

PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT

ES 3.1 PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH BOTH OR ONLY RESIDENT PARENT IN THE LABOR FORCE

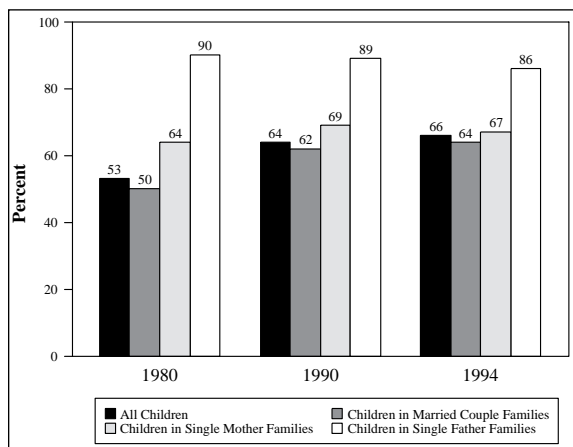
Over the last three decades there has been a rise in the proportion of single parent families, and in the proportion of mothers who work regardless of marital status.¹⁷ These factors have acted to reduce the percent of children who have a parent at home full time. Figure ES 3.1 presents data on the percent of children who have all resident parents participating in the labor force at some level for the years 1980, 1990, and 1994. Between 1980 and 1990, rates for all children under age 18 increased from 53 percent to 64 percent. During the early 1990s the percentage rose at a more modest rate, to 66 percent by 1994. Increases were highest among children in married couple families, from 50 percent in 1980 to 64 percent in 1994. Children in single mother families saw much smaller increases over the same time period, from 64 percent to 67 percent. Contrary to the general trend, children in single father families actually experienced a slight decline over this period from 90 percent to 86 percent.

Children under age 6 experienced larger increases than those ages 6-17 in this indicator from 1980 to 1994. Rates increased 16 percentage points (44 percent to 60 percent) for younger children compared to 12 percentage points for children ages 6-17 (57 percent to 69 percent). (See Table ES 3.1) During that same time period, whites experienced a 13 percentage point increase (53 to 66 percent); blacks an 8 percentage point increase (58 to 66 percent); and Hispanics also experienced an 8 percentage point increase (44 to 52 percent).

In 1994, the proportion of children who had both or only resident parent in the labor force was similar for those in married couple and single mother families at 64 percent and 67 percent, respectively. (See Table ES 3.1) Rates were substantially higher for children in single father families, at 86 percent. Across race/ethnicity groups, whites and blacks had identical rates of 66 percent, while Hispanic children had lower a lower rate of 52 percent.

¹⁷Bianchi, S. M. 1995. "Changing Economic Roles of Women and Men" in *State of the Union: American in the 1990s: Volume I*. Reynolds Farley (ed.). New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1995.

Figure ES 3.1 PERCENT OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 WITH BOTH OR ONLY RESIDENT PARENT IN THE LABOR FORCE



Source: Calculated by Child Trends, Inc., based on analyses of the March 1980, 1990, and 1994 Current Population Surveys.

Table ES 3.1 PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH BOTH OR ONLY RESIDENT PARENT IN THE LABOR FORCE

	1980	1990	1994
All children	53	64	66
< age 6	44	58	60
6-17	57	68	69
Family Type			
Married couple	50	62	64
< age 6	42	55	58
6-17	54	65	68
Single mother	64	69	67
< age 6	55	62	62
6-17	67	72	70
Single father	90	89	86
< age 6	91	91	88
6-17	89	88	85
Race/ethnicity group			
White	53	64	66
< age 6	43	57	60
6-17	57	68	69
Black	58	66	66
< age 6	53	62	62
6-17	60	68	68
Hispanic	44	53	52
< age 6	39	49	47
6-17	47	55	56

Source: Calculated by Child Trends, Inc., based on analyses of the March 1980, 1990, and 1994 Current Population Surveys.

