

MAR 07 1994

Child Support

You owe it to your kids



HV
742
I2
S8
1993

Report of Services 1993

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

IDAHO DOCUMENT COLLECTION

ALBERTSONS LIBRARY
BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Report of Services 1993

Child Support Services

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

Published January 1994

47864

Child Support Offices

Collecting child support is a high priority for the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. Seven regional offices are available to serve the needs of clients. A statewide toll-free phone number (**1-800-356-9868**) also is provided. Boise area residents may call 334-2479 for Child Support Services.

Central Office

450 West State Street
Boise, Idaho 83720

Region 1

1120 Ironwood Drive, Suite A
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814

Region 2

1118 "F" Street
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Region 3

317 Happy Day Blvd., Suite 200
Caldwell, Idaho 83605-8117

Region 4

1740 Westgate Drive
Boise, Idaho 83704

Elmore County

520 East 8th
Mountain Home, Idaho 83647

Region 5

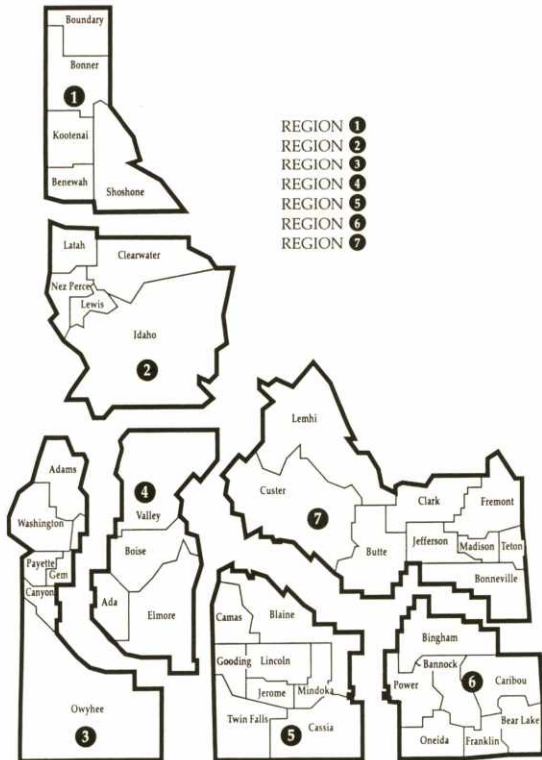
601 Pole Line Road, Suite 1
Twin Falls, Idaho 83301

Region 6

611 Wilson Street, Suite 1
Pocatello, Idaho 83201

Region 7

150 Shoup, Suite 14
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83402



HV
742
I2
S8
1993

Table of Contents

Services Available	1
Program Highlights	2
Total Collections, 1983 - 1993	3
AFDC Payments Recovered Through Support Collections	4
Total Collections Made (By Method of Collection)	5
Paternities Established	5
Support Orders Established	6
Orders for Current Support	6
Current Support Due and Received	6
Average Support Obligation	7
Cases and Caseloads	7
Total Idaho Collections Received From Other States	8
Total Collections Idaho Made on Behalf of Other States	8
Number of Absent Parents Located	8
Administrative Funding Sources	9
Child Support Employees	9

Services Available

Every child has a legal right to the financial support of both parents, even if the parents are divorced, separated or were never married. The Child Support Services program is a joint federal and state effort to collect child support from absent parents. In Idaho, the state agency managing the program is the Department of Health and Welfare.

The Department has a staff of support officers, attorneys and other personnel located in seven regional offices to help establish and enforce orders to collect child support. To ensure complete service, the Department works with a number of state, federal and local agencies. A toll-free phone number also is available to provide immediate information about child support programs and specific cases. The statewide number is 1-800-356-9868. Boise area residents may call Child Support Services at 334-2479.

Child support services involve: locating absent parents; establishing paternity for children born to unmarried parents; establishing, modifying and enforcing support obligations; and collecting support payments. The Department also obtains and enforces court orders to provide medical insurance coverage for children or a sharing of medical expenses by the parents.



Several enforcement methods are used to secure child support from absent parents. These methods include: wage garnishment; wage withholding; liens on houses, property and bank accounts; interception of income tax refunds; interception of unemployment benefits; contempt citations; and reporting information regarding past-due child support to credit bureaus.

