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Child Support and Alimony: 1981

(Advance Report)

U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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**Child Support
and Alimony:
1981**

(Advance Report)

by
Ruth Sanders



U.S. Department of Commerce
Malcolm Baldrige, Secretary
Robert G. Dederick, Under Secretary for
Economic Affairs

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Bruce Chapman,
Director



BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Bruce Chapman, Director
C. L. Kincannon, Deputy Director
William P. Butz, Associate Director
for Demographic Fields

POPULATION DIVISION
Roger A. Herriot, Chief

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SYMBOLS USED IN TABLES

- Represents zero or rounds to zero.
 - B Base is less than 75,000.
 - X Not applicable.
-

Child Support and Alimony: 1981 (Advance Report)

INTRODUCTION

Increases in the divorce rate and in the number of families maintained by women with no husband present have resulted in greater demands for information on the economic condition of women and children involved in divorce and separation. The Bureau's first survey specifically designed to obtain data on child support and alimony was conducted in the spring of 1979, under the joint sponsorship of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Commerce. The results of this survey were presented in Current Population Reports, Series P-23, No. 112, Child Support and Alimony: 1978. The survey,¹ with minor modifications, was conducted again in the spring of 1982 by the Department of Commerce, sponsored in part by the Office of Child Support Enforcement, Department of Health and Human Services. Initial findings from the 1982 survey are presented in this report.

AWARD AND RECEIPT OF CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS

- o As of spring 1982, 8.4 million women were living with a child under 21 years of age whose father was not living in the household; 59 percent or about 5 million of these women were awarded child support payments.
- o Of the 4 million women due child support payments in 1981, 47 percent received the full amount due. Of the remaining women, there was no evidence of a difference between the proportion receiving partial payment and those who received no payment at all.

¹For a comparison of the 1982 and 1979 surveys, see "Changes in the Survey." For a discussion of survey design and processing procedures, see "Brief Description of the Survey."

- o For all women, the child support award and reciprocity rates reported were not significantly different from those of the 1979 survey. (The award and reciprocity rates from the 1979 survey were 59 and 72 percents, respectively; see table A.)
- o The mean amount of child support received by women increased from \$1,800 in 1978 to \$2,110 in 1981.² After adjusting for inflation during this period, child support payments decreased by about 16 percent in real terms. However, child support payments as a percentage of average male income (\$13,110 in 1978 and \$16,520 in 1981) was at about the same level (13 percent) in both years, since the real income of males declined during this period as well.³
- o Of the 2.6 million women below the poverty level with children present from an absent father, about 40 percent were awarded child support.
- o Among the poor, 810,000 women were due payments in 1981, but only about 60 percent received some amount of payment.
- o The mean child support payment received in 1981 by women below the poverty level was \$1,440.

THE DEFICIT IN CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS

- o For the 4 million women due child support payments in 1981, the mean amount of child

²Mean income figures in the text are rounded to the nearest \$10.

³Mean child support payments were compared with mean income of all males as a proxy, since the income of the absent father was not available from the survey. Income figures for males can be found in table 12 of Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 134.

Table A. Awarded and Reciprocity Status of Women—Child Support and Alimony Payments in 1981 and 1978

(Women as of spring 1982 and 1979. Child support payments for women with own children under 21 years of age present from an absent father; alimony payments for ever-divorced women)

Year, award and reciprocity status of women	Child support payments		Alimony payments	
	Number (thousands)	Percent distribution	Number (thousands)	Percent distribution
1981				
Total.....	8,387	100.0	16,996	100.0
Awarded ¹	4,969	59.2	2,534	14.9
Supposed to receive payments in 1981.....	4,043	48.2	782	4.6
Not supposed to receive payments in 1981.....	926	11.0	1,752	10.3
Not awarded ¹	3,417	40.7	14,462	85.1
Supposed to receive payments in 1981.....	4,043	100.0	782	100.0
Actually received payments.....	2,902	71.8	527	67.4
Received full amount.....	1,888	46.7	340	43.5
Received partial amount.....	1,014	25.1	187	23.9
Did not receive payments.....	1,140	28.2	255	32.6
1978				
Total.....	7,094	100.0	14,334	100.0
Awarded ¹	4,196	59.1	2,052	14.3
Supposed to receive payments in 1978.....	3,424	48.3	760	5.3
Not supposed to receive payments in 1978.....	772	10.9	1,292	9.0
Not awarded ¹	2,898	40.9	12,282	85.7
Supposed to receive payments in 1978.....	3,424	100.0	760	100.0
Actually received payments.....	2,452	71.6	528	69.5
Received full amount.....	1,675	48.9	312	41.1
Received partial amount.....	777	22.7	216	28.4
Did not receive payments.....	971	28.4	232	30.5

¹Award status as of spring 1982 and 1979.

support including those who received nothing was \$1,510. If the full amount of payment due had been made, the mean amount would have been \$2,460.

o For women with court-ordered payments, the mean payment due was \$2,050, but the mean amount received was only \$1,120; therefore, women with court orders received only 55 percent of the amount they were due. In contrast, women with voluntary written agreements received 78 percent of the amount they were due, and their mean child support payments due (\$2,870) and received (\$2,240) were higher.

o The aggregate amount of child support payments due in 1981 was \$9.9 billion, but actual payments received amounted to only about \$6.1 billion.

