



Transforming Child Maintenance

What is the Commission?

- A new 'Non-Departmental Public Body' responsible for Great Britain's child maintenance system
- Its primary objective is **to maximise the number of effective child maintenance arrangements in place – whether private or statutory.**
- It has **three core functions** to achieve this objective:
 1. Promote financial responsibility that parents have for their children;
 2. Provide information and support about the different child maintenance options available
 3. Provide an efficient statutory child maintenance service, with effective enforcement

The Commission's aim is wide reaching...

To create a future where it is the norm for separated parents to support their children financially

The challenges facing us are...

- 90% of parents agree in principle that separated parents have a responsibility to financially maintain their children*
- But many parents believe there are legitimate reasons why this doesn't apply to them
- The reality is that only 47% of children living with one parent in Great Britain are currently covered by an effective maintenance arrangement**

*DWP Public Attitudes survey

**From analysis of administrative data, the Families and Children Study and the Families with Children Projection Model

So what's different?

- **Extends choice** to all parents (including those who claim benefits) to have the maintenance arrangement which suits them best whether private or statutory
- **Support for all parents** by providing Information and Support to enable informed choices about the maintenance arrangements that suit them best
- Increases the **maintenance disregard** for those on out of work benefits and introduces full maintenance disregards for housing and council tax benefits
- Introduces full maintenance disregard from 2010 **removing all links with the benefits system**
- Debt and non-compliance to be tackled via an **enhanced enforcement regime**
- Simplified and streamlined assessment and collection through **future 'Gross Income' scheme** (which utilises latest available tax information from HMRC as basis of fixed annual assessment - unless income varies by 25% or more)

The timeline for change...

