Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 2002

Household Economic Studies

Issued October 2005

P70-101

Current Population Reports

By
Julia Overturf Johnson

INTRODUCTION

Parents in the labor force face numerous decisions when balancing their work and home life, including choosing the type of care to provide for their children while they work. Interest in the use of child care has grown as more women now than in past decades are in the labor force. Child care arrangements and their costs are important issues for parents, relatives, care providers, policy makers, and anyone concerned about children. This report, which is the latest in a series that dates back to 1985, shows the number and characteristics of children in

CHILD CARE DEFINITIONS

The universe of respondents in the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) child care module consists of adults who are the parents of children under 15 years old. In households where both parents are present, the mother is the *designated parent*. Questions on child care arrangements for each child are asked of the designated parent. If the mother is not available for an interview, the father of the child can give proxy responses for her. In single-parent families, the resident parent is the designated parent. If neither parent is in the household, the guardian is the designated parent. Designated parents include biological, step- and adoptive parents, or other relatives/nonrelatives acting as a guardian in the absence of parents. In this report, unless otherwise noted, the term *parent* is used to refer to the designated parent.

Child care providers can be broadly classified as relatives or nonrelatives of children. *Relatives* include mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents; *other relatives* are individuals such as aunts, uncles, and cousins. *Nonrelatives* include in-home babysitters, neighbors, friends, and other nonrelatives providing care in either the child's or the provider's home. Another subcategory of nonrelative care is *family day care providers* who care for two or more children outside of the child's home. *Organized child care facilities* include day care or child care centers, nursery schools, preschools, and Head Start programs. Kindergarten/grade school is also included in the organized care total for children 0 to 4 years of age. To present a comprehensive view of the regular weekly experiences of children under 15 years old, this report also shows the incidence of children enrolled in school and enrichment activities (such as sports, lessons, clubs, and after- and before-school care programs), and the time children are in self-care situations.

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U

Helping You Make Informed Decisions

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

Table 1.
Preschoolers in Types of Child Care Arrangements: Winter 2002

Arrangement type	Number of children (thousands)	Percent in arrangement	
		Estimate	Margin of error[1]
Total children under 5 years	**18,454**	**100.0**	**(X)**
IN A REGULAR ARRANGEMENT	**11,596**	**62.9**	**1.5**
Relative care	7,411	40.2	1.5
Mother[2]	654	3.5	0.6
Father[2]	2,616	14.2	1.1
Sibling	462	2.5	0.5
Grandparent	4,180	22.7	1.3
Other relative	1,337	7.2	0.8
Nonrelative care	6,447	34.9	1.5
Organized care facility	4,198	22.7	1.3
Day care center	2,335	12.7	1.0
Nursery or preschool	1,138	6.2	0.7
Head Start/school[3]	981	5.3	0.7
Other nonrelative care	2,554	13.8	1.1
In child's home	690	3.7	0.6
In provider's home	1,890	10.2	0.9
Family day care	1,149	6.2	0.7
Other care arrangement	769	4.2	0.6
Self-care	39	0.2	0.1
NO REGULAR ARRANGEMENT[4]	**6,858**	**37.2**	**1.5**

(X) Not applicable.

[1] The margin of error, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, provides the 90-percent confidence interval around the estimate.
[2] Only asked for the time the designated parent was working or in school.
[3] Includes children in a federal Head Start program or in kindergarten or grade school.
[4] Also includes children only in kindergarten/grade school or only in self-care.

Note: Numbers of children in specified arrangements may exceed the total because of multiple arrangements.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

different types of child care arrangements in 2002.[1]

Preschoolers and grade school-aged children require different types of care. While the primary focus of child care for infants and preschoolers is meeting their basic needs, older children often engage in structured enrichment activities and are found in self-care situations. The respective child care arrangements used for each age group are compared and contrasted within this report. Information is also provided on assistance in paying for child care arrangements and the number of fathers providing care for their children.

CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OLD

After describing the patterns and use of child care for preschoolers, this section shows how arrangements varied by family characteristics and how much time children regularly spent in various types of care during a typical week in the month preceding the interview date. The section concludes by summarizing historical trends since the first SIPP child care survey in 1985.

Child Care Arrangements of Preschoolers

In a typical week during the winter of 2002, 11.6 million (63 percent) of the 18.5 million children under 5 years of age were in some type of regular child care arrangement (Table 1).[2] In the interview, arrangements used on a regular basis were defined as those used at least once

[1] The data in this report are from reference month 4 of the fourth wave of the 2001 panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The data were collected from February through May 2002. The population represented (population universe) is the civilian noninstitutionalized population living in the United States.

[2] The estimates in this report (which may be shown in text, figures, and tables) are based on responses from a sample of the population and may differ from the actual values because of sampling variability or other factors. As a result, apparent differences between the estimates for two or more groups may not be statistically significant. All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing and are significant at the 90-percent confidence level unless otherwise noted.

a week. Preschoolers—children under 5 years old—were more likely to be cared for by a relative (40 percent) than by a nonrelative (35 percent), while 11 percent were regularly cared for by both.[3] Twenty-three percent of preschoolers were regularly cared for by their grandparent, and 14 percent were cared for by their father. Care by other relatives (7 percent), or the mother while she worked (4 percent), or by siblings (3 percent) was less frequent.

Almost one-quarter of all preschoolers were cared for in organized facilities, with day care centers (13 percent) being more commonly used than nursery or preschools (6 percent). Overall, other nonrelatives provided home-based care to 14 percent of preschoolers, with 6 percent cared for by family day care providers.

Over one-third of preschoolers (6.9 million) were not in a regular child care arrangement during the month preceding the interview.[4] Table 2 shows that this statistic varied by the employment status of the mother—many more preschoolers of nonemployed mothers than employed mothers were not in a regular child care arrangement (69 percent and 11 percent, respectively).

Two percent of preschoolers lived only with their father; the remainder lived with both their mother and father or only with their mother. Grandparents were an important source of child care for father-only families, providing care for one-third of such children. Many mothers were involved as care providers for their preschoolers even though they did not live with them. Table 2 shows that 30 percent of preschoolers living with only their father in the household were regularly in the care of their mother while their father was working or attending school.

Family members were regularly used sources of child care for many employed mothers. Fathers and grandparents were regular care providers for many preschoolers of employed but non-self-employed mothers, with almost 30 percent of these preschoolers cared for by each. Siblings and other relatives cared for 11 percent of preschoolers of employed mothers. Some preschoolers were cared for by their mother while she was working as an employee (5 percent).

Another source of child care for employed mothers with preschool-aged children is organized child care facilities.[5] Employed mothers of preschoolers relied on day care centers (21 percent) more than nursery schools and preschools (8 percent) and Head Start programs, kindergarten, and grade schools (5 percent).[6] Children under the age of 5 were also cared for by a family day care provider (10 percent), nonrelatives in the provider's home (6 percent), and nonrelatives in the child's home (5 percent), such as babysitters, nannies, au pairs, and housekeepers providing child care services.[7]

Arrangements Used by Nonemployed Mothers

In the winter of 2002, 89 percent of the 9.8 million preschoolers of employed mothers and 31 percent of the 8.2 million preschoolers of nonemployed mothers were in at least one child care arrangement on a regular basis.[8] About half of the children of nonemployed mothers in a regular arrangement were regularly cared for by a grandparent (15 percent), and it was the most common arrangement used.

[3] Since some children are in more than one type of arrangement, the sum of children in each of the arrangements exceeds the total number of children.

[4] Eighty-four percent of preschoolers with no regular arrangement lived with a designated parent who was not employed. They were most likely under the supervision of their parent during the day. For those preschoolers with an employed designated parent, not having a regular child care arrangement during work hours may indicate instability in child care arrangements or difficulty in identifying regular use. It does not necessarily indicate that no one looked after the child.

[5] Organized facilities for younger children include day care centers, nursery schools, preschools, federal Head Start programs, and kindergarten or grade school.

[6] Differences may be noted between Head Start estimates shown in this report and enrollment numbers from the agency that administers this program. The number of children reported as being *administratively enrolled* in Head Start is a different measurement than the number of children who are reported by their parents in a child care topical module survey as being in Head Start as a *child care arrangement* on a regular basis. Many parents may not be aware that the day care, preschool, or kindergarten their child participates in is a Head Start program. SIPP data show 153,000 preschoolers were reported to be in a Head Start program as a regular form of child care in the first four months of 2002. Administrative data show that there were an average of 867,000 children 0–4 years of age enrolled in federal Head Start programs in 2002 <www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/research/2003.htm>.

[7] A family day care provider who provides care for two or more children outside the child's home was an arrangement option in the survey questionnaire. Nonrelative care in the provider's home likely includes care by friends or neighbors who are not officially licensed as family day care providers.

[8] Information on child care by the mother or father is not calculated for the time that the designated parent is not working for an employer or attending school.