AWARD AND RECEIPT OF ALIMONY PAYMENTS

o Of the 17 million ever-divorced or currently separated women as of spring 1982, 15 percent were awarded alimony payments.

o Of the 780,000 women due alimony payments in 1981, 43 percent received full payment; there was no evidence of a difference between the proportion receiving partial payments and those who received no payment at all.

o The mean amount of alimony received by women in 1981 was \$3,000. After adjusting for inflation, this reflected a decrease of about 25 percent from the 1978 level. Alimony payments as a percentage of average male income showed no statistically significant change between the two years.⁴

AWARD OF PROPERTY SETTLEMENTS

o About 42 percent of the 14.2 million ever-divorced women were awarded a property settlement as of spring 1982.

⁴Mean alimony payments were compared with the mean income of all males as a proxy, since the income of ex-husbands was not available from the survey.

- o Of women awarded a property settlement, about 20 percent also received some form of support payment in 1981. About 16 percent of ever-divorced women without a settlement received support payments in 1981.
- o Slightly over 20 percent of women with a settlement received a "one-time" cash payment as at least part of the settlement.
- o The likelihood of receiving a property settlement varied by age. Women over 30 years of age were more likely to receive an award than younger women.
- o The average total income of women with property settlements (\$10,280) was slightly higher than those without settlements (\$9,180).

All women 18 years of age and older were within the universe for the supplemental questions. Marital status, divorce history, and the presence of own children under 21 years old determined whether or not a woman was eligible to be asked certain series of questions on child support, alimony, and property settlements.

A data file was created containing all of the supplemental data from the April 1982 CPS as well as the income information from the supplement to the March 1982 CPS. This enabled the data gathered in each survey to be jointly tabulated. The file was created by matching the persons on the March 1982 CPS Supplement file with the persons on the April 1982 CPS Basic file, using only those segments from each (approximately three-fourths of the sample) that were interviewed in both months. The match rate for the relevant unweighted universe for April supplement data was approximately 95 percent. March was chosen as the base month from which demographic characteristics were taken. Each time that a match occurred for which there were

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY

The data on child support and alimony were collected in a special supplement to the April 1982 Current Population Survey (CPS).

Table B. Child Support Payments Awarded and Received in 1981—Women With Children Present, by Selected Characteristics

(Women with own children under 21 years of age present from an absent father as of spring 1982)

Characteristics of women	Total (thousands)	Percent awarded child support payments ¹	Supposed to receive child support in 1981			
			Total (thousands)	Actually received child support in 1981		
				Percent	Mean child support	Mean total money income
Total.....	8,387	59.2	4,043	71.8	\$2,106	\$11,747
CURRENT MARITAL STATUS						
Married ²	2,201	77.8	1,298	66.7	1,909	9,081
Divorced.....	2,861	80.5	2,033	73.8	2,220	14,230
Separated.....	1,552	42.8	518	79.9	2,374	9,893
Widowed ³	64	(B)	16	(B)	(B)	(B)
Never-married.....	1,708	14.3	178	62.9	1,015	5,555
RACE AND SPANISH ORIGIN						
White.....	5,977	69.2	3,443	72.5	2,180	12,198
Black.....	2,283	33.8	546	67.0	1,640	8,849
Spanish origin ⁴	628	43.9	232	65.9	2,068	8,887
YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED						
Less than 12 years.....	2,386	42.9	762	58.9	1,677	6,869
High school: 4 years.....	3,971	63.2	2,048	71.7	1,909	10,819
College: 1 to 3 years.....	1,385	67.9	802	77.6	2,309	13,255
4 years or more...	644	76.6	431	84.0	3,089	18,973

B Base less than 75,000.

¹Award status as of spring 1982.

²Remarried women whose previous marriage ended in divorce.

³Widowed women whose previous marriage ended in divorce.

⁴Persons of Spanish origin may be of any race.

Table C. Comparison of Mean Child Support and Alimony Income Received by Women in 1981 and 1978, by Selected Characteristics

Characteristics of women	Mean child support			Percent change, child support in 1981 dollars	Mean alimony			Percent change, alimony in 1981 dollars
	1981	1978			1981	1978		
		1981 dollars	Current dollars			1981 dollars	Current dollars	
Total.....	\$2,106	\$2,510	\$1,799	** -16.1	\$3,000	\$3,977	\$2,851	** -24.6
CURRENT MARITAL STATUS								
Married ¹	1,909	2,235	1,602	* -14.6	(B)	(B)	(B)	(X)
Divorced.....	2,220	2,722	1,951	** -18.4	3,006	4,411	3,162	** -31.9
Separated.....	2,374	2,659	1,906	-10.7	3,291	3,246	2,327	1.4
Widowed ²	(B)	(B)	(B)	(X)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(X)
Never-married.....	1,015	1,362	976	* -25.5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
RACE AND SPANISH ORIGIN								
White.....	2,180	2,596	1,861	** -16.0	3,040	4,242	3,041	** -28.3
Black.....	1,640	1,805	1,294	-9.1	(B)	(B)	(B)	(X)
Spanish origin ³	2,068	1,839	1,318	12.5	(B)	(B)	(B)	(X)
YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED								
Less than 12 years.....	1,677	2,097	1,503	** -20.0	1,744	2,472	1,772	* -29.4
High school: 4 years.....	1,909	2,321	1,664	** -17.8	2,383	3,172	2,274	** -24.9
College: 1 to 3 years...	2,309	2,914	2,089	** -20.8	4,171	6,238	4,472	* -33.1
4 years or more	3,089	3,591	2,574	-14.0	4,444	4,867	3,489	-8.7

B Base less than 75,000.

X Not applicable.

* Significant between the 90- and 95-percent confidence levels.

**Significant at the 95-percent confidence level.

¹Remarried women whose previous marriage ended in divorce.

²Widowed women whose previous marriage ended in divorce.

