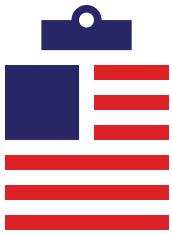

THE AMERICAN FAMILY SURVEY

2021 SUMMARY REPORT

RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF CHALLENGES

AMERICAN FAMILIES IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

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Contents

1 Project Overview & Summary **4**

2 The State of Marriage and Family **10**

3 COVID-19 and American Family Life: A Tale of Two Pandemics **16**

3.1 Economic Challenge and Resilience 17

3.2 The Government Response 21

3.3 The Pandemic's Emotional Toll 26

3.4 Moms, Dads, Work, & COVID 30

3.5 Education & COVID 38

4 Race & Family **40**

5 Family Policy in 2021 and Beyond **50**

6 Appendix: Statement on Methodology **57**

7 Appendix: Topline Report **57**

1 Project Overview & Summary

The 2021 American Family Survey represents the seventh annual effort from our team to understand the state of public opinion about the American family and the experiences of American families. Fielded between June 25 and July 8, this year's survey came at a relative low point in COVID cases, prior to the widespread delta wave and before families sent their children back to school. At this point, however, American families had been living with the pandemic for more than a year, and in designing the survey, we sought to both replicate our recurring core battery of questions about the health of the American family and some of the questions we asked in 2020. In addition, we developed new questions about American families' experiences with the pandemic and their evaluations of the government's responses to it. Finally, we also followed up on 2020's protests around issues of racial equality and policing with a new series of questions about how American families talk about those issues and how they would like to see the schools address them. The results reflect a story of both challenges (often unequally felt across different demographic groups) and extraordinary resilience in the face of the difficulties of the pandemic era.

The State of Marriage and Family

There is continuing stability in Americans' evaluations of marriage, both their own and the institution at large. There is a hint that people are less likely to say that their own marriage has gotten stronger during COVID, perhaps because of the stress of the period. But in general, people believe that marriages are doing well.

Despite this, there is reason to believe that people are slightly growing less attached to marriage as an institution. The percentage of people who believe that marriage makes children and families better off, that it is necessary to create strong families, or that it makes society better off, have all fallen slightly. And though people still think positively of marriage, the percentage who think it is old-fashioned and out-of-date has also grown in recent years. Though we would not want to imply that marriage is in trouble as an institution, there is slight erosion in its popularity.

When people evaluate families (instead of marriages) the story is quite similar. People tend to think their own family is about the same, but there is a slight dip in the evaluation of families generally—down about six percent since the pre-COVID survey. While not cause for alarm, the trend does bear watching.

Americans continue to be relatively worried about economic issues facing families, a trend true since 2017—though structural issues have been prominent in the past and remain so. When the survey was first administered in 2015, cultural concerns outstripped economic concerns among respondents. Since 2017, cultural concerns had fallen off dramatically in people's minds as economic issues became increasingly important and that pattern holds, despite the pandemic.

However, this generalization conceals significant partisan differences. Republicans tend to select cultural or structural problems as the most immediate for families: discipline, single-parent homes and

a decline in faith being the most significant to them. Democrats select the costs of raising a child and work demands as the most significant factors. The small group of pure independents splits the difference citing a lack of teaching or discipline and the costs of raising a family as the key problems.

Looking back over the past several years, it is Democrats who have shifted their views on what problems face families. In 2015, 60 percent of Democrats were selecting at least one cultural factor as a serious problem. They were selecting economic problems more often: 73 percent of the time. Despite the 13-point difference the two numbers were relatively close. In 2021, however, a serious gulf has opened up in which Democrats now cite economic factors as being the most important 77 percent of the time and cultural factors only 38 percent of the time. Republicans are very consistent in their views across this period. Pure independents have seen broadly similar change to Democrats. Policymakers could look at this as ground that needs bridging or an opportunity to address multiple areas with creative policies, only time will tell how they approach that. As we highlight in greater detail below, this year's survey includes some evidence that families are suffering less economically over the last two years, in no small part due to substantial pandemic-related government aid.

COVID and American Family Life: A Tale of Two Pandemics

COVID-19 affected many aspects of family life in the United States, but the story is not a simple, universal tale of hardship or calamity. Some families seemed to weather the pandemic relatively successfully, while others experienced distinct emotional, physical, and economic challenges. While the COVID-19 pandemic brought with it significant economic hardship, it was also accompanied by a robust response in terms of federal aid and stimulus under both Presidents Trump and Biden, which appears to have had a meaningful effect in supporting families of all types. Often, the differences in COVID experience coincided with racial, economic, or other types of disadvantage that predated the pandemic. For example, about 1 in 5 Hispanic respondents to the survey reported that they had lost a family member to COVID, compared to 1 in 10 Whites. In this sense, the story of the pandemic's effect on the American family is a tale of two pandemics.

The pandemic brought significant economic challenge to many families in terms of layoffs and lost income, but such economic hardships were not evenly distributed among American families. While most told us their financial situation had not fundamentally changed since the beginning of the pandemic, among Americans who did experience a change, those with higher incomes who experienced a change were more likely to say that their financial situation improved and less likely to say that it got worse. By contrast, lower income Americans who experienced a change in their financial situation were more likely to say that it got worse than that it got better.

Single parents with children remain the group most likely to experience a serious economic crisis, but at the same time, 2020 and 2021 saw a marked *decrease* in the number of families who reported such a serious crisis. How could economic crises decrease in the midst of major economic upheaval?

One important reason was massive federal aid distributed under both the Trump and Biden administrations. Overwhelming percentages of Americans received the aid, and of those who did, sizeable

percentages — including three-quarters of low-income American families — told us they needed the aid to get by and that it helped them.

Compared to their evaluations in 2020, more Americans said the federal government, state and local governments, and churches were helpful in response to the pandemic, while ratings of other institutions, including employers and public schools, stayed relatively constant. Both Democrats and Republicans were more likely in 2021 to say that their state and local government was helpful, while evaluations of the federal government changed as the White House changed partisan hands. Democrats' evaluations of the helpfulness of the federal government increased by more than 40 percentage points, while Republican support fell off by about 10 points.

Overall, in their economic lives, American families responded to the pandemic with remarkable resilience bolstered by significant government aid. The economic challenges were felt more by those at the lower end of the economic spectrum, but significant government intervention spanning across two presidential administrations shielded many American families from the most severe forms of crisis.

The pandemic also took an emotional toll, with approximately one-third of Americans reporting an increase in sadness or depression. This number was highest (38 percent) among single people with no children. While not everyone reported needing physical or mental health care, significant numbers of Americans who said they needed it did not receive it. The lack of care was highest among the lowest-income Americans.

When it comes to family relationships, a majority of respondents to the American Family Survey who live with others reported no conflict within their household about COVID or other issues, but about 4 in 10 parents told us they had at least some conflict about school, and similar percentages of families reported conflict about household responsibilities or family finances. A majority of married or cohabiting respondents reported that the challenges of COVID had caused them to appreciate their partner more, and about 4 in 10 said that it had deepened their commitment to their marriage. About 1 in 10 said that the pandemic had made them question the strength of their relationship. Overall, the pandemic revealed romantic partners as sources of support in the midst of hard times.

The pandemic also brought changes to the relationship between home and work. Americans of all different economic levels were equally likely to work from home prior to the pandemic — about 4 in 10 respondents told us they had ever done so prior to March 2020. After March 2020, the percentage who had ever worked from home increased at all income levels, but the increases did not occur at equal rates. About 7 in 10 Americans with higher incomes said they had ever worked from home after March 2020, compared to less than 6 in 10 middle-income workers and half of those at the lowest income levels. The move to work from home was, in this sense, disproportionately an experience of the wealthy.

Large percentages of Americans who were working full-time prior to the pandemic reported concern about how the pandemic would affect their long-term work prospects, including earning potential, ability to achieve long-term career goals, advancement opportunities, work-life balance, and retirement savings. Women in the workforce tended to express more concern than men.

Women also expressed more concern than men about how being a working parent affects both their ability to parent well and their ability to advance their careers. The gap between those who said being a working parent makes those activities harder and those who reported that it makes things easier was much larger among women than men. While both men and women who work full time were more likely to say that it complicates their parenting and work life, mothers who work full-time feel disproportionately the burdens of working parenthood.

Striking differences between men and women also emerged in how they provide childcare during the work day. Working fathers were dramatically more likely than working mothers to say that they provide childcare by relying on themselves or on their spouses. Comparatively fewer women are able to meet their childcare needs on their own or with the help of their spouses. In turn, full-time working women were more likely than men to report relying on daycare or nursery.

Despite these challenges, more than 8 in 10 full-time working mothers and fathers felt like their level of participation in the labor force was the right option for them at their current stage in life. Similarly, parents who work part time or are not currently in the labor force tended to be happy with their situation. Among mothers currently not working for pay, however, more than a quarter said they would prefer to be working at least part time.

Men and women also disagree about the division of labor within the home. These disagreements can be found among couples with and without children. Repeatedly, women reported taking on much more of the responsibility, while men felt that responsibilities were more evenly divided. Women were also less satisfied than men with the amount of housework done by their partners. When it comes to work other than paying the bills, men and women report sharply different views of who shoulders the workload, and they also express differing levels of satisfaction with the current division of labor in their homes.

Schooling has been a key point of contention in recent months. We asked about people's attendance in the final month of school (May or June, for most) and found that while many people attended in-person every day (40 percent), more than a third were still completing schoolwork completely online. It is quite clear that in many cases, this was by choice. Half of those not attending in person (52 percent) said they had the option, but chose not to attend full time. Almost six in ten Democrats said this, as did five out of ten Republicans.

Parents also reported that learning went worse for their children in the pandemic's aftermath—though some felt that things had improved, about three in ten parents felt that their child's learning was worse (only 22 percent thought it had gotten better). In contrast, about a quarter of parents said that their child's grades had improved, with only 19 percent reporting worse grades.

Race & Family in America

In addition to a global pandemic, 2020 brought widespread concern about issues of racial inequality and policing, sparked by the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others. Controversies about

Black Lives Matter, critical race theory, and the idea of systemic inequality revealed again how issues of race are a defining characteristic of American politics and how differently Americans of various backgrounds see these issues. Survey respondents of different races and ethnicities reported dramatically different impressions of the extent to which racial discrimination has negatively affected their lives and the extent to which race and ethnicity affect the opportunities families receive in America today. Profound partisan disagreements also shape these different impressions, especially among White respondents.

Racial and partisan identities also shape how — and how much — American families talk about issues, including race and policing. Democrats (especially White Democrats) are far more likely than Republicans to talk about racial discrimination by police within their families, and Non-White Democrats are more likely than any other group to talk with their families about personal safety when interacting with the police. Republicans, by contrast, tend to talk more about about how police keep communities safe or to avoid these issues entirely.

The divide in opinions about race and racial equality may be related to the fact that few Americans seem to have positive social interactions across lines of race. We asked about activities like serving as a job reference for someone of another race, arranging a playdate with a family of another race, or hosting someone of another race in your home. Though the likelihood of doing these things was related in part to income, large percentages of both White and Non-White Americans told us they had not had any of these experiences in the past five years. At least with respect to the activities we asked about, many American families have few social connections outside their own racial group. In this way, social separation between the races remains a persistent fact of American life.

In light of recent controversies over teaching about race and racial equality in schools, including new laws in many Republican-controlled states directing what can and cannot be taught in public schools, we asked respondents to the 2021 American Family Survey to tell us their perspectives about how schools should approach this topic. Republicans and Democrats disagree in their views of race and racial equality in the United States, and the largest gaps are between White Democrats and White Republicans. White Democrats are the most eager to acknowledge racial inequalities, talk about how they are reflected in police action, and confront the nation's troubled racial history in schools, while White Republicans are the most reluctant.

Across multiple indicators, then, Republicans and Democrats disagree in their views of race and racial equality in the United States. If anything, White Democrats are even more eager than Non-Whites to acknowledge racial inequalities, talk about how they are reflected in police action, and confront the nation's troubled racial history in schools. Republicans see an entirely different world (though Non-White Republicans are slightly more willing than their White counterparts to make it part of the school curriculum). Still, these intra-party racial differences pale in comparison to the gulf that separates the parties in their views of the state of racial equality in America today. The only thing that Americans appear to have in common, regardless of their political views, is that they rarely have meaningful social interactions with American families of a different race. Perhaps more such interactions would be one way to identify some common path forward.

Family Policy in 2021 and Beyond

The public is generally in favor of the government giving aid to families, though there are predictable partisan differences. Republicans (43 percent) are less likely to favor any kind of aid. Democrats favor both helping families directly and spending money on programs and institutions (61 percent favor both approaches). When those who want "both" are pressed, there is a clear, but not overwhelming, preference for helping families directly. But even among Republicans who are the least sympathetic, almost six in ten want some form of aid. The most popular form of benefit is cash assistance, and Americans favor an average benefit of around $2,400 per year.

In terms of paying for that benefit the clear preference of the public is to tax the wealthy (should the program be instituted). Forty-eight percent of the public selected that as their preferred method, with no other method clocking in any higher than about a quarter of the public favoring it. The conclusion is that while cash benefits may be popular, paying for them in a popular way may be difficult.

Many policy analysts have argued that a payment to families may affect fertility. Though that is very difficult to conclusively test within a survey context, 17 percent of those in child-bearing years responded that it would increase their interest in having children.

A note of caution for proponents of a child allowance or benefit: it is most popular when targeted to those at the bottom of the income scale. Republicans and Independents would phase it out for those making around $75,000 per year. Democrats would go somewhat higher but would also phase it out by $100,000 incomes. Most existing benefits are more universal than that public preference, so the most plausible interpretation of the public's preferences is probably that they want the benefit, but would cap it to a smaller group of people than most existing plans currently provide.

What worries people with respect to the economy and their families? Inflation. Nothing else—lack of government assistance, national debt, or unemployment, drew as much concern. Thirty-nine percent of the public is concerned about inflation. None of the other factors concerned more than 30 percent of the public.

One might wonder if this concern was largely driven by Republicans. In a sense, that's true. Over half (52 percent) of Republicans expressed worry about inflation. But even among Democrats inflation was still more concerning than were factors like lack of government assistance, debt, and unemployment. Policy-makers should probably be more concerned about inflation, or at least be aware that the public is quite concerned about it.

In the next sections of the report, we will delve deeper into findings we have reviewed above and explore further the state of the American family in 2021. The report is divided into four broad sections, the largest of which is the discussion of how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected families. A topline report of all questions asked is appended as an appendix.

2 The State of Marriage and Family

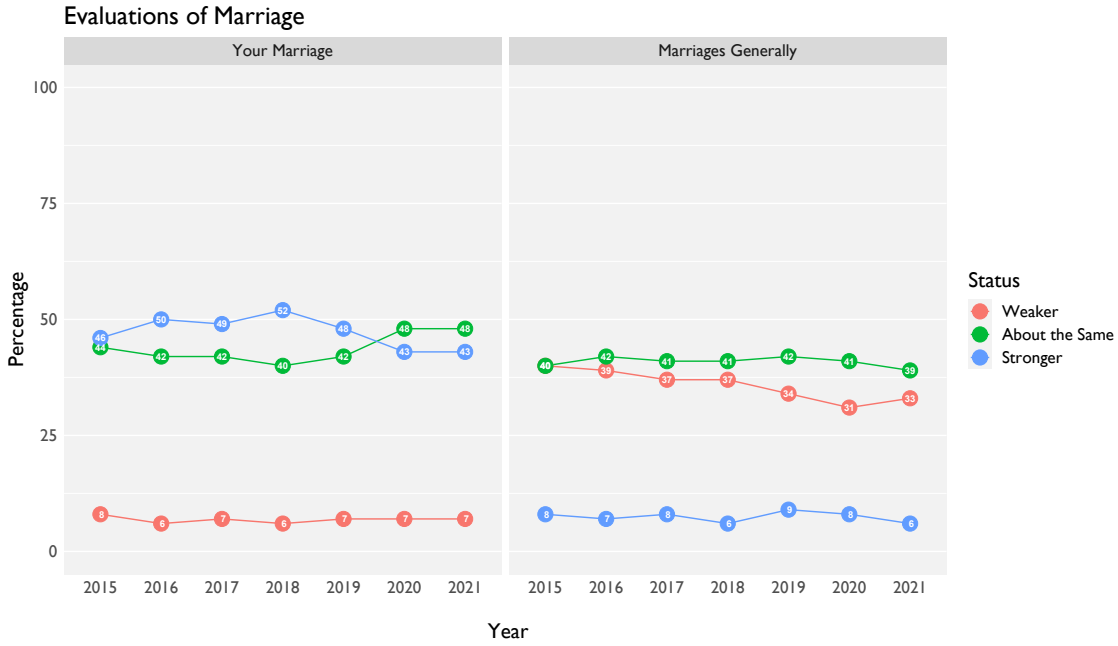

Figure 1: Figure displays the percentage evaluating both personal marriages and the state of marriage in the country over the past year.

Despite the pandemic, the public continues to see relatively positive evaluations of marriage in the country. Regarding one's own marriage the numbers stand unchanged from 2020. Under COVID people do not seem to believe their marriage has gotten better quite as much as they believed in the past, but the "weaker" numbers are absolutely unchanged. As for marriage generally, the public continues to see similar patterns to the entire time of the survey's history.

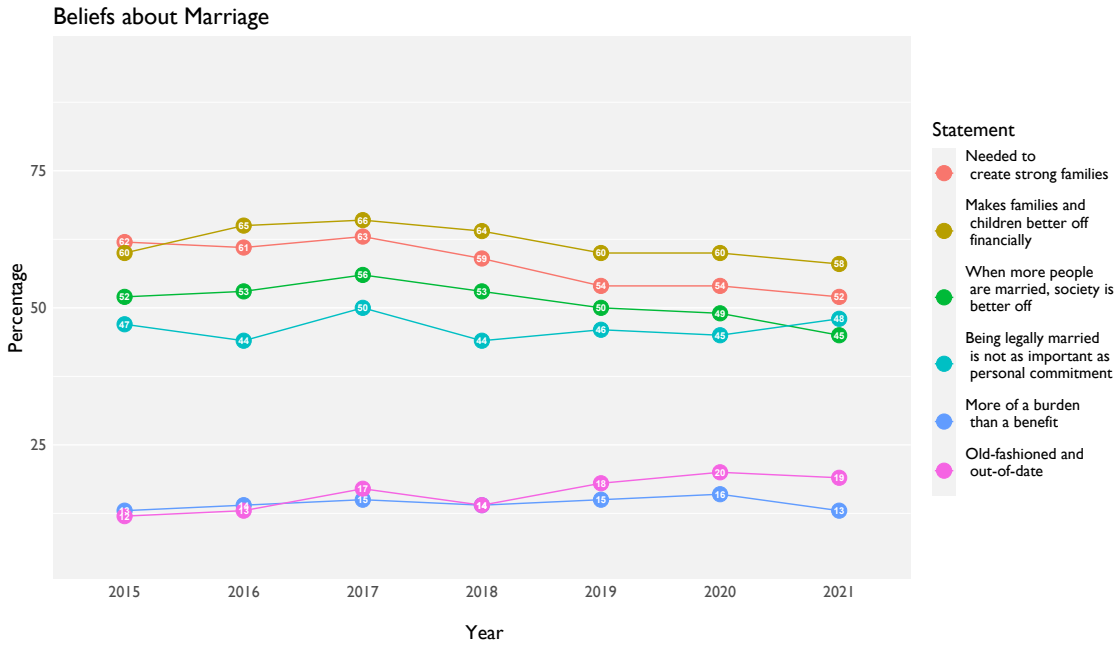

Figure 2: Figure displays the percentage agreeing with each of the statements in the marriage battery (listed at right).

Though the overall patterns suggest broad continuity, the numbers continue to see slight erosion in the public's evaluation of marriage as an institution. For example, in 2015, when the survey began, more than six in ten respondents believed that marriage was needed to create strong families. But by 2021, that number had fallen to its low: 52 percent. Similarly, in 2015 only 12 percent considered marriage a old-fashioned and out of date. In 2021 that number is somewhat higher at 19 percent. Similar patterns and shifts can be seen in other numbers (e.g., "when more people are married society is better off").

Perhaps on a better note for evaluations of marriage, the idea that marriage is "more of a burden than a benefit" has fallen very slightly in the pandemic.

