

# Living beyond the edge: The impact of trends in non-standard work on single/lone-parent mothers <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## Attachment

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 [non-standard-work-single-mothers.pdf](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

1.19 MB

Excerpts: This is an empirical study of the impacts the trends in the labour force (the increased use of non-standard, contingent working patterns) have on single mothers/lone parents. The combination of their relatively low educational rates and modest employability skills, coupled with their sole responsibility for care of their children, makes active participation in the labour force an unlikely and often impractical direction to pursue. The study draws on a combination of cross-Canada interviews with 82 single mothers participating in employability-enhancement training, interviews with 49 government respondents and service providers, an intensive labour force analysis and a review of Canadian and international literature. The 82 single mothers interviewed in focus groups averaged 32.5 years of age. Their average number of children was just under two. The average age of the respondents at the time of the birth of their first child was 24 years. Thus, the women do not reflect the negative stereotypes sometimes held of “welfare mothers” who may be seen as single women having many children at an early age. However, the women have rather weak educational backgrounds, with sporadic employment histories. The primary obstacles to sustainable employment, as reported by the women, were a lack of access to child care and inadequate salaries that made the “trade-off” between the job and the loss of the benefits available to income assistance recipients (e.g., medical and dental care, for themselves and/or their children) a difficult choice. Most felt full-time work would be essential, but those with younger children felt that permanent part-time work would be an appealing option. The importance of sustainable child care cannot be overemphasized. As it is, mothers doing non-standard work who are fortunate enough to find any appropriate child care are then faced with the difficulties of sporadic usage.

**Region:** Canada <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** economics <sup>[5]</sup>

poverty <sup>[6]</sup>

funding <sup>[7]</sup>

accessibility <sup>[8]</sup>

gender <sup>[9]</sup>

mother's labour force participation <sup>[10]</sup>

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