

Tax Credits for Lower-Income Working Families Help 21 Million Mothers

Two working-family tax credits — the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) — have proven to be powerful tools for reducing children's poverty and advancing their long-term well-being.¹

About 21 million mothers in low- and moderate-income working families received either the EITC or the low-income portion of the CTC in 2010.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) figures show that over 27 million Americans claimed the EITC, including about 21 million filers with children. Similarly, a mostly-overlapping group of 21 million parents claimed the low-income (that is, refundable) CTC.

Using IRS data, additional state tax information from the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, and national-level Census data on the gender of tax credit recipients, we estimate that about 10 million single mothers and 11 million couples — a mother and a father — received either or both credits, as did 2 million single fathers.

The table shows the figures for mothers (married plus single) by state.² The figures show that in most states, more than 100,000 mothers received one or both credits, while in even the least populous states, such as Vermont and Wyoming, over 25,000 mothers received this help.

¹ Chuck Marr, Jimmy Charite, and Chye-Ching Huang, "Earned Income Tax Credit Promotes Work, Encourages Children's Success at School, Research Finds," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, revised April 9, 2013, at www.cbpp.org/files/6-26-12tax.pdf.

² "Mothers" here includes grandmothers and other female relatives with dependent children.

Mothers with EITC or Refundable Child Tax Credit FY2010

50 States + DC	21,000,000
Alabama	430,000
Alaska	35,000
Arizona	440,000
Arkansas	240,000
California	2,700,000
Colorado	290,000
Connecticut	160,000
Delaware	56,000
Dist. of Columbia	36,000
Florida	1,400,000
Georgia	890,000
Hawaii	78,000
Idaho	110,000
Illinois	880,000
Indiana	440,000
Iowa	160,000
Kansas	180,000
Kentucky	300,000
Louisiana	410,000
Maine	68,000
Maryland	330,000
Massachusetts	280,000
Michigan	600,000
Minnesota	260,000
Mississippi	320,000
Missouri	390,000
Montana	56,000
Nebraska	110,000
Nevada	210,000
New Hampshire	54,000
New Jersey	470,000
New Mexico	170,000
New York	1,200,000
North Carolina	770,000
North Dakota	31,000
Ohio	720,000
Oklahoma	280,000
Oregon	210,000
Pennsylvania	670,000
Rhode Island	59,000
South Carolina	390,000
South Dakota	49,000
Tennessee	510,000
Texas	2,200,000
Utah	200,000
Vermont	29,000
Virginia	470,000
Washington	360,000
West Virginia	110,000
Wisconsin	310,000
Wyoming	28,000

Source: CBPP estimates based on data from IRS, unpublished data from the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, and CBPP analysis of the March 2012 Current Population Survey. The figures assume that among filers with children who claim either the EITC or the refundable CTC, the share that contain a married or single mother (about 90 percent) is the same in every state as it is nationwide, while the other 10 percent of EITC and refundable CTC filers with children consists of single fathers. A Center analysis of three years of merged Census data found no statistically significant state-to-state differences in this share.