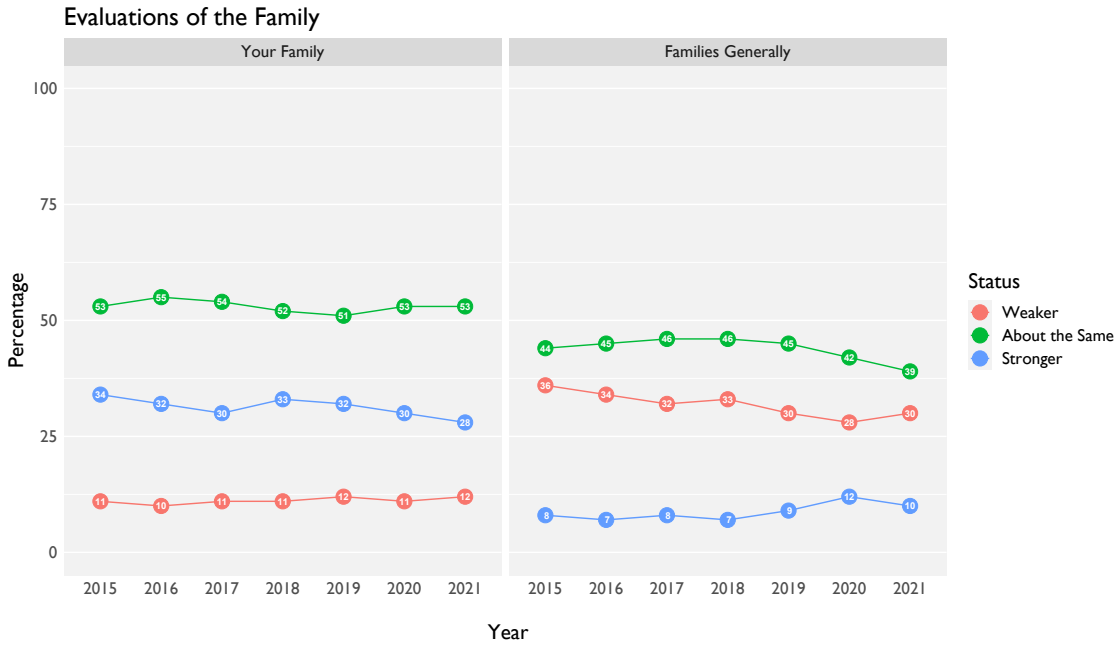

Figure 3: Figure displays the percentage evaluating both personal families and the state of family generally.

Beliefs about the status of families and their health are broadly similar. Over half of all respondents believe their own family is about the same (with another three in ten believing it got stronger. However, we do see some erosion when it comes to people's perceptions of families generally. Perhaps due to the pandemic or other upheavals over the past couple of years, now only 39 percent see families generally as being about the same a slightly weaker number than in past years.

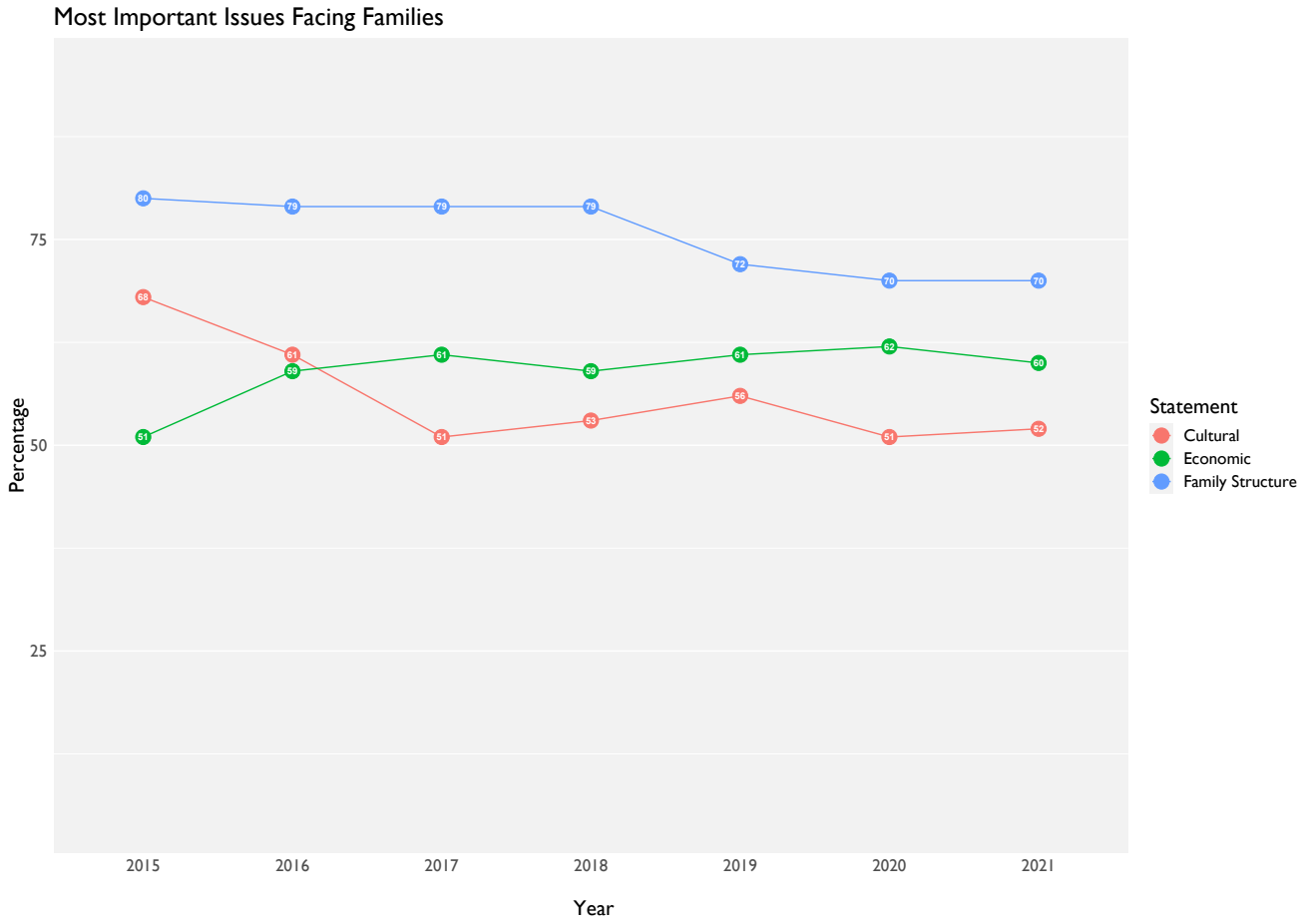

Figure 4: Figure displays the percentage seeing each of these areas as a particularly serious problem.

Using a list of 12 possible problems facing families, respondents were asked to choose their top three (see the below for the entire list), we categorize several problems facing families in the minds of the public into three broad categories: structural (definition of marriage, lack of discipline, single-parent homes, or the digital age), economic (work demands, lack of programs to help, costs, and lack of good jobs), and cultural (decline in faith, sexual permissiveness, drugs/alcohol, and crime). The problems perceived most by the public remain structural—the public particularly sees the problem of people not disciplining their children enough as a major problem. And despite government assistance and the reduced rate of economic problems, people still believe economics is a more pressing concern than are cultural matters.

	Overall	***Republicans***	***Democrats***	***Independents***
Economics				
Work Demands	29	13	42	28
Lack of Government Programs	17	2	29	14
Costs of Raising a Family	38	20	50	41
Lack of Good Jobs	17	7	23	23
Cultural				
Decline in Faith	23	43	9	15
Sexual Permissiveness	15	21	8	16
Drugs / Alcohol	17	19	16	17
Crime	13	12	14	14
Family Structure & Discipline				
The Definition of Marriage	15	25	7	13
Parents not Teaching or Disciplining	41	56	30	38
Single-Parent Homes	27	43	15	24
The Digital Age	18	16	22	16

As has been true in past years respondents are particularly likely to believe in greater levels of discipline and teaching of children. After that, the most common answers are the costs of raising a family, work demands, single-parent homes and the decline of religious faith. There are major partisan differences, perhaps seen most prominently in the way that Democrats choose work demands and the costs of raising a family as the key difficulty for families while Republicans choose a decline in faith and parents not disciplining or teaching their children (though three in ten Democrats do see that as a problem, the number for Republicans is close to double that).

Independents (pure independents we remind the reader) have different and more scattered priorities. They, like Republicans, see lack of discipline or teaching as very serious, but also see hight costs as being important.

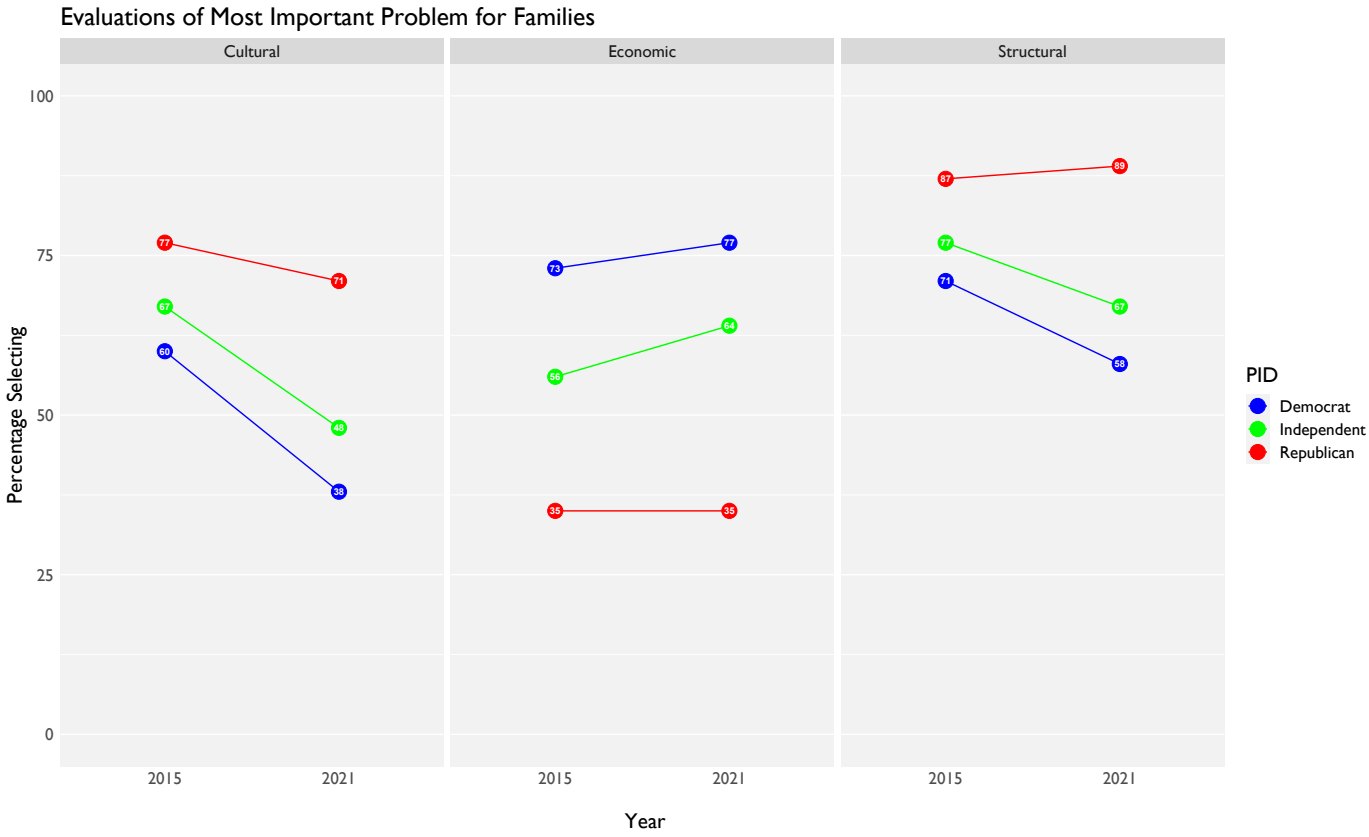

Figure 5: Figure displays the percentage selecting a different type of problem as most important.

Some of the variation in the previous figure is obviously related to changing attitudes about family by partisanship. As seen here, Democrats have decidedly shifted their views on what problems face families (as well as independents to some degree). In 2015 60 percent of Democrats were selecting at least one cultural factor as a serious problem. They were selecting economic problems more often: 73 percent of the time. Despite the 13-point difference the two numbers were relatively close. But in 2021 a serious gulf has opened up. Now only 38 percent of Democrats select cultural problems, while still 77 percent of Democrats select economic problems. A similar shift is happening on structural issues (though 6 in 10 Democrats) still see problems in this area.

Republicans are mostly stable. This represents a shifting set of views by partisanship. Democrats increasingly see family challenges as essentially economic, while Republicans (who were far less likely to family challenges were economic in the first place) still see them as mostly cultural and structural.

3 COVID-19 and American Family Life: A Tale of Two Pandemics

	Diagnoses	**Death**
Total	48	13
White	47	9
Black	46	16
Hispanic	55	21
Low Income (< $40K)	43	12
Middle Income ($40-80K)	50	13
High Income (> $80K)	55	15
Democrats	51	16
Independents	42	9
Republicans	46	10

Table 1: Experiences with COVID. This table summarizes respondent self-reports of a COVID diagnosis or death in the family (including household and extended family).

More than a year into the pandemic, experience with COVID in American families is widespread. Nearly half of all respondents told us that a member of their family (either in the household or an extended family member) had been diagnosed with COVID. These are respondent self-reports, not formal medical diagnoses, and those who indicated "maybe" are not counted as reporting yes.

One of the most important COVID trends is found along racial and ethnic lines: Hispanic families reported both deaths and diagnoses at noticeably higher rates than both Black and white respondents. Their rate of death in the family was reportedly more than double that of white respondents. In all, about 1 in 5 Hispanics reported losing a family member to COVID.

3.1 Economic Challenge and Resilience

	Temporarily Laid Off	**Permanently Let Go**	**Lost Income**	**Hours Reduced**
Working full time prior to March 2020				
Men	17	8	23	15
Women	15	7	20	13
Working part time prior to March 2020				
Men	35	11	35	35
Women	32	11	34	23

Table 2: How the Pandemic Affected Work. Responses limited to those who said they worked full-time or part-time prior to the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020.

Table 2 offers a snapshot of some of the pandemic's negative effects. Of those who self-reported that they were working full-time prior to March of 2020, at least 15 percent of both men and women were temporarily laid off, and another 7-8 percent were permanently let go. Large percentages of working Americans report that they lost income or had their hours reduced. These effects hit part-time workers even harder, with about one third reporting that they were temporarily laid off or that they lost income, and more than 10 percent telling us they were permanently let go. Clearly, the pandemic exacted a meaningful toll on the lives of working Americans.

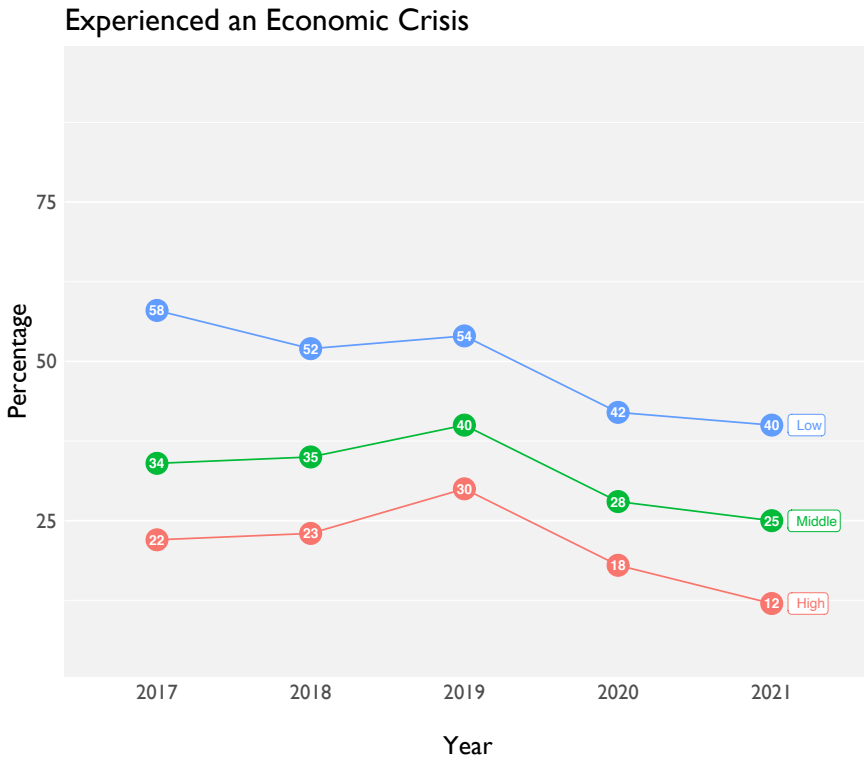

Figure 6: Experienced an Economic Crisis in the Past 12 Months by Income Level. Economic crisis is defined as reporting any of the following: respondent was hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford enough food; someone in the household needed to see a doctor or go to the hospital but couldn't because of the cost; respondent moved in with other people even for a little while because of financial problems; respondent borrowed or received money from friends or family to help pay the bills; respondent did not pay the full amount of an important bill; respondent stayed at a shelter, in an abandoned building, an automobile or any other place not meant for regular housing, even for one night.

At the same time, the pandemic did not bring large increases in economic crisis for American families. Since 2017, we have asked questions about whether severe economic hardship had touched the lives of American families (see Figure 6). Between 2017 and 2019 the proportion of Americans experiencing economic crisis, such as going hungry, not paying a bill, or moving in with other people, remained roughly steady. However, in both 2020 and 2021, these numbers dropped significantly. Every income level experienced at least a 14-point drop or more, relative to 2019 levels. These changes are surprising, given the pandemic recession and the evidence of significant changes in work patterns, but as we detail below, pandemic aid appeared to make a difference for many families.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
No child at home	36	32	37	25	25
Child at home	51	48	52	39	32
Total	41	37	42	29	26

Table 3: Economic Crisis and Children. Cells denote the percentage of respondents who experienced an economic crisis each year.

In every year since 2017, Americans who have children at home have been more vulnerable to economic crisis than those who do not (Table 3). This fact remained true in 2021. But the recent reduction in the experience of economic crisis was especially steep among parents with children in the home, declining about 20 points from a high of more than half in 2019 to under a third in 2021.

	Experienced Econ. Crisis	Made Expensive Purchase
Single No Kids	26	19
Single with Kids	37	25
Married No Kids	15	34
Married with Kids	26	48

Table 4: Economic Crisis and Family Structure, 2021 Only. Cells denote the percentage of respondents who experienced an economic crisis or reported making an expensive purchase.

How does family structure affect the experience of economic crisis? Table 4 highlights the results for 2021. The group most vulnerable to serious economic trouble was single parents, whose likelihood of experiencing a crisis was more than 10 points higher than any other group. The table also highlights patterns of spending on large items, such as a household appliance, household renovations, a car, or a new home.

	Got Worse	**Stayed the Same**	**Got Better**
Total	22	61	17
Low Income (< $40K)	28	58	14
Middle Income ($40-80K)	21	61	18
High Income (> $80K)	14	63	23
Single No Kids	23	60	17
Single with Kids	27	65	8
Married No Kids	19	65	16
Married with Kids	20	61	19

Table 5: Financial Changes Since March 2020. Cells denote the percent of people from each income category in each financial situation. "With kids" refers to respondents with a child at home.

Table 5 reports respondents' evaluation of changes in their overall financial situation since March of 2020. Although the majority of each family type reported no change, meaningful differences appear when looking at those whose situation did change (). For example, 28 percent of low-income Americans said their financial situation got worse after March 2020, while 14 percent said it got better. By contrast, 14 percent of high-income Americans said their financial situation deteriorated, while 23 percent reported that it improved. Thus, while the largest number of both groups said their financial situation remained steady, the rich who experienced a financial change were comparatively more likely to be doing even better, while the poor whose situation changed were more likely to do worse.

Family circumstances also mattered. Single parents were the most likely to say their financial situation got worse after March 2020 and the least likely to say it got better.

3.2 The Government Response

	Received Federal Stimulus Checks	**Received Child Tax Credit**
Total	84	40
Low Income (< $40K)	86	37
Middle Income ($40-80K)	92	45
High Income (> $80K)	78	40
White	86	43
Black	77	32
Hispanic	80	37

Table 6: Experience with Federal Aid. Cells denote percentages in each category. Percentages for receiving the child tax credit are limited to respondents with a child at home. Those who said they didn't know whether they had received aid were counted as not receiving it.

