



Parents with Nontraditional Work Schedules in Connecticut

Implications for Child Care

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Understanding the child care needs of parents working nontraditional hour (NTH) schedules—defined here as any work outside of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays—has become a growing concern for policymakers trying to reduce barriers to accessible child care. Families working these schedules can face extra challenges finding child care, and the child care arrangements they use are less often supported by public funds. Further, structural inequities in the labor and education markets mean that NTH schedules are more common for Black and Latino workers and workers in families with low incomes—who already face disparities in access to quality child care and good jobs. The child care crisis brought on by the pandemic and other challenges of COVID-19 have amplified these issues as well as the importance of the essential workforce and impact of race on families’ risks and opportunities.

Using data from the 2014–18 American Community Survey and the 2016 Survey of Program Participation, we find that roughly a third of Connecticut children younger than 6 with working parents had parents that worked NTH schedules. The most common hours these parents worked were evenings, mornings, and weekends, with fewer working overnight. Although parents of all types and income levels work NTH schedules, these schedules are much more common among families that have faced structural barriers to employment, education, and good wages. This is true especially for families with low incomes, Black and Latino families, parents with lower levels of education, and single-parent families. Further, these patterns hold true for essential workers as well.

This brief is one in a set of three examining NTH work patterns. The companion briefs include one providing these data for the District of Columbia and one for Oklahoma.

Background

Understanding the child care needs of parents working nontraditional hour (NTH) schedules has become a growing concern for policymakers trying to reduce barriers to accessible child care. We define NTH schedules as before 7:00 a.m., after 6:00 p.m., or on weekends. Families working these schedules can face extra challenges finding child care and are less likely to get financial assistance to pay for care (Rachidi et al. 2019). Moreover, the child care options available to these families are much less likely to be part of child care subsidy systems (Henly and Adams 2018). The care options families working NTH schedules use tend to be smaller and home-based, such as care offered by relatives or friends, or family child care homes.¹ Further, systemic inequities in the labor market and education system mean that NTH work schedules are more common for Black and Latino workers and workers in families with low incomes (Sandstrom et al. 2019; Enchautegui 2013; Golden 2015). As a result, the structural inequities in the labor market may directly shape the child care options these families can access as well as the extent to which they are able to get subsidies to afford care. This can further compound disparities in these families' ability to work, earn a living wage, and support their children's healthy development.

The challenges Black and Latino families face, and larger concerns about structural inequities for communities of color, have only grown during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, many parents have struggled to balance the need to work with protecting their children's health and safety,² all while child care programs have closed or reduced services.³ Parents who are essential workers and those who cannot move to telecommuting (Adams 2020) face difficult tradeoffs. Further, these challenges disproportionately affect communities of color. Black and Latino parents are in a particularly challenging situation given the greater impact of the economic downturn on their employment and income,⁴ their disproportionate representation in some parts of the essential workforce,⁵ the fact that they were significantly less likely to move to telecommuting (Adams 2020), and the higher COVID-19 health risks they and their families face because of structural inequities in health care.⁶

A first step in working to address these inequities is to understand the extent of the problem. ***Specifically, it is important to know how many children have parents who work NTH schedules and how this varies across children and families with different characteristics.*** This brief—part of a larger series—provides this information for the state of Connecticut and examines the extent to which Connecticut children younger than age 6 with working parents had parents who worked NTH schedules. It first presents the information overall, describing variation across groups of children (including those in families with low incomes and children of color), and then explores variation for children with one or more parents working in essential industries. It then briefly explores the implications of these findings for child care and concludes with a brief discussion of some policy questions and issues that policymakers should consider.

Note that the data on which these estimates are based are from before the pandemic (box 1). Although the number of children with parents working NTH schedules may be different now because of changes in who is working and how they are working during the pandemic, the general patterns described in this brief still provide important insights for policy and practice. Many parents continue to be employed, including in essential industries and frontline jobs critical to supporting the economy and society, and many are trying to regain their jobs or find new work.

BOX 1

Understanding the Data

The data are from the Census Bureau's 2014–18 American Community Survey and 2016 Survey of Income and Program Participation.^a The results provide information on the children of parents working NTH schedules. We define NTH as parents working or commuting at any point between 6:00 p.m. and 6:59 a.m. during the week or anytime on weekends. And because our goal is to identify the potential need for child care for children living with two parents, we only count the children in two-parent families if both parents were working or commuting either during the same weekday hour or anytime during the weekend.

Our analysis of essential workers focuses on young children with at least one parent working for an employer in an industry classified as essential by the US Department of Homeland Security.^b We adapted a crosswalk developed by Brookings to classify industry codes they determined were likely to fall under the federal definition of essential industries (Tomer and Kane 2020).

