

**National Estimates of Child Care and Subsidy Receipt for Children Ages 0 to 6:
What Can We Learn from the National Household Education Survey?**

Research Brief

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research brief highlights findings of analyses with data from the 2001 Early Childhood Program Participation Study of the National Household Education Survey Program (NHES). It provides national estimates of child care arrangements and subsidy receipt for children ages 0 to 6 (not yet in kindergarten) by family background characteristics and examines variations in child care arrangements by subsidy receipt. Patterns in child care arrangements and subsidy receipt are also examined across three income groups: 1) *in poverty* (below 100 percent of the poverty line); 2) *near poverty* (at 100 percent to less than 150 percent of the poverty line); and 3) *above poverty* (at or above 150 percent of the poverty line).

The major findings include:

National Estimates of Subsidy Receipt:

- Overall, six percent of children ages 0-6, not yet in kindergarten, receive child care subsidies.
- Fifteen percent of children living in poverty, and 10 percent of those living near poverty receive subsidy assistance, compared to just under 3 percent of those living above poverty.
- Although specific eligibility requirements are determined by states, this pattern is consistent with the goal of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act to assist low-income families in obtaining child care.

Patterns of Subsidy Receipt by Key Family Characteristics:

- Children living in single-parent families, and those with mothers working full-time are more likely to receive subsidies.
- Black non-Hispanic children are more likely than white non-Hispanic and Hispanic children to receive subsidies, a pattern consistent with higher rates of poverty, maternal employment and single-parent families among blacks.
- Among children living in poverty, the percentage of Hispanic children receiving subsidies is lower than that of either blacks or whites. Additional research is needed to determine whether a greater availability of informal networks accounts for lower rates of subsidy use among Hispanics or whether such rates reflect structural barriers (such as language or a lack of familiarity with government agencies) or other factors such as parental preference for relative care.

Patterns in Type of Child Care Arrangements:

- The majority of children ages 0 to 6 receive some type of non-parental care and are equally likely to be in home-based care as they are to be placed in center-based care arrangements.
- Children living above poverty are more likely to receive non-parental care and be placed in center-based care than those living in or near poverty.
- Although a roughly equal proportion of children in each income group receive home-based care, children living in or near poverty are more likely to receive home-based care from a relative than children living above poverty.

Patterns in Primary Child Care Arrangements:

- Fewer differences between children living in poverty and those living above poverty are found in children's *primary* child care arrangements—the arrangement type children attend for the greatest number of hours per week.
- Children living in poverty are as likely to receive home- and center-based primary care as children living above poverty.
- However, differences persist in the primary child care arrangements between children living near poverty and those living above poverty. Children living near poverty are more likely than those living above poverty to receive home-based care for their primary child care arrangement.
- Among those most likely to receive subsidies, a group roughly represented by those living below 150 percent of the poverty line, a higher percentage of subsidized children than non-subsidized children receive center-based primary care.

Multiple Child Care Arrangements:

- The use of multiple care arrangements is greater among preschoolers ages 3 to 6 than younger children ages 0 to 2.
- Families of children living in and near poverty and of those whose care is subsidized do not appear to be any more likely to be patching together multiple arrangements than other families.

Quality of Child Care Arrangements:

- The percentage of parents reporting lower quality in their child care arrangement is slightly, yet consistently, higher for those living in or near poverty than for those living above poverty.
- Although parent reports of child care quality may be biased, this finding suggests that there may be differences in the quality of care children receive by poverty status.

I. OVERVIEW

This research brief highlights findings from analyses of the 2001 Early Childhood Program Participation Study of the National Household Education Survey Program (NHES). It provides national survey-based estimates of child care arrangements and subsidy receipt for children ages 0 to 6 (not yet in kindergarten), examining variations in the use of non-parental care and arrangement types by household income and subsidy receipt.

The brief begins with estimates of the proportion of children ages 0 to 6 receiving child care subsidies. It then examines variations in subsidy receipt by key demographic characteristics such as age of child, race and Hispanic origin, maternal employment and education, and family structure across three income groups: 1) those living *in poverty*; 2) those living *near poverty*; and 3) those living *above poverty*. The distribution of child care arrangements—specifically, type of care—by age of child, household income and subsidy receipt is examined next; followed by an analysis of primary child care arrangements (arrangement used for the greatest number of hours). The primary child care arrangements of children living in households with income below 150 percent of the Federal poverty line—a group most likely to receive subsidies—is compared by subsidy status. Last, this research brief presents comparisons of parents' reports of the quality of their child care arrangements across income groups.

ABOUT THE TERMS USED IN THIS BRIEF

Subsidy receipt: A family is considered to be receiving subsidies if the parent or guardian reported receiving assistance from a social service, welfare, or child care agency to pay for the child's child care arrangement (see also Data Sources and Methods). Respondents were asked about subsidy receipt for each type of care arrangement they reported for the child; however, subsidy receipt in this report does refer to a specific child care arrangement but rather whether a family is receiving subsidies for *any* of the child's child care arrangements.

Income groups: The terms 'in poverty', 'near poverty' and 'above poverty' are used throughout the brief; they refer to household income below 100 percent of the Federal poverty line, household income at 100 percent to less than 150 percent of the poverty line, and at or above 150 percent of the poverty line, respectively.

II. CHILD CARE SUBSIDY RECEIPT

This section presents national estimates of the proportion of children receiving child care subsidies. In order to ascertain the extent to which the low-income population (those living below 150 percent of the poverty line) is being served, subsidy receipt is examined within and across income groups, as well as by key child, parent, and household characteristics. These estimates are reported in Table 1.

a. Overview:

Overall, six percent of children ages 0 to 6 (not yet in kindergarten) are receiving subsidies for child care.

