CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS
Household Economic Studies
P70–30

Who's Minding The Kids?

Child Care Arrangements:
Fall 1988

SIPP
Survey of Income and Program Participation

by Martin O'Connell
and Amara Bachu

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared in the Fertility Statistics Branch, Population Division, under the general direction of **Arthur J. Norton,** Assistant Division Chief for Social and Demographic Statistics. **Joan R. Kidwell,** Fertility Statistics Branch, provided secretarial assistance in preparing this report.

Helpful review comments were provided by **Harriet B. Presser,** University of Maryland, and **Mark Menchik,** Office of Management and Budget.

Survey design and data operations were coordinated by **Donald Fischer,** Chief, Income Surveys Branch, Demographic Surveys Division. Data processing activities were designed by **Doris Anderson** under the direction of **Donna Riccini,** Chief, Income Surveys Programming Branch, Demographic Surveys Division.

Data collection was conducted by Bureau of the Census interviewers under the overall direction of **Stanley D. Matchett,** Chief, Field Division.

Sampling review was conducted by **Tracy Pruitt** and **Rita J. Petroni** under the direction of **Rajendra Singh,** Chief, Survey of Income and Program Participation Branch, Demographic Statistical Methods Division.

The Staff of the Administrative and Publications Services Division, **Walter C. Odom,** Chief, provided publication planning, editorial review, design, composition, and printing planning and procurement.

CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS
Household Economic Studies
P70–30
Issued August 1992

Who's Minding The Kids?

Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1988

by Martin O'Connell
and Amara Bachu

U.S. Department of Commerce
Barbara Hackman Franklin, Secretary
Rockwell A. Schnabel, Deputy Secretary

Economics and Statistics Administration
J. Antonio Villamil, Acting Under Secretary
for Economic Affairs and Administrator

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Barbara Everitt Bryant, Director

Economics and Statistics Administration
J. Antonio Villamil, Acting Under Secretary for Economic Affairs and Administrator

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Barbara Everitt Bryant, Director
C.L. Kincannon, Deputy Director
William P. Butz, Associate Director for Demographic Programs

POPULATION DIVISION
Paula J. Schneider, Chief

SUGGESTED CITATION

U.S. Bureau of the Census. Current Population Reports, P70-30.
Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1988 (Data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation)
U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1992.

For sale by Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Contents

Introduction 1
Highlights 2
Population Coverage 3
Primary Child Care Arrangements for Preschoolers 4
Child Care Arrangements for Grade-School Children 5
Organized Child Care Facilities 9
Child Care Arrangements by Parents' Work Schedules 9
Work Disruptions from Failures in Child Care Arrangements 13
Changes in Child Care Arrangements 14
Family Expenditures on Child Care 15
Costs of Individual Child Care Arrangements 17
Note on Estimates 21
User Comments 21

FIGURES

1. Average Weekly Hours of Child Care Used by Employed Mother, by Child's Age: Fall 1988 8
2. Children Under 5 Years in Organized Child Care Facilities, by Monthly Family Income and Poverty Status: Fall 1988 10
3. Child Care Arrangements for Children Under 5 Years, by Shift Work Status of Employed Mothers: Fall 1988 12
4. Percent of Children Under 5 Years Cared for in Their Home, by Shift Work Status of Parents: Fall 1988 13
5. Employed Mothers Losing Time From Work Due to Failures in Child Care Arrangements, by Age of Youngest Child: Fall 1988 15
6. Average Weekly Cost of Child Care: Fall 1988 18
7. Percent of Monthly Family Income Spent on Child Care: Fall 1988 18

TEXT TABLES

A. Population Universe for Child Care Module: Fall 1988 3
B. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers for Children Under 5 Years, by Age of Child: Fall 1988 4
C. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers for Children Under 5 Years: Selected Periods, 1977 to 1988 6
D. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers for Children Under 15 Years: Fall 1988 6
E. Average Weekly Hours of Child Care Used by Employed Mothers: Fall 1988 8
F. Main Reason Given by Employed Mothers With Children Under 15 Years for Choosing Type of Work Shift of Principal Job: Fall 1988 11
G. Number of Dual-Employed Married Couples With Children Under 15 Years, by Type of Work Shift of Their Principal Job: Fall 1988 13
H. Time Lost from Work Due to Failures in Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1988 14
I. Reasons for Changes in Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1988 16
J. Weekly Cost of Child Care Per Family With Children Under 15 Years: Selected Periods, 1984 to 1988 16

K. Hourly Child Care Costs for Children of Employed Mothers, by Hours of Child Care Used Per Week: Fall 1988 18
L. Hourly Child Care Costs for Children of Employed Mothers, by Type of Child Care Arrangement: Fall 1988 20

DETAILED TABLES

1. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Mothers for Children Under 15 Years, by Marital and Employment Status of Mothers: Fall 1988 23
2. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers for Children Under 5 Years, by Characteristics of Mothers: Fall 1988 24
3. Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers for Children 5 to 14 Years: Fall 1988 25
4. Children of Employed Mothers Using Secondary Child Care Arrangements, by Age of Child and Type of Primary Care Arrangement: Fall 1988 26
5. Loss of Time From Work by Employed Mothers Because of Failures in Child Care Arrangements and Frequency of Changes in Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1988 28
6. Weekly Child Care Costs Paid by Families: Fall 1988 29
7. Number of Child Care Arrangements Made by Employed Mothers, by Payment Status of Arrangement: Fall 1988 31
8. Weekly Child Care Costs of Employed Mothers When Payments are Made Separately for Each Child: Fall 1988 32
9. Weekly Child Care Costs of Employed Mothers When Payments are Shared Among Different Children: Fall 1988 33
10. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers, by Type of Work Shift of Principal Job: Fall 1988 34
11. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Dual-Employed Parents: Fall 1988 35
12. Standard Errors for Average Weekly Hours of Child Care Used by Employed Mothers: Fall 1988 36
13. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Parents for Children Under 15 Years, by Labor Force, Sex, and Enrollment Status of Parents: Fall 1988 37
14. Type of Work Schedule Used by Employed Mothers With Children Under 15 Years: Fall 1988 38

APPENDIXES

A. Overview of the SIPP Program A-1
B. Definitions and Explanations B-1
C. Source and Accuracy of Estimates C-1
D. Data Quality D-1
E. Facsimile of SIPP Child Care Module E-1
F. Facsimile of SIPP Work Schedule Module F-1

APPENDIX TABLES

C-1. Combined 1987 and 1988 Panel Household Sample Size by Month and Interview Status C-1
C-2. SIPP Variance Parameters for Fall 1988 Child Care Estimates (1987 Wave 6/1988 Wave 3) C-6
C-3. Standard Errors of Estimated Numbers of Persons for Fall 1988 Estimates C-7
C-4. Standard Errors of Estimated Percentages of Persons for Fall 1988 Estimates C-8

D-1. Imputation Rates for Primary and Secondary Child Care Arrangements for Children Under 15 Years: Fall 1988 ..... D-2
D-2. Imputation Rates for Selected Child Care Items: Fall 1988 ..... D-2

Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1988

INTRODUCTION

There were 19.7 million women in the labor force in 1988 with children under 15 years of age. The child care statistics shown in this report are for children under the age of 15 whose parents or guardians were in the labor force or attending school during September to December, 1988. How these children were cared for while their parents were at work, looking for work, or in school, the complexity of these arrangements and the accompanying disruptions in the daily work schedule, and payments for child care services are some of the topics presented in this report.

Survey background. Data on child care arrangements have been collected by the Census Bureau in prior supplements to the Current Population Survey (CPS) since 1958[1] and in supplements to the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) since 1984.[2] This report discusses the most recent statistics on child care arrangements in the United States based on data collected in the SIPP for the period September to December, 1988. Data from earlier CPS and SIPP supplements on child care are also presented in order to show a historical perspective on changes that have occurred in the way working parents arrange for the care of their children.

For the first time in this series of reports, we will show estimates of child care costs for individual arrangements and the average number of hours per week each child spends in these arrangements. We will also show the number of arrangements where payments were made separately or shared for brothers and sisters in the same family. In addition, this report shows how frequently parents change child care arrangements and the reasons for these changes. Since many young children now have both parents in the labor force, this report will feature the child care arrangements used by dual-employed parents according to their work shift.

[1]Current Population Reports, Series P-23, No. 117, **Trends in Child Care Arrangements of Working Mothers,** and Series P-23, No. 129, **Child Care Arrangements of Working Mothers: June 1982.**

[2]Current Population Reports, Series P-70, No. 9, **Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 1984-85;** Series P-70, No. 20, **Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: 1986-87.**

Terms used in this report. Children under 15 years of age in this reported are divided into two major categories: preschool-age children (under 5 years of age) and grade school-age children (5 to 14 years of age). The term "child care arrangement" used in this report describes how children are cared for during the time their parents are in the labor force (either working or looking for a job) or attending school. Child care arrangements include not only informal arrangements where neighbors, relatives, or family members look after the children either in the child's home or in their own homes but also organized child care facilities such as day or group care centers and nursery schools or preschools. The reader should be cautioned that these distinctions may not always be clear to the respondent and may even be affected by regional differences in terminology or governmental regulations used to categorize child care arrangements.

The report also includes responses which indicate that the parents themselves were caring for their children while at work (either at home or outside their home), looking for a job or attending school, or that the children were caring for themselves. Since school-age children are included in the survey, child care, in its broadest sense, also includes the time children are enrolled in kindergarten or grade school during the time their parents are in the labor force or in school. For the first time, a new child care arrangement "school-based activity before or after school" has been included. This category consists of school-based supervised activities such as sports, music, and arts and crafts classes that are outside the regular school hours.

Some parents may use more than one type of child care arrangement in a typical week; therefore, two categories of arrangements are shown in this report, primary and secondary. The primary child care arrangement refers to what the child was usually doing or the way the child was usually cared for during most of the hours the child's parent was in the labor force or in school. If other arrangements were used in addition to the primary arrangement, the one used second most frequently was called the secondary arrangement. For example, if a child was in grade school most of the time his or her parent worked and then cared for himself or herself after school, the primary child care arrangement for this child would be "enrolled in grade school" and the secondary child care arrangement would be "child cares for self."

The respondent determined the category of the child care arrangement used for his or her own children. No inquiry was made in the survey concerning the licensing status of the child care facilities or private homes providing the child care.

Information on child care arrangements used by parents for their children was asked of the wife and not the husband in the case of married-couple families. As such, the child care arrangement listed was that used while the wife, not the husband, was in the labor force or in school. In families where only one parent was present or where the child was cared for by a legal guardian (excluding foster parents), information on child care arrangements was obtained from that parent or guardian.

In cases where the designated respondent was both employed and enrolled in school, questions on child care arrangements pertain only to the time the respondent was at work. If the respondent was enrolled in school and also looking for a job, the responses only refer to the time the respondent was in school. The terms "employed" or "working" mothers or women are used interchangeably in this report to refer to women employed in the paid labor force in the month preceding the interview.

The definitions for day and non-day work shift used in this report are based on Bureau of Labor Statistics guidelines.[3] Day shift is defined as a work schedule where at least one-half of the hours worked fall between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and where the respondent described the schedule as being a regular daytime schedule. All other work schedules having the majority of the hours worked being outside the 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. core period are classified as non-day work shifts, including respondents who reported that they worked rotating or irregular hours, regardless of their time schedules of employment.

HIGHLIGHTS

(The figures in parentheses denote the 90-percent confidence interval of the estimate.)

