato, MN 56001
(507) 389-1425

**Child Care Resource &
Referral, Inc.**
2116 Campus Dr. SE
Rochester, MN 55904
(507) 287-2020

The Parenting Resource Center, Inc.
1900 NW 8th Ave.
Box 505
Austin, MN 55912
(507) 433-0692 or 1-800-247-5039

SCOPE Resource Center
122 E. McKinley
Owatonna, MN 55060
(507) 455-2560

**Anoka County Social Services
Department**
Courthouse, 4th Floor
Anoka, MN 55303
(612) 422-7159

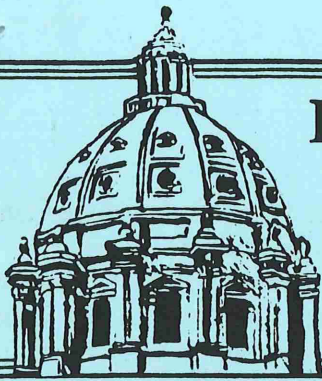
Community Action Council CCRR
14451 C. Rd. 11
Burnsville, Mn 55337
(612) 431-2112

GMDCA
1628 Elliot Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55404
(612) 341-1177

Resources for Child Caring
450 N. Syndicate Ave
St. Paul, MN 55104
(612) 641-0305

CC Resource and Referral
Box 42
Shakopee, MN 55379
(612) 496-8293

**Washington County
Community Social Services**
14900 61 St. N.
Box 30
Stillwater, MN 55082
(612) 779-5023



Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

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IN THIS ISSUE

Child-bearing no longer stops a woman's career, but merely causes a relatively short interruption in the course of a woman's working life. According to a March 1990 special report by the U.S. Census Bureau, "Work and Family Patterns of American Women," a woman's work life once she becomes pregnant and has children has changed significantly over the last three decades. The report examined those changes, comparing the early 1960s with the first half of the 1980s, the most recent years for which detailed maternity information is available. The goal of the study was to discover how these women dealt with maternity leave arrangements and how many of them re-entered the labor force after the birth of their first child.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Commission is planning to hold two public hearings in southwestern Minnesota on October 3. One will be held during the day in Windom and the other that evening in Pipestone. For more information or if you wish to testify, please call the Commission office.

PREGNANCY AND EMPLOYMENT--CURRENT LAW

Whether or not a pregnant woman receives maternity benefits from her employer is dependent upon that employer's own policies. There are very few state or federal laws which require employers to provide pregnancy-related benefits. Both state and federal laws prohibit discrimination against pregnant workers or work applicants. It is illegal to fire someone because she is pregnant. In providing employee benefits, employers are required only to treat pregnancy-related illnesses and absences the same as other conditions. If the company does not provide sick leave or disability leave for all workers, for example, it is not required to provide it to pregnant workers.

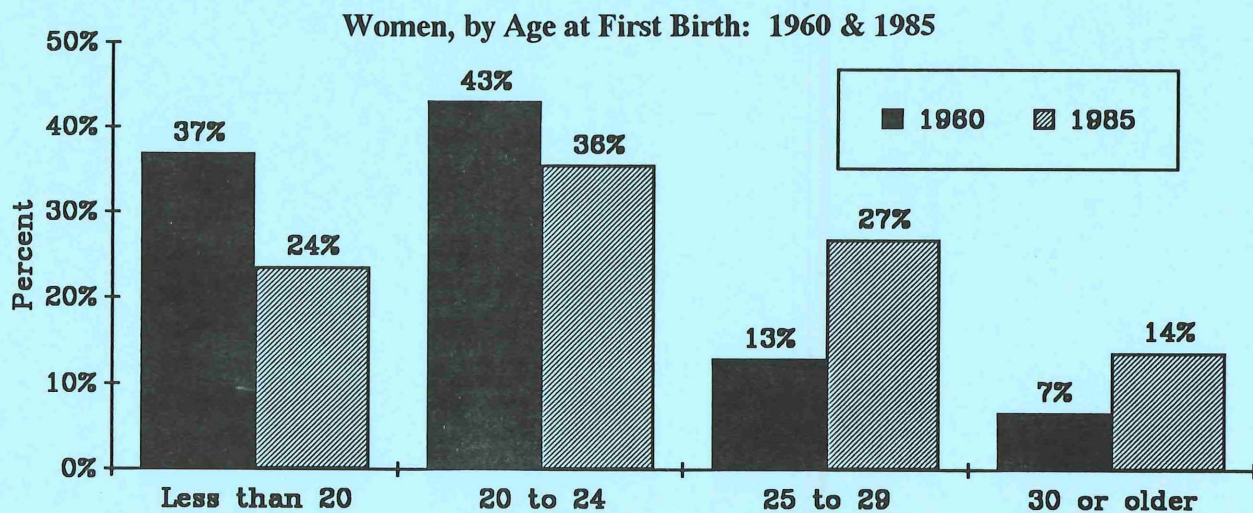
Minnesota is one of the few states which requires employers to allow workers to take six weeks of unpaid leave after the birth or adoption of a child. This is available to both men and women who work for employers who have at least 21 full-time employees. Upon return from the leave, employees are guaranteed their former job or a position with comparable duties, number of hours and pay.

By 1988, only six states had laws requiring employers to grant leaves of absence to care for new children. Minnesota, Wisconsin, Maine, Oregon, Rhode Island and Tennessee require private employers to grant "parental leave". Connecticut require such leave only for state employees. Two states, Iowa and Louisiana, require employers to provide a "pregnancy disability" leave, treating pregnancy like a disability for leave purposes, and 16 other states have some other pregnancy leave requirements in law.

WOMEN'S SHARE OF THE LABOR FORCE

Since the 1960s the make up of the labor force has changed dramatically. Women were 37 percent of the labor force in 1968, but by the end of 1988 they were nearly half, 45 percent, of the labor force. A large share of this increase came from the trend of women with young children to re-enter the labor force shortly after their children are born. Also, women who became pregnant were much more likely to remain working throughout their pregnancy, with relatively brief interruptions in their work compared to their 1960s counterparts.

One of the main reasons for the increase in the number of women working during their pregnancies was the trend toward delaying childbirth. Older expectant women potentially have more education and labor force experience than younger mothers and therefore are more attached to the labor force and likely to work through their pregnancies. Younger women are more likely to quit their jobs voluntarily. The chart below shows the changes in women's age with their first child is born for 1960 and 1985.



LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS

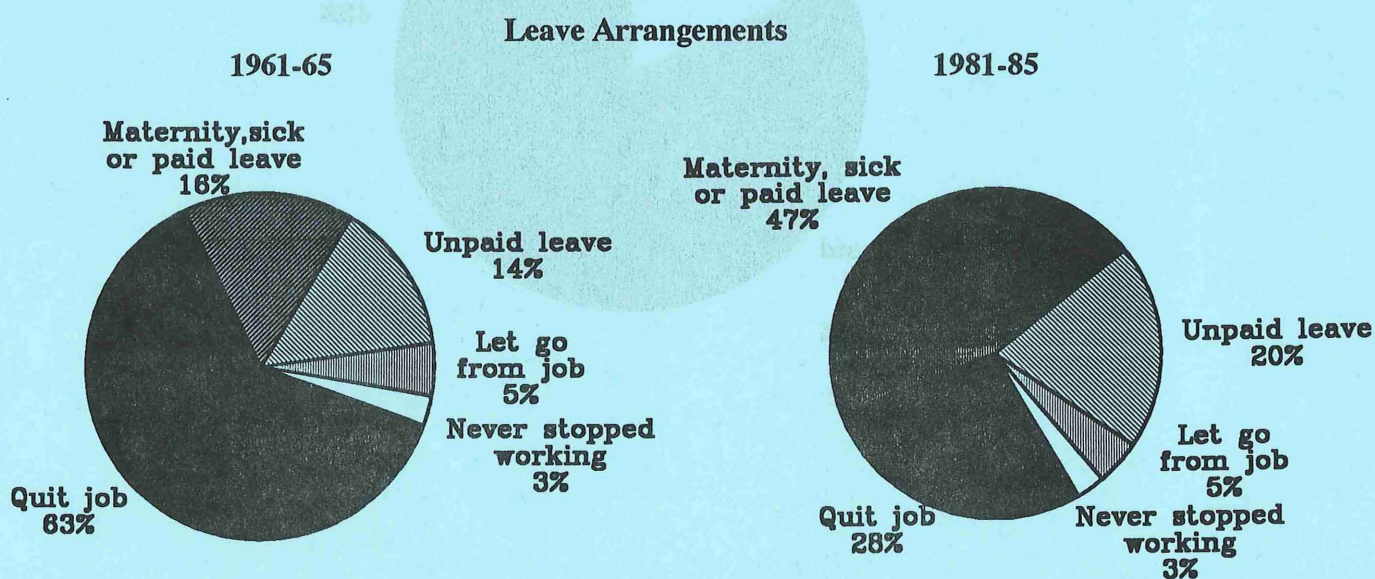
Expectant mothers remaining in the workforce created the need for maternity leave arrangements and employers responded to the need, as reflected in the greater numbers of working women reporting leave arrangements in the 1980s, compared to the 1960s. Respondents to the survey were asked to check which of the five categories applied to them once they became pregnant:

1. Quit job 2. Maternity/sick/paid leave 3. Unpaid leave of absence 4. Let go from job 5. Never stopped working. The results are indicated in the chart at the bottom of this page.