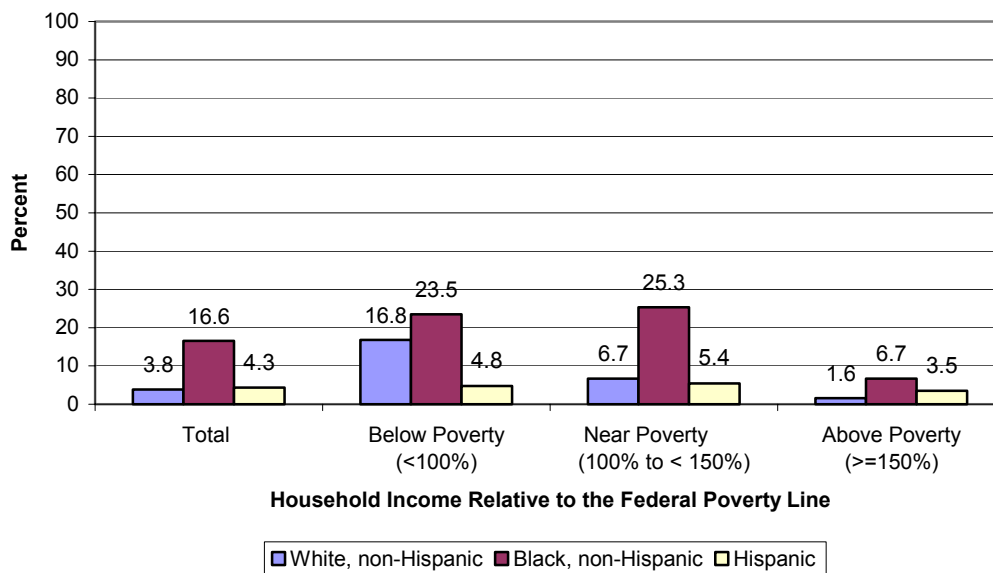
Children living in poverty are most likely to receive subsidies, followed by those living near poverty. Fifteen percent of children under the age of 6 living in poverty and 10 percent of those living near poverty receive subsidy assistance, compared with under three percent of those living above poverty. Although specific eligibility requirements are determined by states, this pattern is consistent with the goal of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act to assist low-income families in obtaining child care (Child Care Bureau 2003).

Children living in households with income below 150 percent of the poverty line roughly represent the target population for child care subsidies at the national level. However, states have flexibility in determining income eligibility and target population criteria, therefore national estimates derived from parent reports in the NHES provided above and throughout this brief do not reflect the extent to which any state's target population is being served. Specifically, subsidy receipt may be higher if states are applying lower poverty thresholds to determine eligibility and lower if states are expanding eligibility to include families with higher income. In 2000, most states set eligibility criteria below 85 percent of the Federal poverty line in order to concentrate on families most in need (Child Care Bureau 2003).

b. Differences in subsidy receipt by race and Hispanic origin:

Overall, black, non-Hispanic children are far more likely to receive subsidies than white, non-Hispanic and Hispanic children (see Figure 1).¹ Seventeen percent of black, non-Hispanic children receive subsidies compared with four percent of white, non-Hispanic and Hispanic children.

Figure 1. Subsidy Receipt Among Children Ages 0 to 6 by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income Relative to the Federal Poverty Line



¹ All group differences noted throughout the report are statistically significant at the .05 level or below.

Racial and ethnic differences in subsidy receipt are found among children living at all income levels. However, the difference in the rate of subsidy receipt between families of black and white children living in poverty is not statistically significant.

Among those living in poverty, the percentage of Hispanic children receiving subsidies is significantly lower than that of either blacks or whites, (5 percent compared with 24 and 17 percent, respectively) and among those living near poverty, this percentage is much lower than that of blacks (5 percent compared with 25 percent). This finding echoes the results of other studies (see Blau & Tekin, 2001) and suggests an under-utilization of subsidies among the Hispanic population. Additional research is needed to determine whether a greater availability of informal networks accounts for lower rates of subsidy use among Hispanics or whether such rates reflect structural barriers (such as language or a lack of familiarity with government agencies) or other factors such as parental preferences for relative care.

Conversely, higher rates of subsidy receipt among black, non-Hispanic children are consistent with higher rates of poverty and single-parent families among blacks, as well as higher rates of employment among black women (McKinnon 2003). In 2002, 23 percent of non-Hispanic blacks compared with 8 percent of non-Hispanic whites were living in poverty and 43 percent of all black families were maintained by a women with no spouse present compared with 13 percent of all non-Hispanic white families. Moreover, over a third (35 percent) of black single-mother families were living in poverty in 2002 compared with 19 percent of white single-mother families. Overall, black mothers with children under the age of 18 have slightly higher labor force participation rates than white mothers (70 percent vs. 68 percent) (McKinnon 2003).

c. Differences in subsidy receipt by family structure:

Overall, children living in single-parent families are far more likely to receive subsidies than children in two-parent families (19 percent compared with 2 percent). This pattern is replicated in each of the income groups examined. For example, among those living in poverty, 24 percent of children living in single-parent families receive child care subsidies, compared with six percent of those living in two-parent families.

d. Differences in subsidy receipt by maternal employment:

Nine percent of children with mothers working full-time receive subsidized child care. This percentage is higher than for children with mothers outside of the labor force (2 percent) or working part-time (6 percent). Children with mothers who are looking for work are as likely as those whose mothers work full-time to be receiving subsidized child care. These findings are consistent with the statute's requirements that limit subsidy eligibility to parents who are working, in school or receiving job-training (Child Care Bureau, 2003).

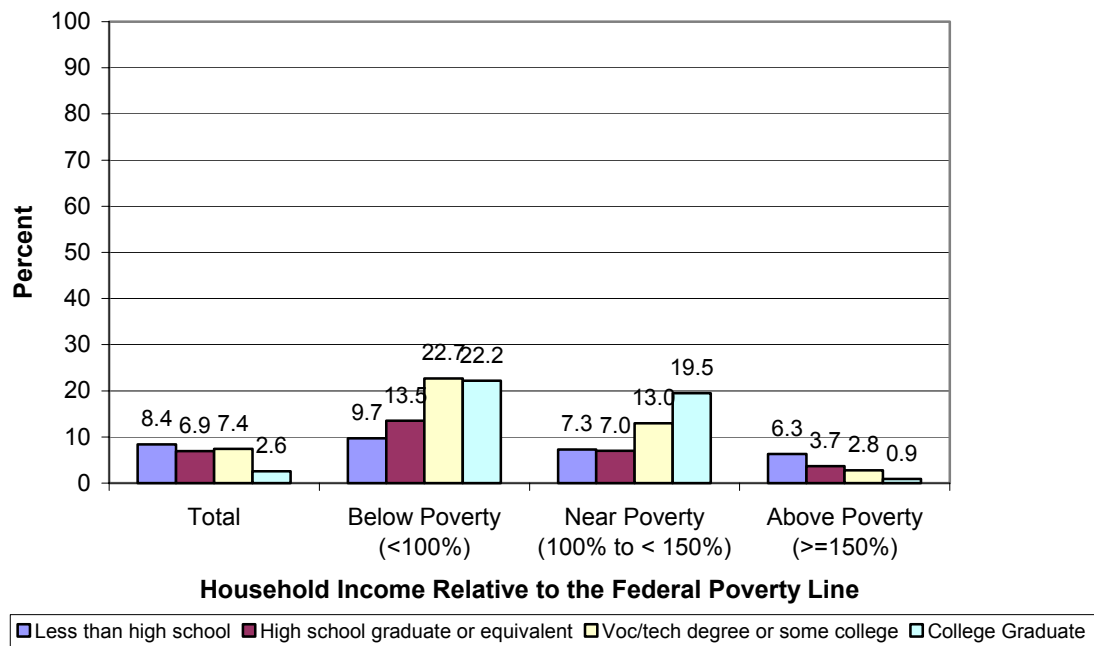
e. Differences in subsidy receipt by maternal education:

Overall, children whose mothers have a college degree are less likely to receive subsidies than those whose mothers have lower levels of educational attainment

(see Figure 2). For example, three percent of children whose mothers are college graduates are receiving subsidies compared with eight percent of those whose mothers have not finished high school.

However, for children living in poverty, the pattern is reversed. Specifically, among those living in poverty, children whose mothers have attended a vocational school or have received some college education² are more likely to receive subsidies than those whose mothers have lower levels of educational attainment.

Figure 2. Subsidy Receipt Among Children Ages 0 to 6 by Maternal Education and Household Income Relative to the Federal Poverty Line



III. CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

This section highlights the use of various types of child care arrangements among children ages 0 to 6, not yet in kindergarten. Families with young children use parental care, non-parental care, and multiple care arrangements and the pattern of use of these types of arrangements varies by key demographic characteristics. Non-parental care includes home-based care, which can be provided by relatives or non-relatives, and center-based care, which includes such programs as Head Start and faith-based programs. The estimates for participation in these types of child care arrangements are not necessarily mutually exclusive since children may be in multiple arrangements of the same type of care, or they may be in multiple types of child care. Table 2 presents the data for this section.

² The proportion of children whose mothers are college graduates that receive subsidies is also higher than that of children with lower levels of maternal education, but group differences are only marginally significant. This is likely a result of the small sample size for children with college-educated mothers living in poverty.

a. Overview:

Overall, the majority (61 percent) of children ages 0 to 6, not yet in kindergarten, receive some type of non-parental care. A slightly though not significantly higher percentage of children are in non-parental home-based care (37 percent) than in center-based care (33 percent).

b. Distribution and characteristics of child care arrangements by age of child:

Older children (3 to 6) are more likely to be in a non-parental care arrangement than younger children (0 to 2). Approximately half (52 percent) of children ages 0 to 2 are in non-parental care arrangements, compared with roughly three-quarters (74 percent) of those ages 3 to 6.

Younger children (0 to 2) are slightly more likely to receive non-parental home-based care and are much less likely to receive center-based care than older children (3 to 6). Specifically, 38 percent of children ages 0 to 2 are in non-parental home-based care compared with 35 percent of children ages 3 to 6. Seventeen percent of children ages 0 to 2 receive center-based care compared with over half (56 percent) of children ages 3 to 6.

The child care arrangements of preschool age children (3 to 6) are more complex than those of younger children (0 to 2). Just under a third (31 percent) of children ages 3 to 6 are in multiple care arrangements compared with a fifth of those ages 0 to 2.

c. Distribution and characteristics of child care arrangements by household income:

Children living above poverty are more likely to receive non-parental care than those living in or near poverty. Sixty-four percent of children living above poverty receive non-parental care compared with 55 percent of children living in and near poverty.

About thirty-six percent of children receive home-based care, regardless of their household income, but whether the care provider is a relative or not varies by household income. Children living in poverty are more likely to receive home-based care from their relatives than children living in households with income above the poverty line (28 percent compared with 22 percent). In contrast, a higher percentage of children living above poverty (19 percent) receive home-based care from non-relatives than children living in poverty (10 percent) or near poverty (13 percent).

The use of center-based care is more common among children living above poverty than children living in or near poverty. Thirty-seven percent of children living above poverty receive center-based care compared with just over a quarter (27 percent) of those living in poverty or near poverty.

As with home-based care, the type of center-based care children receive varies by household income. For instance, the use of Head Start centers decreases with income, since it is a program targeted at low-income children. Specifically, 12 percent of children living in poverty and eight percent of those living near poverty participate in Head Start

programs compared with two percent of those living above poverty. On the other hand, the use of faith-based centers increases with income: 11 percent of children living above poverty are in faith-based centers compared with two percent of those living in poverty and six percent of those living near poverty.

The complexity of child care arrangements does not vary by household income. Overall, about a quarter of children ages 0 to 6 within each income group are in multiple child care arrangements (i.e., attending more than one child care arrangement).

d. Distribution and characteristics of child care arrangements by subsidy receipt:

Children receiving subsidies are more likely than non-subsidized children to be in both center-based and home-based care. (This is partly due to the fact that all children receiving subsidies are in some type of non-parental care, while 41 percent of non-subsidized children receive *only* parental care.) Roughly two-thirds (67 percent) of children receiving subsidies are in center-based care compared with just under a third (31 percent) of non-subsidized children. Similarly, just over half (53 percent) of children receiving subsidies are in non-parental home-based care compared with 36 percent of non-subsidized children. Children receiving subsidies are no more likely to be in multiple child care arrangements than non-subsidized children. About 26 percent of each group has multiple child care arrangements.

A higher percentage of children receiving subsidies than non-subsidized children are in Head-Start programs. Twenty percent of subsidized children are in Head Start centers compared with four percent of non-subsidized children. This finding reflects the focus of both subsidy and Head Start programs to serve low-income children.

Children receiving subsidies are as likely as non-subsidized children to be in faith-based child care centers. Nine percent of subsidized children attend faith-based child care centers, as do eight percent of non-subsidized children.

IV. PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

This section describes the primary non-parental child care arrangements, or the type of non-parental arrangement used for the ***greatest*** number of hours per week. Variations by type of primary care, as well as the extent to which children are placed in multiple child care arrangements, are considered across income groups. These estimates are presented in Table 3.

a. Overall distribution of primary child care arrangements:

The primary child care arrangements of children ages 0 to 6, not yet in kindergarten, are almost equally likely to be home-based (50 percent) as center-based (47 percent) care arrangements. Home-based care can be provided by a relative or a non-relative. Similar proportions of children receive home-based care from a relative (28 percent) or a non-relative (23 percent) for their primary child care arrangement.

b. Variations in primary child care arrangements by household income:

Children living in poverty are as likely as children from other income groups to receive home-based care for their primary child care arrangement. However, children living near poverty are more likely than those living above poverty to receive home-based care for their primary child care arrangement. Fifty-two percent of children living in poverty, 58 percent of those living near poverty, and 49 percent of those living above poverty receive home-based care for their primary child care arrangement.

While the proportion of children living in poverty receiving home-based care does not differ significantly from that of children in other income groups, there are differences in the type of primary home-based care children receive. Specifically, children living in poverty and children living near poverty are more likely to receive relative home-based care for their primary child care arrangement than those living above poverty. Thirty-seven percent of children living both in poverty and near poverty receive primary care from their relatives compared with 23 percent of children living above poverty.

Over 40 percent of children receive center-based care for their primary child care arrangement regardless of their household income level. However, a higher proportion of children living above poverty receive center-based care as their primary arrangement than children near poverty. Forty-nine percent of children living above poverty compared with 41 percent of children living near poverty receive center-based care for the most hours per week.

V. PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS BY SUBSIDY RECEIPT AMONG LOW-INCOME CHILDREN

In this section, the distribution of primary child care arrangements is examined by subsidy receipt among children living below 150 percent of the poverty line. Thus in contrast to the previous sections, this section discusses those children living in households with income below 150 percent of the poverty line, which combines the two lower income groups discussed above (i.e., those living below 100 percent of the poverty line and those living in households with income at 100 percent to below 150 of the poverty line). These data are presented in Table 4.

a. Overview:

Overall, 54 percent of children living below 150 percent of the poverty line are in a home-based child care arrangement for their primary arrangement while 43 percent have a center-based child care arrangement as their primary arrangement.

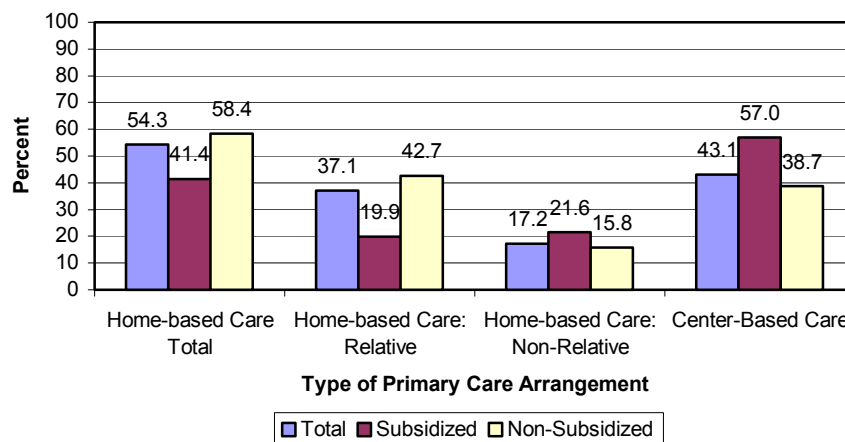
b. Variations by subsidy status:

The primary child care arrangements of low-income children varies by subsidy status (see Figure 3). **Among those living below 150 percent of the poverty line, the use of center-based care as a primary child care arrangement is more common among those receiving subsidies than among non-subsidized children.** Among these low-income children, over half (57 percent) of children receiving subsidies are in center-based primary child care arrangements compared with just over a third (39 percent) of non-subsidized children.

In contrast, **home-based care is more commonly used as a primary child care arrangement among non-subsidized children than subsidized children.** Among those living in households below 150 percent of the poverty line, 58 percent of non-subsidized children receive home-based care compared to 41 percent of subsidized children. This difference is associated with higher rates of relative home-based care among non-subsidized children. Forty-three percent of non-subsidized children receive relative care for their primary care compared with one-fifth of subsidy recipients.

These child care utilization patterns demonstrate how subsidies enable low-income families to purchase center-based care. They may also reflect preferences for relative home-based care among families who do not receive subsidies, or a shortage of affordable center-based care for families who are not receiving subsidies.

Figure 3. Primary Child Care Arrangements among Children below 150% of the Federal Poverty Line by Subsidy Receipt



The complexity of child care arrangements does not vary by subsidy status. Regardless of whether child care is subsidized, 27 percent of children living in households below 150 percent of the poverty line are in multiple child care arrangements.

VI. QUALITY OF CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

This section reports on parents' perceptions of the quality of their primary non-parental child care arrangement. Seven dimensions of child care quality adapted from a commonly used scale³ were measured: 1) caregiver's warmth and interest in child; 2) rich activities and environment; 3) caregiver's skills in meeting child's needs and handling discipline matters; 4) information sharing by caregivers; 5) caregiver's supportiveness towards parents; 6) whether parents feel that child is in a safe and

³ The Quality of Child Care Index, adapted from the EMLLEN scale, measures parent's perceptions of the quality of child care arrangements. The adapted EMLLEN scale consists of a total of 14 items that are grouped into the seven subscales; each of subscales taps into a different dimension of quality.

healthy place, and 7) whether child feels safe and secure. The percentage of parents who report that the quality of their child's child care arrangement was less than excellent (i.e., good, fair, or poor) is presented for each dimension in Table 5.

Estimates of the quality of child care presented in this section should be interpreted with caution since parental reports of child care quality are not validated by objective measures in the NHES, and may be biased. Parents are unlikely to report or believe that they are leaving their children in settings that are problematic, or may be unaware of quality issues. Estimates based on observational data collected by trained field observers, on the other hand, provide more unbiased estimates of child care quality than parental reports, but these are not available in this survey. The data presented here captures the percentage of parents who report that their child care quality is less than excellent, which is a high cut-point reflecting the upward bias in the responses. Although the questions may not be perfect, they capture some variations in quality of care as perceived by parents.

a. Overview:

A small proportion of parents (ranging from 13 percent to 29 percent) report that their child care is less than excellent on any dimension. Parents are most likely to report their child care being less than excellent on the following dimensions: 1) caregiver's warmth and interest in child (29 percent); 2) rich activities and environment (29 percent); and 3) caregiver's skills in meeting child's needs and handling discipline matters (27 percent).

b. Differences in parental rating by household income:

Differences in parental ratings across income groups are small, yet are fairly consistently found between children living in and near poverty and children above poverty. In four of the seven dimensions examined, parents with household incomes below poverty reported poorer quality care than parents with household income above poverty. Similarly, parents living near poverty reported poorer quality care in five of the seven dimensions than parents living above poverty. For example, a third of parents living in or near poverty gave a rating of less than excellent on the dimension of warmth and interest compared to 26 percent of parents living above poverty. The ratings of parents living in and near poverty are quite similar across the seven dimensions. This finding may signal some differences in the quality of care children receive across income groups.

VII. KEY FINDINGS

The majority (61 percent) of children ages 0 to 6, not yet in kindergarten, are in some type of non-parental care. Overall, six percent of children in this age group receive child care subsidies. Specifically, 15 percent of children living in poverty and 10 percent of those living near poverty receive subsidy assistance. This pattern is consistent with the goal of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act to assist low-income families in obtaining child care, and also reflects the variability in subsidy eligibility requirements set by states.

Black, non-Hispanic children are more likely to receive subsidies than white non-Hispanic and Hispanic children. Greater subsidy use among blacks is likely to be related

to higher rates of poverty, single-parent families, and maternal employment among blacks. Among children in poverty, the percentage of Hispanic children receiving subsidies is significantly lower than that of either blacks or whites, perhaps indicative of an under-utilization of subsidies among the Hispanic population or parental preferences.

Children ages 0 to 6, not yet in kindergarten, are equally like to be placed in home-based or center-based care. The use of multiple care arrangements is higher among children ages 3 to 6 than among children ages 0 to 2, but does not seem to vary by household income or subsidy receipt.

Children living above poverty are more likely to receive non-parental care than those living in or near poverty. The types of child care arrangements in which children are placed also vary by household income. Specifically, the use of center-based care is more common among children living above poverty than among those living in and near poverty.

