



## Questions and Answers about CHILD CARE: A Sloan Work and Family Research Network Fact Sheet

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### Introduction

The Sloan Work and Family Research Network has prepared Fact Sheets that provide statistical answers to some important questions about work–family and work–life issues. This Fact Sheet includes statistics about Child Care. (Last updated: July 2008)



#### How many children are in child care?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “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” (Johnson, 2005, p. 2).
- ✔ **Fact 2** “In the winter of 2002, 89 percent of the 9.8 million preschoolers [children under 5 years old] 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” (Johnson, 2005, p. 3).
- ✔ **Fact 3** According to the National Survey of America's Families, “nearly 3 out of 4 (73%) children younger than 5 with employed mothers are regularly in nonparental child care” (Urban Institute, 2004, para.1).



#### How many hours per week do children stay in child care?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “In the winter 2002, preschoolers [children under 5 years old] spent an average of 32 hours per week in child care” (Johnson, 2005, p. 5).
- ✔ **Fact 2** In 2002, “[t]he highest average number of hours spent in a [child care] arrangement by preschoolers [children under 5 years old] of employed mothers was 34 hours for those in a day care center” (Johnson, 2005, p. 6).
- ✔ **Fact 3** In 2002 children under 5 years old “...with employed mothers spent twice as much time in child care as those with nonemployed mothers: 36 hours per week and 18 hours per week, respectively” (Johnson, 2005, p. 5–6).



#### How many preschoolers are cared for in center based programs?

- ✔ **Fact 1** Preschoolers [children under 5 years old] being cared for in organized facilities, “dropped to around 21 percent in the late 1990's and rose to 24 percent in 2002” (Johnson, 2005, p. 11).



- ✔ **Fact 2** In 2002, “[e]mployed mothers of preschoolers [children under 5 years old] 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)” (Johnson, 2005, p. 3).
- ✔ **Fact 3** The National Survey of America's Families found that among children under 5 years old with employed mothers, “nearly 3 out of 10 children are in center-based care (child care center, Head Start, nursery school, preschool, prekindergarten, and before- or afterschool programs)” (Urban Institute, 2004, para.1).
- ✔ **Fact 4** In 2002, “[a]mong [preschool] children [under 5 years old] 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” (Johnson, 2005, p. 6).
- ✔ **Fact 5** In 2002, “[d]ay care centers were more common arrangements for... children aged 3 and 4 years... than for infants (25 percent compared with 16 percent)” (Johnson, 2005, p. 8).
- ✔ **Fact 6** In 2002, “[c]hildren [under 5 years old] 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)” (Johnson, 2005, p. 7).



#### How many preschoolers are cared for by nonrelatives?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “In the late 1980's, the proportion of preschoolers [children under 5 years old] 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... rose back up to 28 percent in 1995”... and dropped down to 17 percent in 2002 (Johnson, 2005, p. 10).
- ✔ **Fact 2** In 2002, employed mothers of preschoolers [children under 5 years old] relied on, “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, aupairs, and housekeepers providing child care services” (Johnson, 2005, p. 3).
- ✔ **Fact 3** In 2002, “[n]onrelatives provided homebased care to 14 percent of preschoolers [children under 5 years old], with 6 percent cared for by family day care providers” (Johnson, 2005, p. 3).
- ✔ **Fact 4** In 2002, “[e]mployed 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)” (Johnson, 2005, p. 6).



### How many preschoolers are cared for by relatives?

- ✔ **Fact 1** The National Survey of America's Families found that among children under 5 years old with employed mothers, "about 1 in 4 children are cared for by a relative either in the child's home or the relative's home" (Urban Institute, 2004, para.1).
- ✔ **Fact 2** In a typical week during the winter of 2002, 7% of preschoolers [children under 5 years old] were cared for by other relatives, 4% by their mother while she worked, and 3% by siblings (Johnson, 2005, p. 3).
- ✔ **Fact 3** In a typical week during the winter of 2002, "[p]reschoolers--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" (Johnson, 2005, p. 3).
- ✔ **Fact 4** In 2002, "[a] smaller proportion of children [under 5 years old] of Hispanic [employed] mothers were in family day care (6 percent) than those with non-Hispanic White mothers (13 percent)" (Johnson, 2005, p. 6).