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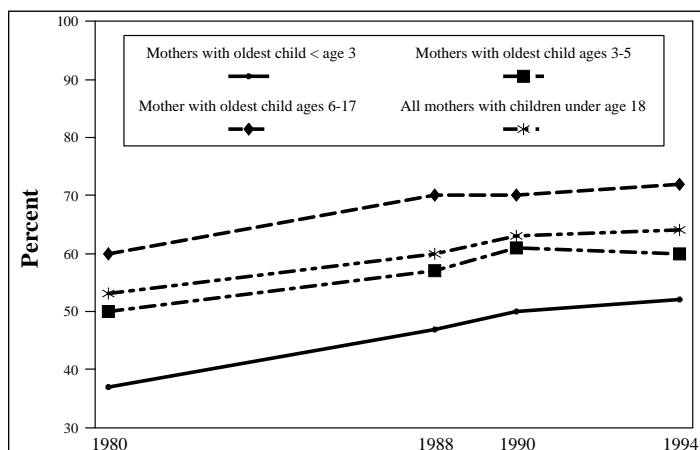
ES 3.2 MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT: PERCENT OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 WHO ARE EMPLOYED, FULL TIME AND PART TIME

Over the last several decades, the increasing proportion of mothers moving into employment has had substantial consequences for the everyday lives of families with children. Maternal employment adds to the financial resources available to families, and is often the only source of income for families headed by single mothers. In addition, it often means that younger children are spending a substantial amount of time in child care.

Figure ES 3.2.a presents trends in rates of maternal employment by age of youngest child for selected years from 1980 through 1994. For all mothers with children under age 18, rates increased steadily from 53 percent to 63 percent between 1980 and 1990. From 1990 to 1994, rates increased at a slower pace from 63 percent to 64 percent. Mothers with children under the age of three experienced the largest increases, advancing 15 percentage points, from 37 percent in 1980 to 52 percent in 1994. The increase for women with a youngest child age 3-5 was 10 percentage points (from 50 percent to 60 percent), and 12 percentage points for mothers whose youngest child was 6-17 (from 60 percent to 72 percent). Most of the increase for mothers whose youngest children were in this older age group occurred between 1980 and 1988, when the rate increased to 70 percent.

Table ES 3.2 provides additional trend data from 1980 to 1994 by race ethnicity group. During that period maternal employment among white mothers increased 13 percentage points (from 52 percent to 65 percent) followed by Hispanic mothers at 6 percentage points (from 42 percent to 48 percent) and black mothers at 4 percentage points (from 54 percent to 58 percent). Increases had been larger for black and Hispanic mothers between 1980 and 1990, but those groups showed declines in maternal employment of 2 to 3 percentage points in employment levels from 1990 to 1994 while white mothers continued to gain.

Figure ES 3.2.A PERCENT OF MOTHERS WHO ARE EMPLOYED, BY AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD: 1980 - 1994



Source: Unpublished Tables, Bureau of Labor Statistics, based on analyses of March Current Population Surveys for 1980, 1988, 1990 and 1994.

Table ES 3.2 MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT: PERCENT OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 WHO WERE EMPLOYED, FULL TIME AND PART TIME^a

	1980	1988	1990	1994
Total				
Employed	53	60	63	64
Working Full-Time	—	44	46	45
Working Part-Time	—	16	17	19
Age of Youngest Child				
< Age 3				
Employed	37	47	50	52
Working Full-Time	—	32	34	34
Working Part-Time	—	15	16	18
Ages 3-5				
Employed	50	57	61	60
Working Full-Time	—	40	43	41
Working Part-Time	—	17	18	19
Ages 6-17				
Employed	60	70	70	72
Working Full-Time	—	53	53	53
Working Part-Time	—	17	17	19
Marital Status				
Married, Spouse Present				
Employed	—	62	63	66
Working Full-Time	—	43	44	45
Working Part-Time	—	19	19	21
Never Married				
Employed	—	40	45	46
Working Full-Time	—	32	36	34
Working Part-Time	—	8	9	12
Divorced				
Employed	—	75	75	74
Working Full-Time	—	66	66	63
Working Part-Time	—	9	9	11
Race/Ethnicity				
White				
Employed	52	62	63	65
Working Full-Time	—	44	44	45
Working Part-Time	—	18	19	20
Black				
Employed	54	56	61	58
Working Full-Time	—	48	53	47
Working Part-Time	—	8	8	11
Hispanic				
Employed	42	49	50	48
Working Full-Time	—	38	39	36
Working Part-Time	—	11	11	12

Note: ^aPercentages for 1980 are not offered separately by marital status and full-time vs. part-time due to incompatibilities with definitions used in later years.

Source: Unpublished Tables, Bureau of Labor Statistics, based on analyses of March Current Population Surveys for 1980, 1988, 1990 and 1994.