The principal findings of the survey are summarized below:

Child care arrangements and trends

- There were 53.4 (±0.2) million children under age 15 living with their parents in fall 1988. About 57 (±0.7) percent of these children, 30.3 (±0.4) million, had mothers who were employed; of these children 9.5 (±0.3) million were under 5 years old and 20.8 (±0.4) million were 5 to 14 years old.
- Among preschool-age children of employed mothers 26 (±1.6) percent were using organized child care facilities most of the time their mothers were at work, up from 23 (±1.8) percent in winter 1984-85 when the first SIPP survey was conducted. From a longer perspective, both the 1988 and 1984-85 proportions were significantly higher than the 13 (±1.4) percent recorded for preschoolers in 1977.
- Although almost one-half (43 ±3.8 percent) of 5-year old children were in school most of the time their mothers were at work, about one in five children (19 ±3.0 percent) used organized child care facilities. Among children 6 to 14 years of age, 79 (±1.0) percent were in school while their mothers were at work.

Child care arrangements of grade school children

- About 15.7 (±0.4) million of the total 20.8 (±0.4) million gradeschool age children of employed mothers spent most of their time in school while their mothers were working. Including secondary arrangements after school, about 1.4 (±0.1) million were reported to have cared for themselves while their mothers were at work.
- The average number of hours worked by mothers with grade schoolage children was 34.7 (±0.4) hours per week. These children spent only 26.3 (±0.4) hours in child care arrangements including an average of 18.7 (±0.4) hours per week in school. The difference between the mother's hours at work and the time the child spent in child care arrangements could be accounted for, at least partially, by travel time between school, care arrangements, and home.

Time lost from work and changes in arrangements

- Of the 19 (±0.4) million employed women with children under 15 years, 4.4 (±0.5) percent lost time from work in the month before the survey as a result of a failure in child care arrangements.
- Work disruptions from failures in child care arrangements affected 6 (±2.1) percent of employed women with infants. Lost time from work was least reported among women whose youngest child was 12 to 14 years old (1.3 ±0.7 percent).
- In the case of married couples with children, 3.7 (±0.5) percent said the wife alone lost time from work while 0.7 (±0.2) percent said only the husband lost time from work (a similar percentage, 0.6 (±0.2) percent, said both lost time from work).
- About 16 (±0.9) percent of employed mothers reported that they had changed child care arrangements in the four months prior to the interview. Only 8 (±1.7)

[3]See J.N. Hedges and E.S. Sekscenski, "Workers on Late Shifts in a Changing Economy," **Monthly Labor Review**, Vol. 102, No. 9, (September 1979), pp. 14-22.

percent of women whose youngest child was 12 to 14 years old changed arrangements compared to 17 (±3.3) percent for women with infants.

- Among women with infants, reliability and quality of care of the provider was mentioned as the principal reason for change in 18 (±8.3) percent of the cases compared to 6 (±5.1) percent for women with children 12 to 14 years of age.

Family expenditures on child care

- Of the 19 (±0.4) million employed women with children under 15 years of age, 40 (±1.2) percent reported that they made a monetary payment for child care services.

- An estimated $21 billion was spent on child care in 1988. Families paying for child care spent an average of $54 (±$1.9) per week in 1988 compared to $40 (±$1.8) per week in 1984-85; $5.50 (±$2.7) of this increase was due to inflation. These payments in 1988 represented 7 (±0.3) percent of their total family income each month. Women in poverty paid a higher proportion of their monthly family income on child care, 21 (±3.4) percent, compared to women living in families that were not living in poverty, 7 (±0.3) percent.

Costs of individual child care arrangements

- Of the 6.7 (±0.3) million children for whom separate child care payments were made, 5 (±0.2) million of those children were in child care for 10 or more hours of week. Among families making child care payments, those using 10 or more hours of child care per week for each child made lower hourly payments ($1.78 ±$0.08) than those using less than 10 hours per week ($6.06 ±$0.62).

- The costs for organized child care facilities used for 10 or more hours a week amounted to $1.91 (±$0.14) per hour for each child. When child care was provided by nonrelatives who came into the child's home, the cost per child per hour was $2.61 (±$0.62), about $1.00 more per hour than when the child was brought to the provider's home ($1.63 ±$0.10).

Costs of shared child care arrangements

- When two or more children in a family shared the same child care provider for 10 or more hours per week, the cost of child care was $1.70 (±0.16) per hour per child, not different from the amount when payments were made separately for each child ($1.78 ±$0.08 per hour).

- When payments were shared by more than one child in the family, care by relatives cost $0.99 (±$0.21) per hour per child compared to $1.38 (±$0.14) when payments were made separately for each child in the family. No "discounts" for child care sharing by the same provider were noted when either nonrelatives or organized child care facilities were used.

POPULATION COVERAGE

The child care data presented in this report profile the arrangements typically used for children under 15 years old, (including any adopted or step children) during the time their parents were in the labor force or in school. There were an estimated 53.4 million children under age 15 living in the United States in the fall (September to December) of 1988 (table A). About 57 percent of these

Table A. **Population Universe for Child Care Module: Fall 1988**

(In thousands. Numbers represent the average monthly estimate of children or their parents/guardians who are either in the labor force or enrolled in school)

Population	All children	Children under 5 years	Children 5 to 14 years
PARENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE OR IN SCHOOL[1]			
Total	21,226	9,097	15,943
Number of mothers	20,465	8,864	15,350
Number of fathers	761	233	593
CHILDREN			
Total number[2]	53,448	18,625	34,822
Children of parents in the labor force or in school[3]	33,790	10,674	23,117
Child living with mother	32,888	10,436	22,452
Mother employed:			
Number of mothers	18,902	8,105	14,303
Number of children	30,287	9,483	20,804
Mother unemployed:			
Number of mothers	750	330	551
Number of children	1,340	456	884
Mother enrolled in school:			
Number of mothers	813	429	496
Number of children	1,261	497	764
Child living with father[4]	902	237	665
Number of fathers	761	233	593
Number of children	902	237	665
Children of parents not in the labor force or in school[5]	19,659	7,951	11,705

[1]Person in household who is the parent or guardian of the child(ren). In the case of married couple families, the wife is designated as the reference person for the child care module. The total numbers of parents is less than the sum of the two age groups as some parents have children in both age groups.

[2]Total estimated number of children regardless of parent's labor force or school enrollment status.

[3]Information collected for only the three youngest children in the household.

[4]Father either in the labor force or enrolled in school.

[5]Consists of children living with their mothers who are not in the labor force or enrolled in school and children living only with fathers or male guardians who are not in labor force or enrolled in school.

children (30.3 million) had mothers who were employed. There were another 1.3 million children whose mothers were unemployed (looking for work) and a similar number of children whose mothers were enrolled in school.

Table A also shows the numbers of children who were living only with their fathers or male guardians who were either in the labor force or enrolled in school. An estimated 761,000 men cared for 902,000 children under 15 years old. However, data from the 1986 and 1987 SIPP surveys indicated that 1.5 million and 1.9 million children, respectively, were living only with their fathers.[4] Estimates from the March 1988 Current Population Survey indicate that there were 1.4 million children under 15 years old living only with their father, an estimate not different from the 1986 SIPP estimate of 1.5 million.[5] The sharp decline in the estimated number of children cared for by their fathers in the SIPP surveys between 1987 and 1988 and the lower numbers of children in the 1988 SIPP panel compared to the March 1988 CPS suggest that the 1988 SIPP estimates may not be accurate reflections of the living arrangements of these children.

The remaining number of children under 15 years of age, 19.7 million (table A), consists of those living with their mothers who were not in the labor force or enrolled in school and those children living only with their fathers or male guardians who were not in the labor force or enrolled in school.

[4]Current Population Reports, Series P-70, No. 20, **op.cit.**
[5]Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 433, **Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1988,** table 4.

PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRESCHOOLERS

The choice of child care arrangements for preschool-age children is one of the most important daily decisions parents make. It is an age when children are most dependent on a care provider's supervisory skills and often marks the time when children make their first prolonged social contacts with persons outside the immediate family.

Table B shows the distribution of the primary child care arrangements used by employed mothers for children under 5 years old (preschoolers) in fall 1988. Twenty-eight percent of these preschoolers in fall 1988 were cared for in their own homes, mainly by their fathers, while 37 percent were cared for in another home, usually by someone not related to the child. A similar proportion of children used organized child care facilities (26 percent) as were cared for in their own home; these facilities provided the primary child care services for 2.5 million children under 5 years old. An additional 8 percent (723,000) of preschoolers were cared for by their mothers while working, either at home or away from home. The majority of these children (502,000) were cared for by their mothers who worked at home, thus eliminating potentially expensive commuting and child care costs.

The hourly demands for child care services placed upon families with mothers employed full time cannot normally be met by other household members or relatives who have full-time jobs and career commitments. As a result, the location of child care activities for full-time working mothers tends to be outside of the

Table B. **Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers for Children Under 5 Years, by Age of Child: Fall 1988**

(Numbers in thousands)

Type of arrangement	All children		Less than 1 year		1 and 2 years		3 and 4 years	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	9,483	100.0	1,523	100.0	3,925	100.0	4,035	100.0
Care in child's home	2,678	28.2	475	31.2	1,231	31.4	971	24.1
By father	1,433	15.1	249	16.4	596	15.2	587	14.6
By grandparent	539	5.7	108	7.1	290	7.4	141	3.5
By other relative	207	2.2	36	2.3	93	2.4	78	1.9
By nonrelative	500	5.3	82	5.4	253	6.4	164	4.1
Care in another home	3,491	36.8	621	40.8	1,621	41.3	1,249	30.9
By grandparent	778	8.2	160	10.5	363	9.2	255	6.3
By other relative	476	5.0	69	4.5	230	5.8	178	4.4
By nonrelative	2,237	23.6	392	25.7	1,029	26.2	816	20.2
Organized child care facilities	2,451	25.8	278	18.2	791	20.2	1,382	34.2
Day/group care center	1,575	16.6	246	16.2	595	15.2	734	18.2
Nursery/preschool	875	9.2	32	2.1	196	5.0	648	16.1
School-based activity	15	0.2	-	-	8	0.2	7	0.2
Kindergarten/grade school	121	1.3	-	-	-	-	121	3.0
Child cares for self	5	0.1	5	0.4	-	-	-	-
Mother cares for child at work[1]	723	7.6	144	9.4	273	7.0	306	7.6

- Represents zero.
[1]Includes women working at home or away from home.

child's home with nonrelatives, rather than in the child's home with family members or relatives.

Table 1 shows that preschool-age children of mothers employed full time were less likely to be cared for at home (21 percent) than were children of mothers employed part time (41 percent). Offsetting this difference, full-time working mothers relied more heavily than part-time workers on child care in someone else's home and on organized child care facilities.

Children of part-time workers were more likely to be cared for by their mothers while at work (12 percent), than were children of mothers who worked full time (5 percent). In addition, child care provided by the father was also more frequent when women worked part time (27 percent) than full time (8 percent). More part-time working mothers with preschoolers worked non-day schedules (63 percent) than did full-time working mothers (25 percent), thus enabling fathers who worked on a "9 to 5" schedule the opportunity to look after their children (table 10).

Variations in arrangements by age of the child. As children grow from infancy to school age, employed women make considerable changes in child care arrangements in order to meet the needs of their children and the changing demands of their family and their employer. However, one of the problems that families face in finding child care arrangements for young children may be due to minimum age requirements for children admitted to organized child care facilities. Estimates from the June 1988 Current Population Survey (CPS) show that 51 percent of all women 18 to 44 years old who had a birth in the 12-month period preceding the survey were in the labor force, up from 31 percent in 1976.[6]

Data for fall 1988 indicate that there were 1.5 million children under 1 year of age whose mothers were employed in the labor force (table B). Seventy-two percent of these infants were cared for in either the child's home or another home. Another 16 percent were cared for in day/group care centers while 2 percent were cared for in nursery/preschools.