Notes: ^aFor more information on how children with parents working NTH are identified and the methodology used in this analysis, please see Sandstrom and colleagues (2019). ^b"Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce," Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, US Department of Homeland Security, accessed April 10, 2020, <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>.

Key Findings

Findings from our analyses are described below. (For more details, see the data tables at the end of the brief. Table 1 includes data for all children younger than 6 with working parents, and table 2 for all children younger than 6 with working parents including at least one working in an essential industry.)

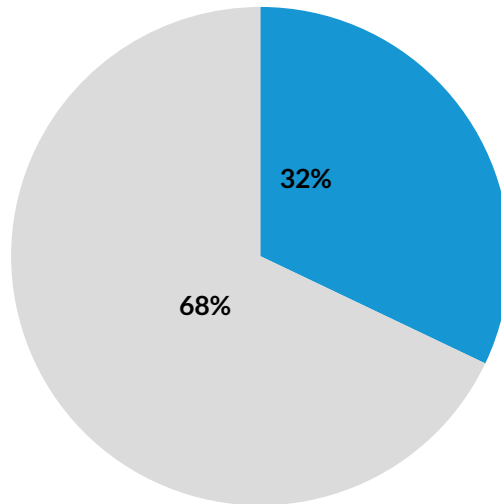
How Common Is Having Parents Work NTH Schedules for Connecticut's Children?

Our analysis showed that about a third (32 percent) of children younger than age 6 with working parents in Connecticut had parents with NTH schedules (figure 1). This share was relatively consistent across regions and major counties.

FIGURE 1

One-Third of Connecticut Children Younger Than Age 6 with All Parents Working Had Parents with NTH Schedules

■ Have parents working NTH schedules ■ Do not have parents working NTH schedules



Sources: Urban Institute analysis of Census Bureau microdata from the 2014–18 American Community Survey downloaded from IPUMS-USA and from the 2016 Survey of Income and Program Participation.

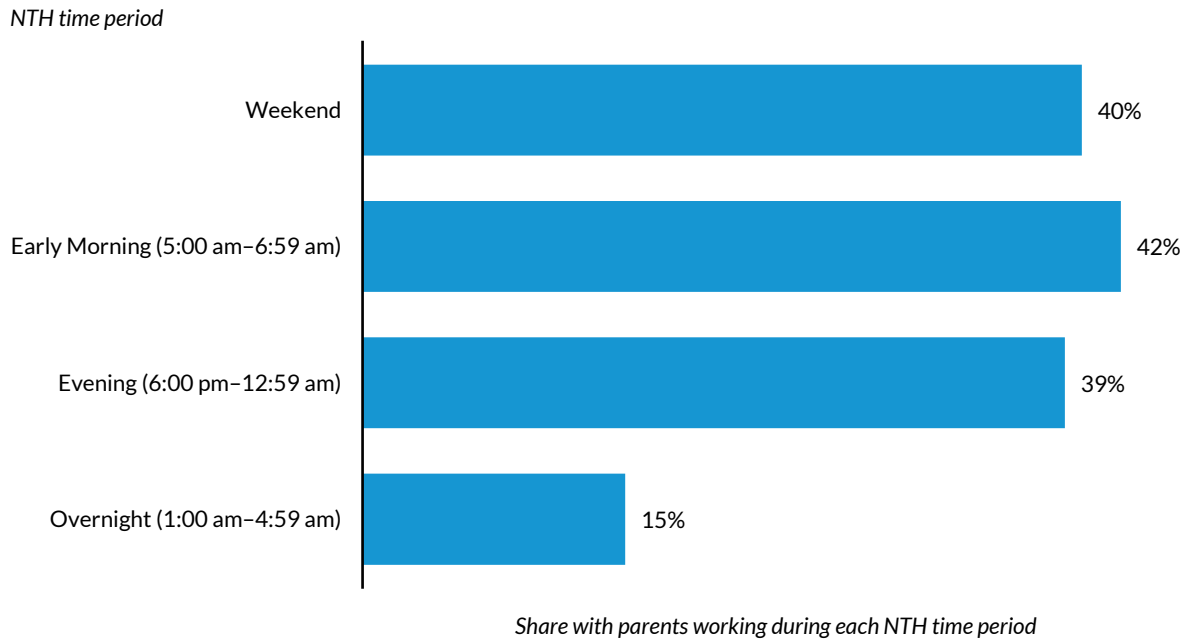
Notes: Figures are estimates with percentages rounded to the closest 1 percent. For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working for the child to be considered having all parents working. Children with parents working during nontraditional hours (NTH) had all parents predicted as working or commuting during NTH (6:00 p.m.–6:59 a.m. weekdays or anytime Saturday or Sunday). For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working or commuting either during the same weekday hour or anytime during the weekend to be considered working NTH in that period.

In Which NTH Time Periods Did Parents Work?