Those who receive public or medical assistance are automatically eligible for child support services and pay no fees. Other applicants are asked to pay a \$25 application fee and to contribute to the cost of legal services necessary to establish or enforce their order. A \$25 fee is charged to intercept each tax refund.

Any person living in Idaho with minor children, who needs financial support from an absent parent, may qualify for child support services.

Program Highlights

To help children receive the support they need for full, healthful lives, both parents must accept responsibility for the financial and medical well-being of their children. Unfortunately, increasing numbers of children are not receiving the financial or medical support to which they are entitled. Children living with one parent face a greater risk of living in poverty than children living with two parents.

Taxpayers also pay the price when parents do not support their children. Many children must rely on Aid to Families with Dependent Children and other forms of public assistance, putting strain on tight state and federal budgets. When parents assume financial responsibility for their children, less taxpayer money is spent on public assistance.

Idaho's child support services are among the very best in the country. Cooperation among state and local child support employees, judges and court personnel, and federal officials, resulted in a 17 percent increase in Idaho collections in FY 1993, up to \$39.8 million. Since 1986, Idaho has led the nation in child support collections to defray welfare expenses. Despite an increasing caseload last year, nearly 36 percent of Aid to Families with Dependent Children expenses were recovered through child support payments.

Children are particularly hard-hit by the national health-care crisis. In Idaho, parents are now required to secure medical insurance coverage for their children. This will help reduce Medicaid costs and ensure that children receive medical attention when it is necessary.

The Department also awarded a contract for professional collection services on delinquent child support payments owed to the State to repay public assistance. About 5 percent of the Department's 47,000 cases have past-due debts totaling nearly \$9 million.

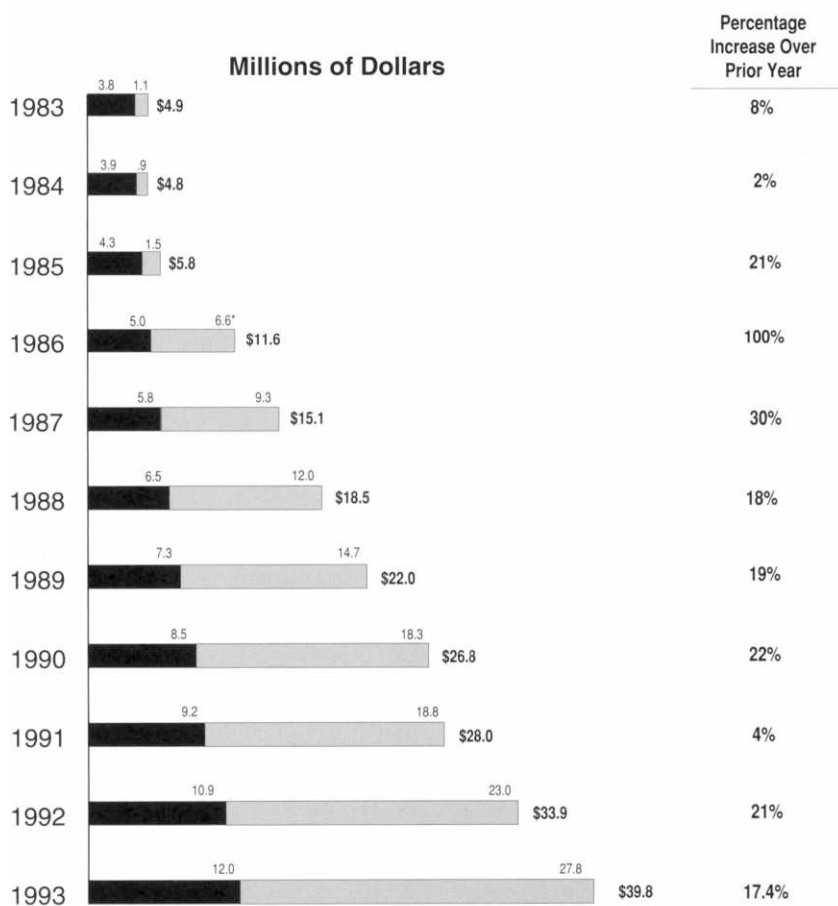
In 1993, the Department began asking clients who can afford to pay to contribute to the cost of their legal services. The cost of legal services provided through the Department is about one-third the cost of private firms. This effort places financial responsibility on those who can afford to pay and reduces the burden on taxpayers.