³Persons of Spanish origin may be of any race.

April supplement data, this information was added to each person's record. The unmatched April records were discarded. If a supplement had unfilled items, an attempt was made to produce a response using a consistency edit of reported information; if this was not possible, the items were imputed from fully reported cases.

As noted earlier, partial funding for collection of the Supplemental data was provided by the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). Of prime interest to OCSE was the "cost avoidance" effectiveness of its programs in assisting women experiencing difficulty in establishing or collecting child support payments. Among the service provisions offered by OCSE are help in locating the father, establishing paternity, establishing support obligation, enforcing support orders, and obtaining collection. Data presenting findings associated with the user rate of OCSE's services, the type of such services used, and the dollar amount of child support paid to women as a result of OCSE's

help are available upon request from the Office of Child Support Enforcement, Department of Health and Human Services.

CHANGES IN THE SURVEY

In response to user needs and in an attempt to improve reporting and the usability of the data, certain deletions, modifications, and additions were made to the survey. A forthcoming final report will include a facsimile of the spring 1982 survey questionnaire that will enable readers to make comparisons with the 1979 survey. Outlined below are the major areas of change.

The two major items deleted from the supplement were questions designed to obtain minimal information from the respondent about the current status of the absent father. The first question concerned the father's responsibility for support of other children. Many of the women responding to this question indicated that they "did not know" whether the ex-husband was responsible for other children.

The second question concerned the current income of the ex-husband. Women were asked to indicate their ex-husband's income according to five broad intervals. The response rate on this item was so low that the data could not be published.

Also excluded from the supplement was a question on the estimated value of property settlements awarded to women. In many cases, women had difficulty estimating the total value of the settlement. This problem was compounded by the fact that awards were made at different points in time and could not be compared without adjusting each value for inflation. Because of this problem, previous tabulations by value of property settlement were limited to a restricted universe of women who had been divorced less than 5 years.

The major modification of the questionnaire dealt with another item on property settlements. The four categories on the type of settlement ("house," "cash," "other property," and "something other") were condensed to two categories ("a one-time cash settlement" and "something other"). The response of "no settlement reached" was retained.

The major additions to the survey were questions requested by OCSE. Added items cover the following areas of women's interaction with the child support enforcement agency: (1) had contact been made with the agency for help; (2) was help received; (3) what type of help was received; (4) what was the dollar amount, if any, of child support payments received as a result of OCSE's efforts; (5) what was the woman's AFDC reciprocity status; and (6) for AFDC recipients, were AFDC payments made the full year.

Additional questions collected information on the labor force status of women at the time of divorce or separation and whether they were employed full or part time. Tabulations including the labor force data collected in the April 1982 survey will appear in an upcoming detailed report in the P-23 series of the Current Population Reports.

OTHER DATA ON CHILD SUPPORT AND ALIMONY

Prior to April 1979, survey data available on the receipt of child support and ali-

mony payments were obtained as a byproduct from the Survey of Income and Education (SIE) conducted by the Bureau of the Census in the spring of 1976. In the SIE, information was collected on the amount of child support received from all sources. In the April 1979 and 1982 CPS, information was collected on only those payments from the most recent divorce or separation, to achieve consistency with other information collected on circumstances surrounding the divorce or separation. Because of the differences in survey design and scope, the data from the SIE and CPS are not strictly comparable. The information on child support and alimony collected from the SIE may be found in Current Population Reports, Series P-23, No. 84, Divorce, Child Custody, and Child Support. For further discussion of the comparison of the two surveys, see Current Population Reports, Series P-23, No. 112, Child Support and Alimony: 1978.

The reader should also be aware of the existence of administrative and survey data available from the Social Security Administration concerning women who may have received child support payments as part of their income from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). With the enactment of the Child Support Enforcement Amendments of 1973 to the Social Security Act, provision was made for AFDC child support payments contributed by the father to be paid directly to the welfare agency and not to the parent with whom the child lives. Thus, it is theoretically possible that if a woman received AFDC income in which the child support payment were included, and if she had no knowledge of the inclusion, the CPS data may show her as receiving no child support payment. For further discussion of Child Support Enforcement with relation to AFDC families, see Aid to Families with Dependent Children--1979 Recipients Characteristics Study published by the Office of Research and Statistics, Social Security Administration.

Table 1. Child Support Payments Agreed to or Awarded—Women With Own Children Present, by Selected Characteristics, for All Women and Women With Incomes Below the Poverty Level in 1981