Table 2.
Preschoolers in Types of Child Care Arrangements by Employment Status and Selected Characteristics of Mother: Winter 2002

(Percent of children)

Characteristic	Number of children (thousands)	Relative care				Organized care facility			Other nonrelative care			Other	
										In provider's home			
		Mother[1]	Father[1]	Grandparent	Sibling/other relative	Day care center	Nursery/preschool	Head Start/school[2]	In child's home	Family day care	Other	No regular child care[3]	Multiple arrangements[4]
Total children under 5 years	**18,454**	**3.5**	**14.2**	**22.7**	**9.3**	**12.7**	**6.2**	**5.3**	**3.7**	**6.2**	**4.2**	**37.2**	**15.4**
Living with father[5]	417	30.4	(B)	33.9	12.2	11.9	(B)	8.1	(B)	(B)	(B)	20.9	20.4
Living with mother[6]	18,037	14.5	2.9	22.4	9.2	12.7	6.2	5.3	3.8	6.3	4.2	37.5	15.3
MOTHER EMPLOYED	**9,823**	**5.0**	**24.7**	**28.3**	**11.0**	**20.6**	**7.7**	**5.4**	**4.9**	**10.4**	**6.4**	**10.8**	**22.4**
Self-employed	818	(NI)	(NI)	20.1	7.5	(B)	8.6	5.5	(B)	4.2	(B)	56.2	9.3
Not self-employed[7]	9,005	5.4	26.9	29.1	11.3	22.2	7.6	5.4	5.0	11.0	6.5	6.7	23.6
Race and Hispanic Origin													
White	6,951	6.0	28.7	28.7	10.0	21.9	7.5	4.8	5.4	11.4	6.9	6.8	24.7
Non-Hispanic	5,728	6.4	29.5	26.7	8.3	22.8	8.1	4.4	5.8	12.5	6.5	7.0	25.0
Black	1,521	1.8	18.2	29.2	15.9	24.3	7.4	8.5	2.9	9.3	5.2	6.5	16.3
Asian and Pacific Islander	416	(B)	28.7	33.7	13.7	21.2	11.0	(B)	(B)	9.9	(B)	(B)	30.5
Hispanic (any race)	1,375	3.6	23.8	37.3	18.7	18.8	5.5	6.9	3.9	6.2	9.0	5.6	23.9
Marital Status													
Married[8]	6,531	5.9	31.6	26.6	9.1	21.6	7.1	4.4	5.7	10.6	5.8	7.2	22.8
Separated, divorced, widowed	886	5.6	11.5	31.9	15.2	27.9	11.6	9.7	3.2	16.1	6.1	5.9	25.9
Never married	1,588	3.2	16.3	37.8	17.7	21.6	7.5	7.0	3.3	9.5	9.4	5.1	25.4
Poverty Status[9]													
Below poverty level	1,261	7.2	28.4	28.9	18.3	14.2	5.2	9.8	6.3	7.2	6.0	11.6	24.2
At or above poverty level	7,678	5.2	26.7	29.2	10.2	23.4	8.0	4.6	4.8	11.6	6.6	5.9	23.6
Employment Schedule													
Employed full-time	5,963	3.5	22.1	28.5	10.3	26.0	7.6	5.8	4.9	12.1	6.9	5.5	21.0
Employed part-time	3,042	9.1	36.4	30.3	13.3	14.7	7.5	4.5	5.2	8.8	5.7	9.1	28.6
Shift Work Status													
Worked day shift	5,835	4.4	22.0	28.2	9.2	25.6	8.4	5.4	4.7	12.3	6.5	5.3	20.2
Worked non-day shift	3,170	7.3	36.0	30.7	15.2	16.0	6.1	5.4	5.5	8.6	6.4	9.3	29.7
Child's Age													
Less than 1 year	1,565	6.0	28.7	33.7	9.6	16.0	(B)	-	3.5	11.1	5.6	10.4	19.8
1 to 2 years	3,593	4.9	30.2	30.0	11.5	22.1	3.0	0.4	6.0	10.8	6.5	6.2	22.7
3 to 4 years	3,848	5.6	23.1	26.3	11.8	24.8	14.4	12.2	4.6	11.1	6.9	5.7	25.9

See footnotes at end of table.

A smaller percentage of nonemployed mothers than employed mothers used organizational child care facilities such as day care and nursery schools that could provide enrichment activities, educational development, and early childhood socialization for their preschoolers. Similar percentages of preschoolers of nonemployed mothers were in day care centers, nursery schools or preschools, and federal Head Start programs or kindergarten/grade schools—3 percent to 5 percent each.

Seven percent of preschoolers of nonemployed mothers were in multiple (two or more) child care arrangements, compared with 22 percent of preschoolers of employed mothers. Figure 1 shows the percentage of preschoolers in selected types of arrangements who were also in one or more other arrangements, by whether their mother was employed. The preschoolers with employed mothers who were most likely to be in multiple arrangements were those in grandparent care or in nursery school/preschool on a regular basis. Children in grandparent care were more likely to be in multiple arrangements if their mother was employed than if she was not employed (46 percent compared

Table 2.
Preschoolers in Types of Child Care Arrangements by Employment Status and Selected Characteristics of Mother: Winter 2002—Con.

(Percent of children)

Characteristic	Number of children (thousands)	Relative care				Organized care facility			Other nonrelative care			Other	
		Mother[1]	Father[1]	Grandparent	Sibling/other relative	Day care center	Nursery/preschool	Head Start/school[2]	In child's home	In provider's home: Family day care	In provider's home: Other	No regular child care[3]	Multiple arrangements[4]
MOTHER NOT EMPLOYED[10]	**8,215**	**(NI)**	**(NI)**	**15.3**	**7.2**	**3.2**	**4.6**	**5.2**	**2.3**	**1.3**	**1.5**	**69.3**	**6.8**
Race and Hispanic Origin													
White	6,508	(NI)	(NI)	14.5	6.4	2.6	4.9	4.6	2.7	1.3	1.6	71.6	7.5
Non-Hispanic	4,632	(NI)	(NI)	16.3	6.8	2.9	5.9	3.7	3.5	1.7	1.6	68.7	9.1
Black	1,130	(NI)	(NI)	20.7	6.9	6.7	2.6	8.0	(B)	(B)	(B)	60.5	2.9
Asian and Pacific Islander	445	(NI)	(NI)	11.7	16.0	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	-	(B)	62.9	(B)
Hispanic (any race)	2,011	(NI)	(NI)	9.4	5.9	(B)	(B)	6.7	(B)	-	(B)	79.0	3.3
Marital Status													
Married[8]	6,095	(NI)	(NI)	11.3	6.7	2.3	5.4	5.2	2.4	1.2	1.3	73.9	6.5
Separated, divorced, widowed	695	(NI)	(NI)	18.0	8.0	6.1	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	66.5	6.2
Never married	1,425	(NI)	(NI)	31.0	8.6	5.6	(B)	5.1	(B)	(B)	2.3	51.9	7.7
Poverty Status[9]													
Below poverty level	2,409	(NI)	(NI)	17.4	6.7	3.3	2.3	6.3	2.0	(B)	(B)	68.5	5.4
At or above poverty level	5,411	(NI)	(NI)	14.6	7.1	3.1	5.7	4.6	2.5	1.5	1.7	69.6	7.3
Child's Age													
Less than 1 year	1,861	(NI)	(NI)	17.4	7.0	(B)	-	-	2.7	(B)	(B)	74.0	6.4
1 to 2 years	3,162	(NI)	(NI)	16.6	7.4	2.0	1.7	(B)	2.9	1.6	1.5	70.3	6.5
3 to 4 years	3,191	(NI)	(NI)	12.9	7.0	5.0	9.9	13.1	1.6	1.2	2.0	66.0	7.1

- Represents or rounds to zero. (NI) Not included, see footnote 1. (B) Base less than 200,000 or numerator too small for comparison.
[1] Care in parental arrangements was calculated only for the time the designated parent was working as an employee.
[2] Includes children in a federal Head Start program or in kindergarten or grade school.
[3] Also includes children only in school or only in self-care. For employed mothers, not having a regular child care arrangement during work hours may indicate instability in child care arrangements or difficulty in identifying what types are regularly used. It does not necessarily indicate that no one looked after the child.
[4] Children in two or more child care arrangements, excluding school and self-care.
[5] Mother not present in the household, so father is the designated parent. Child care arrangements are not shown by father's employment status due to small sample size.
[6] Mother present in the household; father may or may not be present. Mother is the designated parent.
[7] Wage and salary jobs and employment arrangements other than self-employed.
[8] Includes married spouse present and spouse absent (excluding separated).
[9] Excludes those with missing income data.
[10] Includes mothers only in school (627,000), mothers not in school and looking for work (751,000), and mothers not in school and not in the labor force (6,837,000).

Note: Numbers of children in specified arrangements may exceed the total because of multiple arrangements.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

with 34 percent). It may be easier for grandparents to provide all of the care for their grandchild if the mother is not employed since, on average, children of nonemployed mothers spend less time in child care arrangements. Children of employed mothers who spent any amount of time in a nursery school or preschool were more likely than their counterparts whose mothers were not employed to be in multiple arrangements (54 percent and 36 percent, respectively). Often, nursery schools and preschools offer half-day care only, which would require mothers working full-time to use additional child care arrangements.

Number of Hours Spent in Child Care

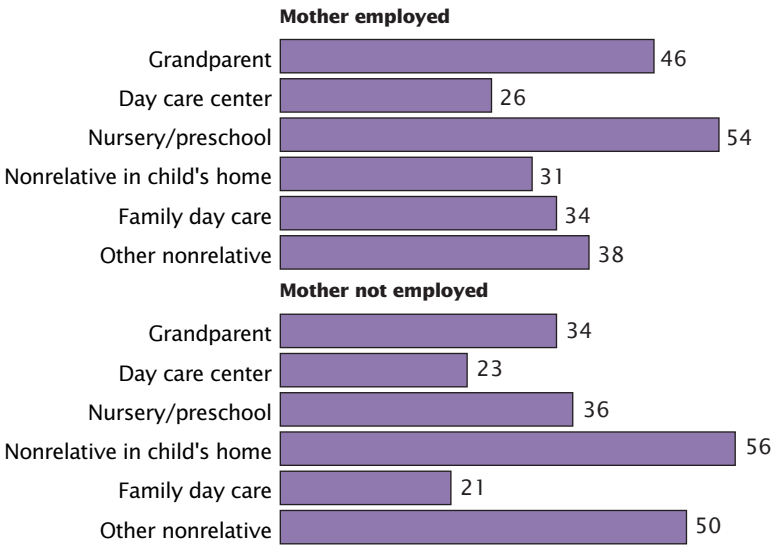
The amount of time that children spend in care arrangements sheds light on how and with whom children are spending time during the day. In winter 2002, preschoolers spent an average of 32 hours per week in child care.[9] Figure 2 shows the average amount of time preschoolers spent in selected child care arrangements by the employment status of the mother. Those with employed mothers spent twice as much time in child

[9] The average number of hours spent in care is based on those who reported using at least one child care arrangement and includes all arrangement types except self-care and school. Average hours for each specific arrangement type are based on those who reported using that specific arrangement.

care as those with nonemployed mothers: 36 hours per week and 18 hours per week, respectively. For children of employed mothers, this includes time spent with their mother while she was working and time with their father while their mother was working. If time in parental care is excluded, preschoolers of employed mothers spent, on average, 28 hours per week in non-parental child care.