(Those responding that a maternity/sick/paid leave arrangement was made were not asked to report the length of their leave. Most likely they were fairly short-term, as evidenced by survey information which shows a rapid return to work. These leaves provided either a cash payment of benefits or a formal agreement regarding retention of benefits such as job security or seniority. The unpaid leave of absence category include leaves without pay but with an informal agreement that the woman would be able to return to work within an agreed-upon period after childbirth.)

Results of the survey showed that in the 1960s, when less than one-half of women worked throughout their pregnancies, most of those women eventually quit their job before their child was born. Specifically, 63 percent of pregnant working women quit their jobs before their child's birth, regardless of their social or economic circumstances. Another 30 percent of pregnant women in the 1960s reported either maternity leave or unpaid leave of absence. No more than three percent of women stated that they never stopped working because of their pregnancy. Surprisingly, five percent of pregnant women said that they were let go from their jobs.

By the end of the study period, 1981-85, the most common type of leave arrangement made by pregnant women was some form of maternity or paid leave. The number of women who quit their jobs declined by over one half by 1981-85 only 28 percent of pregnant women voluntarily quit their jobs. The number of women taking unpaid leave of absence has remained at about the 20 percent level since the 1970s.



LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS BY AGE

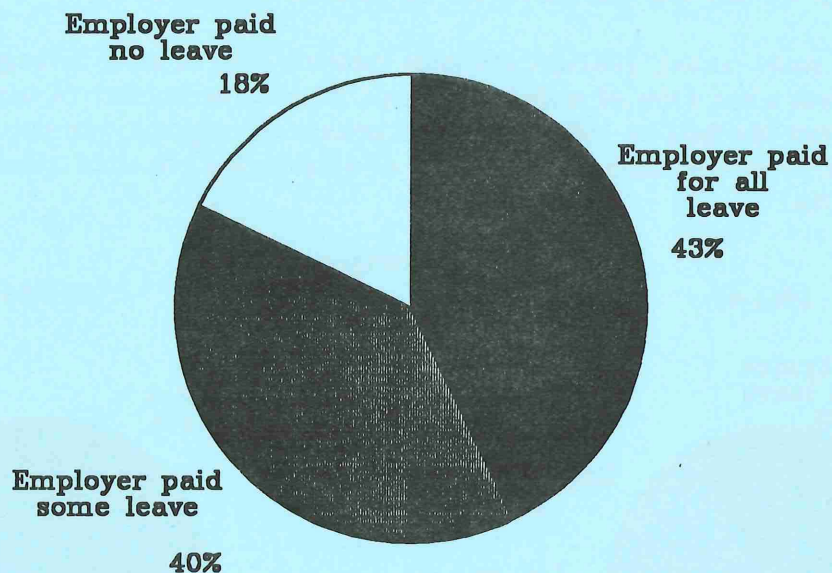
The study revealed that younger pregnant women today are more likely to quit their jobs or be let go than were women who were relatively older and had delayed childbirth. In the period between 1981 and 1985, 43 percent of pregnant women between ages 18 and 22 quit their jobs, compared with 20 percent at age 25 and over. Additionally, about 14 percent of women ages 18 and 19 were let go from their job while pregnant, compared with only two percent of mothers age 30 and over.

Older women were also more likely to receive maternity benefits such as paid leave and/or an agreement regarding the retention of their position than were younger women. This could be explained by their longer tenure and/or higher level jobs they hold and the accompanying benefits.

PAID OR UNPAID LEAVE

Full-time workers were more likely to receive maternity benefits than part-time workers and were more likely to get actual cash benefits. For full-time workers in 1981 to 1985, 43 percent reported the employer paid for their leave, 40 percent said some part of their leave was paid and 18 percent said none was made. This is a substantial change from 1961 to 1965, when half of workers reported no part of their leaves were paid.

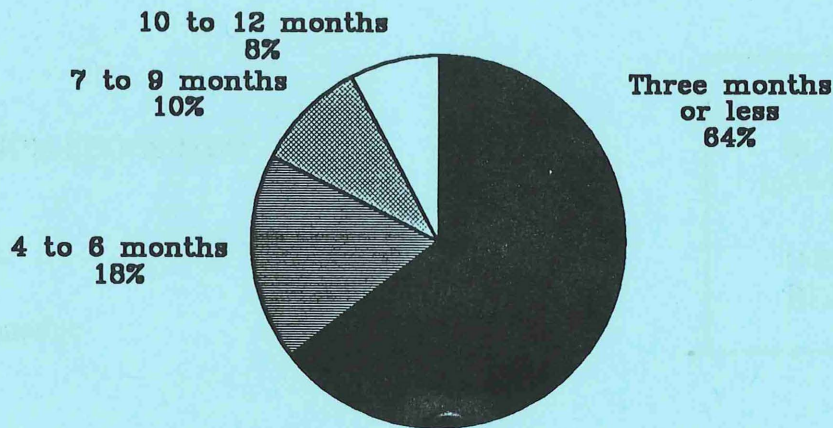
**Paid or Unpaid Leave Arrangements
1981-1985**



RETURNING TO WORK

Another significant change since the 1960s has been women's increasingly rapid return to work after the birth of a child. Working within one year after the birth of a child was a rare occurrence in the 1960s. Only 17 percent of mothers with newborns had returned to work by the 12th month, while 53 percent of mothers who gave birth between 1981 and 1984 had returned to work by the 12th month. The factors that seemed to influence this trend are how long they worked during their pregnancy, whether or not the mother received maternity benefits and the possibility of job retention after childbirth.

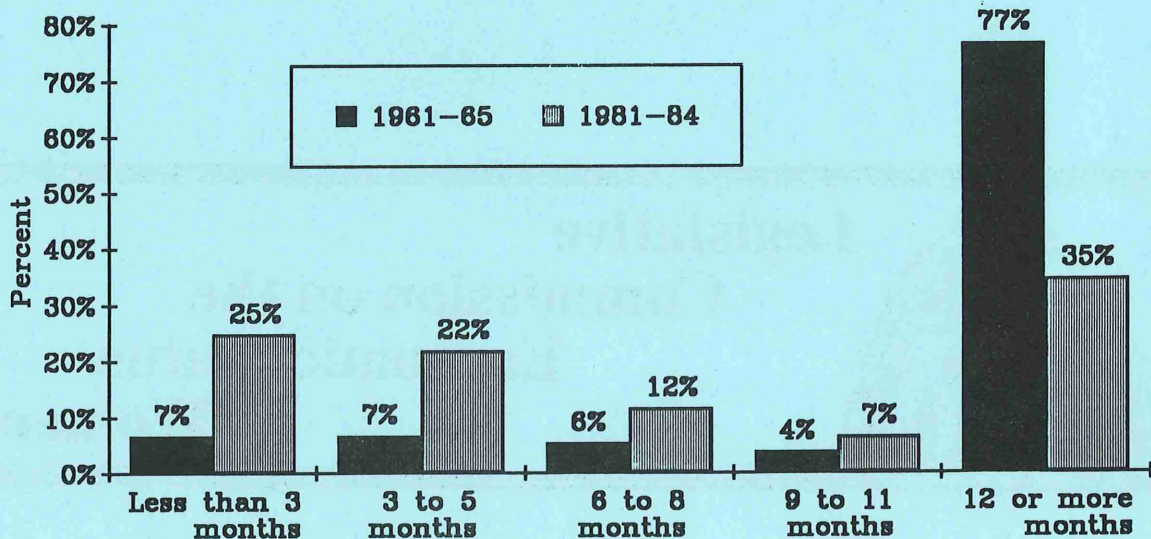
Returning to Work Full-time
1981-84

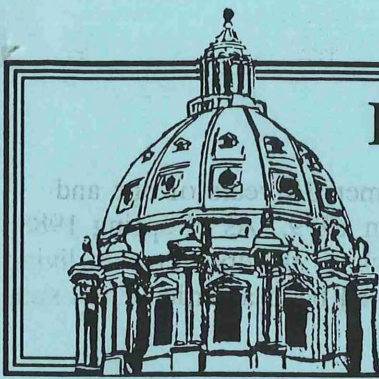


TOTAL TIME AWAY FROM WORK

The changes in the total time away from work by women employed when they become pregnant and eventually give birth has changed dramatically. In 1961-65, seven percent of mothers were away from work less than 3 months, while 77 percent were gone at least 12 months. By 1981-84, 25 percent of all pregnant workers were away less than three months while those who were gone 12 or more months declined to 35 percent.

Total Time Away from Work Before and After Birth
1961-65 and 1981-84





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IN THIS ISSUE

Data for this newsletter are from the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent biennial report, "Child Support and Alimony, 1987." The report sponsored with the federal Department of Health and Human Services was first published in 1979 and has been updated in 1982, 1984, 1986 and 1988. Generally, the 1988 report shows very little change in the percentages of women awarded child support or receiving full or partial payments, compared to both the 1986 and 1984 reports. Mean child support amounts received, when adjusted for inflation, have increased 16 percent since 1985. Data regarding the regularity of payments received were not gathered in the 1988 survey. Reasons for fathers not paying were also not included in the report.

PUBLICATIONS

The Commission has published a new report "Minnesota Women in the Twentieth Century", a historical overview of state census data from 1900 to the present. The 14-page report is available by calling the Commission office.

Several older publications by the Commission are still available. The fourth edition of "A Woman's Place," a 1988 resource guide to women's legal and economic rights can be ordered in quantity. The Commission is currently working on updating this guide for publication later this fall, but most information in the fourth edition remains useful.

Also, "Sexual Harassment: An Overview of Current Laws and Studies" is a 32-page report published in late 1988. It contains detailed information about Minnesota and U.S. laws, legal cases and studies done in schools and private industry. "Women in Minnesota" is the Commission's detailed report based on 1980 census data. Although the data are 10 years old, it provides an excellent snapshot of Minnesota's women and remains the only detailed demographic information by gender until 1990 census data are available in 1992. To order any publication, call or write the Commission office.

