

Bureau of the Census **Statistical Brief**

Mothers Who Receive AFDC Payments — Fertility and Socioeconomic Characteristics

In summer 1993, the Nation had 36 million mothers 15 to 44 years old; 3.8 million of them (10 percent) were receiving AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) payments to help with the rearing of 9.7 million children. (An additional 0.5 million women over 45 years old and 0.3 million fathers living with their dependent children also received AFDC.)

This Brief examines fertility and socioeconomic characteristics of mothers in their child-bearing years (aged 15 to 44) who received AFDC and compares them to mothers of those ages who were not receiving payments. The statistics were collected in the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) between June and September 1993.



SB/95-2
Issued March 1995

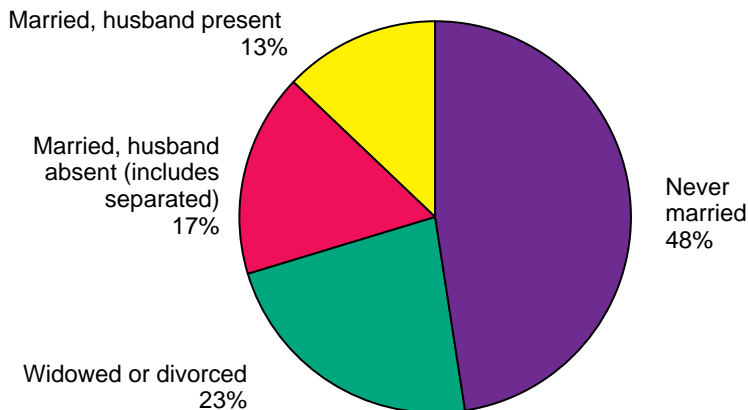
U.S. Department of Commerce

Economics and Statistics Administration

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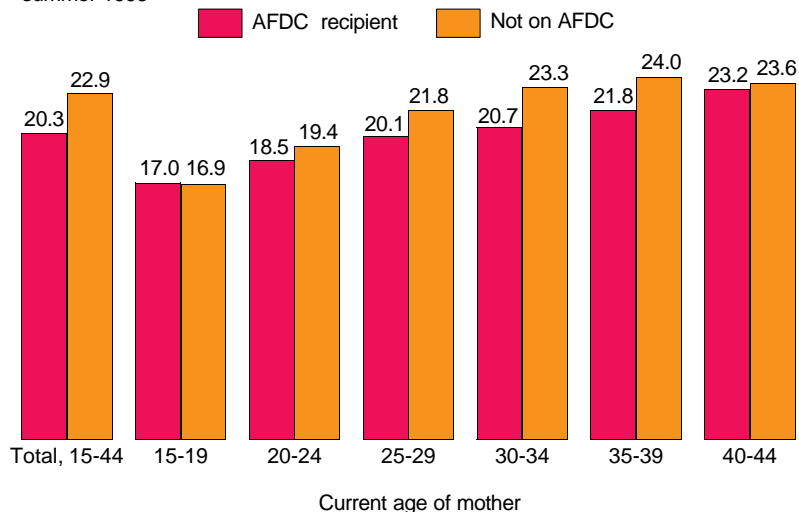
Nearly Half of AFDC Mothers Have Never Been Married

Percent distribution of mothers currently on AFDC, by marital status: summer 1993



AFDC Mothers Were Younger When They Had Their First Child

Mean age at first birth among mothers, by current AFDC status and current age: summer 1993



AFDC mothers are younger.

On average, mothers receiving AFDC payments were 30 years old; those not receiving them were 34. (See table, page 4.) AFDC mothers were nearly 3 times as likely as their non-AFDC counterparts to be under 25 years old (28 percent versus 10 percent).

AFDC mothers were also younger (an average of 20 years old) than non-AFDC mothers (23 years) when they gave birth for the first time. (See graph on page 1 and table.) In fact, 29 percent of mothers on AFDC had their first birth under age 18; the same was true for only 15 percent of non-AFDC mothers.

AFDC mothers have more children.

Mothers on AFDC had an average of 2.6 children each; non-AFDC mothers averaged 2.1. The difference varied by age of mother, ranging from about 0.5 children for women aged 20 to 24 to about 1.0 for those 35 years old and over. (See graph below and table.)

The chances of receiving AFDC payments differ by race and Hispanic origin, but not the nativity of the mother.

■ *Race:* About 1 in 4 Black mothers of childbearing ages (1.5 million) were AFDC recipients, higher than the 7 percent of corresponding White mothers (2.1 million). Despite these differences in reciprocity rates, Black AFDC mothers did not have significantly more children than their White counterparts.

