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FP-12-13 Nonresident Fathers and Child Support: Exploring Who Pays and How Much

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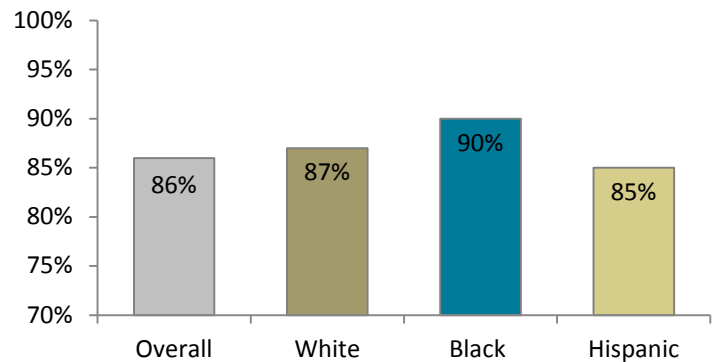
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Nonresident fathers are an important source of social and economic support to children. This family profile focuses on economic support reported and provided by nonresident fathers using the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) 2006-2010, a nationally representative data set of men 15-44 years of age. The NSFG asks men about nonresident children under age 18 living outside the household. This profile differs from U.S. Census Bureau reports on child support which rely on mothers' reports of child support received (see Grall, 2011). The demographic characteristics of nonresident fathers (FP-12-08) and visitation (FP-12-02) have been explored in prior profiles as well as the measurement issues surrounding surveys of nonresident fathers (Poster).

Who Provides Economic Support?

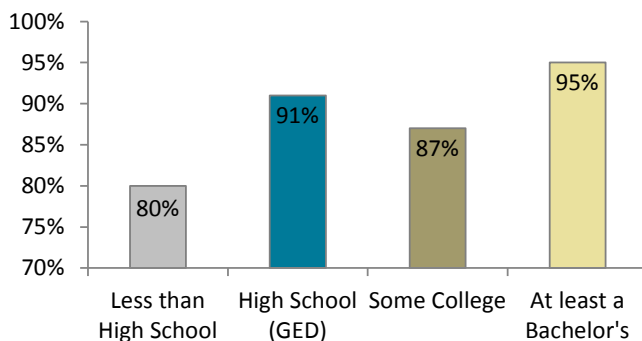
- More than four out of five nonresident fathers (86%) report providing some economic support to their children in the last year.
- There are no significant racial/ethnic differences in the likelihood of nonresident fathers who report providing support (Figure 1).
- An education gradient exists in provision of economic support. Less educated fathers are less likely to provide economic support (80%) compared to those with a Bachelor's degree (95%) (Figure 2).
- Currently, married and single fathers' provision of economic support is similar (87% and 89%, respectively). Cohabiting fathers are the least likely to provide economic support to nonresident children (79%) (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Racial and Ethnic Variation in Who Provides Economic Support



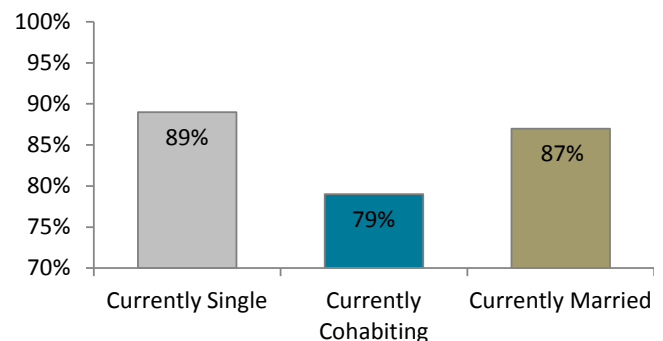
Source: NSFG 2006-2010 Male Data File.
Significance Testing Conducted at $p < 0.05$

Figure 2. Educational Variation in Who Provides Economic Support



Source: NSFG 2006-2010 Male Data File.
Significance Testing Conducted at $p < 0.05$

Figure 3. Relationship Status Variation in Who Provides Economic Support



Source: NSFG 2006-2010 Male Data File.
Significance Testing Conducted at $p < 0.05$

Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

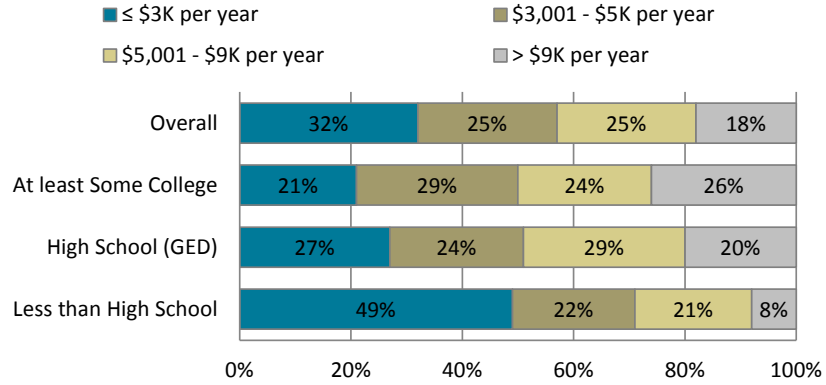
Levels of Economic Support

- Among nonresident fathers providing support, 32% provide \$3,000 or less per year (Figure 4). Just over half (53%) of nonresident fathers who provide economic support report they have a child support agreement (not shown).

Educational Variation in Economic Support to Nonresident Children

- Better educated fathers provide higher levels of economic support to nonresident children compared to less educated fathers, on average.
 - Forty-nine percent of nonresident fathers with low levels of education provide \$3,000 or less in annual economic support in contrast to 27% of fathers with a high school degree and 21% of fathers with some college education.
 - Twenty-six percent of nonresident fathers with some college education paid at least \$9,000 per year (or \$750 a month) versus only 8% of fathers without a high school degree.

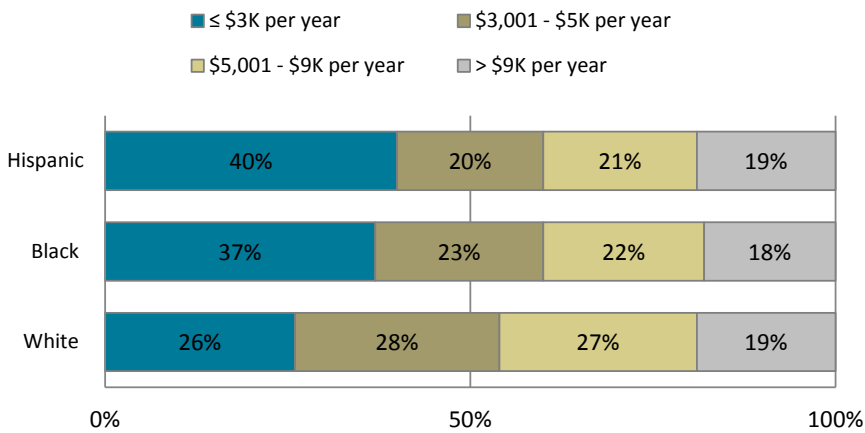
Figure 4. Educational Variation in Economic Support to Nonresident Children (limited to nonresident fathers providing support)



Source: NSFG 2006-2010 Male Data File.
Significance Testing Conducted at p<0.05

Racial and Ethnic Variation in Economic Support to Nonresident Children

Figure 5. Racial and Ethnic Variation in Economic Support to Nonresident Children (limited to nonresident fathers providing support)



Source: NSFG 2006-2010 Male Data File.
Significance Testing Conducted at p<0.05

- No significant racial and ethnic differences exist in the average levels of child support provided.
- Yet, minority nonresident fathers are significantly more likely to provide low support, \$1-\$3,000 per year, (37% Black and 40% Hispanic) than their White counterparts (26%).
- Nearly one-fifth of White, Black, and Hispanic nonresident fathers reported paying \$9000 or more in economic support for their children in the last year.

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References

Grall, Timothy. 2011. "Custodial Mothers and Their Child Support: 2009." In Current Population Reports P60-P240. Washington DC: U.S. Census Bureau.