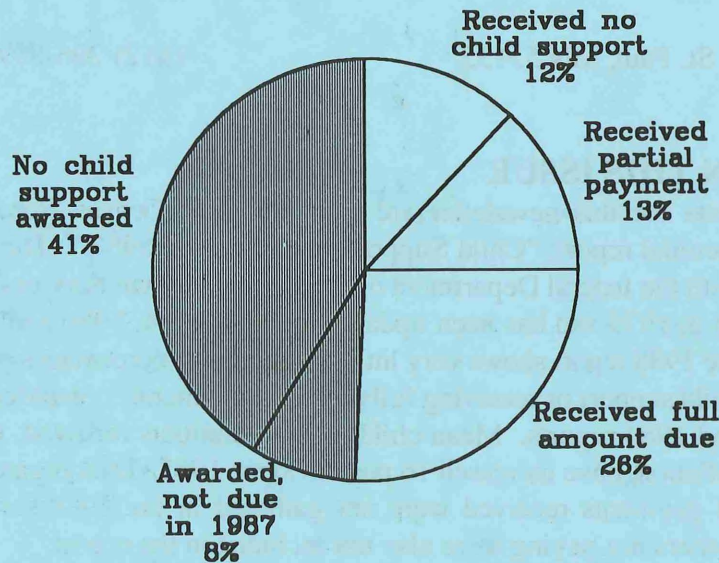
PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Commission will hold public hearings in Windom and Pipestone Oct. 3 focusing on health care for women and child care. The Windom hearing is 12:30 p.m. at the city council chambers and the Pipestone hearing is 7 p.m. in the community room of the courthouse. For more information, contact the Commission office.

CHILD SUPPORT AWARDS

In 1988 the U.S. Census Bureau conducted its biennial survey of women 18 years of age and older to obtain data on child support. These biennial reports began in 1979. As of spring 1988, 9.4 million women were living with children under 21 years of age whose fathers were not living in the households; 59 percent or about 5.6 million of these women had been awarded child support for their children as of that date.

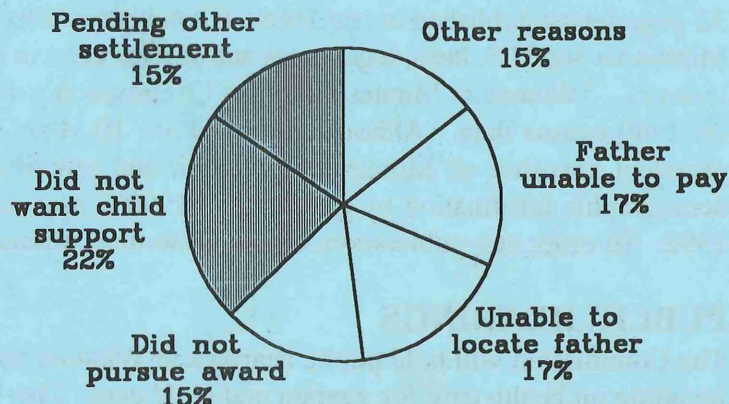
Child Support in U.S., 1987



REASONS FOR NON-AWARD OF CHILD SUPPORT

The majority of women in the survey, 64 percent, report they wanted child support awarded but did not receive it. Another 22 percent did not want any child support and the settlement was pending for another 15 percent. Of those who wanted but did not receive support, reasons included the father's inability to pay, the inability to locate the father or the custodial parent's inability to pursue getting the child support granted. Women with family incomes below the poverty level were more likely to report that they wanted child support but were not awarded it than women with higher incomes. Nearly three-quarters of poor women, compared to 58 percent of non-poor women, said they wanted support but did not receive it. The chart below indicates the reasons for non-award of child support.

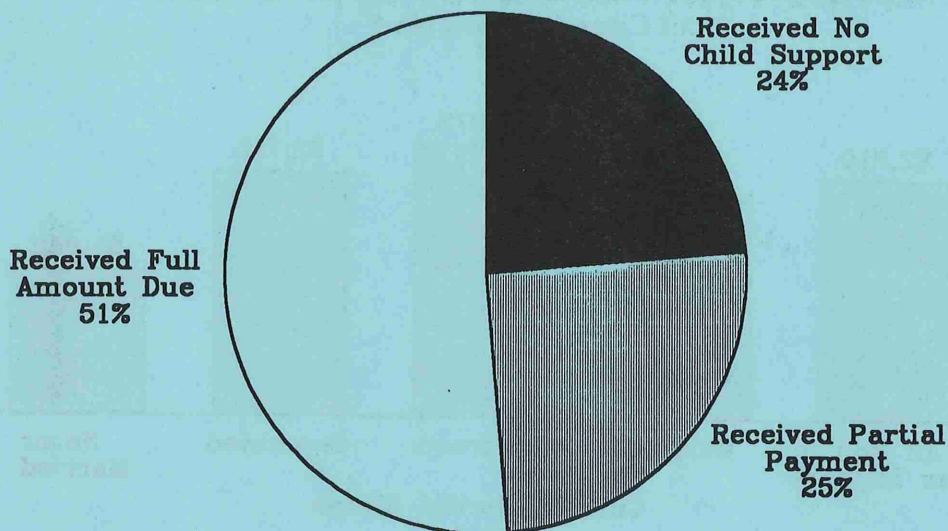
Reasons for Non-award of Child Support



ACTUAL PAYMENTS RECEIVED

Of the 5.6 million women awarded child support, 4.8 million women were supposed to receive child support for their children in 1987. Of those due payments, half received the full amount due, 25 percent received partial payments and 24 percent received no child support payments. These figures are not substantially different from 1983.

Child Support Received in U.S., 1987¹



¹ This pie only includes child support that was due in 1987.

CHILD SUPPORT AMOUNTS

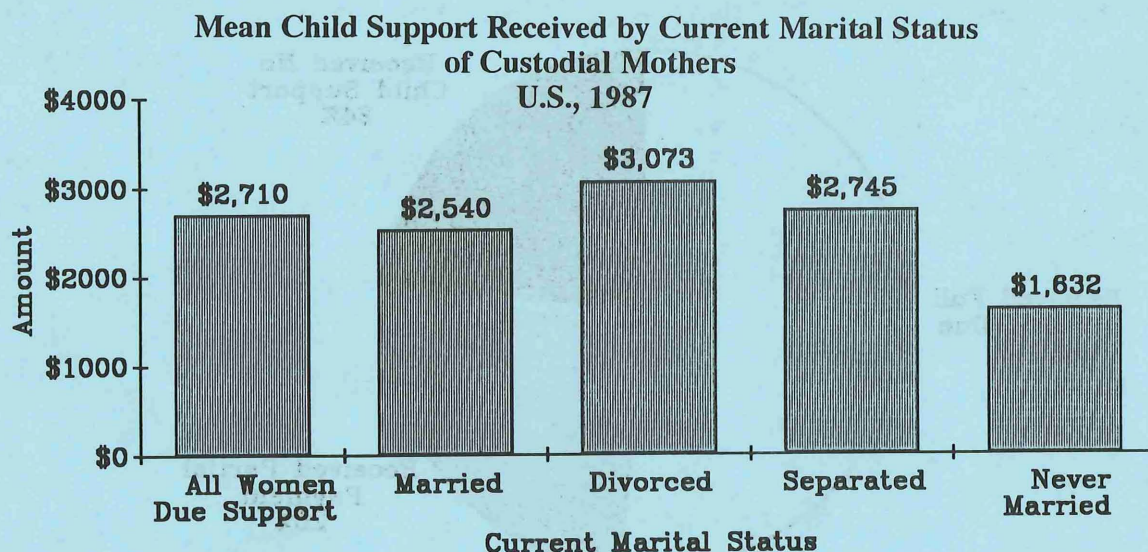
The mean amount of child support received in 1987, excluding those who received no child support payments, was \$2,710. Mean amounts are lower when those women receiving none of the awarded amount are included. For women with court-ordered payments, the mean payment due was \$2,831, but the mean amount received was only \$1,685. Therefore, women with court orders received only 60 percent of the amount due. Women with voluntary written agreements received 84 percent of the amount due and the mean child support payments due (\$3,463) and received (\$2,895) were higher than for women with court-ordered child support. Voluntary written agreements between the two parties may or may not be recognized by the courts as part of the divorce or separation proceedings.

