

VI. CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS

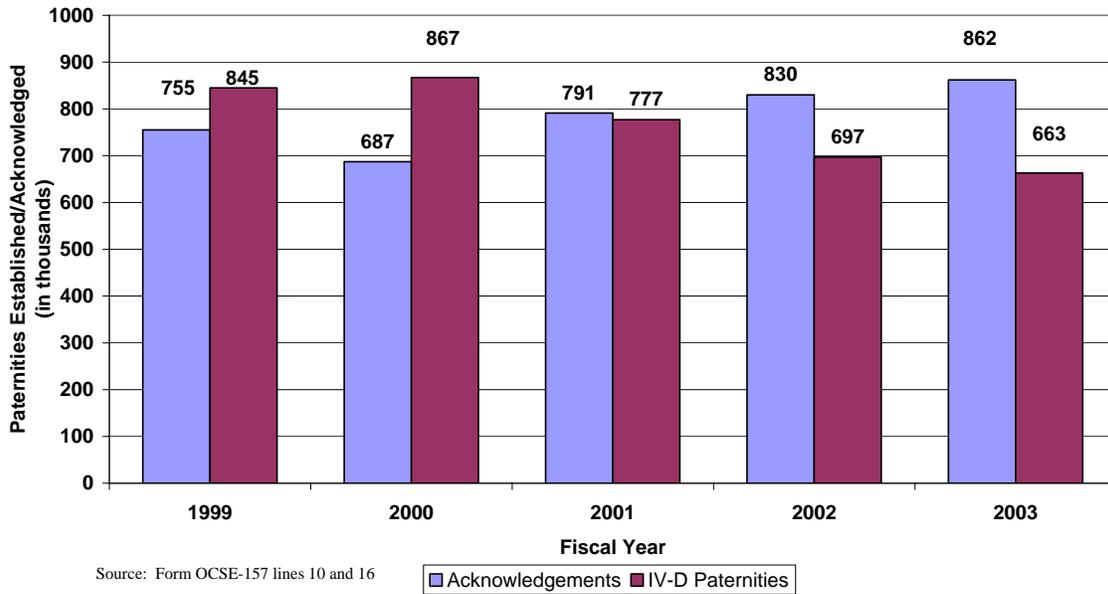
The goal of the nation's Child Support Enforcement Program is to ensure that children are supported financially and emotionally by both of their parents. Single parents receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are required to cooperate with child support enforcement efforts. Compared to last year, more paternities and child support orders were established, more child support was collected, and a greater share of families received child support. The child support caseload is increasingly made up of former TANF recipient families for whom child support helps maintain self-sufficiency.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2003, States achieved a one percent increase in the percentage of current assistance cases for which orders were established and a two percent increase in the percentage of former assistance cases for which orders were established. This means that over 51 percent of current assistance cases had orders established, and over 78 percent of former assistance cases had orders established.

In FY 2003, about \$21.2 billion was collected for children by the Child Support Enforcement (IV-D) Program, an increase of five percent from FY 2002, and a 33 percent increase since FY 1999. Over 89 percent of distributed collections went to families in FY 2003, an increase of nearly six percent from FY 2002. Total collections included almost \$1.6 billion in overdue child support intercepted from Federal tax refunds. In addition, the Passport Denial Program collected nearly \$12 million in calendar year (CY) 2003, double the \$6 million collected in CY 2002.

Over 1.5 million paternities were established in FY 2003. Figure A shows the number of paternities established by IV-D (child support) agencies and by acknowledgement at birth in a hospital from 1999 to 2003. There has been a substantial increase in paternities acknowledged due to the in-hospital acknowledgement program.