A voice-response phone system was activated by the Department last year. This allows callers to reach Child Support Services, seven days a week.

In the coming year, the Department will continue efforts to obtain private health insurance coverage for children in divorce. Also in 1994, Idaho will take part in a nationwide computer network linking state child support agencies. This system will help obtain support for children when parents move to other states. In addition, the Department also will develop a hospital-based program to help fathers acknowledge paternity and make arrangements to support their children.

Parental responsibility is the key to raising strong, healthy children who are ready to take their place as Idaho's future leaders. Every dollar of child support collected is a contribution to the future of Idaho's children.

Total Collections, 1983 - 1993
(Fiscal Year, October through September)



AFDC: Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Child support collections made for families receiving public assistance.



Non-AFDC: Child support collections made for families who do not receive public assistance.

* In 1986, Idaho substantially increased the non-AFDC funds collected as a result of new federal requirements.

AFDC Payments Recovered Through Support Collections

Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) is a federal public assistance program. From 1986 to 1992 (the most recent years for which federal figures are available), Idaho led the nation in the percent of AFDC money recovered through child support collections.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Alabama	23.2	25.5	30.8	31.7	33.7	27.0	
Alaska	8.3	10.5	12.6	13.7	14.6	12.7	
Arizona	5.1	4.1	3.8	4.4	4.2	5.4	
Arkansas	17.6	19.4	21.0	20.7	23.6	26.5	
California	6.1	6.4	6.0	5.9	6.3	6.5	
Colorado	9.5	10.2	11.4	12.3	13.0	15.0	
Connecticut	12.2	12.4	12.7	9.5	10.2	10.5	
Delaware	17.3	19.6	21.2	20.5	20.6	19.7	
Wash., D.C.	3.8	4.2	4.7	4.9	4.5	4.7	
Florida	11.5	10.7	11.9	11.6	11.1	9.9	
Georgia	10.4	10.7	12.4	14.3	15.4	18.2	
Guam	9.1	10.8	11.9	10.8	32.7	34.6	
Hawaii	8.9	8.9	7.3	8.8	7.4	6.9	
IDAHO	25.0	29.0	33.2	35.7	34.7	36.5	35.7
Illinois	4.8	5.4	5.0	5.6	5.7	7.0	
Indiana	21.5	21.1	23.0	22.4	23.8	24.0	
Iowa	19.3	20.1	19.2	20.1	20.6	23.2	
Kansas	14.1	12.6	13.4	15.9	17.8	19.4	
Kentucky	8.5	11.5	12.0	12.4	15.0	18.8	
Louisiana	9.1	9.8	10.5	11.1	12.4	14.2	
Maine	20.6	21.1	26.1	22.9	21.5	20.6	
Maryland	11.2	12.3	13.0	14.5	11.4	14.2	
Massachusetts	10.7	12.0	12.0	11.2	10.4	10.5	
Michigan	12.5	12.5	13.0	13.9	15.1	16.1	
Minnesota	12.7	14.0	14.2	14.4	14.6	16.3	
Mississippi	9.4	10.6	13.7	16.8	22.3	24.2	
Missouri	12.0	13.5	15.0	17.8	15.6	19.0	
Montana	8.6	8.2	9.9	11.1	12.9	16.0	
Nebraska	11.5	12.6	12.9	13.0	13.2	16.0	
Nevada	16.4	14.8	12.4	12.2	14.1	17.1	
New Hampshire	15.2	13.5	12.4	11.3	10.1	12.3	
New Jersey	12.5	14.5	14.4	14.0	16.4	16.5	
New Mexico	7.4	7.8	9.4	9.2	7.8	8.0	
New York	5.0	5.3	5.6	6.4	6.7	7.2	
North Carolina	17.4	18.4	18.9	18.8	18.4	19.6	
North Dakota	16.8	19.0	17.4	21.0	23.4	24.0	
Ohio	10.1	10.3	9.9	10.0	10.3	11.7	
Oklahoma	6.4	7.3	8.0	9.0	9.9	10.7	
Oregon	13.0	12.8	13.0	13.5	13.5	12.5	
Pennsylvania	11.0	12.4	13.2	12.6	13.7	14.0	
Puerto Rico	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.1	1.8	
Rhode Island	7.6	9.1	8.9	10.4	9.2	10.8	
South Carolina	13.1	14.0	15.9	16.8	16.8	17.9	
South Dakota	14.4	17.0	17.8	17.1	18.1	18.8	
Tennessee	10.3	14.9	14.1	13.7	14.3	11.2	
Texas	6.2	7.9	9.4	9.5	10.2	11.8	
Utah	19.6	21.5	22.1	23.4	23.2	25.6	
Vermont	10.8	12.2	12.9	12.7	13.0	12.7	
Virgin Islands	8.3	12.3	7.9	7.3	7.1	8.5	
Virginia	9.0	10.7	13.5	15.7	17.2	17.3	
Washington	10.9	12.4	14.4	17.1	18.1	20.0	
West Virginia	7.8	6.9	6.1	5.1	8.1	10.6	
Wisconsin	12.4	14.5	15.4	15.5	15.7	16.2	
Wyoming	8.2	10.1	10.0	13.5	13.3	14.3	
National Average	9.1	9.8	10.0	10.3	10.7	11.4	