Mean Child Support Due in 1987, U.S.			
Type of Arrangement	Number (thousands)	Mean Child Support Received	Mean Child 1 Support Due
All Payments	4,829	2,063	3,017
Court Ordered	3,072	1,685	2,831
Voluntary	1,536	2,895	3,463

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

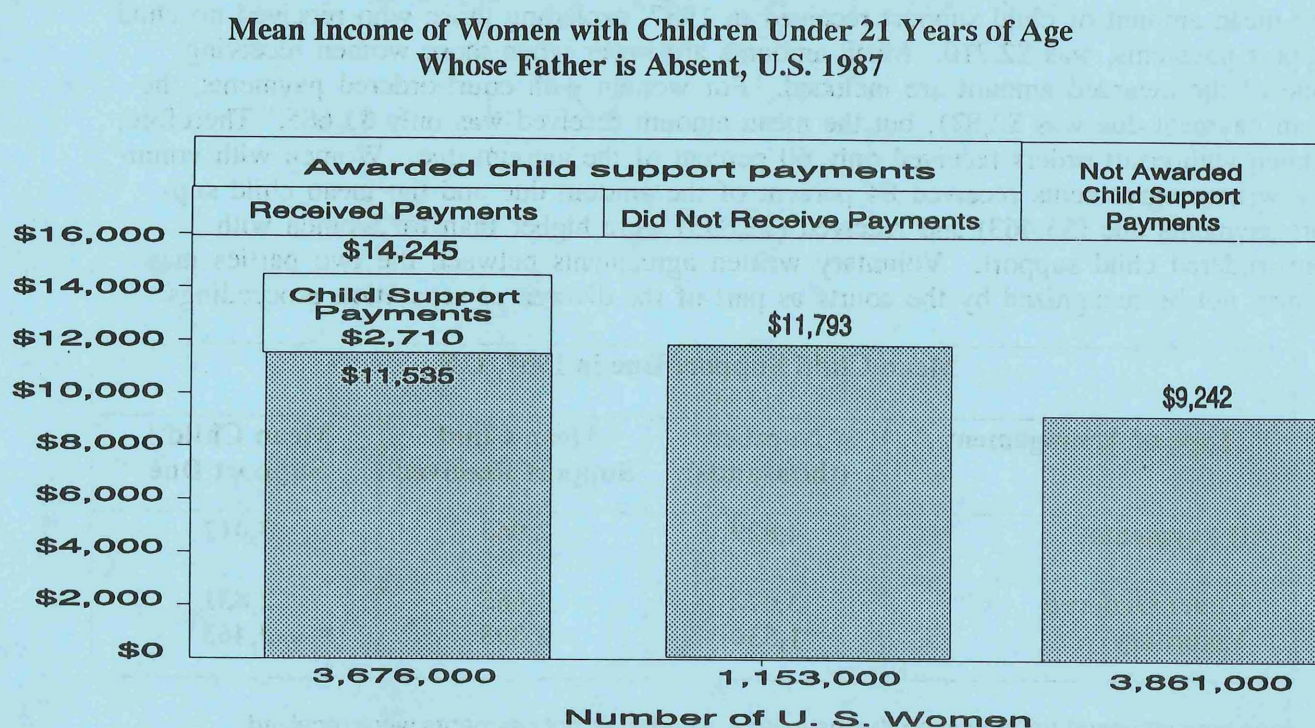
CHILD SUPPORT AMOUNTS BY POVERTY/MARITAL STATUS

For women who were living below the poverty level the average amount of child support received was \$1,673. This varies, however, by the current marital status of the custodial parent. Divorced women received the highest average child support payment and never married women received the lowest.



TOTAL MONEY INCOME

Women who receive child support for their children tend to be better off financially than women who do not receive payments. On average the mean money income of women due payments but not receiving them (\$11,793) was below that of women receiving payments (\$14,345).



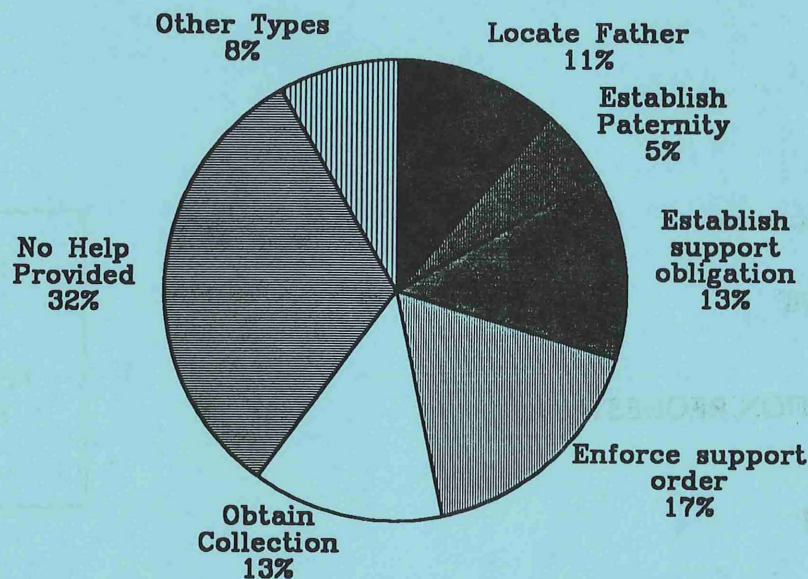
HEALTH CARE BENEFITS

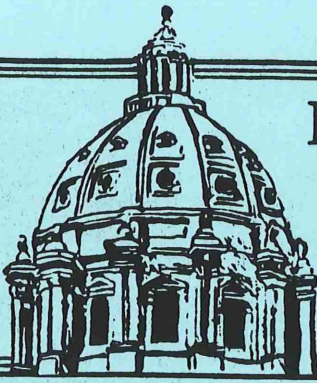
Of women awarded child support, 39 percent had child support orders which included health care insurance for the children. However, women with incomes below the poverty level were less likely to have health insurance included in the awards, with only 32 percent receiving health insurance for the children. Also, never married women were much less likely to receive health insurance than those who had been married to the child's father, with only 18 percent receiving insurance, compared to 41 percent of ever-married women.

GOVERNMENT HELP IN OBTAINING AND ENFORCING CHILD SUPPORT AWARDS

Of the women with children from an absent father, 28 percent sought the help of a government agency to find the father, establish paternity, establish a support obligation, enforce the award and collect awards. The most common type of assistance requested was enforcing the order. Nearly one-third of those requesting assistance, however, received no help from the government agency.

Reasons for Seeking Government Help with Child Support





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85 State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155

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(612) 296-8590 or 1-800-652-9747

IN THIS ISSUE:

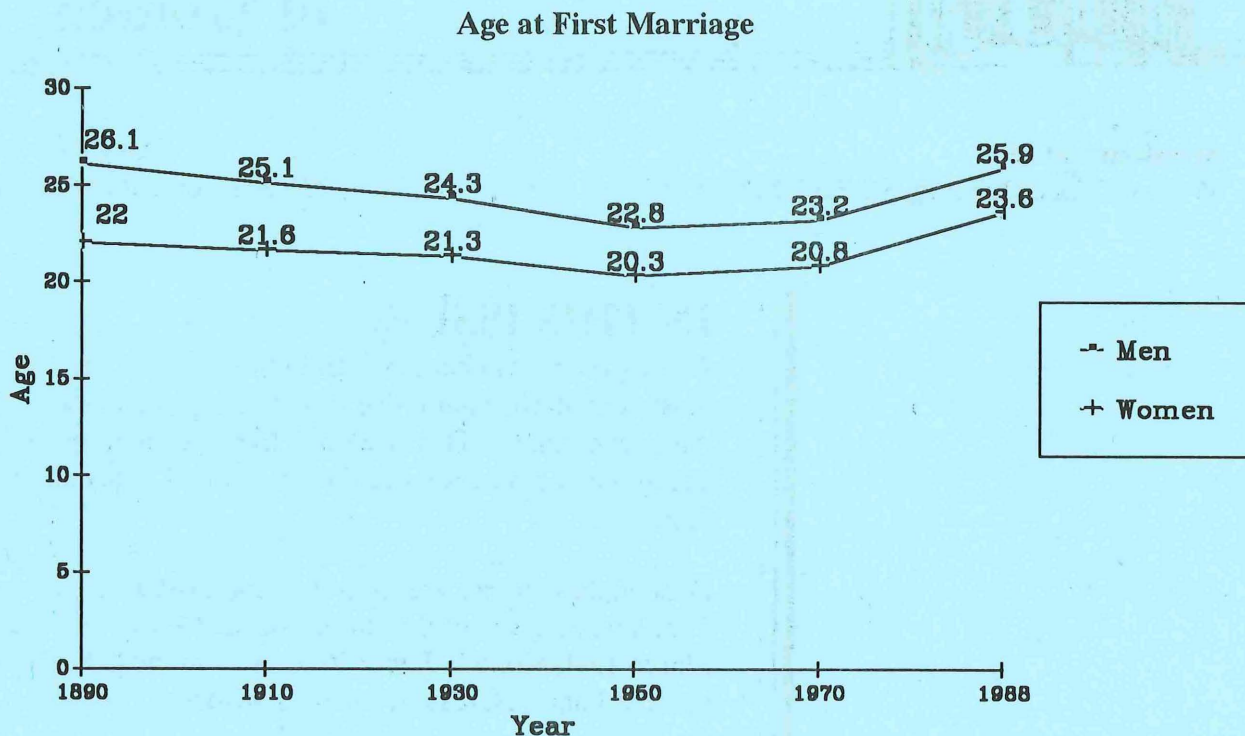
Among the many changes seen in this century, one of the most dramatic are those that have taken place in the American family. This issue will focus on demographic changes that have reshaped the structure of the American family.

Data on these trends are from the June 1989 Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census and the March 1990 Monthly Labor Review from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Increases in age at first marriage and the number of divorces, as well as changes in child-bearing trends have altered the living arrangements of the American people. Adults are more likely to be single today than in 1970. This is true because adults are staying single longer and are much more likely to be divorced at some time in their lives. Children are more likely to be living in single parent families. Women have an average of two children. Non-family households are a growing segment of U.S. society. All of these are significant changes which have happened in just the last 20 years.

