



## Children in 2-worker families and real family income

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In recent years, changes in marital trends and family stability, along with changes in the labor force activity of mothers, have affected the lives of many of the Nation's children. The high incidence of divorce, separation, and out-of-wedlock births during the 1970's and 1980's has led to an increase in the proportion of children living with just one parent. The rapid increase in the proportion of employed married mothers has resulted in continuing growth in the percentage of children in families in which both parents are working. And, as racial minorities have increased, so have the number and proportion of minority children.

This research summary is based on information collected annually in March as part of the Current Population Survey.<sup>1</sup> It reviews the changing work patterns and composition of families with children, and trends in children's median family income. This measure of income differs somewhat from the more commonly used measure—median income of families with children.<sup>2</sup>

### Family trends

The primary change in the family situation of children has been the well-publicized increases in the proportion who are living in dual-worker families, that is, families with both parents employed (including fathers in the Armed Forces). Secondly, the proportion living in single-parent families main-

tained by mothers has also increased. These developments, of course, were coupled with the decline in the number of children living in "traditional" families (two-parent families in which only the father was employed). At the same time, the total number of children under 18 years was also declining.

*Dual-worker versus traditional families.* In March 1988, 24.9 million children under the age of 18 lived in dual-worker families. These children accounted for 43 percent of the total in families. Just 13 years earlier, children in such families numbered 18.9 million and constituted barely 30 percent of the Nation's children. Meanwhile, the number in "traditional" families fell from about 29 million (46 percent of all children) to fewer than 17 million (29 percent of children). (See table 1.)

Children whose parents both work tend to be better off than other children. For instance, in 1987, median family income for children in dual-worker families (\$41,000) was nearly 30 percent higher than for children in "traditional" families (\$32,000) and more than four times that of children in single-parent families maintained by women.

*Single-parent versus two-parent families.* The growth in the proportion of children living in single-parent families has not been as dramatic as the shift from "traditional" to dual-worker families. In 1975, 16 percent of children under 18 lived in single-parent families; by 1988, the proportion was 22 percent. The overwhelming majority of these children lived with their mothers, but a growing segment lived with their fathers.

Though small, this shift has some important implications for the well-being of children because of the employment situation of single parents,

especially mothers. As a group, these women face many difficulties that inhibit labor market success.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, 45 percent of the children in single-parent families maintained by a woman lived with a mother who was either unemployed (7 percent) or not in the labor force (38 percent). Of the children in families maintained by unmarried men, 21 percent lived with a father who was not employed. In contrast, only 4 percent of the children in two-parent families had no employed parent.

Thus, as might be expected, children in families maintained by women tend to have very low incomes. In 1987, median family income for children living with single mothers was only \$9,000 (\$15,400 if the mother worked); it was \$20,800 for children living with single fathers. This compares to \$35,600 for children in two-parent families.

*Race and Hispanic origin.* Black children accounted for nearly 14 percent of all children in 1988, while the proportion who were Hispanic totaled almost 11 percent. Both proportions were somewhat higher than in 1975.

Typically, white and Hispanic children live in two-parent families, whereas a little more than half of black children are in single-parent families (53 percent). For each group, the proportion living in two-parent families has declined. The decline was least for whites (6 percentage points) and greatest for black children (about 10 percentage points). Among Hispanics, the decline was also substantial (from 80 percent in 1975 to 72 percent in 1988). (See table 2.)

For the children in these families, part of the significance of these shifts lies in the employment problems of single parents, the effects of which were discussed above. The majority of

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[Utility] costs accounted for a larger share of rural consumers' housing costs than of urban consumers'.<sup>9</sup>

Rural consumers also spent more per unit on health care than did urban consumers. . . . [They] more frequently paid the full cost of their health insurance policies while employers more frequently paid the cost of policies for urban consumers.<sup>10</sup>

In general, the differences between expenditures in urban and rural areas found by Rogers were larger and more often significant than those discussed in this article. A divergence also occurred between specific comparisons. For example, Rogers found transportation expenditures and expenditure shares to be higher in rural areas, whereas here they were found to be larger in metropolitan areas. Also, in Rogers' study, rural consumer units were found to be more likely to own a home, while here metropolitan consumer units had a slightly higher incidence of homeownership. In general, then, most metropolitan/nonmetropolitan comparisons made in this article resemble urban/rural comparisons made by Rogers, although some important differences exist.