■ *Hispanic origin:* Nearly 1 in 5 Hispanic mothers (784,000) aged 15 to 44 were on AFDC. By comparison, about 1 in 10 (3.0 million) non-Hispanic mothers were AFDC recipients. Although both Hispanic and non-Hispanic mothers on AFDC were an average of 20 years old when they had their first child, Hispanic women had almost 0.7 more children than non-Hispanic women. About 3 in 10 Hispanic mothers on AFDC were born outside the United States.

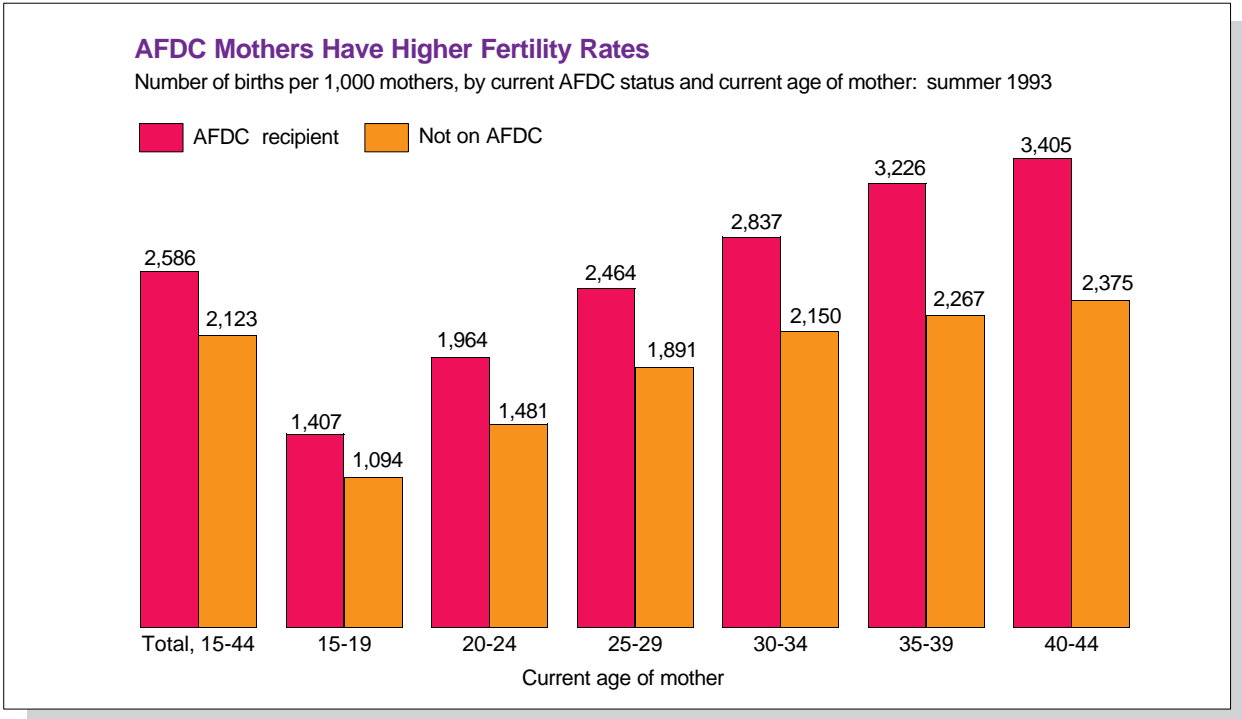
■ *Nativity:* About 9 percent (392,000) of the Nation's 4.2 million foreign-born mothers aged 15-44 were on AFDC, not statisti-

cally different from the 11 percent (3.4 million) of U.S.-born mothers who were AFDC recipients. Native- and foreign-born mothers on AFDC each had higher fertility rates than their counterparts who were not AFDC participants. Incidentally, about three-quarters of all foreign-born mothers on AFDC were not citizens of the United States.

Nearly one-half of AFDC mothers have never been married.

About 1.8 million of the Nation's 3.8 million mothers (48 percent) receiving AFDC payments had never been married. These never-married AFDC mothers had an average of 2.4 children each.

Another 30 percent of AFDC mothers were currently married. (See chart on the first page.) They had an average of 2.8 children each. Most of these women (58 percent, or 648,000) either were separated or had absent husbands. However, about half a million women in intact marriages needed AFDC payments to help make ends meet.



The remaining 23 percent of mothers receiving AFDC payments were either widowed or divorced.