Preschoolers usually spent more time in an arrangement if their mother was employed. This was true for those in each of the care arrangements shown in Figure 2, with the exception of those in family day care. Preschoolers of employed mothers spent 20 hours more per week with a nonrelative in the child's home than those with mothers who were not employed. The highest average number of hours spent in an arrangement by preschoolers of employed mothers was 34 hours for those in a day care center.

Figure 1.
Percentage of Preschoolers in Multiple Child Care Arrangements for Selected Arrangement Types by Employment Status of Mother: Winter 2002



Note: Employed includes wage and salary jobs, other employment arrangements, and self-employment. Not employed includes those looking for work, in school, or out of the labor force.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

Family Characteristics

This section shows variations in child care use among employed and nonemployed mothers by family characteristics, such as mother's race and Hispanic origin, marital status, work status, family income, and child's age.[10]

Race and Hispanic origin

Table 2 shows that across all groups, many employed mothers relied on their relatives to act as child care providers. In winter 2002, the most widely used arrangements for preschoolers of non-Hispanic White mothers were fathers and grandparents (both around 30 percent).[11] Preschoolers with Black mothers and preschoolers with Hispanic mothers were more likely to be cared for by their grandparents than their fathers. Among preschoolers of Asian or Pacific Islander mothers, about the same percentage were cared for by their fathers as by their grandparents. Hispanic mothers were almost twice as likely to rely on care from a sibling or other relative (19 percent) as non-Hispanic White mothers (8 percent).

Among children of employed mothers, day care centers were frequented by around one-quarter of children of Black mothers and non-Hispanic White mothers, while approximately 8 percent of both groups were in nursery schools or preschools. A smaller proportion of children of Hispanic mothers were in family day care (6 percent) than those with non-Hispanic White mothers (13 percent). Preschoolers with Black mothers were less likely than children with mothers in the other groups to be in multiple child care arrangements, 16 percent compared with about one-quarter or more.

For preschoolers of nonemployed mothers, a higher percentage of children of non-Hispanic White mothers (69 percent) had no regular arrangement than children of Black mothers (61 percent). Four out of 5 children of nonemployed Hispanic mothers were not in a regular child care arrangement. A greater

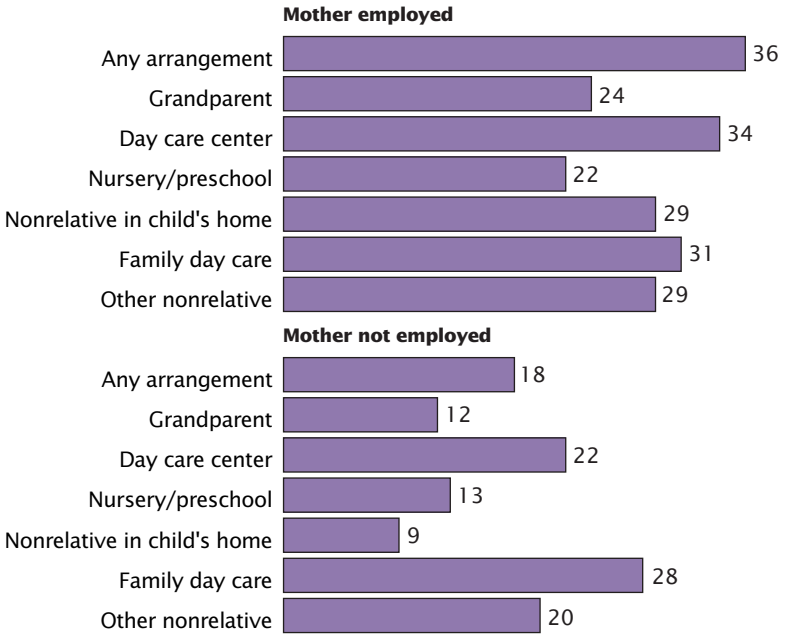
[10] The term "employed mothers" in this section excludes self-employed workers because work schedule and shift variables may not apply to this group of workers as they do to wage and salary workers.

[11] Categories are not exclusive. Hispanics may be any race. Based on the 2001 SIPP Wave 4 child care data, 8 percent of Black mothers and 5 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander mothers were Hispanic. Data for the American Indian and Alaska Native population are not shown in this report because of their small sample size in the survey.

Figure 2.

Average Time Preschoolers Spent in Selected Care Arrangements by Employment Status of Mother: Winter 2002

(Average hours per week among children in specified care arrangement)



Note: Employed includes wage and salary jobs, other employment arrangements, and self-employment. Not employed includes those looking for work, in school, or out of the labor force.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

percentage of preschoolers with nonemployed Asian or Pacific Islander mothers were cared for by a sibling or other relative than preschoolers in any of the other groups shown.

Marital status

Preschoolers of employed mothers who were married were almost twice as likely to have fathers as care providers (32 percent) as children of never-married, employed mothers (16 percent). The latter group was also more likely to be in the care of grandparents and other relatives than children of married, employed mothers. Although it was not as common as with children with a married mother, 12 percent of children with previously married, employed mothers were cared for by their fathers, despite their parents' marital disruption.[12]

The same percentage of children with married and never-married employed mothers spent time in day care centers on a regular basis (22 percent), while a smaller percentage of those with married mothers were in federal Head Start programs or school than those with never-married mothers (4 percent compared with 7 percent).

[12] Previously married includes those who are separated, divorced, or widowed.

Poverty status

Families in poverty with an employed mother relied to a greater extent on grandparents and fathers (around 29 percent each) than on day care centers (14 percent) or family day care providers (7 percent) to care for their preschoolers. Children in families above the poverty line were more likely to be in an organized day care center (23 percent) than with other relatives (10 percent). They were less likely to be in the care of other relatives than those in poverty. This tendency may be due to the higher costs associated with organized care. One out of 10 children in poverty were in Head Start or kindergarten/grade school, compared with 1 in 20 children who were not in poverty.

Employment characteristics

Overall, in winter 2002, preschoolers of mothers who worked full-time for an employer were more likely to be in certain types of nonrelative care arrangements, such as day care centers (26 percent) and family day care providers (12 percent), than were preschoolers of mothers who worked part-time (15 percent and 9 percent, respectively). On the other hand, preschoolers of mothers who worked part-time were more likely to be cared for by their father (36 percent) than preschoolers whose mothers worked full-time (22 percent).[13]

Nine percent of preschoolers whose mothers worked non-day shifts had no regular arrangement, compared with 5 percent of children with day shift mothers. Children whose mothers worked a non-day shift were more likely to

[13] Full-time work is defined as working 35 or more hours per week in the month preceding the interview.

have their father as a child care provider than those with mothers who worked day shifts (36 percent and 22 percent, respectively).[14] Some families may arrange their work schedules to enable fathers to care for children while mothers work. More children of mothers who worked day shifts than children of mothers who worked non-day shifts were in day care centers or with family day care providers. These child care patterns are probably due to the high prevalence of both fathers and mothers who work daytime shifts and the scarcity of day care centers or family day care providers available during evenings and weekends.

A higher proportion of preschoolers with mothers who worked a non-day shift were in multiple arrangements than those with mothers who worked a regular daytime shift (30 percent compared with 20 percent). Mothers working non-day shifts, particularly those with irregular schedules, may have more difficulty securing regular arrangements, necessitating the piecing together of multiple sources of care.

Child's age

Many fathers and grandparents had a role in caring for infants and toddlers of employed mothers. A greater percentage of both infants and children 1 to 2 years of age spent time in the care of a grandparent or father than in any of the other types of arrangements. Among children aged 3 and 4 years, day care centers were as widely used as grandparents and fathers. Day care centers were more common arrangements for these older children than for infants (25 percent compared with 16 percent). Use of family day care, on the other hand, did not differ by age.

[14] Day shift is defined as usually working the majority of one's hours between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Other work schedules are defined as non-day shifts.

COMPARABILITY OF 1997–2002 SIPP DATA TO PREVIOUS SIPP CHILD CARE DATA

SIPP child care data collected in 1997 or later cannot be compared directly with SIPP child care data from previous years. Starting in 1997, child care data (collected in the 1996 SIPP Panel) were collected using a Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) instrument rather than a paper questionnaire. In addition, two important changes were made to the module to improve data collection.

The types of child care arrangements were expanded and differentiated by the child's age and parent's employment status. Also, instead of collecting data only on the primary and secondary arrangements, the new questions solicited responses on all arrangements used on a *regular basis* for preschoolers of both employed and nonemployed parents. The primary care arrangement is now defined as the arrangement used the most hours per week, rather than by asking respondents to name the primary arrangement. Respondents could also answer that they had no regular care arrangement. These alterations in the instrument and questionnaire design required changes in the processing and editing procedures.

Another comparability issue concerns the survey implementation schedule; the child care questions in the 2001 panel asked about arrangements used between January and April of 2002. Previously, the survey had been conducted for many years in the fall. Then it changed to the spring for 1997 and 1999. Child care changes observed between surveys of different years may reflect seasonal differences in child care use and the availability of providers, such as preschool closings and seasonal variations in school activities and sports for grade school-aged children.

In addition, beginning with the 1996 SIPP Panel, effort was expanded to identify and include contingent workers and workers with alternative work schedules, such as temporary or on-call workers, in the employed category. Capturing more workers with irregular job schedules may affect the overall responses to the child care items, and may account for more employed workers reporting no regular arrangements if the employment during the reference period was of a sporadic nature.*

* A discussion of contingent workers and people with alternative work arrangements is provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics online at <www.bls.gov/news.release/conemp.nr0.htm>. Using the broadest measure, this group could have included up to 5.4 million workers, or 4 percent of the labor force in February 2001.