## Conclusion

Significant differences exist between average expenditure patterns in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan urban areas. While generally these differences are similar to those of urban/rural comparisons (that is, higher income and expenditures in metropolitan and urban areas), the

**Table 4. Selected average annual entertainment expenditures of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan urban consumer units, 1987**

Item	Expenditures		Shares		Chi-square statistic
	Metropolitan	Nonmetropolitan	Metropolitan	Nonmetropolitan	
Entertainment .....	\$1,210	\$872	100.0	100.0	—
Fees and admissions .....	363	188	30.0	21.6	*18.55
Fees for participant sports	47	25	3.9	2.9	1.57
Admissions to sports events .....	20	10	1.7	1.1	.91
Admissions to movies, concerts, etc. ....	67	24	5.5	2.8	*9.40
Club memberships .....	83	47	6.9	5.4	1.87
Fees for recreation lessons .....	48	19	4.0	2.2	*5.20
Total out-of-town recreation .....	98	63	8.1	7.2	.54
Televisions, radios and sound equipment .....	401	359	33.1	41.2	*14.10
Televisions .....	271	283	22.4	32.5	*26.25
Radios and sound equipment .....	130	76	10.7	8.7	2.34
Pets, other entertainment supplies and equipment ..	446	325	36.9	37.3	.04

NOTE: Asterisk indicates significance at the 5-percent level.

trends of item-level expenditures often follow very different paths in the two comparisons. With increasing metropolitan migration, this information will be useful in reaching a better understanding of future expenditure patterns nationwide. □

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of the Census, *News Release*, Sept. 30, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> A consumer unit consists of all members of a particular housing unit or other type of living quarters who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption, or who are parties to some other legal arrangement, such as foster children. Determination of membership in a consumer unit in the case of unrelated persons is based on financial independence. The term "household" may be used interchangeably with "consumer unit."

<sup>3</sup> A non-MSA urban area is any city with population between 2,500 and 50,000.

<sup>4</sup> N. M. Downie and R. W. Heath, *Basic Statistical*

*Methods* (New York, Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 193–201.

<sup>5</sup> Health care expenditures include out-of-pocket expenditures only; reimbursed health costs are not recorded as health care expenditures.

<sup>6</sup> John Rogers, "Expenditures of urban and rural consumers, 1972–73 to 1985," *Monthly Labor Review*, March 1988, pp. 41–46.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

**Table 3. Family characteristics of children by age, selected years, March 1975-88**

Family characteristics	Children 6 to 17 years old			Children under 6 years old		
	1975	1980	1988	1975	1980	1988
Total children (thousands)	45,208	41,788	38,554	18,366	17,927	19,887
Percent in:						
Two-parent families	83.1	79.0	75.8	86.8	84.4	81.0
Traditional families <sup>1</sup>	42.5	32.9	24.5	55.3	46.8	36.5
Dual-worker families <sup>2</sup>	32.2	39.1	44.6	23.3	30.6	38.5
Single-parent families	16.9	21.0	24.2	13.2	15.6	19.0
Maintained by women <sup>3</sup>	15.4	19.1	21.2	12.7	14.6	16.6
Maintained by men <sup>3</sup>	1.6	1.9	2.9	.5	1.0	2.3
White families	85.4	84.1	82.3	85.5	84.4	84.2
Black families	13.0	13.5	14.2	12.6	12.7	12.4
Hispanic-origin families	7.0	7.2	10.4	8.8	9.1	11.7

<sup>1</sup> Father employed (including Armed Forces), mother not employed.  
<sup>2</sup> Father and mother employed (including father in Armed Forces).  
<sup>3</sup> No spouse present.

NOTE: Detail for the above race and Hispanic-origin groups will not sum to totals because the data for the "other" groups are not presented and Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.

ward. However, under the pressure of recession, the median fell to \$26,800 between 1979 and 1983. Subsequently, as the Nation entered a protracted growth period, the median rose, reaching \$30,000 in 1987—only a little above the 1974 level.

For children in dual-worker families, the trend in median family income was similar, with one important exception. During the period following 1983, as the economy rebounded, the family median for these children rose to reach about \$40,900 in 1987, compared with its 1974 level of \$37,900.

