



# Where We Stand: 8th Edition

## Update 6: Working-Parent Households

July 2020

In much of the country, workplaces are getting back to normal, even though parts of the childcare system remain shut down. For many working parents, the difficulty of balancing employment, unpaid labor, and childcare has been exacerbated. Looking ahead to autumn, there is much uncertainty about whether schools will be open, and whether days or hours of attendance will be varied. This creates considerable stress on parents in households in which all adults are employed. To the extent that COVID-related shutdowns affect the ability of parents to continue working, there could be significant impacts on both household financial stability and workforce availability.

This Where We Stand Update reports the number of households with children in which all adults are employed and the number of employed adults who reside in households where all adults are employed. The term “working-parent household” (WPH) is used to refer to a household with children where all of the adults are employed. The focus on employed parents in this report does not imply that these are the only parents who are experiencing stress due to COVID-induced changes in childcare. Rather, it provides a conservative estimate of the workforce challenges that could be faced if parents seek to resume normal work routines without adequate supports.

Changes in childcare availability potentially create stress for all families with children, including those with parents who are not currently employed for pay. Parents who are not employed often have full-time obligations, whether caring for elders or other family members, performing volunteer work without pay, engaging in other necessary household management, seeking work, or pursuing education. Nor is it necessarily the case that an adult not currently employed will have the capacity to provide childcare. Many families are multigenerational, with some including an elderly or disabled adult who would not be able to step into this role.

Table 1 shows WPHs as a percentage of all households with children. In the St. Louis region, WPHs make up nearly two-thirds (65.8 percent) of all households with children. This is high by national standards. Nationally, only 56.2 percent of households with children are WPHs. Among the 50 most populous MSAs,<sup>1</sup> St. Louis ranks 3rd on the ratio of WPHs to total households with children.

The St. Louis region also ranks high on the percentage of the workforce in a WPH. In St. Louis, 28.8 percent of employed adults live in households with children in which all adults are employed. This constitutes a significant portion of the St. Louis workforce. St. Louis ranks 10th among the peer regions on this metric, above the national average.

<sup>1</sup> Where We Stand tracks the St. Louis region among the 50 most populous Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), which are geographic entities delineated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). MSAs are areas with “at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties.”

**Table 1**

### Working-Parent Households

Percent of households with children where all adults work, 2018

1	Minneapolis	69.9
2	Milwaukee	66.7
3	St. Louis	65.8
4	Hartford	65.5
5	Columbus	64.1
6	Cincinnati	63.7
7	Kansas City	62.8
8	Buffalo	62.7
9	Boston	62.1
10	Louisville	62.0
11	Richmond	61.5
12	Pittsburgh	61.3
12	Raleigh	61.3
14	Denver	61.2
15	Virginia Beach	60.8
16	Providence	60.7
17	Indianapolis	60.6
17	Washington, D.C.	60.6
19	Cleveland	60.4
20	Baltimore	60.1
21	Oklahoma City	59.9
22	Portland	58.9
23	Philadelphia	58.7
24	Charlotte	58.3
25	Nashville	57.9
26	Atlanta	57.8
27	Salt Lake City	57.1
28	Tampa	56.9
29	Austin	56.6
29	Jacksonville	56.6
31	Detroit	56.4
32	Chicago	56.3
	<b>United States</b>	<b>56.2</b>
33	Memphis	56.1
34	Birmingham	56.0
35	New Orleans	55.9
36	Seattle	55.8
37	San Francisco	55.3
38	Dallas	54.6
39	Orlando	54.1
40	Miami	53.9
41	San Diego	52.3
42	Sacramento	52.1
43	Phoenix	51.9
44	New York	51.5
45	San Jose	51.4
46	San Antonio	51.3
47	Las Vegas	50.9
48	Houston	50.1
49	Los Angeles	46.0
50	Riverside	42.0

Source: IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota

**Table 2**

### Employed Adults in Working-Parent Households

Percent of employed adults in households with children where all adults work, 2018

1	Minneapolis	30.9
2	Oklahoma City	30.6
3	Salt Lake City	30.3
4	Raleigh	30.0
5	Cincinnati	29.8
6	Indianapolis	29.7
6	Kansas City	29.7
8	Milwaukee	29.6
9	Columbus	29.2
10	St. Louis	28.8
11	Hartford	28.5
12	Charlotte	28.4
13	Dallas	28.0
14	Louisville	27.9
15	Atlanta	27.7
15	Washington, D.C.	27.7
17	Nashville	27.2
18	Jacksonville	26.9
19	Richmond	26.8
20	Birmingham	26.7
20	Denver	26.7
22	Memphis	26.5
22	Philadelphia	26.5
24	Houston	26.4
24	Portland	26.4
26	Baltimore	26.3
	<b>United States</b>	<b>26.2</b>
27	Providence	26.1
28	Buffalo	26.0
28	Chicago	26.0
30	Detroit	25.7
31	Austin	25.6
31	Boston	25.6
33	Cleveland	25.5
33	Virginia Beach	25.5
35	San Jose	25.4
36	Phoenix	25.3
36	Sacramento	25.3
38	Pittsburgh	24.8
38	San Antonio	24.8
40	Seattle	24.6
41	Tampa	24.5
42	Las Vegas	23.8
43	Riverside	23.7
44	New York	23.4
45	San Diego	23.3
46	Orlando	23.2
46	San Francisco	23.2
48	New Orleans	23.0
49	Miami	22.4
50	Los Angeles	21.3

Source: IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota

See Appendix 1 (Page 4) and Appendix 2 ([ewgateway.org/wws](http://ewgateway.org/wws)) for more data on the peer regions.

In St. Louis, there are approximately 218,000 households with children in which all adults are employed. Some 402,000 employed adults live in these households. Of these employed adults, about 80,000 are in single-parent households, while more than 300,000 are in two-parent households.

There are a substantial number of working-parent households (WPHs) in each county of the East-West Gateway eight-county region as well as a significant proportion of the workforce that lives in WPHs. Table 3 displays the number and percent of WPHs and employed adults who reside in WPHs for each county in the East-West Gateway region for which data are available.<sup>2</sup> In the seven counties for which data are available, there are about 198,000 WPHs. Although the largest number is in St. Louis County, the greatest proportion of WPHs are in the counties of Franklin, Jefferson, and St. Charles. In each of these counties, nearly three-quarters of households with children are WPHs. In the seven counties, there are about 363,000 employed adults who reside in WPHs. Again, the greatest number, 128,000, is in St. Louis County. However, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, and St. Charles counties have greater proportions; in each of these counties, more than a third of employed adults live in a WPH.

Every industry relies upon WPHs for a portion of its labor supply. In St. Louis, the finance and insurance industry has the greatest proportion, with WPH employed adults making up 36 percent of the workforce. Education has the next highest concentration with 35 percent. Almost all industries rely on WPHs for a quarter or more of their employees. See Table 4 for the WPH employed adults by industry for St. Louis and the United States.

The lack of childcare options caused by the COVID outbreak is not simply a predicament for individual households. Rather, it is an issue that affects the entire economy. The labor supply of parents is inextricably linked to education and childcare systems. To place the onus of finding a solution solely on parents runs the risk of jeopardizing the supply of labor needed by businesses to maintain a growing economy. Flexibility on the part of both employers and employees is needed to navigate tensions created between the need to care for children and the need to contribute to the economy.

**Table 4**  
**Employed Adults who Reside in Households with Children in which all Adults are Employed**

Percentage of Industry Workforce  
St. Louis MSA and United States, 2018

Industry	St. Louis MSA	United States
Finance and Insurance	36.8	29.5
Education	35.0	30.2
Mining	32.0	26.6
Public Administration	30.5	29.0
Construction	30.5	24.2
Wholesale	30.3	25.0
Administrative and Support	30.2	25.3
Professional, Scientific, Technical	30.0	25.9
Health Care	29.9	30.1
Management of Companies	29.6	26.0
Information	28.8	24.5
Utilities	28.2	26.6
Real Estate	28.1	24.6
Manufacturing	27.4	25.1
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	26.4	21.7
Other Services	25.9	25.4
Retail	24.2	23.1
Food Services	24.0	25.5
Accommodation	22.8	25.6
Agriculture	22.3	23.8
Transportation, Warehousing	22.0	22.6
Military	13.3	17.4

Source: Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 10.0, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2018, Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.v10.0>.

**Table 3**  
**Working-Parent Households**  
East-West Gateway Region, by County, 2018

County <sup>1</sup>	Households with Children	Working-Parent Households <sup>2</sup>	Working-Parent Households (Percent of households with children)	Employed Adults in Working-Parent Households (Percent of all employed adults)		
				Employed Adults	Working-Parent Households	Employed Adults in Working-Parent Households
Madison	35,250	24,046	68.2	126,787	43,745	34.5
St. Clair	29,190	18,243	62.5	123,270	32,639	26.5
Franklin	13,292	9,681	72.8	51,845	19,260	37.1
Jefferson	27,477	20,557	74.8	111,673	39,034	35.0
St. Charles	49,985	36,120	72.3	209,026	71,081	34.0
St. Louis	113,038	71,803	63.5	490,751	128,437	26.2
City of St. Louis	30,766	17,491	56.9	154,222	29,213	18.9
<b>St. Louis Region (7 counties)</b>	<b>298,998</b>	<b>197,941</b>	<b>66.2</b>	<b>1,267,574</b>	<b>363,409</b>	<b>28.7</b>

Note: (1) Micro-data are not published for counties with less than 100,000 people, precluding the inclusion of Monroe County in this tabulation. (2) Working-parent households are households with children in which all adults (parents and non-parents) are employed.