Among 1- and 2-year olds, child care either in the child's home or in another home accounted for 73 percent of all arrangements while organized child care facilities made up 20 percent of the primary care for these children, neither of these percentages being statistically different from that recorded for infants' arrangements. For 3-and 4-year old children, care in either the child's home or in another home declined to 55 percent of all arrangements while organized child care facilities made up 34 percent of the primary care. For these older children, the proportion enrolled in nursery schools was not statistically different from those in day/group care centers while among younger children the large majority who were in organized child care facilities were in day care centers.

Data in table B show that 0.1 percent of children under 5 (estimated to be 5,000 children) cared for themselves while their mothers were at work in 1988. The reader should be warned that this represents the response for one woman in the survey. Given the sample size of this survey and the possible nonsampling errors that may exist, one should not consider this isolated response as evidence of any trend or accurate representation of the number of preschool-age children left unsupervised while their mothers were at work.

Trends in child care arrangements: 1977 to 1988. Table C shows the distributions of the primary child care arrangements used by employed mothers for their children under 5 years old for selected survey years between 1977 and 1988. Since 1977, there has been a decline in the utilization of relatives, but not the child's father, as child care providers both in the child's home and in the provider's home. For example, care provided by relatives (excluding fathers) in the child's home declined from 12.6 percent in 1977 to 7.9 percent in 1988. Similarly, care provided by relatives in their own homes also decreased between 1977 and 1988 from 18.3 to 13.2 percent (table C).

The decline in the use of relatives as child care providers may reflect the overall increase in the labor force participation of women outside the home, thus reducing the potential number of female relatives available for child care services. The proportion of children cared for by their mothers while at work also declined between 1977 and 1988 from 11.4 to 7.6 percent.

In contrast to declines in the frequency of care provided by relatives and by the child's mother, increases were noted in the proportion of children cared for in organized child care facilities (day/group care centers or nursery/preschools). In fall 1988, 26 percent of children under age 5 were in organized child care facilities most of the time their mothers were at work, only slightly higher than the 23 percent recorded in the first SIPP survey taken in 1984-85. However, earlier estimates from the June 1977 CPS indicated that only 13 percent of preschoolers were in organized child care facilities while their mothers were at work.

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR GRADE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

Primary arrangements. Most grade-school age children were in school while their mothers were at work (76 percent, table D). This does not mean that the remaining 24 percent were not enrolled in school; rather it

[6]Data from the June 1990 CPS (Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 454, **Fertility of American Women: June 1990**, table C) indicate a continuing increase in the proportion of women with infants in the labor force since 1976, reaching 53 percent in 1990.

Table C. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers for Children Under 5 Years: Selected Periods, 1977 to 1988

(Numbers in thousands)

Type of arrangement	Fall 1988	Fall 1987	Fall 1986	Winter 1984-85	June 1977[1]
Number of children	9,483	9,124	8,849	8,168	4,370
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Care in child's home	28.2	29.9	28.7	31.0	33.9
By father	15.1	15.3	14.5	15.7	14.4
By grandparent	5.7	5.1	5.2	5.7	NA
By other relative	2.2	3.3	3.4	3.7	[4]12.6
By nonrelative	5.3	6.2	5.5	5.9	7.0
Care in another home	36.8	35.6	40.7	37.0	40.7
By grandparent	8.2	8.7	10.2	10.2	NA
By relative	5.0	4.6	6.5	4.5	18.3
By nonrelative	23.6	22.3	24.0	22.3	22.4
Organized child care facilities	25.8	24.4	22.4	23.1	13.0
Day/group care center	16.6	16.1	14.9	14.0	NA
Nursery school/preschool	9.2	8.3	7.5	9.1	NA
School-based activity	0.2	NA	NA	NA	NA
Child cares for self	0.1	0.3	-	-	0.4
Mother cares for child at work[2]	7.6	8.9	7.4	8.1	11.4
Other arrangements[3]	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.6

NA Not available. - Represents zero.

Source: Tabulations derived from the June 1977 Current Population Survey; Current Population Reports, Series P-70, No. 9, table 1; Series P-70, No. 20, table 1, Part A and Part B; and table 1 of this report.

[1]Data only for the two youngest children under 5 years of age.
[2]Includes mothers working at home or away from home.
[3]Inlcudes children in kindergarten/grade school.
[4]Data for 1977 includes grandparents.

Table D. Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Employed Mothers for Children Under 15 Years: Fall 1988

(Numbers in thousands)

Type of arrangement	All children		Children under 5 years		Children 5 to 14 years	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	30,287	100.0	9,483	100.0	20,804	100.0
Care in child's home	5,158	17.0	2,678	28.2	2,480	11.9
By father	2,906	9.6	1,433	15.1	1,473	7.1
By grandparent	770	2.5	539	5.7	232	1.1
By other relative	671	2.2	207	2.2	464	2.2
By nonrelative	811	2.7	500	5.3	311	1.5
Care in another home	4,323	14.3	3,491	36.8	833	4.0
By grandparent	1,060	3.5	778	8.2	282	1.4
By other relative	623	2.1	476	5.0	147	0.7
By nonrelative	2,640	8.7	2,237	23.6	403	1.9
Organized child care facilities	2,977	9.8	2,451	25.8	526	2.5
Day/group care center	1,931	6.4	1,575	16.6	356	1.7
Nursery/preschool	1,045	3.5	875	9.2	170	0.8
School-based activity	361	1.2	15	0.2	346	1.7
Kindergarten/grade school	15,832	52.3	121	1.3	15,711	75.5
Child cares for self	481	1.6	5	0.1	476	2.3
Mother cares for child at work[1]	1,155	3.8	723	7.6	433	2.1

[1]Includes women working at home or away from home.

implies that the majority of the hours that these mothers worked did not necessarily coincide with the hours of the day the children are in school.

Of the remaining 5.1 million grade-school-age children not in kindergarten/grade school while their mothers worked, 2.5 million children were cared for in their own home. Over one-half of the total care given in the children's homes was provided by the children's fathers. About 476,000 children were left unsupervised most of the time that their mothers were at work; another 346,000 children were involved in a school-based activity.

Variations in arrangements by age of the child. Just as the type of child care arrangements change as the child ages from infancy to preschool age, child care arrangements for grade-school age children shift dramatically after age 5 (table 3, upper panel). Among 5 year olds who were just entering kindergarten and grade school, 43 percent were in school most of the time their mothers were at work. Among older children (6 to 14 years old) about 80 percent were in school during the time their mothers were at work.

In contrast, the percentage of children cared for primarily in either their own home or in another home sharply declined after age 5. Among 5 year olds, 31 percent were cared for in a home environment compared to 16 percent among 6-to-11 year olds. Use of organized child care facilities also rapidly diminished from 19 percent for 5 year olds to about 1 percent among 6-to-11 year olds. After age 5, when virtually all children are enrolled in school, self-care by children noticeably increased from 1 to 6 percent between younger and older grade school-age children.

After school arrangements. The first panel of data in table 3 shows that approximately three-quarters (15.7 million) of gradeschool-age children were in school most of the time while their mothers were at work. From earlier test surveys of this module conducted in Boston in 1983, interviewers reported that respondents frequently did not consider school attendance as a form of child care arrangement, even though many women were at work while their children were in school. The question arises, What would be the distribution of child care arrangements if school attendance was eliminated from the table?

The second panel of data in table 3 re-distributes the child care arrangements in the first panel by excluding responses of kindergarten/grade school attendance and substituting the secondary arrangements used, if any, by these 15.7 million children while their mothers were at work. For example, after the addition of these secondary arrangements, the resulting number of children cared for at home was 5,033,000 (second panel, table 3) compared to the original estimate of 2,480,000 (first panel, table 3). The number of children 5 to 14 years of age who were reported to have cared for themselves while their mothers were working also increased from 476,000 to 1.4 million, reflecting the addition of 926,000 children using this secondary arrangement (table 4).

The second panel in table 3 also reveals that 8.8 million children were reported not to have any additional child care arrangements after school, i.e., no secondary child care arrangements were made (second panel, table 3). Does this mean all of these children cared for themselves after school? The second panel of data in table 3 attempts to answer this question by examining whether the mother's work hours are likely to occur during the time child was in school.

Of the 8.8 million children with no reported secondary child care arrangements after school, 3.1 million were in school at least the same number of hours per week that their mothers reported working. It is likely that the mothers of these children worked during their children's school hours and came home to care for them after work, thereby obviating the need for a secondary arrangement.

For the remaining 5.7 million children with no reported secondary arrangements, the hours per week their mothers worked exceeded the number of hours per week the children were in school. Potentially, this means that another 5.7 million children were without care arrangements after school in addition to the 1.4 million children who were reported by their mothers to be in self care after school. It may be that some mothers do not consider the response "child cares for self" as a true arrangement and hence may say that no secondary arrangement is used. Other respondents may perceive that leaving a child unattended may be interpreted as an undesirable response. In any case we do not know the degree or lack of supervision of these self-care arrangements.

Table E and figure 1 provide a further look at the above issue. The data in this table show the average number of hours per week spent by the mothers while at work (34.4 hours) and the average number of hours the children spent each week in child care arrangements (27.5 hours), including primary and secondary arrangements. Figure 1 shows only a slight increase in the number of hours mothers worked per week with increases in the child's age. The average number of hours worked by mothers with children under 5 years was 33.6 per week compared to 34.7 per week for mothers with children 5 to 14 years old.

With increasing age, however, children spend fewer hours per week in child care arrangements, even including the time they were in school. Children under 5 years spend an average of 30 hours per week in child care arrangements compared to only 26 hours per week for grade-school-age children. What can account for (1) the apparent shortfall in child care hours compared to the

Table E. Average Weekly Hours of Child Care Used by Employed Mothers: Fall 1988

(Numbers in thousands)