Children in "traditional" families experienced less variation in family income over the period. In 1974, median real income for children in "traditional" families was \$31,400; 13 years later, it was \$31,700. In between, the median was lowest in 1983 (\$28,900) and highest in 1979 (\$32,600).

Children in single-parent families maintained by women were not as fortunate as those in two-parent families. The families of these children—whose median income is far less than that of two-parent families anyway—did not participate in the post-1983 recovery experienced by children in two-parent families. Between 1974 and 1979, their median income was fairly stable

**Income trends: 1974-87**

To the extent that income measures economic well-being, there has been little overall improvement in children's welfare over the period from 1974 to 1987. In fact, family income trends indicate that children's well-being declined, on average, in the early 1980's. However, as the economy recovered from the recession of the early 1980's,

family income began rising so that by 1987 some groups of children were in families with median incomes that were equal to, or slightly above, their 1974 levels (in constant 1987 dollars<sup>5</sup>). However, other groups were in families in which the median was below its 1974 level. (See table 4.)

In 1974, children's real median family income was about \$29,600. From 1974 to 1979, the median edged up-

**Table 4. Median family income in constant (1987) dollars<sup>1</sup> for children under 18 years by family characteristics, 1974-87**

Year	Total children	In two-parent families			In families maintained by women <sup>4</sup>	In families maintained by men <sup>4</sup>	In white families	In black families	In Hispanic-origin families
		Total	Traditional families <sup>2</sup>	Dual-worker families <sup>3</sup>					
1974	\$29,560	\$32,675	\$31,402	\$37,860	\$11,116	\$23,702	\$31,361	\$17,051	\$21,313
1975	28,340	31,639	30,319	36,482	10,754	23,248	30,101	16,505	19,438
1976	29,554	32,823	31,308	37,020	11,243	25,550	31,377	16,546	20,426
1977	29,724	33,274	31,959	37,309	11,257	24,632	31,587	16,062	21,523
1978	30,566	34,165	32,109	38,570	10,927	24,322	32,328	16,478	20,479
1979	30,442	34,508	32,558	38,808	11,346	23,665	32,389	16,147	20,842
1980	29,152	33,045	30,746	38,258	10,567	19,676	30,815	16,409	19,523
1981	28,196	32,595	29,909	38,136	10,439	23,850	29,727	15,347	18,907
1982	27,346	30,927	29,847	37,140	9,400	20,878	29,154	13,862	17,555
1983	26,800	31,444	28,865	36,620	9,065	21,628	28,681	14,028	17,844
1984	28,003	32,966	30,065	37,969	9,206	23,102	30,174	13,853	18,536
1985	28,519	33,440	30,500	38,811	8,993	21,343	32,656	15,341	17,910
1986	29,513	34,706	31,656	39,814	8,946	22,743	31,527	15,068	18,081
1987	30,007	35,619	31,652	40,890	9,007	20,781	32,357	14,250	17,504

<sup>1</sup> CPI-U-X1 used to adjust nominal values. See footnote 5 of research summary for explanation.

<sup>2</sup> Father employed (including Armed Forces), mother not employed.

<sup>3</sup> Father and mother employed (including father in Armed Forces).

<sup>4</sup> No spouse present.

**Table 1. Family characteristics of children under 18 years, March 1975-88**

[In percent]

Year	Total children (thousands)	Two-parent families			Single-parent families			White families	Black families	Hispanic-origin families
		Total	Traditional families <sup>1</sup>	Dual-worker families <sup>2</sup>	Total	Maintained by women <sup>3</sup>	Maintained by men <sup>3</sup>			
1975	63,574	84.1	46.2	29.7	15.9	14.6	1.3	85.4	12.9	7.5
1976	62,661	83.6	44.3	31.3	16.4	15.2	1.2	85.0	13.1	7.5
1977	61,709	83.0	43.0	33.2	17.0	15.7	1.3	85.0	13.0	7.4
1978	60,961	81.7	40.7	34.8	18.3	16.8	1.5	84.8	13.2	8.0
1979	59,983	81.6	39.5	36.2	18.4	16.8	1.6	84.7	13.3	7.2
1980	59,714	80.6	37.1	36.5	19.4	17.7	1.6	84.2	13.2	7.8
1981	59,148	80.4	36.3	36.8	19.6	17.8	1.8	83.8	13.3	8.3
1982	58,312	79.4	35.0	35.7	20.6	18.8	1.8	83.6	13.3	8.4
1983	58,034	79.4	34.0	35.4	20.6	18.7	1.9	83.6	13.3	8.8
1984	58,233	79.1	33.2	37.8	20.9	18.8	2.1	83.3	13.4	9.6
1985	58,189	78.3	31.5	39.5	21.7	19.3	2.4	83.2	13.5	9.8
1986	58,546	78.3	31.1	39.5	21.7	19.3	2.4	82.9	13.6	10.1
1987	58,438	77.8	28.8	41.9	22.2	19.7	2.5	83.2	13.6	10.4
1988	58,441	77.6	28.6	42.6	22.4	19.6	2.7	82.9	13.6	10.8