In response to the economic challenges of the pandemic, the federal government passed several rounds of large stimulus checks, which occurred under both President Trump and President Biden. American families made use of this assistance. As of late June and early July, 2021, when this year's AFS was fielded, overwhelming percentages of Americans at all income levels and across all racial groups reported receiving federal aid (Table 6). In addition, about 40 percent of parents with a child at home said they had received child tax credit support, though these do not refer to the monthly child tax credit support that was part of President Biden's COVID stimulus package because those payments began shortly after our survey closed.

		Of those who said they needed aid ...		
	Needed Aid to Get By	**Aid Helped A Lot**	**Aid Helped Some**	**Aid Helped A Little**
Low Income (< $40K)	73	57	31	12
Middle Income ($40-80K)	46	54	36	10
High Income (> $80K)	27	52	32	16
Single No Kids	57	55	33	12
Single with Kids	66	56	30	14
Married No Kids	38	51	36	13
Married with Kids	46	60	32	8
White	58	53	34	13
Black	46	62	29	9
Hispanic	40	62	29	9

Table 7: Need for Aid. Cells denote percentages in each category. Only those who said they needed the aid were asked how much it helped. "With kids" refers to those who have a child at home.

Table 7 shows that among those who reported receiving federal stimulus checks, large percentages of recipients said they "needed the aid to get by" — nearly three-quarters of low-income Americans, almost half of those in the middle of the income spectrum, and more than a quarter of those with higher incomes. Given that single parents were especially vulnerable to economic crisis and deterioration of family finances during the pandemic, it is also notable that two-thirds of them said they needed the aid. Of those who said they needed the aid, more than 8 in 10 said that it helped "a lot" or "some." Clearly, pandemic relief made a substantial difference in the lives of many American families.

	Savings	Household Costs	Rent/ Mortgage	Entertainment/ Travel/Retail	Donations to Others	Other
Total	29	36	12	8	3	11
Single No Kids	28	35	12	8	3	11
Single with Kids	18	42	17	8	3	12
Married No Kids	36	33	8	8	4	10
Married with Kids	29	37	13	8	3	10

Table 8: How Stimulus Aid was Spent. Cells denote the average percentage within each category. Respondents were asked to indicate what percentage of their stimulus aid they used for each spending category.

How did American families spend the stimulus checks? For most, the bulk of the spending went toward household costs and paying for housing (Table 8). In addition, families saved about 30 percent of what they received, though that number fluctuated with family structure. Single parents tended to save less and use comparatively more for household expenses. A small number of Americans gave their money to others, and on average, families used about 20 percent of what they received for entertainment, travel, retail purchases, and miscellaneous other spending.

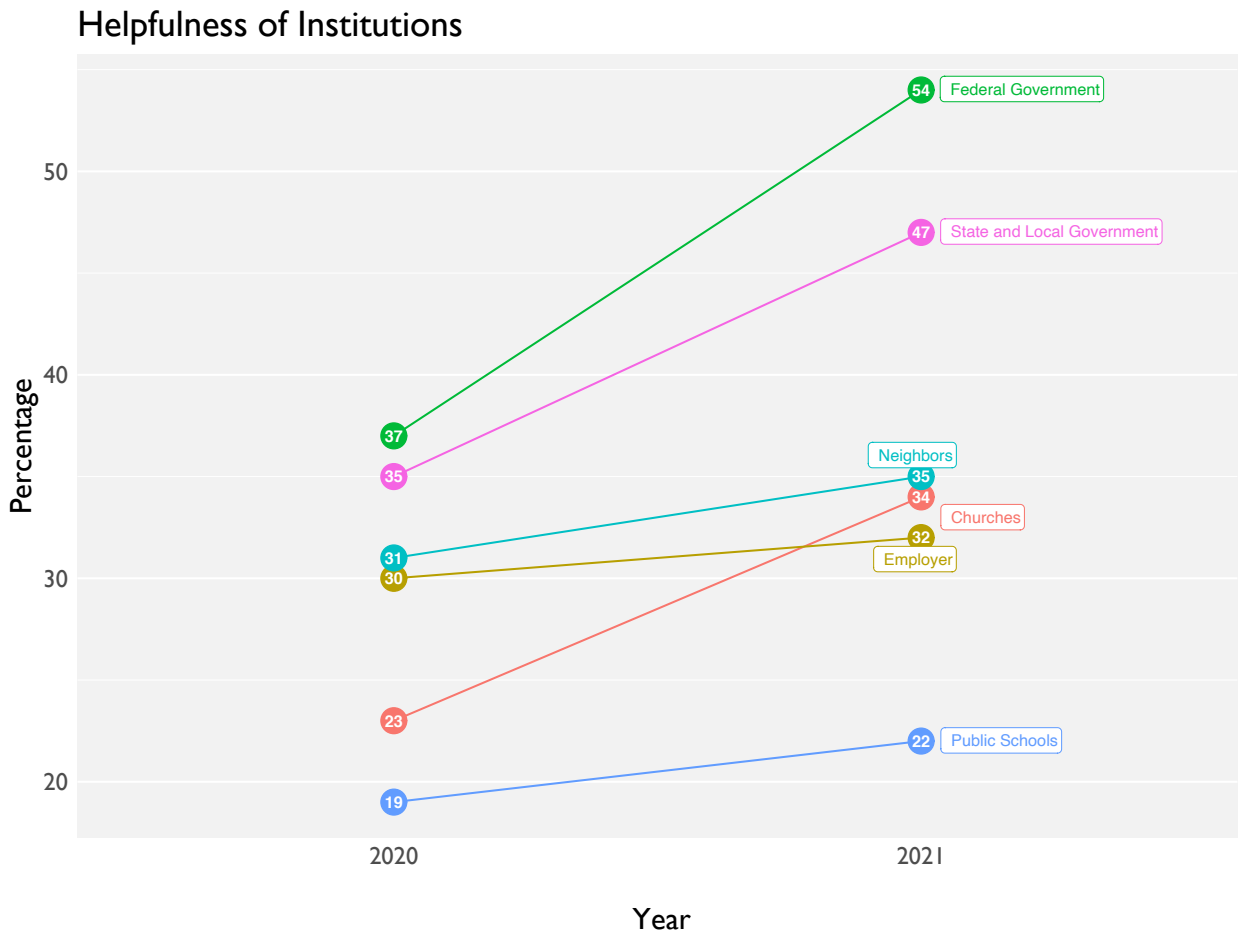

Figure 7: Evaluations of the Helpfulness of Institutions during the Pandemic. Points represent the percentage of respondents indicating that the institution was slightly or very helpful.

Because the pandemic presented significant challenges to many different social and political institutions, we repeated a question we first asked in 2020 about how helpful various institutions had been. Figure 7 reports the percentage of respondents indicating that each institution was at least slightly helpful. Relative to 2020, many more Americans perceived the federal government or state and local governments to be helpful in dealing with the pandemic. Churches also saw a more than 10 percentage point increase. By contrast, perceptions of schools, employers, and neighbors changed little from 2020.

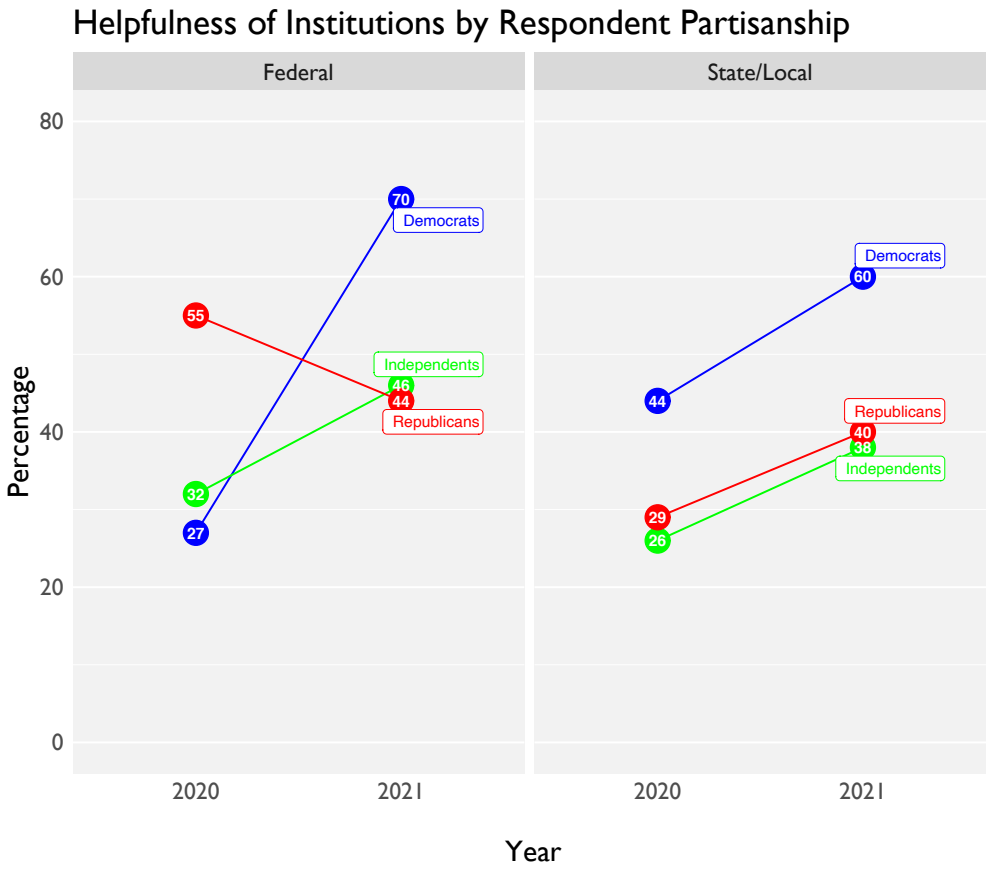

Figure 8: Evaluations of the Helpfulness of Government Institutions during the Pandemic by Respondent Partisanship. Points represent the percentage of respondents indicating that the institution was slightly or very helpful.

Impressions of the federal government varied strongly by respondent partisanship. In 2020, a majority of Republicans judged the federal government's response to be helpful, compared to barely over a quarter of Democrats. In 2021, with the White House changing partisan hands, fully 7 in 10 Democrats thought the federal government's response had been helpful, while positive judgments among Republicans dropped 11 points. Independents were about evenly split, though decidedly more positive in 2021 than in 2020.

Notably, the trends for state and local governments were uniformly positive, regardless of partisanship (Figure 8). Perhaps this is because Democrats tend to live in Democratic states and Republicans in Republican states. Overall, however, only Democrats expressed majority support in 2021 for the helpfulness of the state and local responses to the pandemic. Still, the positive slope of the state and local trend over time for all groups differs sharply from the differing judgments about the national response.

3.3 The Pandemic's Emotional Toll

	Increases in ...	
	Sadness or Depression	**Weight**
Total	32	34
Low Income (< $40K)	34	35
Middle Income ($40-80K)	31	33
High Income (> $80K)	29	34
Single No Kids	40	35
Single with Kids	34	36
Married No Kids	33	33
Married with Kids	26	30

Table 9: Increases in Sadness and Weight. This table reports the percentage of respondents in different categories who said they had experienced an *increase* in sadness or depression and in weight.

Beyond the financial challenges that accompanied the economic upheaval of 2020, an additional important question is how American families are coping with the physical and mental stresses of life in a pandemic. We asked respondents whether they had experienced an increase in sadness and depression and whether they had gained weight. Nearly one-third of Americans indicated that they experienced these changes, and the largest increases in sadness or depression occurred among single Americans with no children.

	Did not receive needed ...	
	Physical Health Care	**Mental Health Care**
Total	26	47
Low Income (< $40K)	33	53
Middle Income ($40-80K)	22	46
High Income (> $80K)	20	38

Table 10: Of Those Who Needed Care, Who Did Not Receive It? Cells denote the percentage of respondents who did *not* receive needed physical or mental health care. Results restricted only to those who said they needed care.

About 75% of respondents to the American Family Survey said they needed physical health care in the previous year, and about 50% said they needed mental health care. Of those, we asked what percentage received the care they needed. About one-quarter of those who said they needed physical health care indicated that they did not receive it, and nearly half of those indicating that they needed mental health services reported that they did not receive it. Among the lowest income respondents who said they needed care, these numbers increased to one-third and over one half.

	No Conflict	Minor Conflict	Major Conflict
School	60	28	12
Household Responsibilities	60	31	9
Family Finances	62	28	10
Rules for Children	64	26	10
Politics	73	20	7
COVID Restrictions or Masking	75	20	5
Vaccinations	78	16	6

Table 11: Family Conflict. Cells denote percentage of respondents indicating "no conflict," "minor conflict," or "significant conflict" about each issue during the pandemic. Respondents saw only those items that were applicable to their situation. For example, the "rules for children" item was seen only by respondents with children.

Did the stresses and challenges of the pandemic translate into conflict within American homes? Most respondents who did not live by themselves told us that they did not have conflict about any of the issues we included on this year's survey (Table 11). In this sense, American families proved again to be quite resilient in the face of hardship.

But such resilience does not mean an absence of stress and conflict. About 4 in 10 adults with children in the home said they had at least minor conflicts about school, and a similar number of adults (whether parents or not), reported conflict about household responsibilities and family finances. Comparatively fewer conflicts occurred, within households at least, about masking, vaccinations, or other COVID-related issues. To the extent that families experienced conflict during the pandemic, it revolved primarily around schooling, managing the household, and money.

	2020	2021
"Made me appreciate my partner more"		
Men	60	53
Women	52	56
"Deepened my commitment to my marriage/relationship"		
Men	50	42
Women	44	42
"Increased stress in my marriage/relationship"		
Men	25	22
Women	26	23
"Made me question the strength of my marriage/relationship"		
Men	14	11
Women	12	13

Table 12: Effects on Relationships. Cells indicate the percentage of married or cohabiting respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with each statement.

Given these various stresses, how did American relationships hold up? In both 2020 and 2021, married and cohabiting respondents to the American Family Survey had the opportunity to evaluate the pandemic's effects on their relationships. (Table 12). The story is one of considerable resilience. Though 2021 saw slight declines from the results in 2020, still a majority of respondents reported increased appreciation of their partner, and 4 in 10 said it had deepened their commitment to their marriage or relationship. Conversely, just over 1 in 10 said that the pandemic had caused them to question the strength of their relationship, and a little less than a quarter indicated that it had increased relationship stress. Overall, the results in both years indicate that spouse or partner relationships were a source of support in the midst of challenge.

3.4 Moms, Dads, Work, & COVID

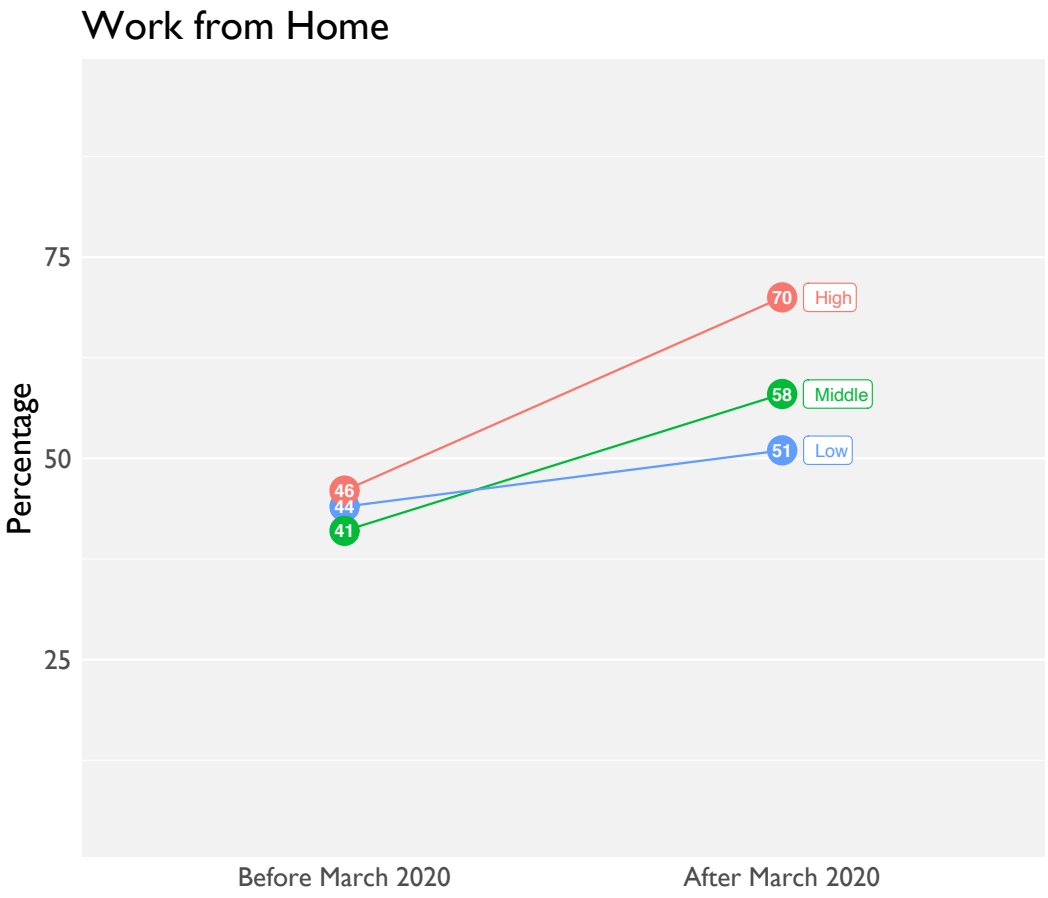

Figure 9: Ever Work from Home, by Income Level. Figure highlights the percentage of respondents indicating that they had ever worked from home, before and after March 2020.

The pandemic also brought different patterns of work, including the rise of working from home. Figure 9 presents the percentage of respondents who told us they had ever worked from home, both before and after the pandemic. Prior to March 2020, the experience of working from home was roughly equally shared across income categories. Since then, about 70 percent of wealthy Americans say they have worked from home — an increase of 24 percentage points. The percentage of low- and middle-income Americans saying they have worked from home also increased, but by much smaller amounts.

Not only were the wealthy more likely to say they had ever worked from home after March 2020, they were also reported the most time working from home: on average, about 54 percent of the time, compared to 40 percent and 37 percent for middle- and low-income workers, respectively. The move to work from home was disproportionately an experience of the wealthy.

	My Earning Potential	Long-term Career Goals	Advancement Opportunities	Work-Life Balance	Retirement Savings
Employed full time in March 2020					
Men, No Kids	41	38	35	41	47
Women, No Kids	52	46	45	48	53
Fathers	42	36	32	37	49
Mothers	46	44	35	46	58

Table 13: Concern About Pandemic Effects on the Future of Work. Cells denote percent of respondents in each group who are somewhat or very concerned.

Respondents to the 2021 AFS had an opportunity to report their concerns about how the pandemic would affect their future work lives, including earning potential, long-term career goals, advancement at work, work-life balance, and retirement savings. We focus on Americans who said they were working full-time in March 2020, when the pandemic began because we want to understand how the pandemic affected the trajectory of those who were employed prior to the economic challenges accompanying COVID. Substantial numbers of men and women report high levels of concern about their work futures (Table 13). Women consistently expressed greater concern than men about the pandemic's long-term implications for their career futures. More than half of women without children, for example, told us they were somewhat or very concerned about their earning potential, compared to about 4 in 10 men without children. Similarly, women without children were 10 points more likely than men to express concern about advancement opportunities. And nearly 6 in 10 working mothers (compared to half of fathers) said they worried about retirement savings.