(WOMEN WITH OWN CHILDREN PRESENT UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE FROM AN ABSENT FATHER AS OF SPRING 1982. FOR MEANING OF SYMBOLS, SEE TEXT)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS	CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS--													
	AGREED TO OR AWARDED										NOT AWARDED			
	SUPPOSED TO RECEIVE PAYMENTS IN 1981													
	RECEIVED PAYMENTS					DID NOT RECEIVE PAYMENTS								
	TOTAL	TOTAL ¹	TOTAL	NUMBER	MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME		MEAN INCOME FROM CHILD SUPPORT		NUMBER	MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME		NUMBER	MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME	
VALUE					STAND-ARD ERROR	VALUE	STAND-ARD ERROR	VALUE		STAND-ARD ERROR	VALUE		STAND-ARD ERROR	
(THOUS.)	(THOUS.)	(THOUS.)	(THOUS.)	(DOL.)	(DOL.)	(DOL.)	(DOL.)	(THOUS.)	(DOL.)	(DOL.)	(THOUS.)	(DOL.)	(DOL.)	
ALL WOMEN														
TOTAL	8 387	4 969	4 043	2 902	11 747	292	2 104	66	1 140	8 027	316	3 417	6 135	156
STANDARD ERROR	187	147	134	114	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	72	(X)	(X)	123	(X)	(X)
CURRENT MARITAL STATUS OF WOMAN														
HARRIED ²	2 201	1 712	1 298	866	9 081	389	1 909	150	432	7 035	560	489	6 413	483
DIVORCED	2 861	2 304	2 033	1 501	14 230	373	2 220	74	533	9 787	432	857	8 497	483
SEPARATED	1 552	665	518	414	9 893	539	2 374	184	103	5 475	821	847	6 322	310
WIDOWED ³	64	44	14	9	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	7	(8)	(8)	20	(8)	(8)
NEVER-HARRIED	1 708	244	178	112	5 555	640	1 015	128	66	(8)	(8)	1 464	4 937	172
RACE AND SPANISH ORIGIN OF WOMAN														
WHITE	5 977	4 136	3 443	2 495	12 198	280	2 180	73	948	8 109	354	1 841	6 612	234
BLACK	2 283	772	546	366	8 849	543	1 640	154	180	7 582	727	1 811	5 374	211
SPANISH ORIGIN ⁴	628	276	232	153	8 887	1 316	2 048	438	79	8 060	1 688	352	4 967	587
AGE OF WOMAN														
18 TO 29 YEARS	3 053	1 401	1 166	723	8 074	321	1 483	77	443	6 384	405	1 653	4 614	157
30 TO 39 YEARS	3 288	2 292	1 943	1 482	12 494	333	2 231	105	462	8 042	499	996	7 569	337
40 YEARS AND OVER	2 046	1 277	933	697	13 969	647	2 484	131	236	11 085	801	769	7 546	377
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF WOMAN														
LESS THAN 12 YEARS	2 386	1 024	762	449	6 869	393	1 677	118	313	5 900	452	1 362	4 229	165
HIGH SCHOOL: 4 YEARS	3 971	2 511	2 048	1 469	10 819	292	1 909	64	579	7 679	420	1 460	6 699	236
COLLEGE: 1 TO 3 YEARS	1 385	941	802	622	13 255	526	2 309	204	179	10 288	811	444	7 930	487
4 YEARS OR MORE	644	493	431	362	18 973	1 055	3 089	238	69	(8)	(8)	151	12 572	1 246
NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN														
1 CHILD	4 174	2 377	1 860	1 259	11 133	366	1 624	70	602	8 525	468	1 797	6 221	223
2 CHILDREN	2 772	1 811	1 549	1 159	11 917	407	2 292	84	391	7 826	503	961	5 985	286
3 CHILDREN	892	512	418	327	13 065	731	2 797	217	91	7 351	1 026	360	5 508	409
4 CHILDREN OR MORE	549	270	215	158	12 668	1 293	3 146	705	58	(8)	(8)	280	6 949	528
WOMEN WITH INCOMES BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL IN 1981														
TOTAL	2 566	1 018	806	495	4 289	359	1 440	190	311	3 675	440	1 947	3 373	185
STANDARD ERROR	162	103	92	72	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	57	(X)	(X)	127	(X)	(X)
CURRENT MARITAL STATUS OF WOMAN														
HARRIED ²	181	110	87	46	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	41	(8)	(8)	71	(8)	(8)
DIVORCED	694	498	404	241	4 542	434	1 466	252	164	4 259	555	196	3 941	423
SEPARATED	784	278	217	144	4 353	687	1 768	429	73	(8)	(8)	507	3 593	353
WIDOWED ³	13	6	6	-	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	6	(8)	(8)	7	(8)	(8)
NEVER-HARRIED	893	127	92	65	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	27	(8)	(8)	767	3 208	247
RACE AND SPANISH ORIGIN OF WOMAN														
WHITE	1 355	695	577	344	4 287	407	1 499	220	233	3 617	505	660	3 449	291
BLACK	1 167	311	217	144	4 291	751	1 320	381	73	(8)	(8)	654	3 323	243
SPANISH ORIGIN ⁴	284	90	77	44	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	33	(8)	(8)	194	4 183	824
AGE OF WOMAN														
18 TO 29 YEARS	1 293	441	362	217	4 134	475	1 240	246	145	3 458	671	852	3 055	227
30 TO 39 YEARS	837	404	331	200	4 245	607	1 515	333	131	4 017	646	434	3 922	373
40 YEARS AND OVER	435	173	113	79	4 823	987	1 799	473	35	(8)	(8)	262	3 494	479
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF WOMAN														
LESS THAN 12 YEARS	1 246	412	318	173	3 722	526	1 349	276	145	3 657	619	834	3 227	260
HIGH SCHOOL: 4 YEARS	997	448	364	238	4 564	522	1 322	251	126	3 720	703	548	3 507	297
COLLEGE: 1 TO 3 YEARS	252	113	90	56	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	34	(8)	(8)	139	3 649	602
4 YEARS OR MORE	71	44	35	29	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	6	(8)	(8)	26	(8)	(8)
NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN														
1 CHILD	1 000	356	286	164	4 006	503	1 065	190	122	3 168	640	644	2 960	268
2 CHILDREN	891	403	336	210	3 727	557	1 448	318	126	3 708	676	488	3 239	265
3 CHILDREN	387	154	107	75	5 695	1 021	1 878	621	32	(8)	(8)	233	3 637	524
4 CHILDREN OR MORE	287	106	77	46	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	32	(8)	(8)	182	4 855	603

¹INCLUDES A SMALL NUMBER OF WOMEN WHO WERE NOT SUPPOSED TO RECEIVE PAYMENTS IN 1981. ²REHARRIED WOMEN WHOSE PREVIOUS MARRIAGE ENDED IN DIVORCE. ³WIDOWED WOMEN WHOSE PREVIOUS MARRIAGE ENDED IN DIVORCE. ⁴PERSONS OF SPANISH ORIGIN MAY BE OF ANY RACE.