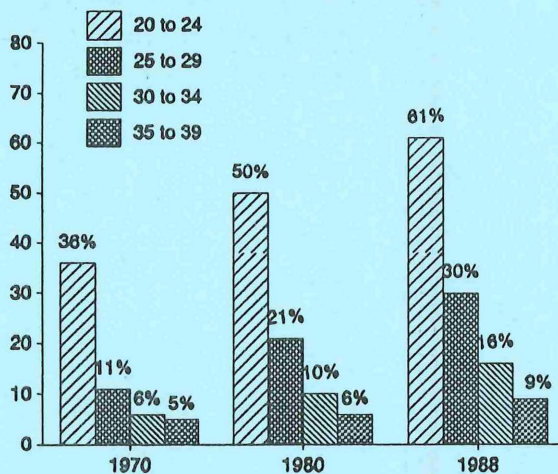
DELAYED MARRIAGE

An increasing number of adults are postponing marriage. Today's population is marrying later than any preceding generations. The median age for men to first marry is 25.9 and for women is 23.6.



In addition, even in the later age groups more people are reporting not having been married. In the 35 to 39 age group in 1988, 9 percent of adults reported never having married, compared with 6.2 percent in 1980 and 5.4 percent in 1970. Women have substantially increased their educational levels and their participation in the labor force during this same time period and this could be at least partially a factor in marrying later than previous generations of women.

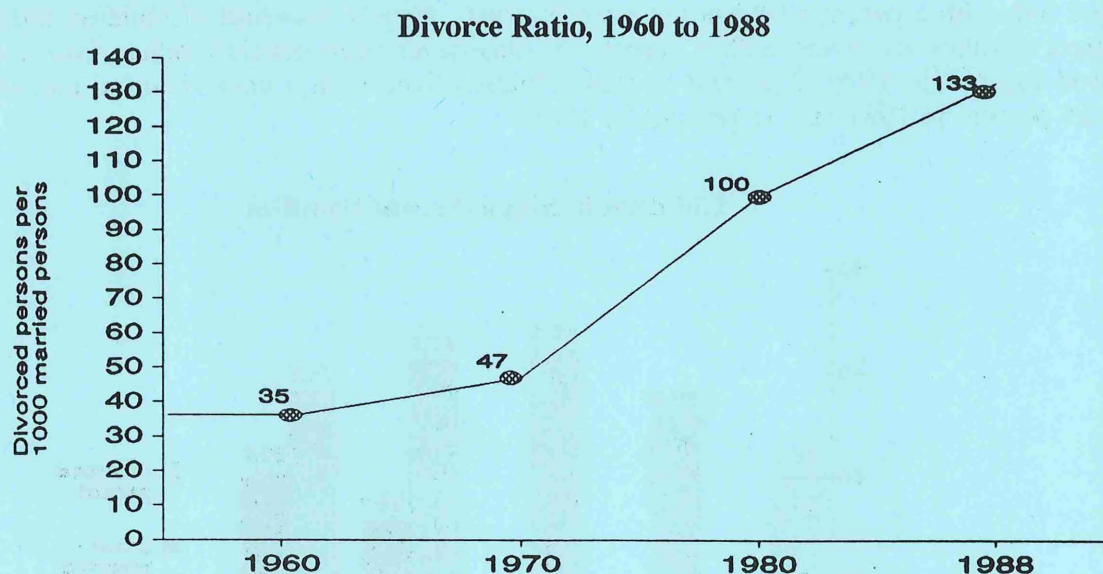
Never Married Women by Age Group



DIVORCE

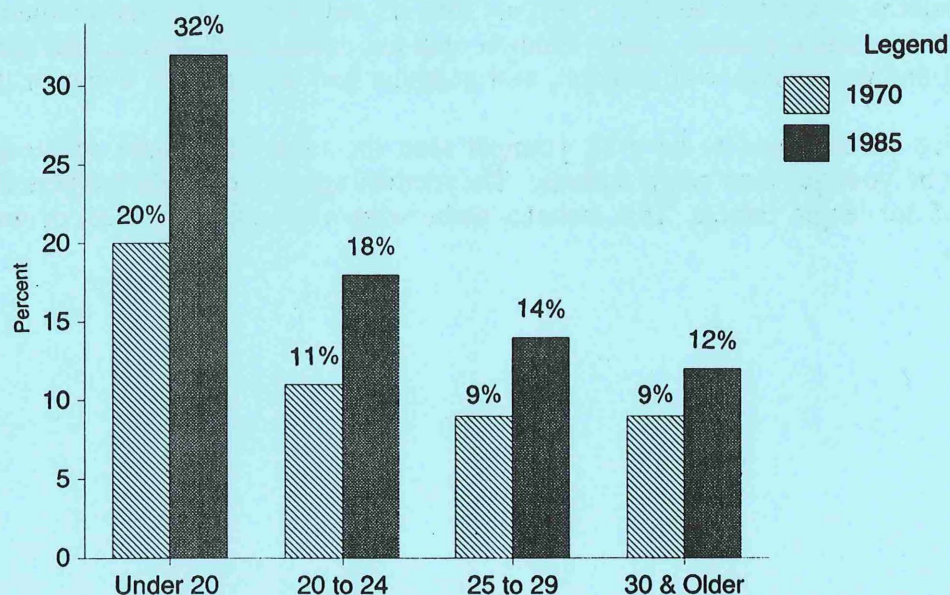
The percentage of the adult population which is divorced has increased dramatically in the last 20 years. In 1988, 10 percent of all adults who had been married were divorced, compared to 1970, when only 4 percent of ever-married adults were divorced.

A useful way to measure the increase in divorce is by comparing the number of divorced persons to the number of married persons. In 1988, there were 14 million divorced persons, compared with 105 million married persons. This yields a ratio of 133 divorced per 1,000 married persons, up slightly from 100 per 1,000 in 1980 and up greatly from 47 per 1,000 in 1970.



Divorce rates decrease as age at first marriage increases. Women who marry at later ages have a lower divorce rate, although the number of divorces in later marriages has also risen. Teenage marriages are at the greatest risk for divorce. Among women who married before age 20, 32 percent had divorced as of 1985, up from 20 percent in 1970. In 1985, almost 70 percent of women divorcing had married before age 25.

Divorced Women by Age at Marriage, 1970 & 1985

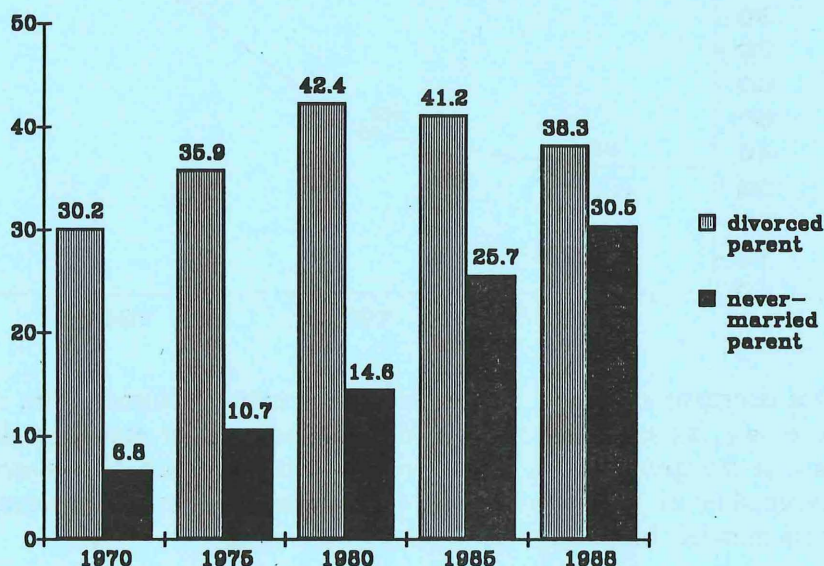


SINGLE PARENTHOOD

Divorce and delayed marriages have resulted in profound changes in the kinds of families making up American culture. First, marrying later increases the chances that a woman will have children before marrying. According to figures from the National Center for Health Statistics, births to unmarried women have increased substantially since the mid-1970s. During the 1980s, the second most common reason for new families to be created was births among single women (marriage was the most common). In 1987, one-quarter of all births were to unmarried women.

While the majority of children living in single-parent families have parents who are divorced, a large share live with a parent who has not been married. Nearly one-third of children living in single-parent families are living with a parent who has never been married, rather than a divorced or widowed parent. In 1970, 7 percent of these children lived with a never-married parent, compared to 15 percent in 1981 and 31 percent by 1988.

Children in Single-Parent Families

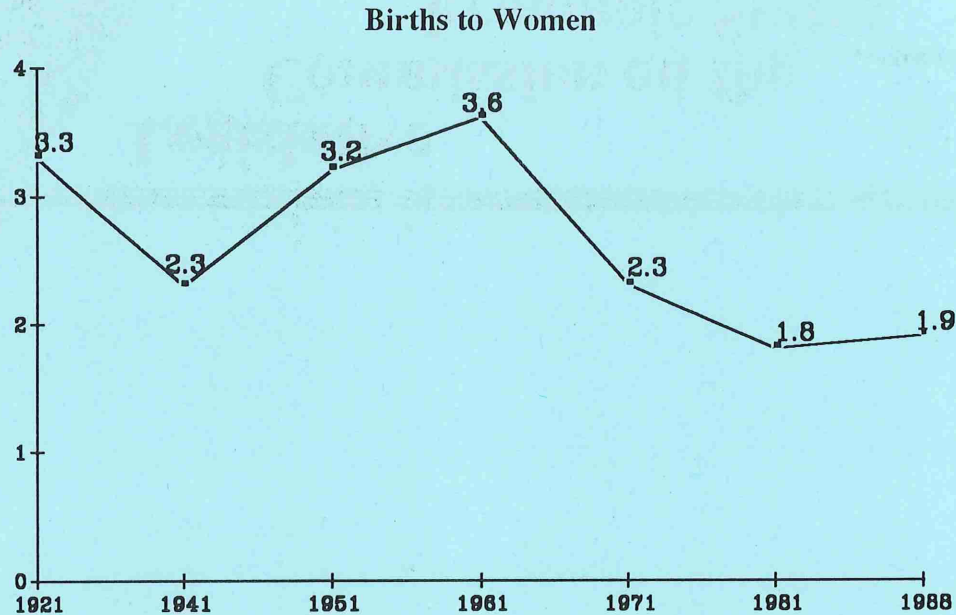


Based on patterns of the last decade, it appears that six out of ten of today's children will live for some time with a single-parent. Many children also live with a step-parent. In 1985 almost one in five married couple families with children still at home had a step-child living in the household.

