

“I’m Not Supporting His Kids”: Noncustodial Fathers’ Contributions When Mothers Have Children with New Partners

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We examine the level, trend, and type of nonresident fathers’ informal contributions to their children. Using unique data on Wisconsin welfare participants, the paper measures how fathers’ contributions change when their ex-partner has a child with a new man. Cross-tabulations, change, fixed-effect, and difference-in-difference models generally confirm that fathers are less likely to provide informal support to mothers who have had a child with a new partner in the previous five years. Our models also show that fathers whose ex-partners have new children change the *types* of support they provide, away from general support (money toward rent) and toward child-specific support (gifts, clothes). Somewhat surprisingly, fathers who are paying more formal child support do not decrease informal support. However, some estimates change when we use propensity-score matching models, highlighting the importance of accounting for differences between those with and without new-partner fertility.