

# The Modern Family Index

**Bright Horizons®** has spent a decade tracking trends in working families, with the annual Modern Family Index research study highlighting parents' unique challenges and priorities over the course of a consequential period in history. In 2025, this landmark piece of thought leadership, conducted by the Harris Poll for Bright Horizons, will focus on important topics impacting families, with several waves of survey data scheduled to be released throughout the year.

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## **New research shows summer is no break for working parents**

No school, no child care and no dependable schedules — new research shows summer for working parents, both mom and dads, is no walk in the park. If the school year is a challenge for those managing families and jobs, data from the latest Modern Family Index shows the months between the end of one school year and the beginning of the next are even more so, with parents stretched thin and juggling two-plus months of managing kids, carpools, and careers — all on their own.



## More interruptions/less work

- **87%** of working parents report they experience **challenges with their children being home during the summer months**, ranging from work interruptions, to worrying about what they are up to while they are working, to being distracted at work thinking about their children's schedules.
- **76%** of working parents say the level of focus they have at work during the summer is **directly tied to the reliability of their children's summer schedules**.
- **45%** of working parents say the workday interruptions/absences they experience are **worse during the summer months** when their children are at home, including...
  - **33%** report **more interruptions during the workday** due to their children.  
(e.g., receiving calls / texts from children, having children home with them during the workday)
  - **30%** say they **take more time off of work due to parenting responsibilities**.  
(e.g., leaving early to pick up children from activities, taking full days off to care for children)

## Time off is no vacation

- **68%** of parents say summer feels like a break for **everyone but them**.
- **42%** of working parents say the **emotional/mental strain is worse during the summer months** when their children are home.
- **76%** of working parents **wish their employer offered more supports** to help them with reliable summer schedules for their children.
- **86%** of parents want their children to have a **good amount of structure in their day** during the summer months.
- **66%** of parents believe their children will let their brains "rot" if they do not put a **lot of effort into planning their summer schedules**.

### Method statement

The research was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll between April 24-28, 2025, among 2,083 adults ages 18 and older — among whom 634 are a parent or guardian of child(ren) under 18 years of age ("parents"). Data are weighted where necessary by age, gender, region, race/ethnicity, household income, education, marital status, size of household, and political party affiliation to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population.

Respondents are selected among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. The sample data is accurate to within  $\pm 2.5$  percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to other multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including, but not limited to coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments.



## Contact us to learn more

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