Selected Program Statistics

Total Collections (By Method of Collection)



The Department uses several methods to collect child support payments, including intercepting and withholding money from state and federal tax returns and unemployment benefit checks. Wages may be withheld automatically from absent parents' paychecks by their employers. Garnishment, a legal procedure by which up to 65 percent of absent parents' earnings are withheld by employers, also may be used to satisfy a support obligation.

Other methods of collection include voluntary payments, liens on real estate, and reporting past-due child support to credit bureaus. Court actions also are used to collect support payments. Actions may include orders to show cause as to why payments are not being made and criminal non-support orders which show the absent parent has the means to make payments, but refuses.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Federal Tax Refunds	\$ 2,195,250	\$ 2,526,365	\$ 2,287,451
State Tax Refunds	515,153	592,470	737,104
Unemployment Benefits	579,322	980,102	1,091,666
Wage Withholding	6,219,947	7,688,976	9,606,883
All Other Collections	<u>18,501,136</u>	<u>22,111,896</u>	<u>26,106,988</u>
Total	\$ 28,010,808	\$ 33,899,809	\$ 39,830,092

Paternities Established

Establishing paternity is the process of determining the identity of the father of a child. The identity of a child's biological father is established by one of two methods: the father's voluntary admission in a legal document, or a court order based on a blood test. This category compares the number of paternities to be established with the number of paternities actually established over three years. Idaho's establishment rate is comparable with the national average. Rates are affected by the difficulty of identifying or locating absent parents, and obtaining or serving court orders.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Paternities established	1,551	1,722	1,509
Potential paternities	6,687	7,512	5,193
Percent of paternities established	23.2%	23%	29%

Support Orders Established

Support orders, established through Child Support Services, are court orders that stipulate the amount of child support to be paid by the non-custodial parent. This category compares the yearly number of orders established in Idaho with the number of orders requested. Idaho's rate of establishment is comparable with most other states. Difficulty in identifying and locating absent parents, or obtaining and serving court orders, prevents higher rates nationally.



	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Orders established	1,775	2,275	2,630
Orders requested	7,300	7,056	8,178
Percent of orders established	24%	32%	32%

Orders for Current Support

This section compares the number of enforcement orders for current support owed in Idaho with the number receiving collections through support enforcement. Idaho's 1993 collection rate on 67 percent of its cases was substantially higher than the national average of 53.1 percent.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Orders owing current support	23,329	26,635	28,422
Orders receiving collections	14,695	17,111	18,909
Percent of orders with collections	63%	65%	67%

Current Support Due and Received

The amount due for child support payments (based on orders for current support) is compared here with the amount of collections actually received.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Current collections due	\$ 42,538,885	\$ 50,975,930	\$ 56,048,712
Current collections received	\$ 19,324,534	\$ 19,863,501	\$ 24,382,678
Percent of collections received	46%	39%	44%

Average Support Obligation

The average monthly support payment per child is compared with the average monthly payment per family, based on the most recent Federal Annual Data Summary (national figures for 1993 were not available).

