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DAYTIME CARE OF CHILDREN: OCTOBER 1974 AND FEBRUARY 1975

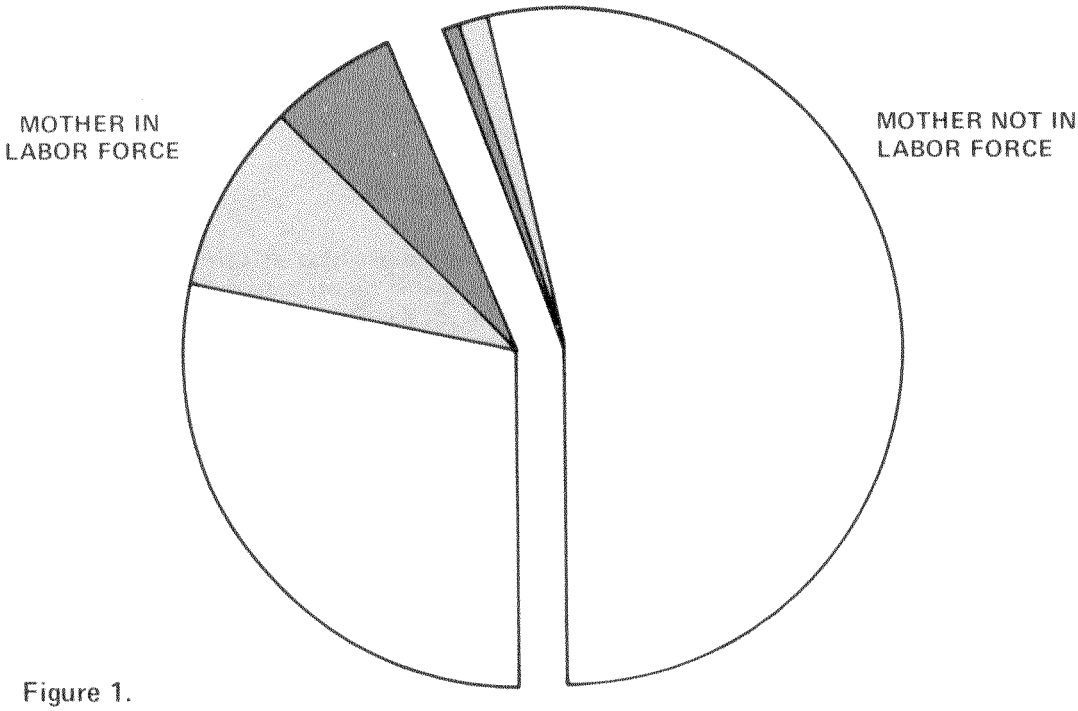

Figure 1.

Arrangements Made for the Daytime Care of All Children 3 to 13 Years Old by Labor Force Status of the Mother.

Cared for by Parents in Own Home

Cared for in Own Home by Someone Other Than Parents

Cared for Outside Own Home

Source: Table 1

U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

U.S. Department of Commerce
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DAYTIME CARE OF CHILDREN: OCTOBER 1974 AND FEBRUARY 1975

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DAYTIME CARE OF CHILDREN: OCTOBER 1974 AND FEBRUARY 1975

More mothers of young children work outside the home today than ever before. In fact, a third of women with a child under 6 years old are in the labor force as are one-half of mothers of children 6 to 17 years old.[1] The high level of labor force participation of mothers of young children suggests that many young children may need care by someone other than the child's own mother or father. This report presents data on the arrangements made for the daytime care of children 3 to 13 years old for women in and out of the labor force for both full- and part-time workers. These data are presented by the age, race, and school enrollment of the child, the marital status of the mother and family income. Detailed statistical tables follow the text of this report.

This report is based on data collected in the October 1974 and February 1975 Current Population Surveys. The October 1974 survey obtained information on care arrangements for children 7 to 13 years old, and the February 1975 survey included questions for children 3 to 6 years old. The wording of the questions for the two surveys is shown in the section of this report on definitions and explanations. The response categories for older and younger children were slightly different, but in both surveys the respondent was asked about arrangements made for the daytime care of the child when the child was not in school. For almost all children in the compulsory school attendance years, arrangements for daytime care would refer to arrangements made after school; whereas arrangements for younger children are made for a larger part of the day.