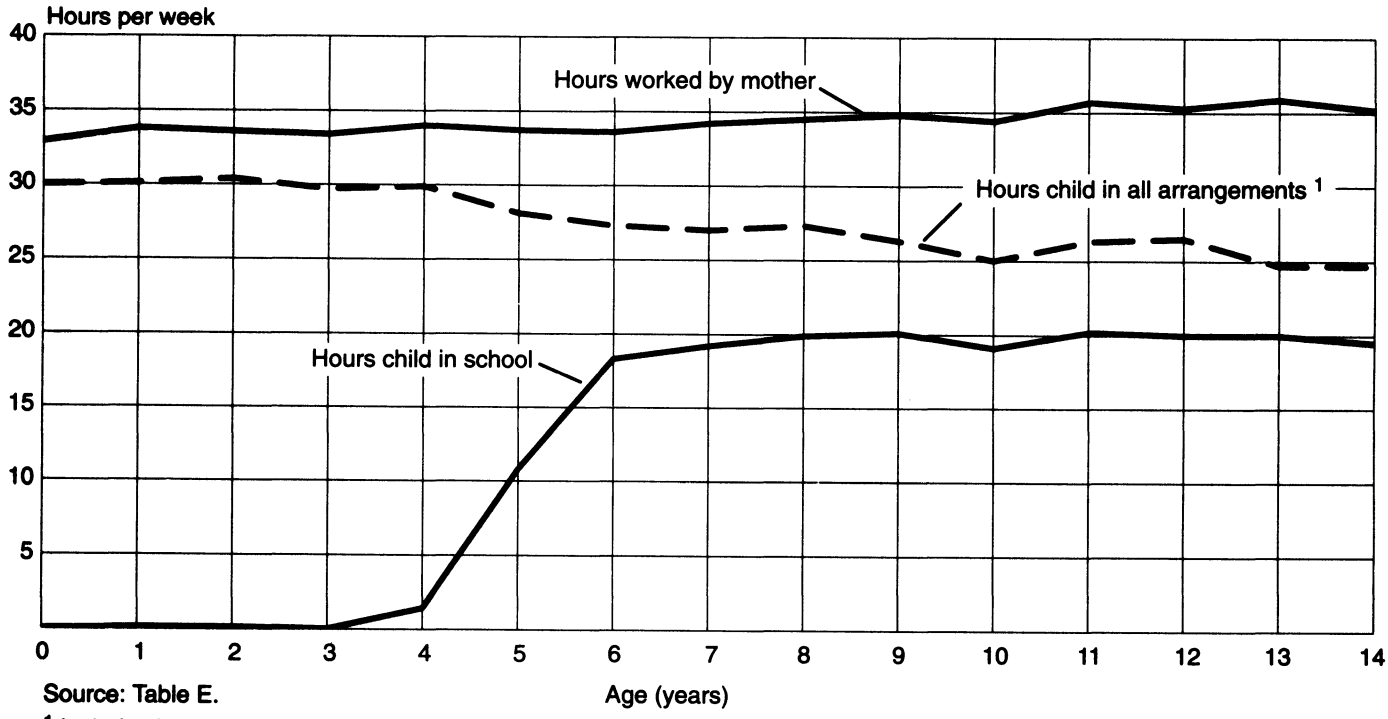
Age of child	Number of children	Hours per week spent by mother at work	Hours per week spent by children in a child care arrangement					
				Type of arrangement		Location of arrangement		
			Total	Primary arrangement	Secondary arrangement	Child in school[1]	Child in non-school arrangement	Child cares for self
Total	30,287	34.4	27.5	24.4	3.1	12.9	14.1	0.5
Under 5 years	9,483	33.6	30.0	28.1	1.9	0.3	29.7	-
Less than 1 year	1,523	32.9	30.0	28.8	1.2	-	29.9	0.1
1 year	1,979	33.8	30.1	28.5	1.6	0.1	30.0	-
2 years	1,945	33.6	30.4	28.8	1.6	0.1	30.3	-
3 years	2,022	33.4	29.7	27.4	2.3	-	29.7	-
4 years	2,014	34.0	29.9	27.0	2.9	1.4	28.5	-
5 to 14 years	20,804	34.7	26.3	22.7	3.6	18.7	7.0	0.7
5 years	2,144	33.7	28.1	22.3	5.8	10.8	17.3	-
6 years	2,050	33.6	27.3	22.3	5.0	18.3	8.9	0.1
7 years	2,128	34.2	27.0	22.3	4.7	19.2	7.7	0.1
8 years	2,024	34.5	27.3	23.1	4.1	19.9	7.3	0.1
9 years	2,160	34.8	26.3	22.7	3.6	20.1	6.0	0.3
10 years	2,037	34.4	25.0	21.9	3.1	19.1	5.3	0.6
11 years	2,148	35.7	26.3	23.5	2.8	20.2	5.2	1.0
12 years	2,003	35.3	26.5	23.8	2.7	20.0	5.0	1.5
13 years	2,063	35.9	24.7	22.4	2.3	20.0	3.6	1.1
14 years	2,045	35.2	24.7	22.9	1.8	19.5	3.2	2.0

Note: See table 12 for the standard errors of the means.

- Represents zero.

[1]Children in kindergarten/grade school or in school based activity.

Figure 1.
Average Weekly Hours of Child Care Used by Employed Mothers by Child's Age: Fall 1988



Source: Table E.

[1] Includes hours in school.

mother's working hours and (2) why does this discrepancy increase with the child's age as shown in figure 1?

The 3-4 hour difference between the mother's working hours and the child's arrangement hours for preschoolers noted in table E may be partly explained by rounding the daily estimates of work and child care hours reported by mothers to produce the weekly totals. In addition, time associated with transportation of the child between home and child care providers may have been unaccounted for in the estimates of the number of hours per week used for child care arrangements.

The difference between estimates of weekly work and child care arrangements increases sharply from about 6 hours per week for 5 year olds to about 11 hours per week for children 14 years old. Again, these discrepancies do not necessarily mean that the child is alone all these hours as some of this time may constitute travel time to school with other children or in the presence of other adults. For these older grade-school-age children who may travel longer distances to go to school, travel time from home to school to a secondary arrangement and back home again can easily take more than an hour per day which would translate into at least 5 hours per week. Some mothers may include these transportation time gaps as secondary arrangements where the "child cares for self." Others, however, may ignore these time periods, hence the resulting hourly differences which are noted in table E and figure 1.

ORGANIZED CHILD CARE FACILITIES

The term organized child care facilities used in this report refers to day/group care centers and nursery/preschools. A day/group care center must be an incorporated business and licensed to care for children and may be run by a government agency, a business enterprise, or a religious or a free-standing charitable organization. A day care center may be located in a private home. If a person is licensed to care for children in his or her own home but does not claim to be a business enterprise or day care center, this arrangement is categorized as care provided by a "nonrelative in another home." Often, this provider is called a "family day-care provider."

Nursery schools or preschools are used to describe formal organizations which provide an educational experience for children before they are old enough to enter kindergarten or grade school. These organizations include instruction as an important and integral phase of their program of child care. Head Start programs are included in this category.

Characteristics of users of organized child care. In fall 1988, 17 percent (1,575,000) of children under 5 years old of employed women were in day/group care centers while another 9 percent (875,000) were enrolled in nursery/preschool programs (table B). The majority (56 percent) of preschoolers using organized child care facilities were 3 and 4 years old; 11 percent were under 1 year of age and 32 percent were either 1 or 2 years old.

Table 2 shows that the use of organized child care arrangements was higher among women employed full time (31 percent) than among women employed part time (17 percent). Twenty-seven percent of the primary child care arrangements for the children of part-time working women were provided by the children's fathers, compared to only 8 percent for mothers employed full time, which partly accounts for their low usage of organized child care facilities.

The economic status of the family is also related to the use of organized child care facilities as the primary child care arrangement. Figure 2 shows that children of employed mothers whose family income exceeded $4,500 per month (over $54,000 per year) were more likely to be using organized child care facilities (31 percent) than were children living in families (20 percent) with monthly incomes less than $1,500 per month (less than $18,000 per year).

Also shown in figure 2 is the utilization of organized child care facilities by the poverty level of the children's families. For children living in families below the poverty level, approximately 21 percent used organized child care facilities as the primary child care arrangement while their mothers were at work. (Families with employed mothers with children under 15 years of age living in poverty reported an average family income of $880 per month in 1988). For children living in families categorized as being above the poverty level, 26 percent of the children used organized child care facilities.

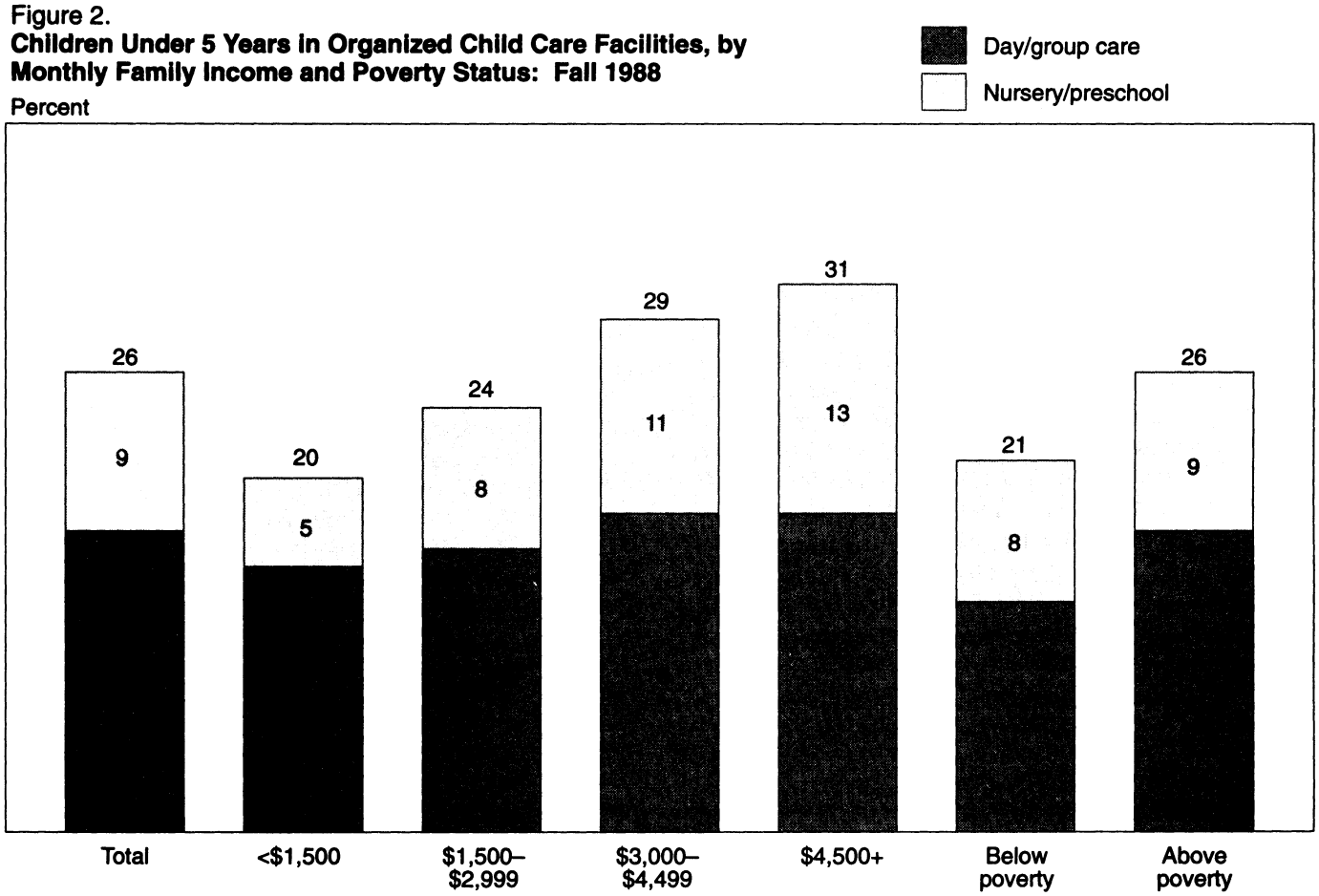
What are the other differences in the types of arrangements used by families in different economic groups (table 2)? Children living in poverty in fall 1988 depended more on care given in their own home, provided by grandparents and other relatives (16 percent), than did children who were not poor (7 percent). On the other hand, children living in families that were not poor relied more on care by family day-care providers than did children living in poverty.

Large differences in the use of organized child care facilities are also noted by the educational attainment level of the mother (table 2). Children whose mothers had completed 4 or more years of college used organized child care facilities twice as often (34 percent) as did children whose mothers failed to complete high school (17 percent). It should be noted that these variations in child are arrangements may reflect the financial abilities of the families in different educational categories.

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS BY PARENTS' WORK SCHEDULES

Overview. Of the 30.3 million children under 15 years of age of employed women, 19 million (63 percent) had mothers who worked a day shift at their principal job

Figure 2.
Children Under 5 Years in Organized Child Care Facilities, by Monthly Family Income and Poverty Status: Fall 1988



Source: Table 2.

(table 10). In instances where the mother had two or more jobs, shift-work status was shown in this report only for the principal job (8.3 percent of employed mothers with children under 15 years old held two or more jobs). Categories of shift work in this report were derived from questions in the survey concerning the time of day work usually began and ended and the regularity of the stated time schedule (appendix F, items 1e, 1f, and 1g).[7]

Day shift is defined in this report as a work schedule where at least one-half of the hours worked by the respondent fell between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on a regular daytime basis. All other work schedules outside the 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. core period, including all evening/night, irregular, rotating, or split day/night shifts, were classified as non-day work shifts (table 14). This definition resulted in 12 million respondents being classified as being regular daytime workers. In addition, table 14 shows that there were an another 1.9 million women who worked at least half of their hours in the 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. period, but described their schedule as not being a regular daytime shift. These women, and their children, were not included in the day shift categories shown elsewhere in this report. An unknown proportion of these women may comprise women working flex-time schedules which primarily occur during the day but which have no regularly scheduled hours.