Fewer differences between children living in poverty and those living above poverty are found when *primary* child care arrangements—the arrangement in which children spend the greatest number of hours per week—are considered. Specifically, children living in poverty are as likely as children above poverty and children living near poverty to receive home- or center-based care for their primary care arrangement. Among those in a home-based setting, the primary arrangements of children living in or near poverty is more likely to be with a relative rather than a non-relative, whereas children living above poverty are equally likely to be placed with relatives as non-relatives in a home setting.

Primary child care arrangements also vary by subsidy receipt. Among children living below 150 percent of the poverty line—a group that is most likely to receive subsidies—center-based care is more commonly used as the primary child care arrangement by subsidy recipients, while home-based care, particularly relative home-based care, is more commonly used by non-subsidized children. Together these patterns may signal parental preferences, fewer affordable choices among the non-subsidized population, as well as the extent to which subsidies increase the ability of low-income families to purchase center-based care.

The percentage of parents who report that their child's child care quality was less than excellent is slightly, yet consistently, higher for those in and near poverty than for those living above poverty. Although parent reports of child care quality may be biased, this finding suggests some differences in the quality of care children receive by poverty status.

DATA SOURCE AND METHODS

The National Household Education Survey (NHES)—a periodic survey started in 1991—is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education to describe Americans' educational experiences, as well as to monitor education trends over time. NHES is made up of a core module (to monitor change over time) and topic surveys, that explore, for example, the learning experiences of subpopulations. The survey topics includes: Adult Education; Before- and After-School Programs and Activities; Civic Involvement; Early Childhood Program Participation; Household Library Use; Parent and Family Involvement in Education; School Readiness; and School Safety and Discipline. The overall content of NHES varies from survey to survey with topics appearing on a rotating basis, though some topics appear more often than others.

Data used for this report are based on the 2001 Early Childhood Program Participation (ECCP) survey. The ECCP survey include questions on the following topics: children's participation in formal and informal nonparental care, including relative care, non-relative care, center-based care, Head Start and Early Head start programs; the characteristics of care arrangements, including hours spent in non-parent care, time spent in nonparental care, numbers of children and care providers in arrangement. ECCP first appeared in 1991; the next administration of the ECCP is slated for 2005.

The analyses reported in this brief are based on a sample of 6,749 children 0 to 6, not yet in kindergarten. Within each household one child was selected as the reference or focal child for a given age group or domain (i.e., infants, preschoolers, elementary students, middle school students), although no more than three children were selected per household. In focal child selection, priority was given to preschoolers and middle school students. Person-level weights constructed by NHES, and used in Child Trends' analyses, account for the probability of sampling the child's domain in a given household, and adjust for the probability of sampling the child from among all eligible children in a given domain. To adjust for the complex sample design, all estimates and comparison tests (i.e., t-tests) were conducted using SUDAAN. All groups difference noted in the brief are at the .05 level or below.

Data from NHES provide recent national estimates of child care and subsidy utilization both at the population level and by characteristics that are policy relevant such as income. The national portrait derived from survey data can complement estimates derived from state level and administrative data. Care, however, is warranted when making comparisons across data sets as differences may reflect differences in sampling, question wording, etc., rather than actual population differences.

While NHES provides researchers and policy makers with recent national estimates of child care use and subsidy receipt, there are several limitations of NHES worth noting. First, the sample is intended to be representative of children 0 to 6 *not yet in kindergarten*, and is not a random sample of either subsidy recipients or low-income households. Second, the choice of subgroups, and, within subgroups, the categories used in the analysis, was often limited by small cell sizes. Third, subsidy receipt is broadly defined in the NHES survey and includes help the parent received from a social service, welfare, or child care agency to pay for the reference child's child care arrangements.

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Table 1. Characteristics of children ages 0 to 6 (not yet in kindergarten) and their households by household income relative to the federal poverty line and subsidy receipt¹; 2001