Children younger than 6 with NTH-working parents had parental work hours evenly spread across early morning (42 percent), evening (39 percent), and weekends (40 percent), with fewer parents working overnight (15 percent) (figure 2).⁷

FIGURE 2

Parents with NTH Schedules Most Often Worked During the Early Morning, Weekend, and Evening
Share of Connecticut children younger than age 6 with NTH-working parents that had parents working in each NTH time period



Sources: Urban Institute analysis of Census Bureau microdata from the 2014–18 American Community Survey downloaded from IPUMS-USA and from the 2016 Survey of Income and Program Participation.

Notes: Figures are estimates with percentages rounded to the closest 1 percent. For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working for the child to be considered having all parents working. Children with parents working during nontraditional hours (NTH) had all parents predicted as working or commuting during NTH (6:00 p.m.–6:59 a.m. weekdays or anytime Saturday or Sunday). For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working or commuting either during the same weekday hour or anytime during the weekend to be considered working NTH in that period. The total across time periods is greater than 100 percent, as parents could work in more than one NTH time period.

Are Children in Families Facing Greater Barriers and Structural Inequities More Likely to Have Parents Working NTH?

Children in families facing greater structural inequities and barriers to employment, education, and other opportunities are disproportionately likely to have parents working NTH schedules (figure 3):

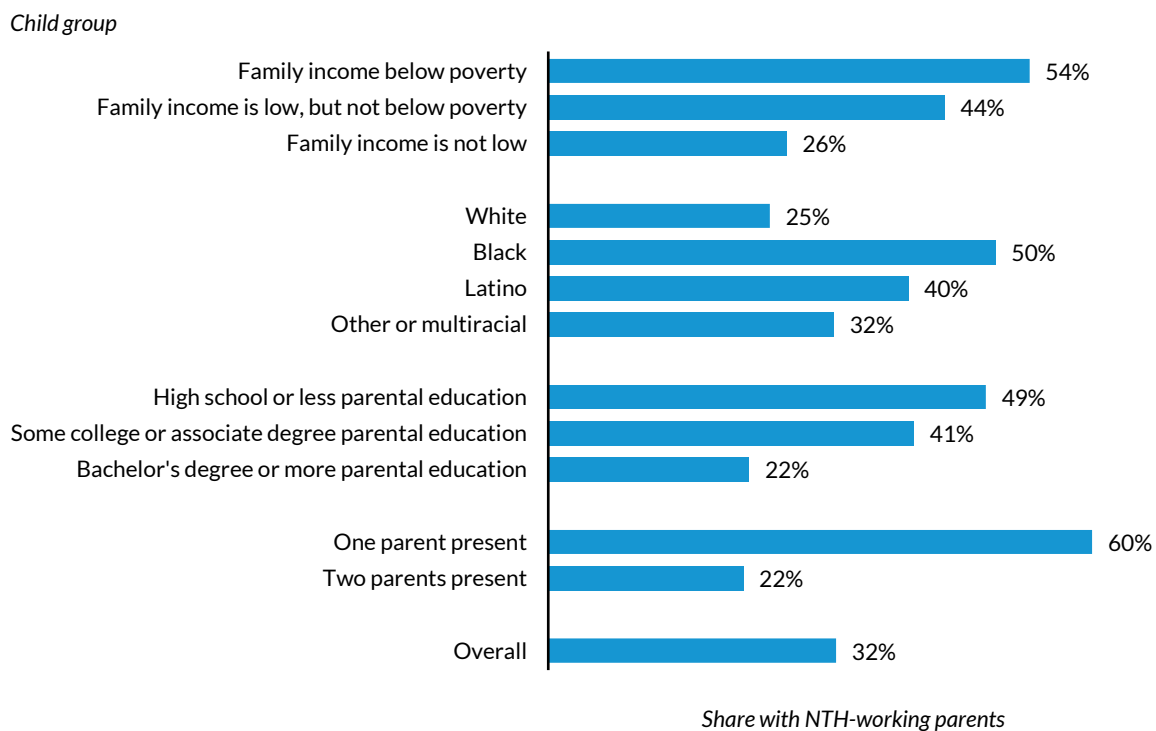
- Connecticut children with working parents in families with incomes **below the poverty level** were more than twice as likely to have NTH-working parents as children in families that did not have low incomes (54 percent compared with 26 percent).
- **Black and Latino children** with working parents are much more likely to have NTH-working parents—50 percent and 40 percent, respectively—than white children (25 percent). These differences remained, albeit at lower levels, when we compared the work patterns of Black, Latino, and white families with low incomes.

