

Using Administrative Records to Evaluate Child Care Expense Reporting among Child Care Subsidy Recipients

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MOTIVATION

Policy leaders look to quality data and statistics to help inform and guide programmatic and policy decisions. As a result, assessing the quality and validity of major household surveys in capturing accurate information is essential. One method for evaluating survey quality is to compare self-reported information in surveys to administrative records.

There has been limited analysis of self-reported child care expenses since the question was added to the 2010 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC). In this poster, we explore how self-reported child care expenses in the CPS ASEC compare with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) administrative records for families receiving subsidized child care.

DATA

This paper pools data from the CPS ASEC for calendar years 2009 to 2013. We link to CCDF child care subsidy administrative records from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). We include 41 states and the District of Columbia from the CCDF records because the data for those states include the full population of subsidy recipients. Links are created using the Census Bureau's Personal Identifier Key (PIK) process.

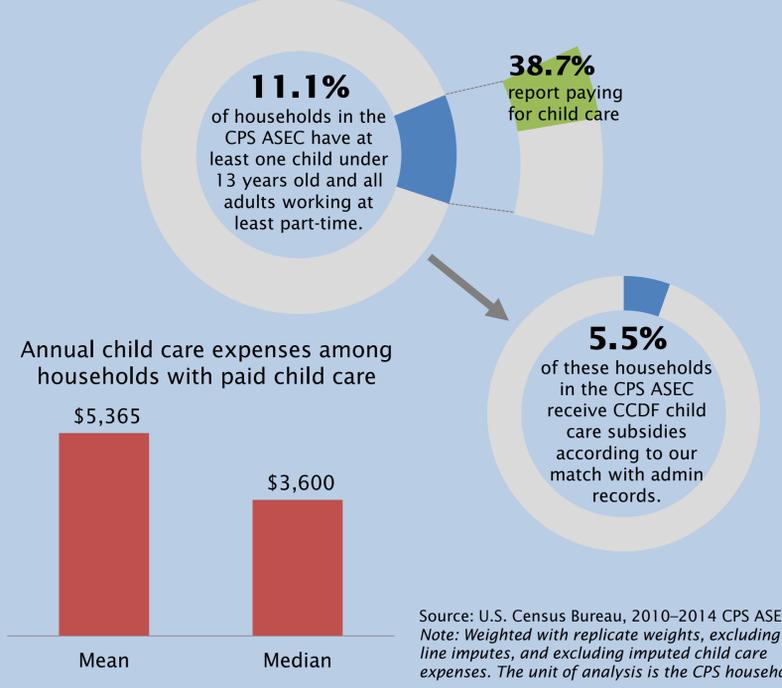
There are 374,800 households in the CPS ASEC pooled sample. Of those, 257,400 households have PIKs and are in one of the states with administrative records. We exclude individuals whose child care expenses were imputed. Finally, for most analyses we include only households in the CPS ASEC who can be linked to a CCDF record. This final sample includes **3,441** households.

CHILD CARE QUESTIONS IN CPS ASEC

1. Did anyone in this household PAY for the care of their children while they worked in (year)?
2. Which children needed care while their parents worked?
3. What is the easiest way for you to tell us how much you and others in this household paid for child care while they worked in (year): weekly, etc.?
4. How much did they pay for child care?
5. How many payments did they make during (year)?

The data are subject to error arising from a variety of sources, including sampling error and nonsampling error. For more information, please visit <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar17.pdf>. All comparative statements in this presentation have undergone statistical testing, and, unless otherwise noted, all comparisons are statistically significant at the 10 percent significance level. This paper meets all of the U.S. Census Bureau's Disclosure Review Board (DRB) standards and has been assigned DRB approval number DRB-FY19-ROSS-B0064.

CHILD CARE EXPENSES IN CPS ASEC



CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND (CCDF)

- Federal block-grant program
- Policies vary substantially across states. As of October 1, 2014 –
 - The maximum monthly income for a family of three for initial eligibility ranged from \$1,990 to \$4,915.
 - The monthly copayment for a family of three with annual earnings of \$15,000 ranged from \$0 to \$414.
 - The monthly base reimbursement rates for toddler care in child care centers ranged from \$292 to \$1,148.
- Provides child care subsidies to low-income families while they work, attend training, or go to school.
- In FY 2014, about 1,438,200 children (in 869,700 families) per month received CCDF child care subsidies.