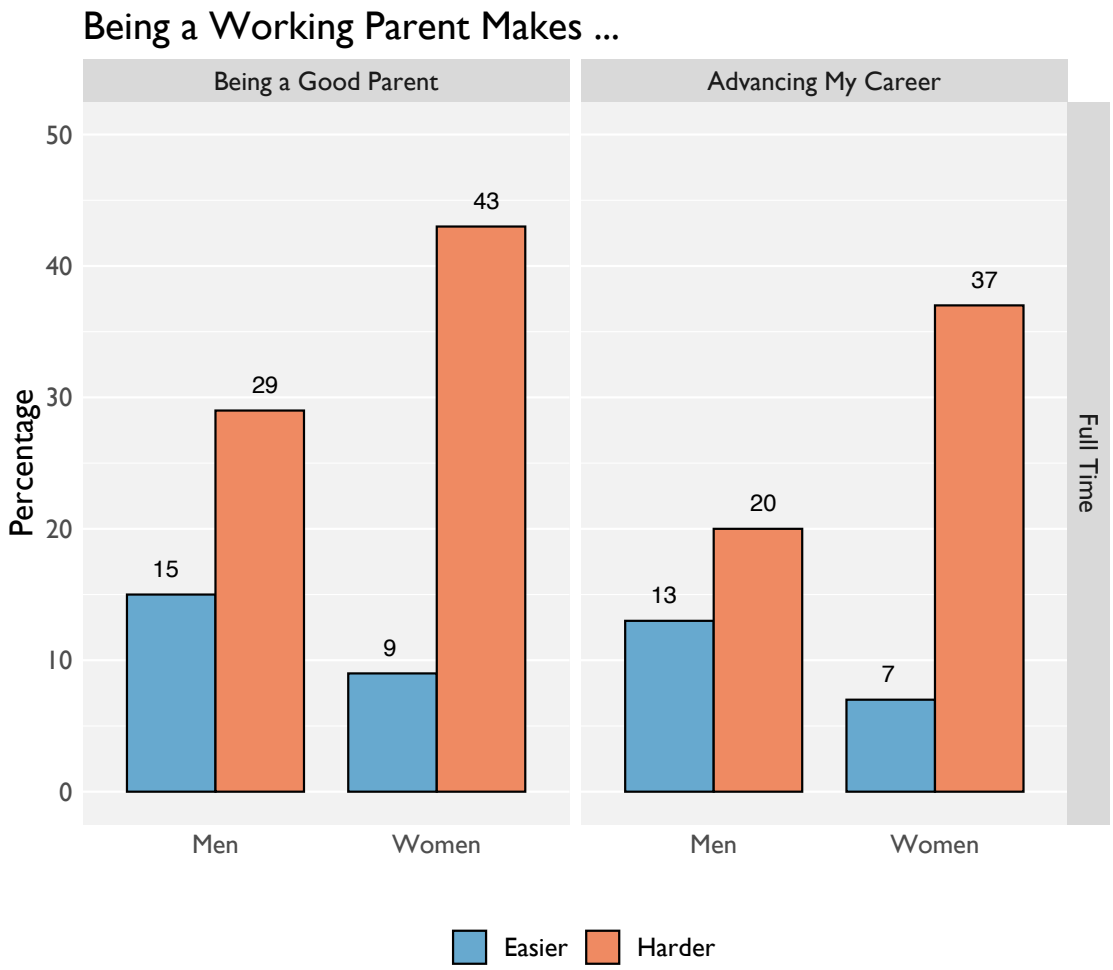

Figure 10: How Being a Working Parent Affects Home and Career. Totals do not sum to 100 because a third option, "hasn't made a difference," is not reported in the table.

We also inquired more generally about how being a working parent affects both parenting and career prospects. These questions did not focus on the experience of the pandemic. Rather, they represented broader judgments about how work affects family life and, conversely, how parenting affects work life.

As Figure 10 shows, both men and women who work full time were more likely to say that being a working parent is a challenge for both good parenting and career advancement. However, mothers were significantly more likely than fathers to say that being a working parent makes things harder and comparatively less likely to say that it makes things easier. Mothers who work full-time feel disproportionately the burdens of working parenthood. Women who worked part-time (not shown) expressed lower levels of concern than full-time working mothers about both parenting and career advancement. Still, compared to part-time working fathers, women were less likely to report that working made being a good parent or advancing careers easier.

	Self/ Spouse	Extended Family	Friends	Sitter/ Nanny	Daycare/ Nursery	Older Siblings
Currently employed full time						
Fathers	69	25	9	12	17	11
Mothers	48	38	8	8	24	11
Currently employed part time						
Fathers	90	49	4	8	5	6
Mothers	79	27	6	0	6	12

Table 14: How Parents Provide Childcare during the Work Day. Cell entries denote the percentage choosing each category. Rows do not sum to 100 because respondents could choose multiple categories.

Given these challenges, an important issue involves how working parents deal with one important element of their work-life balance: providing childcare during the work day. Striking gender differences emerge (Table 14). Working fathers were nearly 20 points more likely than working mothers to say that they provide childcare by relying on themselves or their spouses. Full-time working mothers, by contrast, were more likely to rely on extended family or daycare. Among part-time workers, fathers again were more likely than mothers to say that they rely on themselves or their spouses. Whether they work full-time or part-time, fewer working women than men are able to meet their childcare needs themselves or with the help of their partners.

	Working Full Time	**Working Part Time**	**Not Working for Pay**	**Don't Know**
Among Fathers Who Are Currently ...				
Working Full Time	87	6	6	1
Working Part Time	25	60	12	4
Not Working for Pay	8	16	51	25
Among Mothers Who Are Currently ...				
Working Full Time	81	15	1	3
Working Part Time	11	82	4	3
Not Working for Pay	7	20	44	30

Table 15: Best Employment Option at This Point in Your Life. Analysis includes all respondents with children of any age, by self-reported current employment status. Results are similar if we restrict to respondents with children at home, but the sample of parents working part-time with children at home is too small to be confident of results.

Despite the challenges of being a working parent, both fathers and mothers generally endorsed their choices about their participation in the labor market. We asked respondents to tell us what employment option would be the best at their current stage of life. The vast majority of full-time and part-time employed mothers and fathers said that their current career choices were best for them (Table 15). The only exception to this pattern was mothers not currently working for pay. Less than a majority of them said that this arrangement was the best option, and more than a quarter told us they preferred to be working full time or part time.

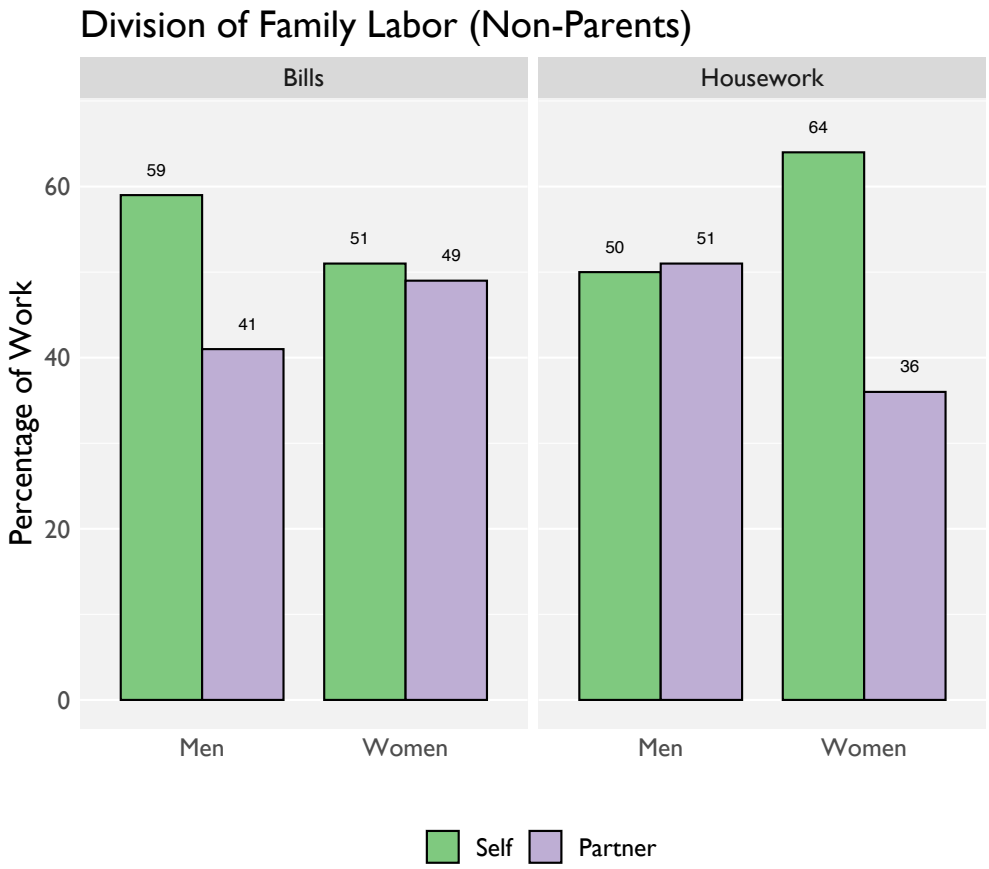

Figure 11: Division of Household Labor among Respondents without Children. Percentages indicate respondent estimates of what portion of the task they do themselves and what portion is done by their partner. Estimates restricted to married or cohabiting couples without children.

Balancing work and family is not only about meeting career goals; it also involves taking care of household responsibilities, including paying the bills, doing the housework, and providing childcare. Figure 11 highlights the impressions of couples without children about the division of labor for important household responsibilities. When it comes to work at home, the perceptions of men and women differed markedly. Men tended to think they take more of the responsibility for paying bills and share the housework evenly. By contrast, women on average thought responsibility for paying bills was shared equally but that they do two-thirds of the housework.

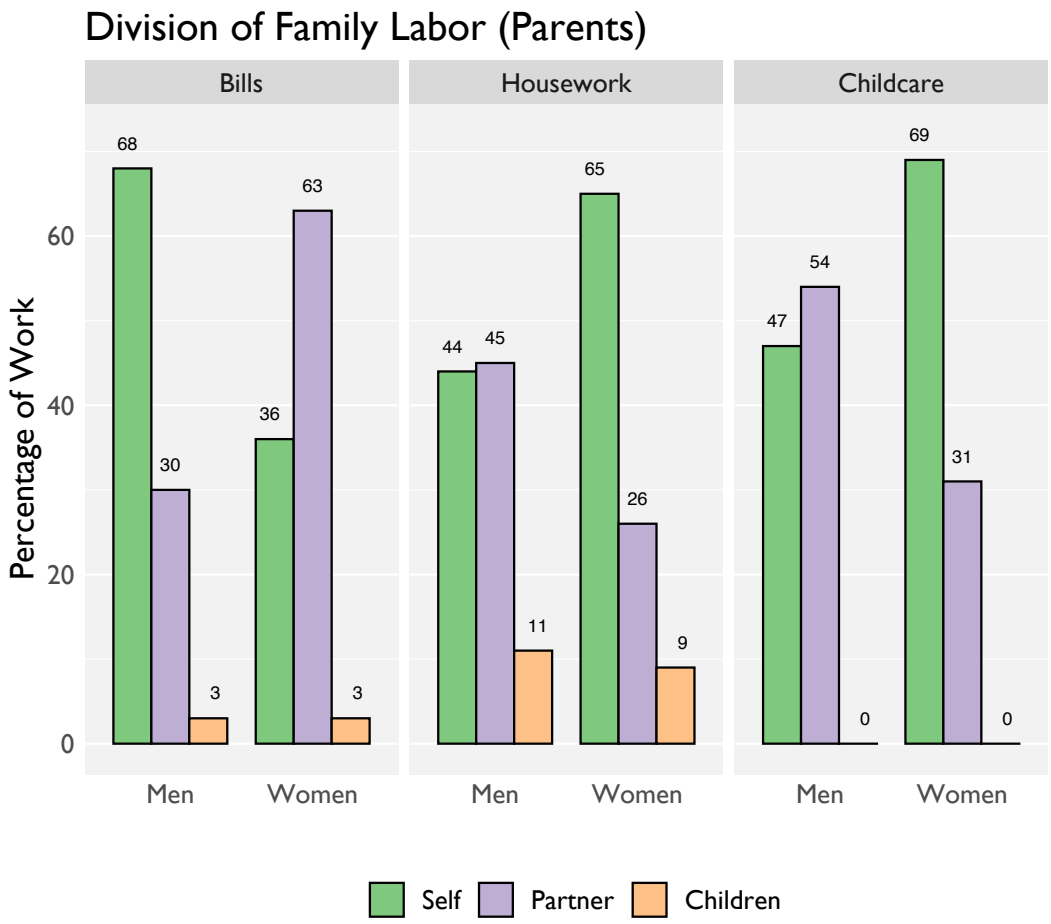

Figure 12: Division of Household Labor among Respondents with Children. Percentages indicate respondent estimates of what portion of the task they do themselves and what portion is done by their partner or their children. Estimates restricted to married or cohabiting couples, with children.

For couples with children, respondents could also tell us how much work the children do around the house (Figure 12). For these couples, men and women tended to agree about who pays the bills. Men said they do about 2/3 of the work, while women largely agreed that their partners do more. But when it comes to housework, men again thought that they and their partners carry approximately even loads, while women said men do only about a quarter of the work. Women also said they shoulder nearly 70 percent of the childcare responsibilities, while men again believed that things were more evenly divided (though here, men perceived their partners as doing a little more than half the work).

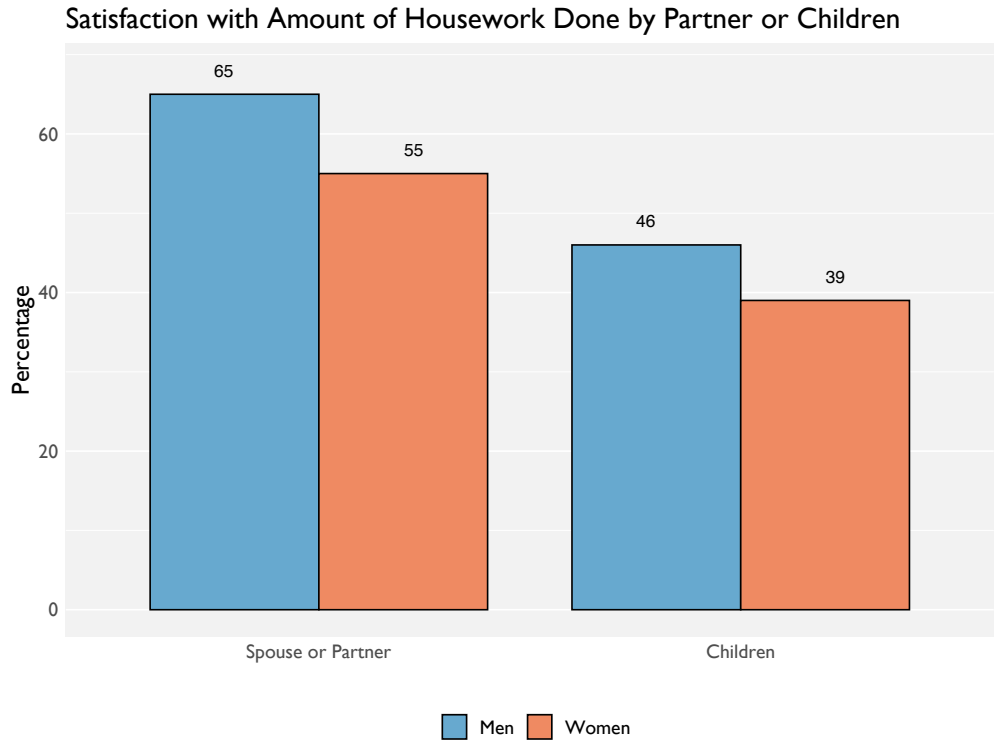

Figure 13: Estimates of Satisfaction with the Division of Household Labor by Gender. Percentages indicate the percentage of men and women who were "somewhat" or "very" satisfied with the division of household tasks. Estimates restricted to married or cohabiting couples. Satisfaction with children restricted to those for whom the question is applicable.

With this division of labor in mind, how satisfied are men and women with the work done by their partners and children? Figure 13 reports the results. About 2/3 of men told us they were somewhat or very satisfied. A majority of women were also satisfied, though they are less satisfied than men by about 10 percentage points. Less than a majority of both men and women told us they are satisfied with the work their children do around the house, though again, men appear to be more satisfied than women.

Overall, men and women report sharply different views of who does the work at home, and they also express differing levels of satisfaction with that division of labor.

3.5 Education & COVID

	Total	Dem	Ind.	GOP	Income <$40K	Black	White	Hispanic
Never, they completed school completely online								
school completely online	37	45	34	27	43	37	30	50
Attended in-person a few times a week	23	22	23	26	23	31	21	21
Attended in-person every day	40	34	43	47	34	32	49	29
The school is not offering a full-time option	34	32	29	42	23	24	40	30
We had the option, but chose not to attend full-time	54	63	44	48	57	61	50	58
Don't know	12	5	28	9	20	15	9	12

One of the most difficult parts of the COVID pandemic has been dealing with education and education policy. This table shows (in the top half) the degree to which children attended in person and online. It should be borne in mind that this question was asked about the last month of school when schools were clearly more open and in-person than they had been before that time. Despite this, over a third of students were still completely online. A clear majority were at least partially online. And only 4 out of 10 were meeting in person every day. Republicans and whites were more likely to be in-person most of the time. Democrats and both Blacks and Hispanics were less likely to be in-person.

Why? Well the answer is quite clearly that people chose that status as recorded in the bottom half of the table that reports a query of parents as to why they were not attending. Over half of all respondents (but even 48 percent of Republicans) elected to attend school in that way. While school was clearly a challenge, and it may have been the decisions of teachers and administrators to keep things online, it is also clear that the parents very often preferred that. Of course, it should be noted that schools in more Democratic areas were more likely to go remote, but as indicated in the second to last row, even when the option was available staying home was a popular choice.

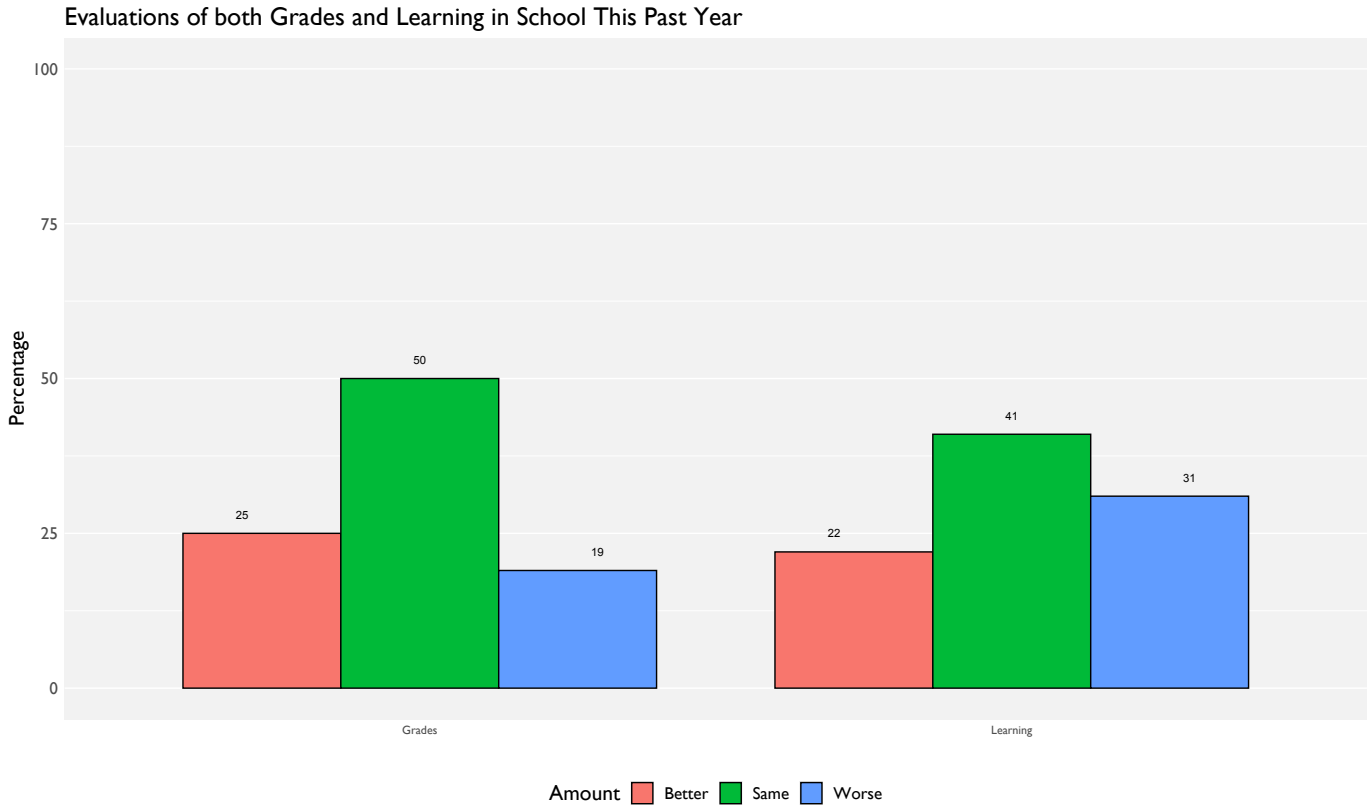

Figure 14: Figure displays percentage of parents who evaluated their children's grades and learning (on average) as being better or worse.

Despite the fact that parents were not pining for schools to be open last year, many clearly believed that learning in school was worse during the pandemic. Though most parents found things to be the same over the past year (the question was asked about a randomly selected school-age child), of those who saw a change it was for "better grades" but "worse learning" — a disturbing trend for those monitoring education.

4 Race & Family

	White	Black	Hispanic
Education	11	54	34
Social Relationships	11	46	31
Medical Care	10	52	35
Good Housing	11	55	35

Table 16: Racial Discrimination as an Obstacle for My Family. Cells indicate the percentage of respondents in each racial group who indicated that racial discrimination "is an obstacle to my family" in each category.

In light of the nation's increasing focus on issues of racial inequality, the 2021 AFS explored Americans' perspectives about how race has shaped their family experiences. Specifically, we asked whether racial discrimination is an obstacle for the respondent's family in four different areas: access to good education, social relationships, attention and care from medical professionals, and access to good housing. As Table 16 shows, only 1 in 10 White respondents said that racial discrimination had restricted opportunities for them. Hispanic respondents were about three times more likely to report racial discrimination as an obstacle, and Black respondents were about five times more likely. These differences are not merely about institutions like schools or hospitals, they are also present for social relationships more generally. When it comes to the experience of discrimination, Black, Hispanic, and White families live in different worlds.

	White	Black	Hispanic
Black families face obstacles that White families do not	52	79	60
Hispanic families face obstacles that White families do not	49	70	61
Asian families face obstacles that White families do not	48	60	52
Black families face obstacles that Hispanic families do not	33	57	37
Hispanic families face obstacles that Black families do not	38	43	52

Table 17: Obstacles Families Face. Cell entries denote the percentage of respondents in each racial/ethnic category who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. All respondents answered the first item and were then randomly assigned to answer one of the remaining four items.

Beyond their own experiences with racial discrimination, we also asked respondents to indicate their impressions of whether families face race-based obstacles. We did this by asking whether families of different races face obstacles that other types of families do not (Table 17). Notably, majorities of White, Black, and Hispanic respondents agreed that Black families face obstacles that White families do not. However, the differences across racial groups are again large: Hispanics were 8 points more likely than White respondents to agree with the statement, and Black respondents were 27 points more likely than Whites to agree. While most Whites recognize race-based challenges, they still do not see them to the same extent as do racial or ethnic minorities.

In addition to the question about Blacks and Whites, which all respondents saw first, we also randomly assigned them to answer one of four additional questions about the obstacles faced by different racial groups. Patterns of opinions about the challenges Hispanic families confront relative to Whites were very similar to the results for Blacks, and the pattern remains, though is less pronounced, when the target group is Asian families relative to Whites. When asked to compare the challenges of Black and Hispanic families relative to each other, lower percentages of every group perceived differing obstacles, though a majority of Blacks believed that Black families face distinct obstacles, and a majority of Hispanics felt the same about Hispanic families.

	White Democrats	White Independents	White Republicans
Black families face obstacles that White families do not	88	44	24
Hispanic families face obstacles that White families do not	88	32	22
Asian families face obstacles that White families do not	80	33	22

Table 18: Obstacles Families Face, White Respondents Only, by Respondent Partisanship. Cell entries denote the percentage of white respondents who agreed with each statement, by partisanship.

Among White respondents, partisan identities are strongly correlated with views about whether families face race-based obstacles. Nearly 9 in 10 White Democrats believe that Black and Hispanic families face obstacles that White families do not, and 8 in 10 White Democrats answered similarly about Asian families. White Democrats perceive racial inequality to be widespread.

These views are not shared by independents and Republicans. Only 44 percent of White independents — half the corresponding percentage of Democrats — believe that Black families face obstacles that White families do not, and when the question concerns Hispanic or Asian families, only about one-third of White independents see race-based obstacles. For Republicans, the numbers are even lower: less than one-quarter, no matter which racial or ethnic group is compared to Whites.

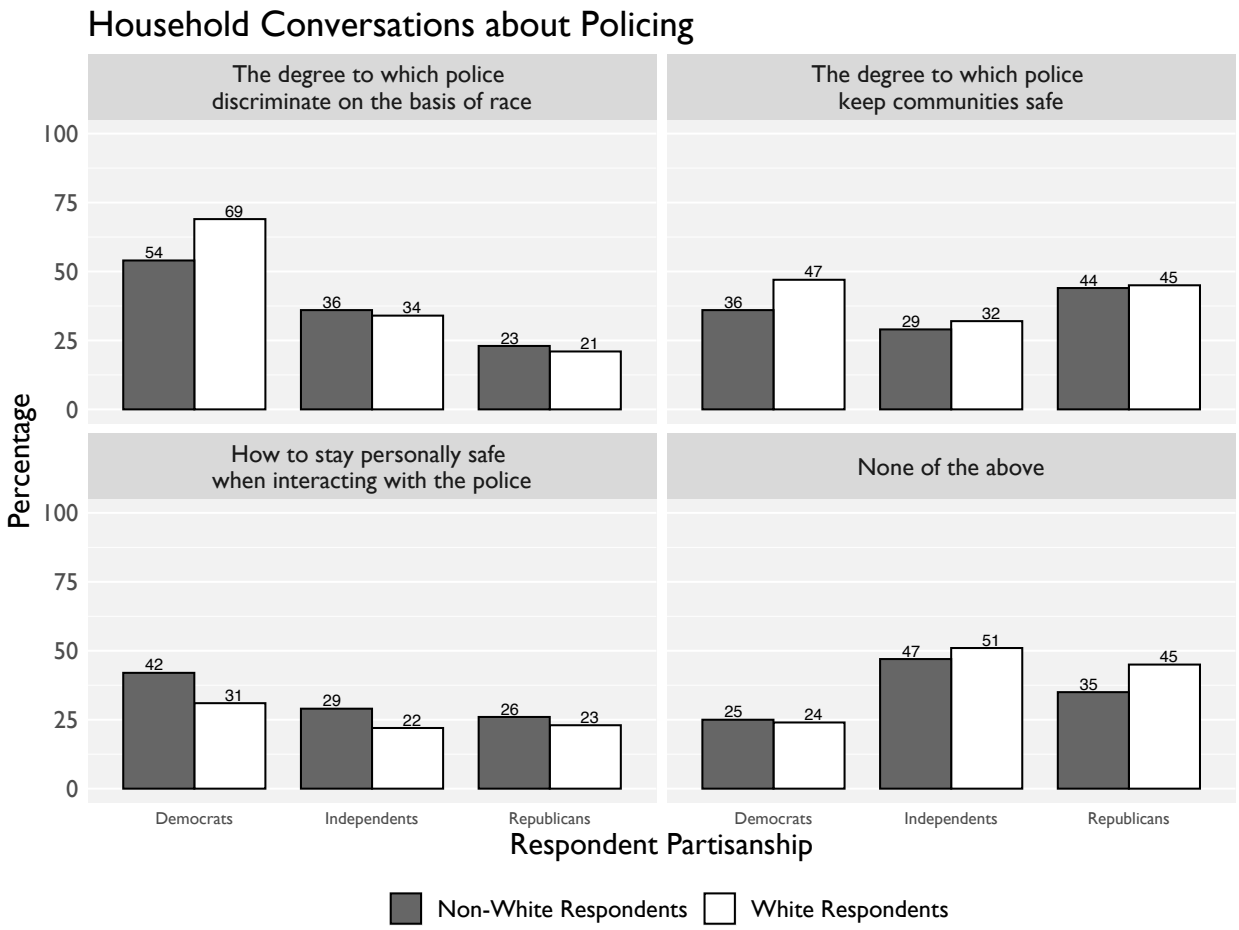

Figure 15: Household Conversations about Policing and Race. Percent of respondents in each group indicating that they had a conversation about each topic with a member of their household in the past year.

If Americans of different racial and partisan identities perceive race-based challenges to American families so differently, how did they talk about the challenges of policing that were the subject of so much protest and attention in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder? We asked whether respondents had participated in a conversation about three different topics — "the degree to which police discriminate on the basis of race," "the degree to which police keep communities safe," and "how to stay personally safe when interacting with the police" — with a member of their household in the past year. Respondents could also indicate whether they had not talked about any of those topics.

Figure 15 presents the results, disaggregated by respondent partisanship and race. Each panel represents a different topic of conversation. We mark a simple distinction between White and Non-White respondents in order to have sufficient statistical power to analyze Republicans who identify as racial or ethnic minorities. Democrats were dramatically more likely to report conversations about racial discrimination by police, and perhaps surprisingly, conversations were most prevalent among White Democrats. About one-third of independents and less than one-quarter of Republicans, regardless of their racial identities,

held similar conversations.

Conversations about policing and community safety occurred at similar rates among both all Republicans and White Democrats. They were least common among independents. Notably, discussions about how police keep communities safe were less common among Non-White Democrats than among White Democrats, and Non-White Democrats were the most likely to say they had talked about how to stay personally safe when interacting with the police. This latter pattern is primarily driven by Black Democrats, more than half of whom had a conversation in their homes about that subject in the past year, compared to one-third of Hispanic Democrats. By contrast only about 27 percent of Black Democrats had a conversation about how police keep communities safe. Put simply, Black Democrats are far less likely to talk about how police protect them and far more likely to discuss how the police could endanger them. Conversations in the homes of White Republicans follow the opposite pattern: they are far more likely to be about the safety police provide and far less likely to be about police discrimination on the basis of race or the need to stay safe when interacting with the police.

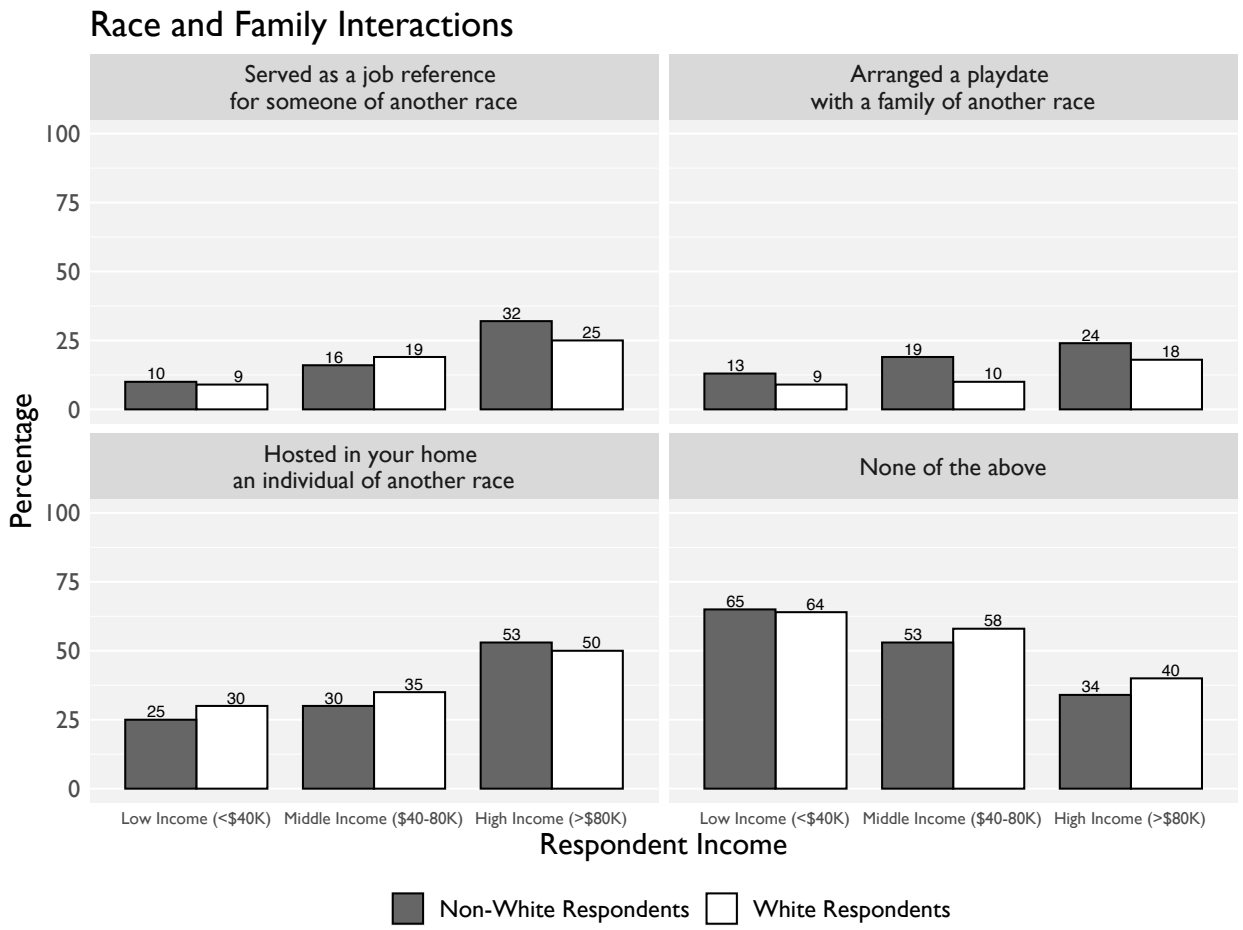

Figure 16: Experiences with Other Racial Groups. Respondent self-report of whether they had done any of these activities at least once in the past five years.

Clearly, Americans of different racial identities and partisan stripes perceive racial inequalities in starkly different ways, and their conversations around the dinner table reflect those differing perceptions. It is as though Americans of differing racial identities are living in different worlds. But perhaps that is because they are. Levels of residential segregation in the United States remain quite high, for example. We explored levels of social contact among White and Non-White Americans by asking whether survey respondents had done any of the following three activities at least once *over the past five years*: serving as a job reference for someone of another race, arranging a playdate for a family of another race, and hosting an individual of another race in your home.

Figure 16 presents the results, with each activity in a separate panel. Because we happened to ask about activities that may be more common among higher-income people — serving as a job reference or having the means to host others in your home, for example — we disaggregate the results by both respondent race and income. (In the future, we can ask about an even wider set of opportunities for cross-racial social contact.) Unlike the conversation patterns we explored earlier, patterns of responses to these questions do

not differ substantially by partisanship.

At least with respect to the three activities that were the focus of our questions this year, cross-racial social contact in the United States is a rare exception for many American families. The most common activity was hosting someone of another race, and even then only half of high-income Americans had done so in the past five years. If we restrict the results for arranging a playdate to parents with children at home, the numbers remain extremely low — between 2 in 10 low-income parents and 4 in 10 high-income parents reported doing so. Two-thirds of low-income respondents and more than half of middle-income respondents, whether White or Non-White, told us they had done none of these three activities. Among high-income Americans, one-third of Non-Whites and 4 in 10 Whites reported none of these positive social interactions either. Though more remains to be done in future years to explore other types of social interactions, the core finding from these three items is clear: most American families do not have many meaningful, positive social interactions with families of different racial identities.

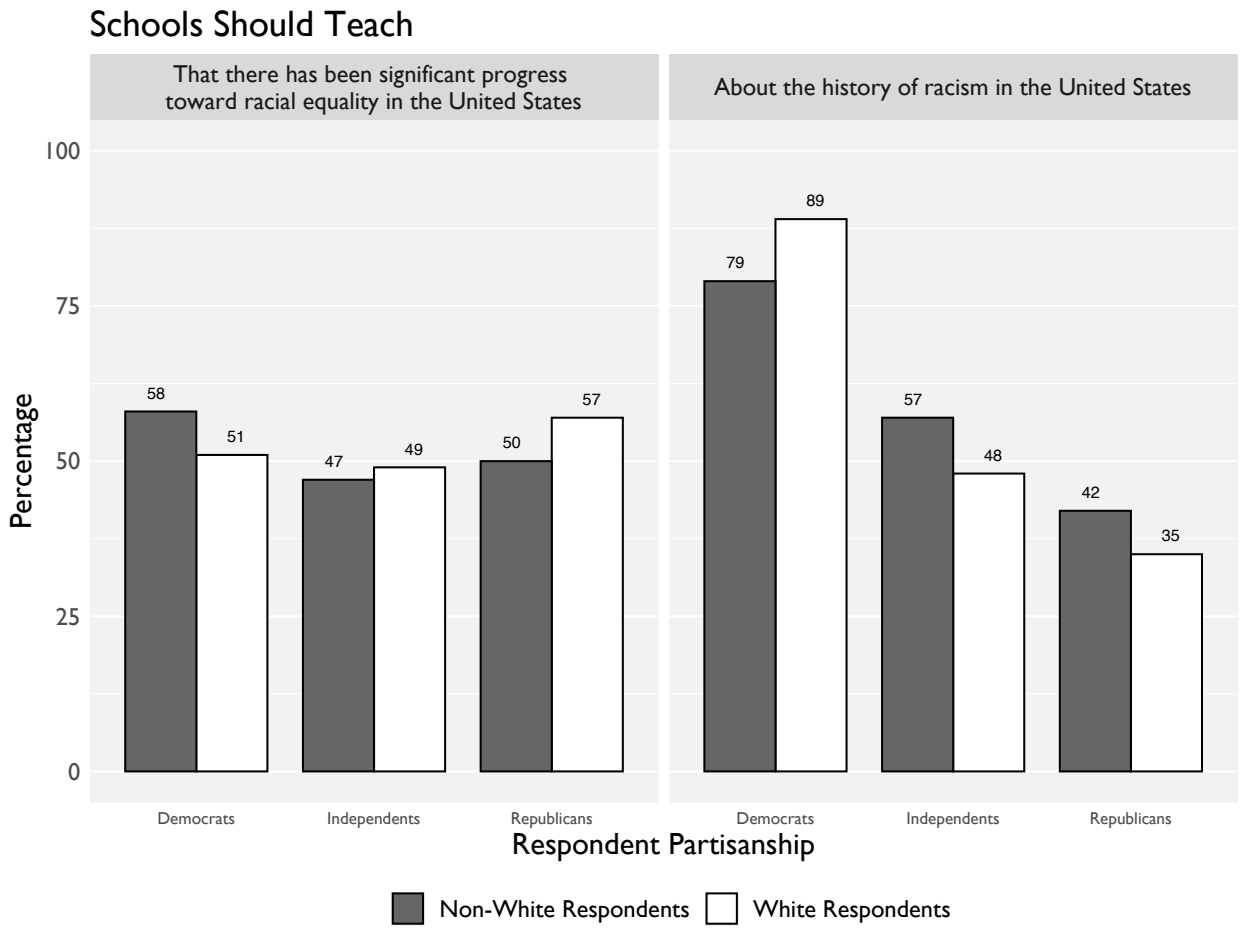

Figure 17: Teaching about Race. Figures show the percentage of each racial and partisan category agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement. Non-white respondents include all those who identified with a race or ethnicity other than white.

Beyond family-level interactions, another important question that affects parents and children is how schools should approach the topic of race. Specifically, we asked respondents how much they agreed or disagreed with the idea that schools should teach "that there has been significant progress toward racial equality in the United States" and their agreement with the idea that schools should teach "about the history of racism in the United States." Across the sample as a whole, about 54 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that schools should teach about racial progress, while 61 percent said that educators should discuss the nation's history of racism.

But majority support for both questions in the full sample masks important party distinctions. In Figure 17, we present the results by respondent partisanship and race. Majorities of Republicans and Democrats agreed that schools should teach about racial progress. Notably, the highest levels of agreement occurred among Non-White Democrats and White Republicans. Whatever else divides them, both groups agreed that students should learn that the nation is closer to racial equality now than it once was.

However, this agreement breaks down entirely when the question is whether schools should teach about the history of racism. Among Democrats, 8 in 10 Non-Whites and 9 in 10 Whites agree that school curricula should take up this topic. Among Republicans, only 4 in 10 Non-Whites and just over a third of Whites share that view. It is uncertain, of course, how it would be possible to teach about progress toward racial equality without confronting a legacy of past racism, but it is clear that Republicans want to tell a positive story of racial progress, while Democrats see a need to deal directly with the nation's fraught racial history. Notably, the biggest partisan gap is between *White* Democrats and *White* Republicans.

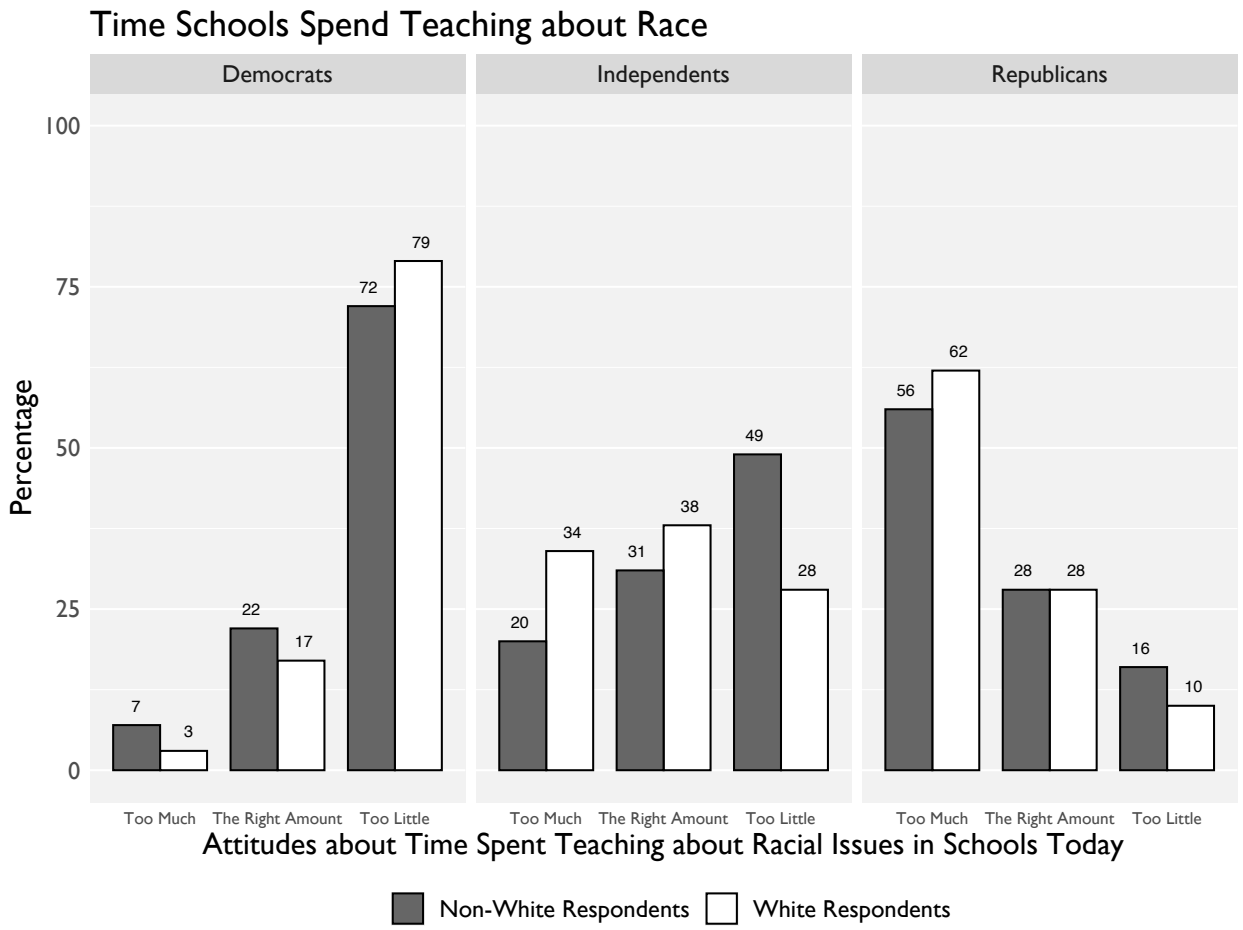

Figure 18: Time Spent Teaching about Racial Issues. Percent each racial and partisan group responding that "schools today spend too much, the right amount, or too little time teaching about racial issues in the United States." Non-white respondents include all those who identified with a race or ethnicity other than white.

These divergent priorities are underscored by responses to our question about whether schools today spend too much, the right amount, or too little time teaching about race (Figure 18). In the sample as a whole, less than 30 percent of respondents said that schools spend too much time and about a quarter said that schools are spending the right amount of time on race, while nearly half (46%) responded that schools should spend more time. Again, however, the party divisions are dramatic. Overwhelming numbers of Democrats (led, again, by White Democrats) believe that schools spend too little time on race. Less than 1 in 10 Democrats (and only 3 percent of White Democrats) say that schools spend too much time on race. Among Republicans, the pattern reverses. Majorities of White and Non-White Republicans say that the educators today spend too much time talking about race, and only 1 in 10 White Republicans (compared to 16 percent of Non-White Republicans) think that students do not talk about these issues enough.

5 Family Policy in 2021 and Beyond

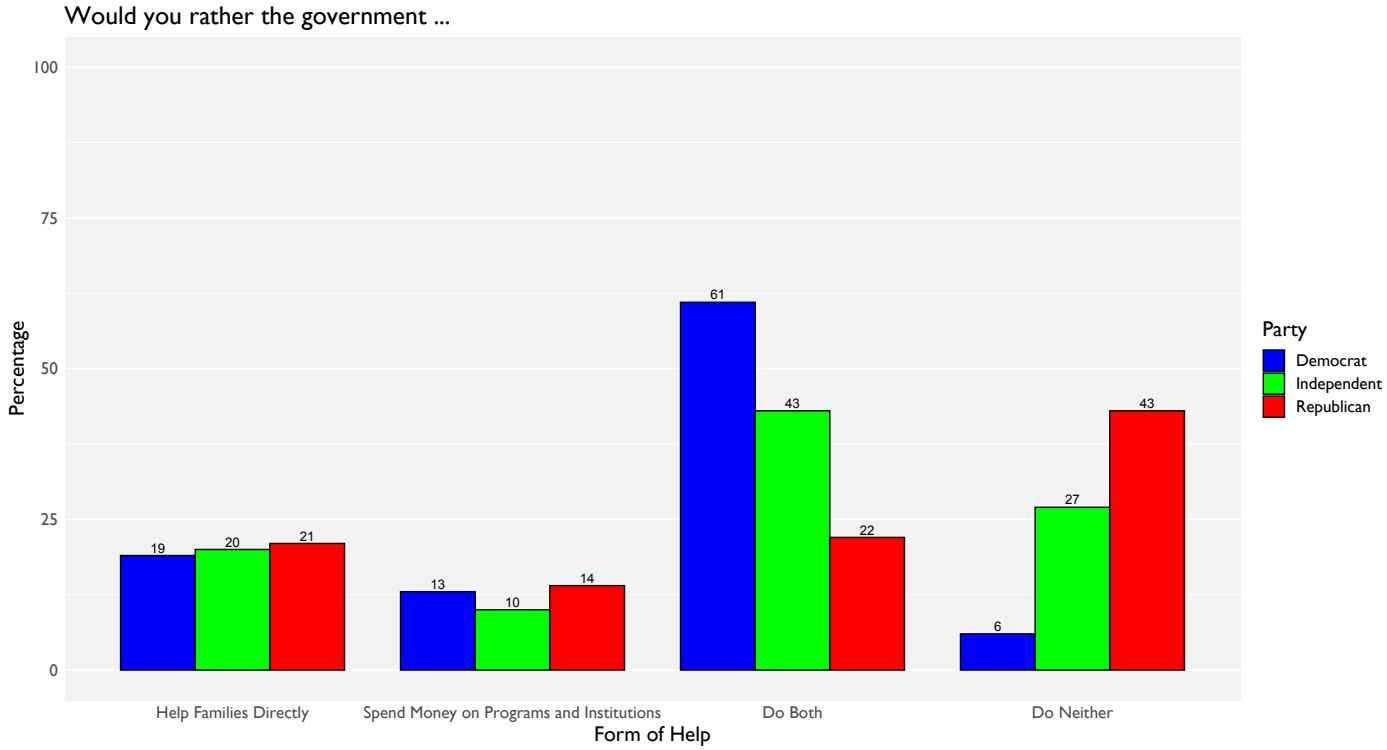

Figure 19: Figure displays general views on the best methods of support for families.

When asked how the government should help families there is both a clear answer but also partisan division. Democrats prefer that the government both help families directly but also spend money on institutions and programs. Republicans are more split than Democrats. The largest group of Republicans (43 percent) would do neither of those things, though a majority of Republicans would engage in some form of help with both helping directly and pursuing a "both" strategy.

When pressed, those who say "both" or "either" tend to prefer helping families directly, suggesting that the most overall popular position is both options.

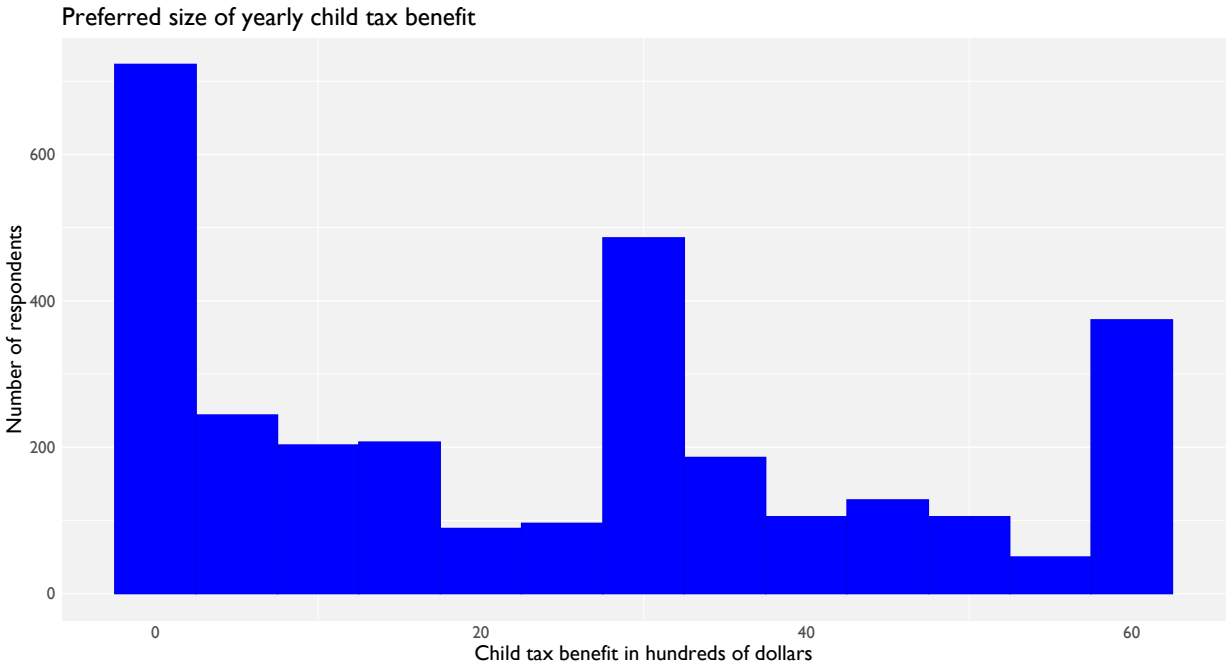

Figure 20: Figure displays a distribution of how much money people would prefer each family to receive in a yearly child benefit.

Fifty percent of respondents when simply asked if they support or oppose a benefit for families support such a benefit. Another 21 percent are indifferent, with a final 29 percent opposed. The histogram (in hundreds of dollars per year) displays the percentage of respondents who suggested benefits (in hundreds of dollars) if the benefit were offered. Though there are very large bumps at $0, $3,000 (the midpoint of our scale) and at $6,000 (the maximum of the scale shown to people), the overall average preferred benefit is about $2,300. Republicans would go far lower: $1,300 on average with many of them favoring no benefit at all. Democrats would spend over $3,100 on families and independents sit in between: $2,300. If you eliminate those arguing for no benefits (effectively tossing out a large number of Republicans) the public would favor a benefit of about $2,900.

Family status had relatively little impact on this relative to partisanship. For instance, those with children favored a benefit around $2,200, while those without kids favored a benefit of around $2,400. The counter-intuitive result comes from the fact that partisan preferences matter more on this question and Republicans tend to have more kids than do Democrats.

	Percentage Selecting
Cut Programs	19
Eliminate the Child Tax Credit	21
Raise Taxes on the Wealthy	48
Raise Taxes on Everyone	7
Raise Taxes on Businesses	26
Increase Government Debt	7
None of the Above	26

How should this benefit be paid for? In the mind of the public, the clear answer is to raise taxes on the wealthy. In some respects, this table suggests a limit to how far the public would be willing to go to fund the program. Raising taxes on everyone (an arguably necessary step for a benefit this expensive) and going into government debt are relatively unpopular. The overall impression of the policy left from these data is that it is popular, and the public believes it could be funded by taxing the wealthy or perhaps businesses.

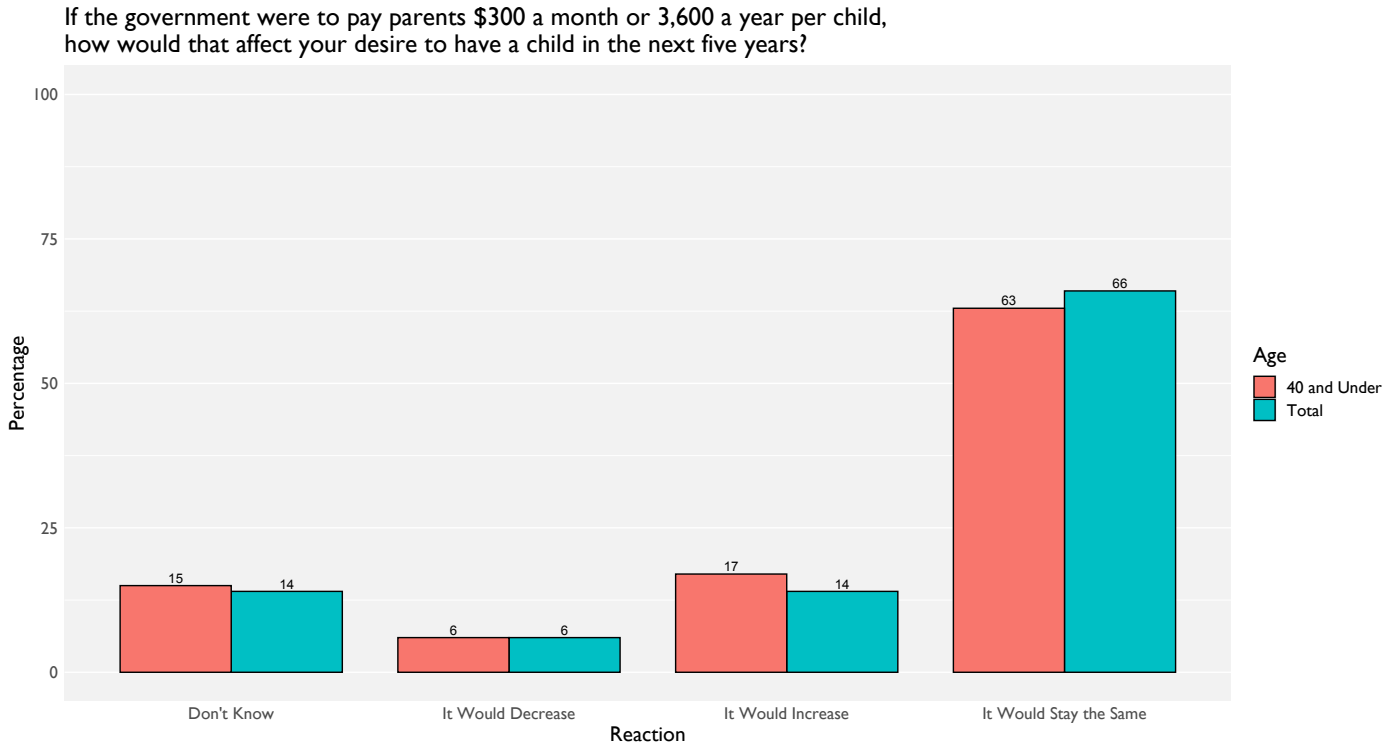

Figure 21: Figure displays the percentage (by age group) that believe such a benefit would have a measurable impact on their desire to have a child.

Would a benefit like the one just discussed have a significant impact on people's likelihood of having children. In a sense, the answer is "not for most people." Certainly many other factors would dominate that important decision. But for 17 percent of the sample (under age 40) the answer was that it would increase that desire—a substantial amount if it were actually put into practice. The answer to this question had relatively little to do with age as those above age 40 gave broadly the same answers as did adults under age 40.

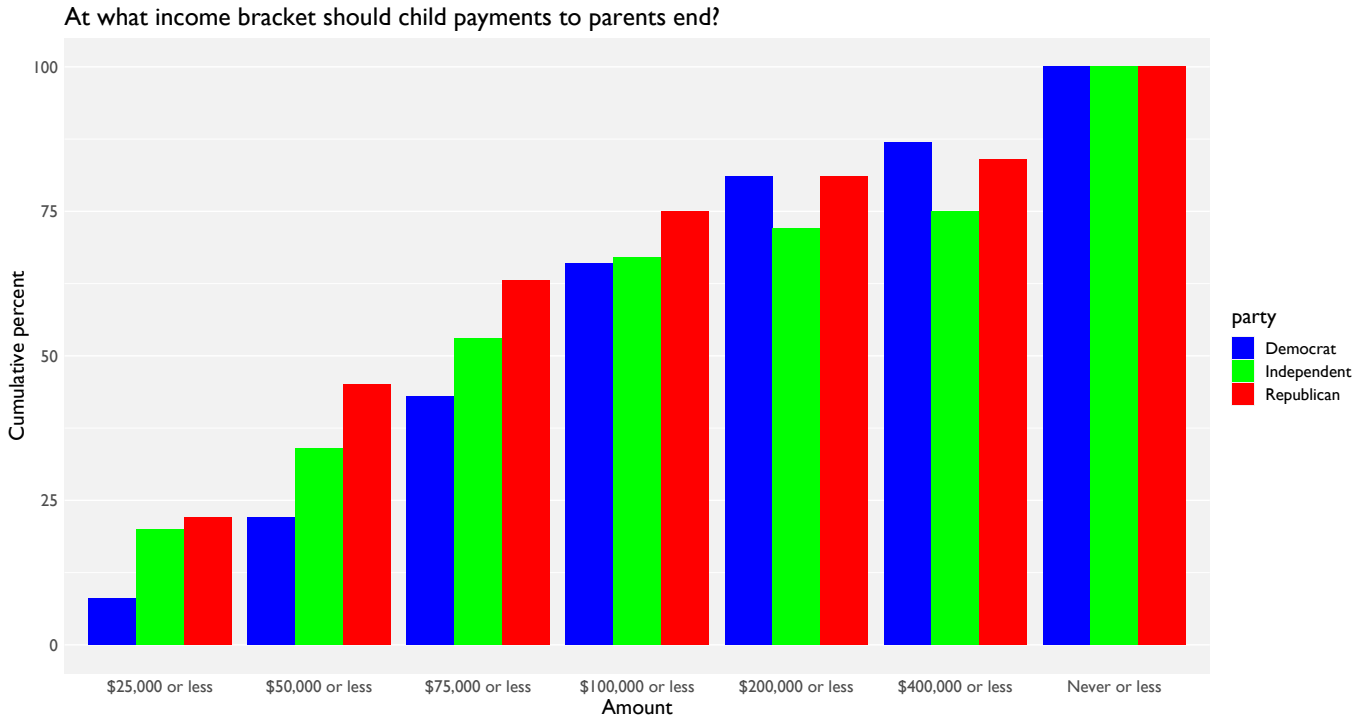

Figure 22: Figure displays the *cumulative* percentage that would end aid to families by income level.

Where should the benefit phase out? According to the public, at incomes somewhere around $75,000 per year. Republicans and independents would phase it out at that point, Democrats would only go one step higher on the scale to about $100,000 per year, so while there is a broad appetite for a child benefit, the public favors it only for those making essentially a bit above the median national income. A relatively small number of people (20 percent) would extend it to all incomes.

