

PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT

What does this indicator measure?

Parental employment measures the number of Connecticut children under age 18 in either one- or two-parent households where no parent, one parent, or both parents work.

Why is this indicator important?

In 2001, 61% of U.S. children six years and under spent time in non-parental care.¹ Nationally, half of families with income below 200% of poverty include parents who work full time. Almost 60% of these families have two parents in the home, and over 75% are headed by a parent with at least a high school degree. In almost half of these families, the primary worker is a parent over 30 years of age.²

Parental Employment and Family Economic Security

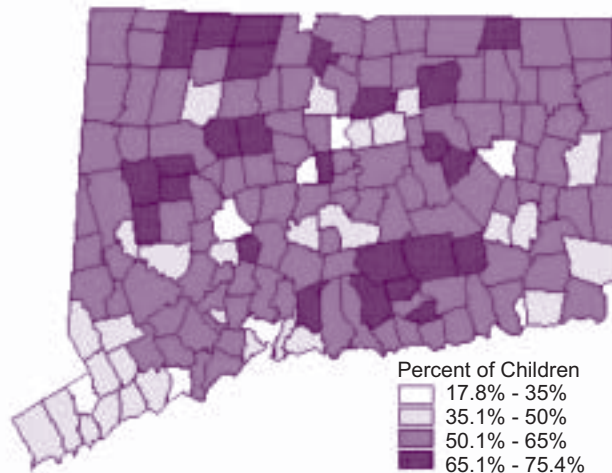
Employment may increase cash flow in some families, but work-related expenses, such as child care or transportation costs, may potentially leave families with fewer resources overall.³ For two-parent households where both parents work, or single-parent households where the parent works, child

care is a primary concern, not only for economic reasons, but also because of the quality of care typically available.

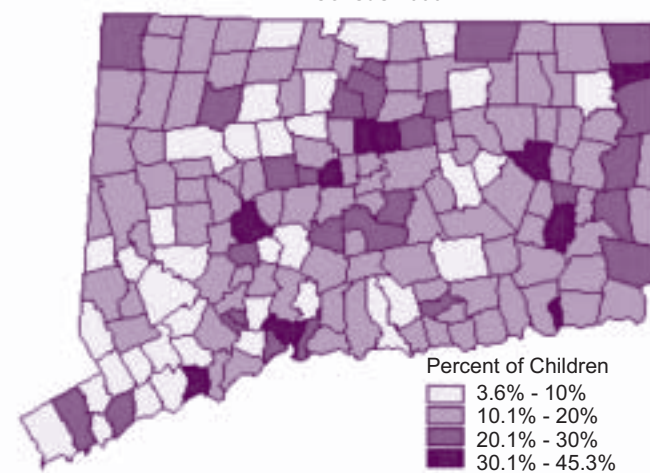
The diversity reflected in our society can be seen in the variety of work situations in which parents participate. The prevalence in parental work patterns is for both parents in a two-parent family to work. However, according to a recent Census report, there is a growing number of professional women who are choosing to stay home with their newborns for the first year of the child's life rather than return to work.⁴ Unfortunately, for low-income families, especially single-parent families and those who are receiving public assistance, staying home with their children is not an option.

As a result of the economic downturn that has occurred since 2000, there are fewer jobs available for those who are looking for work, particularly those with limited education and work experience. According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, the state's unemployment rate in February 2000 was 2.5%; it rose to 4.8% in February 2004.⁵ Since 2000, there has been a 2% decline in employment among all parents who care for their own children under age 18. For mothers who have no spouse present, there has been a 3% decline in employment.⁶

