

Child Support -  
Savings

There are different answers to the question about child support receipt among AFDC recipients--none of them completely accurate.

Based on AFDC receipt data from the SIPP it appears that about 21 percent of all AFDC recipients during a one year period reported receiving any child support payments during that year. However, not all of the AFDC recipients are child support eligible and child support eligibility questions are only asked when a biological or adoptive parent is living in the household. In the SIPP data about 25% of AFDC families were not sent through the child support module. AFDC administrative data would seem to indicate that about 15% of AFDC recipients families are not child support eligible. Using a 15 percent screen against AFDC families to eliminate the non-child support eligible would bring the percent of eligibles with payment up during a one year period to about 24 percent.

About 37 percent of child support eligible AFDC recipients report having a child support award for at least one child and the proportion of these families that receive any child support is about about 57 percent. Of the remaining child support eligible families without awards, about 12 percent report informal child support payments. Reported child support for both groups may not have been paid while the family was receiving AFDC. We only know that it was received in the same year that they received some AFDC payments. (This is 1990 data)

Using AFDC and OCSE administrative data the Green book reports an AFDC receipt rate of 16 percent in 1992 (and a similar rate in 1990). Note that this uses the unadjusted 1992 AFDC caseload data. If the AFDC caseload is reduced by 15 % to account for non-child support eligible cases the proportion with child support receipt is 19 percent. This is a point in time estimate and may be effected by caseload flow. Using AFDC caseload as the denominator and OCSE data as the numerator the proportion of AFDC families with awards is about 48%. Of those the proportion reporting receipt is about 53%, very similar to the SIPP data.

In sum, of those AFDC families eligible for child support, collections are made on behalf of 20 to 25 percent. Another 20 to 25 percent have awards but no collections. The remaining 50 to 60 percent have no awards, although a few report some informal child support payments. About 15 percent of the AFDC population is not child support eligible. Estimates are not precise because we use data with different reference points: ever-on versus point-in-time.

PERCENT OF AFDC FAMILIES AFFECTED BY  
1991, AND 1992<sup>1</sup>

1985	Percent of families affected		
	1990	1991	1992
11.7	19.1	22.2	33.4
11.9	20.7	18.8	18.8
4.8	4.9	7.8	7.3
15.9	19.7	22.7	27.7
13.8	12.7	13.4	11.3
14.1	15.1	16.4	18.5
15.6	19.3	18.1	18.3
11.7	18.0	23.0	21.6
5.8	7.5	7.7	7.9
11.4	24.0	21.1	15.9
5.3	19.6	19.9	17.8
10.5	19.9	33.5	34.6
10.5	13.2	10.6	19.6
16.7	46.6	47.9	49.6
5.5	7.9	7.8	7.4
15.9	27.8	34.1	43.4
12.7	22.8	23.0	23.9
5.2	24.0	28.5	31.5
7.6	13.4	14.9	15.5
6.9	8.5	8.9	9.3
5.6	39.3	28.4	23.0
5.0	10.9	19.0	18.6
0.2	16.3	16.0	11.2
7.2	25.3	23.7	23.9
2.5	28.0	26.5	29.8
4.8	9.2	11.3	12.4
8.2	18.5	17.1	17.9
3.9	15.2	17.5	18.3
1.3	20.6	20.2	27.5
3.6	29.8	28.9	32.4
2.6	13.5	15.6	27.1
5.4	15.8	17.4	19.9
7.6	11.8	12.6	9.5
9.2	11.8	12.6	13.0
5.0	19.5	19.7	18.9
5.1	36.7	28.6	38.5
1.6	19.9	18.5	14.1
1.4	13.4	8.5	7.5

TABLE 12.—ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER AND PERCENT OF AFDC FAMILIES AFFECTED BY  
\$50 PASSTHROUGH: 1985, 1990, 1991, AND 1992<sup>1</sup>—Continued

State	AFDC families 1992	Estimated families affected 1992	Percent of families affected			
			1985	1990	1991	1992
Oregon .....	37,735	8,483	16.0	17.6	21.1	22.5
Pennsylvania .....	190,644	47,493	16.3	20.8	22.9	24.9
Puerto Rico .....	61,375	2,017	4.7	4.2	3.0	3.3
Rhode Island .....	20,651	2,281	13.9	17.9	11.3	11.1
South Carolina .....	48,712	11,573	8.9	26.3	24.2	23.8
South Dakota .....	7,168	1,735	17.6	21.4	23.1	24.2
Tennessee .....	92,764	10,528	9.8	15.2	11.3	11.4
Texas .....	257,834	15,786	3.1	5.8	6.1	6.1
Utah .....	17,694	4,547	26.9	23.7	24.0	25.7
Vermont .....	8,512	3,054	21.9	36.5	32.7	35.9
Virgin Islands .....	1,053	123	10.2	11.6	10.7	11.7
Virginia .....	69,903	17,151	14.9	24.9	25.9	24.5
Washington .....	82,083	23,554	18.0	24.8	27.6	28.7
West Virginia .....	31,776	2,861	6.6	7.1	7.7	9.0
Wisconsin .....	73,056	28,278	37.8	38.9	38.1	38.7
Wyoming .....	6,409	1,681	8.0	21.7	24.8	26.2
Nationwide total...	4,435,307	724,401	13.2	16.3	16.6	16.3

NA=Not available.

<sup>1</sup> These estimates are based on the number of "paying" child support cases and are a low estimate of the number of families affected.

Note: These estimates are based on the number of "paying" child support cases adjusted for comparability with AFDC families.

Source: Office of Child Support Enforcement.