Primary Child Care Arrangements of U.S. Infants at Nine Months of Age: Patterns of Utilization by Household Income, and Maternal Work Status and Schedule

Tamara Halle, Ph.D.
SAMI-CCPRC Institute
July 31, 2007

Contact: Tamara Halle
thalle@childtrends.org
Background

- 59% of infants ages 0 to 3 had mothers in the labor force in 2005 (Mosisa & Hipple, 2006)

- 73% of children under the age of three are cared for by adults other than their parents while their mothers work (Ehrle, Adams & Tout, 2001)

- Infants and toddlers of mothers who are employed spend, on average, about 25 hours per week in non-parental care (Ehrle, Adams & Tout, 2001)
Overview of Analyses

• This presentation focuses on patterns in primary care arrangements by maternal employment status, work schedule, and household income among families with 9-month-old infants.

• Data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B) were used to provide a snapshot of patterns in primary child care arrangements for a nationally-representative sample of infants born in the U.S. in 2001.
Characteristics of the Sample

- **Household Income**
  - 24% of the 9-month-old infants in the ECLS-B sample live in households below the poverty line
  - 15% live in households considered low-income (between 100% and 150% of poverty)

- **Maternal Employment Status**
  - About one-third of infants (32%) have mothers in full-time employment (35+ hours)
  - One in five infants (20%) have mothers who are working part-time (less than 35 hours a week)
  - 8% of infants have mothers who are looking for work
  - 40% have mothers who are not in the labor force

- **Primary Care Arrangement**
  - 51% of 9-month-olds are cared for primarily by their parents
  - 49% of 9-month-olds are primarily in non-parental care arrangements
  - These percentages vary by household income
Percentage of All 9-month-old Infants in Parental and Non-Parental Care, by Household Income
Primary Care Arrangements at 9 Months for Those Children in Non-Parental Care, by Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Percentage in Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below Poverty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Center-based care
- Non-relative, other home
- Non-relative, child's home
- Relative, other home
- Relative, child's home
Percentage of Infants in Non-Parental Care, by Mother’s Work Status and Household Income

Mother’s work status
- Full Time
- Part Time
- Looking for Work
- Not in Labor Force

Household Income Levels
- Below Poverty
- Low-Income
- Higher Income

Percentage in care
0.0% 10.0% 20.0% 30.0% 40.0% 50.0% 60.0% 70.0% 80.0% 90.0% 100.0%
Primary Care Arrangements for 9-Month-Old Infants Who are in Non-Parental Care and Whose Mothers are Working Full Time or Part Time, by Household Income

- Center-based care
- Non-relative, other home
- Relative, other home
- Non-relative, child’s home
- Relative, child’s home

Below Poverty
Low-Income
Higher Income

Percentage in Care
Percentage of Infants in Non-Parental Care, by Mother’s Work Schedule and Household Income

![Bar chart showing the percentage of infants in non-parental care by mother’s work schedule and household income. The chart has categories for Daytime, Evening, Night, Split Shift, and Other work schedules with bars for Below Poverty, Low-Income, and Higher Income.]
Primary Care Arrangement by Income Level of Infants Whose Mothers are Working a Regular Daytime Shift

Percentage in Care

- Below Poverty
- Low-Income
- Higher Income

Income Level

- Center-based care
- Non-relative, other home
- Relative, other home
- Non-relative, child's home
- Relative, child's home
Primary Care Arrangement by Income Level of Infants Whose Mothers are Working a Rotating Shift

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Percentage in Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below Poverty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Center-based care
- Non-relative, other home
- Non-relative, child's home
- Relative, other home
- Relative, child's home
Summary

- About half of U.S. infants are in non-parental care at 9 months of age.
- Of those in non-parental care, most are in relative or non-relative care rather than center-based care.
- There is variation in type of primary care arrangement by household income, with higher-income infants more likely in non-relative care and low-income and below-poverty infants more likely in relative care.
- The relationship between primary care arrangement and household income varies somewhat by mother’s employment status and work schedule.
Next Steps

- Multivariate, longitudinal analyses to examine:
  - Stability of care arrangements from 9 to 24 months
  - Child outcomes at 24 months
    Predictors include:
    - Family characteristics (e.g., household income, family structure, maternal education, maternal employment, work schedule),
    - Child characteristics (e.g., prematurity, LBW)
    - Child care characteristics (type, quality, stability)
For more information please contact:
Tamara Halle
thalle@childtrends.org