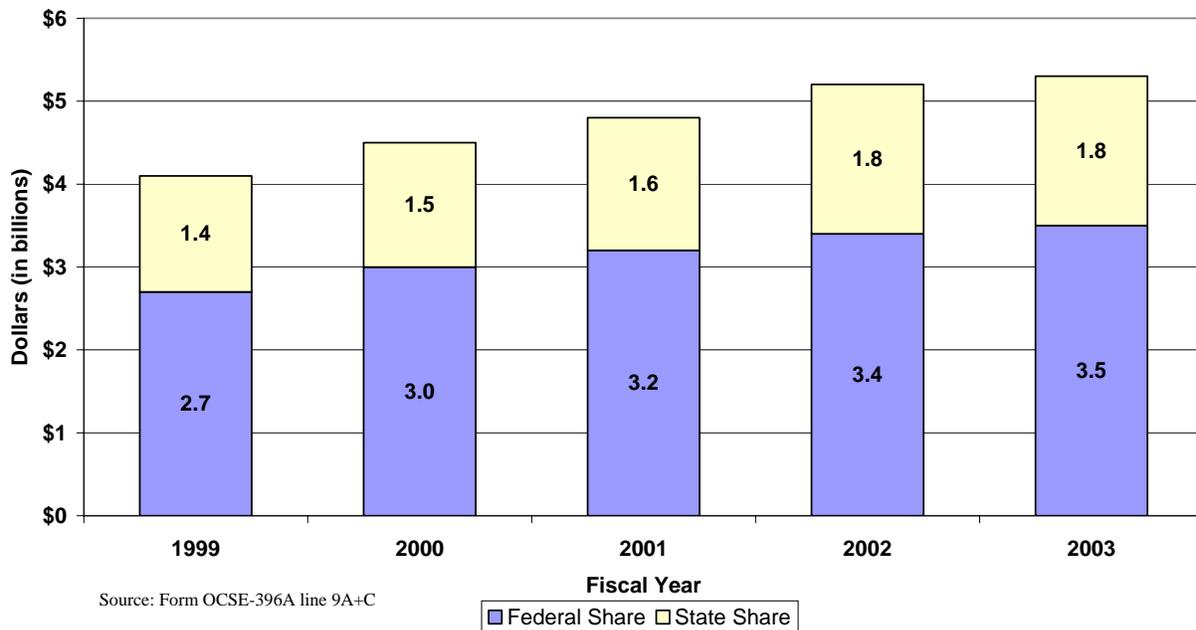
Figure A
Paternities Established by IV-D (Child Support)
Agencies and Acknowledgements



Data for FY 2003 show that:

- With a caseload of over 15.9 million, over 50 percent of the total child support cases had a collection, significantly more than the 38 percent achieved in FY 1999.
- About 70 percent of the cases with orders established reported a collection. This was an increase over the 64 percent achieved in FY 1999.
- Nationally, about \$2,653 was collected per case for those with a collection. This was an increase of \$78 per case from FY 2002 and an increase of \$244 per case from FY 1999.
- Total administrative expenditures were \$5.2 billion. In FY 2003, as in FY 1999, States collected about \$4 in child support for every \$1 spent. Figure B shows the Federal and State share of expenditures from FY 1999 to FY 2003. The Federal government pays the largest share of expenditures.

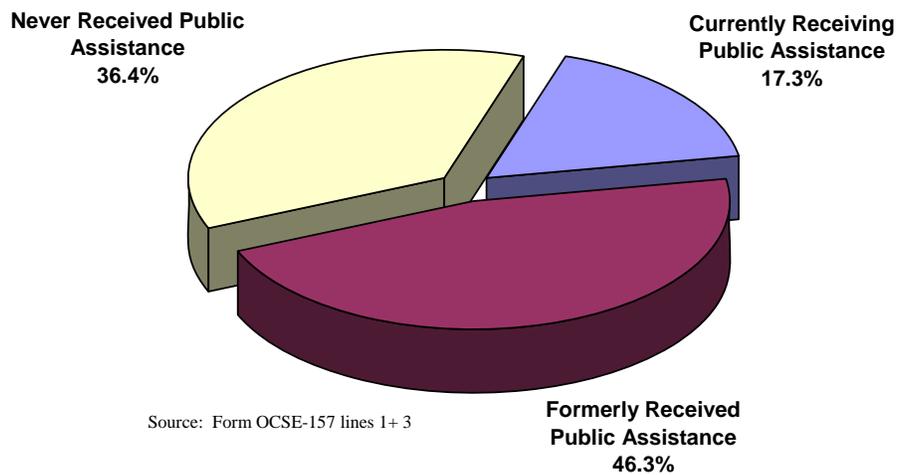
Figure B
Total Expenditures on the Child Support Enforcement Program



- Of the 15.9 million child support cases served by IV-D agencies, only 2.8 million involve families currently receiving public assistance¹, 5.8 million are those who never received public assistance, and the largest group is the 7.4 million that formerly received public assistance. The receipt of child support is especially important to families formerly on assistance. Having income from two parents is very likely a factor keeping them from returning to assistance dependency. Figure C shows the caseload represented in terms of welfare receipt. The current assistance caseload has decreased 16 percent since FY 2000, and the former assistance caseload has decreased seven percent from FY 2000. This shift represents a dramatic change in those being served by the program, as the vast majority of child support services are now provided to non-public assistance cases.

¹ Public assistance in this paragraph is defined as those families where the children are: (1) recipients of TANF (IV-A) or (2) entitled to Foster Care maintenance payments (IV-E).

Figure C
Total Child Support Caseload, FY 2003



- The Census Bureau's Current Population Survey on Child Support for CY 2001 indicates that 45 percent of parents who were owed child support payments received the full payment, and nearly 74 percent received some payment. The Child Support Enforcement Program does not collect information on the number of custodial parents who receive their full support.
- The number of non-TANF families receiving child support services has been steady over the last few years, while TANF-related cases have been declining. In FY 2003, non-TANF collections were \$18.2 billion, which is a 36 percent increase from FY 1999. TANF collections were \$3.0 billion in FY 2003, which is a 20 percent increase from FY 1999.
- Figure D shows the dollar value of child support collections distributed each year from 1999 to 2003 divided in terms of two categories of families, those on TANF or in Foster Care (FC) and those not on TANF. Figure E shows the distribution of child support collections, but in terms of the family's recipient status. Families that were never on welfare receive the largest portion of total collections.