Table 2. Reciprocity of Child Support Income in 1981—Women With Children Present, by Type of Arrangement

(NUMBERS IN THOUSANDS. WOMEN WITH OWN CHILDREN PRESENT UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE FROM AN ABSENT FATHER AS OF SPRING 1982. FOR MEANING OF SYMBOLS, SEE TEXT)

TYPE OF ARRANGEMENT	SUPPOSED TO RECEIVE CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS IN 1981									
	NUMBER	STANDARD ERROR	AMOUNT OF PAYMENT DUE IN 1981							
			\$1 TO \$499	\$500 TO \$999	\$1,000 TO \$1,499	\$1,500 TO \$1,999	\$2,000 TO \$2,999	\$3,000 TO \$4,999	\$5,000 TO \$6,999	\$7,000 AND OVER
TOTAL¹										
PERCENT OF PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 1981:										
TOTAL	4 043	134	199	558	901	653	727	710	171	123
0.0	1 140	72	80	225	320	194	172	116	20	14
0.1 TO 24.9	170	26	-	24	41	29	27	37	6	6
25.0 TO 49.9	194	30	1	15	44	31	20	56	7	2
50.0 TO 74.9	338	39	7	49	36	49	69	90	19	17
75.0 TO 99.9	313	38	9	41	69	61	63	51	6	15
100.0 AND OVER	1 888	93	102	205	373	289	376	360	115	69
MEAN INCOME FROM CHILD SUPPORT, DOLLARS	1 512	(X)	178	382	654	1 020	1 592	2 490	4 444	7 471
STANDARD ERROR	53	(X)	24	28	31	53	62	92	260	963
MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME	10 698	(X)	7 644	8 266	8 964	10 722	11 058	12 970	14 013	19 362
STANDARD ERROR	206	(X)	708	483	353	465	455	552	980	1 983
NUMBER BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	806	(X)	82	175	185	121	113	95	22	14
STANDARD ERROR	92	(X)	29	43	44	36	35	32	(8)	(8)
IF FULL AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS WERE RECEIVED IN 1981:										
MEAN INCOME FROM CHILD SUPPORT, DOLLARS	2 457	(X)	249	738	1 202	1 710	2 399	3 718	5 693	15 507
STANDARD ERROR	103	(X)	15	9	6	8	13	35	57	2 585
MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME	11 659	(X)	7 735	8 643	9 524	11 436	11 876	14 213	15 263	27 424
STANDARD ERROR	222	(X)	712	481	352	457	445	538	912	2 868
NUMBER BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	697	(X)	82	164	167	103	96	64	14	9
STANDARD ERROR	86	(X)	29	42	42	33	32	(8)	(8)	(8)
COURT-ORDERED PAYMENTS										
PERCENT OF PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 1981:										
TOTAL	2 502	106	100	434	607	417	452	381	80	31
0.0	907	65	55	191	278	148	132	86	15	3
0.1 TO 24.9	119	24	-	20	22	25	15	27	6	4
25.0 TO 49.9	139	25	1	11	43	19	19	42	3	-
50.0 TO 74.9	254	34	4	43	27	45	55	57	15	8
75.0 TO 99.9	181	29	5	30	43	40	34	20	3	5
100.0 AND OVER	903	65	36	138	195	140	197	149	36	11
MEAN INCOME FROM CHILD SUPPORT, DOLLARS	1 119	(X)	153	329	534	864	1 427	2 030	3 471	(8)
STANDARD ERROR	61	(X)	39	27	38	61	81	123	411	(8)
MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME	9 776	(X)	7 990	7 630	8 875	10 364	10 313	12 054	9 910	(8)
STANDARD ERROR	247	(X)	1 039	519	433	583	583	735	948	(8)
NUMBER BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	550	(X)	37	151	130	77	78	59	16	4
STANDARD ERROR	76	(X)	(8)	40	37	28	29	(8)	(8)	(8)
IF FULL AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS WERE RECEIVED IN 1981:										
MEAN INCOME FROM CHILD SUPPORT, DOLLARS	2 052	(X)	257	734	1 199	1 719	2 406	3 614	5 552	(8)
STANDARD ERROR	71	(X)	22	10	7	11	17	44	76	(8)
MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME	10 721	(X)	8 134	8 040	9 553	11 228	11 302	13 657	11 991	(8)
STANDARD ERROR	248	(X)	1 050	518	432	579	572	700	935	(8)
NUMBER BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	478	(X)	37	145	114	65	67	37	13	1
STANDARD ERROR	71	(X)	(8)	39	35	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)
VOLUNTARY WRITTEN AGREEMENT										
PERCENT OF PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 1981:										
TOTAL	1 362	79	76	104	267	215	243	292	83	81
0.0	177	29	15	27	32	44	32	16	4	5
0.1 TO 24.9	43	(8)	-	4	13	4	12	8	-	3
25.0 TO 49.9	53	(8)	4	4	21	10	1	13	1	2
50.0 TO 74.9	70	(8)	2	5	10	4	12	26	4	7
75.0 TO 99.9	121	24	4	11	26	16	29	24	2	10
100.0 AND OVER	899	65	54	53	166	137	158	206	72	54
MEAN INCOME FROM CHILD SUPPORT, DOLLARS	2 237	(X)	226	586	941	1 282	1 864	3 190	5 322	7 562
STANDARD ERROR	96	(X)	29	91	49	98	94	118	261	629
MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME	12 482	(X)	8 164	10 753	9 599	11 509	12 098	14 250	18 110	19 822
STANDARD ERROR	380	(X)	1 156	1 320	646	816	742	902	1 491	2 242
NUMBER BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	212	(X)	35	17	42	38	36	28	6	10
STANDARD ERROR	47	(X)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)
IF FULL AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS WERE RECEIVED IN 1981:										
MEAN INCOME FROM CHILD SUPPORT, DOLLARS	2 873	(X)	246	759	1 220	1 687	2 377	3 817	5 797	11 723
STANDARD ERROR	168	(X)	25	19	12	14	23	59	79	2 074
MEAN TOTAL MONEY INCOME	13 143	(X)	8 184	11 017	9 890	11 970	12 624	14 890	18 586	24 022
STANDARD ERROR	402	(X)	1 155	1 303	643	789	724	914	1 426	2 825
NUMBER BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	180	(X)	35	14	42	31	29	19	1	8
STANDARD ERROR	44	(X)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)

