

Elevating Their Voices: What Single Mothers Say They Need to Survive

Actionable Insights from Jeremiah Program's Annual 2026 Summit Convening

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Ensuring that single-mother-led households can achieve economic stability begins with recognizing and addressing the unique financial and caregiving pressures they face. Doing so will help reduce the material hardships and structural barriers that leave many single mothers and their children economically vulnerable. Single-mother-led households face higher rates of material and financial hardship when compared with dual-parent households, in large part due to higher caregiving responsibilities and higher prevalence of low job quality (Tucker and Vogtman 2023). These economic challenges are expected to increase in the wake of an ongoing affordability crisis¹ and the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), which set in motion significant federal funding reductions to critical safety net programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid. Single-mother households face unique challenges that may require tailored policy solutions. However, while about one in four households with children in the US are led by single parents—about 80 percent of which are single mothers²—their voices are often missing from policy conversations.

In March 2026, Jeremiah Program, a national nonprofit organization focused on disrupting the cycle of poverty for single mothers and their children, two generations at a time (see box 1 for more information), partnered with the Urban Institute to better understand what single moms are facing in the current environment, and what single mothers need to thrive. Single mothers shared their experiences via a survey administered during Jeremiah Program’s March 2026 Annual Summit Weekend, the nation’s largest gathering of single moms focused on advancing economic mobility.³ The goal of the survey was to capture the experiences of single mothers and to elevate their perspectives during a period of significant economic uncertainty and a rapidly shifting safety net landscape. We used a caregiver-centered approach to amplify insights from a population whose voices are often missing when developing policy solutions. In this brief, we share survey insights about the challenges respondents shared that are affecting material and economic stability and family well-being. We also highlight results among key groups of single mothers who are known to face particular financial burdens and may benefit from specific policy strategies, including student parents and those parents with young children (from birth through age 4). See box 2 for more information about single mothers, student parents, and single mothers with young children.

BOX 1

About Jeremiah Program

Founded nearly 30 years ago in Minneapolis, Jeremiah Program began as a direct service organization focused on economic mobility by making postsecondary education possible for single mothers by addressing intersecting barriers such as child care access, housing instability, and affordability. Through this work, Jeremiah Program learned a critical lesson: while holistic two-generation (2Gen) supports are essential for family stability, they are not sufficient to achieve equity at scale. The persistent barriers facing single mothers are rooted in systems that were never designed with their realities, leadership, or strengths at the center.

This insight reshaped Jeremiah Program’s theory of change. Today, Jeremiah Program both operates in nine cities across seven states and leverages its integrated 2Gen model as both evidence and infrastructure to mobilize single mothers around for systems change. What Jeremiah Program learns alongside families most impacted by the inadequate policy becomes shared evidence for institutional reform and public action—informing how colleges design supports for student parents, how policymakers approach caregiving and housing, and how the public understands single motherhood.

In 2026, around 2,250 single mothers across 43 states (see figure 1) participated in Jeremiah Program’s in-person and virtual organizing platforms. The event brought single mothers together for leadership development, policy engagement, and collective action, and the level of attendance—a fivefold increase over the prior year—indicated Jeremiah Program’s growth in scale, reach, and coalition building.

Source: “Jeremiah Program,” accessed May 22, 2026, <https://jeremiahprogram.org/>.

Findings from the survey can inform a national conversation about what families need to thrive, especially at a time when financial pressures are reshaping the lived experience of many low and

middle-income families across the country. This survey work builds on a 2025 Urban research brief supported by Share our Strength that identified evidence-based policy strategies to address the various systematic barriers that impact single mothers and their children (Waxman et al. 2025). The report outlined policy levers across several domains, including child care, job quality, tax benefits, financial well-being, and health care, among others, based on guidance from existing literature and policy experts, interviews with single mothers, and input from community organizations serving single mothers, including the Jeremiah Program.

BOX 2

Single Mothers in the US

Families led by single mothers (referring to unmarried mothers) comprise about 80 percent of single-parent households.⁴ Single mothers face elevated rates of poverty compared with other single-parent and dual-parent households. In 2023, about 37 percent of single-mother households had incomes below the federal poverty level, compared with 20 percent of single-father households and 7 percent of married-couple families (Shrider 2023). These higher rates of hardship reflect a range of structural challenges, such as higher caregiving responsibilities, high costs of child care, a greater likelihood of experiencing low job quality along with a single income, and associated vulnerability to economic shocks. Single mothers may also experience increased mental health stressors (Waxman, Gupta, and Tezel 2025).

Finding and maintaining child care can be particularly challenging for single mothers. The cost of child care has continued to rise across the United States and has become increasingly unaffordable, even for dual-income households.⁵ In addition, child care availability may be more difficult for single parents, who are more likely to work in professions with nontraditional hours that child care facilities often cannot accommodate. Single mothers pursuing educational opportunities may face outsized challenges. During the 2019–20 academic year, 17 percent of female undergraduates were single mothers.⁶ Student parents not only need to locate child care during hours that match their school schedules, but they often may not meet the work requirements to access certain government benefits that could support funding child care, such as the Child Care and Development Fund. According to the 2020 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, about 75 percent of single mothers were employed, with 19 percent working part time and 55 percent full time.⁷

Single parents with young children may also face additional challenges that differ from households with only older children, who may not need as much child care once their children are in school. Nearly 70 percent of children under age 6 live in households where all available parents are in the workforce, meaning that care for young children is a critical work support.⁸ Households with young children are experiencing rising costs of child care. In 2024, the average annual cost of child care for children age 4 and under in the US reached \$13,128, an increase of 29 percent since 2020. It would take 35 percent of a single parent's median income to afford this national average price, which is five times the federal child care affordability standard of 7 percent.⁹ This number varies widely depending on the state the family resides in as well. The intersection of rising child care costs and limited availability in many communities can exacerbate burdens for single-mother-led households that are already resource constrained.