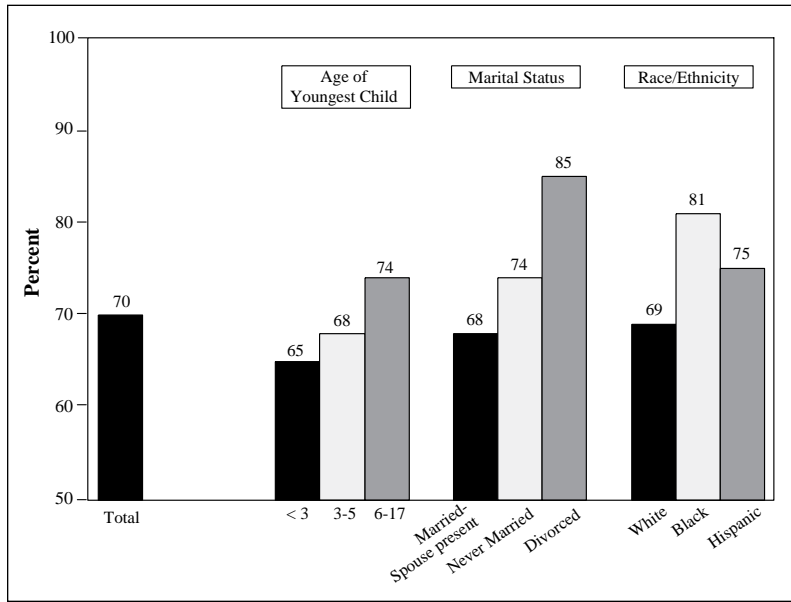
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ES 3.2 MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT: PERCENT OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 WHO ARE EMPLOYED, FULL TIME AND PART TIME (continued)

Table ES 3.2 also presents data for married, never married, and divorced mothers, though only for years 1988, 1990, and 1994. Both married and never married mothers experienced increases in employment during that period, from 62 percent to 66 percent for married mothers, and from 40 to 46 percent for never married mothers. Divorced mothers, who had the highest rates of employment over that period, actually experienced a small decrease from 75 percent to 74 percent.

Figure ES 3.2.b shows the proportion of employed mothers who reported working full time in 1994, by age of youngest child, marital status, and race/ethnicity. Among all employed mothers, 70 percent were working full time in 1994. Employed mothers with older children were more likely to work full time than those with young children, with rates ranging from 65 percent for mothers with children under age 3, to 74 percent for mothers with a youngest child between the ages of 6 and 17. Among employed mothers of different marital statuses, divorced mothers were the most likely to work full time (85 percent) and married mothers the least likely (68 percent). Finally, among race/ethnicity groups, black mothers who were employed were the most likely to work full time (81 percent), followed by Hispanic mothers (75 percent) and white mothers (69 percent).

Figure ES 3.2.B PROPORTION OF OF MOTHERS WHO REPORTED WORKING FULL TIME: 1994



Source: Unpublished Tables, Bureau of Labor Statistics, based on analyses of March Current Population Surveys for 1980, 1988, 1990, and 1994.

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ES 3.3 PARENTAL LABOR FORCE DETACHMENT: THE PERCENT OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 WITH NO RESIDENT PARENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE.

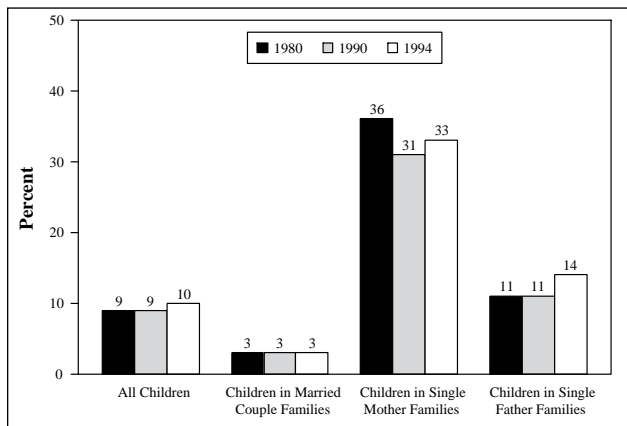
Attachment to the labor force is, for the vast majority of families, a necessary prerequisite for a financially and socially stable life. Children who have no parents in the labor force are at considerably higher risk of poverty, welfare dependence, and social isolation, all of which can have long term negative consequences for their well-being.