The survey results show that of the approximately 41 million children 3 to 13 years old in the United States, about 33 million, or eight out of ten, are usually cared for by one of the parents while the children are not in school (table A). For the additional 8 million children, some other arrangement is made for their daytime care. The most common arrangement is care in the child's own home by a relative; about 2.1 million children between the ages of 3 and 13 are cared for in this way. An additional 1.8 million, almost all of whom are 7 to 13 years old, care for themselves. Fairly small proportions are taken outside their home for care, either to the home of a relative, to the home of someone who is unrelated to them (about 1.2 million to each) or to a day care center (326,000). Thus, the use of a day care center is the least often reported child care arrangement in the United States.

CHILDREN OF WORKING MOTHERS

The type of arrangement made for the care of children largely depends on whether the mother is employed and whether the child is enrolled in school. Virtually all children of mothers who are not in the labor force are cared for primarily by a parent. This applies both to children of preschool age (3 to 6 years old), 95 percent of whom were cared for by a parent, and to those of grade school age (7 to 13 years old), for whom the comparable figure is 92 percent. Only for working mothers is there any significant variety of types of care used for the child. However, even among young children of women in the labor force, the probability that a parent is primarily responsible for the child's care depends on whether the child is enrolled in school and requires only after-school care or is not enrolled and requires full-day care.

PARENT CARE

Approximately two-fifths (43 percent) of all children 3 to 13 years old have a mother who is in the labor force. About three out of five of these children of working mothers are reported as being under the care of a parent when they are not in school. Although full-time employment of the mother reduces the proportion of children receiving parent care, about half of the children of women who work full time are usually cared for by one of their parents. Children of grade school age (7 to 13 years old) whose mother works are more likely than those of preschool age (3 to 6 years old) to receive parent care. Among children of women who are employed full time, 53 percent of older children as compared with 41 percent of younger children are usually under the care of a parent when they are not in school. Mothers of children who are in school all day may arrange to work during school hours. Care needs to be provided for these children only after school hours. Also, some children 7 to 13 years old may be old enough to care for themselves until one of their parents returns from work. Children 3 to 6 years old are less

[1] U.S. Department of Labor, **Special Labor Force Report**, No. 173, "Marital and Family Characteristics of the Labor Force, March 1974," table 2, p. 62, and table F, p. A-17.

Table A. Day Care Arrangements of Children 3 to 13 Years Old, By Race: October 1974 and February 1975

(Numbers in thousands. Civilian noninstitutional population)

Day care arrangements	Total	White	Black	Spanish
Children 3 to 13 years old...	40,765	34,200	5,885	3,083
In own home.....	37,282	31,368	5,280	2,826
Child's parent.....	32,810	27,961	4,340	2,446
Child cares for self.....	1,828	1,444	307	152
Other relative.....	2,069	1,451	570	185
Nonrelative.....	575	512	63	43
Outside own home.....	2,776	2,253	485	174
Relative.....	1,174	857	296	111
Nonrelative.....	1,276	1,122	148	56
Day care center.....	326	274	41	7
Other.....	95	80	14	6
Not reported.....	612	500	107	76

Note: Data for children 3 to 6 years old obtained from February 1975 Current Population Survey; data for children 7 to 13 years old obtained from October 1974 Current Population Survey.

frequently enrolled full time in school and often require care for the entire day. Thus, more employed mothers of children of preschool age arrange for someone else to care for their children than do mothers of older children.

Enrollment of a child in school may allow the mother to both work and care for her child (table 4). Mothers in the labor force with children 3 to 6 years old are least likely to take care of those who are not enrolled in either nursery school or kindergarten. Among children of women in the labor force, 64 percent of those enrolled in nursery school and 56 percent of those attending kindergarten are usually cared for by their mother during out-of-school hours compared with 43 percent of those not enrolled.

CARE NOT SUPPLIED BY A PARENT

If the mother is employed and neither she nor her husband is able to take care of the child during working hours, a variety of care arrangements may be made. Approximately 14 percent of children 7 to 13 years old care for themselves when the mother works; if she works full time, 18 percent care for themselves.

Children of grade school age without parental care are as likely to be cared for in their own home by a relative who is not their mother or father (for example, an older sibling, an aunt or uncle, or grandparent) as they are to care for themselves.

Children of preschool age without parental care, those 3 to 6 years old, whose mothers are in the labor force are virtually never left without some supervision. If their parents cannot stay at home with them, they most frequently are taken outside the home to be cared for by a relative (11 percent) or by a person who is unrelated to them (15 percent). Full-time work by the mother increases the frequency of care of young children in someone else's home to 36 percent.