### How many fathers and grandparents provide child care?

- ✔ **Fact 1** In a typical week during the winter of 2002, "[t]wenty-three percent of preschoolers [children under 5 years old] were regularly cared for by their grandparent, and 14 percent were cared for by their father" (Johnson, 2005, p. 3).
- ✔ **Fact 2** "In winter 2002, the most widely used arrangements for preschoolers (children under 5 years old) of non-Hispanic White [employed] mothers were fathers and grandparents (both around 30 percent)" (Johnson, 2005, p. 6).
- ✔ **Fact 3** "The rate of care [of preschool children under 5 years old] 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" (Johnson, 2005, p. 11).
- ✔ **Fact 4** In 2002, "...1 in 5 fathers were the primary caregiver for their preschooler [child under 5 years old], meaning their child spent more time in their care than in any other arrangement (20 percent)" (Johnson, 2005, p. 19).
- ✔ **Fact 5** "Among fathers with preschoolers [children under 5 years old] 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)" (Johnson, 2005, p. 20).



### How does marital status affect fathers' involvement in child care?

- ✔ **Fact 1** In 2002, “[p]reschoolers [children under 5 years old] 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)” (Johnson, 2005, p. 7).
- ✔ **Fact 2** In 2002, “...12 percent of [preschool] children [under 5 years old] with previously married, employed mothers were cared for by their fathers, despite their parents' marital disruption” (Johnson, 2005, p. 7).



### How does mothers' employment status affect the types of child care used?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “For both married and single mothers, this study finds that centre (child) care is more likely to be chosen by women who have a higher probability of full-time employment” (Connelly & Kimmel, 2003, p. 772).
- ✔ **Fact 2** 35.1% of mother's who's children under 5 years old live with them and are employed full-time, have their preschooler going to organized care programs compared to 11.7% of unemployed mothers (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004).
- ✔ **Fact 3** In 2002, “[s]even percent of preschoolers [children under 5 years old] of nonemployed mothers were in multiple (two or more) child care arrangements, compared with 22 percent of preschoolers of employed mothers” (Johnson, 2005, p. 4).
- ✔ **Fact 4** In 2002, “[f]amilies 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 under 5 years old]” (Johnson, 2005, p. 7).
- ✔ **Fact 5** In 2002, “...many more preschoolers [children under 5 years old] of nonemployed mothers than employed mothers were not in a regular child care arrangement (69 percent and 11 percent, respectively)” (Johnson, 2005, p. 3).
- ✔ **Fact 6** “Among married mothers, 62% of those employed full-time pay for (child) care compared with 37% of those employed part-time. Similarly, 59% of single mothers employed full-time pay for (child) care compared to 39% of those employed part-time” (Connelly & Kimmel, 2003, p. 768).



### What is the cost of child care?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “Weekly expenditures on child care for each mode for those who pay for care: For employed part-time married mothers: Relative Care (\$51.75), Home-based care (\$70.71), Centre-based care (\$79.91). For employed part-time single mothers: Relative care (\$43.01), Home-based care (\$53.65), Centre-based care (\$60.32)” (Connelly, & Kimmel, 2003, p. 769).



- ✔ **Fact 2** In 2002, “[o]n average, mothers living in metropolitan areas paid \$101 per week for child care, while mothers living in nonmetropolitan areas paid \$69 per week” (Jonhson, 2005, p. 16).
- ✔ **Fact 3** In 2002, “...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)” (Johnson, 2005, p. 16).
- ✔ **Fact 4** In 2002, “[a]mong 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)” (Johnson, 2005, p. 16).
- ✔ **Fact 5** In 2002, “[f]amilies in poverty in which the mother was employed paid an average of \$67 per week (for child care), while families not in poverty paid \$98 per week” (Jonhson, 2005, p. 16).
- ✔ **Fact 6** In 2002, “[o]n average, mothers with one child paid \$75 per week [for child care], while those with two or more children paid about \$114 per week” (Jonhson, 2005, p. 16).