¹ INCLUDES A SMALL NUMBER OF WOMEN WHO RECEIVED PAYMENTS BY 'SOME OTHER METHOD,' NOT SHOWN SEPARATELY.

Table 4. Property Settlement Following Divorce—Ever-Divorced Women, by Selected Characteristics

(NUMBERS IN THOUSANDS. WOMEN AS OF SPRING 1982. FOR MEANING OF SYMBOLS, SEE TEXT)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS	NO SETTLEMENT REACHED					PROPERTY SETTLEMENT REACHED						
	TOTAL	TOTAL ¹	RECEIVED--			TOTAL ¹	RECEIVED--			TYPE OF SETTLEMENT		
			CHILD SUPPORT ONLY	ALIMONY ONLY	CHILD SUPPORT AND ALIMONY		CHILD SUPPORT ONLY	ALIMONY ONLY	CHILD SUPPORT AND ALIMONY	CASH ² ONLY	OTHER TYPES ³ ONLY	CASH ⁴ AND OTHER TYPES
TOTAL	14 209	8 270	1 127	93	96	5 939	1 035	120	119	815	4 602	922
STANDARD ERROR	232	186	72	21	21	160	69	24	24	61	142	49
CURRENT MARITAL STATUS OF WOMAN												
DIVORCED	6 749	3 910	684	83	91	2 839	612	104	114	471	2 140	229
MARRIED ⁵	6 453	3 756	441	9	5	2 697	416	16	5	305	2 134	259
WIDOWED ⁶	1 007	604	2	1	-	403	7	-	-	39	329	39
RACE AND SPANISH ORIGIN OF WOMAN												
WHITE	12 487	7 127	979	85	93	5 359	979	115	105	740	4 217	402
BLACK	1 521	1 013	130	6	3	508	47	5	10	64	340	104
SPANISH ORIGIN ⁷	643	435	67	3	4	208	37	-	12	22	166	20
AGE OF WOMAN												
18 TO 29 YEARS	2 302	1 770	340	10	10	532	157	12	6	146	370	17
30 TO 39 YEARS	4 180	2 137	484	18	30	2 043	661	41	73	254	1 696	93
40 YEARS AND OVER	7 727	4 363	302	66	56	3 365	217	68	39	415	2 537	413
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF WOMAN												
LESS THAN 12 YEARS	4 018	2 602	169	25	12	1 416	102	12	16	151	1 096	168
HIGH SCHOOL: 4 YEARS	6 297	3 623	593	39	50	2 674	511	57	48	405	2 056	213
COLLEGE: 1 TO 3 YEARS	2 432	1 345	252	18	17	1 087	270	31	30	135	880	72
4 YEARS OR MORE	1 483	700	113	11	17	763	152	20	25	124	569	69
PRESENCE OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 21 YEARS OLD BY AN ABSENT FATHER												
NO CHILDREN PRESENT	9 083	5 259	(X)	74	(X)	3 824	(X)	107	(X)	546	2 869	409
1 OR MORE CHILDREN PRESENT	5 127	3 011	1 127	19	96	2 116	1 035	14	119	269	1 734	113
YEAR OF DIVORCE												
1975 AND LATER	6 397	3 845	832	59	71	2 552	759	88	107	435	1 949	168
1970 TO 1974	2 625	1 693	225	13	16	932	195	17	9	145	726	62
1960 TO 1969	2 544	1 319	70	18	9	1 225	57	14	-	152	977	95
BEFORE 1960	2 643	1 413	-	3	-	1 230	24	1	2	84	950	197
INCOME OF WOMAN												
WITHOUT INCOME	775	509	(X)	(X)	(X)	266	(X)	(X)	(X)	31	202	33
WITH INCOME	13 435	7 761	1 127	93	96	5 673	1 035	120	119	784	4 400	489
\$1 TO \$999 OR LOSS	1 072	636	53	-	-	436	21	1	-	58	335	43
\$1,000 TO \$1,999	644	366	73	-	-	278	42	11	-	24	225	28
\$2,000 TO \$3,999	1 851	1 185	93	15	2	666	92	4	3	75	513	78
\$4,000 TO \$5,999	1 696	1 065	127	17	3	631	79	21	13	82	487	61
\$6,000 TO \$7,999	1 368	814	113	3	16	554	55	5	12	76	423	53
\$8,000 TO \$9,999	1 237	726	112	13	2	511	89	12	3	78	402	31
\$10,000 TO \$11,999	1 217	684	112	4	12	553	141	10	10	77	433	43
\$12,000 TO \$14,999	1 502	826	138	13	15	676	170	22	24	111	528	37
\$15,000 TO \$24,999	2 260	1 185	247	18	33	1 075	279	26	42	159	834	81
\$25,000 AND OVER	589	296	59	10	13	293	67	8	12	41	220	33
MEDIAN INCOME DOLLARS	8 141	7 546	9 880	9 768	14 559	9 064	11 982	11 069	14 343	9 904	9 078	7 275
STANDARD ERROR DOLLARS	148	172	476	1 881	1 853	234	403	1 550	1 269	570	262	657
MEAN INCOME DOLLARS	9 645	9 177	11 300	12 416	16 395	10 284	12 744	12 434	15 687	10 852	10 244	9 737
STANDARD ERROR DOLLARS	108	138	425	1 582	1 667	170	401	1 485	1 376	457	191	627