Historical Trends in the Primary Child Care Arrangements of Employed Mothers

Table 3 presents data on primary child care arrangements for preschoolers of employed mothers

Table 3.
Primary Child Care Arrangements of Preschoolers With Employed Mothers: Selected Years, 1985 to 2002

(Numbers in thousands)

Type of arrangement	Winter 1985	Fall 1988	Fall 1990	Fall 1991	Fall 1993	Fall 1995[1]	Spring 1997[1]	Spring 1999[1]	Winter 2002[1]
Children under 5 years	**8,168**	**9,483**	**9,629**	**9,854**	**9,937**	**10,047**	**11,041**	**11,397**	**9,823**
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION									
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Parents	**23.8**	**22.7**	**22.9**	**28.7**	**22.1**	**22.0**	**20.8**	**20.1**	**20.7**
Mother while working	8.1	7.6	6.4	8.7	6.2	5.4	3.2	3.0	3.2
Father	15.7	15.1	16.5	20.0	15.9	16.6	17.7	17.1	17.5
Relatives	**24.1**	**21.1**	**23.1**	**23.5**	**25.3**	**21.4**	**24.9**	**27.7**	**24.8**
Grandparent	15.9	13.9	14.3	15.8	16.5	15.9	17.5	19.7	18.6
Sibling and other relative	8.2	7.2	8.8	7.7	8.8	5.5	7.4	8.0	6.2
Organized facility	**23.1**	**25.8**	**27.5**	**23.1**	**29.9**	**25.1**	**20.4**	**21.0**	**24.3**
Day care center	14.0	16.6	20.6	15.8	18.3	17.7	15.4	16.7	18.3
Nursery/preschool	9.1	9.2	6.9	7.3	11.6	5.9	4.2	3.9	5.2
Federal Head Start program	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	1.5	0.9	0.4	0.8
Other nonrelative care	**28.2**	**28.9**	**25.1**	**23.3**	**21.6**	**28.4**	**20.2**	**18.8**	**17.2**
In child's home	5.9	5.3	5.0	5.4	5.0	4.9	3.8	3.3	3.9
In provider's home	22.3	23.6	20.1	17.9	16.6	23.5	16.3	15.6	13.4
Family day care	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	15.7	9.8	10.2	8.9
Other nonrelative	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	7.8	6.5	5.4	4.5
Other	**0.8**	**1.6**	**1.3**	**1.6**	**1.1**	**2.9**	**13.7**	**12.4**	**13.0**
Self-care	-	0.1	0.1	-	-	0.1	-	-	-
Other arrangement[2]	0.8	1.5	1.2	1.6	1.1	0.6	2.2	2.7	2.6
No regular arrangement[3]	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	2.2	11.5	9.7	10.4

- Represents or rounds to zero. (NA) Not available.

[1] Distributions were proportionately redistributed to account for tied responses for the primary arrangement (including responses of no regular arrangement) to make the percentages total to 100 percent and comparable to earlier years.

[2] Includes kindergarten/grade school and school-based activities for 1985 to 1995. Only includes kindergarten/grade school from 1997 forward.

[3] Not in a child care arrangement on a regular basis (also includes children who were only in kindergarten/grade school or only in self-care for 1997 and forward).

Note: Employed mothers are those with wage and salary employment or other employment arrangements including contingent work and self-employment. Starting with the 1997 data, edits of employment categories were changed to better capture arrangements other than wage and salary employment, as well as including the self-employed in the employed total, which may affect comparisons to survey data from earlier years. Percentages shown here reflect these new edits and supersede previously reported percentages for years 1997 and 1999.

Source: Tabulations derived from Current Population Reports, P70-9, Table 1; P70-30, Table 1; P70-36, Table 1; P70-53, Table 2; P70-70, Table 3; U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 1996 Panel, Waves 4 and 10; 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

since the first SIPP child care survey was conducted in 1985.[15] The primary child care arrangement is defined as the arrangement used the most hours per week.[16] In winter 2002, 9.8 million preschoolers lived with employed mothers, up from 8.2 million in 1985. Forty-six percent were cared for by either a parent (including the mother herself while working) or by some other relative. Organized child care facilities and other types of nonrelatives made up another 42 percent of primary arrangements in winter 2002, while 10 percent reported having no regular arrangement other than school or self-care.

[15] Beginning with the 1996 panel, after all child care information (arrangement types used, hours spent per week, and costs paid per week) was collected, separate questions regarding whether the child attended school and whether the child usually cared for himself or herself (and the hours spent in self-care per week) were asked.

[16] Before 1995, respondents were asked to specify their primary arrangement. Data for 1995 and after distribute the "tied" responses proportionally among the primary arrangements to make the distributions comparable to prior survey years. In addition, the option for reporting that no regular arrangement was used was not available before 1995.

Table 4.
Grade School-Aged Children in Types of Child Care Arrangements by Employment Status and Selected Characteristics of Mother: Winter 2002

(Percent of children)

Characteristic	Number of children (thousands)	Relative care				Nonrelative care			Other arrangements			Other	
		Mother[1]	Father[1]	Grandparent	Sibling/other relative	Organized care facility[2]	Nonrelative in child's home	Nonrelative in provider's home[3]	School	Enrichment activity[4]	Self-care	No regular child care[5]	Multiple arrangements[6]
Total children 5 to 14 years	**40,624**	**3.2**	**13.1**	**13.2**	**13.4**	**5.2**	**2.6**	**4.9**	**93.5**	**16.4**	**15.0**	**47.2**	**14.6**
Living with father[7]	1,676	14.2	(B)	20.2	14.4	4.3	2.5	6.3	97.9	20.4	18.3	36.2	14.9
Living with mother[8]	38,948	2.7	13.5	12.9	13.4	5.2	2.6	4.8	93.3	16.2	14.8	47.7	14.6
MOTHER EMPLOYED	**26,128**	**3.9**	**19.4**	**15.5**	**16.4**	**6.8**	**3.0**	**6.3**	**94.2**	**19.0**	**18.6**	**34.4**	**18.7**
Self-employed	2,285	(NI)	(NI)	6.6	10.8	2.9	2.1	3.2	91.1	19.9	15.4	62.2	8.4
Not self-employed[9]	23,843	4.1	21.3	16.4	17.0	7.2	3.0	6.6	94.5	18.9	18.9	31.8	19.7
Race and Hispanic Origin													
White	18,721	4.5	21.6	15.7	15.7	6.9	3.2	6.8	94.5	19.9	19.7	33.1	20.0
Non-Hispanic	15,317	4.7	22.4	15.2	13.8	7.5	3.4	7.0	94.2	21.4	21.9	33.9	21.1
Black	3,902	2.7	16.4	19.3	22.4	8.9	2.1	6.2	94.9	15.1	14.4	27.6	16.8
Asian and Pacific Islander	853	3.7	31.4	17.1	19.7	(B)	(B)	7.4	94.4	18.3	(B)	22.1	26.2
Hispanic (any race)	3,828	3.7	19.2	17.4	24.6	4.1	2.2	5.5	95.2	13.1	10.6	28.8	15.1
Marital Status													
Married[10]	16,915	4.2	25.7	13.3	14.6	5.9	2.9	6.0	94.4	19.0	19.2	34.5	19.8
Separated, divorced, widowed	4,518	4.8	10.2	23.5	21.9	9.8	4.1	8.5	95.2	21.5	21.9	26.5	21.9
Never married	2,410	2.1	11.4	24.4	24.3	11.2	2.4	7.5	93.9	13.0	11.3	22.5	14.7
Poverty Status[11]													
In poverty	2,716	4.2	15.4	19.9	24.8	6.1	3.2	6.4	95.4	12.7	12.4	28.0	17.4
Not in poverty	20,968	4.2	22.1	15.9	16.0	7.3	3.0	6.6	94.4	19.7	19.8	32.3	20.0
Employment Schedule													
Employed full-time[12]	16,433	3.5	19.8	17.0	18.5	8.0	3.7	7.3	95.0	19.1	20.1	29.0	19.7
Employed part-time	7,410	5.5	24.6	15.1	13.6	5.4	1.7	5.1	93.5	18.4	16.1	37.8	19.7
Shift Work Status													
Worked day shift	16,480	3.8	17.7	15.5	16.3	7.8	3.3	6.9	95.2	19.7	19.9	33.5	18.3
Worked non-day shift	7,363	4.9	29.2	18.4	18.6	5.7	2.4	6.0	93.0	17.0	16.6	27.9	22.7
Child's Age													
5 to 8 years	8,547	4.1	24.2	21.4	15.1	14.8	3.4	10.8	89.1	15.6	2.8	20.6	22.1
9 to 11 years	7,451	4.5	21.7	17.0	19.0	4.7	3.9	6.5	97.5	21.6	15.3	29.8	21.0
12 to 14 years	7,844	3.8	17.7	10.3	17.1	1.2	1.8	2.2	97.6	19.9	39.8	45.8	15.8

See footnotes at end of table.

Changes in the survey design over the period warrant caution when making comparisons between years. In 1995, the number of child care response categories was expanded, and in 1997, the data collection procedure was changed from a paper questionnaire to a computer-based instrument. In addition, shifts in work schedules and the availability of other family members, organized child care facilities, or family day care providers during certain times of the year may affect the comparability of data from surveys conducted in different seasons. The economic climate and stages of the business cycle during the time the surveys were conducted may also influence child care usage.[17]

The use of nonrelatives for child care followed an erratic pattern during the 1985 to 2002 period. In the late 1980s, the proportion of preschoolers who were in home-based, nonrelative care (either in the child's home or in the provider's home) was about 29 percent. It dropped to 22 percent in 1993 and rose back up to 28 percent in 1995. By winter 2002, 17 percent were cared for in a home-based arrangement by a nonrelative. Care by nonrelatives in the child's home did not change much over time; it was the primary arrangement for 3 percent to 6 percent of children in any of the survey years. The use of organized facilities for preschoolers fluctuated. From 1985 to 1990, the proportion of preschoolers cared for in organized facilities rose from

[17] Lynne Casper and Martin O'Connell, "Work, Income, the Economy, and Married Fathers as Child-Care Providers." *Demography*, Vol. 35 (1998): 243–250.

Table 4.
Grade School-Aged Children in Types of Child Care Arrangements by Employment Status and Selected Characteristics of Mother: Winter 2002—Con.

