

How are South Carolina families using their Child Tax Credit payments?

Evidence from Census Data

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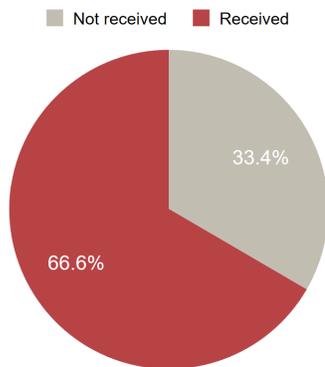
The temporary expansion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC) is projected to cut American child poverty by more than half. The CTC expansion provides families with \$3,600 for every child in the household under the age of six, and \$3,000 for every child between the ages of six and 17. The vast majority of U.S. families with children are eligible for the CTC.

In this research brief, we use data from the Census Household Pulse survey to examine how a representative sample of South Carolina families making less than \$150,000 a year report using their CTC payments. This survey was administered between July 21st and August 16th, covering the period in which the first two CTC payments were deposited in families' bank accounts.

Key Finding 1: 67% of eligible SC families received the CTC.

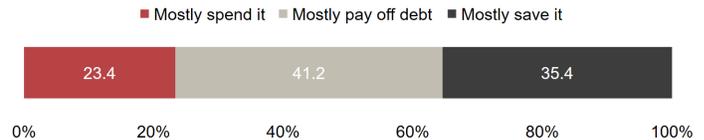
Key Finding 2: 41% of SC families reported mostly using their CTC to pay down debt, 35% mostly saved their CTC, and 23% mostly spent it.

CTC receipt (SC)



Sample size: 391

CTC and balance sheets (SC)

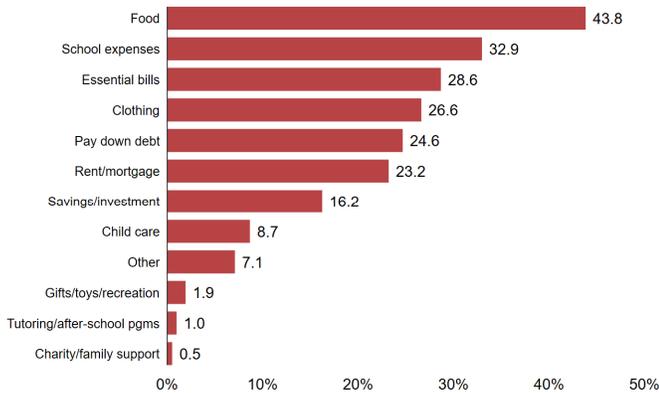


Sample size: 266

Key Finding 3: The most common uses of the CTC payments among SC families were purchasing food for their family (44%), school expenses (33%), and managing bills (29%).

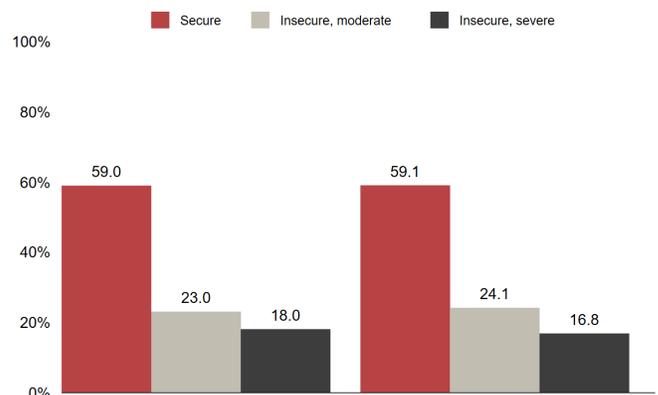
Key Finding 4: Eligible SC families experienced slightly lower rates of severe food insecurity after CTC payments went out.

CTC usage (SC)



Sample size: 267

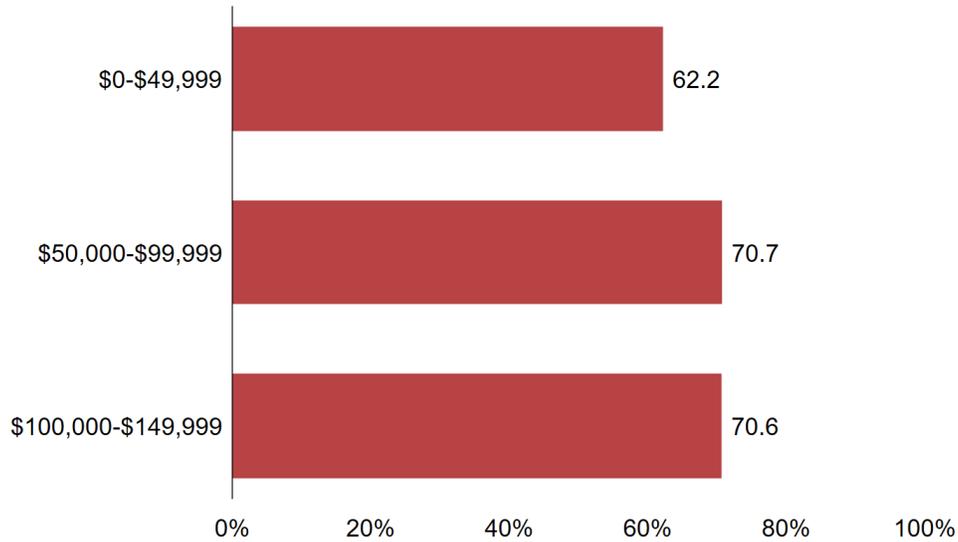
Food insecurity experiences (SC)



Sample size (Pre-CTC, week 30-33): 719; Sample size (Post-CTC, week 34-35): 391

Key Finding 5: SC families in the middle and upper income categories received the CTC at a similar rate (71%), while 62% of those in the lowest income category received the CTC.

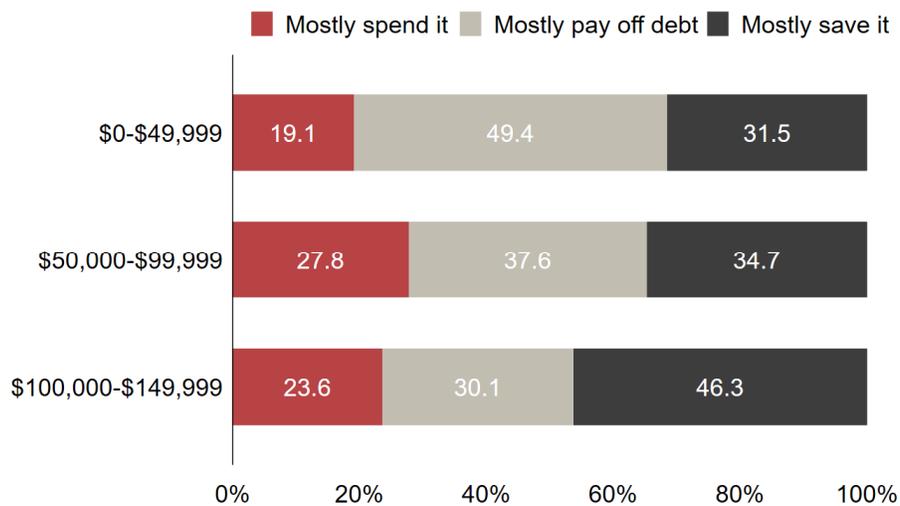
CTC receipt (SC), by income



Sample size: 391

Key Finding 6: SC families in the lowest income category were more likely to use their CTC funds to pay down debt relative to other groups, while those in the highest income category were more likely to report mostly saving their CTC payments.

CTC and balance sheets (SC), by income



Sample size: 266