¹DETAIL DOES NOT ADD TO TOTAL BECAUSE SOME EVER-DIVORCED WOMEN RECEIVED NEITHER CHILD SUPPORT NOR ALIMONY, NOT SHOWN SEPARATELY.²A ONE-TIME CASH SETTLEMENT.³OTHER PROPERTY (HOUSE, OTHER REAL ESTATE, CARS, FURNISHINGS, ETC.).⁴REARRIED WOMEN WHOSE PREVIOUS MARRIAGE ENDED IN DIVORCE.⁵WIDOWED WOMEN WHOSE PREVIOUS MARRIAGE ENDED IN DIVORCE.⁶PERSONS OF SPANISH ORIGIN MAY BE OF ANY RACE.

Appendix A. Definitions and Explanations

Child support. Data on award of child support payments were collected from women 18 years or older with children under 21 years of age whose father was not living in the household as of spring 1982. Information on reciprocity and amount of payments was obtained from women who reported that they were awarded or had agreements to receive child support payments in 1981. Payment amounts were limited to only those from the last divorce or separation.

Alimony. Data on the award of alimony or maintenance payments were collected from women 18 years or older who were ever-divorced or currently separated as of spring 1982. Information on reciprocity status and payment amounts was obtained from those women who reported that they were awarded or had agreements to receive alimony payments in 1981. The data are limited to payments received from the most recent divorce or separation.

Property settlements. Data on property settlements were collected from women 18 years or older who were ever-divorced as of spring 1982. For the purposes of this survey, property settlements consist of a one-time cash settlement or other property (i.e., house, other real estate, car, or furniture) or a combination of both.

Money income. Income distributions and income summary measures (such as medians and means) shown in this report are limited to money income before payment of Federal, State, local, or Social Security (FICA) taxes and before any other types of deductions, such as union dues and Medicare premiums. Total money income is the sum of the amounts received from wages and salaries, self-employment income (including losses), Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, public assistance, interest, dividends, rent, royalties, estates or trusts, veterans' payments, unemployment and workers' compensations, private and government retirement and disability pensions, alimony, child support, and any other source of money income which was regularly received.

Capital gains (or losses) and lump sum or one-time payments such as life insurance settlements are excluded.

Poverty definition. Families and unrelated individuals are classified as being above or below the poverty level using the poverty index originated at the Social Security Administration in 1964 and revised by Federal Interagency Committees in 1969 and 1980. The poverty index is based solely on money income and does not reflect the fact that many low-income persons receive food stamps, Medicaid, and public housing. The index is based on the Department of Agriculture's 1961 Economy Food Plan and reflects the different consumption requirements of families based on their size and composition. It was determined from the Department of Agriculture's 1955 Survey of Food Consumption that families of three or more persons spend approximately one-third of their income on food; the poverty level for these families was, therefore, set at three times the cost of the economy food plan. For smaller families and persons living alone, the cost of the economy food plan was multiplied by factors that were slightly higher in order to compensate for the relatively larger fixed expenses of these smaller households. The poverty thresholds are updated every year to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The average poverty threshold for a family of four was \$9,287 in 1981, about 10.4 percent higher than the comparable 1980 cutoff of \$8,414. For further details, see Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 133.

Computation of constant dollar means. The adjustment for price change was made by converting the mean income for women for the year 1978 into 1981 dollars on the basis of the change in the Consumer Price Index. The indices used to make the constant dollar conversions are shown in table A-1.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is an index designed to measure changes in purchasing power. While the CPI is a good measure of the changes in prices, it is not necessarily a

good measure of the changes in prices faced by consumers of different characteristics and income levels. Furthermore, the housing component of the CPI has been criticized for contributing to unduly large increases in the CPI over the past several years. These limitations should be noted when comparing income figures adjusted to constant dollars using the CPI since the same index was used for all women and all income levels.

Symbols. A dash (-) represents zero or rounds to zero, and the symbol "B" means that the base is less than 75,000. An "X" means not applicable.

Table A-1. Consumer Price Index (CPI): 1977 to 1981

(1977 = 100)

Year	CPI	Year	CPI
1977.	100.0	1980.	136.0
1978.	107.6	1981.	150.1
1979.	119.8		

Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Appendix B. Source and Reliability of Estimates

SOURCE OF DATA

The estimates in this report are based on data collected in the March and April 1982 Current Population Surveys (CPS) conducted by the Bureau of the Census. The present CPS sample was initially selected from the 1970 census files with coverage in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. The sample is continually updated to reflect new construction. The current sample is located in 629 areas comprising 1,148 counties, independent cities, and minor civil divisions in the Nation.