(Percent of children)

Characteristic	Number of children (thousands)	Relative care				Nonrelative care			Other arrangements			Other	
		Mother[1]	Father[1]	Grandparent	Sibling/other relative	Organized care facility[2]	Nonrelative in child's home	Nonrelative in provider's home[3]	School	Enrichment activity[4]	Self-care	No regular child care[5]	Multiple arrangements[6]
MOTHER NOT EMPLOYED[13]	**12,820**	**(NI)**	**(NI)**	**7.7**	**7.2**	**1.9**	**1.8**	**1.8**	**91.4**	**10.5**	**7.1**	**74.8**	**6.3**
Race and Hispanic Origin													
White	9,994	(NI)	(NI)	6.3	5.7	1.7	2.1	1.7	91.6	10.6	7.1	76.8	5.8
Non-Hispanic	7,238	(NI)	(NI)	6.7	5.6	1.9	2.6	2.0	91.1	13.0	8.2	74.0	6.7
Black	2,048	(NI)	(NI)	14.1	11.4	2.1	(B)	2.5	91.9	11.5	7.6	66.3	8.4
Asian and Pacific Islander	524	(NI)	(NI)	(B)	13.3	(B)	(B)	(B)	86.5	6.8	(B)	74.9	(B)
Hispanic (any race)	3,013	(NI)	(NI)	5.6	6.4	(B)	(B)	1.2	92.6	4.7	4.2	82.9	3.6
Marital Status													
Married[10]	9,811	(NI)	(NI)	5.8	6.0	1.7	1.9	1.4	91.1	10.8	6.8	76.6	5.4
Separated, divorced, widowed	1,605	(NI)	(NI)	10.7	9.4	3.7	(B)	4.1	92.1	7.6	7.8	72.2	8.6
Never married	1,404	(NI)	(NI)	16.9	12.8	(B)	(B)	(B)	92.4	12.4	8.1	64.6	10.2
Poverty Status[11]													
In poverty	4,197	(NI)	(NI)	9.2	8.3	0.9	1.2	1.7	93.1	7.2	7.2	77.5	6.1
Not in poverty	8,034	(NI)	(NI)	6.9	6.5	2.4	2.1	1.6	90.9	12.5	7.2	73.6	6.5
Child's Age													
5 to 8 years	5,721	(NI)	(NI)	8.4	6.1	3.9	2.0	2.0	85.8	8.3	2.0	74.0	6.0
9 to 11 years	3,877	(NI)	(NI)	7.9	7.8	(B)	2.2	1.6	96.1	13.0	6.4	74.2	6.8
12 to 14 years	3,222	(NI)	(NI)	6.1	8.4	-	(B)	1.4	95.9	11.6	17.2	76.9	6.3

- Represents or rounds to zero. (NI) Not included, see footnote 1. (B) Base less than 200,000 or numerator too small for comparison.

[1] Care in parental arrangements was only calculated for the time the designated parent was working as an employee.
[2] Includes care in day care centers, nursery or preschools, or federal Head Start programs.
[3] Includes care by a family care provider and other nonrelatives in the provider's home.
[4] Organized sports, lessons (such as music, art, dance, language, and computer), clubs, and before- or after-school programs located either at school or other locations.
[5] Also includes children only in school or only in self-care. For employed mothers, not having a regular arrangement during work hours may indicate instability in child care arrangements or difficulty in identifying what is regularly used. It does not necessarily indicate that no one looked after the child.
[6] Children in two or more child care arrangements, excluding school and self-care.
[7] Mother not present in the household, so father is the designated parent. Child care arrangements are not shown by father's employment status due to small sample size.
[8] Mother present in the household; father may or may not be present. Mother is the designated parent.
[9] Includes mothers with wage and salary jobs and employment arrangements other than self-employed.
[10] Includes married spouse present and spouse absent (excluding separated).
[11] Excludes those with missing income data.
[12] Those who work 35 or more hours per week are considered working full-time.
[13] Includes children whose mother is only in school (791,000), not in school and looking for work (1,234,000), or not in school and not in the labor force (10,795,000).

Note: Numbers of children in specified arrangements may exceed the total because of multiple arrangements.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

23 percent to 28 percent. Use of this arrangement dropped to around 21 percent in the late 1990s and rose to 24 percent in 2002.

Rates of family and relative care also have varied over the past 17 years. The rate of care by fathers was around 15 percent between 1985 and 1988, increased to 20 percent in 1991, and settled between 16 and 18 percent beginning in 1993. The declining trend since 1985 in the rate of care by mothers while they were working was interrupted in 1991, when it rose to 9 percent. The rates for both mother care and father care while the mother worked decreased and leveled off in the latter half of the 1990s. In 2002, 3 percent of women were the primary caretaker for their child while they were working. The lack of a consistent trend since 1985 in the use of specific child care arrangements makes it difficult to foresee which arrangements will grow or wane in popularity in the future, although the proportions appear to have stabilized since 1997.

CHILDREN 5 TO 14 YEARS OLD

This section shows the patterns and use of child care arrangements for grade school-aged children. The child care experiences of grade school-aged children differ from those of preschool-aged children primarily in that older children

experience a wider array of daily activities.

Child Care Arrangements for Grade School-Aged Children

Grade school-aged children—children 5 to 14 years old—engage in different daily activities than do preschoolers, such as school, enrichment programs, and self-care. Therefore, the child care arrangements shown in the tables for grade school-aged children differ from those shown for younger children. Although not generally considered a child care arrangement, school attendance is included in order to show all of children's activities during the day. School activities figure prominently in the daily lives of grade school-aged children and may influence the demand for other arrangements before and after school.

A little over half (53 percent) of grade school-aged children were in a child care arrangement on a regular basis. Relatives were regular contributors to the overall care of many grade school-aged children (Table 4). In winter 2002, similar proportions of grade school-aged children received care from their father, a grandparent, or another relative, including siblings (13 percent for each).

Grade school-aged children were less likely to be cared for by nonrelatives, such as organized care facilities or other nonrelatives in the child's home or the provider's home, than by relatives other than their mother. Five percent of children 5 to 14 years old were cared for in organized facilities, 3 percent by a nonrelative in the child's home, and 5 percent by a nonrelative in the provider's home. This low use of nonrelative care compared to younger children reflects the fact that 94 percent of older children were enrolled in school, and 16 percent were involved in enrichment activities. Data on participation in enrichment activities such as sports, lessons, clubs, and before- or after-school programs were only collected if a parent specifically identified the activity as a care arrangement.[18] In addition, 15 percent (6.1 million) of grade school-aged children cared for themselves on a regular basis without adult supervision.

In general, employed mothers were more likely to have regular care arrangements than nonemployed mothers. In winter 2002, of the 23.8 million grade school-aged children whose mothers were employed but not self-employed, 32 percent were in no regular arrangement other than school or self-care, compared with 75 percent of the 12.8 million grade school-aged children of nonemployed mothers.

Comparing the use of enrichment activities and self-care by mother's employment status reveals that 19 percent of children of employed but not self-employed mothers participated regularly in at least one enrichment activity on a weekly basis, and the same percentage regularly spent time in self-care. In both cases, this was a higher percentage than that of children with nonemployed mothers. Children living in families with incomes at or above the poverty level were more likely to be in enrichment activities than were children below the poverty level. Regardless of the employment status of their mother, more children of non-Hispanic White mothers than Hispanic mothers were involved in enrichment activities. The cost of these activities and their availability in different neighborhoods and schools may be factors in these differences.

Self-Care

As children grow and mature, many parents allow them to spend some time in unsupervised situations caring for themselves. Parents base this decision on a number of factors, including the age and maturity of the child, the environment in which the child will be in self-care, the financial resources and parental time available to provide alternative care arrangements, and the perceived risks associated with self-care.[19] Sometimes parents experience difficulty in securing supervised arrangements, and self-care may be used more out of necessity than choice. Other times, parents may feel that self-care provides an opportunity for their child to learn to be more independent.

Estimates of self-care

In winter 2002, 5.8 million (15 percent) of the 38.9 million grade school-aged children living with a mother cared for themselves on a regular basis during a typical week in the month preceding the interview (Table 5). Children are shown in Table 5 in two age groups that meet the generally accepted definitions of elementary and middle school (5 to 11 years old and 12 to 14 years old). Among all children who lived with their mother and were in self-care, 68 percent were in the older age group. Within the age groups, 7 percent of

[18] For information on the number of children participating in extracurricular activities, regardless of their status as a child care arrangement, see Terry Lugaila, *A Child's Day: 2000 (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being),* U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, P70-89, Washington, DC, 2003.

[19] Kristin Smith and Lynne Casper, "Self-Care: Why do Parents Leave Their Children Unsupervised?" *Demography*, Vol. 41 (2004): 303–314.

Table 5.
Prevalence of Self-Care Among Grade School-Aged Children, by Selected Characteristics for Those Living With Mother: Winter 2002

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total	Age of child	
		5 to 11 years	12 to 14 years
Total children 5 to 14 years	**40,624**	**28,276**	**12,348**
LIVING WITH FATHER[1]	**1,676**	**1,084**	**592**
Number in self-care	307	106	201
Percent in self-care	18.3	9.8	34.0
LIVING WITH MOTHER	**38,948**	**27,192**	**11,756**
Number in self-care	5,766	1,862	3,904
Percent in self-care	14.8	7.0	33.3
Race and Hispanic Origin of Mother			
White	15.4	6.9	34.9
Non-Hispanic	17.5	8.0	38.7
Black	11.9	6.4	24.7
Asian and Pacific Islander	10.9	4.1	28.1
Hispanic (any race)	7.9	3.5	19.8
Marital Status of Mother			
Married[2]	14.7	6.8	32.7
Separated, divorced, widowed	18.1	7.9	37.5
Never married	10.0	5.4	27.3
Poverty Status of Family[3]			
Below poverty level	9.4	4.7	21.7
At or above poverty level	16.3	7.4	36.2
100 to 199 percent of poverty level	11.6	5.4	26.4
200 percent of poverty level or higher	18.2	8.3	39.9
Employment Schedule of Mother			
Not employed	7.1	3.7	17.2
Employed (all)	18.6	8.5	39.3
Self-employed	15.4	7.7	33.0
Not self-employed[4]	18.9	8.6	39.8
Full-time[5]	20.1	9.1	41.5
Part-time	16.1	7.5	35.6
Worked day shift	19.9	9.3	40.9
Worked non-day shift	16.6	7.1	37.2
Enrichment Activities of Child			
Participated in an activity	24.9	12.3	50.1
Did not participate in an activity	12.9	5.8	29.5
Average hours per week in self-care among children in self-care	**6.3**	**5.2**	**6.9**
Number of Hours in Self-Care Per Week (Percent distribution)			
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 2 hours	13.0	19.6	9.9
2 to 4 hours	33.3	39.4	30.4
5 to 9 hours	31.3	25.7	34.0
10 or more hours	22.4	15.4	25.7

[1] Mother not present in the household, so father is the designated parent.
[2] Includes married spouse present and spouse absent (excluding separated).
[3] Excludes those with missing income data.
[4] Includes mothers with wage and salary jobs and employment arrangements other than self-employed.
[5] Those who work 35 or more hours per week are considered working full-time.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

elementary school-aged children and 33 percent of middle school-aged children living with their mother were in self-care. The use of self-care ranged from 1 percent among 5- and 6-year-olds to 39 percent of 14-year-olds.

