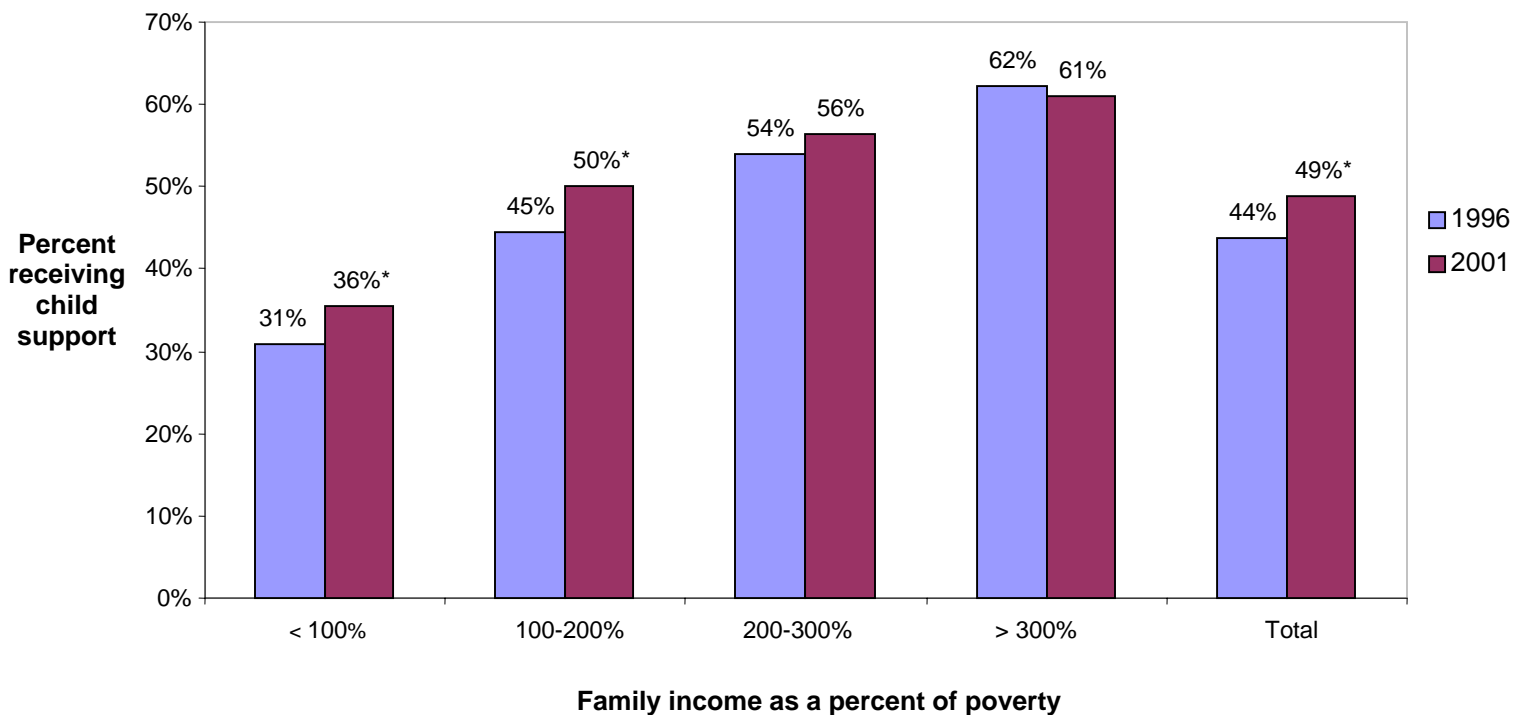




Child Support Increases for Low-Income Families

Child Support Received from Noncustodial Fathers for Children Living with Their Mothers, by Family Income as a Percent of Poverty, 1996 and 2001



Source: Urban Institute calculations based on National Survey of America's Families data.

* Change between 1996 and 2001 is significant at the 0.10 level.

A significantly larger share of children in low-income families received child support in 2001 than in 1996. Among poor families, those receiving child support increased from 31 percent in 1996 to 36 percent in 2001. Children with family incomes between 100 and 200 percent of poverty were also more likely to receive child support in 2001 (45 percent in 1996 compared with 50 percent in 2001). Children whose family incomes were more than twice the poverty threshold did not experience gains in child support. Despite these gains for low-income families, over 60 percent of poor children who live with their mothers and whose fathers live outside the home do not receive child support. One reason is that the fathers tend to have low incomes themselves, limiting their ability to pay child support. In addition, nearly all the support paid on behalf of poor children receiving cash assistance goes to the government rather than to the children. This reduces fathers' incentive to pay child support.