Methodology

The Urban Institute developed and fielded a survey to approximately 2,250 attendees of the Summit Weekend between March 5 and March 10, 2026. The survey was developed in consultation with Jeremiah Program and Share Our Strength to address experiences among single mothers across the five policy and programmatic pillars of Jeremiah Program. Validated survey measures were used where available for the topics of interest. To ensure protection of the survey respondents, the Urban team obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to the fielding of the survey.

Jeremiah Program facilitated recruitment of survey participants. The survey was distributed via a QR code, generated through the Voxco survey platform, which was shown to all attendees of the summit attending either in-person and virtually (see figure 1 for a map of attendees of the Summit). Jeremiah Program then sent reminders to complete the survey throughout the weekend. All respondents were offered a \$25 DoorDash e-gift card from Jeremiah Program as an incentive to participate in the survey and in recognition of their time and expertise.

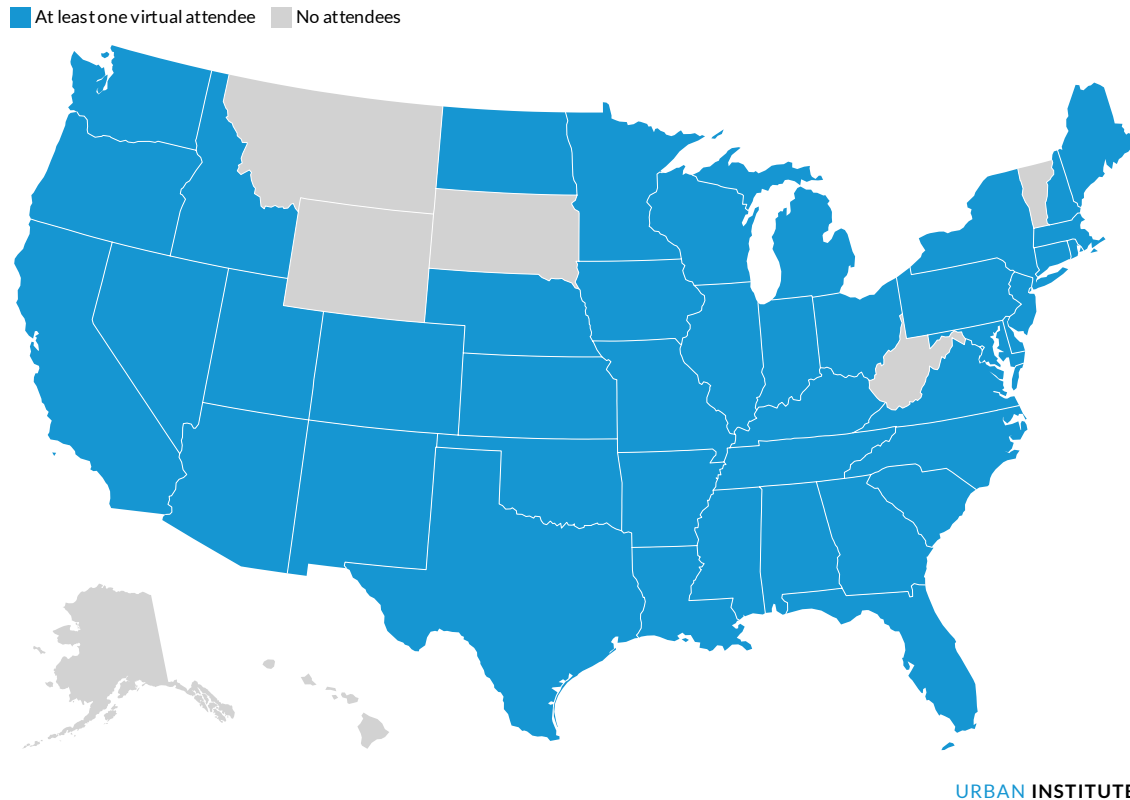
The response rate was approximately 80 percent. Prior to analysis, we removed responses from those that did not identify as current parents or caregivers (N = 134) and those that identified as male caregivers (N = 16), given the primary focus on single-mother experiences. The final sample size was 1,790. This response rate is an approximated estimate using the reported number of registrations by Jeremiah Program partners; however, there may have been additional virtual attendees for the summit, as some registrations represented larger watch parties with additional respondents in attendance.

Survey Limitations

The survey sample was composed of single mothers who are currently in programming with Jeremiah Program, those who received services from Jeremiah Program in the past, and single mothers connected to other nonprofits across the country. This population may represent a group that experiences higher rates of hardship and may also be more connected to certain supportive services than some single-parent families. While these responses cannot be generalized to the broader population of single mothers in the US, these insights can still shed light on the levels of hardship faced by a segment of single mothers who are actively seeking opportunities to improve their families' well-being.

