



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance

NRFC Quick Statistics



www.fatherhood.gov

Fathers and Child Support

Frequency of Contributions of Child Support in the Last 12 Months (Nonresident Fathers Ages 20-44 with Children under 19) by Poverty Level, 2002

Percent of Poverty Level	Number of Men (000s)	Did not contribute	Contributed once in a while	Contributed on a regular basis
Total*	7,405	15.3%	8.9%	75.8%
0-149 percent	2,366	23.9%	11.7%	64.4%
150-299 percent	2,049	11.7%	12.6%	75.6%
300 percent or higher	2,890	11.1%	3.7%	85.2%

*Poverty level data is limited to men aged 20-44. "Total" category includes men 15-44.

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- Overall, three-quarters (75.8 percent) of nonresident fathers with children under 19 years of age reported paying child support on a regular basis.
- Fathers living below 150 percent of the poverty line were less likely than non-poor fathers to report paying child support on a regular basis (64.4 percent as compared to 75.6 percent for those living between 150-299 percent and 85.2 percent for living at 300 percent or higher).

Frequency of Contributions of Child Support in the Last 12 Months (Nonresident Fathers Ages 15-44 with Children under 19) by Labor Force Status 2002

Labor Force Status	Number of Men (000s)	Did not contribute	Contributed once in a while	Contributed on a regular basis
Total	7,405	15.3%	8.9%	75.8%
Full time	5,186	14.9%	6.2%	78.9%
Other*	2,219	16.3%	15.3%	68.4%

*Other includes fathers employed part-time and unemployed fathers

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- In 2002, fathers working full time in the labor force were more likely than those that were not to report paying child support on a regular basis over the past 12 months (78.9 percent as compared to 68.4 percent).

Frequency of Contributions of Child Support in the Last 12 Months (Nonresident Fathers Ages 20-44 with Children under 19), by Educational Attainment 2002

Educational Attainment	Number of Men (000s)	Did not contribute	Contributed once in a while	Contributed on a regular basis
Total*	7,405	15.3%	8.9%	75.8%
No high school diploma or GED	1,577	20.2%	12.3%	67.5%
High school diploma or GED	2,992	17.7%	6.8%	75.5%
Some college or higher	2,545	10.4%	8.3%	81.3%

*Education data only available for men ages 20-44. "Total" category includes men ages 15-44.

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- The frequency with which fathers pay child support increases with educational attainment. In 2002, those who had completed at least some college were the most likely to pay child support on a regular basis (81.3 percent), followed by those with a high school diploma or GED (75.5 percent). Fathers with no high school diploma or GED were the least likely to pay child support on a regular basis (67.5 percent).

Frequency of Contributions of Child Support in the Last 12 Months (Nonresident Fathers Ages 15-44 with Children under 19), by Age 2002

Age	Number of Men (000s)	Did not contribute	Contributed once in a while	Contributed on a regular basis
Total	7,405	15.3%	8.9%	75.8%
15-29 years	1,555	18.6%	7.6%	73.8%
30-44 years	5,850	14.5%	9.3%	76.3%

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- In 2002, about 3 in 4 nonresidential fathers (75.8 percent) reported paying child support on a regular basis. The differences in the frequency of contributions between older and younger men were slight.

Average Amount of Child Support Paid in the Last 12 Months (Nonresident Fathers Ages 20-44 with Children under 19), by Poverty Level 2002

Percent of Poverty Level	Number of Men (000s)	Median Amount of Child Support	Amount Paid			
			\$3,000 or less	\$3,001-\$5,000	\$5,001-\$9,000	More than \$9,000
Total*	7,405	\$4,250	36.0%	22.9%	23.5%	17.6%
0-149 percent	2,366	\$3,000	51.5%	18.5%	19.2%	10.8%
150-299 percent	2,049	\$3,600	44.5%	23.7%	19.0%	12.7%
300 percent or higher	2,890	\$5,800	17.6%	25.5%	30.7%	26.2%

*Poverty level data is limited to men aged 20-44. "Total" category includes men 15-44.

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- In 2002, the median amount of child support paid in the last 12 months by nonresident fathers with children under 19 years of age was \$4,250.
- The median payment for men living at 300 percent of the poverty level or higher was \$5,800, \$2,200 more than fathers living between 150 and 299 percent of the poverty level, and \$2,800 more than fathers living below 150 percent of the poverty level.
- Just over half (51.5 percent) of fathers living below 150 percent of the poverty level paid \$3,000 or less in child support over the last 12 months. By comparison, only 17.6 percent of men living at 300 percent or higher of the poverty level paid \$3,000 or less.

Average Amount of Child Support Paid in the Last 12 Months (Nonresident Fathers Ages 20-44 with Children under 19), by Educational Attainment 2002

Educational Attainment	Number of Men (000s)	Median Amount of Child Support	Amount Paid			
			\$3,000 or less	\$3,001-\$5,000	\$5,001-\$9,000	More than \$9,000
Total*	7,405	\$4,250	36.0%	22.9%	23.5%	17.6%
No high school diploma or GED	1,577	\$3,000	50.5%	17.5%	24.3%	7.7%
High school diploma or GED	2,992	\$4,500	36.2%	25.4%	23.2%	15.2%
Some college or higher	2,545	\$5,000	27.6%	22.7%	23.9%	25.7%

*Education data is limited to men aged 20-44. "Total" category includes men 15-44.

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- In 2002, the median amount of child support paid in the last 12 months by nonresident fathers with children under 19 years of age was \$4,250.
- The median payment for fathers with no high school diploma or GED was \$3,000, \$1,500 less than fathers with a high school diploma or GED and \$2,000 less than fathers with at least some college experience.
- One in four fathers (25.7 percent) with some college experience or higher paid more than \$9,000 in child support over the past 12 months. By comparison only 7.7 percent of fathers with no high school diploma or GED paid this amount.

Average Amount of Child Support Paid in the Last 12 Months (Nonresident Fathers Ages 15-44 with Children under 19), by Age 2002

Age	Number of Men (000s)	Median Amount of Child Support	Amount Paid			
			\$3,000 or less	\$3,001-\$5,000	\$5,001-\$9,000	More than \$9,000
Total	7,405	\$4,250	36.0%	22.9%	23.5%	17.6%
15-29 years	1,555	\$4,000	39.6%	23.0%	22.0%	15.5%
30-44 years	5,850	\$4,500	35.1%	22.8%	24.0%	18.1%

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- In 2002, the median amount of child support paid in the last 12 months by nonresident fathers with children under 19 years of age was \$4,250.
- The median payment for fathers under 30 was \$4,000 only \$500 less than fathers aged 30 to 44.
- Older fathers were slightly more likely than younger fathers to report paying over \$5,000 in child support over the past year (42.1 percent of fathers 30-44 years old as compared with 37.5 percent of fathers ages 15-29).

Reasons Non-Custodial Fathers Give for Not Paying Child Support, 1997

Reason	Percentage
Lack of money	38%
Not allowed to visit the child	23%
Did not want the child	23%
No control over spending	14%
Not the father	12%

Source: Argys, Laura M. et al. "Contributions of Absent Fathers to Child Well-Being: The Impact of Child Support Dollars and Father-Child Contact." *Mothers* (Fall 1997): 32. In: National Fatherhood Initiative. (2002). *Father Facts 4*. Gaithersburg, MD: National Fatherhood Initiative. Pg. 63

- Lack of money was the most popular reason given by non-custodial fathers for not paying child support, 38 percent of fathers listed this as a reason.
- "Not the father" was the least cited reason for not paying child support. Only 12 percent of non-custodial fathers provided this reason.