Figure ES 3.3 presents trends in the proportion of children living in families where there were no resident parents attached to the labor force. Data are presented for 1980, 1990, and 1994, by family type and race/ethnicity. During that period, approximately one in 10 children lived in families where all resident parents were detached from the labor force. The percentages were 9 percent in 1980 and 1990, and rose slightly to 10 percent in 1994.

The rate of parental labor force detachment for children in married couple families was constant at 3 percent from 1980 to 1994. Rates for children in families headed by single mothers were considerably higher. For children in such families, parental labor force detachment dropped from 36 percent to 31 percent between 1980 and 1990, then increased somewhat to 33 percent by 1994. For children under age 6 in such families, however, the reduction was more substantial, from 46 percent in 1980 to 38 percent in 1990 and 1994. (See Table ES 3.3 for age-specific data). In families headed by single mothers, mothers of children under age six were more likely to be detached from the labor force than mothers of older children. The difference for the two age groups has become smaller over time, however, going from 13 percentage points in 1980 (46 percent versus 33 percent) to 8 percentage points in 1994 (38 percent versus 30 percent). Children living in families headed by single fathers experienced parental labor force detachment rates of 11 percent in 1980 and 1990, and 14 percent in 1994. This is substantially less than rates experienced by children in families headed by single mothers (14 percent versus 33 percent in 1994), but substantially higher than those in married couple families (3 percent).

White children were less likely than black or Hispanic children to have no resident parents in the labor force in 1994, with rates of 8 percent, 24 percent, and 17 percent, respectively. For white children, rates were steady at 6 percent in 1980 and 1990 before increasing to 8 percent in 1994. Rates for Hispanic children have been increasing over the time period from 14 percent in 1980 to 17 percent in 1994. Black children had rates of 24 percent in 1980 and 1994, with a modest dip to 23 percent in 1990.

Figure ES 3.3 PARENTAL LABOR FORCE DETACHMENT: PERCENT OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 WITH NO RESIDENT PARENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE



Source: Calculated by Child Trends, Inc., based on analyses of the March 1980, 1990, and 1994 Current Population Surveys.

Table ES 3.3 PERCENT OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 WITH NO RESIDENT PARENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE FOR SELECTED YEARS: 1980 - 1994

	1980	1990	1994
All Children	9	9	10
< age 6	9	10	11
Ages 6-17	9	9	10
Family Type			
Married couple	3	3	3
< age 6	2	3	3
6-17	3	3	3
Single mother	36	31	33
< age 6	46	38	38
6-17	33	28	30
Single father	11	11	14
< age 6	9	9	12
6-17	11	12	15
Race/ethnicity group			
White	6	6	8
< age 6	6	7	8
6-17	7	6	8
Black	24	23	24
< age 6	26	27	27
6-17	23	20	23
Hispanic	14	15	17
< age 6	14	15	18
6-17	14	15	17

Source: Calculated by Child Trends, Inc., based on analyses of the March 1980, 1990, and 1994 Current Population Surveys.

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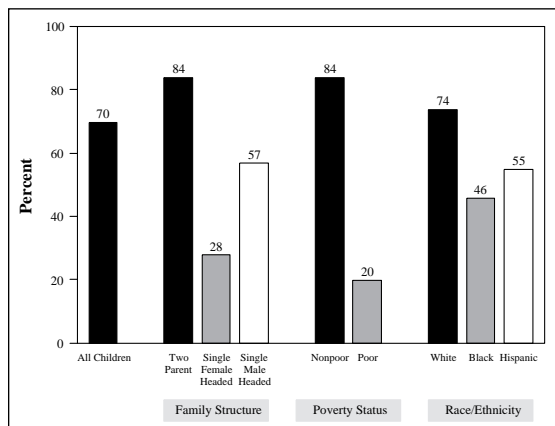
ES 3.4 SECURE PARENTAL LABOR FORCE ATTACHMENT: PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH AT LEAST ONE FULLY EMPLOYED (FULL TIME, FULL YEAR) RESIDENT PARENT

Full time, full year employment is an indicator of secure and stable labor force attachment and, for most families, produces a degree of financial security and independence.