Figure D
Total Distributed Collections by TANF/Foster Care
and Non-TANF/Foster Care Cases

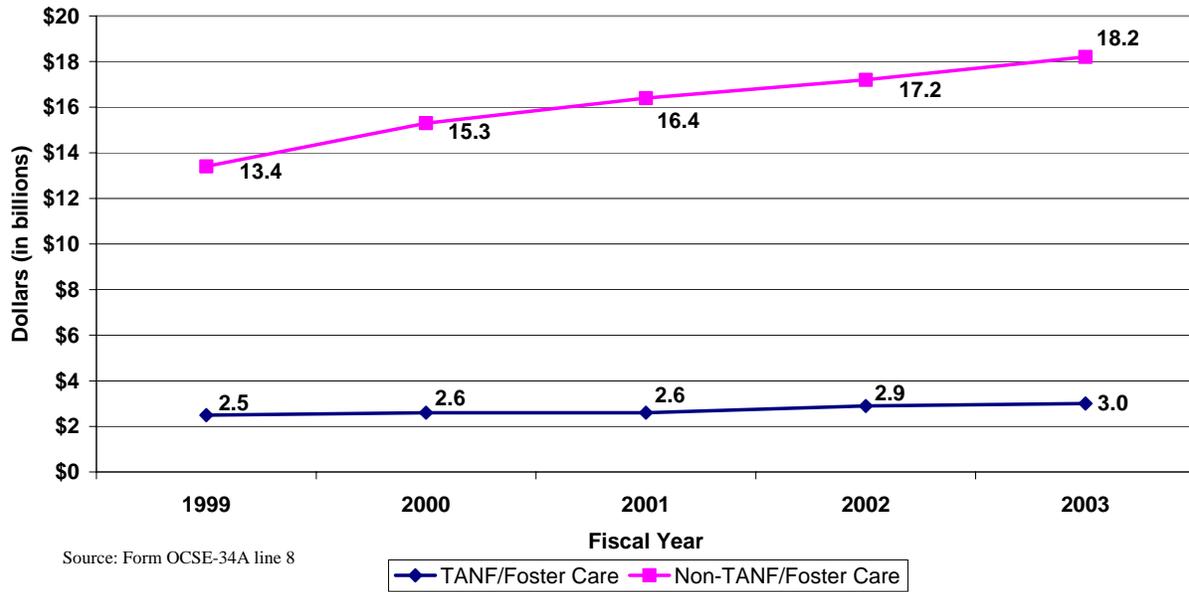
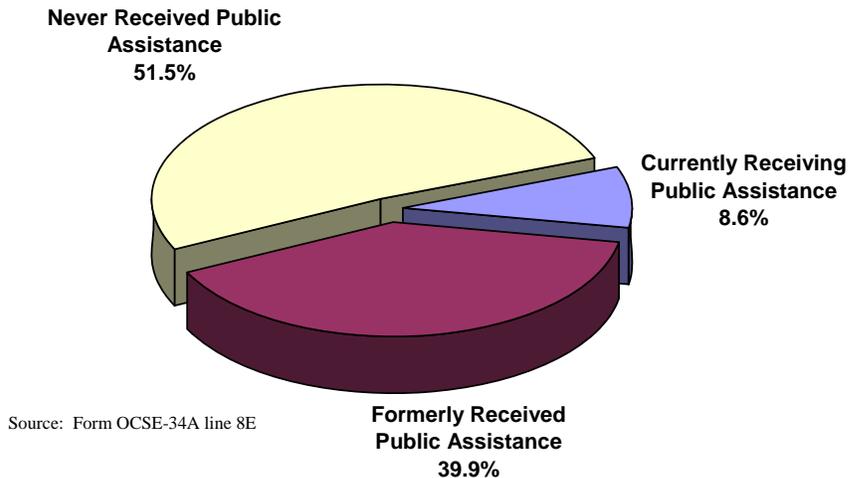


Figure E
Total Distributed Collections, FY 2003



Access and Visitation Program

The Federal Access and Visitation Program provides \$10 million per year to States enabling them to encourage non-custodial parents to stay involved with their children. Based upon the number of children living with only one biological or adoptive parent, each State receives from \$100,000 to almost \$1 million to fund mediation, counseling, education, development of parenting plans, visitation enforcement, visitation monitoring, supervised visitation, neutral drop-off and pick-up services, and development of guidelines for visitation and alternative custody arrangements.