Children Living with 2 Parents, Both in Labor Force
Census 2000



Children Living with 1 Parent, Parent in Labor Force
Census 2000



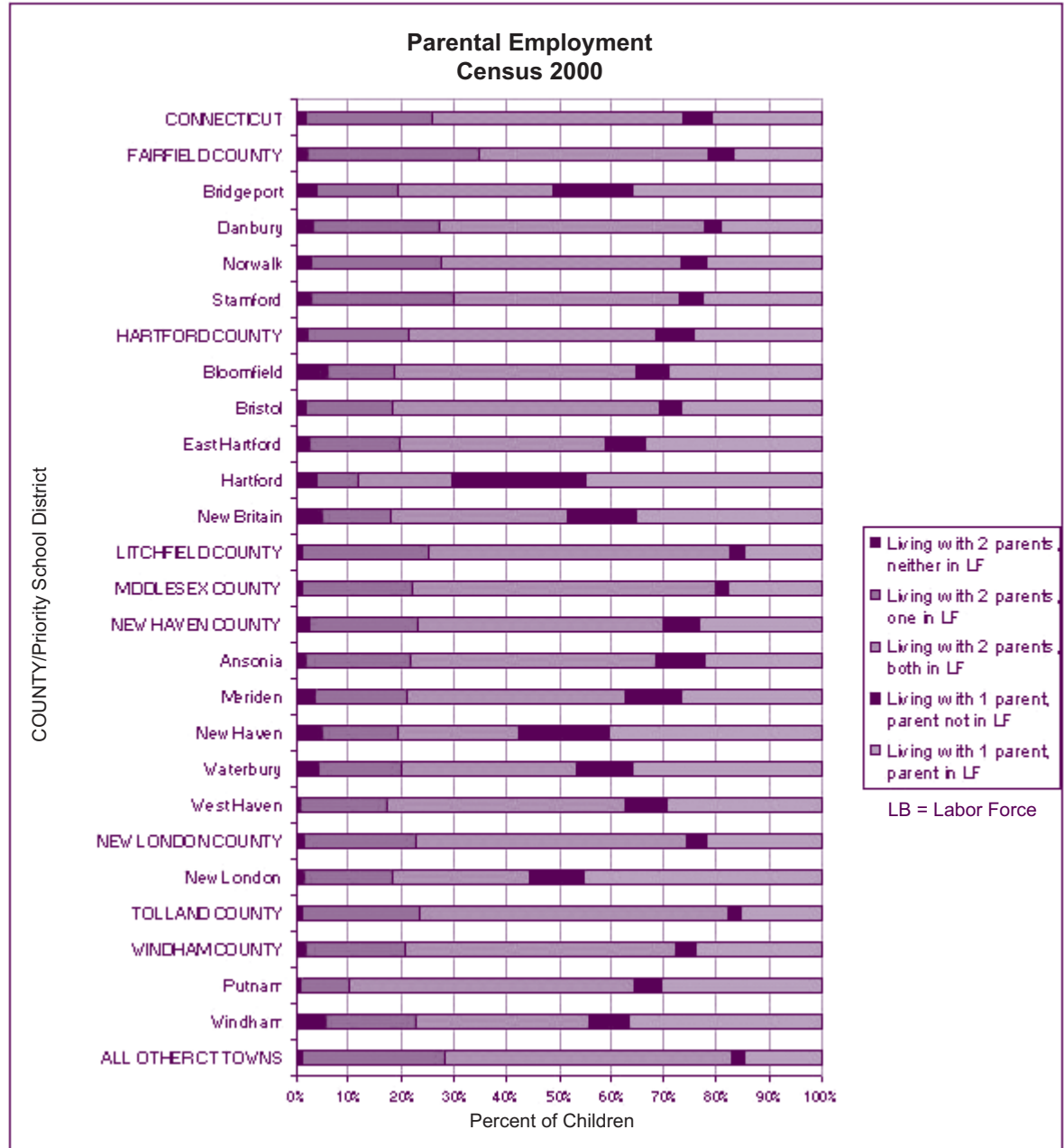
How are Connecticut children and families faring?

According to the 2000 Census, the majority of Connecticut children live with both parents, except in Connecticut's poorest cities. Of children who live with a single parent, most live with one who works. Children living in households with two parents where neither parent works are found across a range of geographic settings, including urban centers, inner-ring suburbs, and rural pockets of the state.

What can be done: Parental employment policies

Several policy options should be considered by Connecticut policymakers and employers to support working parents and their children. Policymakers could:

- ▶ Promote before- and after-school programs;
- ▶ Fund and implement a statewide plan for paid parental leave;
- ▶ Examine the possibility of extending the school day and year to support parents' employment and children's academic success;
- ▶ Restore funding for the Care 4 Kids child care subsidy program;
- ▶ Create a state Earned Income Tax Credit; and
- ▶ Support the dissemination of federal Earned Income Tax Credit information to eligible families.