Table ES 3.4 presents trend data for 1979, 1989, and 1993 in the percent of children who have at least one resident parent employed full time, full year. Data are presented for all children, and separately by race/ethnicity, poverty status, age of child, and family structure. The data indicate that the percent of children in such families stayed constant at 72 percent in 1979 and 1989, decreasing modestly to 70 percent in 1993. Rates for most population subgroups were also fairly stable, decreasing or increasing by a couple of percentage points. In general, those groups that are better off on most measures of economic security (e.g., children in married couple or nonpoor families), experienced increased levels of full time, full year employment, while those who are generally worse off economically (children in poor or single parent families) experienced decreases. For example, while rates for children from single female-headed families dropped from 32 percent to 28 percent between 1989 and 1993, rates for children from married couple families increased from 82 percent to 84 percent.

Figure ES 3.4 presents estimates of secure parental labor force attachment for 1993 by family structure, poverty status, and race/ethnicity. Across family types, full time, full year parental employment is considerably more common for children from two parent families (84 percent) than among children from either single female headed families (28 percent) or single male headed families (57 percent). The figure also shows a strong relationship between poverty and secure labor force attachment, with rates of 84 percent for children from nonpoor families versus 20 percent for children in poor families. Finally, rates of secure parental labor force attachment were highest among white children (74 percent) followed by Hispanic children (55 percent) and then black children (46 percent).

Figure ES 3.4 SECURE PARENTAL LABOR FORCE ATTACHMENT: PERCENT OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 WITH AT LEAST ONE FULLY EMPLOYED (Full-time, Full Year) RESIDENT PARENT: 1993



Note: Fully employed is defined as having worked 50+ weeks during the preceding year, and working 35+ hours per week for the majority of those weeks.

Source: Calculated by Child Trends, Inc., based on data from the March 1994 Current Population Survey.

Table ES 3.4 SECURE PARENTAL LABOR FORCE ATTACHMENT: PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH AT LEAST ONE FULLY EMPLOYED RESIDENT PARENT FOR SELECTED YEARS: 1979 - 1993

	1979	1989	1993
Total	72	72	70
Race/Ethnicity			
White	76	77	74
Black	51	50	46
Hispanic	63	60	55
Poverty Status			
Poor	21	22	20
Nonpoor	82	84	84
Child's Age			
< age 5	69	69	66
6-11	72	73	70
12-17	75	76	74
Family Structure			
Two-parent	82	84	84
Single female headed	32	31	28
Single male headed	61	60	57

Note: Fully employed is defined as having worked 50+ weeks during the preceding year, working 35+ hours per week for the majority of those weeks.

Source: Calculated by Child Trends, Inc., based on data from the March 1980, 1990, and 1994 Current Population Surveys.

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ES 3.5 CHILD CARE

The child care needs of American families have been increasing over the past several decades as mothers have moved into the labor force in ever greater numbers. Research has clearly demonstrated that the quality of child care that a young child receives can have substantial impacts on his or her development and well-being, and that the quality of care varies substantially in the United States.¹⁸

Table ES.3.5.a presents trends from 1965 through 1993 in the types of child care used by working mothers for their children under the age of five. The data demonstrate a clear trend away from care in the home, and towards care outside the home in day care centers, preschools and in the homes of non-relatives. For the children of full-time working mothers, the proportion attending day care centers and preschools increased from 8 percent to 31 percent between 1965 and 1988, declined somewhat to 28 percent in 1991, then resumed its upward trend to 35 percent in 1993. For children whose mothers worked part time, use of child care centers and preschools increased from 3 percent in 1965 to 17 percent in 1988, dipped to 15 percent in 1991, then increased once again to 21 percent in 1993.

Data for 1991 indicate that, for children whose mothers work full time, the most common forms of child care used were day care and preschool facilities (28 percent) followed by non-relative care in the provider's home (21 percent). (See Table ES.3.5.a) For children whose mothers work part time, care by the father is by far the most common arrangement (29 percent). Day care centers and preschools are used by only 15 percent of these children.

¹⁸Whitebook, M., Phillips, D., and Howes, C. 1989. *National Child Care Staffing Study*. Oakland, CA: Child Care Employees Project and Hayes, C.D., Palmer, J.L., and Zaslow, M. J. (Eds.). 1990. *Who Cares for America's Children? Child Care Policy for the 1990s*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Table ES 3.5.A PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 WITH EMPLOYED MOTHERS IN DIFFERING CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, 1965 - 1993

	1965*	1977	1982	1984-85	1988	1991	1993
Mother Employed Full-Time							
Day care center or preschool	8	15	20	30	31	28	35
Non-relative care in provider's home	20	27	25	27	27	21	—
Grandparent or other relative in relative's home	18	21	21	16	14	14	—
Father in child's home	10	11	11	10	8	15	—
Other care in child's home	37	18	16	13	13	15	—
Mother Employed Part-Time							
Day care center or preschool	3	9	8	17	17	15	21
Non-relative care in provider's home	8	16	19	14	17	13	—
Grandparent or other relative in relative's home	9	13	16	16	11	11	—
Father in child's home	23	23	21	22	27	29	—
Other care in child's home	24	20	20	18	14	17	—

*Data for 1965 are for children under 6 years old.

