

# What full-time working moms and dads want

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NEW YORK >> Most mothers and fathers who work full-time say they sometimes parent while at work and vice versa. Most are upset to miss out on events with their kids, and many don't have enough time to exercise. But moms and dads seem to have different perceptions on who does most of the chores, and mothers were more likely than fathers to say that having children made it harder to advance at work.

Those are some of the findings about full-time working parents from a newly released Pew Research Center study, which surveyed 2,242 working parents between March 2-15.

Here's a look what full-time working parents want, by the numbers:

Households where both the mother and father work full time 52%

That's according to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data looking at the work arrangements of mothers and fathers with children under 18 who are married or live together. A decade ago, 46% of such families had two full-time working parents. In 1975, it was just 31%.

The increase has been driven largely by mothers who have bachelor's or postgraduate degrees. It has occurred during a period when women have outpaced men in obtaining college educations.

In families where mothers and fathers live together, about 56% of moms with bachelor degrees and 69% of mothers with postgraduate degrees worked full time in 2025. That's an increase from 50% and 59% in 2000, respectively.

In contrast, the number of mothers without college degrees working full time stayed largely constant at 43%, compared to 46% in 2000.

Many parents are single, divorced or live with same-sex partners. In total, 89% of fathers and 59% of mothers with children under 18 work full time.

Parents who sometimes juggle work and child duties simultaneously: 70%

In the new survey, moms were more likely to say they sometimes handle parenting tasks at work at least "sometimes," at 81%. But a majority of dads — 62% — said they same. Most moms and dads — 63% and 57% respectively — say they sometimes take on work tasks while they are with their kids.

"One of the major findings we have from this study is just a large share of parents who experience these blurred boundaries between family and work. And we find that moms often carry more of the mental load that comes with trying to balance what their family needs with what their work demands," said Luona Lin, a Pew Research Center research associate who co-authored the study.

Parents who are upset by missing their children's activities because of work: 92%

Full-time working moms and dads almost universally dislike missing out on a child's concert, sporting match or other activity thanks to their jobs. About 9 in 10 said they were "extremely," "very," or "somewhat" upset when

this happened, including 55% who were “extremely” or “very” upset. But the unhappiness is deeper among full-time working mothers: 65% said they were “extremely” or “very” upset when they missed out, compared 45% of fathers who said the same. About 31% of mothers said they were “somewhat upset,” compared to 42% of dads who said the same.

“It’s not to say dads aren’t experiencing any of challenges in balancing work and family lives. It’s just that moms are experiencing more of it,” Lin said.

Parents who have a hard time finding time to exercise: 58%

This was a bigger issue for moms than dads. While 65% of moms who work full time said they didn’t have enough time to exercise, 52% of dads said the same. Full-time working moms were also more likely to say they had too little time for hobbies, friends, relaxing and spending time with their spouse or partner.

Parents who say moms do most of the chores: 52%

But mothers and fathers seem to disagree here.

Among full-time working mothers, 63% say they do most of the chores. However, 50% of working fathers said chores were equally divided and only 25% said moms do most of it.

A similar dynamic plays out when it comes to parenting. About 63% of moms say they do most of the daily parenting tasks but only 41% of dads agreed. Instead, about 47% of dads say daily parenting tasks are split equally.

Parents who say having kids makes it harder to advance at work: 45%

This was another area with a sharp gender divide. While about half, 52%, of full-time working mothers said being a parent made it “a lot” or “somewhat” more difficult to advance in their job or career, only 38% of fathers said the same. And while 61% of mothers said their job made it “a lot” or “somewhat” harder to be a good parent, 45% of fathers felt that way.

About 52% of full-time working mothers and 38% of fathers said they felt they couldn’t give 100% at work mainly because of juggling work and family responsibilities. While 67% of mothers said they felt they couldn’t give 100% at home, 50% of fathers said the same.

Despite their growing labor rate participation rate and college education levels, women are still far behind men when it comes to wages and career advancement.

The so-called “motherhood penalty” has long been a major factor in the persistent wage gap between men and women.

Families with two full-time working parents who say the arrangement has financial benefits: 83%

There were mixed feeling about the trade-offs of having both parents work full-time.

While about 83% of parents in that situation said it had a “somewhat” or “very” positive financial impact, about half, 49%, said it had a positive impact on their children’s well being. Still, only about 22% said it had a “somewhat” or “very” negative impact on their children’s well being, while about 29% said it had neither a negative or positive impact.