

# FACT SHEET

## Child Support

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The Ohio child support program provides services that focus on ensuring children receive the financial and medical support they are legally entitled to and deserve. More than one million children in Ohio are involved in the program. By working with both parents, the program seeks to establish support orders and maintain reliable and consistent support payments. Research has shown that when support payments are ongoing, non-custodial parents are more involved in the lives of their children. Having both parents involved in a child's life results in a healthier and more responsible child.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Office of Child Support establishes policies and guidelines for the program based on the rules and requirements of federal and state laws. The Office provides leadership and guidance to county child support enforcement agencies as well as processing all collections and disbursements of support payments. Ohio's child support program consistently ranks as one of the best in the nation. This achievement reflects a joint, dedicated effort involving federal, state, and county agencies.

The county child support enforcement agencies provide the program's services directly to the public. In some counties, child support is a division within the county department of job and family services but it can also be associated with a county prosecutor's office, a court of common pleas, or a county commissioners office. Services available at county child support enforcement agencies include: location of non-custodial parents, paternity establishment, the establishment and enforcement of support and medical support orders and review and modification of support orders.

The child support program is available to any family that needs support services. If an unmarried individual with a child receives public assistance, he or she is automatically referred to the county child support office to establish a support case. If a participant is not on public assistance and chooses not to complete an application for the program, some services such as the offset of federal tax refunds and the withholding of Unemployment Compensation benefits will not be available.

### How Ohio compared with other states in Federal Fiscal Year 2005 (10/1/2004 - 9/30/2005)

Statistics comparing Ohio to other states and territories include only cases in which parents have applied for services or receive them automatically because they participate in public assistance programs.

- Ohio ranked third nationally in total collections distributed
- Ohio ranked first nationally in collections in non-public assistance cases
- Ohio ranked eighth nationally in paternities established
- 68.98 percent of current support owed was collected, better than the current national average of 59.91 percent
- 66.54 percent of cases with arrears receive payment, better than the current national average of 60.04 percent
- Ohio collects \$5.66 in support for every \$1 spent on the program, better than the current national average of \$4.58 for every \$1 spent.

### Ohio's child support payment statistics for State Fiscal Year 2006 (7/1/2005 - 6/30/2006)

- On an average day, Ohio processes 51,353 payments worth \$7,858,418
- 13,392,928 disbursements were processed, 88.6 percent electronically.