- Children with working parents whose highest level of education was a **high school diploma or less** were more than twice as likely to have a parent working NTH than children with working parents who had graduated from college (22 percent compared with 49 percent).
- Three-fifths (60 percent) of children living with a working **single parent** had parents working NTH schedules, contrasted with 22 percent of those living in two-parent families.⁸

FIGURE 3

Children in Groups More Likely to Face Structural Barriers and Challenges Are More Likely to Have NTH-Working Parents

Share of Connecticut children younger than 6 with working parents who had NTH-working parents, by selected personal and family characteristics



Sources: Urban Institute analysis of Census Bureau microdata from the 2014–18 American Community Survey downloaded from IPUMS-USA and from the 2016 Survey of Income and Program Participation.

Notes: Figures are estimates with percentages rounded to the closest 1 percent. For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working for the child to be considered having all parents working. Children with parents working during nontraditional hours (NTH) had all parents predicted as working or commuting during NTH (6:00 p.m.–6:59 a.m. weekdays or anytime Saturday or Sunday). For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working or commuting either during the same weekday hour or anytime during the weekend to be considered working NTH in that period. Families with incomes below poverty have incomes below 100 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). Families with higher incomes or incomes that are not low have incomes at or above 200 percent FPL. For family income, a small group of children living with unrelated household members or in group quarters fall into a “Not Applicable” category, in which poverty status is not calculated and (not shown here). The “other or multiracial” group includes Asians and Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, those that identified as another race outside of these categories, and those that identified with more than one race. Parental education level reflects the highest level of attainment

between both parents for children living with two parents. A small group of children not living with their parents fall into a “no parents” category (not shown here).

Is NTH Work Found across the Full Range of Family Types and Characteristics?

As noted above, children in families with specific characteristics are more likely to have parents with NTH work schedules, but—as is demonstrated in figure 3—these parental work schedules are found across all groups of families. For example, roughly one in four children with working parents in families with higher incomes, who are white, whose parents have higher education levels, or who live in two-parent families also have NTH-working parents—and each category can represent significant numbers of children (table 1). This underscores the fact that these work patterns are common for a broad swath of Connecticut’s children (figure 3).

Did NTH Work Patterns Differ across the State?

Although some variation exists, NTH parental work patterns described above by time period and child and family characteristics were relatively similar in different regions of the state. One exception, however, is that in the New London, Middlesex, Windham, and Litchfield counties region, an even higher share of children in families with incomes below the poverty level (66 percent), Black children (67 percent), children in the other race or multiracial group (47 percent), and Latino children (46 percent) had NTH-working parents than for Connecticut children in these groups overall.

How Are the Industries in Which Parents Work Related to Their Likelihood of Having NTH Schedules?⁹

Among children with working parents in Connecticut, 48 percent of those whose primary parent worked in the retail, entertainment, and accommodation and food services industries (or 11,990 children) had parents working NTH. This share is substantially higher than the 23 percent of those (or 13,110 children) whose primary parent worked in the “all other” industries category, which includes administrative services, education, white-collar and business services, and other services (table 1).

How Common Is It for Children to Have a Parent Working in an Essential Industry, and What Are These Parents’ NTH Work Schedules?

- About 7 in 10 (69 percent) Connecticut children younger than 6 with working parents had a parent working in an essential industry (tables 1 and 2).
- Slightly less than a third (29 percent) of children with working parents (including at least one parent working in an essential industry) had parents working NTH schedules, slightly lower than the rate for all Connecticut children younger than 6 with working parents (table 2).
- Children with at least one parent working in an essential industry made up a large share—almost two-thirds (63 percent)—of all Connecticut children younger than 6 with NTH-working parents (tables 1 and 2).

- Children with working parents where at least one worked in an essential industry have similar parental NTH work patterns as for all children with working parents as described above (table 2). Similar to all children with working parents, those whose families face greater structural barriers to employment, education, and income are more likely to have parents working NTH schedules.

Understanding the Child Care Challenges Parents Working Nontraditional Schedules Face

Nontraditional parental work schedules are much more common for children living in families who already face challenges because of inadequate resources and structural inequities in access to good paying jobs, education, and health care. These families are, in turn, exactly the families that would benefit from financial assistance for child care, both to help support their ability to work and help them access child care options they need for their children. Further, these findings also underscore the reality that many parents with NTH schedules also work in essential industries, which means these issues play out among those workers who are keeping the economy running during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yet families with NTH work schedules face a unique set of child care challenges if they need someone to help them care for their children while they work:

Even before the pandemic, the formal child care market did not effectively meet the needs of families working nontraditional schedules. National data from 2012 find that only 8 percent of child care centers are open during nontraditional hours. And although regulated family child care homes tend to have more flexible hours than centers, most do not serve families during these different hours. Only 34 percent of family child care homes offered care during these hours.¹⁰ Further, the overall supply of family child care is relatively small compared with other sectors and has been declining in recent years (National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance 2019).