FIGURE 1

Map of Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX Virtual Attendees



Source: Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX attendee registration list.

Notes: The seven states without any attendees were Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. The following represent the approximate share of attendees from each US region: South (28 percent), Northeast (27 percent), West (24 percent), Midwest (21 percent).

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1 provides key demographic characteristics of survey respondents. All respondents in the analysis sample identified as female or nonbinary caregivers of at least one child from birth through age 17. Although there was a range of ages above 18, respondents were predominately between the ages of 25 and 49 (90 percent). About two-thirds of respondents identified as Black or African American (39 percent) or as white (35 percent). The remaining third identified as American Indian or Alaska Native (8 percent), Hispanic or Latino/a/x/e (7 percent), Asian (3 percent) or another race/more than one racial or ethnic category (9 percent). A majority of respondents (88 percent) reported being the sole caregiver for a child from birth through 17. In addition to caring for children, 20 percent of respondents reported that they also were caring for an adult age 18 or older. One in five (20 percent) respondents reported being pregnant at the time of the survey. The vast majority of respondents (84 percent) reported currently working either part time or full time, and 36 percent of respondents reported they were currently enrolled in school, either part or full time. A little less than three out of four respondents (70 percent) were renters, while approximately one in four (26 percent) were homeowners.

TABLE 1

Characteristics of Survey Respondents

| Characteristics | % |
|--|--------------|
| Age | |
| 18-24 | 5 |
| 25-34 | 40 |
| 35-49 | 50 |
| 50+ | 5 |
| Race/ethnicity | |
| Black or African American | 39 |
| White | 35 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 8 |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/x/e | 7 |
| Asian | 3 |
| Other/More than one racial or ethnic category | 9 |
| Currently pregnant | 20 |
| Caregiving characteristics | |
| Caring for a child age 0-17 | 100 |
| Caring for an adult age 18-59 | 15 |
| Caring for an adult ages 60 and older | 6 |
| Caring for a child age 0-17 and an adult age 18 or older | 20 |
| Sole caregiver for child age 0-17 | 88 |
| Currently working (part or full time) | 84 |
| Working full time | 44 |
| Working part time | 40 |
| Current student (part or full time) | 36 |
| Full-time student | 16 |
| Part-time student | 20 |
| Homeownership | |
| Renter | 70 |
| Homeowner | 26 |
| Lived in without payment of rent | 4 |
| Total N | 1,790 |

Source: Survey of the Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX participants, March 5-10, 2026.

Key Findings

Child Care Is a Significant Challenge for These Single Mothers, and Mothers of Young Children and Student Parents Disproportionately Feel This Burden

The vast majority of single mothers (80 percent) reported using some form of child care, whether that be paid, unpaid, or a combination of both. Among those using paid child care, 64 percent reported using 20 or fewer hours during the week, while 13 percent reported using 40 hours or more. Households with young children and student parents were both more likely to report using 20 or more hours of paid child care per week (41 percent and 46 percent, respectively, vs. 34 percent overall). A large majority of respondents using paid child care (82 percent) reported difficulty making a child care payment in the prior 12 months, with similar rates reported by households with young children and student parents (table 2).

TABLE 2

Use of Child Care among Respondents

| Characteristics | Overall | Households with children 0-4 | Student parents |
|--|---------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Use of child care | | | |
| No, do not use any child care | 20% | 18% | 10% |
| Yes, use a combination of paid and unpaid child care | 20% | 23% | 19% |
| Yes, use paid child care | 32% | 39% | 39% |
| Yes, use unpaid child care | 28% | 20% | 33% |
| Among paid child care users, hours used per week (N = 746) | | | |
| 1-9 hours | 28% | 28% | 24% |
| 10-19 hours | 36% | 30% | 29% |
| 20-39 hours | 21% | 20% | 23% |
| 40 hours or more | 13% | 21% | 23% |
| Among paid child care users, expressed difficulty making a child care payment in the last 12 months (N = 746) | 82% | 81% | 84% |

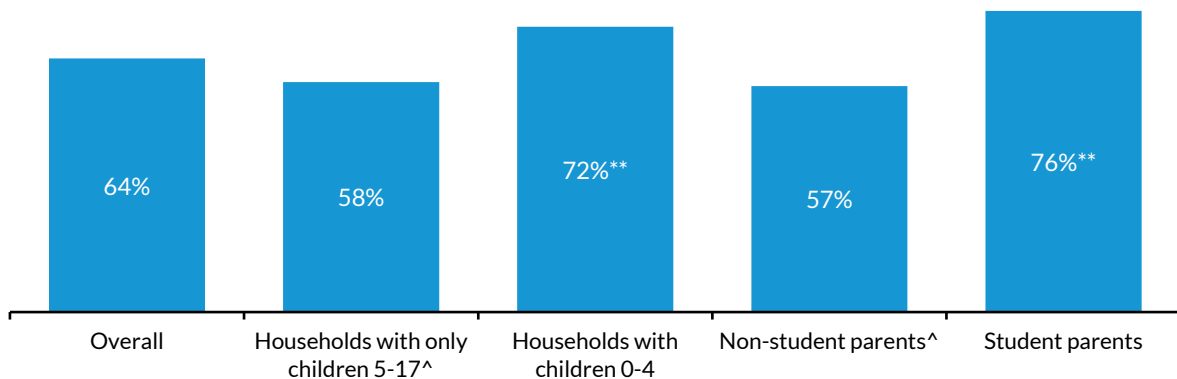
Source: Survey of the Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX participants, March 5-10, 2026.