Regardless of the child's age, no difference was found in the proportion of children whose mothers worked day or non-day shifts: about 63 percent worked day shifts while 37 percent worked non-day shifts. However, large differences were noted in the work schedules of mothers by their full-time/part-time employment status. Seventy-five percent of children whose mothers were employed full time worked a day shift at their principal job compared to only 39 percent for mothers who were employed part time (table 10). What are some of the reasons women give for choosing their particular type of work shift?

[7]Differences in the estimates of the number of workers in day/non-day shifts derived from the SIPP shown in this report compared to other analyses based on the May 1985 Current Population Survey result from: (1) reference period of the survey; (2) the time frame to which the term "usual" hours worked refers to; and (3) the wording of the questionnaires (H.B. Presser, "Can We Make Time for Children? The Economy, Work Schedules, and Child Care," **Demography**, Vol. 26, No. 4 (November 1989), pp. 523-543).

Reasons for choosing shift work. Overall 67 percent of women answered that job requirements determined the type of shift they worked (table F). Another 15 percent mentioned that the main reason for choosing the shift they worked in was to secure better child care arrangements for their children, while 6 percent said that seeking better arrangements for the care of other members of their family was their most important reason for choosing that work shift.

Only one-half of women working part time said that their job requirements determined their work shift compared to three-quarters of women working full time. However, child care issues played a more important role in choosing the type of shift among part-time workers. Twenty-four percent of women working part time cited the need for better child care arrangements as the main reason for choosing the type of work shift compared to 11 percent of women working full time.

The need for better child care arrangements was more important in choosing the type of work shift among women with preschool-age children (19 percent) than among women with grade-school-age children (13 percent). Women with preschoolers who worked part time in a non-day shift were particularly concerned with the need for better child care arrangements, as 31 percent cited this as their main reason for choosing the particular type of shift.

The data indicate that child care arrangements during non-day hours were needed by approximately 6.9 million employed women with children under 15 years old in fall 1988. About 1.4 million of them stated that the need for better child care arrangements was the primary reason for choosing this type of work schedule. This analysis suggests that child care issues play a significant role in the choice of daily work schedules of women.

Table F. **Main Reason Given by Employed Mothers With Children Under 15 Years for Chosing Type of Work Shift of Principal Job: Fall 1988**

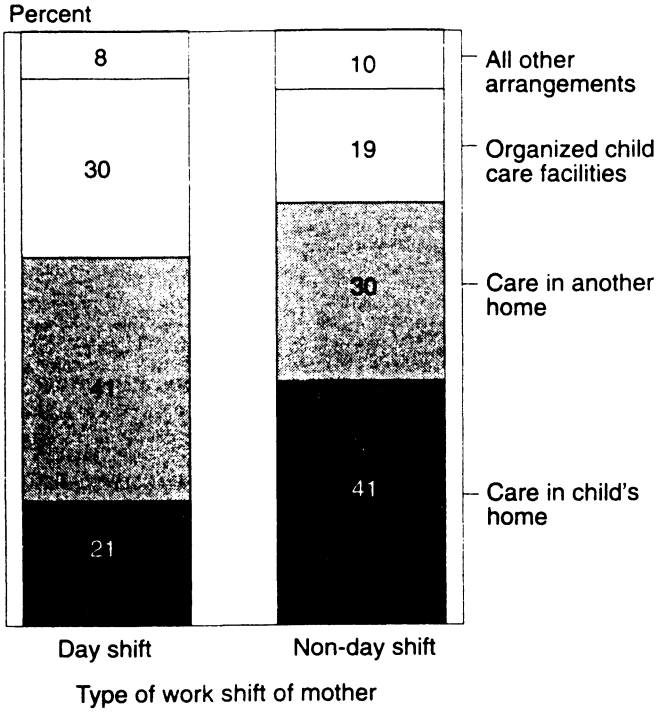
(Percent distribution. Numbers in thousands)

Employment status, type of shift, and age of youngest child	Number	Reasons for choosing work shift				
		Total	Required by job	Child care arrangements	Other family care arrangements	All other reasons
Total	18,902	100.0	66.8	15.2	5.5	12.5
Employed full time	12,697	100.0	74.9	11.2	3.7	10.2
Day shift	9,568	100.0	77.8	9.8	3.5	8.9
Not a day shift	3,129	100.0	66.0	15.4	4.1	14.5
Employed part time	6,204	100.0	50.3	23.6	9.4	16.7
Day shift	2,441	100.0	54.2	21.6	8.8	15.4
Not a day shift	3,763	100.0	47.8	24.8	9.7	17.7
Under 5 Years	8,103	100.0	64.6	18.5	5.0	11.9
Employed full time	5,302	100.0	73.9	13.3	3.2	9.6
Day shift	3,983	100.0	76.9	11.2	2.7	9.2
Not a day shift	1,319	100.0	64.9	19.7	4.7	10.7
Employed part time	2,801	100.0	47.1	28.4	8.6	15.9
Day shift	1,045	100.0	56.7	24.8	5.8	12.7
Not a day shift	1,756	100.0	41.4	30.5	10.2	17.9
5 to 14 Years	10,798	100.0	68.5	12.8	5.9	12.8
Employed full time	7,396	100.0	75.6	9.6	4.0	10.8
Day shift	5,585	100.0	78.5	8.8	4.1	8.6
Not a day shift	1,811	100.0	66.7	12.3	2.5	18.5
Employed part time	3,403	100.0	53.0	19.6	10.2	17.2
Day shift	1,397	100.0	52.3	19.3	11.2	17.2
Not a day shift	2,006	100.0	53.4	19.8	9.3	17.5

Child care arrangements by type of work shift. Child care arrangements were mentioned more often by non-day shift workers as important reasons in choosing their schedule: do their arrangements reflect these concerns?

The answer is yes. Major differences are noted in the child care arrangements used by women according to the time of the day they worked (table 10). Among women with preschoolers who worked a day shift at their principal job, 41 percent had their children cared for in another home compared to 30 percent for women who worked in a non-day shift (figure 3).

Figure 3.
Child Care Arrangements for Children Under 5 Years, by Shift-Work Status of Employed Mothers: Fall 1988



Source: Table 10.

Use of organized child care facilities was also more prevalent among women working in day shifts accounting 30 percent of all child care arrangements. Since organized child care facilities often may not be available during evenings or weekends, women working non-day shifts used these facilities less frequently, amounting to 19 percent of all child care arrangements.

Working non-day rather than day shifts may offer more opportunities for women with preschoolers to provide care for their child at home, especially by the child's father. Overall, 41 percent of the pre-school age children of women working non-day shifts were cared for in their own home compared to 21 percent of the children of women working day shifts. In-home child care of preschoolers by fathers accounted for 26 percent of all arrangements used by women working non-day shifts compared to only 8 percent used by women working day shifts (table 10). In addition, child care provided by mothers while at work was also more frequently mentioned among women working non-day shifts than day shifts.

Among women with grade-school-age children working more traditional day shifts, 83 percent of the children were in school most of the time their mothers were working (table 10). Even among women working non-day shifts, 63 percent still reported that their children were in the school most of the time they were at work. The second most frequently used arrangement among non-day shift workers with grade-school-age children was care provided in the child's home (23 percent) principally by the child's father.

Child care arrangements by dual-employed married couples. Families often encounter difficulties in securing child care arrangements for their children if both parents are working the same hours during the day. In fall 1988, there were 13.7 million families with children under 15 years of age where both mother and father were employed (table G). Almost one-half (6.6 million) had both the husband and wife working day shifts with the majority of these couples (5 million) working full-time schedules during the day. Overall, 36 percent of all dual-employed married-couple families with children under 15 had both the husband and wife working full time in day shifts.

How do families who work daytime versus nighttime schedules cope with the problems of securing child care arrangements when both parents are at work? In circumstances where both parents work during the day, only 16 percent of 3.4 million preschoolers were cared for in their own home (table 11, column 2). In contrast, if both parents worked non-day shifts (column 5), 44 percent of these 0.8 million children were cared for in their own home. Among families where the parents work "split-shifts" (i.e., where one parent works a day shift and the other a non-day shift, columns 3 and 4), the proportion of children cared for in their own home is greater than when both parents work a day shift. It is likely that these families take advantage of the potential of having one parent at home to provide care for their child while the other is working.

With the exception of dual-employed families where both husband and wife work day shifts, the father is the principal provider of the in-home child care for preschoolers (figure 4). A study by Harriet Presser also concluded that "Reliance on spouses for child care when dual-earner couples are employed is much higher when respondents work non-days rather than days."[8]

Irrespective of the shift work or employment status (full/part time) of the parents, more than 50 percent of the grade-school-age children were in school most of their time their mothers were working. In-home care for these older children, however, ranged from 4 percent when both parents worked day shifts to about 25 percent when the mother worked a non-day shift, regardless of the father's work schedule (table 11).

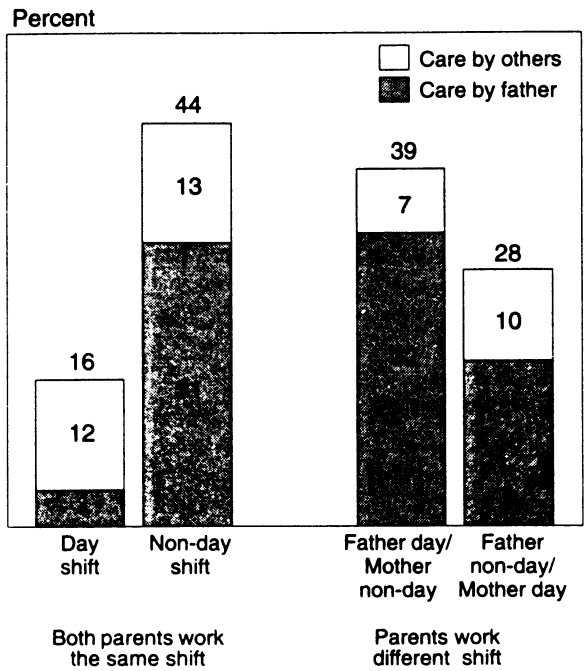
[8]H.B. Presser, "Shift Work and Child Care Among Young Dual-Earner American Parents," **Journal of Marriage and the Family,** Vol. 50 (February 1988), pp. 133-148.

Table G. **Number of Dual-Employed Married Couples with Children Under 15 Years, by Type of Work Shift of Their Principal Job: Fall 1988**

(In thousands)

Type of work shift of mother, and age of youngest child	Total	Type of work shift of father			
		Employed full time		Employed part time	
		Day shift	Not a day shift	Day shift	Not a day shift
Total	13,691	9,993	2,928	207	564
Employed full time	8,675	6,376	1,848	113	338
Day shift	6,657	4,994	1,293	100	270
Not a day shift	2,018	1,382	555	13	68
Employed part time	5,015	3,616	1,080	95	226
Day shift	2,010	1,456	439	48	68
Not a day shift	3,005	2,160	641	47	158
Under 5 Years	6,323	4,454	1,490	86	293
Employed full time	4,025	2,873	929	41	183
Day shift	3,084	2,204	690	38	152
Not a day shift	941	669	239	3	30
Employed part time	2,298	1,581	561	45	111
Day shift	886	610	221	17	38
Not a day shift	1,412	971	340	28	73
5 to 14 Years	7,368	5,539	1,438	121	270
Employed full time	4,651	3,504	920	71	155
Day shift	3,574	2,790	604	62	118
Not a day shift	1,077	714	316	9	38
Employed part time	2,718	2,035	519	49	115
Day shift	1,125	846	218	31	30
Not a day shift	1,593	1,188	300	19	85

Figure 4.
Percent of Children Under 5 Years Cared for in Their Own Home, by Shift-Work Status of Parents: Fall 1988



Source: Table 11.