Never married parents tend to be a bit younger than their married-couple counterparts. Single mothers are likely to be younger than single fathers. The median age of all single mothers in 1988 was 32.7, compared to 36.5 for single fathers. This includes those who were never married, or were divorced, separated or widowed.

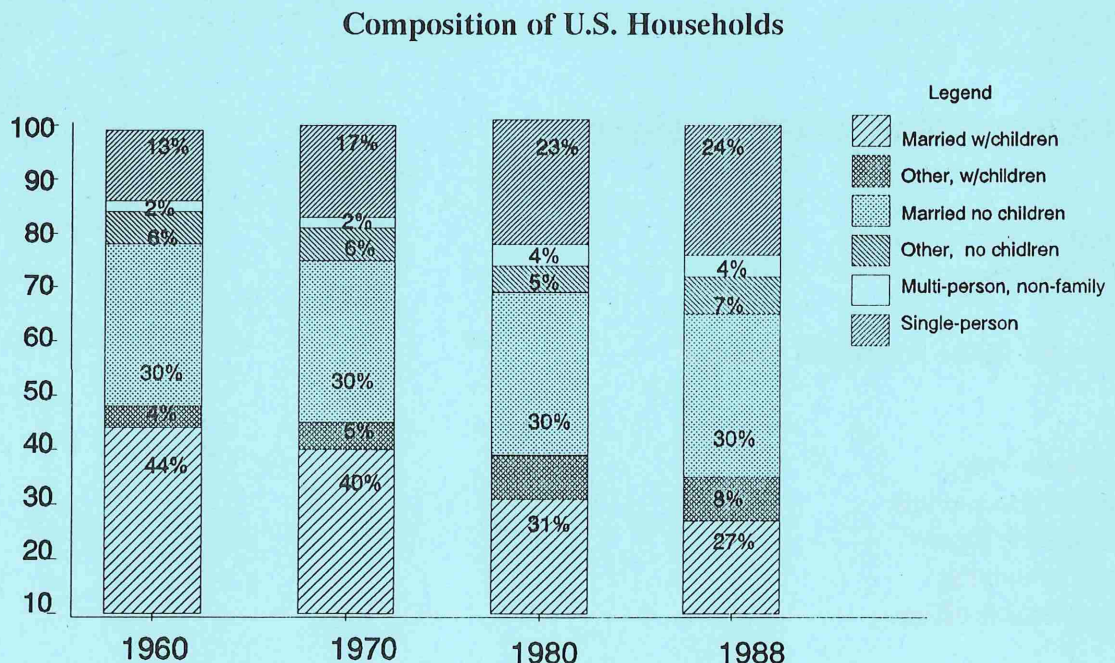
FERTILITY RATES

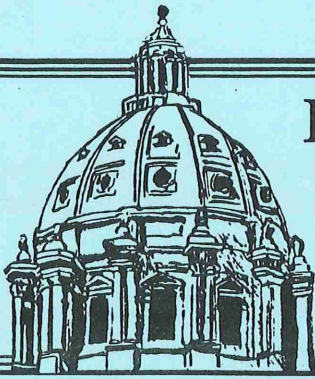
Another major change in family structure is a result of women having fewer children than in the past. In 1921, there was an average 3.3 births per woman. The rate peaked in 1961 at 3.6 births. By 1971 that number had declined to 2.3 and by 1988 women were having an average of only 1.9 children.



NON-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

Changes in marriage and family patterns have also had an effect on single-person and non-family households. With later marriages, more divorces and an older population which is more likely to be widowed, non-family households have become a more common form of household in the past two decades. In 1940, non-family households were nearly 8 percent of all households, compared to 29 percent of today's households.





Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Poverty information for this report was taken from the U.S. Bureau of the Census "Money Income and Poverty Status in the U.S., 1987" and from the Monthly Labor Review, October 1989. No recent statistics pertaining specifically to Minnesota exist because they are only gathered during each census year. Information from the 1990 census for Minnesota will not be available until some time in 1992.

COMMISSION HEARINGS

The Commission will hold two public hearings to consider its 1990 legislative proposals. The hearings will be Dec. 4 and Dec. 11, 1:30 p.m. at Room 107 in the State Capitol.

POVERTY RATES AND GUIDELINES

There are approximately 32.5 million persons in poverty in the U.S., accounting for 13.5 percent of the population. These figures are down from the 1983 peak of 14 percent, but higher than the most recent low of 11.7 percent in 1978.

Poverty rates differ for men and women. In 1987, 13 percent of all women over 18 were in poverty, compared to 9 percent of all men. The federal government each year establishes an official poverty level based on the number of persons in a family and the family income level.

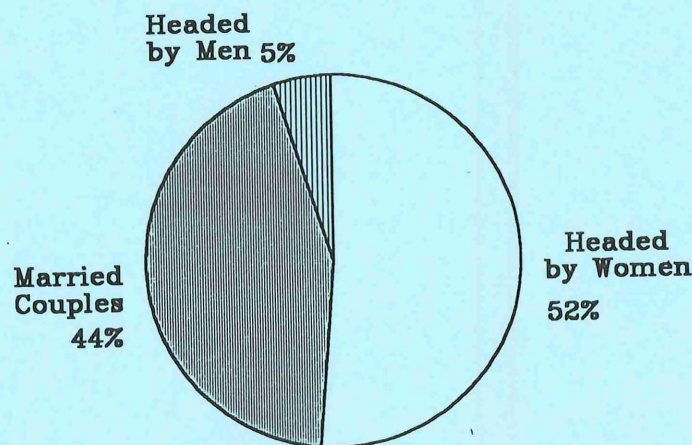
FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES, 1990	
Size of Family	Income Level
1	\$ 6,280
2	8,420
3	10,560
4	12,700
5	14,840
6	16,980
7	19,120
8	21,260

FAMILIES AND POVERTY

The majority of people living in poverty, 77 percent, are members of families. Families are defined as related persons living together. Nearly half of all family members in poverty are children.

Half (52 percent) of all poor families are headed by women, 44 percent are married couple families and 5 percent are families headed by men.

Poverty Rates by Family Type



FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Families with children are more likely to be poor than those without children. Among all families only 5 percent live in poverty, but in those families with children, 16 percent are in poverty.

The presence of children has the most profound impact on poverty rates for families headed by women. In female-headed families without children, 10 percent were in poverty, compared to 46 percent of those families with children.

One-third of persons living in poverty families are in families headed by women. An additional 8 percent of families fall just above the poverty level.

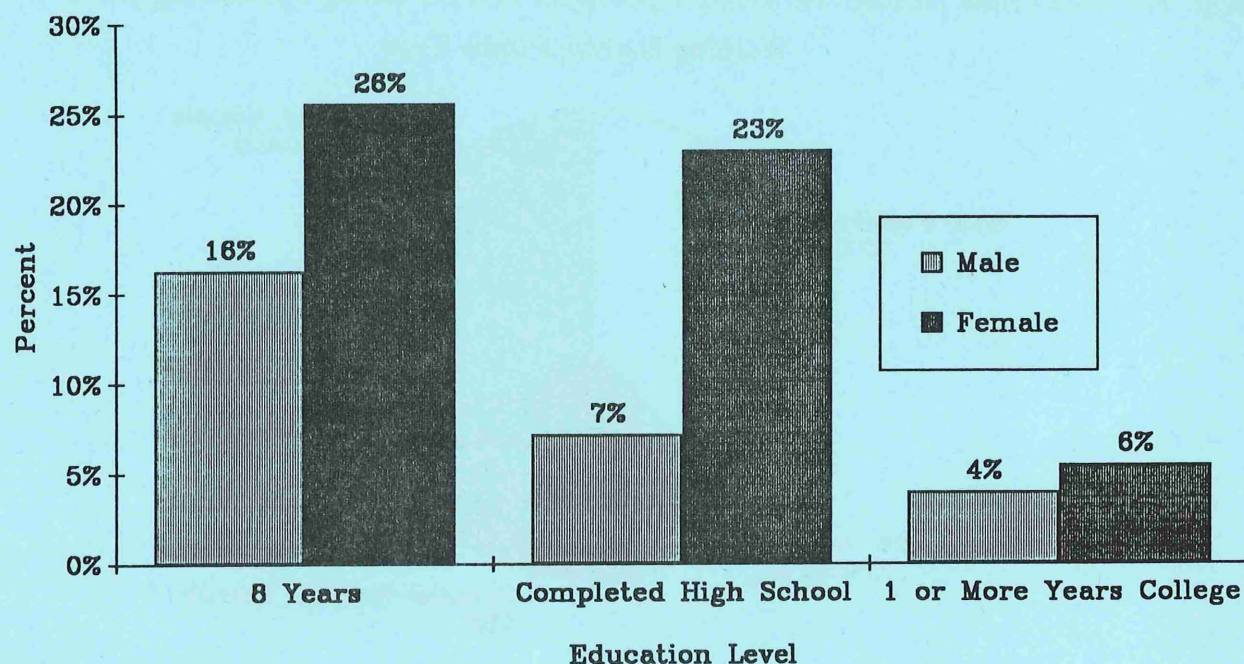
EDUCATION AND THE POVERTY RATE

There is a strong link between educational attainment and poverty. Only half (49 percent) of poor family heads-of-households age 25 and over are high school graduates compared to three-fourths (79 percent) of non-poor family heads of households. One-fifth of poor heads-of-households had not completed the eighth grade.