Source: Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 10.0, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2018, Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.v10.0>.

<sup>2</sup> Micro-data are not published for counties with less than 100,000 people, precluding the inclusion of Monroe County in this tabulation.

## Appendix 1: Employment and Household Type

United States and the 50 Most Populous U.S. Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), 2018

MSA	Households with Children	Working-Parent Households <sup>1</sup>	Working-Parent Households (Percent of households with children)	Employed Adults in Working-Parent Households		
				Employed Adults	Employed Adults in Working-Parent Households	(Percent of all employed adults)
United States	37,098,809	20,852,566	56.2	156,243,752	40,981,943	26.2
Atlanta	729,476	421,633	57.8	2,966,967	820,793	27.7
Austin	263,351	149,170	56.6	1,168,077	298,898	25.6
Baltimore	310,034	186,276	60.1	1,395,672	367,331	26.3
Birmingham	124,408	69,665	56.0	501,268	133,937	26.7
Boston	544,295	338,004	62.1	2,650,681	677,883	25.6
Buffalo	120,247	75,446	62.7	547,378	142,550	26.0
Charlotte	323,080	188,495	58.3	1,295,422	367,258	28.4
Chicago	1,095,139	616,173	56.3	4,732,785	1,228,283	26.0
Cincinnati	261,736	166,745	63.7	1,064,263	317,038	29.8
Cleveland	227,132	137,161	60.4	997,374	254,163	25.5
Columbus	244,056	156,522	64.1	1,011,648	295,456	29.2
Dallas	962,002	525,290	54.6	3,725,583	1,041,640	28.0
Denver	358,023	219,076	61.2	1,653,647	442,086	26.7
Detroit	474,036	267,198	56.4	1,984,467	509,370	25.7
Hartford	140,296	91,963	65.5	617,896	176,127	28.5
Houston	885,534	444,031	50.1	3,307,680	871,816	26.4
Indianapolis	255,912	155,190	60.6	1,004,323	298,753	29.7
Jacksonville	174,683	98,954	56.6	719,156	193,591	26.9
Kansas City	270,687	169,900	62.8	1,099,060	326,752	29.7
Las Vegas	244,016	124,255	50.9	1,055,076	250,691	23.8
Los Angeles	1,424,753	654,972	46.0	6,600,995	1,403,221	21.3
Louisville	146,124	90,531	62.0	623,981	174,235	27.9
Memphis	147,012	82,449	56.1	575,735	152,839	26.5
Miami	604,104	325,866	53.9	3,015,204	676,368	22.4
Milwaukee	189,115	126,179	66.7	790,508	233,986	29.6
Minneapolis	440,091	307,542	69.9	1,975,636	611,031	30.9
Nashville	258,479	149,663	57.9	1,067,306	290,687	27.2
New Orleans	128,532	71,839	55.9	586,174	134,812	23.0
New York	2,242,108	1,154,126	51.5	9,863,649	2,311,432	23.4
Oklahoma City	190,812	114,207	59.9	713,099	218,139	30.6
Orlando	264,088	142,809	54.1	1,250,760	290,322	23.2
Philadelphia	693,821	407,415	58.7	3,015,073	799,654	26.5
Phoenix	560,728	290,816	51.9	2,279,860	576,967	25.3
Pittsburgh	235,738	144,537	61.3	1,129,227	280,304	24.8
Portland	287,662	169,306	58.9	1,282,041	338,715	26.4
Providence	180,949	109,820	60.7	817,970	213,467	26.1
Raleigh	186,510	114,292	61.3	730,388	219,080	30.0
Richmond	147,758	90,937	61.5	650,080	173,904	26.8
Riverside	525,169	220,429	42.0	2,024,802	480,534	23.7
Sacramento	268,358	139,797	52.1	1,091,069	276,544	25.3
Salt Lake City	159,414	91,021	57.1	643,343	195,112	30.3
San Antonio	262,023	134,395	51.3	1,127,697	279,645	24.8
San Diego	364,467	190,558	52.3	1,672,328	389,654	23.3
San Francisco	512,485	283,552	55.3	2,537,817	588,789	23.2
San Jose	231,327	118,843	51.4	1,015,146	258,331	25.4
Seattle	461,017	257,175	55.8	2,085,622	512,029	24.6
St. Louis	331,600	218,060	65.8	1,397,335	402,545	28.8
Tampa	316,434	179,936	56.9	1,450,912	355,676	24.5
Virginia Beach	186,316	113,339	60.8	837,230	213,718	25.5
Washington, D.C.	741,578	449,052	60.6	3,344,899	925,234	27.7

Note: (1) Working-parent households are households with children in which all adults (parents and non-parents) are employed.

Source: Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 10.0, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2018, Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.v10.0>.

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