Barriers to Child Care Impact Single Mothers' Ability to Maintain Employment

Single mothers also reported experiencing a more pronounced impact on their careers as a result of challenges to accessing child care. Respondents were asked if anyone in the household had to quit a job, not take a job, or greatly change their job because of problems with child care in the last 12 months. Overall, two in three respondents (64 percent) reported a job challenge due to child care. This experience was more pronounced for households with young children and student parents (72 percent and 76 percent, respectively; figure 2).

FIGURE 2

Share of Respondents Reporting Barriers to Employment Due to Child Care



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Source Survey of Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX participants, March 5-10, 2026.

Notes: Respondents were asked, "During the last 12 months, did you or anyone in the household have to quit a job, not take a job, or greatly change your job because of problems with child care for your child/children?"

[^] Estimate for student parents with children from birth to age 4 differs significantly from estimate for adults student parents with only children ages 5-17 at the 0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests.

When Asked About Basic Needs, Finances, Career Advancement, and Dependable Child Care Were Least Frequently Met for All Respondents

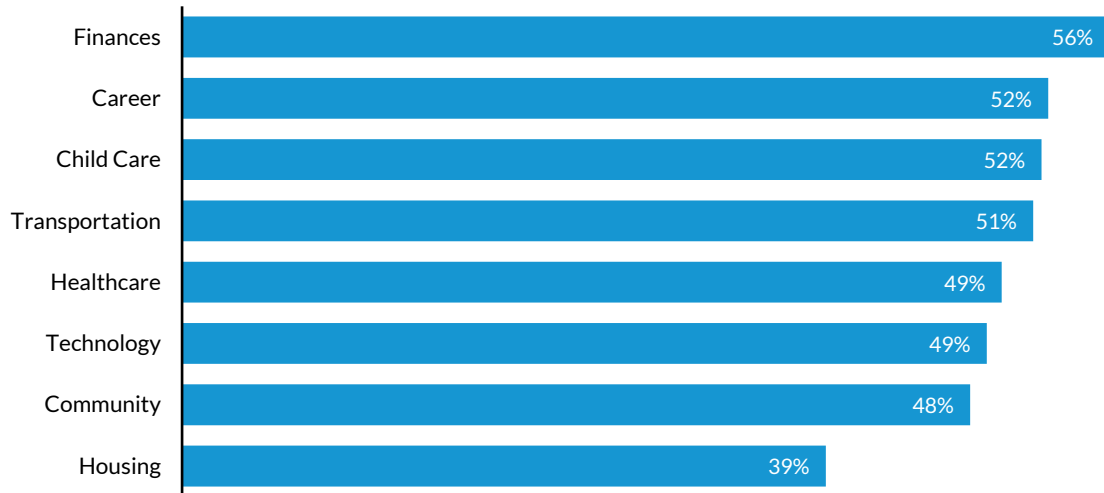
All respondents were asked how frequently they felt their basic needs were met. Each basic need was framed as a positive statement, and respondents were asked to assess how frequently (ranging from “almost always true” to “rarely true”) they felt those basic domains were met for their household.¹⁰ The positive statements provided to survey respondents were as follows:

- **Finances.** We have enough money (including loans) to cover basic needs (housing, food, child care, needed transportation, basic health care, etc.)
- **Career.** I am enrolled in training for a job or currently working in a job that provides opportunity for advancement
- **Child care.** We have dependable and stable child care arrangements that align with school or work needs (can be through a center, a family/friend, or another arrangement)
- **Transportation.** We have dependable and affordable transportation for myself and those I care for
- **Health care.** We have reliable access to affordable health care for myself or those I care for
- **Technology.** We have reliable internet and computing technology to engage in school, work, and other aspects of daily life
- **Community.** Our community health and well-being are strong (e.g., families, youth, and children are supported, and substance abuse and violence are minimal)
- **Housing.** We have a safe and dependable place to live, with adequate privacy and for an extended period of time

The top three statements that respondents expressed as being “sometimes” or “rarely” true were finances (56 percent), a job or training with advancement opportunities (52 percent), and child care (52 percent). As the cost of living continues to increase across the US,¹¹ single mothers may disproportionately feel the burdens of rising costs, which may shed light on the large share citing that their financial needs are rarely met. About half of respondents also indicated that dependable and affordable transportation (51 percent), reliable access to affordable health care (49 percent), reliable internet access (49 percent), and strong community health and well-being (48 percent) were sometimes or rarely true (figure 3). The frequencies of respondents indicating their basic needs being met were true did not differ substantially when looking at households with young children or student parents.

FIGURE 3

Share of Respondents Expressing Each Need Being Met Is “Sometimes True” or “Rarely True”



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Source: Survey of Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX participants, March 5–10, 2026.