Source: Minton, Sarah, Kathryn Stevens, Lorraine Blatt, and Christin Durham (2015). The CCDF Policies Database Book of Tables: Key Cross-State Variations in CCDF Policies as of October 1, 2014, OPRE Report 2015-95, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

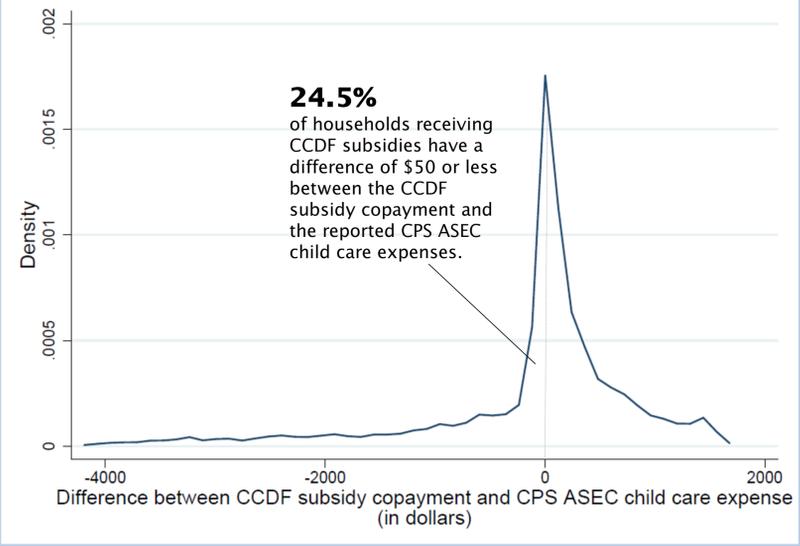
DIFFERENCES IN REPORTING OF PAID CHILD CARE

(Restricted to households receiving CCDF child care subsidies according to administrative records that can be matched to the CPS ASEC)

Admin Records	CPS ASEC Data			Total
	No paid child care reported	Paid child care reported	No children under 15 years old *	
Subsidy recipients with no copayment	76.8%	16.6% **	6.7%	19.4%
Subsidy recipients with copayment	53.0%	41.7%	5.3%	80.6%
Total	57.6%	36.8%	5.6%	3441

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010–2014 CPS ASECs and CCDF administrative records. Note: Adjusted using inverse probability weighting (IPW), excluding full line imputes, and excluding imputed child care expenses. The unit of analysis is the CPS household. * The estimates in this column are not statistically different from each other. ** This estimate is not statistically different from the total percentage with zero copayment in the administrative records.

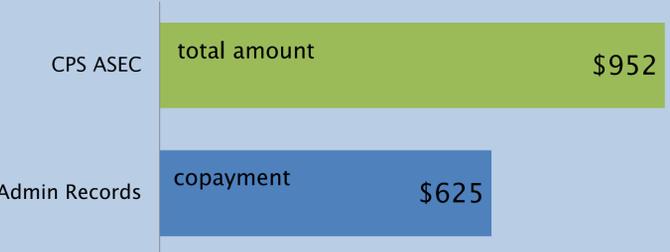
COMPARING CHILD CARE EXPENSES



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010–2014 CPS ASECs and CCDF administrative records. Note: Adjusted using inverse probability weighting (IPW), excluding full line imputes, and excluding imputed child care expenses. The unit of analysis is the CPS household. The sample is restricted to households receiving CCDF child care subsidies.

COMPARING CHILD CARE EXPENSES

Average annual child care expense by data source



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010–2014 CPS ASECs and CCDF administrative records. Note: Adjusted using IPW, excluding full line imputes, and excluding imputed child care expenses. The unit of analysis is the CPS household. The sample is restricted to households receiving CCDF child care subsidies.

LIMITATIONS

- CCDF administrative records only include child care expenses for subsidized child care. Therefore, our findings cannot be generalized beyond subsidy recipients.
- Low-income families rely on a patchwork of child care providers to care for their children and may rely on a mix of subsidized and non-subsidized child care (paid or unpaid).
- The CPS ASEC only asks about child care expenses while working, whereas CCDF provides subsidies while working or attending training or school.
- The CPS ASEC only asks about child care expenses paid for by the household, but the CCDF copayment could be paid for by someone outside the household.
- Other surveys contain more detailed information regarding families' child care receipt and expenses.

SUMMARY

Child care expenses reported in the CPS ASEC are an important component of the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM). Our analysis highlights the need for more research on how child care expenses are reported in the CPS ASEC. This poster is the first step of exploring how CCDF administrative records can be linked to look at child care expenses for CCDF subsidy recipients. Future analysis may compare characteristics of households whose child care expenses are consistent across data sources to those whose expenses are inconsistent.



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