CARE IN A DAY CARE CENTER

An organized day care center supplies care for children 3 to 13 years old rather infrequently. Approximately 2 percent of children 3 to 6 years old and virtually no older children (7 to 13 years old) are cared for in this way. If the mother holds a job, then about 4

percent of the younger and 1 percent of the older children are usually cared for in a day care center. Mothers, whether they are employed or not, are about as likely to have a nonrelative come into their home to care for their child of preschool age as they are to take the child to a day care center.

BLACK MOTHERS AND WHITE MOTHERS WHO WORK

Black mothers of children 3 to 6 years old are significantly more likely than their White counterparts to be in the labor force. The arrangements Black mothers and White mothers make for the care of their children also differ. About 81 percent of Black children of preschool age whose mothers work are cared for by someone who is related to them. The comparable figure for White children is 72 percent. Black fathers are almost three times as likely as White fathers to care for their 3-to-6-year-old child if their wife is in the labor force (17 percent versus 6 percent). White working mothers are more likely to place their young children in the care of someone unrelated to them than are Black mothers. Black working women are more likely than White working women to have a relative care for their child (table 3).

INCOME OF FAMILY

The type of care provided for grade-school age children of mothers in the labor force varies only slightly by the income level of the family. The following discussion refers only to daytime care of children 7 to 13 years old whose mother is in the labor force. Families of low income levels (below $10,000) are no more likely than families of higher income levels to arrange for care of their children in a day care center or day care home.[2] A higher proportion of children from relatively low than from high income families are cared for by someone who is related to them, either in their own home or outside it. Families with high incomes ($15,000 a year or more) are more likely than those with lower incomes to have their grade-school age children care for themselves during the day while the mother works, perhaps because women in high income families delay labor force entry until their children are old enough to care for themselves. These differences, while statistically significant, are substantively very small. The amount of money available to families with children 7 to 13 years old in which the mother works makes no substantively important difference in the type of care the children receive.

[2] The term "day care home" is used here to mean care by a nonrelative outside the child's home.

Table B. Day Care Arrangements of Children 7 to 13 Years Old of Mothers in the Labor Force, By Family Income: October 1974

(Numbers in thousands. Civilian noninstitutional population)

Family income	Total	Relative				Nonrelative		Other	Not reported
		Parent	Child cares for self	Other relative		In child's home	Outside child's home[1]		
				Own home	Outside own home				
Children 7 to 13 years old.	12,247	8,090	1,600	1,168	367	316	480	72	155
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION									
Total.....	100.0	66.1	13.1	9.5	3.0	2.6	3.9	0.6	1.3
Less than $10,000.....	100.0	65.0	11.7	11.3	4.2	2.2	3.7	0.7	1.3
$10,000 to $14,999.....	100.0	69.6	12.2	7.3	3.4	2.2	4.1	0.3	0.9
$15,000 or more.....	100.0	65.1	14.4	9.0	1.6	3.6	4.1	0.8	1.5
Total[2].....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	(B)	100.0
Less than $10,000.....	36.1	35.3	33.3	43.9	48.6	30.5	33.3	(B)	37.8
$10,000 to $14,999.....	32.9	34.4	31.6	26.0	36.0	27.9	34.1	(B)	25.2
$15,000 or more.....	31.0	30.3	35.2	30.0	15.7	42.0	32.2	(B)	37.1

B Base less then 75,000.
[1] Includes in day care center and care in a nonrelative's home.
[2] Based on persons reporting income.

Figure 2.

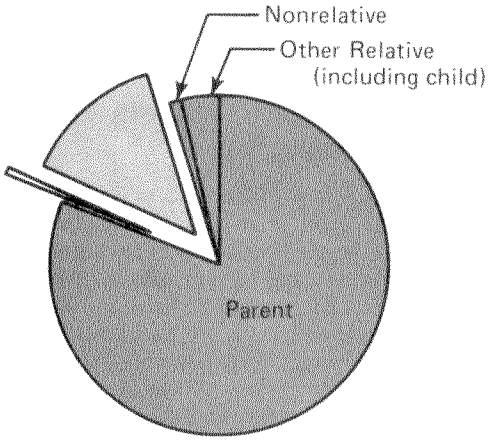
Arrangements Made for the Daytime Care of Children 3 to 6 Years Old by Labor Force Status of Mother: February 1975