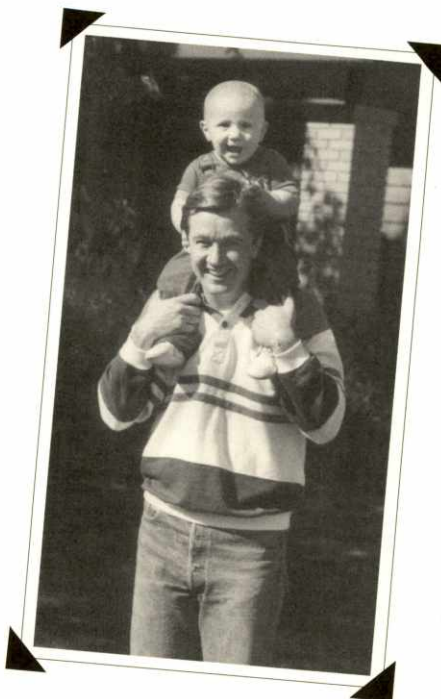
	<u>1991</u>		<u>1992</u>		<u>1993</u>	
	<u>Idaho</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Idaho</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Idaho</u>	<u>National</u>
Average monthly payment/child	\$ 84	\$ 93	\$ 89	\$117	\$112	N/A
Average monthly payment/family	\$152	\$167	\$159	\$172	\$164	N/A

Cases and Caseloads

This section compares the number of child support cases opened over the last three years with the total number of cases actually monitored during that time.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Number of cases opened	42,626	42,824	31,459*
Average annual caseload	49,146	54,886	43,590*

** Federal child support reporting requirements are changing to eliminate duplicate counting of certain cases. Idaho began to change its case-counting methods in 1992-93. Thus, comparisons to previous year's caseloads may look lower, although the actual number of cases has increased.*





Total Idaho Collections Received From Other States

This category details the amount of money other states collected when absent parents who owe Idaho child support live out-of-state. The money is collected in the other state and transferred to Idaho for distribution.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
AFDC and Foster Children	\$ 223,280	\$ 173,763	\$ 115,574
Non-AFDC	<u>295,439</u>	<u>278,861</u>	<u>269,276</u>
Total	\$ 518,719	\$ 452,624	\$ 384,850

Total Collections Idaho Made On Behalf of Other States

The Department also makes collections for other states when an absent parent from that state resides in Idaho. The money is collected in Idaho, and transferred to the appropriate state.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
AFDC and Foster Children	\$ 1,767,324	\$ 2,385,455	\$ 3,252,269
Non-AFDC	<u>2,801,212</u>	<u>3,668,716</u>	<u>4,450,934</u>
Total	\$ 4,568,536	\$ 6,054,171	\$ 7,703,203

Number of Absent Parents Located

Idaho is a national leader in finding absent parents who reside in or out-of-state. Both sophisticated electronic systems and manual methods are used in locating absent parents. On the average, it takes 30 days to locate an absent parent.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Number of absent parents located	8,985	10,498	13,328



Administrative Funding Sources

Idaho's child support enforcement program receives its funding from four sources: federal appropriation, state funds, county receipts and fees, and federal incentives which are based on a cost-effectiveness ratio. In 1992, Idaho collected \$3.62 for every \$1 spent.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Federal	\$ 3,579,900	\$ 5,243,809	\$ 6,660,621
State	691,900	911,717	835,664
County receipts and fees	217,600	286,547	353,344
Incentives	<u>1,312,700</u>	<u>1,249,219</u>	<u>1,611,297</u>
Total	\$ 5,802,100	\$ 7,691,292	\$ 9,460,926

Child Support Employees

The Department employs staff in seven regional offices around the state, as well as the central office in Boise.

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Central office	41	46	59
Regional offices	<u>91</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>118</u>
Total	132	151	177

Photos on Pages 1, 5 and 6 by Pam Benham
 Photos on Pages 7, 8 and 9 by Deborah Hardee
 Cover photo courtesy of Wisconsin Child Support

Costs associated with this publication are available from the Department of Health and Welfare.
 IDHW-500-30031-1/94. Cost per unit \$2.17.



Printed on recycled paper

ALBERTSONS LIBRARY
BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

ALBERTSONS LIBRARY
BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY