



Father's Day 2016

10 Economic Facts about Fathers that May Surprise You

Four in five American men are fathers by the time they turn 45.¹

Altogether, more than 70 million fathers live in the United States.²

Twenty-nine million fathers live with a child under the age of 18.³

Housework and child care are being done by fathers twice as much as in 1967. But mothers still spend more time on housework and child care than fathers, even when both parents work full time.⁴

Eighty-five percent of fathers living with their children work full time.⁵

Roughly \$2 trillion was earned by fathers for their families in 2014.⁶ However, stagnant wages for men over the past several decades have hurt many fathers' earnings. Men in their prime parenting years have seen about a four percent drop in median weekly earnings since 1979.⁷

Sixty percent of married-couple families depend on two incomes for their financial security. That is up from only 25 percent in 1960.⁸

Dads today are more likely to stay at home to take care of their children. In 2012, 21 percent of fathers who were not working did so to take care of their families, up from 5 percent in 1989.⁹

A study of U.S. fathers showed that those who took at least two weeks of paternity leave were more actively involved in their child's care nine months later.¹⁰ Studies from other countries also show that taking more paternity leave increases fathers' engagement with their children. Research confirms that this leads to better developmental outcomes for children. It is also associated with higher earnings for mothers.¹¹

Yet, while about 90 percent of fathers take some leave after the arrival of a child, fewer than one in three fathers use more than 10 days. Only 13 percent of fathers who take parental leave are paid for that time. Surveys suggest that the lack of paid leave and an expectation that fathers should prioritize work over family keep many fathers from taking more time off when a child arrives.¹²

Sources

- ¹ [“Key Statistics from the National Survey of Family Growth - B Listing”](#) National Center for Health Statistics.
- ² [“Facts for Features: Father’s Day: June 19, 2016”](#) U.S. Census Bureau (May 24, 2016).
- ³ [“Employment Characteristics of Families”](#) (Table 5), Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- ⁴ Council of Economic Advisers, [2015 Economic Report of the President](#), (February 2015); and [“American Time Use Survey”](#) (Table A-7), Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- ⁵ JEC Democratic staff calculations based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, [“Employment Characteristics of Families”](#) (Table 5). Note: This includes only fathers who live with their own children under the age of 18.
- ⁶ JEC Democratic staff calculations based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey 2015 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (using CPS Table Creator).
- ⁷ JEC Democratic staff calculations based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The percent change in median usual weekly earnings for full-time wage and salary male workers ages 25 to 54 years, adjusted for inflation using the CPI-U-RS, is calculated from 1979 to 2015.
- ⁸ JEC Democratic staff calculations based on data from Bureau of Labor Statistics, [“Employment Characteristics of Families”](#) (Table 5); and [“5 Facts About Today’s Fathers”](#) Pew Research Center (June 18, 2015).
- ⁹ [“5 Facts About Today’s Fathers”](#) Pew Research Center (June 18, 2015).
- ¹⁰ JEC Democratic Staff 114th Congress, [“Gender Pay Inequality: Consequences for Women, Families and the Economy”](#) (April 2016).
- ¹¹ [“Paternity Leave: Why Parental Leave For Fathers Is So Important For Working Families”](#) U.S. Department of Labor (June 18, 2015).
- ¹² Ibid.