WORK DISRUPTIONS FROM FAILURES IN CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Time lost from work: Who loses? Some of the principal factors affecting a family's choice of child care arrangements include the quality and costs of the arrangements, proximity to work and home, and the reliability of child care provider during the parent's working hours. The last factor is also of concern to the employer since it directly affects the rate of absenteeism resulting from a failure in a child care arrangement.

Employed women were asked about the time they or their husbands lost from work during the reference month because the person who usually cared for their child (or children) was not available. The interviewer was instructed to include lost time from work resulting from a disruption if the respondent had to make an alternative child care arrangement. Child care arrangement failures could result from the provider not being available because of sickness, an emergency, a prior commitment, or some other reason. Sickness on the part of the child may have also been included if the usual provider was unable to care for the child and the parent had to stay home with the child or bring the child to the doctor's office.

Of the 19 million employed women with children under 15 years, 4.4 percent reported that they lost time

from work in the last month as a result of a failure in a child care arrangement (table 5). No differences were noted in the incidence of time lost from work by the mother's marital status. This may have been because lost time from work was overwhelmingly the responsibility of the mother in the case of married women (table H). Of the 14 million employed married women with children under 15 years old, 3.7 percent reported that they alone lost time from work last month because of a failure in a child care arrangement (table H). In only 0.7 percent of the cases did only the husbands lose time from work if there was a failure in a child care arrangement.

Table H. **Time Lost From Work Due to Failures in Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1988**

(Numbers in thousands)

Marital status, type of work shift, and employment status of the woman	Number of women	Percent losing time-		
		Woman only	Wife and husband	Husband only
MARRIED, HUSBAND PRESENT				
Total	14,262	3.7	0.6	0.7
Day shift	9,033	3.9	0.7	0.8
Employed full time	6,928	3.7	0.9	0.9
Employed part time	2,105	4.5	0.2	0.6
Not a day shift	5,229	3.5	0.3	0.6
Employed full time	2,021	3.5	0.7	0.6
Employed part time	3,208	3.5	0.1	0.6
ALL OTHER MARITAL STATUSES[1]				
Total	4,640	4.4	(X)	(X)
Day shift	2,977	4.5	(X)	(X)
Employed full time	2,577	4.6	(X)	(X)
Employed part time	400	4.4	(X)	(X)
Not a day shift	1,663	4.2	(X)	(X)
Employed full time	1,025	4.5	(X)	(X)
Employed part time	638	3.8	(X)	(X)

X Not applicable.

[1]Includes married, husband absent (including separated), widowed, divorced, and never-married women.

Time lost from work by child's age and arrangement. Estimates of child care related work disruptions by the age of the youngest child in the family are shown in figure 5. Work disruptions from failures in child care arrangements affected 6.0 percent of the 1.5 million employed women with infants. Lost time from work was least among women whose youngest child was 12 or more years old (1.3 percent).

In addition, women who placed their children in an organized child care facility experienced slightly more work disruptions (5.1 percent) than if they were able to provide for care in their own home (2.4 percent, table 5). Children's exposure to health risks such as contact with other sick children may be more prevalent in child care centers than in home-based care and could result in lost time from work on the part of the mother[9].

CHANGES IN CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

This report so far has examined how families care for their children on a daily basis while mom is at work and the frequency of disruptions in the work schedule because of failures in child care arrangements. Now we will describe the stability of different child care arrangements and which arrangements change most often.

Frequency of change. Of the 19 million employed mothers with children under 15 years of age, 3 million, or about one-sixth, reported that they had changed their child's care arrangement in the 4 months prior to their interview (table 5). Only 8 percent of women whose youngest child was 12 to 14 years old reported changing arrangements, about one-half the rate of mothers with younger children.

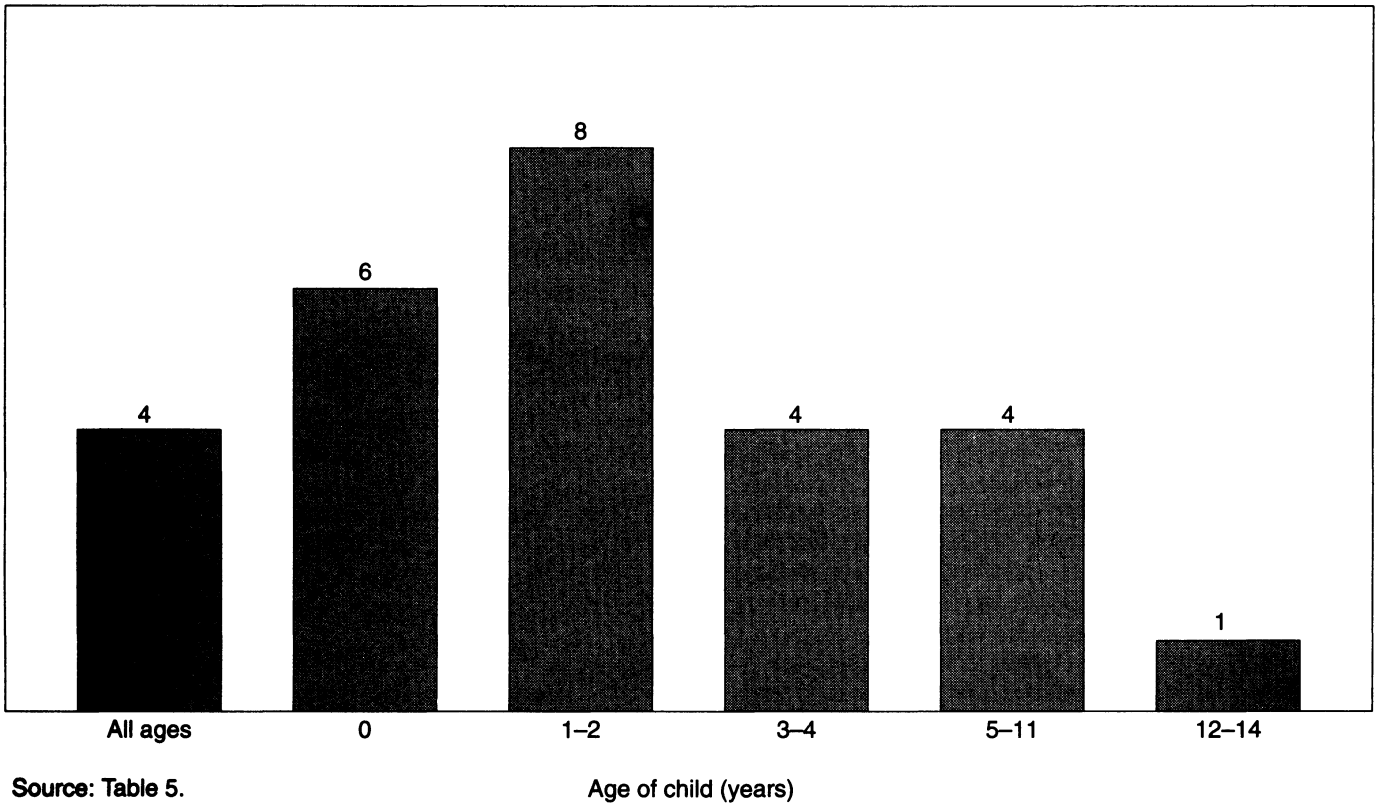
Also noted was the higher frequency of changes in arrangements among women who worked day shifts (17 percent) than non-day shifts (13 percent). It should be noted that the frequency of change reported in the survey may be different if the questions asked were referenced only for the school year when disruptions in arrangements due to school closings in the summer would be absent. The retrospective 4-month period in this report which covers the frequency of change questions, however, includes a time span for some respondents when schools were closed over the summer and then reopened in the fall.

Changes among families with only children. Because frequency of change questions were not asked for each individual child in the family, comparisons of frequency of change for specific child care arrangements can only be made for families with one child. In addition, the survey did not inquire about the arrangements used in the prior 4 months but only if a change had occurred in arrangements. These data, then, should not be interpreted as transition probabilities between arrangements since the prior arrangement was not known.

Children cared for in their own home experienced relatively few changes in arrangements (table 5). Only 7 percent of children cared for in their own home had changed arrangements in the last 4 months compared to 18 percent when children were cared for in someone else's home. Women who were currently using family day care providers (care in a nonrelative's home) reported more changes in arrangements in the last 4 months than women who were currently using in-home care.

[9]H.B. Presser, "Place of Child Care and Medicated Respiratory Illness Among Young American Children, "**Journal of Marriage and the Family,** Vol. 50 (November 1988), pp. 995-1005.

Figure 5.
Employed Mothers Losing Time from Work due to Failures in Child Care Arrangements, by Age of Youngest Child: Fall 1988



Source: Table 5.

Twenty-five percent of women who used family day-care providers reported changing their arrangements in the last 4 months. If the current child care arrangement was provided by a grandparent in the grandparent's home, then only 8 percent of women changed their child's arrangement, suggesting more stability in arrangements among relatives than nonrelatives.

About 16 percent of women who were currently using organized child care facilities changed arrangements in the last 4 months (table 5). It is likely, however, that many of these centers and nursery schools were closed in the summer months causing the mother to have sought an alternative arrangement at some time in the last 4 months. About twice as many mothers using nursery schools changed arrangements in this period as did mothers who used day care centers.

Reasons for change. The principal reason for changing child care arrangements given by employed women in the survey was due to changes in the child's school enrollment. About one-half of all reasons given for changing arrangements fell in this category. This reason was especially pronounced for grade-school-age children, reaching about two-thirds of all women whose youngest child was of grade-school age (table I).

The second most frequently specified reason was because of a change in the mothers employment or school schedule (14 percent). Reasons of availability or reliability of child care arrangements each accounted for 9 percent of the reasons given by the mothers, more so for preschoolers than for children 12 to 14 years old. Surprisingly, concerns for child care costs were rather low (3 percent) on the list of reasons for changing child care arrangements.

FAMILY EXPENDITURES ON CHILD CARE

Overview. Weekly expenses for child care arrangements shown in this section refer to the overall expenditures on child care that families make for all of their children under 15 years of age.[10] The questions on child care expenses were asked of parents only if any of their three youngest children under age 15 were cared for by a grandparent, other relative or a nonrelative, or if any

[10]Costs were also asked of women enrolled in school, unemployed women, and male guardians of children. The child care expenditures for these groups were very small relative to the total expenses for child care for families where mother was employed. Unless otherwise specified, child care costs shown in this report refer only to families where the mother was employed.

Table I. **Reasons for Changes in Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1988**

(Numbers in thousands. Data shown are limited to mothers who changed an arrangement in the last 4 months. Percentages total to more than 100.0 because of multiple answers)

Reasons for changes in child care arrangement	Total	Age of children					Mother employed		Type of shift	
		Less than 1 year	1 and 2 years	3 and 4 years	5 to 11 years	12 to 14 years	Full time	Part time	Day shift	Not a day shift
Number of mothers	2,960	244	608	482	1,391	235	2,019	941	2,072	888
Child's school arrangement	48.9	7.5	26.4	40.4	64.8	73.4	49.6	47.3	50.4	45.5
Mother's job or school sched ule	14.2	17.8	17.7	16.9	12.1	8.4	12.3	18.3	13.4	16.1
Cost	2.5	7.6	1.6	3.1	2.2	-	2.3	3.0	2.8	1.8
Availability or hours of care provider	8.9	11.6	15.1	10.6	6.1	3.2	9.9	6.8	8.9	9.0
Reliability of care provider/ quality or care provided	8.5	17.8	13.7	13.3	3.4	5.7	9.1	7.2	9.3	6.7
Location or accessibility to care provider	4.0	6.4	6.0	5.9	2.3	2.2	3.9	4.3	4.6	2.6
Found better/less expensive/ more convenient provider	5.2	11.4	7.2	8.4	2.9	-	5.1	5.2	5.4	4.7
All other reasons	23.6	37.2	28.3	27.5	18.5	19.4	23.9	22.9	21.7	28.0

- Represents zero.

children were placed in day/group care centers, nursery/preschools or before/after school-based activities. Excluded were women who used only family members (i.e., child's father or siblings) or only kindergartens /grade schools, or if the child cared for himself or herself. Therefore, cash transfers to family members or payments for schooling were not included in child care costs.