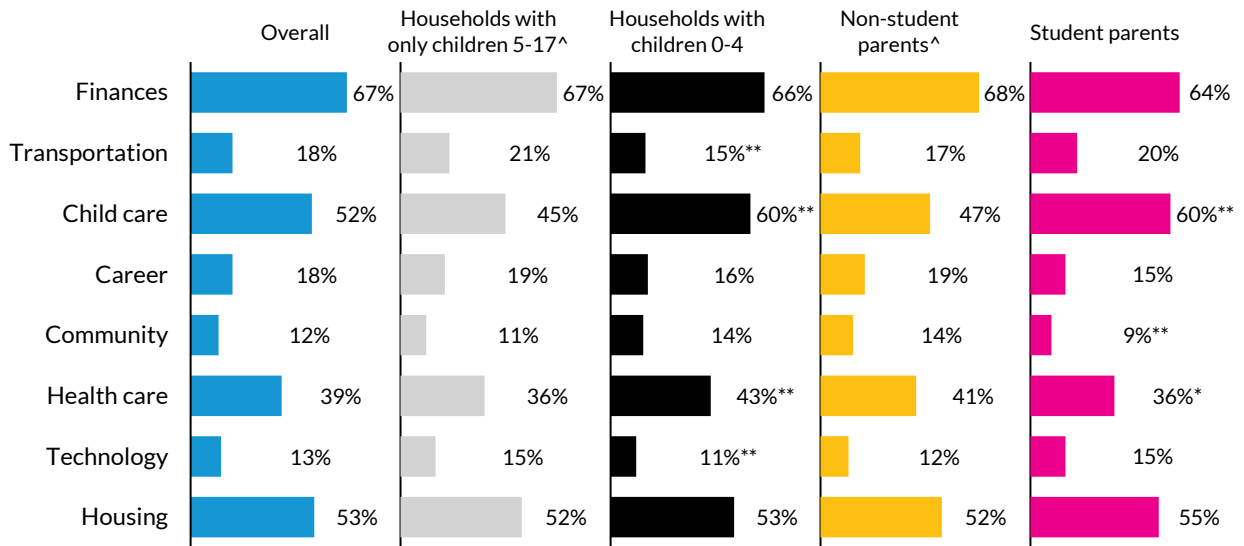
Notes: Shares represent respondents that said each basic need statement has “rarely” or “sometimes” been true in the last 12 months.

Parents of Young Children and Student Parents Most Frequently Cited Child Care as a Top Area of Assistance Needed

Referencing the same set of basic needs, respondents were asked to rank the top three areas where additional assistance was needed in their household. Finances (67 percent), housing (53 percent), and child care (52 percent) were most commonly indicated as the top three areas among respondents. Child care emerged as a substantial area of need specifically for households with young children and student parents. Households with young children (60 percent) and student parents (60 percent) were more likely to report child care needs as areas where they need the most assistance, compared with households with only older children (45 percent) and nonstudent parents (47 percent), respectively (figure 4).

FIGURE 4

Share of Respondents Ranking Needs in Their “Top 3 Areas of Needed Assistance”



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Source: Survey of the Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX participants, March 5-10, 2026.

Notes: ** Estimate for student parents with children 0-4 differs significantly from estimate for adults student parents with only children ages 5-17 at the 0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests.

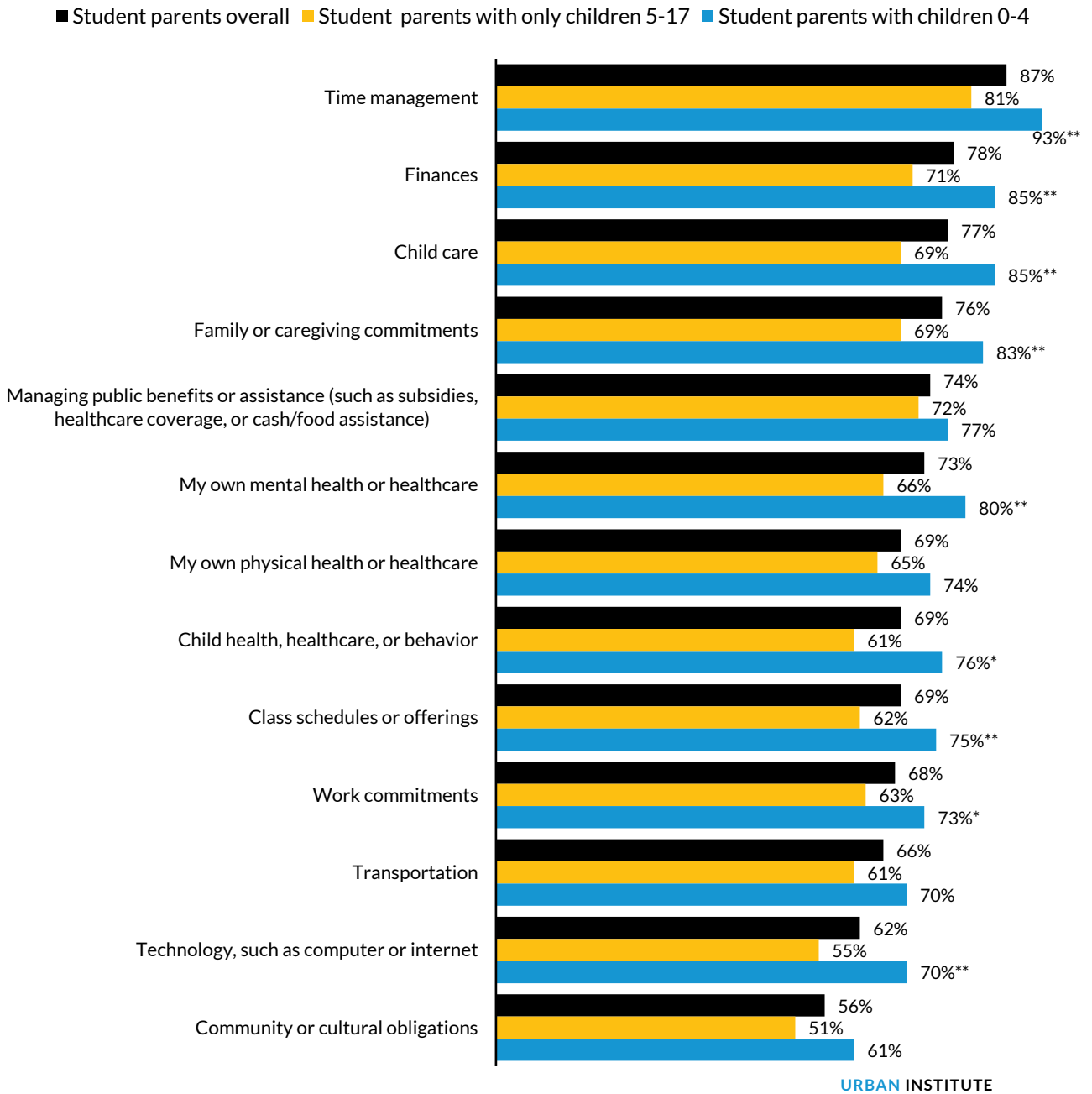
Student Parents Face Significant Challenges That Create Barriers to Succeeding at School

Respondents who identified as either part- or full-time student parents were asked about whether a series of challenges affected their ability to succeed at school. Student parents who are also single mothers experience a unique intersection of burdens including needing to find child care while also completing their coursework, and often juggling employment. Over 50 percent of student parent respondents selected a challenge in every sector, reflecting these multiple demands. Time management was the most common challenge cited the (87 percent). More than three in four student parent respondents also cited finances (78 percent), child care (77 percent), and family or caregiving commitments (76 percent) as challenges.

Among student parents, those with young children (birth to age 4) were more likely to report certain challenges compared to student parents with only older children (ages 5-17). In line with the most common challenges cited above, the vast majority of student parents with young children were more likely to cite time management (93 percent) challenges, followed by finances and child care (85 percent). Student parents with young children were also more likely than student parents with only older children to face challenges with their own mental health or access to healthcare (80 percent vs. 66 percent), navigating class schedules or offerings (75 percent vs. 62 percent), and technology (70 percent vs. 55 percent; figure 5). These findings may indicate where areas of additional support in campus settings may be most helpful.

FIGURE 5

Challenges Among Student Parents That Impact Ability to Succeed at School



Source: Survey of Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX participants, March 5-10, 2026.

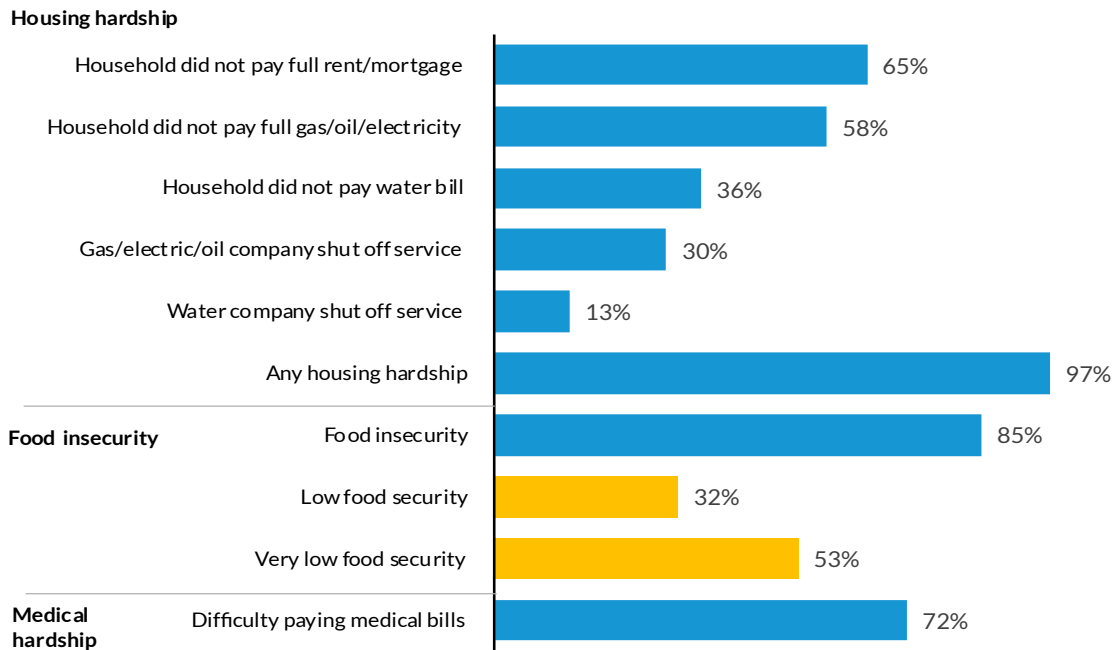
Notes: Respondents were asked, "As a student with caregiving responsibilities, have any of the following challenges gotten in the way of your ability to succeed at school?" **/** Estimate for student parents with children 0-4 differs significantly from estimate for adults student parents with only children ages 5-17 at the 0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests.

Single Mothers Face High Levels of Economic and Material Hardship, and Difficulties with the Rising Cost of Living

Respondents reported high levels of material and economic hardship. These levels were similar across all subgroups (student parents, single mothers with young children and single mothers with older children), indicating high levels of hardship overall. Almost all (97 percent) of respondents reported facing some type of housing hardship in the last 12 months, including two in three respondents reporting not being able to pay their full rent or mortgage, 58 percent not being able to pay the full utility bill, and 36 percent not being able to pay their water bill. A smaller share (30 percent) reported that their utility company shut off service at some point in the last 12 months.

We also asked respondents about their household food security in the last 12 months. Household food security refers to access by all household members at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. In households experiencing food insecurity, access to adequate food is limited or uncertain because of a lack of resources.¹² We found that 85 percent of respondents reported their household experienced food insecurity in the last year. This is significantly higher than rates of food insecurity among single-parent households in national survey data as of 2024, indicating the substantively higher level of need in this single-mother respondent population (Rabbitt et al. 2025). We also found that about half (53 percent) of respondents reported experiencing very low food security, a severe form of food insecurity in which household members experience multiple indicators of disrupted eating patterns, such as skipping meals or going without food for a full day. Finally, about three in four respondents (72 percent) reported difficulty paying medical bills (figure 6).

FIGURE 6
Material and Economic Hardship Among Respondents



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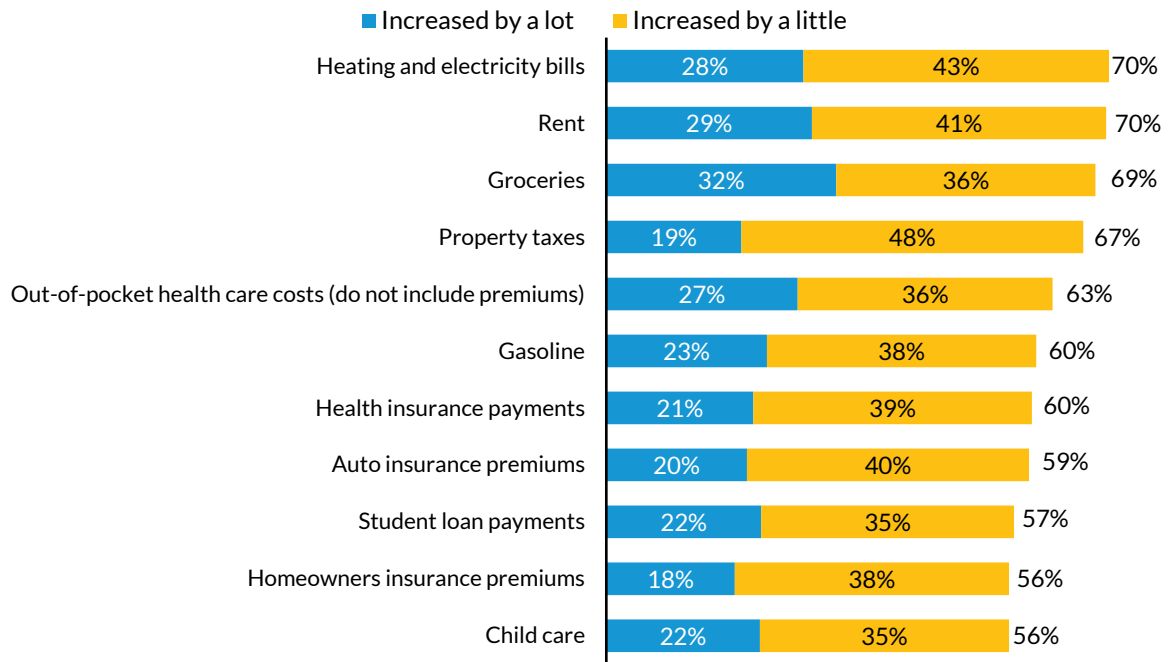
Source: Survey of Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX participants, March 5–10, 2026.

Notes: Food security is measured using the Six-Item Household Food Security Module. The estimate for overall food insecurity represents the sum of low food security and very low food security, represented by the bars in yellow. See US Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, “Food Security in the U.S.—Measurement,” <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/measurement>.

Many Americans are struggling to afford the rising costs of essential goods such as food, child care, housing, and energy, with estimates finding that nearly half of people in all American families are unable to afford the true cost of living (Acs et al. 2026).¹³ The prices of these goods are rising faster than earnings, which is of particular concern for those in the low-wage workforce who must often make tradeoffs to afford essential goods. We also asked respondents whether and how costs have changed for their households in the last 12 months, and report in figure 7 the share of respondents indicating each cost increased a little or increased a lot. Housing costs, including heating and electricity bills and rent, were most commonly cited as increasing in the past year (70 percent), followed by groceries (69 percent). About 6 in 10 respondents also cited increases in health care costs, including out-of-pocket health care costs (63 percent) and health insurance payments (60 percent). A similar share also cited the growing cost of gasoline (60 percent). A smaller, but still substantive, share reported increases in child care costs (56 percent).

FIGURE 7

Share of Respondents Reporting the Cost of Each Basic Need Has Increased



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Source: Survey of Jeremiah Program 2026 Summit and SummitX participants, March 5–10, 2026.

Notes: The estimates on the right side of each stacked bar represent the sum of respondents that said each basic need has “increased by a little” or “increased by a lot” in the last 12 months.

Despite High Levels of Hardship, Single Mothers Are Resilient and Forward-Looking

Despite these challenges, however, single mothers responding to the survey were notably resilient and hopeful for the future. The high number of responses to the survey indicates a high level of engagement among attendees of the Jeremiah Program Summit and reflects a desire in this population to ensure their voices are heard. In addition to the survey results above, respondents were also asked to complete the statement, “When I am supported as a mom, my child is able to....” The most common responses from mothers included “thrive”, “succeed,” “be healthy,” “go to school,” “grow,” and “live a good life,” indicating not only a level of hopefulness looking ahead, but also that supportive interventions and policy changes targeted toward single mothers can go a long way in advancing the health and well-being of children (see figure 8 for the most common words in a word cloud). Other respondents also noted the positive impacts support would have on their own well-being and how this could in turn impact their children, stating that when they are supported as a mom, their child would be able to do the following:

- “Benefit from the best version of me”
- “Receive consistent care and guidance”
- “Feel secure and loved every day”

benefits in fiscal year 2028 and beyond, making it more difficult for state SNAP programs to maintain current eligibility and benefit levels. Lastly, due to new work requirements associated with Medicaid, households enrolled in both SNAP and Medicaid may experience the compounding loss of both resources, which may also have downstream effects for participation in child nutrition programs (Gutierrez 2025). Overall, these changes will likely increase the level of hardship felt by single mothers across the country, which, in turn, can make it more difficult for them to achieve their goals for themselves and their families. These goals are multifaceted, and another single mother stated the following in the open-ended response:

“When I am supported as a mom, I will be able to provide a better life for my child. I will ensure my child has proper food, education, healthcare, and a safe environment to grow. With support, I can focus on working hard, being emotionally present, and creating opportunities that will help my child have a brighter future.”

—Survey participant

Notes

- ¹ “The American Affordability Tracker,” Urban Institute, April 2, 2026, <https://www.urban.org/data-tools/american-affordability-tracker>.
- ² “Children’s Living Arrangements,” U.S. Census Bureau, November 14, 2023, <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/childrens-living-arrangements.html>.
- ³ “Jeremiah Program Summit Weekend,” Jeremiah Program, accessed May, 2026, <https://jeremiahprogram.org/summit-2026/>.
- ⁴ Children are raised in diverse family structures in the US. A single-parent household can refer to biological or adoptive parents, families that include stepparents, cohabiting parents, single parents living alone or with a partner, single parents living with extended family, and families where grandparents, other relatives, or nonrelated caregivers are raising children.

“Children’s Living Arrangements,” U.S. Census Bureau, November 14, 2023, <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/childrens-living-arrangements.html>.
- ⁵ “Child Care Remains out of Financial Reach for Many Families, US Department of Labor Data Shows,” US Department of Labor - Women’s Bureau, accessed May 2026 <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/wb/wb20230124>.
- ⁶ Theresa Anderson, Sheron Gittens, and Kate Westaby, “Infographic: Undergraduate Single Mother Students,” SPARK Collaborative, September 30, 2024, <https://studentparentaction.org/resources/infographic-undergraduate-single-mother-students>
- ⁷ Theresa Anderson, Sheron Gittens, and Kate Westaby, “Infographic: Undergraduate Single Mother Students,” SPARK Collaborative, September 30, 2024, <https://studentparentaction.org/resources/infographic-undergraduate-single-mother-students>.
- ⁸ “Data on Child Care and Early Learning in the United States,” Center for American Progress, <https://www.americanprogress.org/data-view/early-learning-in-the-united-states/>.

- ⁹ “Child Care in America: 2024: Price & Supply,” Child Care Aware of America, May 2025, <https://www.childcareaware.org/price-landscape24>.
- ¹⁰ The following statements were adapted from the forthcoming revised *Family-Friendly College Toolkit*. See Elizabeth Osche and Theresa Anderson, *Family-Friendly College Toolkit* (Student-Parent Action through Research Knowledge Collaborative, forthcoming).
- ¹¹ “The American Affordability Tracker,” Urban Institute, April 2, 2026, <https://www.urban.org/data-tools/american-affordability-tracker>.
- ¹² Laura J. Hales and Madeline Reed-Jones, “Food Security in the U.S. – Definitions of Food Security,” Economic Research Service, US Department of Agriculture, March 30, 2026, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/definitions-of-food-security>.
- ¹³ “The American Affordability Tracker,” Urban Institute.
- ¹⁴ Deng Chao, “Inflation Soared to 3.8% in April, Driven by Gasoline Prices,” *The Wall Street Journal*, May 12, 2026, <https://www.wsj.com/economy/cpi-inflation-report-april-62b11096>.

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