	Total			Below Poverty (Below 100%)			Near Poverty (100% to less than 150%)			Above Poverty (At or Above 150%)		
	Subsidized	Non-Subsidized	Total Weighted N	Subsidized	Non-Subsidized	Total Weighted N	Subsidized	Non-Subsidized	Total Weighted N	Subsidized	Non-Subsidized	Total Weighted N
Total	6.0	94.0	20,281,225	15.0	85.0	4,271,354	9.8	90.2	2,549,254	2.5	97.5	13,460,618
Child Characteristics												
Race Ethnicity												
White, non-Hispanic	3.8	96.2	12,377,846	16.8	83.2	1,377,353	6.7	93.4	1,272,790	1.6	98.4	9,727,703
Black, non-Hispanic	16.6	83.4	2,989,945	23.5	76.5	1,286,373	25.3	74.7	430,354	6.7	93.3	1,273,219
Hispanic	4.3	95.7	3,694,599	4.8	95.2	1,343,205	5.4	94.6	732,871	3.5	96.5	1,618,523
Age												
0 to 2	5.4	94.6	11,700,346	15.2	84.8	2,430,883	7.5	92.5	1,480,749	2.0	98.0	7,788,715
3 to 6	6.9	93.1	8,580,879	14.8	85.2	1,840,471	13.0	87.0	1,068,505	3.2	96.9	5,671,903
Parent Characteristics												
Maternal Employment												
35 hours or more	9.2	90.9	7,579,703	26.1	73.9	1,245,213	19.8	80.2	829,735	3.7	96.3	5,504,756
Less than 35 hours	5.7	94.3	4,069,316	19.6	80.4	632,481	9.2	90.8	478,370	2.2	97.8	2,958,464
Looking for work	9.3	90.7	989,104	13.6	86.4	499,055	7.7	92.3	180,292	3.4	96.6	309,757
Not in labor force	2.4	97.6	7,271,271	5.9	94.1	1,797,491	2.8	97.2	1,015,960	0.9	99.1	4,457,821
Maternal Education												
Less than high school	8.4	91.6	2,385,212	9.7	90.3	1,327,058	7.3	92.7	430,370	6.3	93.7	627,784
High school graduate or equivalent	6.9	93.1	5,989,553	13.5	86.5	1,630,440	7.0	93.0	1,057,119	3.7	96.4	3,301,994
Voc/tech degree or some college	7.4	92.6	5,896,918	22.7	77.3	962,811	13.0	87.0	810,440	2.8	97.2	4,123,666
College Graduate	2.6	97.5	5,637,711	22.2	77.9	253,931	19.5	80.5	206,427	0.9	99.1	5,177,353
Household Characteristics												
Family Size												
2	24.0	76.0	796,691	41.0	59.0	288,381	25.1	74.9	198,858	7.5	92.6	309,452
3	5.4	94.6	4,707,915	17.4	82.6	732,841	12.2	87.8	484,543	2.0	98.0	3,490,530
4 or more	5.3	94.7	14,776,619	12.1	87.9	3,250,131	7.6	92.4	1,865,852	2.5	97.5	9,660,636
Family Structure												
Two-parent:	2.2	97.8	15,629,497	5.8	94.2	2,056,687	4.3	95.7	1,716,717	1.3	98.7	11,856,093
Other adults besides parent/guardian	3.5	96.5	1,418,405	7.0	93.0	459,406	3.8	96.2	199,411	1.4	98.6	759,589
No other adults	2.1	97.9	14,211,091	5.5	94.6	1,597,282	4.4	95.6	1,517,306	1.3	98.7	11,096,504
Single-parent:	18.9	81.1	4,356,761	23.8	76.2	2,147,538	22.5	77.5	765,564	9.7	90.3	1,443,659
Other adults besides parent/guardian	12.8	87.2	1,694,551	13.5	86.5	853,436	12.3	87.7	246,024	12.0	88.0	595,091
No other adults	22.8	77.2	2,662,210	30.6	69.4	1,294,103	27.3	72.7	519,539	8.0	92.0	848,568

¹The categories of household income relative to the federal poverty line reflect household size and composition. They were derived from the ratio of household income to household poverty thresholds set by the U.S. Census Bureau. A household of four with two children is below 100% of the federal poverty line in 2000 if household income is less than \$17,463. The same household is at or above 100% but less than 150% of the federal poverty line if household income is at or above \$17,463 but less than \$26,194.5. The same household is at or above 150% of the federal poverty line if household income is at or above \$26,194.5. Household income was used in place of family income because respondents were asked to report total household income in 2000.

²Subsidized refers to those who reported that a social service, welfare, or child care agency helped them pay for any non-parental care.

Note: Percentages and total sample sizes are weighted to represent the U.S. non-institutionalized civilian population.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Household Education Survey, 2001.

Table 2. Distribution of child care arrangements for children ages 0 to 6 (not yet kindergarten) by selected characteristics; 200

	Parental care only	Receives non-parental care	Types of Non-parental care ¹						Multiple child care arrangements	Total Weighted N
			Home-based care			Center-based care				
			Total	Relative	Non-Relative	Total	Head Start	Faith-Based ²		
Total	38.8	61.2	36.8	23.1	16.3	33.4	4.9	8.7	25.8	20,281,225
Age										
0 to 2	48.0	52.0	38.4	23.3	18.0	16.6	1.7	4.0	20.4	11,700,346
3 to 6 not yet in kindergarten	26.3	73.7	34.6	22.7	14.0	56.3	9.2	15.1	31.0	8,580,879
Household Income Relative to the Federal Poverty Line⁴										
Below Poverty (Below 100%)	45.1	54.9	36.3	27.6	10.2	27.3	12.0	2.3	25.9	4,271,354
Near Poverty (100% to less than 150%)	44.9	55.1	36.1	24.0	12.9	27.1	7.7	5.5	27.6	2,549,254
Above Poverty (At or Above 150%)	35.7	64.3	37.1	21.5	18.9	36.5	2.1	11.4	25.5	13,460,618
Subsidy										
Subsidized children	0.0	100.0	52.5	30.9	24.7	66.5	19.5	8.2	26.5	1,225,902
Non-subsidized children	41.3	58.7	35.8	22.6	15.8	31.2	3.9	8.8	25.7	19,055,323

¹Some children participate in more than one type of care arrangement and therefore, the sum of all arrangement types exceeds the total percentage of those receiving any non-parental care.

²Faith-based programs refer to center-based programs that were reported by respondents to be located in a church, synagogue or other place of worship. Of those who reported using any 'faith-based' program(s), 42% reported that these programs were affiliated with their family's religion. Some respondents reported that their child-care center was affiliated with their family religion even though it was not located at a place of worship. These respondents are not included in the percentages for faith-based or affiliation with family religion.

³Proportion refers to those who use more than one type of child care arrangement

⁴The categories of household income relative to the federal poverty line reflect household size and composition. They were derived from the ratio of household income to household poverty thresholds set by the U.S. Census Bureau. A household of four with two children is below 100% of the federal poverty line in 2000 if household income is less than \$17,463. The same household is at or above 100% but less than 150% of the federal poverty line if household income is at or above \$17,463 but less than \$26,194.5. The same household is at or above 150% of the federal poverty line if household income is at or above \$26,194.5. Household income was used in place of family income because respondents were asked to report total household income in 2000.

