

# Choice and accommodation in parental child care decisions <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Article in pdf <sup>[2]</sup>

## Abstract:

As women approach parity with men in their representation in the U.S. labor force, child care has become a critical concern both for families and for community development professionals. In this paper, we review recent literature on parental child care decisions and on socio-economic differences in child care utilization. We contrast two bodies of theoretical and empirical research on the determinants of child care arrangements, comparing models of individual consumption choice with models of socially constructed or situated patterns of action. This research suggests that parental child care decisions may be best understood as accommodations—to family and employment demands, social and cultural expectations, available information, and financial, social, and other resources—that often reproduce other forms of economic and social stratification.

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