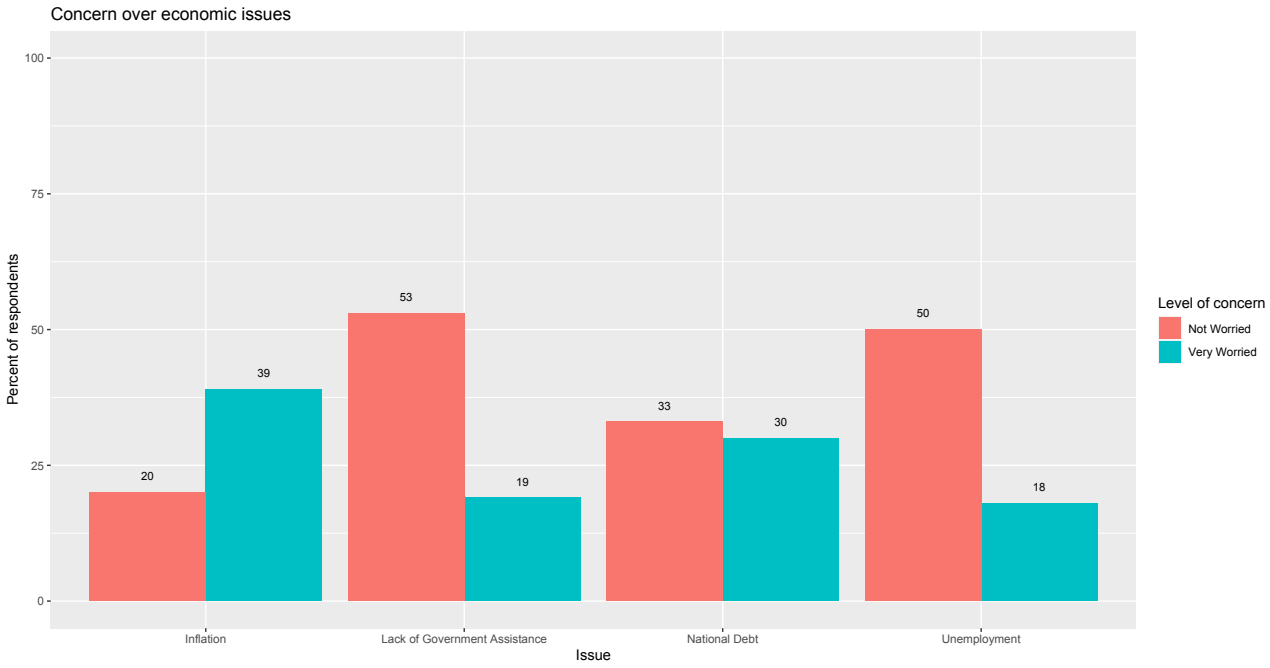

Figure 23: Figure displays the percentage not worried or very worried about each of those future economic concerns.

What is the most significant economic concern of the public right now for things that threaten family life? Inflation. About four in ten people are very worried about that potential problem. None of the other possible concerns, lack of government assistance, national debt, or unemployment came as close.

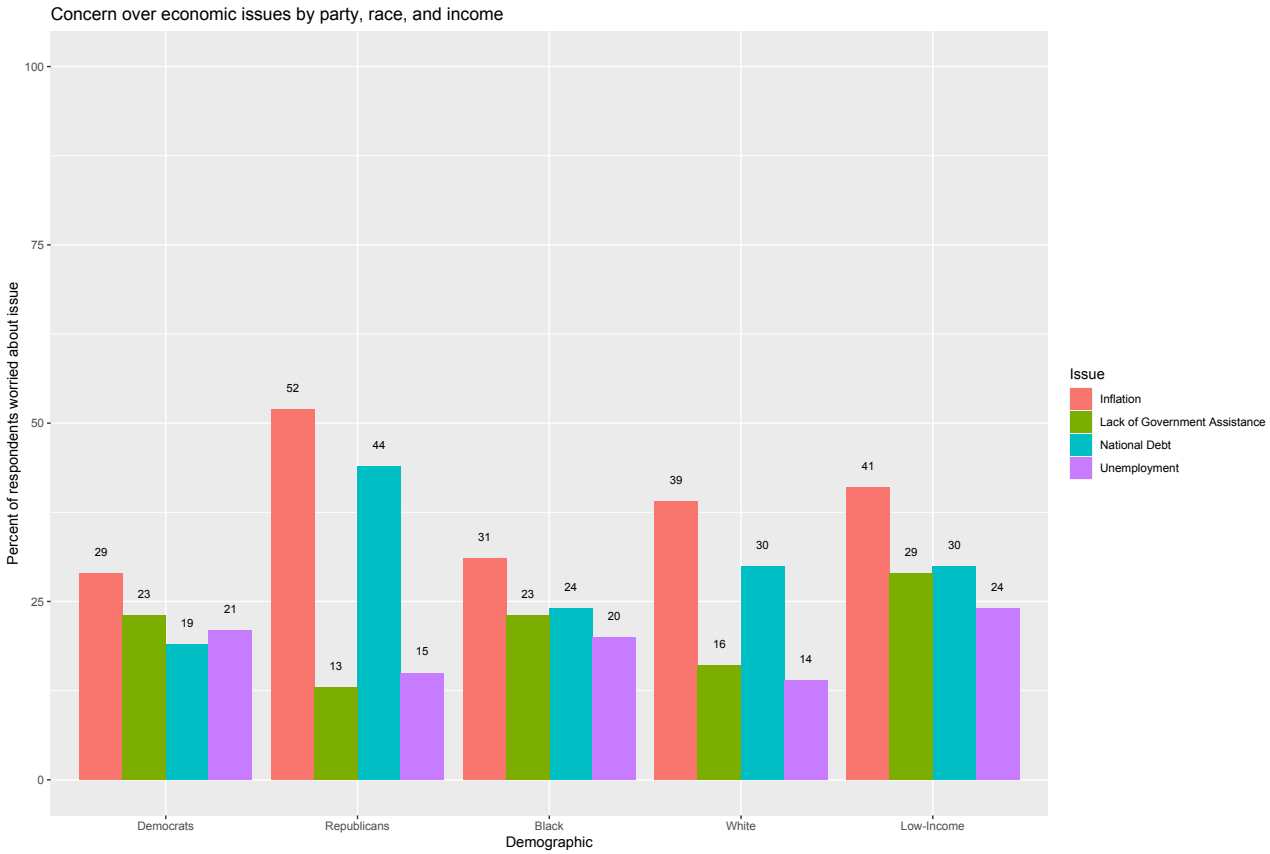

Figure 24: Figure displays the percentage who are worried about each of the following economic factors.

How does that worry break down by demographic factor? In some respects the pattern is completely constant. Among all groups in the figure, inflation is the most likely to draw worry. But there are some relative differences in concern. Fifty-two percent of Republicans are worried, while only 29 percent of Democrats are. Among low-income respondents all of the problems are more of a concern than they are for most of the other groups, though inflation stands out there as well.

The results suggest that the pubic is quite concerned about inflation and worries about this trend are a more significant policy concern for families than are other factors.

6 Appendix: Statement on Methodology

YouGov interviewed 3201 respondents who were then matched down to a sample of 3000 to produce the final dataset. The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race, and education. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the full 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year sample with selection within strata by weighted sampling with replacements (using the person weights on the public use file).

The matched cases were weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores. The matched cases and the frame were combined and a logistic regression was estimated for inclusion in the frame. The propensity score function included age, gender, race/ethnicity, years of education, and region. The propensity scores were grouped into deciles of the estimated propensity score in the frame and post-stratified according to these deciles.

The weights were then post-stratified on 2016 and 2020 Presidential vote choice, and a four-way stratification of gender, age (4-categories), race (4-categories), and education (4-categories), to produce the final weight.

7 Appendix: Topline Report

What follows is a topline report of all survey questions asked in the 2021 American Family Survey. This topline report was generated by YouGov. Any questions about the survey or the topline should be directed to BYU's Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy (csed@byu.edu).

BYUC0028

June 2021

YouGov

Sample	3000 Internet Using Adults (18+)
Conducted	June 25 – July 08, 2021
Margin of Error	±2%

1. How satisfied are you with your...? A - Completely dissatisfied; B - Somewhat dissatisfied; C - Neutral/Don't know; D - Somewhat satisfied; E - Completely satisfied; F - Not applicable; G - Total Dissatisfied; H - Total Satisfied

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Job	5%	8%	10%	21%	15%	41%	**13%**	**36%**
Family	5%	8%	10%	29%	47%	2%	**12%**	**76%**
Life	6%	13%	11%	41%	28%	1%	**19%**	**68%**
Community	6%	13%	19%	38%	21%	3%	**19%**	**59%**

2. At any point in the last two years, have you thought that your marriage or relationship was in trouble?
Asked of people who have been in a relationship or married for 2 years or more

Yes	28%
No	72%

3. Would you say that your marriage or relationship is stronger, weaker or about the same as two years ago?
Asked of people who have been in a relationship or married for 2 years or more

Stronger	43%
About the same	48%
Weaker	7%
Don't know	2%

4. Turning to marriage generally, do you feel that marriages in the United States are stronger, weaker, or about the same as two years ago?

Stronger	6%
About the same	39%
Weaker	33%
Don't know	21%

5. How much do you agree or disagree with the following: A - Strongly disagree; B - Disagree; C - Somewhat disagree; D - Neither agree nor disagree; E - Somewhat agree; F - Agree; G - Strongly agree; H - Total Disagree; I - Total Agree

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
When more people are married, society is better off.	7%	7%	7%	35%	14%	14%	18%	**20%**	**45%**
Marriage is more of a burden than a benefit to couples.	26%	22%	14%	25%	7%	3%	3%	**62%**	**13%**
Marriage is needed in order to create strong families.	11%	10%	9%	18%	15%	15%	23%	**29%**	**52%**
Being legally married is not as important as having a personal sense of commitment to your partner.	11%	10%	10%	21%	16%	16%	16%	**31%**	**48%**
Marriage is old-fashioned and out-of-date.	35%	18%	12%	17%	10%	5%	4%	**64%**	**19%**
Marriage makes families and children better off financially.	4%	4%	6%	28%	20%	19%	20%	**14%**	**58%**
Marriage is for life, come what may.	8%	8%	10%	20%	17%	18%	19%	**25%**	**54%**

6. Would you say that your family relationships are stronger, weaker, or about the same as two years ago?

Stronger	28%
About the same	53%
Weaker	12%
Don't know	7%

7. Turning to families generally, do you feel that family relationships in the United States are stronger, weaker, or about the same as two years ago?

Stronger	10%
About the same	39%
Weaker	30%
Don't know	21%

8. What are the most important issues facing families today? Pick up to three items.

Family issues - Work demands	27%
Family issues - Lack of programs	15%
Family issues - Costs	36%
Family issues - Lack of jobs	16%
Family issues - Decline in faith	23%
Family issues - Sexual permissiveness	13%
Family issues - Drugs/alcohol	14%
Family issues - Crime	14%
Family issues - Definition of marriage	13%
Family issues - Parents not teaching/disciplining	40%
Family issues - Single-parent homes	27%
Family issues - Digital age	16%
Family issues - Other	3%

9. What are the most important issues facing families today? Pick up to three items.
Asked of a random half-sample of respondents

Family issues - Covid pandemic	17%
Family issues - Racial inequality	16%

10. How much do you agree or disagree with the following: A - Strongly disagree; B - Disagree; C - Somewhat disagree; D - Neither agree nor disagree; E - Somewhat agree; F - Agree; G - Strongly agree; H - Total Disagree; I - Total Agree

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
The cost of raising a child/children is affordable for most people	18%	19%	18%	21%	13%	8%	3%	**54%**	**25%**
Children are better off if they have two married parents	7%	7%	6%	22%	15%	15%	26%	**20%**	**57%**
It is sometimes necessary to discipline a child with a good, hard spanking	16%	10%	9%	19%	17%	16%	14%	**35%**	**47%**
It is important for parents to pass on their political values to their children	13%	15%	12%	34%	12%	8%	6%	**40%**	**26%**
Parents should set boundaries on media consumption for their children	1%	1%	2%	11%	20%	30%	35%	**4%**	**85%**
Children need both a male and a female role model in the home	12%	9%	6%	16%	13%	15%	30%	**26%**	**58%**
Raising children is one of life's greatest joys	4%	3%	3%	22%	17%	23%	28%	**10%**	**68%**
It's morally wrong to have a child outside of marriage	25%	16%	8%	24%	11%	8%	9%	**49%**	**28%**

11. Do you personally hope or desire to marry in the future?
Asked of respondents who are not married

Yes	38%
No	37%
Not sure	25%

12. Since the coronavirus pandemic began in March of 2020, has your desire to marry increased, decreased, or stayed the same?
Asked of respondents who are not married

Increased	10%
Decreased	8%
Stayed the same	73%
Don't know	8%

13. Do you personally hope or desire to have a child someday?
Asked of respondents without children under the age of 50.

Yes	39%
No	30%
It depends	21%
Don't know	10%

14. Since the coronavirus pandemic began in March of 2020, has your desire to have children increased, decreased, or stayed the same?
Asked of respondents without children under the age of 50.

Increased	12%
Decreased	15%
Stayed the same	63%
Don't know	10%

15. How do you provide care for your children during the work day? Check all that apply.
Asked of respondents with children under the age of 12 living at home.

Childcare during work day - Self/spouse	70%
Childcare during work day - Extended family	27%
Childcare during work day - Friends	7%
Childcare during work day - Sitter/nanny	7%
Childcare during work day - Daycare/nursery	13%
Childcare during work day - Older siblings	9%

16. Do you consider yourself to be:

Heterosexual or straight	88%
Gay or lesbian	4%
Bisexual	6%
Other	3%

17. Have you been unemployed in the past 2 years?

Yes	49%
No	51%

18. Is your spouse or partner a man or a woman?
Asked of people who are married or in a relationship

Man	53%
Woman	47%

19. How many hours per week do you typically work?

mean	20

20. How many hours per week does your spouse or partner typically work?
Asked of people who are married or in a relationship

mean	25

21. Has your spouse or partner been unemployed in the past 2 years?
Asked of people who are married or in a relationship

Yes	38%
No	62%

22. What was your employment situation immediately before the COVID-19 pandemic started in March 2020?

Working full time	38%
Working part time	12%
Temporarily laid off	1%
Unemployed	8%
Retired	20%
On leave (maternity, paternity, etc.)	0%
Permanently disabled	8%
Taking care of home or family	7%
Student, not currently working	6%

23. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

Working full time	35%
Working part time	12%
Temporarily laid off	1%
Unemployed	10%
Retired	21%
On leave (maternity, paternity, etc.)	0%
Permanently disabled	8%
Taking care of home or family	7%
Student, not currently working	5%

24. Did any of the following situations arise for you or your spouse after the beginning of the pandemic in March of 2020? Check all that apply. A - Temp laid off; B - Permanently let go; C - Loss of income; D - Hours reduced; E - Retired; F - Paid leave; G - Unpaid leave; H - Quit; I - Promotion; J - Pay increase; K - New job; L - None of the above

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Self	13%	6%	15%	10%	6%	3%	3%	3%	3%	10%	9%	59%
Spouse or partner	13%	5%	15%	10%	7%	4%	2%	3%	5%	9%	8%	56%

25. Which of the following best describes the current employment status of your spouse or partner?

Working full time	45%
Working part time	10%
Temporarily laid off	1%
Unemployed	6%
Retired	22%
On leave (maternity, paternity, etc.)	0%
Permanently disabled	6%
Taking care of home or family	8%
Student, not currently working	2%

26. Why did you [take leave|leave your position|take leave and leave your position]? Check all that apply.
Asked of those who quit their job or took paid or unpaid leave from their job.

Leave/quit reason - Care for child	16%
Leave/quit reason - Care for adult	16%
Leave/quit reason - Another reason	73%

27. How do you feel about each of the following aspects of your life?

	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Neither positive nor negative	Somewhat negative	Very negative	Total Positive	Total Negative
Your career prospects or trajectory	17%	20%	46%	9%	8%	**38%**	**17%**
Your mental health	27%	31%	23%	14%	6%	**57%**	**20%**
Your work-life balance	19%	24%	44%	8%	5%	**43%**	**13%**

28. Which of these comes closest to your preference?

I would like to work more hours than I did before the pandemic	15%
I would like to work fewer hours than I did before the pandemic	22%
I would like to work the same number of hours as I did before the pandemic	62%

29. Did you or your family receive any of the following aid from federal or state programs this past year?

	Yes	No	I don't know
Federal stimulus checks	84%	12%	4%
Child tax credit	14%	77%	9%

30. What did you spend the aid you received on? Please estimate percentages.
Asked of those who received federal stimulus checks or child tax credit

Savings / investment	29
Household costs (food, bills, etc.)	36
Rent / mortgage	12
Entertainment / travel / retail purchases	9
Donate to others	3
Other	11

31. Did you need the aid from the federal government in order to get by during the pandemic?
Asked of those who received federal stimulus checks or child tax credit

Yes, I needed it	52%
No, I did not need it	48%

32. How much did the federal government aid help you and your family?
Asked of those who said they needed the aid to get by

Helped a lot	55%
Helped some	33%
Helped a little	12%

33. In the past 12 months, did you do any of the following because there wasn't enough money? *Check all that apply.*

Not enough money - Not eat	7%
Not enough money - Not pay full bill	12%
Not enough money - Borrow or receive money	11%
Not enough money - Move in with others	4%
Not enough money - Stay at shelter	2%
Not enough money - Not see doctor	11%
Not enough money - None of the above	73%

34. In the past 12 months, did you do any of the following? *Check all that apply.*

Past 12 months - Bought house	4%
Past 12 months - Bought second house	1%
Past 12 months - Bought car	13%
Past 12 months - Bought appliance	12%
Past 12 months - Renovations	11%
Past 12 months - None of the above	69%

35. If you were to lose your job, about how long would you be able to live off your savings without going into debt?

Less than a month	29%
1 to 3 months	23%
3 to 6 months	14%
6 or more months	34%

36. Has your financial situation gotten worse, better, or stayed the same since the coronavirus outbreak began in March of 2020?