Note: Percentages and total sample sizes are weighted to represent the U.S. non-institutionalized civilian population.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Household Education Survey, 2001.

Table 3. Primary child care arrangements among children ages 0 to 6 (not yet in kindergarten) receiving some type of non-parental child care by household income relative to the federal poverty line; 2001

Household Income Relative to the Federal Poverty Line ¹	Type of Primary Care ²			Center-based care ³	Proportion with Multiple Care Arrangements ⁴	Total Weighted N
	Total	Relative	Non-Relative			
Total	50.3	27.5	22.8	47.4	26.1	12,253,880
Below Poverty (Below 100%)	52.2	37.4	14.8	44.4	26.6	2,278,786
Near Poverty (100% to less than 150%)	57.8	36.6	21.2	41.1	28.2	1,377,117
Above Poverty (At or Above 150%)	48.5	23.4	25.1	49.3	25.6	8,597,977

¹The categories of household income relative to the federal poverty line reflect household size and composition. They were derived from the ratio of household income to household poverty thresholds set by the U.S. Census Bureau. A household of four with two children is below 100% of the federal poverty line in 2000 if household income is less than \$17,463. The same household is at or above 100% but less than 150% of the federal poverty line if household income is at or above \$17,463 but less than \$26,194.5. The same household is at or above 150% of the federal poverty line if household income is at or above \$26,194.5. Household income was used in place of family income because respondents were asked to report total household income in 2000.

² Primary care refers to the arrangement used for the most number of hours per week. Percentages do not add up to 100% because some children are in more than one child care arrangement for an equal number of hours and are not included in the percentages for any primary care arrangements.

³ Sub-categories of center-based care (e.g., faith-based and head start) are not shown here because they are not mutually exclusive. For example, a head start program may also be a faith-based program.

⁴ Proportion refers to those who use more than one type of child care arrangement.

Note: Percentages and total sample sizes are weighted to represent the U.S. non-institutionalized civilian population.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Household Education Survey, 2001.

Table 4. Primary child care arrangements among children ages 0 to 6 (not yet in kindergarten) receiving some type of non-parental child care and below 150% of the federal poverty line by subsidy status; 2001

Subsidy Receipt	Type of Primary Care Arrangement ¹			Center-Based Care ²	Proportion with Multiple Care Arrangements ³	Total Weighted N
	Total	Relative	Non-Relative			
Total	54.3	37.1	17.2	43.1	27.2	3,655,903
Subsidized ⁴	41.4	19.9	21.6	57.0	26.6	890,764
Non-Subsidized	58.4	42.7	15.8	38.7	27.4	2,765,139

¹ Primary care refers to the arrangement used for the most number of hours per week. Percentages do not add up to 100% because some children use more than one child care arrangement for an equal number of hours and are not included in the percentages for any primary child care arrangement.

² Sub-categories of center-based care (e.g., faith-based and head start) are not shown here because they are not mutually exclusive. For example, a head start program may also be a faith-based arrangement for an equal number of hours.

³ Proportion refers to those who use more than one type of child care arrangement.

⁴ Subsidized refers to those who reported that a social service, welfare, or child care agency helped them pay for any non-parental care.

Note: Percentages and total sample sizes are weighted to represent the U.S. non-institutionalized civilian population.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Household Education Survey, 2001.

Table 5. Proportion of parents of children ages 0 to 6 (not yet in kindergarten) who receive non-parental care who reported that the quality of their child care arrangement¹ was less than excellent² by household income relative to the federal poverty line³; 2001

Quality Index ⁴	Total	Household Income Relative to the Federal Poverty Line		
		Below Poverty (Below 100%)	Near Poverty (100% to less than 150%)	Above Poverty (At or Above 150%)
Total Weighted N	12,253,880	2,278,786	1,377,117	8,597,977
Warmth and Interest in Child (4)	28.7	33.8	34.1	26.4
Rich Activities and Environment (2)	28.9	31.4	33.7	27.5
Skilled Caregiver (3)	26.9	30.15	27.8	25.8
Share information with Parents (1)	16.7	18.7	18.5	15.9
Supportive of Parents (1)	14.1	18.6	19.3	12.1
Safe and Healthy Place for Child (2)	16.6	19.8	21.1	15.1
Child Feels Safe and Secure (2)	12.5	17.4	15.3	10.8

¹Quality of care questions were asked about the respondent's primary child care arrangement only.

²Percentage reflects the proportion of parents reporting less than excellent on any of the items comprising the individual subscales.

³The categories of household income relative to the federal poverty line reflect household size and composition. They were derived from the ratio of household income to household poverty thresholds set by the U.S. Census Bureau. A household of four with two children is below 100% of the federal poverty line in 2000 if household income is less than \$17,463. The same household is at or above 100% but less than 150% of the federal poverty line if household income is at or above \$17,463 but less than \$26,194. The same household is at or above 150% of the federal poverty line if household income is at or above \$26,194. Household income was used in place of family income because respondents were asked to report total household income in 2000.

⁴The Quality of Child Care Index, adapted from the EMLLEN scale, measures parent's perceptions of the quality of child care arrangements. The adapted EMLLEN scale consists of a total of 14 items which are grouped into the seven subscales seen above; each of subscales taps into a different dimension of quality. Number in parentheses refers to the number of items that comprise the individual subscale.

Note: Percentages and total sample sizes are weighted to represent the U.S. non-institutionalized civilian population.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Household Education Survey, 2001.