

Struggling to Recover:

The Impacts of COVID-19 on Southeast Louisiana Families with Young Children

In the first six months of the COVID-19 pandemic, families faced shifting education and care options for their children as K-12 schools largely remained closed until the fall and many child care providers closed or had reduced enrollment capacity due to public health requirements. Now, with schools reopened and child care provider capacity somewhat increased under revised COVID-19 related guidelines, education and care arrangements for children are beginning to stabilize.¹

To learn more about how Louisiana families with children under the age of 5 have been impacted by, and managed during, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, in partnership with Agenda for Children, Louisiana Department of Education, New Orleans Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, Urban League of Louisiana, and Women United of Southeast Louisiana, conducted a survey of Louisiana parents and guardians in the fall of 2020. These initial results are for the southeast region of Louisiana, with statewide results to follow.

This survey provides insights into the needs and challenges of families with young children in southeast Louisiana, many of whom are struggling as the COVID-19 pandemic endures.

¹ Previous surveys indicate child care providers have sustained significant financial losses, and though most have reopened, it is unclear how many are sustainable in the long term. See the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children's surveys of child care providers at: www.policyinstitutela.org/covid-19-impact-child-care.

Challenges Facing Families with Young Children in Southeast Louisiana



Families with young children continue to need child care to support **parent employment or education**, and parents must **adjust schedules to fill child care gaps**.



The COVID-19 pandemic is taking a **financial toll on families** and **increasing stress** for parents.



Families are struggling to **afford child care and basic necessities**.



Families with young children continue to need child care to support parent employment or education, and parents must adjust schedules to fill child care gaps.



of responding parents in southeast Louisiana were **working or in school**.

Parents working or in school full time



Parents working or in school outside the home



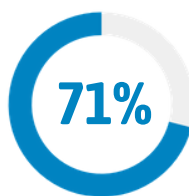
of families with young children relied on **some type of formal child care**.

39
hours per
week

The average number of hours that parents reported their children spent in child care every week.

This is similar to before the COVID-19 pandemic, with parents reporting that children were in child care for an average of 41 hours per week.

Families that used child care at least 30 hours per week

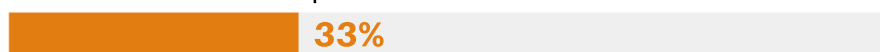


of parents experienced some sort of **adjustment to their work or school schedule to provide child care** during the pandemic.

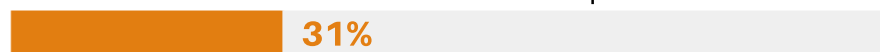
Alternated work or school hours to provide child care



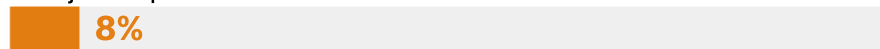
Worked fewer hours to provide child care



Worked outside of normal business hours to provide child care

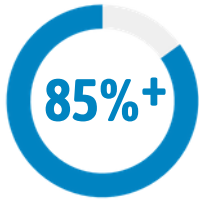


Quit job to provide child care





The COVID-19 pandemic is taking a financial toll on families and increasing stress for parents.



of parents in southeast Louisiana reported the COVID-19 pandemic has **disrupted their lives and increased their stress level** as a parent.



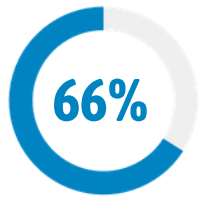
of parents saw their family's **monthly income decrease** during the pandemic.

Almost 1-in-5

parents reported **another adult in their household lost their job** due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



One-third (34%) of parents were **concerned about their employment**.



of parents were **concerned about the spread of COVID-19 through child care**. Parents reported additional concerns including:

Increased exposure from being around other children and child care staff



Immediate family members with underlying health conditions



Other children being able to wear a mask all day



Their own children being unable to wear a mask all day



Lack of required testing for child care providers



Lack of a COVID-19 vaccine





Families are struggling to afford child care and basic necessities

\$467

The average amount of money that families in southeast Louisiana reported **currently paying per child per month for child care.**

For a family with two children that would translate to

\$11,208
per year

For families not receiving any type of subsidized care, the average monthly cost of child care was:

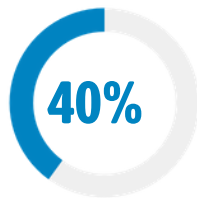
\$609
per child
per month

\$14,608
per year

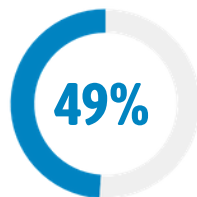
for a family with two children



of parents were concerned about being **unable to afford child care** due to the **high cost.**



of parents were concerned about being **unable to afford child care** due to a **job change or loss.**



of parents worried about being able to **afford their family's basic needs.**

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The Time Is Now

Southeast Louisiana's economic recovery relies on working families, and, as these survey results show, working families rely on child care. To support working families and young children, southeast Louisiana must:

- **Increase availability of affordable, quality child care, keeping in mind health and safety precautions, by continuing to support the child care sector through public investments.**
- **Increase funding for child care assistance at the state and local levels to support families struggling to afford child care for their young children and rebounding businesses who need access to a reliable workforce.**

Survey Methodology

LPIC developed and administered the survey online through Survey Monkey from September 21, 2020, through October 6, 2020. The survey link was shared through email newsletters, social media, letter home to parents, and text messages. See the statewide results report for additional detail.

Prospective respondents included any parent or guardian in southeast Louisiana with at least one child under the age of 5 living in their home. This region includes the following parishes:

- Assumption
- Jefferson
- Lafourche
- Orleans
- Plaquemines
- St. Bernard
- St. Charles
- St. James
- St. John the Baptist
- St. Tammany
- Terrebonne
- Washington

Within the survey window, 840 responded to the survey, answering some or all of the survey questions.

For questions where some survey respondents did not provide an answer, the included results percentages reflect calculations based only on the number of survey respondents providing an answer to the question. For example, if only 100 survey respondents answered a question, the results would reflect what percentage of those 100 respondents selected each answer.