It got worse	22%
It stayed the same	61%
It got better	17%

37. How worried are you that each of the following will affect your family finances in the coming year?

	Very worried	Somewhat worried	Not worried
Inflation	39%	41%	20%
National Debt	30%	37%	33%
Unemployment	18%	32%	50%
Lack of government assistance	19%	28%	53%

38. For each time frame, please indicate the percentage of your work that you did from home or remotely (outside the workplace) during an average work week:
Asked of those who are employed

Prior to March 2020	25
Since March 2020	44

39. How concerned are you about the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the following aspects of your career:

	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not very concerned	Not at all concerned
Your earning potential	14%	25%	23%	39%
Your long-term career goals	13%	22%	23%	42%
Your opportunities for advancement	14%	18%	24%	44%
Your work-life balance	12%	21%	25%	42%
Your retirement savings	22%	26%	21%	32%

40. How important are each of the following work benefits to you?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important
Flexible work hours	39%	28%	9%	24%
Part time work options	24%	24%	18%	34%
Remote work options	27%	22%	16%	35%
Paid leave programs	28%	25%	15%	32%
Childcare assistance	13%	15%	14%	58%
Mental health resources	24%	25%	17%	35%

41. At this point in your life, which of the following would be best for you personally?

Working full-time for pay	39%
Working part-time for pay	23%
Not working for pay	23%
Don't know	16%

42. How does being a working parent affect your ability to be a good parent?
Asked of all parents who work full or part time

Makes it easier	13%
Makes it harder	32%
Hasn't made a difference	56%

43. How does being a working parent affect your ability to advance in your job or career?
Asked of all parents who work full or part time

Makes it easier	10%
Makes it harder	25%
Hasn't made a difference	65%

44. Since the coronavirus pandemic began in March, many households have found there is more to do around the house and that households are dividing up that additional work differently. Indicate what percent of the following tasks each person is doing right now, making the total indicated on each row 100%. - Household rent and bills
Asked of participants who are married or living with a partner and/or participants with children, as applicable

Myself	57
My spouse/partner	46
My child(ren)	3

45. Since the coronavirus pandemic began in March, many households have found there is more to do around the house and that households are dividing up that additional work differently. Indicate what percent of the following tasks each person is doing right now, making the total indicated on each row 100%. - Housework and other household chores
Asked of participants who are married or living with a partner and/or participants with children, as applicable

Myself	59
My spouse/partner	40
My child(ren)	11

46. Since the coronavirus pandemic began in March, many households have found there is more to do around the house and that households are dividing up that additional work differently. Indicate what percent of the following tasks each person is doing right now, making the total indicated on each row 100%. - Child care
Asked of participants who are married or living with a partner and/or participants with children, as applicable

Myself	58
My spouse/partner	43
My child(ren)	1

47. How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the amount of housework done by your spouse or partner?
Asked of participants who are married or living with a partner

Very unsatisfied	10%
Somewhat unsatisfied	12%
Neither unsatisfied nor satisfied	18%
Somewhat satisfied	18%
Very satisfied	42%
Total Unsatisfied	**22%**
Total Satisfied	**60%**

48. How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the amount of housework done by your children?
Asked of participants with children

Very unsatisfied	11%
Somewhat unsatisfied	18%
Neither unsatisfied nor satisfied	30%
Somewhat satisfied	20%
Very satisfied	20%
Total Unsatisfied	**29%**
Total Satisfied	**40%**

49. Have any of the following people you know been diagnosed with the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

	Yes	No	Maybe/Not sure
Someone in your household	14%	82%	4%
A family member you don't live with	43%	52%	6%
A friend or neighbor	49%	41%	9%
A coworker	30%	58%	13%

50. Have any of the following people you know died because of infection or complications from coronavirus (COVID-19)?

	Yes	No	Maybe/Not sure
Someone in your household	2%	96%	3%
A family member you don't live with	12%	84%	4%
A neighbor	7%	85%	8%
A friend	17%	78%	5%
A coworker	6%	85%	8%

51. Earlier we asked you about the strength of your marriage/relationship in the past two years. Consider now how the coronavirus pandemic has affected your marriage/relationship, and indicate how much you agree with the following statements.
Asked of those who are married or cohabiting

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total Disagree	Total Agree
The coronavirus pandemic has made me appreciate my partner more.	4%	6%	36%	33%	21%	**10%**	**54%**
The coronavirus pandemic has deepened my commitment to my marriage/relationship.	5%	7%	46%	26%	16%	**12%**	**42%**
The coronavirus pandemic has increased stress in my marriage/relationship.	22%	25%	31%	18%	4%	**47%**	**22%**
The coronavirus pandemic has made me question the strength of my marriage/relationship.	34%	24%	30%	9%	3%	**58%**	**12%**

52. Evaluate the extent to which the response of each of the following groups or institutions to the coronavirus pandemic helped or did not help your family. A - Not helpful at all; B - Not very helpful; C - Neither helpful nor unhelpful; D - Slightly helpful; E - Very helpful; F - Helpful for some people, but not my family; G - Don't know/Not sure; H - Total Not Helpful; I - Total Helpful

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Churches or houses of worship	16%	6%	17%	13%	21%	9%	19%	**22%**	**34%**
Public schools	19%	7%	20%	11%	11%	8%	24%	**26%**	**22%**
Your employer	12%	5%	18%	13%	19%	3%	29%	**17%**	**32%**
Your neighbors	13%	5%	27%	18%	17%	3%	16%	**19%**	**35%**
News media	31%	11%	14%	17%	15%	2%	9%	**42%**	**33%**
Your state and local government	14%	11%	14%	27%	21%	4%	9%	**25%**	**47%**
The federal government	13%	10%	12%	31%	22%	4%	8%	**23%**	**54%**
Community or non-profit groups	13%	5%	20%	15%	15%	11%	20%	**18%**	**30%**

53. How would you rate the *current* level of tension between members of your household?
Asked of all respondents not living by themselves

Much less than average	16%
Less than average	16%
Same as average	55%
More than average	9%
Much more than average	4%
Total Less Than Average	**32%**
Total More Than Average	**12%**

54. Since March of 2020, how much conflict has occurred in your home about the following issues?
Asked of all respondents not living by themselves

	No conflict about the issue	Minor conflict about the issue	Significant conflict about the issue
School	59%	29%	12%
Household responsibilities	60%	31%	9%
Rules for children	64%	26%	10%
Covid restrictions / masking	74%	21%	5%
Vaccinations	77%	17%	7%
Politics	73%	20%	7%
Family finances	62%	28%	10%

55. What type of school does your [child's age] [child's gender] generally attend?
Asked of respondents with children

Public school	72%
Charter/Magnet school	5%
Private religious school	8%
Private non-religious school	2%
Home School	12%

56. How often did your [child's age] [child's gender] attending school in person over the last month of the school year?
Asked of respondents with children

Never, they completed school completely online	37%
Attended in-person a few times a week	23%
Attended in-person every day	40%

57. Why is your child not attending school in person full-time?
Asked of those with children who attended school in person never or a few days a week

The school is not offering a full-time option	34%
We had the option, but chose not to attend full-time	54%
Don't know	12%

58. How important is it to you that your [child's age] [child's gender]'s local school maintain the following measures for the long term future? A - Very important; B - Somewhat important; C - Neither; D - Somewhat unimportant; E - Very unimportant; F - Total Important; G - Total Unimportant
Asked of respondents with children

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Require students and teachers to wear masks whenever they don't feel well	40%	20%	18%	4%	18%	**60%**	**22%**
Limit the number of students in each classroom	37%	21%	20%	6%	15%	**58%**	**21%**
Mandate improvements in classroom ventilation	41%	24%	19%	6%	10%	**65%**	**15%**
Require students and teachers to be vaccinated for COVID-19	31%	13%	25%	5%	26%	**44%**	**30%**

59. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your [child's age] [child's gender]'s school? A - Very satisfied; B - Satisfied; C - Neither; D - Dissatisfied; E - Very dissatisfied; F - Total Satisfied; G - Total Dissatisfied
Asked of respondents with children

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Teacher quality	31%	37%	23%	6%	3%	**68%**	**9%**
School discipline	26%	33%	30%	8%	3%	**59%**	**10%**
Expectations for student achievement	27%	40%	23%	6%	3%	**68%**	**9%**
Safety	30%	39%	24%	4%	3%	**69%**	**7%**
Instruction in character or values	27%	34%	31%	5%	4%	**60%**	**8%**
Racial and ethnic diversity of students	26%	34%	31%	6%	3%	**60%**	**9%**
Racial and ethnic diversity of teaching and administrative staff	26%	31%	32%	7%	4%	**57%**	**10%**
School building and facilities	28%	44%	22%	6%	1%	**71%**	**7%**
Extracurricular opportunities	25%	31%	31%	10%	3%	**56%**	**13%**
Communication from teachers and administrators	29%	37%	22%	8%	4%	**66%**	**13%**

60. General Education - Help with subjects
Asked of respondents with children

Mathematics	3
Reading/Writing	2
History/Social Studies	2
Science	2

61. Are your [child's age] [child's gender]'s grades better or worse compared to the time before March 2020?
Asked of respondents with children

Much better	11%
Slightly better	14%
The same	50%
Slightly worse	12%
Much worse	6%
Don't know	6%
Total Better	**25%**
Total Worse	**19%**

62. Compared to previous school years, do you feel your [child's age] [child's gender] is learning more or less?
Asked of respondents with children

Much more	9%
Somewhat more	13%
About the same	40%
Somewhat less	18%
Much less	12%
Don't know	7%
Total More	**22%**
Total Less	**31%**

63. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Asked of respondents with children

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Total Agree	Total Disagree
The flexibility of online school was good for my family.	25%	23%	32%	9%	11%	**47%**	**20%**
My [child's age] [child's gender] had trouble staying socially connected with friends during this past school year.	19%	25%	25%	11%	19%	**45%**	**30%**
My [child's age] [child's gender] had more trouble than is typical establishing a relationship with his or her teacher.	12%	15%	37%	15%	22%	**27%**	**37%**
I was more involved as a parent in my [child's gender]'s education this past school year.	26%	22%	36%	10%	7%	**48%**	**17%**

64. Compared to before the pandemic, how is your [child's age] [child's gender]'s:
Asked of respondents with children

	Much worse	Somewhat worse	About the same	Somewhat better	Much better	Total Worse	Total Better
Physical Health	3%	11%	70%	8%	8%	**14%**	**16%**
Social Health	5%	20%	62%	7%	7%	**24%**	**13%**
Mental Health	6%	12%	66%	9%	7%	**18%**	**15%**
Emotional Health	5%	17%	63%	7%	7%	**22%**	**15%**

65. Returning to your family more generally, indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements, thinking about the time since coronavirus restrictions began in March of 2020. A - Strongly disagree; B - Disagree; C - Neither agree nor disagree; D - Agree; E - Strongly agree; F - Don't know/Not applicable; G - Total Disagree; H - Total Agree
Asked of respondents with children age 5-18

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
I am satisfied with the resources/curriculum my children's teachers have provided for them.	5%	11%	25%	37%	17%	5%	**16%**	**54%**
I have become more likely to consider homeschooling my kids in the future.	23%	15%	24%	16%	17%	6%	**38%**	**32%**
I feel as if I am failing as a parent.	29%	21%	23%	15%	9%	3%	**50%**	**23%**
I have struggled with being home with my children for longer periods of time.	26%	21%	23%	17%	8%	5%	**47%**	**25%**
My children have become more disobedient and difficult at home.	29%	27%	21%	13%	6%	3%	**57%**	**18%**
I feel closer to my children than I did before the pandemic.	4%	8%	37%	26%	21%	4%	**12%**	**47%**
I am struggling to balance home and work life.	20%	22%	27%	16%	9%	7%	**41%**	**25%**

66. People have different ideas about who is in their immediate family and who is in their extended family. How would you classify each of the following family members?

	Immediate family	Extended family	Not applicable
My adult sibling(s) and their spouse(s)	63%	20%	16%
My parents	68%	10%	22%
My spouse or partner's parents	47%	32%	21%
My nieces and nephews	29%	54%	18%
My grandchildren	38%	19%	42%
My aunts, uncles, and cousins	18%	68%	13%
My children	91%	4%	5%

67. Which statement best describes your relationship with your immediate family today as compared to before March 2020?

I feel closer to them	26%
I feel the same toward them	59%
I feel less close to them	8%
Don't know	7%

68. Which statement best describes your relationship with your extended family today as compared to before March 2020?

I feel closer to them	12%
I feel the same toward them	62%
I feel less close to them	18%
Don't know	9%

69. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total Disagree	Total Agree
I will miss the time my family spent together during the pandemic.	7%	13%	53%	20%	7%	**20%**	**28%**
I am excited to return to pre-pandemic patterns of family life.	3%	6%	28%	37%	26%	**9%**	**62%**

70. Now thinking about your physical health since March 2020, have the following things increased, decreased or stayed the same?

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Frequency of exercise	20%	58%	22%
Your weight	34%	49%	17%
Feelings of sadness or depression	32%	59%	9%
Frequency of drinking alcohol	12%	68%	20%

71. Do you feel like you and your family have received the physical medical care you needed since March 2020?

Yes	54%
No	20%
My family did not need physical medical care	26%

72. Do you feel like you and your family have received the mental health care you needed since March 2020?

Yes	26%
No	23%
My family did not need mental health care	51%

73. Please indicate your family's current vaccination status.

	Vaccinated(including if currently between first and second doses)	Not vaccinated	Not applicable
Self	64%	31%	5%
Spouse or partner	39%	23%	37%
Eligible children	25%	23%	52%
Others that live in your household	22%	18%	60%

74. Why have you or your family members not been vaccinated? Check all that apply.
Asked of those who said they were not vaccinated

	Not vaccinated because time	Not vaccinated because side effects	Not vaccinated because making appointment	Not vaccinated because opposed to vaccines generally	Not vaccinated because opposed to COVID-19 vaccine
Self	9%	49%	6%	16%	48%
Spouse or partner	10%	39%	6%	16%	49%
Eligible children	10%	41%	6%	18%	43%
Others that live in your household	11%	41%	6%	20%	42%

75. Would you rather the government...

Help families by giving money directly to the parents (e.g. tax breaks, child allowances, etc.)	20%
Help families by spending money on programs and institutions (e.g. child care, schools, etc.)	13%
Both	44%
Neither	24%

76. If you had to choose, which one of these two options do you lean towards? Would you rather the government...
Asked of those who answered "both" or "neither" to Q75

Help families by giving money directly to the parents (tax breaks, child allowances, etc.)	60%
Help families by spending money on programs and institutions (e.g. child care, schools, etc.)	40%

77. Would you rather the government... - (Combined from Q75 and Q76).
Asked of those who answered "both" or "neither" to Q76

Help families by giving money directly to the parents (e.g. tax breaks, child allowances, etc.)	60%
Help families by spending money on programs and institutions (e.g. child care, schools, etc.)	40%

78. As part of the Covid Relief Package passed by Congress in March 2021, families will receive a direct payment of up to $300 per month for each child, starting in July. How strongly do you support this policy?

Strongly support	31%
Somewhat support	18%
Neither support nor oppose	21%
Somewhat oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	19%
Total Support	**50%**
Total Oppose	**29%**

79. Suppose that a policy of permanent government payments to parents was passed by Congress. How large do you think the annual benefit should be for each child?

mean	23

80. Suppose Congress passed a permanent benefit of $3600 per child. Would you prefer parents receive monthly payments of $300 per child, or one annual lump sum of $3,600 per child?

Monthly payment	52%
Annual lump sum	18%
Don't know	30%

81. If the government were to pay parents $300 a month or $3,600 a year per child, how would that affect your desire to have a child in the next five years?
Asked of respondents age 18-50

It would increase	15%
It would decrease	6%
It would stay the same	64%
I don't know	15%

82. Suppose Congress passed a child benefit of $3600. In order to receive the government payments, should a parent be required to work at least part time?
Asked of a random one-third sample of respondents

	Yes, a parent should be required to work in order to receive the benefit	No, a parent should not be required to work in order to receive the benefit	Don't Know
Two-parent families	58%	25%	18%
Single-parent families	45%	36%	19%

83. Suppose Congress passed a child benefit of $3600. In order to receive the government payments, should a parent be required to work at least part time?
Asked of a random one-third sample of respondents

	Yes, a parent should be required to work in order to receive the benefit	No, a parent should not be required to work in order to receive the benefit	Don't Know
Two-parent families	56%	27%	17%
Single-parent families	41%	40%	19%

84. Suppose Congress passed a child benefit of $3600. In order to receive the government payments, should a parent be required to work at least part time?
Asked of a random one-third sample of respondents

	Yes, a parent should be required to work in order to receive the benefit	No, a parent should not be required to work in order to receive the benefit	Don't Know
Two-parent families	58%	25%	17%
Single-parent families	40%	38%	21%

85. If the government were to create permanent payments to parents, how should it pay for this? Check all that apply.

How to pay - Cut programs	19%
How to pay - Eliminate tax credit	21%
How to pay - Raise taxes on wealthy	48%
How to pay - Raise taxes on everyone	7%
How to pay - Raise taxes on buisnesses	26%
How to pay - Increase government debt	7%
How to pay - None of the above	26%

86. If the government were to implement payments to parents, at what household income level should this benefit to families phase out?

$25,000	15%
$50,000	17%
$75,000	19%
$100,000	17%
$200,000	9%
$400,000	4%
All parents should be eligible, regardless of income	18%

87. Would you support or oppose the federal government introducing the following policies?

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total Support	Total Oppose
Guaranteeing two years of free community college	39%	17%	16%	7%	21%	**56%**	**28%**
Guaranteeing two years of free preschool for children age 3-4	43%	18%	17%	5%	16%	**62%**	**21%**
Requiring employers to offer 12 weeks of paid family leave per year	35%	16%	21%	10%	18%	**51%**	**28%**

88. In the last year, how often have you spoken with your [child's age] [child's gender] about racial injustice in the United States?
Asked of all respondents with children

Frequently	30%
Occasionally	42%
Never	28%

89. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Black families in America face obstacles that white families do not.

Strongly agree	37%
Somewhat agree	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%
Somewhat disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	18%
Total Agree	**57%**
Total Disagree	**27%**

90. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? [Asian families in America face obstacles that white families do not. | Hispanic families in America face obstacles that white families do not. | Hispanic families in America face obstacles that Black families do not. | Black families in America face obstacles that Hispanic families do not.]

Strongly agree	21%
Somewhat agree	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%
Somewhat disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	19%
Total Agree	**45%**
Total Disagree	**30%**

91. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? - Asian families in America face obstacles that white families do not.
Asked of a random one-fourth sample of respondents

Strongly agree	23%
Somewhat agree	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%
Somewhat disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	17%
Total Agree	**51%**
Total Disagree	**29%**

92. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? - Black families in America face obstacles that Hispanic families do not.
Asked of a random one-fourth sample of respondents

Strongly agree	17%
Somewhat agree	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%
Somewhat disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	19%
Total Agree	**41%**
Total Disagree	**32%**

93. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? - Hispanic families in America face obstacles that Black families do not.
Asked of a random one-fourth sample of respondents

Strongly agree	17%
Somewhat agree	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%
Somewhat disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	18%
Total Agree	**44%**
Total Disagree	**28%**

94. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? - Hispanic families in America face obstacles that white families do not.
Asked of a random one-fourth sample of respondents

Strongly agree	28%
Somewhat agree	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%
Somewhat disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	18%
Total Agree	**51%**
Total Disagree	**29%**

95. In the past year, have you had a conversation about any of the following issues with a member of your household? Please select all that apply.

Conversations - Police discriminate by race	43%
Conversations - Police keep communities safe	42%
Conversations - How to stay safe	30%
Conversations - None of the above	36%

96. Do you agree or disagree with the following: Racial discrimination is an obstacle to my family in terms of...

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Access to good education	11%	10%	29%	8%	42%	**21%**	**50%**
Social relationships	9%	11%	31%	9%	40%	**20%**	**49%**
Attention and care from medical professionals	11%	9%	28%	9%	43%	**20%**	**52%**
Access to good housing	12%	10%	28%	8%	42%	**21%**	**50%**

97. How much do you worry about race relations in the United States?

A great deal	28%
A fair amount	30%
A little	22%
Not at all	21%

98. In thinking about your interaction with the police, have you or someone in your family ever:

	Me	Family member	Has not happened
Been stopped by the police for any reason?	61%	46%	24%
Been arrested?	20%	30%	58%
Been the victim of a crime?	36%	31%	49%
Called the police for help?	41%	35%	42%
Been helped by the police?	45%	35%	40%

99. How much do you agree with the following statement:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Schools should teach that there has been significant progress towards racial equality in the United States.	24%	30%	31%	8%	8%	**54%**	**16%**
Schools should teach about the history of racism in the United States.	38%	24%	19%	6%	13%	**61%**	**19%**

100. Do you think schools today spend too much, the right amount, or too little time teaching about racial issues in the United States?

Too much	29%
The right amount	24%
Too little	46%

101. In the last five years, have you: (Check all that apply)

Interactions - Served as reference	16%
Interactions - Arranged playdate	13%
Interactions - Hosted in home	35%
Interactions - None of the above	56%

102. Consensual polyamory is when someone has romantic relationships with two or more individuals and all people involved consent. How comfortable are you with consensual polyamory in general?

Very uncomfortable	37%
Somewhat uncomfortable	12%
Neither comfortable or uncomfortable	31%
Somewhat comfortable	9%
Very comfortable	12%
Total Uncomfortable	**49%**
Total Comfortable	**21%**

103. For each of the following family members, please identify whether you have had a conversation in the last year about government or politics with at least one person who would fit in the category.

	Yes, we have talked about politics in the last year	No, we have not talked about politics in the last year	Not applicable
My adult sibling(s) or their spouse(s)	56%	22%	22%
My parents	44%	16%	40%
My spouse or partner's parents	47%	20%	33%
My grandchildren	12%	19%	69%
My aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, or cousins	34%	39%	27%
My children	66%	19%	14%

104. For the next few questions, please think about one specific person who is your selected relationship

Almost never	13%
Every few months	27%
Once a month	14%
Every few weeks	18%
Once a week	9%
A few times per week	14%
Every day	5%

105. Do you ever intentionally change the subject or avoid talking about politics with your selected relationship?

Yes, often	9%
Yes, sometimes	20%
Yes, but not very often	17%
No, never	54%

106. On average, how would you describe your selected relationship's political views?

A lot more conservative than me	11%
A little more conservative than me	15%
About the same as me	56%
A little more liberal than me	11%
A lot more liberal than me	7%
Total More Conservative	**26%**
Total More Liberal	**18%**

107. When you talk about politics with your selected relationship, is it generally...

Stressful and frustrating	26%
Interesting and informative	74%

108. How many sexual partners have you had in the previous two years?

mean	1

109. In an average weekday, how many hours are you **solely** responsible for the care of your children?
Asked of people with children at home.

mean	12