Parental Employment - Census 2000

Location	Total	Children Living w/2 Parents			Children Living w/1 Parent		Location	Total	Children Living w/2 Parents			Children Living w/1 Parent	
		None in LF	One in LF	Both in LF	Not in LF	In LF			None in LF	One in LF	Both in LF	Not in LF	In LF
Fairfield County	216,341	2.2%	32.8%	43.6%	4.7%	16.7%							
Bethel	4,850	0.6%	27.8%	57.3%	0.4%	13.8%	Norwalk	17,084	2.7%	24.6%	46.0%	4.9%	21.8%
Bridgeport	35,913	3.9%	15.6%	29.3%	15.4%	35.9%	Redding	2,365	1.9%	41.9%	44.4%	1.2%	10.4%
Brookfield	4,192	0.2%	32.1%	55.8%	1.9%	10.0%	Ridgefield	7,219	0.8%	51.6%	39.9%	0.1%	7.6%
Danbury	15,246	3.3%	24.0%	50.4%	3.1%	19.2%	Shelton	8,702	0.9%	23.1%	61.3%	1.5%	13.2%
Darien	6,305	1.1%	51.8%	40.9%	2.6%	3.6%	Sherman	991	1.6%	33.1%	50.7%	0.2%	14.4%
Easton	2,076	0.3%	40.3%	53.5%	0.8%	5.1%	Stamford	24,438	2.9%	27.2%	42.7%	4.4%	22.7%
Fairfield	13,347	1.6%	41.3%	47.8%	1.8%	7.6%	Stratford	10,985	1.4%	21.2%	53.9%	4.0%	19.5%
Greenwich	15,187	1.9%	50.9%	35.3%	2.9%	8.9%	Trumbull	8,758	2.2%	39.0%	51.1%	1.2%	6.4%
Monroe	5,513	2.1%	33.5%	56.4%	0.4%	7.6%	Weston	3,324	1.4%	49.5%	42.8%	2.4%	3.9%
New Canaan	5,991	0.7%	65.5%	26.8%	2.0%	5.0%	Westport	7,030	0.8%	50.3%	38.3%	2.8%	7.8%
New Fairfield	4,092	1.2%	38.1%	54.1%	0.9%	5.6%	Wilton	5,504	1.0%	48.3%	43.1%	1.7%	5.9%
Newtown	7,229	0.9%	39.7%	50.6%	1.3%	7.6%							
Hartford County	200,430	2.2%	19.2%	47.1%	7.4%	24.2%							
Avon	4,096	2.3%	33.9%	54.4%	1.5%	7.9%	Manchester	11,805	1.6%	18.3%	45.6%	7.1%	27.5%
Berlin	4,433	0.8%	22.7%	64.5%	0.5%	11.4%	Marlborough	1,505	2.4%	32.0%	54.2%	0.0%	11.4%
Bloomfield	3,686	6.0%	12.9%	45.8%	6.0%	29.2%	New Britain	16,034	4.8%	13.0%	34.1%	13.2%	35.0%
Bristol	13,393	2.0%	16.3%	51.1%	3.6%	27.0%	Newington	5,806	1.8%	16.0%	65.1%	1.7%	15.4%
Burlington	2,283	0.0%	25.8%	66.4%	0.8%	7.0%	Plainville	3,533	0.8%	17.8%	57.2%	1.8%	22.4%
Canton	2,208	0.3%	27.0%	59.1%	1.0%	12.6%	Rocky Hill	3,456	2.2%	21.1%	62.4%	1.2%	13.0%
East Granby	1,221	0.0%	11.8%	71.5%	0.0%	16.7%	Simsbury	6,765	1.3%	36.6%	52.3%	0.8%	9.1%
East Hartford	11,270	2.5%	17.2%	39.2%	7.7%	33.4%	Southington	9,284	0.5%	21.2%	60.8%	1.4%	16.0%
East Windsor	2,076	1.1%	21.4%	55.4%	2.1%	19.9%	South Windsor	6,549	0.5%	21.0%	67.0%	0.9%	10.6%