In the March sample, approximately 63,000 occupied households were eligible for interview. Of this number about 3,000 occupied units were visited but interviews were not obtained because the occupants were not found at home after repeated calls or were unavailable for some other reason. In addition to the 63,000 there were about 11,500 sample units which were visited but were found to be vacant or otherwise not to be interviewed.

About 43,500 of the households interviewed in March were interviewed again in April. Women 18 years of age and older were asked supplemental questions regarding child support and alimony payments. Of the 43,615 eligible women interviewed in March, 39,377

were matched to women interviewed in April.¹ Child support and alimony information was imputed for the other 4,238 eligible women. The table below gives sample sizes and imputation rates by marital status.

The estimation procedure used in this survey involved the inflation of weighted sample results to independent estimates of the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States by age, race, and sex. These independent estimates are based on statistics from decennial censuses; statistics on births, deaths, immigration, and emigration; and statistics on the strength of the Armed Forces.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

Since the CPS estimates are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat from the figures that would have been obtained if a complete census had been taken using the same questionnaire, instructions and enumerators. There are two types of errors possible in an estimate based on a sample survey: sampling and nonsampling. The standard errors provided for this report primarily indicate the magnitude of the sampling error. They also partially measure the effect of some nonsampling errors in response and enumeration, but do not measure any systematic biases in the data. The full extent of the nonsampling error is unknown. Consequently, particular care should be exercised in the interpretation of figures based on a relatively small number of cases or on small differences between estimates.

Nonsampling variability. Nonsampling errors can be attributed to many sources, e.g., inability to obtain information about all cases in the sample, definitional difficulties, differences in the interpretation of questions, inability or unwillingness of

Table B-1. Sample Sizes and Imputation Rates

Marital status	Sample size	Imputed cases	Rates
Total.....	43,615	4,238	9.7
Married or widowed.	31,473	2,385	7.6
Divorced.....	3,399	748	22.0
Separated.....	1,319	324	24.6
Never married.....	7,424	781	10.5

¹The main reasons the responses were not obtained for all eligible women interviewed in March are relocation of families and April nonresponse.

tions, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, inability to recall information, errors made in collection such as in recording or coding the data, errors made in processing the data, errors made in estimating values for missing data, and failure to represent all units with the sample (undercoverage).

In this report, the nonsampling error due to imputing values for missing data may be particularly severe. This is because the imputation rates for divorced and separated women are over 20 percent. Imputation procedures are intended to reduce nonsampling error due to missing data, but with such high imputation rates the procedures lose some effectiveness. Therefore, particular caution should be used in interpreting the data in this report.

Sampling variability. The standard errors given in this report are primarily measures of sampling variability, that is, of the variations that occurred by chance because a sample rather than the entire population was surveyed. The sample estimate and its standard error enable one to construct interval estimates that include the average result of all possible samples with a known probability. For example, if all possible samples were selected, each of these surveyed under identical conditions using the same sample design; and an estimate and its standard error were calculated from each sample, then:

1. Approximately 90 percent of the intervals from 1.6 standard errors below the estimate to 1.6 standard errors above the estimate would include the average result of all possible samples.
2. Approximately 95 percent of the intervals from two standard errors below the estimate to two standard errors above the estimate would include the average result of all possible samples.

The average result of all possible samples may or may not be contained in any particular computed interval. However, for a particular sample one can say with specified confidence that the average result of all possible samples is included within the constructed interval.

All statements of comparison in the text have passed a hypothesis test at the 0.10 level of significance or better, and most have passed a hypothesis test at the 0.05 level of significance or better. This means that, for most differences cited in the text, the estimated difference between parameters is greater than twice the standard error of

the difference. For the other differences mentioned, the estimated difference between parameters is between 1.6 and 2.0 times the standard error of the difference. When this is the case, the statement of comparison will be qualified in some way; e.g. by use of the phrase "some evidence."

Note when using small estimates. Percent distributions are shown in the report only when the base of the percentage is greater than 75,000. Because of the large standard errors involved, there is little chance that percentages would reveal useful information when computed on a smaller base. Estimated numbers are shown, however, even though the relative standard errors of these numbers are larger than those for corresponding percentages. These smaller estimates are provided primarily to permit such combinations of the categories as serve each user's needs.

STANDARD ERRORS

Standard errors of estimates for those characteristics of greatest interest are given together with these estimates in tables 1 through 4. Standard errors for the other estimates can be computed directly by the user as outlined in the next section.

Computation of standard errors for estimated numbers and estimated percentages. Standard errors of estimated numbers and estimated percentages can be computed directly with formulae (1) and (2) below, respectively. The formulae are:

$$\sigma_x = \sqrt{ax^2 + bx} \quad (1)$$

Here x is the size of the estimate and a and b are the parameters associated with the characteristic.

$$\sigma_{(x,p)} = \sqrt{\frac{b}{x} \cdot p \cdot (100-p)} \quad (2)$$

Here x is the size of the population subclass which is the base of the percentage, p is the percentage ($0 < p < 100$), and b is the parameter associated with the characteristic.

Table B-2 provides the values of the a and b parameters that are used in formulae (1) and (2) to create standard errors of estimated number of persons and estimated percentages.

**Table B-2. Parameters to be Used in the Computation of Standard Errors
for Estimated Numbers and Percentages of Persons**

Race and Spanish origin	Parameters ¹	
	a	b
Total women:		
Total or non-Black.....	-.000061	4667
Black.....	-.000690	6693
Spanish origin.....	-.000115	9959
Women from income levels below poverty:		
Total.....	-.000138	10,595
Black.....	-.001093	10,595
Spanish origin.....	-.000299	25,904

¹These parameters should not be used to calculate standard errors for estimates which are given in dollars (e.g., mean income).

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