CARE IN OWN HOME

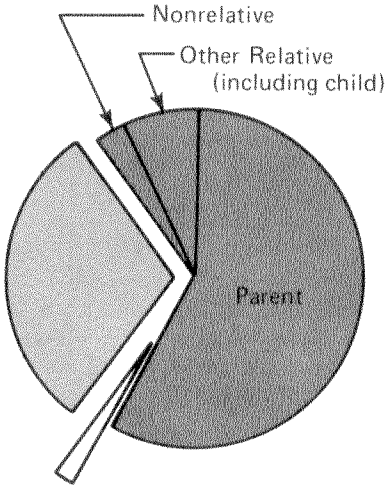
CARE OUTSIDE OWN HOME

OTHER

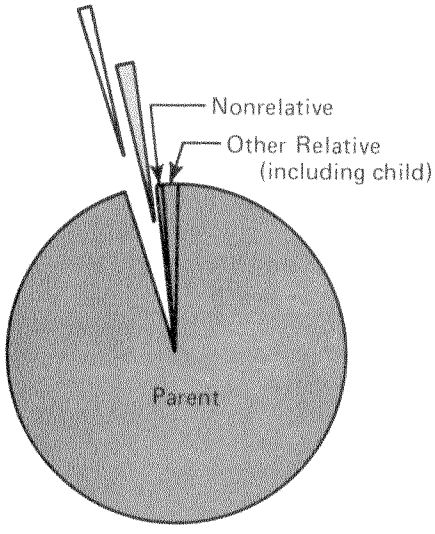
Source: Table 1



ALL CHILDREN 3 TO 6 YEARS OLD



MOTHER IN LABOR FORCE



MOTHER NOT IN LABOR FORCE

Figure 3.

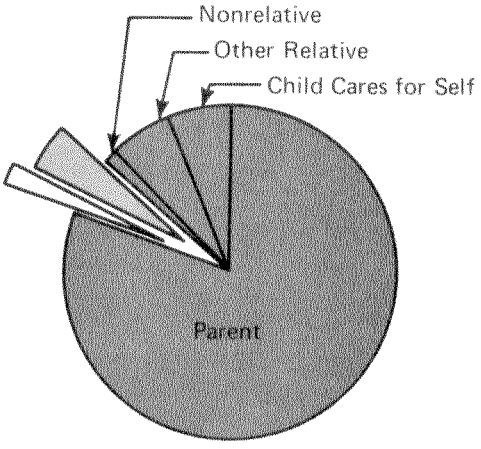
Arrangements Made for the Daytime Care of Children 7 to 13 Years Old by Labor Force Status of Mother: October 1974

CARE IN OWN HOME

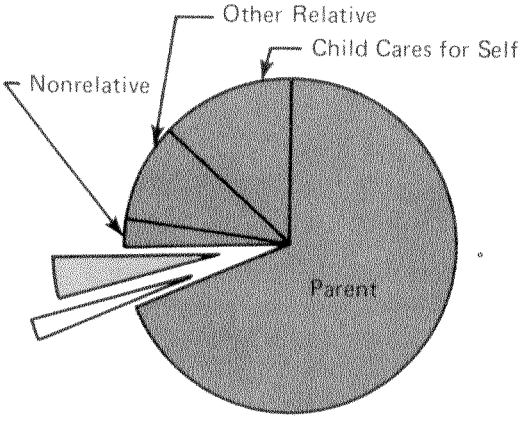
CARE OUTSIDE OWN HOME

OTHER

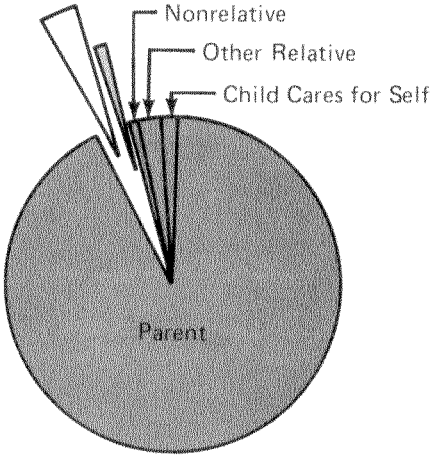
Source: Table 1



ALL CHILDREN 7 TO 13 YEARS OLD



MOTHER IN LABOR FORCE



MOTHER NOT IN LABOR FORCE