<sup>1</sup> Father employed (including Armed Forces), mother not employed.

<sup>2</sup> Father and mother employed (including father in Armed Forces).

<sup>3</sup> No spouse present.

NOTE: Detail for the above race and Hispanic-origin groups will not sum to totals because the data for the "other" groups are not presented and Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.

black and Hispanic children in such families (54 and 59 percent, respectively) lived with a parent who was not employed, compared with 37 percent of white children in such families.

At 28 percent for each group, the proportion of black and Hispanic children who were in dual-worker families was somewhat higher in 1988 than in 1975, while for white children the proportion rose sharply to reach 45 percent. Part of this differential resulted from the rapid increase among blacks and Hispanics in the proportion of children living in single-parent families. However, part was also because the labor force participation rate of white married mothers increased more rapidly than that of their black or Hispanic counterparts:

	Labor force participation rate		
	March 1975	March 1988	Difference
White	43.6	64.1	20.5
Black	58.4	76.0	17.6
Hispanic origin	38.5	52.6	14.1

Because the increase in white mothers' labor force participation rate was more rapid than that of black mothers, the traditional gap in participation between the two groups narrowed sub-

stantially. In contrast, the difference between the participation rates of white and Hispanic mothers widened between 1975 and 1988.

*School- and preschool-age children.* A higher proportion of school-age children are in dual-worker families than children under 6. This is because the mothers are far more likely to be in the labor force than those of preschoolers.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, both proportions have increased sharply since 1975—from 32 percent to 45 percent of the school-agers and from 23 percent to 39 percent

of the preschoolers. Over the same period, of course, there were substantial declines in the proportions in "traditional" families among children in both age groups. (See table 3.)

For both preschool- and school-age children in single-parent families, the proportions with an employed parent rose between 1975 and 1988—from 39 to 44 percent of children under 6 and from 53 to 62 percent of children 6 to 17 years old. Nonetheless, these percentages remained far below those of children of similar ages living in married-couple families.

**Table 2. Family characteristics of children by race and Hispanic origin, selected years, March 1975-88**

Family characteristics	White			Black			Hispanic origin		
	1975	1980	1988	1975	1980	1988	1975	1980	1988
Total children (thousands)	54,292	50,301	48,449	8,210	7,902	7,937	4,751	4,646	6,311
Percent in:									
Two-parent families	88.1	85.4	82.4	56.9	49.5	47.3	80.3	77.4	71.7
Traditional families <sup>1</sup>	49.7	40.4	31.3	23.5	17.3	13.1	45.7	39.2	32.2
Dual-worker families <sup>2</sup>	30.6	38.3	45.1	23.2	24.6	27.7	22.7	27.4	28.4
Single-parent families	11.9	14.6	17.6	43.1	50.5	52.7	19.8	22.6	28.3
Maintained by women <sup>3</sup>	10.7	13.0	14.9	41.6	48.6	49.5	18.7	21.1	25.4
Maintained by men <sup>3</sup>	1.2	1.6	2.7	1.5	2.0	3.2	1.1	1.6	2.9

<sup>1</sup> Father employed (including Armed Forces), mother not employed.

<sup>2</sup> Father and mother employed (including father in Armed Forces).

<sup>3</sup> No spouse present.

NOTE: Detail for the above race and Hispanic-origin groups will not sum to totals because the data for the "other" groups are not presented and Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.

at around \$11,000 a year. However, from 1980 to 1983, the median fell to about \$9,000, where it has remained since.