Among children 5 to 14 years old who were regularly in self-care situations, the average time spent in self-care was 6.3 hours per week. The majority of children in self-care spent between 2 and 9 hours per week supervising themselves (65 percent). Children 12 to 14 years old spent an average of 7 hours per week in self-care, compared with 5 hours per week for children 5 to 11 years old. The older group was more likely than the younger group to spend 10 or more hours per week in self-care (26 percent and 15 percent, respectively).

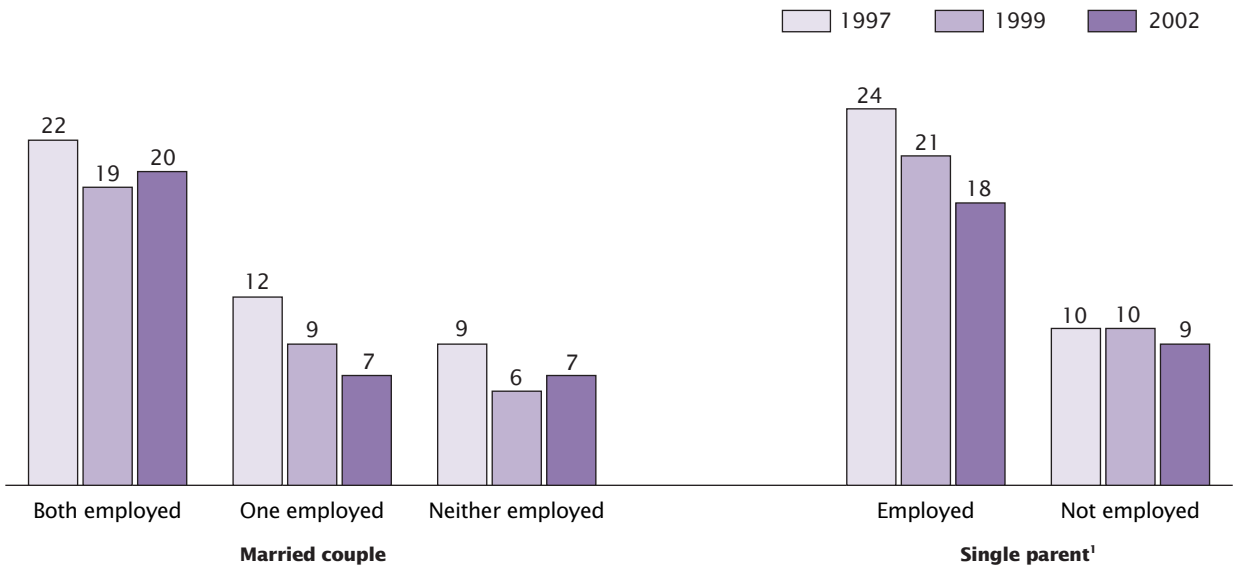
Parental availability

The prevalence of self-care has been found to correlate with the amount of time parents are available to care for children, which in turn is influenced by family structure and labor force participation.[20] In winter 2002, grade school-aged children living with a previously married mother were more likely to be in self-care (18 percent) than were those living with a married mother (15 percent) or a never-married parent (10 percent).

[20] Virginia Cain and Sandra Hofferth, "Parental Choice of Self-Care for School-Age Children," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, Vol. 51 (1994): 65–77; Harriet Presser, "Can We Make Time for Children? The Economy, Work Schedules, and Child Care," *Demography*, Vol. 26 (1998): 523–543.

Figure 3.

Percentage of Grade School-Aged Children in Self-Care by Parent's Employment Status and Marital Status: 1997 to 2002



Note: Employed includes wage and salary jobs, other employment arrangements, and self-employment. Not employed includes those looking for work, in school, or out of the labor force.

[1] Includes both mothers and fathers.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 1996 Panel, Waves 4 and 10; 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

Patterns of self-care vary also by the mother's labor force participation. Fifteen percent of grade school-aged children of an employed but not self-employed mother were in self-care, compared with 7 percent of children whose mother was not employed. Also, children whose mother worked full-time were more likely to be in self-care than those whose mother worked part-time (20 percent and 16 percent, respectively). Children whose parent worked a day shift were more likely to be in self-care at some point during the week than children whose parent worked a non-day shift.

Differences in self-care also appeared by race and Hispanic origin. Nearly one in every five 5- to-14 year olds with a non-Hispanic White mother were in self-care situations (18 percent). This was more than twice the proportion of children with a Hispanic mother who were in self-care (8 percent).

Figure 3 shows the distribution of time spent in self-care by whether children lived with married parents or a single parent (either their mother or father) and whether one, both, or neither parents was employed. The figure shows data for 2002 as well as for 1997 and 1999, the two previous survey years for which comparable questions on self-care were asked. For each of these years, grade school-aged children living in homes where all parents present were employed were the most likely to be in self-care situations. In 2002, similar percentages of children living with married parents where one or neither parent was employed, and children living with a single parent who was not employed, were in self-care. This was also the case for 1997. In each of these situations, at least one parent was not working and therefore more likely to be available to care for their child. The only consistent trend over time appears for children of a single, employed parent—their chance of being in self-care declined from 24 percent in 1997 to 21 percent in 1999 and 18 percent in 2002.

FAMILY EXPENDITURES ON CHILD CARE FOR ALL CHILDREN UNDER 15 YEARS OLD

Weekly Child Care Expenditures

This section examines weekly family expenditures for child care by selected demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, and shows the expenditures as a

Table 6.
Weekly Child Care Payments of Families With Mothers Present and Children Under 15 Years by Selected Characteristics: 1984 to 2002

(Numbers in thousands. Excludes families with no report of income in the last 4 months)

Characteristic	Number of families	Making payments		Weekly child care payments				Expenditures on child care per month	
				Actual dollars		2002 dollars[1]			
		Number	Percent	Average[2]	Margin of error[3]	Average[2]	Margin of error[3]	Percent of income[4]	Margin of error[3]
Families with mothers, and children under 15 years[5]	**32,851**	**9,353**	**28.5**	**91.8**	**3.6**	**91.8**	**3.6**	**6.9**	**0.8**
Mother not employed	10,643	1,427	13.4	73.0	9.4	73.0	9.4	5.7	0.6
Mother employed	22,208	7,926	35.7	95.2	3.9	95.2	3.9	7.1	0.8
Self-employed	1,811	422	23.3	90.2	17.9	90.2	17.9	6.3	1.0
Not self-employed[6]	20,397	7,504	36.8	95.5	4.0	95.5	4.0	7.2	0.8
Employment Schedule of Mother									
Full-time[7]	14,348	5,735	40.0	101.1	4.6	101.1	4.6	7.4	0.8
Part-time	6,049	1,769	29.2	77.6	7.8	77.6	7.8	6.5	0.9
Number of Children in Family									
One child	10,392	3,517	33.8	74.9	4.1	74.9	4.1	5.6	0.5
Two children	7,160	2,907	40.6	113.1	7.5	113.1	7.5	8.3	0.8
Three or more children	2,845	1,080	38.0	115.4	11.9	115.4	11.9	9.8	2.5
Age of Youngest Child									
Under 5 years	7,916	4,273	54.0	122.4	5.9	122.4	5.9	9.5	1.1
5 to 14 years	12,482	3,231	25.9	60.0	4.0	60.0	4.0	4.4	0.4
Type of Residence									
Metropolitan	16,479	6,201	37.6	101.1	4.6	101.1	4.6	7.2	0.8
Central cities	5,364	1,928	35.9	93.6	7.6	93.6	7.6	8.1	1.5
Outside central cities	11,115	4,272	38.4	104.5	5.8	104.5	5.8	6.9	1.0
Nonmetropolitan	3,918	1,303	33.3	68.9	5.9	68.9	5.9	6.8	1.0
Monthly Family Income									
Less than $1,500	2,361	670	28.4	58.3	7.6	58.3	7.6	24.4	24.4
$1,500 to $2,999	4,150	1,300	31.3	68.1	5.5	68.1	5.5	13.0	10.5
$3,000 to $4,499	4,150	1,527	36.8	90.9	9.0	90.9	9.0	10.5	14.7
$4,500 and over	9,736	4,007	41.2	112.4	6.1	112.4	6.1	5.8	0.6
Poverty Status									
Below poverty level	1,917	484	25.2	67.2	10.3	67.2	10.3	25.1	8.9
At or above poverty level	18,481	7,020	38.0	97.5	4.2	97.5	4.2	7.0	0.8
100 to 199 percent of poverty level	4,097	1,280	31.2	66.8	6.1	66.8	6.1	13.2	6.8
200 percent of poverty level or higher	14,383	5,741	39.9	104.3	4.9	104.3	4.9	6.5	0.8
Families With Mother Employed[8]									
January to April 2002	22,208	7,926	35.7	95.2	3.9	95.2	3.9	7.1	0.8
March to June 1999	23,397	9,606	41.1	79.0	2.8	85.3	2.8	6.6	0.3
March to June 1997	22,297	9,413	42.2	74.2	2.3	83.2	2.3	6.8	0.3
September to December 1993	19,798	6,987	35.3	70.0	1.8	87.2	1.8	7.3	0.3
September to December 1991	19,180	6,616	34.5	63.3	3.9	83.6	3.9	7.1	0.3
September to December 1990	18,938	7,202	38.0	59.7	2.1	82.2	2.1	6.9	0.2
September to December 1988	18,843	7,520	39.9	54.0	2.0	82.1	2.0	6.8	0.2
September to December 1987	18,501	6,168	33.3	48.5	3.0	76.8	3.0	6.6	0.3
September to December 1986	18,305	5,742	31.4	44.3	2.3	72.7	2.3	6.3	0.3
December 1984 to March 1985	15,706	5,299	33.7	40.3	1.8	67.4	1.8	(NA)	(NA)

(NA) Not available.