Instead, surveys of families across the country find that even before the pandemic families with NTH work schedules were most likely to use child care settings that were legally exempt from licensing, such as relatives, friend, and neighbors, and other small, informal home-based child care settings.¹¹ It is unclear how much this is because these are the only forms of care available during these hours, these families prefer these settings, or a mixture of both. Our Urban research team is interviewing parents working NTH hours to help investigate this question in a current study and anticipates releasing findings in spring 2021. Our hypothesis is that parents prefer home-based settings, particularly during times their children are getting ready for bed, sleeping, or waking up in the morning.

In addition, nationally the pandemic has devastated the child care market, and parents increasingly seem to be turning to home-based child care options. The combination of the economic crisis, the increased costs of providing child care because of COVID-19-related health and safety requirements, concerns about health risks for child care staff, parental concerns about their children's risk, and so on have created a perfect storm for formal child care programs across the country. Many

have closed or are struggling to reopen or have reopened at reduced levels (Zero to Three 2020).¹² And although a national study has not been conducted, various smaller surveys suggest that parents seem to be turning to relatives, friends and neighbors, and other small home-based child care settings.¹³

Yet our public funds to help parents afford child care serve only a fraction of those eligible, and the funds are predominantly spent in settings less accessible to families working nontraditional schedules. Before the pandemic, public investments in child care assistance for working families with low incomes were only sufficient to serve a fraction of those who were eligible under federal law.¹⁴ Further, public funding for child care assistance has been increasingly used to purchase care in child care centers (Henly and Adams 2018). In 2018, for example, 73 percent of the children served through the Child Care and Development Fund nationally were cared for in child care centers—an increase of 15 percentage points from 2005.¹⁵

Policy Questions to Explore

We need to learn much more about how to best support the child care needs of parents working nontraditional hours and how to reduce the inequities in their access to financial assistance. To meet these goals, we recommend that policymakers, advocates, researchers, and other stakeholders consider following questions:

1. **What child care options do parents want during NTH work schedules?** An often-overlooked, foundational question for policymakers is to first understand what child care settings parents want during these times and for their children of different ages. ***The policy priority should be to take a family-centered approach to this issue*** and take steps to ensure parents can access the care they feel best meets their needs and their children's needs. Investing in particular types of care without finding out whether parents want to use them could be unsuccessful or a poor use of resources.

This question is important because the ideal child care situation will likely look different for a parent working overnight when her children are asleep than for a parent working on a weekend afternoon, and needs will also likely differ for a parent whose work starts only an hour before the child care center opens. A parent with an infant might prefer a different child care option during these times versus a parent with a school-age child. (As noted earlier, our research team is currently talking with parents in three sites about their child care preferences during NTH, including a site in Connecticut, Oklahoma, and the District of Columbia, and will have findings to share in spring 2021.)

However, policymakers do not need to wait for this information to take action to support these families because, regardless, the current formal child care market clearly does not adequately serve families working NTH schedules. States may want to consider options to expand the supply of care offered during NTH schedules and use available research to inform policy options. For example, previous research suggests many parents use home-based child care,

suggesting that strategies to support parents working NTH hours should include supports for these options.

2. **What can policymakers and stakeholders do to help parents afford the NTH child care options they prefer?** Child care can be unaffordable for parents, yet current policies seem to inadvertently limit the extent to which parents working NTH schedules are able to access subsidies to use the home-based care options available to them. It is therefore important to consider the following questions: what can be done to support child care for parents working during these times? What do these parents need to be able to get financial assistance for the care they feel is most appropriate and/or that is available to them? What steps can be taken to ensure that public child care subsidies can be used to pay for the full range of child care settings—including relative care, care by friends or neighbors, or other small home-based settings that may be legally exempt from licensing but are commonly used by parents working these schedules—while also assuring accountability and health and safety? What steps can be taken to reduce the barriers these providers face to engaging in the subsidy system? How much should DC pay for care during nontraditional hours to motivate providers to participate in the subsidy system?
3. **What can policymakers and stakeholders do to support the supply of NTH child care options and help parents find care?** How can policymakers use existing funds from the Child Care and Development Block Grant, CARE Act funding, or DC funds to incentivize providing child care during NTH hours? How can these funds be used to prioritize the most vulnerable populations who need NTH care and support the care options parents may prefer, including home-based options and family, friend, and neighbor care? What licensing barriers exist that prevent licensed child care from being offered during NTH hours? Are licensing standards for NTH care based on a careful examination of what parents want and need during these times, and do they reflect the different contexts and realities of home-based settings, or are they simply revised based on licensing standards for traditional hour center-based care? What other policies and rules can be changed to better support the care options parents use during NTH? And what steps can be taken to incorporate the full range of child care settings and NTH caregivers into consumer education and outreach strategies so parents are aware of their options and what to look for?