Part of the reason why children in these families did not participate in the economic expansion of the 1980's was attributable to changes in the composition of families maintained by women. Since 1975, the proportion of these families in which the householder was never married grew from about 13 percent to 21 percent. These women are typically very young, have completed relatively few years of schooling, and hence are not likely to possess the skills and experience necessary to obtain today's jobs. In addition, the proportion of such families that were black or Hispanic also rose, and black and Hispanic single mothers typically experienced labor market difficulties and consequently low median income.

Black and Hispanic children's median family income fell gradually over most of the 13-year period. In contrast, income for children in white families, which declined during the early 1980's began to rise after 1983, returning to its 1979 level. The result was that in terms of economic well-being, black and Hispanic children fell further behind whites, as shown by the change in the ratios of black and Hispanic children's median family income to that of white children:

	Family income ratio	
	1974	1987
Black/white .....	54.4	44.0
Hispanic/white .....	68.0	54.1

The difference in income trends between white children, on the one hand, and black and Hispanic children, on the other, partly reflects the changes in their family composition shown in table 3.

Families whose youngest children are 6 to 17 years old typically have higher median incomes than those with children under 6 years. This difference is partly because young children frequently have young parents, and earnings vary directly with the age of the earner.<sup>6</sup> Also, the needs of very young children often restrict the ability of parents—especially the mothers—to work or find work. (See table 5:)

**Table 5. Median family income in constant (1987) dollars<sup>1</sup> for children by age and family characteristics, selected years, 1974–87**

Family characteristics	1974	1977	1980	1983	1987
<b>Children 6 to 17 years</b>					
Total .....	\$31,575	\$31,438	\$30,920	\$28,416	\$31,366
In two-parent families .....	35,248	35,421	35,562	33,712	37,690
Traditional <sup>2</sup> .....	29,893	34,132	32,936	31,274	33,282
Dual-worker <sup>3</sup> .....	39,543	39,296	40,317	38,310	42,432
In families maintained by women <sup>4</sup> .....	12,487	12,458	12,231	10,736	10,517
In families maintained by men <sup>4</sup> .....	24,113	26,202	21,560	25,160	25,270
White .....	33,688	33,439	32,777	30,646	33,864
Black .....	17,666	16,993	17,127	14,657	15,116
Hispanic origin .....	22,789	23,130	20,742	19,083	18,485
<b>Children under 6 years</b>					
Total .....	\$25,800	\$25,099	\$25,663	\$23,982	\$27,503
In two-parent families .....	27,917	28,820	28,731	27,440	32,396
Traditional <sup>2</sup> .....	27,497	28,286	27,477	26,107	29,633
Dual-worker <sup>3</sup> .....	31,962	31,605	32,883	32,658	37,623
In families maintained by women <sup>4</sup> .....	8,193	7,353	6,968	6,207	6,397
In families maintained by men <sup>4</sup> .....	16,780	20,086	15,506	14,158	14,543
White .....	26,896	27,572	26,943	25,597	29,668
Black .....	15,574	13,143	14,620	11,978	12,957
Hispanic origin .....	18,810	19,016	17,442	15,681	15,474

<sup>1</sup> CPI-U-X1 used to adjust nominal values. See footnote 5 at end of report for explanation.

<sup>2</sup> Father employed (including Armed Forces), mother not employed.

<sup>3</sup> Father and mother employed (including father in Armed Forces).

<sup>4</sup> No spouse present.

WHAT ARE SOME OF the implications of these income trends? In the short term, of course, children whose family incomes are declining or lagging may not be receiving adequate food, shelter, clothing, or health care. Moreover, participation in organized social and educational activities available outside the schools may prove difficult for children from these groups.

The long-term impact of these income trends is more problematic, especially for children in single-parent families. This group varies continuously as parents remarry or divorce; the children may actually spend only a small part of their childhood in low-income, single-parent households.<sup>7</sup> However, to the degree that income affects educational and skill-training opportunities, children from single-parent, black, or Hispanic families may not be able to compete effectively as adults in the labor market. Thus, to the extent that jobs requiring highly skilled, educated workers predominate in the future,<sup>8</sup> these children may be more likely to be relegated to lower

skilled, low-paying work when they enter the labor force. □

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Current Population Survey is a sample survey of about 55,800 households with coverage in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia, conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Its purpose is to collect information on the employment status of persons in the noninstitutional population age 16 and over. Each March, additional questions are asked regarding household members' work experience in the prior year and the amount of money income they received from all sources.