[1] Computed using average Consumer Price Index for a given calendar year as calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
[2] Average expenditures per week among people making child care payments.
[3] The margin of error, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, provides the 90-percent confidence interval around the estimate.
[4] Percent is a ratio of average monthly child care payments (pro-rated from weekly averages) to average monthly family income.
[5] Data refer to January to April 2002.
[6] Wage and salary jobs and employment arrangements other than self-employed.
[7] Those who work 35 or more hours per week are considered working full-time.
[8] Beginning in 1997, edits of employment categories were changed to better capture arrangements other than wage and salary employment, which may affect comparisons to survey data from earlier years.

Source: Tabulations derived from Current Population Reports, P70-36 Table 6, U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 1996 Panel, Waves 4 and 10; 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

percentage of monthly family income. Data on the percentage of families receiving help, from governmental or other sources, to pay for child care is also analyzed. The winter 2002 data refer to payments made between January and April 2002. For prior survey years, data most often reflect the time period between September and December or between March and June for the 1997 and 1999 estimates. Seasonal differences in arrangements that can affect child care costs may affect the comparability of the 2002 data with data from prior surveys.

Family Payments for Child Care

In winter 2002, 32.9 million mothers lived with at least one child of their own who was under the age of 15 (Table 6). Twenty-nine percent of these mothers reported they made cash payments for child care for at least one of their children, and they paid an average of $92 per week. Approximately one-third of these mothers were not employed, and they were less likely to make a payment for child care than were employed but not self-employed mothers (13 percent and 37 percent, respectively). Nonemployed mothers on average paid less per week ($73) than did employed but not self-employed mothers ($96).

Of the 20.4 million mothers who were employed but not self-employed, 37 percent (7.5 million) reported they made a cash payment for child care for at least one of their children. More mothers who worked full-time paid for child care (40 percent) than mothers who worked part-time (29 percent). Mothers with two or more children were more likely to make a child care payment than mothers with only one child. Families in poverty were less likely to make a child care payment (25 percent) than families not in poverty (38 percent).

Families with an employed but not self-employed mother paid an average of $96 per week for child care in the winter of 2002. Mothers working full-time paid, on average, $24 more per week for child care than mothers working part-time. On average, mothers with one child paid $75 per week, while those with two or more children paid about $114 per week. Thus, mothers with more children generally paid more for child care per week, but not twice the average paid for one child. Care providers may reduce their rates for care of additional children in a family. Also, many families with two or more children have children in both age groups who differ in their care needs and cost of care. This age difference is reflected in the fact that among families with an employed mother, those whose youngest child was under 5 years were twice as likely to pay for child care as families with children aged 5 to 14 only (54 percent and 26 percent, respectively), and they paid an average of twice as much ($122 compared with $60 a week). Families with young children also spent a higher proportion of their family income on child care: 10 percent of income, compared with 4 percent of income for families with only older children.

A somewhat higher proportion of mothers who lived in metropolitan areas made payments than those in nonmetropolitan areas (38 percent compared with 33 percent). On average, mothers living in metropolitan areas paid $101 per week for child care, while mothers living in nonmetropolitan areas paid $69 per week. Child care costs as a percentage of family income did not vary by type of residence.

Child care expenditures by income level and poverty status varied. The amount paid for child care increased with income. For example, among families with employed mothers, those with a monthly income of less than $1,500 paid $58 a week for child care, while those with a monthly income of $4,500 or more paid an average of $112 per week. Families in poverty in which the mother was employed paid an average of $67 per week, while families not in poverty paid $98 per week. Among families who paid for child care, those below the poverty level spent roughly three times the percentage of their income on child care as other families (25 percent compared with 7 percent). This gap in the proportion of income paid for child care by poverty status has persisted since 1987.[21]

Receipt of Help to Pay for Child Care

Questions regarding whether the family received any help to pay for child care have been asked on the SIPP since 1997. The resulting data provide insight into characteristics of families that do and do not receive financial assistance to pay for child care. The number of respondents reporting that they receive child care assistance may undercount the true number of recipients if respondents are unaware that their payments are subsidized due to their income level or participation in other programs.

Of the 33 million children under 15 years who were reported to be in a regular child care arrangement in winter 2002, 2.2 million (7 percent) had a designated parent who

[21] For a more detailed explanation of this issue, see Kristin Smith, *Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Spring 1995,* U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, P70-70, Washington, DC, 2000.

Table 7.
Receipt of Help to Pay for Child Care From Selected Sources by Characteristics of Designated Parent: 1997, 1999, and 2002

(Limited to children with a regular child care arrangement)

Characteristic	1997					1999					2002				
	Number of children (thousands)	From any source[1]		From government[2]		Number of children (thousands)	From any source[1]		From government[2]		Number of children (thousands)	From any source[1]		From government[2]	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent		Number	Percent	Number	Percent		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Children under 15 years	**34,234**	**1,626**	**4.7**	**812**	**2.4**	**35,092**	**1,662**	**4.7**	**1,089**	**3.1**	**33,032**	**2,170**	**6.6**	**1,353**	**4.1**
Children under 5 years	**12,419**	**864**	**7.0**	**466**	**3.8**	**12,828**	**791**	**6.2**	**527**	**4.1**	**11,596**	**1,118**	**9.6**	**681**	**5.9**
Race and Hispanic Origin															
White	9,893	616	6.2	280	2.8	10,076	555	5.5	335	3.3	8,884	726	8.2	421	4.7
Non-Hispanic	8,339	540	6.5	247	3.0	8,412	476	5.7	272	3.2	7,200	594	8.3	330	4.6
Black	1,995	228	11.4	177	8.9	2,230	229	10.3	185	8.3	1,952	332	17.0	234	12.0
Asian and Pacific Islander	417	13	(B)	3	(B)	371	-	-	-	-	578	28	(B)	8	(B)
Hispanic (any race)	1,652	84	5.1	38	2.3	1,787	88	4.9	67	3.8	1,870	171	9.1	119	6.3
Marital Status															
Married[3]	8,885	346	3.9	144	1.6	8,878	330	3.7	167	1.9	8,081	472	5.8	204	2.5
Separated, divorced, widowed	1,214	158	13.0	100	8.2	1,366	138	10.1	103	7.5	1,176	220	18.7	153	13.0
Never married	2,320	359	15.5	222	9.6	2,584	324	12.5	258	10.0	2,339	426	18.2	324	13.8
Poverty Status[4]															
Below poverty level	2,053	255	12.4	191	9.3	1,924	237	12.3	199	10.3	1,970	334	16.9	247	12.5
At or above poverty level	10,178	583	5.7	252	2.5	10,711	536	5.0	314	2.9	9,432	737	7.8	395	4.2
100 to 199 percent of poverty level	2,821	245	8.7	147	5.2	2,876	233	8.1	178	6.2	2,292	307	13.4	234	10.2
200 percent of poverty level or higher	7,357	339	4.6	105	1.4	7,835	303	3.9	136	1.7	7,141	430	6.0	161	2.3
Employment Status															
Employed	9,995	694	6.9	330	3.3	10,672	606	5.7	375	3.5	9,062	897	9.9	556	6.1
Self-employed	288	17	(B)	-	-	240	19	(B)	10	(B)	366	19	(B)	4	(B)
Not self-employed [5]	9,707	677	7.0	330	3.4	10,432	587	5.6	365	3.5	8,696	878	10.1	552	6.3
Full-time [6]	6,353	463	7.3	201	3.2	7,143	407	5.7	255	3.6	5,919	609	10.3	374	6.3
Part-time	3,354	214	6.4	129	3.8	3,289	180	5.5	110	3.3	2,777	268	9.7	178	6.4
Not employed	2,425	170	7.0	137	5.6	2,156	186	8.6	152	7.0	2,534	222	8.7	125	4.9
In school	627	98	15.6	81	12.9	600	86	14.4	74	12.3	595	67	11.2	43	7.2
Looking for work	363	22	(B)	19	(B)	220	37	(B)	37	(B)	386	52	13.6	25	6.5
Out of labor force	1,435	50	3.5	37	2.6	1,336	62	4.6	41	3.1	1,553	103	6.6	57	3.7
Participation in Selected Programs															
Receipt of TANF[7]	918	159	17.3	142	15.4	349	73	20.8	62	17.7	275	65	23.5	59	21.5
No receipt of TANF	11,501	705	6.1	325	2.8	12,479	719	5.8	466	3.7	11,321	1,054	9.3	622	5.5
Receipt of Medicaid	2,492	427	17.1	348	14.0	2,592	370	14.3	323	12.4	3,068	574	18.7	464	15.1
No receipt of Medicaid	9,928	437	4.4	118	1.2	10,236	421	4.1	205	2.0	8,528	544	6.4	217	2.5
Child's Age															
Less than 1 year	2,106	150	7.1	81	3.9	1,833	68	3.7	45	2.5	1,987	149	7.5	85	4.3
1 to 2 years	5,000	349	7.0	191	3.8	5,440	354	6.5	255	4.7	4,509	390	8.6	233	5.2
3 to 4 years	5,313	365	6.9	194	3.6	5,554	369	6.6	227	4.1	5,100	579	11.4	364	7.1
Children 5 to 14 years[8]	**21,815**	**762**	**3.5**	**346**	**1.6**	**22,264**	**871**	**3.9**	**562**	**2.5**	**21,436**	**1,052**	**4.9**	**672**	**3.1**

- Represents or rounds to zero. (B) Base less than 200,000 or numerator too small for comparison.