Enfield	9,946	1.0%	18.1%	58.5%	2.4%	20.0%	Suffield	2,947	1.1%	22.9%	64.0%	2.6%	9.3%
Farmington	5,614	2.6%	33.8%	50.3%	1.5%	11.8%	West Hartford	13,606	0.9%	25.6%	53.6%	2.8%	17.1%
Glastonbury	8,446	0.9%	30.4%	57.1%	1.2%	10.3%	Wethersfield	5,095	2.1%	23.4%	55.2%	1.4%	17.9%
Granby	2,756	0.0%	30.0%	57.6%	2.4%	10.1%	Windsor	6,628	1.5%	15.2%	57.4%	4.4%	21.5%
Hartford	32,718	3.9%	8.0%	17.8%	25.2%	45.0%	Windsor Locks	2,734	1.6%	22.5%	50.5%	2.7%	22.6%
Hartland	537	1.3%	20.3%	67.6%	0.9%	9.9%							
Litchfield County	43,030	1.4%	23.8%	57.4%	2.6%	14.8%							
Barkhamsted	853	1.3%	22.4%	65.2%	0.5%	10.7%	Norfolk	386	3.1%	14.8%	65.5%	0.8%	15.8%
Bethlehem	831	1.0%	20.2%	67.4%	0.0%	11.4%	North Canaan	752	0.0%	18.8%	59.6%	1.9%	19.8%
Bridgewater	398	0.0%	37.4%	44.5%	4.3%	13.8%	Plymouth	2,896	1.1%	17.9%	59.8%	3.9%	17.2%
Canaan	250	7.2%	23.2%	56.8%	0.8%	12.0%	Roxbury	486	0.0%	22.4%	71.2%	1.2%	5.1%
Colebrook	355	0.0%	23.9%	65.1%	0.0%	11.0%	Salisbury	777	3.3%	17.2%	53.2%	5.7%	20.6%
Cornwall	337	0.0%	25.5%	54.6%	1.8%	18.1%	Sharon	635	0.0%	28.2%	52.0%	0.0%	19.8%
Goshen	597	2.2%	24.1%	60.3%	0.0%	13.4%	Thomaston	1,875	0.7%	24.7%	55.4%	2.7%	16.5%
Harwinton	1,307	1.0%	24.4%	70.0%	0.7%	3.9%	Torrington	7,817	1.9%	23.3%	49.8%	4.8%	20.3%
Kent	633	2.5%	25.9%	53.7%	0.0%	17.9%	Warren	286	0.7%	17.5%	62.9%	0.7%	18.2%
Litchfield	1,945	1.7%	29.8%	55.5%	3.4%	9.6%	Washington	765	0.7%	17.3%	65.2%	1.6%	15.3%
Morris	544	0.7%	20.0%	65.6%	2.2%	11.4%	Watertown	5,088	0.8%	22.7%	63.8%	1.9%	10.8%
New Hartford	1,608	0.0%	29.0%	61.4%	1.6%	8.0%	Winchester	2,358	4.3%	20.6%	53.3%	3.3%	18.6%
New Milford	7,170	0.8%	28.1%	56.2%	1.8%	13.1%	Woodbury	2,081	2.1%	22.0%	56.0%	2.1%	17.9%
Middlesex Co.	34,391	1.3%	20.9%	57.6%	2.5%	17.8%							
Chester	814	0.0%	17.2%	68.8%	2.6%	11.4%	East Hampton	2,747	0.7%	26.1%	54.1%	2.4%	16.7%
Clinton	3,178	1.5%	23.1%	58.8%	1.5%	15.0%	Essex	1,305	2.1%	16.3%	67.7%	1.1%	12.6%
Cromwell	2,697	1.1%	19.3%	58.7%	2.2%	18.8%	Haddam	1,757	0.5%	11.8%	75.4%	2.2%	10.2%
Deep River	1,095	0.0%	16.3%	53.4%	4.4%	25.9%	Killingworth	1,616	0.0%	25.2%	66.9%	2.7%	5.2%
Durham	1,783	0.0%	21.8%	62.8%	0.4%	15.0%	Middlefield	1,019	1.1%	19.4%	61.9%	1.2%	16.4%
East Haddam	1,954	1.4%	17.1%	70.3%	2.1%	9.1%	Middletown	8,729	2.3%	21.0%	47.5%	3.3%	25.9%