<sup>2</sup> The measure of income used in this report is the median family income of *children*. This median is based on the frequency distribution of *children* by family income. Because many families contain more than one child (in March 1988, 58.4 million children lived in 32.3 million families), the frequency distribution of *children* by family income differs from that of *families with children*. In the distribution of *families*, the income of each family unit is represented only once, whereas in a distribution of *children* by their families' income, the income of family units can be represented more than once, depending on the number of children in each family. As a result, the dollar value of *children's* median family income (about \$30,000 in 1987)

differs somewhat from that of families with children (about \$30,720).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, B. L. Johnson and E. Waldman, "Most women who head families receive poor job market returns," *Monthly Labor Review*, December 1983, pp. 30-34.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Force Participation Unchanged Among Mothers with Young Children," USDL news release 88-431, Sept. 7, 1988, table 1.

<sup>5</sup> In this report, the CPI-U-X1 (Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers experimental series) was used to convert nominal-dollar income to constant-dollar income. This is one of several experimental price indices developed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to incorporate a rental equivalence factor for home ownership into the CPI-U. The CPI-U presently includes the rental equivalency only from 1983 forward. The CPI-U-X1 was used here to provide a deflator for years prior to 1983 that is consistent with current usage. See the appendix in M. W. Horrigan and S. E. Haugen, "The declining middle-class thesis: a sensitivity analysis," *Monthly Labor Review*, May 1988, pp. 3-13.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Usual Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers: First Quarter 1989," USDL news release 89-194, Apr. 26, 1989, table 2.

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of changes in family composition and its relation to family income, see J. N. Morgan, D. Dickinson, J. Dickinson, J. Benus, and G. Duncan, *Five Thousand Families—Patterns of Economic Progress*, (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, Institute for Social Science Research, 1974), pp. 99-122.

<sup>8</sup> See G. T. Silvestri and J. M. Lukasiewicz, "A look at occupational employment trends to the year 2000," *Monthly Labor Review*, September 1987, pp. 46-64.

### Child care options of employed women

Approximately \$14 billion was spent on child care in 1986 by families with

children under age 15, according to provisional data from the Commerce Department's Survey of Income and Program Participation. About 18.2 million working women with children took part in the survey conducted over the September to November 1986 period. One-third of the respondents reported making weekly payments for child care at an average cost of \$45 a week. Thirty-three percent of women above the poverty line reported payments, compared with 21 percent of women who were below the poverty line.

The average weekly payment for child care amounted to 6 percent of monthly family income. The average payment for women with family income below the poverty level was \$32, or 22 percent of their monthly income. Those with monthly family income of more than \$3,750 spent \$58 weekly, or 4 percent of monthly income.

The following are the average monthly income of families with working mothers with children under age 15 and the average weekly expenditure for child care, by race and Hispanic origin:

	Monthly income	Weekly expenditure
Total .....	\$3,048	\$45.20
White .....	3,071	45.60
Black .....	2,259	36.80
Hispanic origin ..	2,448	43.90

Of the 9 million preschool children of working mothers, 41 percent were cared for in someone else's home and 21 percent attended a group day care facility, nursery school, or preschool. The proportion of preschoolers cared for by their mothers at work was 6.7 percent. This proportion is usually highest before school commences.

The following are the day care arrangements reported in the fall of 1986 for both preschoolers and children 5 years or older:

	Under age 5	Ages 5-14
Total (thousands) . . . .	9,046	19,976
Arrangement (percent): .	100	100
Child's home . . . . .	29.7	13.8
Another's home . . . . .	41.3	5.4
Day/group care center . .	14.7	1.9
Nursery school/pre-school . . . . .	6.4	.9
Kindergarten/grade school . . . . .	1.2	69.9
Child cares for self . . . .	—	4.9
Mother cares for child at work . . . . .	6.7	3.2

As shown, about 70 percent of the 20 million children ages 5 to 14 were reported to be in school while their mothers worked; only a little more than 7 percent were cared for outside their homes. Parental care for children in this age group accounted for one-fifth of all arrangements in the summer, compared with one-tenth in the fall. Moreover, 13 percent were left to their own supervision during the summer, compared with 5 percent in the fall.

The Census Bureau cautions that the data come from two national samples of the Survey of Income and Program Participation and are subject to various errors, such as undercoverage of the population, processing errors, and respondent reporting errors. A forthcoming report will include final statistics for 1986 and 1987. □

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