Notes: 1. Data are based on survey questions that asked about care arrangements for youngest child in the family. Percentages for earlier years have been recalculated after removal of cases in "don't know" category.

2. Different arrangements do not sum to 100 percent because children may be in multiple care arrangements.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-70, No. 9, P-70, No. 30, and P-70, No. 36, *Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 1984-1985, 1988 and 1991*, 1987, Table 3; 1992, Table 1; and 1994, Table 1; and Series P-23, No. 117, *Trends in Child Care Arrangements of Working Mothers*, Table A; U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. Data for 1993 from unpublished tables, Bureau of the Census.

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ES 3.5 CHILD CARE (continued)

Table ES.3.5.b presents 1993 estimates of the distribution of child care types used by all working mothers (regardless of hours worked) by child's age, race/ethnicity, mothers educational attainment and marital status, poverty status, and monthly income. The data indicate that, prior to age 3, the most common source of child care is a relative (other than the father) in the child's own home, with rates of 28 percent for children less than age one, and 29 percent for children ages 1-2. For ages 3-4, the percent receiving care from this source drops to 21 percent, and day care and preschool become the most common source of care (39 percent).

Children with mothers of higher socioeconomic status are the most likely to be receiving care from a day care center or preschool. For example, 18 percent of poor children under age 5 receive care from such sources, compared to 31 percent of nonpoor children. Only 20 percent of children whose mothers have less than a high school diploma receive care from a day care center or preschool, compared to 36 percent of children whose mothers have a college degree. For the children of poor mothers and those with mothers lacking a high school diploma, the most common source of child care was a relative other than the father, with rates of 36 percent for both groups.

Patterns of child care use also vary by race/ethnicity. Black children were, at 33 percent, the most likely to receive some form of organized child care (from a child care center or preschool), followed by whites (30 percent) and Hispanics (21 percent).

Table ES 3.5.B PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 WITH EMPLOYED MOTHERS IN DIFFERING CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS, BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, 1993

	Day Care Center/ Preschool ^a	Family Day Care ^b	Non-Relative Sitter in Child's Home	Father in Child's Home	Relative in Own or Child's Home	Mother Cares for Child ^c	Other Care Arrangements ^d
Total	30	17	5	16	25	6	1
Age of Child							
Under 1 year	19	22	6	18	28	7	*
1-2 years	24	19	5	17	29	6	*
3-4 years	39	12	4	14	21	7	3
Race/Ethnicity							
White	30	17	5	17	23	7	1
Black	33	13	2	9	37	3	2
Hispanic ^e	21	13	7	15	39	3	2
Educational Attainment of Mother							
Less than high school	20	15	5	17	36	6	1
High school	27	16	3	17	30	6	1
College, 1 to 3 years	32	16	4	16	23	8	1
College, 4 or more years	36	19	8	14	17	6	1
Marital Status							
Married, Spouse Present	30	16	5	19	21	7	1
All other marital status ^f	29	17	5	3	40	4	1
Poverty Level ^g							
Below Poverty	18	12	7	16	36	8	1
Above Poverty	31	17	5	16	24	6	1
Monthly Family Income ^g							
< \$1,500	23	16	5	15	34	6	1
\$1,500 - \$2,999	25	15	3	21	26	9	1
\$3,000 - \$4,499	29	19	4	18	24	5	1
\$4,500 and over	39	17	7	11	21	4	1

*Less than 0.5 percent.

^aIncludes day/group care center, nursery school and pre-school.

^bRefers to care by a non-relative in a home other than the child's.

^cIncludes mothers working at home or away from home.

^dOther care arrangements include school-based activity and kindergarten/grade school.

^ePersons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

^fIncludes married, husband absent (including separated), widowed, divorced, and never-married mothers.

^gOmits persons who did not report family income.

Note: Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Unpublished tables, United States Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of the Census.