

CHILD CARE PULSE SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of an Online CARAVAN® survey conducted by ENGINE Insights among a sample of 1,004 parents of children ages 12 and under who are employed full-time or part-time, hereinafter referred to as “parents.” The survey was live on November 5-10, 2020. Respondents were members of an online panel and had agreed to participate in online surveys and polls.

Throughout this report, results are analyzed in total as well as by parent gender, age of child, and region where statistically significant differences exist at a 95% confidence level. In addition, comparisons are made between parents with children in school or child care centers and parents who have in-home care only, such as a spouse/partner; family member’s or friend’s home; sitter, nanny or au pair; and/or a learning pod/group with other families.

School/Child Care Centers and Family are Top Sources of Support for Working Parents

The vast majority of parents (91%) have some type of child care help or support while they work, the most common being a child care center and/or school setting (44%). More specifically, three in ten parents (30%) have a child attending school outside their home at least part-time, while 19% have support from a child care center.

Family help is key, with roughly one-third (32%) of parents stating their spouse/partner is the primary caregiver while they’re working. In addition, over one in four (27%) have a child who goes to a family member’s or friend’s home during work hours.

Other sources of child care support include a sitter, nanny, or au pair (13%) and participation in a learning pod/group with other families (10%).

Parents Concerned about Reliability of Care

Parents who are using a form of in-home child care express mixed feelings about their overall child care situation. Over 4 in 10 worry that it may not support the social development of their child (43%) and may not be affordable long-term (42%).

On the other hand, the majority of parents with children in a child care center or school feel their arrangement allows them to focus on their work (97%) and supports the social development of their child (67%).

Among parents who have in-home child care arrangements, roughly half (49%) of all mothers do not feel their child care adequately supports the social development of their child. On the other hand, nearly half of dads (47%) are concerned their child care arrangement is not sustainable long-term.

37% of parents who use a form of in-home care feel it does not always enable them to focus on their work.

Social Skill Development is Primary Benefit of Child Care Center/School

Almost half of parents (46%) with a nanny or in-home care provider agree that a child care center or school setting would provide more opportunities to socialize with other children, and 4 in 10 believe it would provide educational opportunities (41%) and/or more engaging activities (38%) for their child. One-third (31%) believe there would be better health and safety protocols in place in a child care center or school setting.

Mothers are particularly interested in the opportunities a child care center or school setting would offer for their child to socialize (58%), whereas fathers are more focused on the health and safety protocols in place in these settings (36%).

Parents of children 4 and younger view child care centers as offering strong opportunities for social skill development (55%) as well as structure and a predictable schedule (34%). Parent of older children are more likely to cite health and safety protocols, as the benefits of group care for their children.

Regionally, Midwesterners are the most likely to perceive opportunities for their child to socialize (57%) and structure/predictable schedule (35%) as valuable offerings of a child care center or school setting, particularly compared to parents in the West and Northeast. However, parents in the Northeast (38%) are far more inclined than their counterparts in all other regions to view better health and safety protocols as a benefit.

Worry is Prevalent Among Parents with Children Not in Child Care or School

Over three-quarters (78%) of parents whose children are not in a child care center or school setting are worried that their child is missing out on socializing and other developmental opportunities as a result.

Both fathers (81%) and mothers (74%) express concern that their child will miss out on such opportunities because they are not in a child care center or school setting.

Health/Safety Protocols and Social Skill Benefits are Top Considerations Among Parents with Children Not in Child Care or School

Most parents (89%) whose children do not attend a child care center or school would consider this option for their child in the foreseeable future. They are most likely to consider it when they have confidence in the health and safety protocols of the child care center (40%) and/or when their child reaches an age where it's important for them to have more contact with other children than they do now (40%). As expected, the inability to juggle children and work (34%) as well as children becoming increasingly bored at home (29%) are the factors that will weigh most heavily in parents' decision to enroll in group education settings. Relatively fewer (11%) say having another child would make them consider a child care center or school.

CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE.

617-673-8000 | newsroom@brighthorizons.com | www.brighthorizons.com