Persons with post-secondary education, however, are not immune to poverty. Fifteen percent of persons heading poor families have completed 1 or more years of college.

Poverty rates decrease as years of school completed increase. The poverty rate for heads-of-households who have completed less than 8 years of school is 28 percent, compared with 9 percent for those who completed high school only and 4 percent for those who completed 1 or more years of college.

Poverty Rates by Educational Attainment



THE WORKING POOR

People living in poverty include a substantial number of persons who are working. More than 6 million persons who spent at least half of 1987 in the labor force were poor. The "working poor" are defined as persons who have devoted at least half the year to labor market efforts such as being employed or in search of a job during that period, but who still live in poverty.

Of all workers in the U.S. in 1987, 5.6 percent are poor. Of poor people, one-third are working or seeking work during a substantial part of any given year.

Almost half (48 percent) of all poor workers are women. Of all women who work, 6 percent are in poverty, compared to 5 percent of all working men.

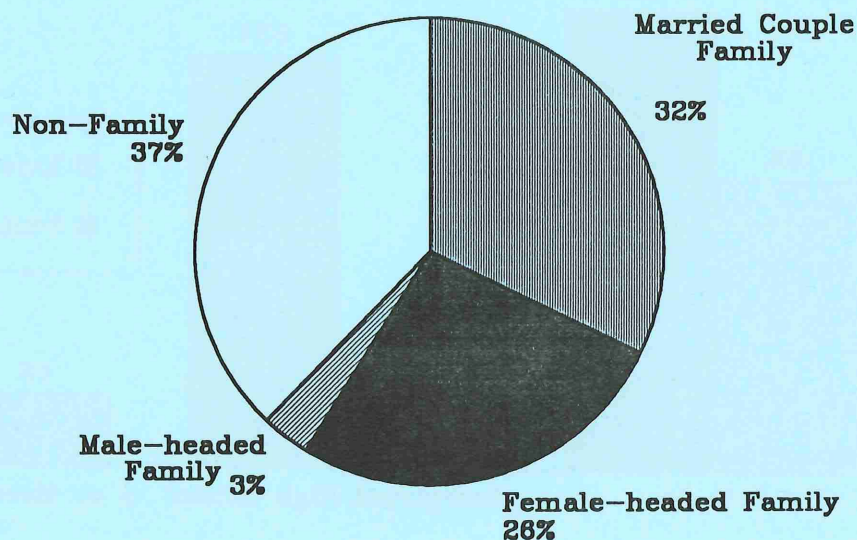
Two sets of factors greatly influence whether workers will be in poverty: (1) workplace issues such as low wages, part-time employment, and/or unemployment, and (2) family structure, such as the presence and number of dependant children and the number of wage earners in the worker's family.

WORKING POOR FAMILIES

Among working families, those headed by women with children have the highest poverty rate with 18 percent. Among married couple families, 4 percent are in poverty and in male-headed families, 8 percent are in poverty.

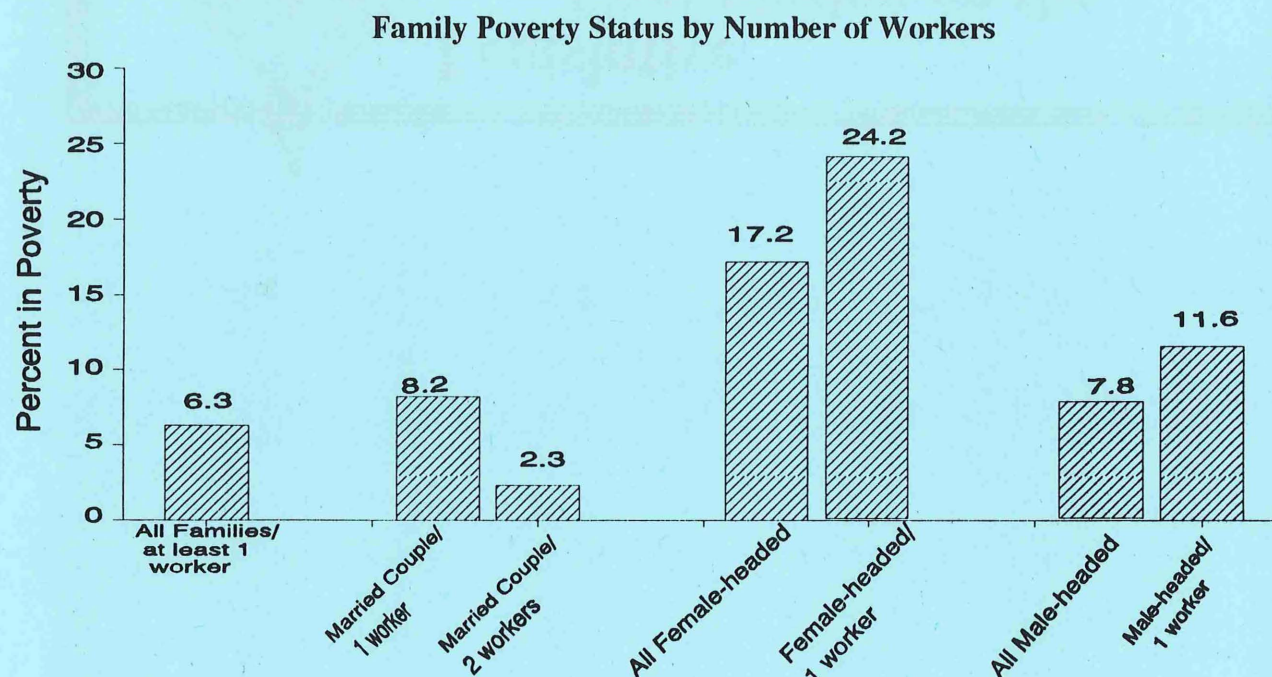
Among poor families, 47 percent of heads of households, 47 percent worked in 1987, 15 percent of them full-time. Among female heads of households, 39 percent of those with income levels below the poverty level worked in 1987, 8 percent full-time, year-round. Female-headed households are 16 percent of all U.S. households, yet they are over-represented among the working poor with 26 percent. The chart below indicates the family types of all workers among the working poor.

Working Poor by Family Type



NUMBER OF WORKERS

The most dramatic difference between poor and non-poor families is the presence of one or more workers. Overwhelmingly, those with only one worker are more likely to be poor than those with more than one worker. Three-quarters of poor families have only one working member, while the majority of non-poor families have two or more wage earners. The chart below shows the poverty rates of various kinds of families and the number of workers in those families.



WORKING POOR AND EDUCATION LEVELS

Educational levels are an important factor in the economic status of workers, as they are with all people in poverty. Workers with low levels of education are more likely to earn lower wages and live at or below the poverty level. Nearly two-fifths (38 percent) of the working poor did not graduate from high school. Two-fifths (41 percent) have completed high school only. A much lower percent, 14 percent, have had 1 to 3 years of college and 7 percent have completed four or more years of college.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

Besides the number of workers in a family, the presence of children and the educational level of the workers, the economic status of workers is also greatly affected by three other factors: low earnings, part-time status and periods of unemployment.

Among full-time workers, those who are poor are in poverty for the simple reason that their wages are too low. Low earnings are defined as an average of \$167 per week or less (1987 dollars). Based on a 40-hour week, this amounts to an average of \$4.18 per hour. Two-thirds of poor, full-time workers are at this low earnings level.

Low wages are compounded when workers who usually work full-time are forced into part-time status or unemployment (involuntary layoffs or seasonal employment). Nearly half of the working poor experienced unemployment in 1987, compared to 13 percent of non-poor workers. Working poor workers also were out of work longer, with 26 weeks of unemployment compared to 13 weeks for non-poor workers.



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WOMEN IN ELECTIVE OFFICE, with U.S. 1990 data from the Center for American Women and Politics and Minnesota data on women in the legislature, executive offices, courts, counties and school boards. Data for 1990 do not include the 1990 elections. Where the 1990 election data were available, they are referred to as 1991 data to indicate the year the women took office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Commission will finalize its 1991 legislative agenda in January. Copies of the agenda will be available then by calling the Commission office.

The Child Care Task Force Report will also be available in January and will be sent to those who have already ordered it then. To order a copy, call the Commission office.