[1] Includes help from the government, the other parent, an employer, and other sources.
[2] Includes help from a federal, state, or local government agency, or a welfare office.
[3] Includes married spouse present and spouse absent.
[4] Excludes those with missing income data.
[5] Wage and salary jobs and employment arrangements other than self-employed.
[6] Those who work 35 or more hours per week are considered working full-time.
[7] TANF stands for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
[8] Receipt of help to pay for child care is not broken down by characteristics for children 5 to 14 years old due to the small proportion of children in this age group with parents who receive help to pay for child care.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 1996 Panel, Waves 4 and 10; 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

Table 8.
Fathers Providing Care for Children with Employed Mothers: Selected Years, 1988 to 2002

(Numbers in thousands. Limited to married fathers with employed wives)

Survey year	Fathers with children under 15 years[1]			Fathers with children under 5 years			Fathers with children 5 to 14 years		
		Percent providing			Percent providing			Percent providing	
	Total	Any care	Primary care[2]	Total	Any care	Primary care[2]	Total	Any care	Primary care[2]
1988	14,278	18.9	11.8	6,536	23.3	16.9	10,720	15.5	8.8
1991	14,620	22.8	13.9	6,274	30.3	22.4	11,256	17.5	9.0
1993	14,849	19.6	12.9	6,274	24.8	18.5	11,412	15.6	9.1
1997	15,882	31.8	10.0	6,589	34.0	20.3	12,451	31.5	7.4
1999	16,650	30.9	8.8	6,525	32.3	19.4	13,429	30.5	6.1
2002	15,566	26.1	8.9	6,192	29.0	19.9	12,258	25.5	6.1

[1] The number of fathers with children in different age groups exceeds the number with children due to the fact that some fathers have children of both ages.

[2] Beginning in 1997, primary arrangements are derived from the number of hours each arrangement is used each week rather than a direct question asking for the primary arrangement as used in prior surveys. Also prior to 1997, information on father care was only collected if mentioned as being the primary or secondary care arrangement.

Note: Employed mothers are those with wage and salary employment, other employment arrangements including contingent work, and self-employment. Beginning in 1997, employment edits were changed to better capture arrangements other than wage and salary employment, which may affect comparisons to survey data from earlier years.

Source: Tabulations derived from Current Population Reports, P70-59, Tables 1 and 2, U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 1996 Panel, Waves 4 and 10; 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

reported receiving help paying for the care from either the government, the child's other parent, the parent's employer, or another source (Table 7). This figure increased from 1999, when 1.7 million children (5 percent) were in families receiving monetary help for child care costs. Receipt of help from any source to pay for child care for children under 5 years increased from 6 percent to 10 percent, compared with an increase from 4 percent to 5 percent for grade school-aged children. In 2002, 62 percent of children under 15 years whose parents received help for their care obtained it from the government (1.4 million out of 2.2 million).

Receipt of assistance to help pay for child care is related to economic status. Preschoolers living in poverty in 2002 were more likely to be in a family receiving help from the government (13 percent) than those living above the poverty line (4 percent). Receipt of government support for child care was related to receipt of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): 22 percent of preschoolers whose parent received TANF received government assistance for child care, compared with 6 percent of those who did not receive TANF. In the same way, a larger percentage of preschoolers in families receiving Medicaid had help from the government for child care payments than those in families not receiving Medicaid. The proportion of preschoolers with a nonemployed designated parent receiving help from a government source for child care payments was about equal to the percentage among those living with an employed parent.

Children with a designated parent who was Black were more likely than other children to receive government help to pay for child care. Preschoolers with an unmarried parent were more likely than those with a married parent to receive government help to pay for child care. Because mothers are usually the designated parent, these findings reflect the higher rates of poverty among Black mothers and unmarried mothers.[22]

In 2002, older preschoolers were more likely to be living with a parent or guardian who received help to pay for child care than were infants: 11 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds, compared with 8 percent of those under 1 year of age. The difference by age also occurred for children with parents receiving government assistance for child care, which was a change from 1997, when it did not vary by age of the preschooler.

[22] Carmen DeNavas-Walt, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Robert. J Mills. *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance in the United States: 2003,* U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, P60-226, Washington, DC, 2004.

Figure 4.

Percentage of Fathers Who Are the Primary Child Care Provider for Their Children by Father's Employment Characteristics: Winter 2002

(As percent of married fathers with employed wives)

Note: Primary care means the child spent more time in father's care than in any other arrangement, including self-care and school.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2001 Panel, Wave 4.

FATHERS PROVIDING CARE FOR THEIR CHILDREN

Fathers as Caregivers

Trends over time in the percentage of fathers providing care for children of employed and married mothers is included in this section, as well as an analysis of how the father's labor force status is associated with the likelihood of being the primary caregiver for their child.

Historical comparisons of SIPP data on fathers as child care providers are complicated by the changes to the questionnaire that began in 1997. Prior to that time, only the two most frequently used arrangement types were identified by the designated parent. The revised questionnaire allowed respondents to identify all of the arrangements they regularly use. As a result, increases in the percentage of fathers providing care are due in part to the addition of fathers who were not the primary or secondary care providers for their children. From 1988 to 1993, between 19 percent and 23 percent of fathers of employed wives provided care to one or more of their children under 15 years of age (Table 8). The percentage rose to 32 percent in 1997, stayed around this level in 1999, and dropped to 26 percent in 2002.

The method used to determine the primary arrangement has also changed. For the more recent survey years, the arrangement in which the child spent the most hours was designated as primary. Previously, the designated parent was asked to name the primary arrangement. The percentage of fathers who were the primary care provider for their child has varied between 9 percent and 14 percent since 1988. Despite some fluctuations, the proportion of fathers providing primary care for at least one of their children under the age of 15 has followed a downward trend, from 12 percent in 1988 to 9 percent in 2002.

Among fathers with an employed wife, 29 percent were a regular source of care for their preschooler in 2002. One in 5 fathers were the primary caregiver for their preschooler, meaning their child spent more time in their care than in any other arrangement (20 percent). In contrast, 6 percent of fathers provided the most hours of care for their grade school-aged child. The lower percentage of primary care by fathers for grade school-aged children is almost entirely due to older children being in school for a large portion of the day. School is included as an arrangement in these comparisons. A smaller

percentage of fathers provided any care to their grade school-aged children than the percentage who provided any care to their preschoolers (26 percent and 29 percent, respectively).

Fathers' Employment Characteristics

A father's employment status is a determinant of whether he is his child's primary caregiver while his wife is working. Figure 4 shows the likelihood that fathers with an employed wife will care for their preschooler or older child based on several employment attributes. Among fathers with preschoolers in 2002, a greater percentage of fathers who were not employed cared for their young children than did employed fathers (52 percent compared with 18 percent). Seven percent of fathers in the survey were not employed.

Some job characteristics may affect the availability of working fathers to care for their children. Fathers employed part-time were more likely to be caregivers to their preschoolers than fathers employed full-time (38 percent compared with 17 percent). Thirty-two percent of fathers who regularly worked evening or night shifts were the primary source of care for their young children, compared with 13 percent of day shift workers.

A father's employment status was also related to the likelihood that he provided most of the care for his older children; 18 percent of non-employed fathers and 5 percent of employed fathers were the primary care providers for their grade school-aged children. Eight percent of non-day shift-working fathers cared for their 5- to 14-year-olds, almost twice the percentage of day shift-working fathers. Part-time employed fathers and full-time employed fathers did not differ significantly in the percentage that were the primary caregivers for their older children.

SOURCE OF THE DATA

The population represented (the population universe) in the 2001 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) is the civilian noninstitutionalized population living in the United States. The SIPP is a longitudinal survey conducted at 4-month intervals. The data in this report were collected from February through May 2002 in the fourth wave (interview) of the 2001 SIPP. For the 2001 SIPP Panel, approximately 50,500 housing units were in sample for Wave 1. Of the 40,500 eligible units, 35,000 were interviewed. In the fourth wave, about 27,000 out of 31,000 eligible housing units were interviewed. All household members aged 15 and over were eligible to be interviewed, with proxy response permitted for household members not available at the time of interview. The universe of respondents for the SIPP child care topical module consists of adults who are the parents of children under 15 years old. The data presented in this report reflect the experiences of respondents during the month preceding the interview. Since the interviews are spread out over 4 months, the actual months represented by the data are from January to April 2002. The institutionalized population, which is excluded from the population universe, is composed primarily of the population in correctional institutions and nursing homes (91 percent of the 4.1 million institutionalized population in Census 2000).

ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES

Statistics from surveys are subject to sampling and nonsampling error. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90-percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. This means the 90-percent confidence interval for the difference between the estimates being compared does not include zero. Nonsampling errors in surveys may be attributed to a variety of sources, such as how the survey was designed, how respondents interpret questions, how able and willing respondents are to provide correct answers, and how accurately the answers are coded and classified. The U.S. Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the production process, including the overall design of surveys, the wording of questions, review of the work of interviewers and coders, and statistical review of reports to minimize these errors. The Survey of Income and Program Participation weighting procedure uses ratio estimation, whereby sample estimates are adjusted to independent estimates of the national population by age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. This weighting partially corrects for bias due to undercoverage, but biases may still be present when people who are missed by the survey differ from those interviewed in ways other than age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. How this weighting procedure affects other

variables in the survey is not precisely known. All of these considerations affect comparisons across different surveys or data sources.

For further information on the source of the data and accuracy of the estimates, including standard errors and confidence intervals, go to <www.sipp.census.gov /sipp/sourceac/S&A01_w1tow6 _cross_puf.pdf>

or contact John L. Boies of the Census Bureau's Demographic Statistical Methods Division on the Internet at <john.l.boies@census.gov>.

Additional information on the SIPP can be found at the following Web sites:

www.sipp.census.gov/sipp (main SIPP Web site),

www.sipp.census.gov/sipp /workpapr/wp230.pdf (SIPP Quality Profile), and

www.sipp.census.gov/sipp /usrguide/sipp2001.pdf (SIPP User's Guide).

MORE INFORMATION

The report is available on the Internet <www.census.gov>; search for children's data by clicking on the "Subjects A-Z" button and selecting "Child Care Data" under "C." A detailed table package presenting more in-depth child care information for both preschool- and grade school-aged children is also on the Internet, as well as more information on child care.

CONTACTS

Child care issues—

Fertility and Family Statistics Branch
301-763-2416
martin.t.oconnell@census.gov

Statistical Information Staff
301-763-2422
pop@census.gov

USER COMMENTS

The Census Bureau welcomes the comments and advice of users of its data and reports. If you have any suggestions or comments, please write to:

Chief, Population Division
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233

or send an e-mail inquiry to:
pop@census.gov

SUGGESTED CITATION

Overturf Johnson, Julia. *Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 2002.* Current Population Reports, P70-101. U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2005.

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
Washington, DC 20233

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Penalty for Private Use $300

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
U.S. Census Bureau
Permit No. G-58