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Middlesex Co. contd.													
Old Saybrook	2,193	1.1%	29.0%	50.2%	3.1%	16.5%	Westbrook	1,326	1.7%	18.1%	63.1%	1.6%	15.5%
Portland	2,178	0.5%	19.8%	55.9%	3.3%	20.4%							
New Haven Co.													
	191,339	2.4%	20.8%	46.8%	6.7%	23.3%							
Ansonia	4,319	1.8%	19.9%	46.7%	9.3%	22.3%	New Haven	27,867	4.9%	14.7%	22.8%	17.2%	40.4%
Beacon Falls	1,275	0.6%	23.4%	64.0%	0.0%	12.0%	North Branford	3,532	1.6%	16.8%	65.6%	1.0%	15.0%
Bethany	1,355	0.8%	20.1%	62.0%	1.3%	15.8%	North Haven	5,032	3.8%	26.9%	59.6%	0.2%	9.5%
Branford	5,726	1.0%	28.6%	49.5%	2.7%	18.1%	Orange	3,212	0.5%	33.6%	58.2%	1.1%	6.7%
Cheshire	6,958	1.3%	26.1%	63.6%	0.4%	8.7%	Oxford	2,575	0.9%	25.4%	61.9%	0.7%	11.0%
Derby	2,595	3.7%	15.6%	52.1%	5.7%	22.9%	Prospect	2,105	0.9%	21.5%	70.1%	0.2%	7.3%
East Haven	5,961	1.8%	24.7%	49.3%	4.0%	20.3%	Seymour	3,577	1.3%	18.6%	64.8%	0.9%	14.5%
Guilford	5,330	1.9%	22.6%	63.9%	0.9%	10.8%	Southbury	4,136	0.4%	41.5%	49.3%	0.5%	8.2%
Hamden	11,250	1.1%	20.0%	54.5%	4.4%	20.0%	Wallingford	10,110	0.9%	21.5%	61.2%	2.4%	14.0%
Madison	4,974	1.8%	35.8%	56.3%	0.6%	5.4%	Waterbury	26,580	4.2%	16.1%	32.9%	11.0%	35.8%
Meriden	13,971	3.4%	17.8%	41.4%	10.4%	27.0%	West Haven	11,570	0.8%	16.5%	45.3%	7.9%	29.5%
Middlebury	1,556	0.9%	26.9%	59.3%	1.6%	11.2%	Wolcott	3,874	1.0%	15.2%	64.1%	2.6%	17.0%
Milford	11,337	1.2%	22.6%	56.8%	2.4%	17.0%	Woodbridge	2,454	0.7%	29.6%	59.8%	0.7%	9.3%
Naugatuck	8,108	2.3%	25.2%	46.6%	3.3%	22.6%							
New London Co.													
	60,353	1.7%	21.0%	51.7%	3.8%	21.9%							
Bozrah	541	0.0%	34.4%	48.1%	5.0%	12.6%	New London	5,339	1.5%	16.8%	26.1%	10.3%	45.3%
Colchester	4,201	0.3%	23.4%	62.9%	2.3%	11.1%	North Stonington	1,195	2.6%	21.5%	47.5%	1.1%	27.3%
East Lyme	3,940	0.3%	24.9%	57.3%	2.7%	14.8%	Norwich	8,165	2.4%	15.1%	43.2%	6.0%	33.2%
Franklin	444	2.0%	21.4%	60.4%	1.4%	14.9%	Old Lyme	1,719	0.5%	25.7%	55.8%	2.4%	15.6%
Griswold	2,666	2.3%	15.5%	54.1%	1.2%	27.0%	Preston	995	2.0%	21.0%	60.8%	0.0%	16.2%
Groton	9,527	1.3%	27.2%	49.1%	3.7%	18.7%	Salem	1,132	1.3%	14.4%	72.1%	0.7%	11.5%
Lebanon	1,728	1.4%	19.4%	64.4%	2.2%	12.7%	Sprague	738	1.2%	20.2%	52.2%	2.3%	24.1%
Ledyard	4,025	3.1%	21.6%	57.7%	1.8%	15.7%	Stonington	3,789	1.9%	19.7%	58.6%	2.4%	17.4%
Lisbon	1,028	5.3%	18.2%	63.1%	0.3%	13.1%	Voluntown	645	0.6%	23.1%	59.1%	0.5%	16.7%
Lyme	408	3.7%	24.8%	55.1%	0.0%	16.4%	Waterford	3,990	0.8%	22.8%	52.9%	3.8%	19.7%
Montville	4,138	2.9%	18.6%	57.4%	3.9%	17.2%							
Tolland County													
	30,766	1.4%	22.3%	58.4%	2.7%	15.3%							
Andover	808	1.1%	19.7%	65.2%	1.6%	12.4%	Somers	2,076	3.7%	25.0%	59.8%	2.0%	9.5%
Bolton	1,299	1.2%	26.2%	57.7%	2.7%	12.2%	Stafford	2,843	0.0%	15.5%	55.2%	4.3%	25.1%
Columbia	1,258	0.6%	17.5%	66.7%	5.7%	9.5%	Tolland	3,622	0.5%	25.0%	67.8%	1.4%	5.4%
Coventry	3,101	1.3%	27.1%	50.2%	3.6%	17.9%	Union	152	2.6%	21.1%	65.1%	0.0%	11.2%
Ellington	3,223	3.2%	21.9%	63.4%	0.3%	11.2%	Vernon	5,932	1.4%	19.2%	49.7%	4.1%	25.6%
Hebron	2,582	1.5%	24.6%	64.6%	1.9%	7.5%	Willington	1,199	0.0%	25.8%	58.5%	1.3%	14.3%
Mansfield	2,671	1.2%	23.1%	58.7%	2.1%	15.1%							
Windham County													
	26,008	1.8%	18.8%	51.5%	3.9%	24.0%							
Ashford	1,059	0.8%	25.5%	56.8%	2.1%	14.8%	Pomfret	1,003	0.0%	28.4%	61.0%	0.7%	9.9%
Brooklyn	1,645	1.2%	14.2%	62.9%	4.6%	17.2%	Putnam	2,062	0.9%	9.5%	54.2%	5.0%	30.4%
Canterbury	1,193	2.3%	20.1%	63.0%	0.3%	14.4%	Scotland	424	1.4%	21.9%	55.7%	2.8%	18.2%
Chaplin	518	0.0%	19.9%	63.9%	1.4%	14.9%	Sterling	837	1.9%	18.2%	59.5%	1.4%	19.0%
Eastford	409	0.5%	24.2%	57.9%	1.5%	15.9%	Thompson	2,149	1.3%	22.0%	53.9%	2.1%	20.7%
Hampton	436	2.8%	22.0%	59.6%	0.9%	14.7%	Windham	4,863	5.7%	16.9%	33.3%	7.4%	36.7%
Killingly	3,861	1.0%	17.6%	50.7%	5.1%	25.6%	Woodstock	1,854	0.0%	24.5%	62.8%	0.0%	12.7%
Plainfield	3,695	0.6%	18.7%	49.2%	4.4%	27.1%							
CONNECTICUT													
	802,658	2.1%	23.8%	48.0%	5.5%	20.7%							