Almost half of AFDC mothers do not have a high school diploma.

An additional 38 percent had completed high school (but did not attend college) and another 19 percent had attended college for at least 1 year.

About 1 in 7 AFDC mothers were currently enrolled in school; these women, on average, had 2.1 children each and were 28 years old. Only 11 percent of these students were teenagers; this suggests that a large proportion of mothers on AFDC who are enrolled in school are trying to resume their education while raising a family under severe economic circumstances.

Most AFDC mothers are jobless

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Unlike mothers not getting AFDC payments, most AFDC mothers (87 percent) didn't have a job. On average, jobless AFDC mothers supported 2.6 children each, no more than AFDC mothers who had a job for all or part of the month preceding the survey.

.... and have very low family incomes.

Nearly three-quarters of mothers on AFDC lived in families with monthly incomes of less than \$1,000; these low-income mothers supported an average of 2.7 children each. In contrast, only 10 percent of non-AFDC mothers lived in families with such low incomes; these low-income non-AFDC mothers had an average of 2.2 children each. About 4 in every 5 AFDC mothers were below the poverty level.

Most AFDC mothers reside in central cities

AFDC mothers were more likely than non-AFDC mothers to live in metro areas (81 percent versus 77 percent). About 70 percent of

metropolitan AFDC mothers lived in central cities. In contrast, nearly 2 in 3 metropolitan non-AFDC mothers lived in the suburbs.

.... and 1 in 5 live in a Pacific Coast State.

The Pacific Division is comprised of five States: Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii. It was home to 787,000 — or 21 percent — of the Nation's AFDC mothers. Most (625,000) lived in California. Though about one-quarter of Pacific Division AFDC mothers were born outside the United States, they had an average of only 2.6 children, not significantly different from that of AFDC mothers nationally.

Upcoming Briefs

Many mothers also participated in other programs designed to assist families needing economic support to provide basic nutrition for themselves and their children. About 5.3 million received food stamps; 2.4 million received support from

the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. Additional Briefs about these mothers will be issued later this year.

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This Brief is one of a series that presents information of current policy interest. It may include data from businesses, households, or other sources. All statistics are subject to sampling variability, as well as survey design flaws, respondent classification errors, and data processing mistakes. The Census Bureau has taken steps to minimize errors, and analytical statements have been tested and meet statistical standards. However, because of methodological differences, use caution when comparing these data with data from other sources.

What is AFDC?

AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) is a program administered and funded by Federal and State governments to provide financial assistance to needy families. In an average State, more than half (55 percent) of the total costs of AFDC payments are funded by the Federal government. The States provide the balance of these payments, manage the program, and determine who receives benefits and how much they get.

In order to be eligible to receive AFDC payments, a family must have a dependent child who is —

- Under age 18 and living with them. (An 18 year-old who is expected to complete secondary school or its equivalent before turning 19 may also be covered.)
- Deprived of financial support from one of their parents due to the parent's death, continued absence, or incapacity. (This includes children in two-parent families where the principal family earner is unemployed.)
- A resident of the State they live in.
- A U.S. citizen or an alien who is permanently and lawfully residing in the United States.

AFDC Mothers Versus Non-AFDC Mothers

Mothers 15 to 44 years old, by AFDC status and selected fertility and socioeconomic characteristics: summer 1993