#### Do companies help employees with child care?

- ✔ **Fact 1** Nine percent of companies provide “child care at or near the worksite” (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, 2008, p. 21).
- ✔ **Fact 2** “21 percent of large employers (1,000 or more employees) provide on- or near-site child care compared with 7 percent of small employers (50–99 employees); and 76 percent of large employers offer DCAPs compared with 37 percent of small employers” (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, 2008, p. 20).
- ✔ **Fact 3** “Five percent of companies offer child care for school-age children on vacation” (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, 2008, p. 21).
- ✔ **Fact 4** Five percent of companies provide “payment for child care with vouchers or other subsidies that have direct costs to the company” (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, 2008, p. 21).
- ✔ **Fact 5** Thirty-five percent of companies offer “access to information to help locate child care in the community” (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, 2008, p. 21).
- ✔ **Fact 6** “Employers are most likely to provide Dependent Care Assistance Plans (46%) and Child Care Resource and Referral (35%)” (Galinsky, Bond, & Sakai, 2008, p. 20).



The Network has additional resources related to this topic.

1. Our database of academic literature contains the citations and annotations of literature related to the issue of Child Care. You can connect to this database at:  
[http://library.bc.edu/F?func=find-b-0&local\\_base=BCL\\_WF](http://library.bc.edu/F?func=find-b-0&local_base=BCL_WF)



## References

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Connelly, R., & Kimmel, J. (2003). Marital Status and full-time/part-time work status in child care choices. *Applied Economics*, 35(7), 761–777.

"The data used in this analysis comes from overlapping 1992 and 1993 panels of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). These data provide a nationally representative data set for the second half of 1994 with sufficient information on child care expenditures and mode as well as extensive employment information. The study limits its sample to those women with at least one child under the age of six. These samples include 4241 married women and 1523 single women, both with at least one child under the age of six" (p. 763).

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Galinsky, E., Bond, J.T., & Sakai, K. (2008). *National study of employers*. Families and Work Institute. Retrieved from <http://familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/2008nse.pdf>

2008 NSE sample includes 1,100 employers with 50 or more employees—77 percent are for profit employers and 23 percent are nonprofit organizations; 40 percent operate at only one location, while 60 percent have operations at more than one location. Interviews were conducted on behalf of Families and Work Institute by Harris Interactive, Inc.

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Johnson, J.O. (2005). *Who's minding the kids?: Child care arrangements: winter 2002*. Retrieved from the U.S. Census Bureau web site: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/p70-101.pdf>

"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)" (Johnson, 2005, p. 20).

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Smith, K. (2002). *Who's minding the kids?: Child-care arrangements: spring 1997*. Retrieved from the U.S. Census Bureau web site: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p70-86.pdf>



"The estimates in this report come from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), collected in Spring 1997 by the U.S. Census Bureau. The data highlighted in this report come primarily from the child care topical module in the fourth interview (wave) of the 1996 SIPP panel. The SIPP is a nationally representative longitudinal survey conducted at 4-month intervals by the Census Bureau" (p. 19).

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Urban Institute. (2004). *Primary child care arrangements for children under age 5 with employed mothers*. Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/900706.pdf>

"The National Survey of America's Families (NSAF) provides a comprehensive look at the well-being of adults and children and reveals striking differences among the 13 focal states. The survey provides quantitative measures of the quality of life in America. It pays particular attention to low-income families. The survey is representative of the noninstitutionalized, civilian population under age 65 in the nation as a whole and in each of the 13 focal states, which are: Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. Together, these states are home to more than half the nation's population and represent a broad range of fiscal capacity, child well-being, and approaches to government programs. ANF conducted three rounds of the NSAF -- 1997, 1999, and 2002. In each round, over 40,000 households participated providing detailed information on more than 100,000 people. The size of the sample and the nature of the questions asked make it one of the largest, most comprehensive surveys on well-being of American adults and children. Each survey round includes questions on economic, health, social, and demographic variables not combined together in any other national survey" (Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/anf> on, May 31, 2005).

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U.S. Census Bureau (2004). *Survey of income and program participation (SIPP), 2004 panel, wave 4*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/child/ppl-2005.html>

"The survey design is a continuous series of national panels, with sample size ranging from approximately 14,000 to 36,700 interviewed households. The duration of each panel ranges from 2 ½ years to 4 years. The SIPP sample is a multistage-stratified sample of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population. For the 1984-1993 period, a new panel of households was introduced each year in February. A 4-year 1996 panel was introduced in April 1996; a 3-year panel was started in February 2000 but cancelled after 8 months for budget reasons; and a 3-year panel was introduced in February 2001. The 2 ½ year 2004 SIPP sample was started in February 2004 and is the first SIPP panel to use the 2000 decennial-based redesign of the sample" (<http://www.census.gov/sipp/overview.html>).

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