Photo courtesy of Connecticut Permanent Commission on the Status of Women.

Small and large businesses could:

- ▶ Allow flexible work schedules and the use of sick time for parents to support their children's educational needs,
- ▶ Support high quality early care and education by subsidizing parental costs, and
- ▶ Advocate for the expansion of the state's School Readiness program for all 3- and 4-year olds whose parents choose such care.

Where can I get more information?

More information can be found using the following sources:

- ▶ National Center for Children in Poverty at: www.nccp.org
- ▶ Child Trends at: www.childtrendsdatabank.org
- ▶ Children's Defense Fund at: www.childrensdefense.org
- ▶ Warren, E. & Warren Tyagi, A. (2003). *The Two-Income Trap: Why Middle-Class Mothers and Fathers Are Going Broke*. New York: Basic Books

Endnotes

¹ National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development. Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips. (Eds.). Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

² Child Trends Databank. (2003). Child Care. Washington, DC. Retrieved on March 19, 2004, from <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org>

³ Gardner, M. (2001, November 14). "Mothers who choose to stay home." Christian Science Monitor. Retrieved on April 6, 2004, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2001/1114/p13sl-lifp.html>

⁴ Boushey, H., Brocht, C., Gundersen, B., & Bernstein, J. (2001). *Hardships in America: The Real Story of Working Families*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

⁵ U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004). *Labor force statistics from the current population survey*. Washington, DC.

⁶ Children's Defense Fund. (2004). *Children's Defense Fund finds parental employment dipped in 2003, indicating dangers of new congressional welfare proposal*. Press Release. Washington, DC.

Parental Employment

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. *2000 Census. Summary File 3, Table P46*.

Methodology:

The employment status of children's parents as a percentage of the number of own children in a town or county. Parents are defined as being in the labor force if they are working, looking for work, or in the U.S. Armed Forces during the reference week.

Key:

LF = Labor Force

What we need to know

- Number of single parent families in which the parent works 2nd or 3rd shift or weekends, by town and correlated with academic success of children
- Labor market by town