Characteristic	Receiving AFDC					Not receiving AFDC				
	Mothers		Births per 1,000 mothers	Mean age of mother in years ...		Mothers		Births per 1,000 mothers	Mean age of mother in years ...	
	Number (in thou- sands)	Percent		at time of survey	at first birth	Number (in thou- sands)	Percent		at time of survey	at first birth
Total	3,754	100.0	2,586	29.5	20.3	32,022	100.0	2,123	34.0	22.9
Age										
15 to 19 years	191	5.1	1,407	18.1	17.0	554	1.7	1,094	18.1	16.9
20 to 24 years	866	23.1	1,964	22.2	18.5	2,615	8.2	1,481	22.3	19.4
25 to 29 years	865	23.0	2,464	27.3	20.1	5,020	15.7	1,891	27.2	21.8
30 to 34 years	921	24.5	2,837	31.9	20.7	7,508	23.4	2,150	32.1	23.3
35 to 39 years	604	16.1	3,226	36.9	21.8	8,389	26.2	2,267	37.0	24.0
40 to 44 years	307	8.2	3,405	41.5	23.2	7,936	24.8	2,375	42.0	23.6
Race										
White	2,074	55.2	2,536	29.9	20.8	26,352	82.3	2,108	34.1	23.1
Black	1,471	39.2	2,694	29.0	19.5	4,258	13.3	2,165	33.4	20.9
Hispanic Origin										
Hispanic ¹	784	20.9	3,114	30.2	20.3	3,406	10.6	2,408	32.9	21.7
Not Hispanic	2,970	79.1	2,447	29.3	20.3	28,616	89.4	2,089	34.2	23.0
Marital Status										
Currently married	1,120	29.8	2,827	31.0	20.7	25,322	79.1	2,185	34.4	23.3
Married, husband present	472	12.6	2,929	31.1	20.6	23,827	74.4	2,175	34.5	23.4
Married, husband absent ²	648	17.3	2,753	30.9	20.8	1,495	4.7	2,352	33.7	21.3
Widowed or divorced	851	22.7	2,728	32.9	21.0	4,009	12.5	2,078	36.2	21.7
Never married	1,783	47.5	2,366	26.9	19.6	2,691	8.4	1,598	27.1	20.5
Educational Attainment										
Not a high school graduate	1,633	43.5	2,890	28.8	19.2	4,631	14.5	2,464	31.9	19.8
High school, 4 years	1,422	37.9	2,361	29.6	20.8	12,900	40.3	2,094	33.8	21.9
College: 1 or more years	698	18.6	2,333	30.7	21.6	14,490	45.3	2,040	34.9	24.8
Enrollment in School										
Enrolled in school	527	14.0	2,128	28.3	20.1	2,682	8.4	1,950	31.8	21.7
Not enrolled in school	3,226	85.9	2,661	29.7	20.3	29,340	91.6	2,138	34.2	23.0
Labor Force Status										
Worked all or some weeks	474	12.6	2,372	31.3	20.4	21,889	68.4	2,061	34.7	23.0
No job last month	3,280	87.4	2,617	29.2	20.2	10,133	31.6	2,255	32.5	22.6
Monthly Family Income³										
Less than \$500	1,351	36.1	2,574	29.7	20.3	889	2.8	2,045	31.2	21.0
\$500 to \$999	1,360	36.3	2,770	29.7	20.2	2,190	6.9	2,308	31.9	21.0
\$1,000 to \$1,499	479	12.8	2,431	29.8	20.5	3,159	10.0	2,153	32.3	21.5
\$1,500 and over	552	14.8	2,293	28.0	20.0	25,309	80.2	2,107	34.6	23.3
Poverty Level³										
Below poverty level	3,004	80.3	2,696	29.6	20.2	4,178	13.2	2,489	31.5	20.8
Above poverty level	737	19.7	2,135	29.0	20.5	27,368	86.8	2,068	34.5	23.2
Division										
New England	185	4.9	(B)	(B)	(B)	1,496	4.7	2,022	34.8	24.3
Mid Atlantic	542	14.4	2,689	29.9	20.4	4,388	13.7	2,023	34.2	23.7
East North Central	748	19.9	2,537	29.0	20.6	5,669	17.7	2,107	33.8	22.8
West North Central	222	5.9	3,027	29.1	19.5	2,363	7.4	2,168	34.2	23.1
South Atlantic	591	15.7	2,472	28.9	19.6	5,720	17.9	2,025	34.1	22.7
East South Central	191	5.1	(B)	(B)	(B)	2,006	6.3	2,026	34.0	21.7
West South Central	369	9.8	2,744	29.8	20.3	3,512	11.0	2,220	33.9	22.2
Mountain	119	3.2	(B)	(B)	(B)	1,634	5.1	2,400	34.2	22.8
Pacific	787	21.0	2,596	30.2	20.9	5,234	16.3	2,223	33.7	23.0
Metropolitan Residence										
Metropolitan	3,039	81.0	2,595	29.4	20.3	24,519	76.6	2,101	34.1	23.1
In central cities	2,117	56.4	2,697	29.7	20.0	8,688	27.1	2,125	33.5	22.5
Suburbs	922	24.6	2,362	28.8	20.8	15,830	49.4	2,088	34.4	23.5
Nonmetropolitan	715	19.0	2,547	29.8	20.2	7,503	23.4	2,194	33.8	22.0
Place of Birth										
Native born	3,362	89.6	2,536	29.2	20.0	28,171	88.0	2,095	34.0	22.8
Foreign born	392	10.4	3,014	31.8	22.4	3,850	12.0	2,328	33.9	23.4

(B)Base too small to show derived measure. ¹Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. ²Includes separated women. ³Excludes those who did not report income.