Conclusion

These data highlight how nontraditional work schedules are a reality for many Connecticut families with young children, including many essential workers. Further, although NTH schedules are found across all income levels and families with different characteristics, NTH work is particularly common among families who face greater resource constraints. In addition, jobs requiring nontraditional schedules are likely here to stay. Before the pandemic, many of the fastest-growing industries and the gig economy involved nontraditional and irregular schedules. This trajectory seems likely to continue (and perhaps even be accelerated) by the pandemic.¹⁶

This reality underscores the importance of Connecticut policymakers and stakeholders taking steps to understand and meet the child care needs of the many Connecticut families working nontraditional schedules. The answers to the questions above will provide important insights into steps they can take to reduce inequities and better meet the child care needs of many working families and essential workers across the state.

Data Tables

TABLE 1

Connecticut Children with NTH-Working Parents, by Selected Personal and Family Characteristics

Children younger than age 6 with all parents working

	How many children have working parents?	How many children have NTH-working parents?	What share of children with NTH-working parents are in each group?	In each group, what share of children with working parents have NTH-working parents?
State total	139,830	44,860	100%	32%
<i>NTH time period</i>				
Evening (6:00 p.m.–12:59 a.m.)	n/a	17,400	39%	n/a
Overnight (1:00 a.m.–4:59 a.m.)	n/a	6,510	15%	n/a
Early morning (5:00 a.m.–6:59 a.m.)	n/a	18,780	42%	n/a
Weekend	n/a	17,810	40%	n/a
<i>Family income</i>				
Family income below poverty	12,010	6,430	14%	54%
Family income is low, but not below poverty	22,390	9,870	22%	44%
Family income is not low	103,980	27,540	61%	26%
<i>Racial or ethnic group</i>				
White	76,240	18,790	42%	25%
Black	16,580	8,250	18%	50%
Latino	34,710	13,900	31%	40%
Other or multiracial	12,310	3,910	9%	32%
<i>Highest parental education level</i>				
High school or less	26,800	13,040	29%	49%
Some college or associate degree	35,770	14,550	32%	41%
Bachelor's degree or more	77,260	17,270	38%	22%
<i>Number of parents</i>				
One parent	34,050	20,600	46%	60%
Two parents	102,700	22,280	50%	22%
<i>Industry of primary parent</i>				
Goods, trade, transportation, and utilities	16,090	6,150	14%	38%

	How many children have working parents?	How many children have NTH-working parents?	What share of children with NTH-working parents are in each group?	In each group, what share of children with working parents have NTH-working parents?
Health care, social assistance, and public administration	42,090	13,610	30%	32%
Retail, entertainment, and accommodation and food services	24,920	11,990	27%	48%
All other	56,730	13,110	29%	23%
<i>Region of residence</i>				
Fairfield County region	37,580	12,070	27%	32%
New Haven County region	33,090	10,670	24%	32%
Hartford and Tolland Counties region	42,960	13,290	30%	31%
New London, Middlesex, Windham and Litchfield Counties region	26,200	8,840	20%	34%

Sources: Urban Institute analysis of Census Bureau microdata from the 2014–18 American Community Survey downloaded from IPUMS-USA and from the 2016 Survey of Income and Program Participation.

Notes: Figures are estimates and frequencies are rounded to the nearest 10 and percentages are rounded to the closest 1 percent. For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working for the child to be considered having all parents working. Children with parents working during nontraditional hours (NTH) had all parents predicted as working or commuting during NTH (6:00 p.m.–6:59 a.m. weekdays or anytime Saturday or Sunday). For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working or commuting either during the same weekday hour or anytime during the weekend to be considered working NTH in that period. Families with incomes below poverty have incomes below 100 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL), families with low incomes have incomes below 200 percent FPL, and families with higher incomes or incomes that are not low have incomes at or above 200 percent FPL. For family income, a small group of children living with unrelated household members or in group quarters fall into a “Not Applicable” category, in which poverty status is not calculated (not shown here). The “other or multiracial” group includes Asians and Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, those that identified as another race outside of these categories, and those that identified with more than one race. Parental education level reflects the highest level of attainment between both parents for children living with two parents. For number of parents, a small group of children not living with their parents fall into a “no parents” category (not shown here). Primary parent is the mother in two-parent opposite sex couples, first-listed mother or father in two-parent same-sex couples, and the only parent for children living with one parent. All other industries in this table include administrative services, education, white-collar and business services, and other services.