In previous surveys only one question was asked to obtain information on the aggregate cost of child care for all children in the household. However, in the 1988 survey, specific questions on child care costs were asked individually for each child regarding both primary and secondary arrangements. Comparisons of 1988 child care costs with prior surveys should be made with these differences in survey design in mind.

Of the 18.8 million employed women with children under 15 years old in fall 1988, 40 percent (7.5 million) reported that they made a cash (money) payment for child care services for at least one of their children (table 6), up from 33 percent in 1987[11]. Average child care costs of $54 per week per family were paid by the families of employed women who reported such payments, amounting to an estimated annual expenditure of 21.1 billion dollars[12]. The average monthly family income of women who paid for child care services was $3,460 of which $1,396 (±$48) of this amount was their own personal income. Childcare payments represented about 6.8 percent of their total family income, not different from the 1987 estimate of 6.6 percent. We do not know what proportion of these child care expenditures were paid by the mother out of her own personal income.

[11]The 1987 estimates reported are from Current Population Reports, Series P-70, No. 20. op.cit., table 7B.

[12]The total cost of child care for 1988 for all families, including those with mothers enrolled in school or unemployed and with male guardians of children amounted to $22.5 billion (derived from table 6).

Table J shows child care costs estimated from four SIPP surveys conducted between winter 1984-85 and fall 1988. Since the first survey in winter 1984-85, child care costs have increased from $40.30 to $54.00 per week. However, $5.5 of this increase was the result of inflation.

Table J. **Weekly Cost of Child Care Per Family With Children Under 15 Years: Selected Periods, 1984 to 1988**

(Limited to families with employed mothers who paid cash for child care arrangements for any of their children)

Period	Current dollars		Constant dollars	
	Mean	Standard error	Mean	Standard error
Sept. to Dec. 1988	$54.0	$1.2	$54.0	$1.2
Sept. to Nov. 1987	48.5	1.8	50.6	1.9
Sept. to Nov. 1986	44.3	1.4	48.3	1.5
Dec. 1984 to March 1985	40.3	1.1	45.8	1.3

Note: Constant dollar estimates were derived by using the consumer price index for all urban consumers for the specified periods from the Monthly Labor Review published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Age of children. For women with preschool-age children, 68 percent made cash payments for the care of their children in fall 1988, compared to 19 percent for women whose youngest child was 5 years old and over (table 6). Women with preschoolers also paid more per week ($59) and spent a higher proportion of their monthly family income on child care (7 percent) than did women whose youngest child was 5 to 14 years old ($40 per week for child care expenses and 5 percent of family income on child care).

Women with three or more children paid an average of $11 more per week for child care than did women

who had only one child. Families with three or more children spent 7 percent of their monthly family income on child care compared to 6 percent for families with only one child in the household. It is likely that larger families had more older children of school age for which child care costs are less; larger families, then, do not necessarily result in higher or even comparable average child care costs per child. Data in table 6 also show that while married women spent more per week on child care ($56) than did unmarried women ($47), a smaller proportion of their monthly family income was spent on child care services (6 percent) than that of unmarried women (10 percent).

Poverty and Income. About 8 percent of employed women (1.6 million) with children under 15 years old were living in poverty (table 6). Thirty percent of women living in poverty reported paying for child care services compared to 41 percent of women living above the poverty level. Women in poverty paid an average of $42 per week while women who were living in households above poverty level paid an average of $55 per week (figure 6). However, among women making child care payments, those in poverty spent a considerably higher proportion of their monthly family income on child care, 21 percent, compared to 7 percent among women living in families that were not in poverty (figure 7). The estimated average monthly family income of the women in the survey who were living in poverty and paying for child care was $879 per month compared to $3,633 per month for women living in families above the poverty line.

Women living in families with low monthly incomes also spent a major portion of their income on child care. Among women making child care payments, those in families whose monthly income was less than $1,500 per month spent 18 percent of their income on child care (table 6). At the other end of the income scale, families whose income was $4,500 and over per month spent only 5 percent of their family income on child care services. These disparities in child care expenditures as a percent of family income and poverty status were also noted in a report based on the 1990 National Child Care Survey.[13]

Regional differences. Table 6 shows that child care costs were about $14 per week higher in the Northeast ($64) than in the South ($50). This pattern of regional differences was also found in the 1986 and 1987 SIPP surveys.[14] Families in the Northeast reported that their child care expenditures made up about 8 percent of their monthly family income compared to 7 percent for families in the South.

[13]B. Willer, S.L. Hofferth, **et. al., The Demand and Supply of Child Care in 1990** (National Association for the Education of Young Children: Washington, D.C. 1991).

[14]Current Population Reports, Series P-70, No. 20, **op.cit.**, p. 12.

Comparison of SIPP and Internal Revenue Service estimates. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in 1988 approved as tax credits child care costs for dependent children under 15 years of age of taxpayers while they were working or looking for work.[15] Qualified expenses include amounts paid for household services and care of the taxpayer's dependent child while he/she was at work or looking for work. Expenditures for child care related services outside of the child's home also qualified for the child care credit.

The maximum amount of these expenses to which the credit could be applied was the lesser of earned income or $2,400 for one qualifying child and the lesser of earned income or $4,800 for two or more children. The credit varied between 30 percent of these expenses for taxpayers with a adjusted gross income of $10,000 or less and 20 percent for taxpayers with an adjusted gross income of $28,000 or more. There are many more restrictions in claiming child care credits (e.g., exclusion of child care expenses while taxpayer is off from work because of illness or cost of sending child to an overnight camp) which may underestimate the total amount of money actually paid for child care.

The latest available information for tax year 1988 from the IRS indicates that $3.8 billion of tax credits were filed on 9 million individual tax returns.[16] Comparative data from the SIPP for fall 1988 show that 7.5 million employed women had at least one child under 15 years old and paid an estimated $21.1 billion for child care arrangements in 1988 (table 6). The following example indicates the differences between the actual cost of child care incurred and the amount of child care credits allowed to families by the IRS.

If a family paid $70 per week for the care of one child, their total child care costs for the year would be $3,640. If their adjusted gross income was over $28,000[17] the maximum amount of child credit they are allowed to claim would be $480 (20 percent of $2,400). This example illustrates that while families with working parents paid an estimated $21 billion for child care in 1988, only $3.8 billion was credited to these families by the IRS.

COSTS OF INDIVIDUAL CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

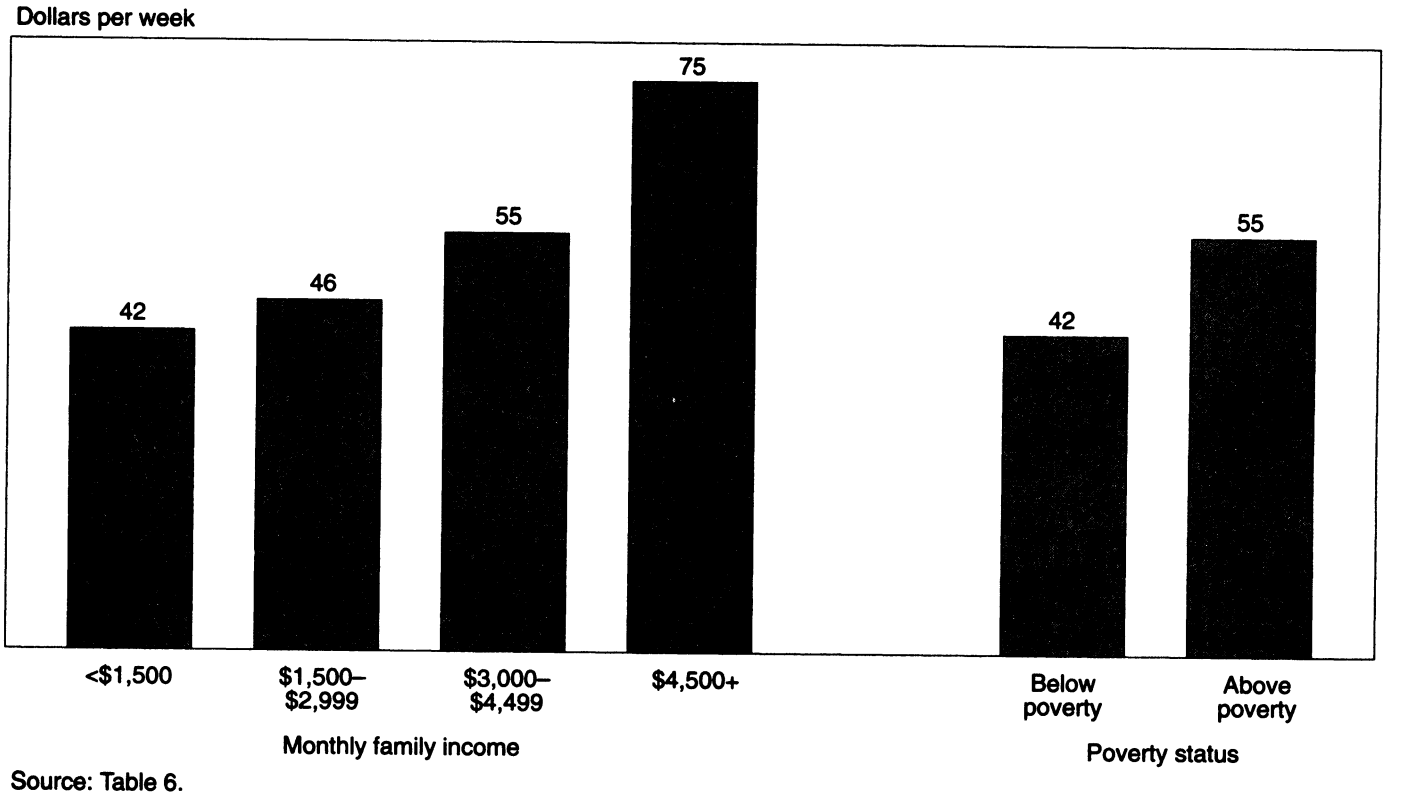
The data shown so far in this report on child care expenditures have focused on the number of families paying for child care arrangements. When estimating

[15]Subsequent changes to the IRS codes have limited credits to children under 13 years old. More stringent provision in the tax forms now require the claimant to list the child's care provider's name, address, and social security or taxpayer identification number.

[16]Internal Revenue Service, "Individual Income Tax Returns, 1988," Statistics of the Income Division of the Internal Revenue Service, Publication No. 1304 (September 1991), table 1.4.

