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**More Custodial Parents Receive Full Amount  
of Child Support, Census Bureau Reports**

The proportion of custodial parents receiving all the child support payments they were due increased from 34 percent in 1993 to 41 percent in 1997, according to a report released today by the Commerce Department's Census Bureau.

Another 27 percent of custodial parents received partial payments in 1997, down from 35 percent in 1993. Overall, two-thirds (67 percent) of custodial parents due child support in 1997 received either full or partial payments, unchanged since 1993. The average amount of child support received by these custodial parents was \$3,600, also unchanged since 1993.

"The economic situation of custodial parents showed steady improvement since 1993," said Census Bureau analyst Timothy Grall, author of the report [Child Support for Custodial Mothers and Fathers: 1997](#). "For instance, a greater proportion of custodial parents are working full time now, and the likelihood of living in poverty and participating in public assistance programs has declined."

The proportion of custodial parents with full-time, year-round jobs increased from 46 percent to 51 percent between 1993 and 1997. The poverty rate for custodial parents declined between 1993 and 1997 (from 33 percent to 29 percent) as did the incidence of participating in a public assistance program (from 41 percent to 34 percent).

Other highlights of the report:

- As of spring 1998, an estimated 14.0 million parents had custody of 22.9 million children under 21 years of age whose other parent lived elsewhere; 85 percent of these parents were mothers.
- Payment of full or partial child support was most likely when the noncustodial parent had arrangements for joint child custody and visitation. About 83 percent of custodial parents with these

arrangements received full or partial support payments, as opposed to 36 percent for those without either shared custody or visitation.

- The 7.0 million custodial parents with agreements or current child support awards received an aggregate of \$17.1 billion, or 59 percent, of the \$29.1 billion in child support due. Custodial mothers received a greater proportion of the total they were due than did custodial fathers (60 percent versus 48 percent).
- About 7.9 million custodial parents (56 percent) had some type of support agreement or award for their children in 1998. This group comprised 59 percent of custodial mothers and 38 percent of custodial fathers.
- The reason most often cited for not having a legal child support agreement by the 6.6 million custodial parents without them was that they did not feel the need to go to court and make it legal (32 percent).
- More than half (56 percent) of all custodial parents received some type of noncash support (gifts, clothes, food, etc.) from noncustodial parents for their children.

The report presents data on parents who have custody of their children when the other parent is absent from the home. It focuses on the child support income received by custodial parents with current awards, as well as some provisions of those awards, such as visitation, joint custody and health insurance.

The data were collected from the April 1994, 1996 and 1998 supplements to the Current Population Survey co-sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Child Support Enforcement. As in all surveys, the data are subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Changes to the 1994 and subsequent supplements mean many of these data are not comparable with data from the April 1992 and earlier supplements.