TABLE 2

Connecticut Children with NTH-working Parents, by Selected Personal and Family Characteristics*Children younger than age 6 with all parents working and parent(s) in essential industries*

	How many children have an essential worker parent?	How many children have NTH-working parents including an essential worker parent?	What share of children with NTH-working parents including an essential worker parent are in each group?	In each group, what share of children with an essential worker parent have NTH-working parents?
State total	96,560	28,320	100%	29%
<i>NTH time period</i>				
Evening (6:00 p.m.–12:59 a.m.)	n/a	10,660	38%	n/a
Overnight (1:00 a.m.–4:59 a.m.)	n/a	3,770	13%	n/a
Early morning (5:00 a.m.–6:59 a.m.)	n/a	12,900	46%	n/a
Weekend	n/a	9,370	33%	n/a
<i>Family income</i>				
Family income below poverty	5,800	2,800	10%	48%
Family income is low, but not below poverty	13,060	5,230	18%	40%
Family income is not low	76,890	19,560	69%	25%
<i>Racial or ethnic group</i>				
White	55,150	12,540	44%	23%
Black	11,750	5,430	19%	46%
Latino	21,090	7,770	27%	37%
Other or multiracial	8,580	2,580	9%	30%
<i>Highest parental education level</i>				
High school or less	15,250	6,760	24%	44%
Some college or associate degree	24,460	8,970	32%	37%
Bachelor's degree or more	56,850	12,590	44%	22%
<i>Number of parents</i>				
One parent	16,870	10,600	37%	63%
Two parents	78,110	16,590	59%	21%
<i>Essential industry of primary parent</i>				
Goods, trade, transportation, and utilities	25,250	7,180	25%	28%
Health care, social assistance, and public administration	44,960	13,880	49%	31%
All other	26,360	7,260	26%	28%
<i>Region of residence</i>				
Fairfield County region	24,070	6,870	24%	29%
New Haven County region	23,110	7,190	25%	31%
Hartford and Tolland Counties region	31,360	8,780	31%	28%

	How many children have an essential worker parent?	How many children have NTH-working parents including an essential worker parent?	What share of children with NTH-working parents including an essential worker parent are in each group?	In each group, what share of children with an essential worker parent have NTH-working parents?
New London, Middlesex, Windham and Litchfield Counties region	18,030	5,480	19%	30%

Sources: Urban Institute analysis of Census Bureau microdata from the 2014–18 American Community Survey downloaded from IPUMS-USA and from the 2016 Survey of Income and Program Participation.

Notes: Figures are estimates, frequencies are rounded to the nearest 10, and percentages are rounded to the closest 1 percent. For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working for the child to be considered having all parents working. Children with parents working during nontraditional hours (NTH) had all parents predicted as working or commuting during NTH (6:00 p.m.–6:59 a.m. weekdays or anytime Saturday or Sunday). For children living with two parents, both parents had to be working or commuting either during the same weekday hour or anytime during the weekend to be considered working NTH in that period. Children had to have at least one parent working for an employer in an industry classified as essential by the US Department of Homeland Security (“Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce,” Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, accessed December 1, 2020, <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>) to be considered having parent(s) working in essential industries. This analysis adapted a crosswalk developed by Brookings to classify industry codes determined to likely fall under the federal definition of essential industries (“Frontline Workers—Industry Appendix,” Brookings Institution, March 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Front-Line-Workers-Appendix.docx>). Families with incomes below poverty have incomes below 100 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL), families with low incomes have incomes below 200 percent FPL, and families with higher incomes or incomes that are not low have incomes at or above 200 percent FPL. For family income, a small group of children living with unrelated household members or in group quarters fall into a “Not Applicable” category, in which poverty status is not calculated (not shown here). The “other or multiracial” group includes Asians and Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, those that identified as another race outside of these categories, and those that identified with more than one race. Parental education level reflects the highest level of attainment between both parents for children living with two parents. A small group of children not living with their parents fall into a “no parents” category (not shown here). Primary parent for this table reflects the parent working in an essential industry. If the child has two parents working in an essential industry, the primary parent is the mother in opposite sex couples, first-listed mother or father in same-sex couples, and the only parent for children living with one parent. All other industries in this table include retail, entertainment, accommodation and food services, administrative services, education, white-collar and business services, and other services.

Notes

- ¹ National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Project Team, “Fact Sheet: Provision of Early Care and Education during Non-Standard Hours,” Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services, May 8, 2015, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/fact-sheet-provision-of-early-care-and-education-non-standard-hours>.
- ² Linda Smith and Sarah Tracey, “Child Care in COVID-19: Another Look at What Parents Want,” *Bipartisan Policy Center* (blog), August 26, 2020, <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/child-care-in-covid-another-look/>.
- ³ “COVID-19: State Child Care Actions,” Hunt Institute, accessed December 14, 2020, <https://hunt-institute.org/covid-19-resources/state-child-care-actions-covid-19/s>