WOMEN IN ELECTIVE OFFICE

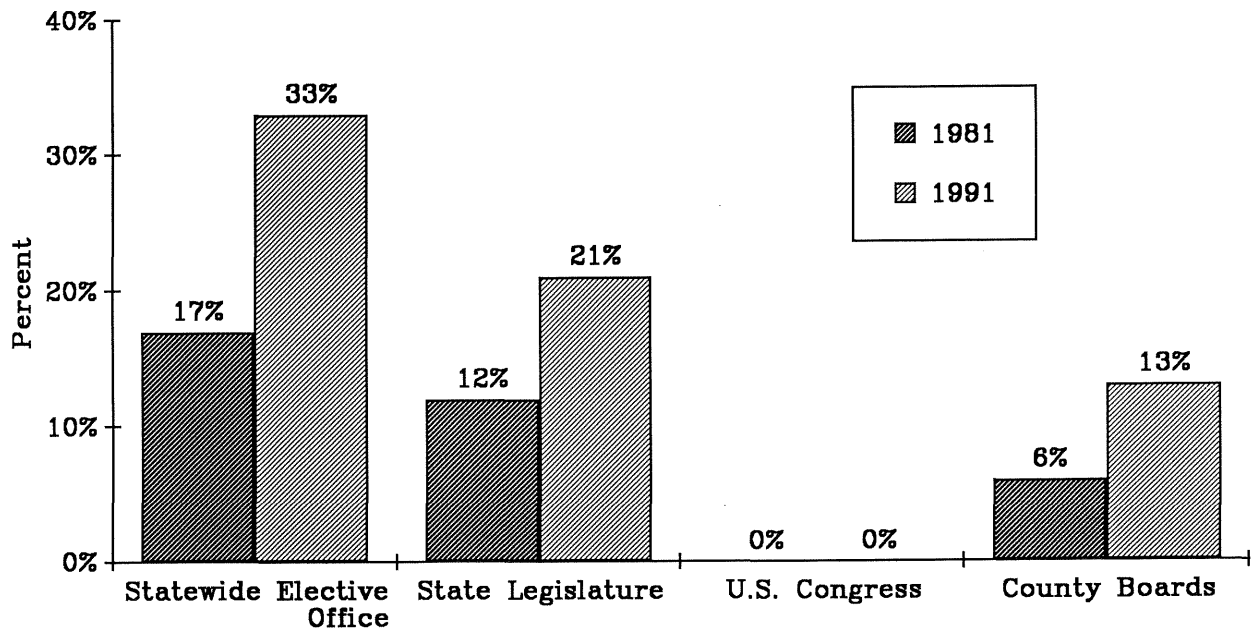
More women are serving in congress than ever before. Three states have women governors. The number of women in state legislatures is four times more than it was 20 years ago. But, despite being 51 percent of the U.S. population, women remain under-represented at all levels of national, state and local elective office. The national averages of women in elective office are no higher than 17 percent at any level.

The participation of women in elected office is higher in Minnesota than the national average for all levels except for U.S. Congress. (Minnesota has no women serving in the U.S. Senate or the U.S. House of Representatives.) In the last eight years, Minnesota has passed the national average in the percentage of women holding county board or city/municipal/township seats.

STATE LEGISLATURES

Of all offices, women have gained the most access to state legislative seats, accounting for approximately 17 percent of all seats. Women held 1,273 or 17 percent of the 7,461 seats in all the state legislatures in 1990. The number of women serving in the state legislatures has more than quadrupled since 1969, when there were 301. In 1990, women held 267 of the 1,995 state senate seats (13 percent) and 1,006 of the 5,466 state house seats (18 percent). Vermont had the highest percentage of women in its legislature, 33 percent in 1990. Figures from the last election are not yet available.

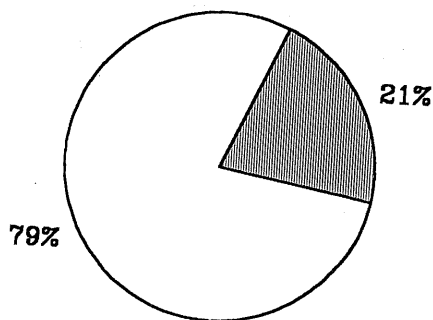
Women in Elective Office, MN
1981 and 1991



MINNESOTA'S LEGISLATURE

In Minnesota, women occupy 21 percent or 43 of the 201 seats in the state legislature. This percentage has increased by 9 percent since 1981 and represents a three percent increase since the 1988 election. Fourteen of the 67 (20 percent) state senators and 29 of the 134 (21 percent) state representatives are women. Senators serve four-year terms and representatives serve two-year terms. Minnesota ranked 21st among all states in the number of women in its legislature in 1990. Nationwide 1991 figures are not yet available.

Women in the Minnesota Legislature, 1991



The party breakdown for Minnesota women serving in the state legislature is 27 DFLers (Democratic-Farmer-Labor) and 16 IRs (Independent Republicans). Since 1922, when women first became eligible for election to the Minnesota legislature, a total of 75 women have served. The number of women being elected to the legislature has risen every election since 1973. **The women who will be serving in the Minnesota legislature in 1991 are:**

SENATE:

Betty Adkins
Joanne Benson
Linda Berglin
Nancy Brataas
Carol Flynn
Janet Johnson
Terry Johnston
Gen Olson
Sandy Pappas
Pat Pariseau
Pat Piper
Jane Ranum
Ember Reichgott
Judy Traub

HOUSE:

Kathleen Blatz
Hilda Bettermann
Karen Clark
Edwina Garcia
Kris Hasskamp
Alice Hausman
Joyce Henry
Alice Johnson
Phyllis Kahn
Becky Kelso
Peggy Leppik
Dee Long
Becky Lourey
Teresa Lynch

Mary Jo McGuire
Harriet McPherson
Connie Morrison
Mary Murphy
Sally Olsen
Katy Olson
Sidney Pauly
Ann Rest
Linda Runbeck
Linda Scheid
Gloria Segal
Eileen Tompkins
Kathleen Vellenga
Jean Wagenius
Linda Wejcman

U.S. CONGRESS

Three women were added to the U.S. Congress in the 1990 elections, bringing the total to 31 or six percent of the 535 seats in the 102nd U.S. Congress. Twenty-nine of them are in the House of Representatives. Only two women serve in the Senate, accounting for two percent of the 100 seats. There have never been more than three women serving in the Senate at the same time. Senators serve six-year terms and representatives serve two-year terms. The party breakdown for women in Congress is 21 Democrats and 10 Republicans.

MINNESOTANS IN CONGRESS

Minnesota's Congressional Delegation (2 senators and 8 representatives) is all male. In 1954, Coya Knutson became the first woman elected to Congress from Minnesota and no woman has been elected since. Muriel Humphrey was appointed to the U.S. Senate in 1978 after her husband's death and served until a special election was held. She did not run for the seat. No other woman has served Minnesota in the U.S. Senate.

STATEWIDE ELECTIVE OFFICES

Nationwide, 46 or 14 percent of the 330 statewide elective executive positions are held by women. This percentage has increased by three percent since 1981. As of the last election there will be three women governors, six lieutenant governors, four attorney generals, 10 secretaries of state, 14 treasurers and five auditors. In six states women serve as elected superintendents of education. Nine women in the U.S. serve in other elected offices, including commissioners of education, labor, agriculture, taxes, corporations, controllers, public service and public utilities.

After the 1990 elections, Kansas became the only state in history with a woman governor, a woman senator and a congresswoman at the same time. Texas became the first state to have a second woman governor.

STATEWIDE OFFICES IN MINNESOTA

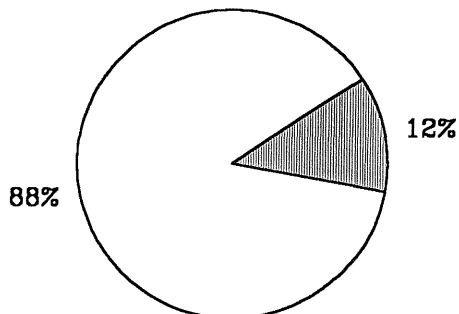
Women account for two of Minnesota's six statewide elected offices or 33 percent. Marlene Johnson was the first woman to be lieutenant governor, elected in 1982 and re-elected in 1986. Another women, Joanell Dyrstad, was elected in November and will take office in January. Secretary of State Joan Growe has held her position since 1974. She is the second female secretary of state in Minnesota history. The first was appointed to complete her husband's term and was then re-elected. The other statewide elective offices in Minnesota are governor, auditor, treasurer and attorney general.

COUNTY GOVERNING BOARDS

In 1988, women held 1,653 or nine percent of the 18,483 county board seats in the 47 states which had county boards. More recent data on national totals are not available. Between 1975 and 1988, the number of women serving at the county board level more than tripled.

In Minnesota, 54 or 12 percent of 445 county commissioners are women as of the November elections this year. This is more than a three-fold increase within the last decade. In 1990, six women were elected in five counties which never had women on their county boards. These counties were Big Stone, Hubbard, Murray, Renville (2 women) and Wabasha. In addition, Crow Wing became the first county in Minnesota with a female majority on its county board.

Women on County Boards in Minnesota, 1991



MUNICIPAL OFFICES

In 1990, 140 or 16 percent of the 879 members of the U.S. Conference for Mayors were women. These figures do not reflect changes from the November 1990 elections. Among the 100 largest cities in the U.S., 16 had women mayors in 1990; four of these cities are among the ten largest in the country.

In 1985, in the states for which data were available, women held 14,672 or 14 percent of the 102,329 elective positions at the municipal and township level. The percentage of women holding municipal and township offices more than tripled from 1975 to 1985.

More recent data on nationwide totals for municipal offices and the results by gender of 1990 elections in Minnesota are not available.

WOMEN IN MINNESOTA'S COURTS

There are three women serving on the seven-member Supreme Court in Minnesota, accounting for 43 percent of the justices. Four women serve on the 16-judge Court of Appeals, accounting for one-quarter of this body. There is one vacancy in the state Supreme Court. Vacancies in mid-term are filled by appointment of the governor and then elected statewide for six-year terms. Women also serve as elected judges at the district level. Of the 241 district court seats, 30 or 12 percent are held by women.

SCHOOL BOARDS

Women hold 778 of the 2,807 school board seats in the state. This represents nearly 28 percent of the seats and is the highest percentage of females in any of the locally elected offices. Women also hold 14 of the 434 superintendent positions, accounting for three percent of the total. School district superintendents are not elected positions.

WOMEN IN MINNESOTA'S ELECTIVE OFFICES

The following chart indicates how the percentage of female representation on a statewide average have changed since 1977.