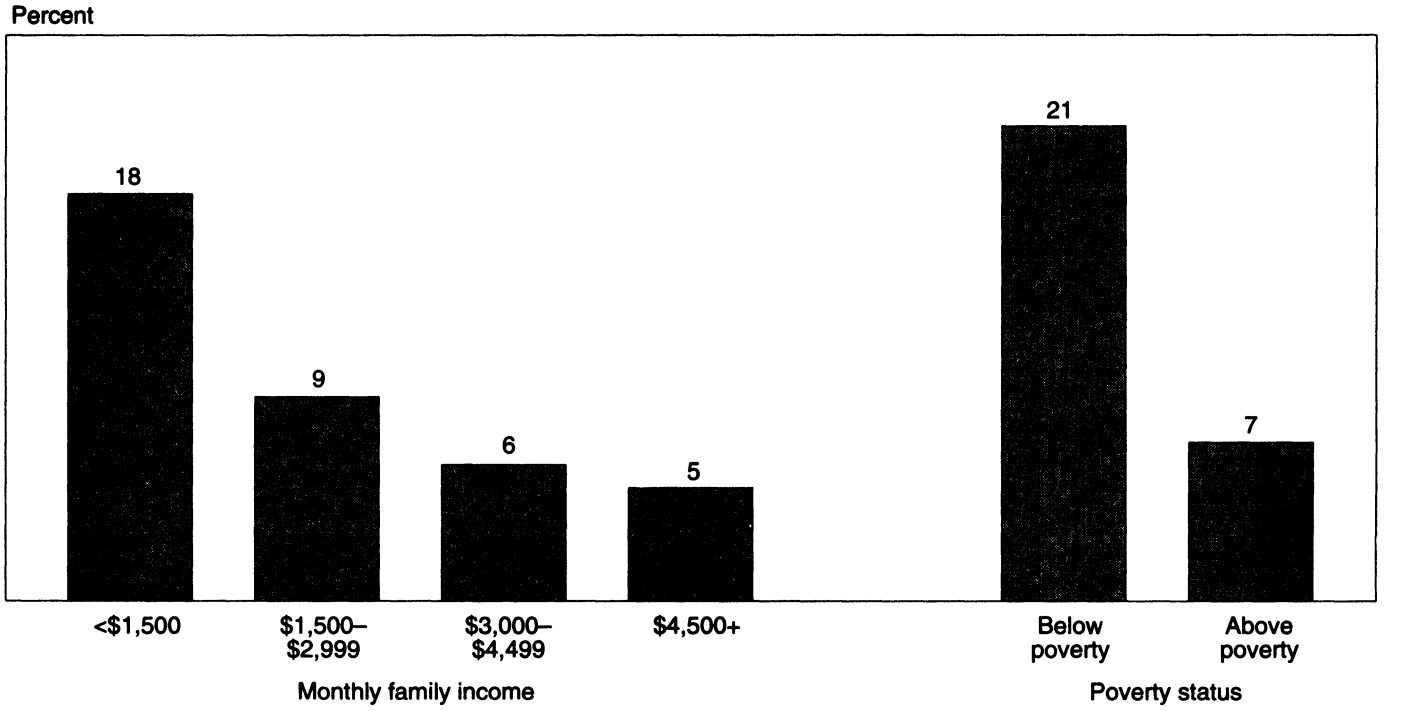
[17]The median family income of all married-couple families with a wife in the paid labor force in 1988 was $42,709 (Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 174, table 13).

Figure 6.
Average Weekly Cost of Child Care: Fall 1988



Source: Table 6.

Figure 7.
Percent of Monthly Family Income Spent on Child Care: Fall 1988



Source: Table 6.

the cost of individual arrangements, however, the unit of analysis becomes the arrangement itself rather than the number of children in the arrangement. For example, a family with three children may use a nursery school for the youngest child and pay a neighbor for after school care for the two older children. In this case there are only two types of paid arrangements (day care center and a neighbor) even though there are three children using the arrangements. In this example, the arrangement used only for the youngest child will be described as a "separate arrangement" while the arrangement used for the two older children by the neighbor will be described as a "shared arrangement."

Separate and shared arrangements. In fall 1988, 30 million children under 15 years of age of employed women used almost 42 million child care arrangements or 1.4 arrangements for each child. Of these 42 million arrangements, 31 million required no cash payments as over one-half of these were composed of kindergarten /grade school arrangements (table 7). Cash payments were required at least 90 percent of the time when family day-care providers or organized child care arrangements were used. Cash payments for arrangements were less frequently made when grandparents or other relatives were used.

Of the 11 million arrangements for which cash payments were made, 6.7 million children were in separate arrangements and another 4.4 million children were in shared arrangements for two or more siblings (table 7). Shared arrangements were more frequently used when care was provided for children in their own home (64 percent) than in another home (43 percent) or in organized child care facilities (25 percent). Shared arrangements were more frequently used when the youngest sibling was of grade-school-age (48 percent) than preschool age (34 percent). However, for both ages approximately one-half of all shared arrangements occurred in the home of the provider.

For purposes of computing child care costs, the 4.4 million children in shared arrangements shown in table 7 were further grouped to reflect the 2 million actual payments made for these arrangements (table K). On average, 2.2 children shared each paid arrangement. Child care costs per hour per child for the 6.7 million separately paid arrangements was $2.87 compared to $2.01 for the 2 million arrangement groups where child care services were shared.

Child care costs for separate arrangements. Women who have a failure in a child care arrangement may need to pay a higher premium for emergency care for a brief period of time. In addition, child care providers who may be willing to work for only a few hours per week may demand higher pay per hour to meet some minimum expenses or wage requirements on their part. Child care centers may also structure their pricing differently for daily users of their facilities as compared to families who contract for long term enrollment of their child.

Among families making separate payments for child care arrangements (table K), those using 10 or more

Table K. **Hourly Child Care Costs for Children of Employed Mothers, by Hours of Child Care Used Per Week: Fall 1988**

(Numbers of arrangements in thousands)

Age of child and hours used per week	Payments made separately			Payments shared with others		
	Number of arrangements	Cost per hour		Number of arrangements groups	Cost per hour	
		Mean[1]	Standard error		Mean[1]	Standard error
ALL CHILDREN						
Total	6,710	$2.87	$0.12	1,962	$2.01	$0.18
Less than 10 hours	1,714	6.06	0.39	101	(B)	(B)
10 or more hours	4,995	1.78	0.05	1,861	1.70	0.10
CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS[2]						
Total	4,559	$2.62	$0.14	1,411	$1.77	$0.14
Less than 10 hours	868	6.49	0.55	41	(B)	(B)
10 or more hours	3,691	1.71	0.06	1,371	1.71	0.13
CHILDREN 5 to 14 YEARS[2]						
Total	2,150	$3.41	$0.25	550	$2.61	$0.57
Less than 10 hours	846	5.61	0.53	60	(B)	(B)
10 or more hours	1,301	1.98	0.10	490	1.67	0.13

B Base less than 200,000.
[1] Average individual costs per hour per child for each arrangement.
[2]For shared arrangements, age refers to age of youngest child in arrangement.

hours of child care per week made lower hourly payments ($1.78) than those using less than 10 hours of child care ($6.06). On average, families using child care for less than 10 hours a week used these arrangements for little more than one hour per weekday (5.8 hours week) and paid $31 per week.[18]

When parents used family day-care providers for less than 10 hours a week (5.7 hours on average), they paid $5.46 per hour for this arrangement. In comparison, parents who used family day-care providers for more than 10 hours per week (30.4 hours on average) paid $1.63 per hour (table 8). Large differences in expenditures by hourly usage of day/group care centers were also found: women who used this arrangement for less than 10 hours per week paid $8.00 an hour vs. $1.85 an hour when used more than 10 hours per week (table 8). The above examples indicate that families who use child care services for less than 10 hours a week may pay unusually high hourly child care costs which are atypical of persons using arrangements most of the day throughout the week.

Child care costs for shared arrangements. In an attempt to estimate typical child care costs of families who use separate and shared arrangements for more than a couple of hours a day, table L in this report shows the hourly costs of child care for families who used arrangements for at least 10 hours per week. These criteria were met by about 5 million arrangements for which payments are made separately and for 1.9 million arrangement groups for which payments are shared (table K).

[18]Data discussed in this section for detailed child care arrangements used less than 10 hours per week are from unpublished table not shown in this report.

Table L. **Hourly Child Care Costs for Children of Employed Mothers, by Type of Child Care Arrangement: Fall 1988**

(Limted to arrangements used for 10 or more hours per week)

Age of child and type of arrangement	Payment made separately		Payment shared with others	
	Mean	Standard error	Mean	Standard error
ALL CHILDREN				
Total[1]	$1.78	$0.05	$1.70	$0.10
By relative	1.38	0.09	0.99	0.13
Grandparent	1.42	0.15	1.06	0.17
Other relative	1.34	0.12	(B)	(B)
By nonrelative	1.76	0.08	1.78	0.14
In child's home	2.61	0.39	2.35	0.31
In another home	1.63	0.06	1.52	0.14
Organized child care facilities	1.91	0.09	1.95	0.23
Day/group care	1.85	0.12	1.95	0.26
Nursery/preschool	2.02	0.14	(B)	(B)
CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS[2]				
Total	$1.71	$0.06	$1.71	$0.13
By relative	1.26	0.09	0.93	0.14
Grandparent	1.19	0.15	(B)	(B)
Other relative	1.32	0.12	(B)	(B)
By nonrelative	1.75	0.10	1.89	0.19
In child's home	(B)	(B)	2.69	0.46
In another home	1.59	0.08	1.59	0.19
Organized child care facilities	1.83	0.10	1.86	0.26
Day/group care	1.70	0.13	1.84	0.28
Nursery/preschool	2.07	0.15	(B)	(B)
CHILDREN 5 to 14 YEARS[2]				
Total[1]	$1.98	$0.10	$1.67	$0.13
By relative	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
Grandparent	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
Other relative	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
By nonrelative	1.81	0.12	1.51	0.13
In child's home	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
In another home	1.77	0.13	1.34	0.12
Organized child care facilities	2.12	0.19	(B)	(B)
Day/group care	2.22	0.22	(B)	(B)
Nursery/preschool	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)

B Base less than 200,000.

[1]Includes arrangements not shown separately.

[2]For shared arrangements, age refers to age of youngest child in the arrangement.

Child care costs for all children under 15 using separately paid arrangements were estimated at $1.78 per hour, not significantly different from hourly costs ($1.70) when two or more children shared the same provider (table L).[19] For children under 5 years old, child care costs were $1.71 an hour regardless of whether payments were made separately or shared. A reduction in hourly costs, however, did occur among older children when arrangements were shared, as parents of older children who shared the same provider received a $0.31 per hour discount per child.

Data in table L show that reductions in hourly child care costs occurred only when the child's relatives, especially their grandparents, provided the care. When payments were made separately, care by relatives cost $1.38 per hour for all children, compared to $0.99 per hour when shared payments were made. No reductions in hourly costs were noted when payments were shared for either nonrelative care or for care in organized child care facilities.

The hourly costs of child care by a nonrelative, when payments were made separately or shared, were about one dollar more when the care provider came to the child's home than when the child was brought to the provider's home. This difference may result from the extra transportation costs and the general inconvenience experienced by the provider. However, this larger payment may also reflect the fact that the provider in the child's home may be asked to do other household chores in addition to baby sitting.

NOTE ON ESTIMATES

Estimates of primary and secondary child care arrangements shown in this report are based on respondents' answers to the question of what their child was usually doing during the time that they were at work or enrolled in school. The estimates of the number of children being left unsupervised by an adult during this period may be underestimated by those respondents who perceive that leaving the child unattended may be interpreted as an undesirable response. In some cases, parents—out of concern for their child's safety—may be unwilling to reveal their child's whereabouts when asked about this subject. The misreporting of any specific child care arrangement may affect the overall distribution of child care arrangements shown in this report. In all cases, the interviewer accepted the respondent's answers and did not question the validity of the response.

[19]When arrangements were shared, the total amount of time spent by all children was used as the denominator in computing the hourly costs of the shared arrangements.

USER COMMENTS

We are interested in your reaction to the usefulness of the information presented in this report and the content of the subject area covered in the questionnaire (see appendix E for a facsimile of the questionnaire). We welcome your recommendations for improving our survey work and reports. If your have suggestions or comments, please send them to:

Current Survey Comments
Population Division
Bureau of the Census
Washington, DC 20233-3400

If you prefer you can contact the authors of this report at 301-763-5303.