- ⁴ Steven Brown, “How COVID-19 Is Affecting Black and Latino Families’ Employment and Financial Well-Being,” *Urban Wire* (blog), Urban Institute, May 6, 2020, <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/how-covid-19-affecting-black-and-latino-families-employment-and-financial-well-being>.
- ⁵ Celine McNicholas and Margaret Poydock, “Who Are Essential Workers? A Comprehensive Look at Their Wages, Demographics, and Unionization Rates,” *Working Economics Blog*, Economic Policy Institute, May 19, 2020, <https://www.epi.org/blog/who-are-essential-workers-a-comprehensive-look-at-their-wages-demographics-and-unionization-rates/>.
- ⁶ Kilolo Kijakazi, “COVID-19 Racial Health Disparities Highlight Why We Need to Address Structural Racism,” *Urban Wire* (blog), Urban Institute, April 10, 2020, <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/covid-19-racial-health-disparities-highlight-why-we-need-address-structural-racism>.
- ⁷ The early morning is defined as 5:00 a.m. to 6:59 a.m. on weekdays, the evening is 6:00 p.m. to 12:59 a.m. on weekdays, overnight is 1:00 a.m. to 4:49 a.m. on weekdays, and the weekend is anytime Saturday or Sunday. Parents with young children can work in more than one time period, which is why the shares of children with parents working NTH schedules across different time periods sum up to more than 100 percent.
- ⁸ Note that given the focus here was to assess potential need for child care, both parents had to be working or commuting during the same nontraditional hour or both had to be working over the weekend for a two-parent family to be counted as NTH workers. These numbers do *not*, therefore, show the share of children in two-parent families who were working any NTH hours, as parents can choose to work different schedules to address child care challenges.
- ⁹ The industry categories presented in this study are based on Census Bureau industry codes, which generally align with the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) industry codes. In this section of the analysis, the industry category reflects the industry of employment of the primary parent. Primary parent is the mother in two-parent opposite sex couples, first-listed mother or father in two-parent same-sex couples, and the only parent for children living with one parent. Additionally, for the analysis of all children age 6 or younger with working parents, the “goods, trade, transportation, and utilities” industry category includes NAICS sectors 11–21, 22, 23, 31–33, 42, and 48–49; the “health care, social assistance, and public administration” industry category includes NAICS sectors 62 and 92; the “retail, entertainment, and accommodation and food services” category includes NAICS sectors 44–45 and 71–72; and the “all other” industry category includes all remaining NAICS sectors (specifically, 51, 52–53, 54–55, 56, 61, and 81).
- ¹⁰ NSECE Project Team, “Fact Sheet: Provision of Early Care and Education during Non-Standard Hours,” <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/fact-sheet-provision-of-early-care-and-education-non-standard-hours>.
- ¹¹ NSECE Project Team, “Fact Sheet: Provision of Early Care and Education during Non-Standard Hours,” <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/fact-sheet-provision-of-early-care-and-education-non-standard-hours>.
- ¹² “COVID-19 Impact on Childcare,” US Chamber of Commerce Foundation, accessed December 14, 2020, <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/reports/covid-19-impact-childcare>.
- ¹³ Gina Adams, “Finding Solutions to Support Child Care during COVID-19,” *Urban Wire* (blog), Urban Institute, September 22, 2020, <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/finding-solutions-support-child-care-during-covid-19>; Linda Smith and Suzann Morris, “As Economies Reopen, State Administrators Note a Shift to Family Child Care,” *Bipartisan Policy Center* (blog), June 2, 2020, <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/as-economies-reopen-state-administrators-note-a-shift-to-family-child-care/>.
- ¹⁴ Nina Chien, “Factsheet: Estimates of Child Care Eligibility & Receipt for Fiscal Year 2017,” Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, US Department of Health and Human Services, November 12, 2020, <https://aspe.hhs.gov/pdf-report/child-care-eligibility-and-receipt-2017>.
- ¹⁵ “FY 2018 Preliminary Data Table 3 - Average Monthly Percentages of Children Served by Types of Care,” Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services, December 3, 2019, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/fy-2018-preliminary-data-table-3>; “FY 2005 CCDF Data Tables (Preliminary),” Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services, July 1, 2006, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/ccdf-data-05acf800-preliminary>.

- ¹⁶ Mark C. Bolino, Thomas K. Kelemen, and Samuel H. Matthews, “Rethinking Work Schedules? Consider These 4 Questions,” *Harvard Business Review*, July 6, 2020, <https://hbr.org/2020/07/rethinking-work-schedules-consider-these-4-questions>; Ryan Nunn and Jimmy O'Donnell, “Unpredictable and Uninsured: The Challenging Labor Market Experiences of Nontraditional Workers,” *Up Front* (blog), Brookings, May 7, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/05/07/unpredictable-and-uninsured-the-challenging-labor-market-experiences-of-nontraditional-workers/>.

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Errata

This brief was revised on July 29, 2021. On page 2, the first paragraph was updated to say that the companion briefs include one providing these data for the District of Columbia and one for Oklahoma. A previous version listed Connecticut as one of the companion briefs.

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