

Caring for their children: Impacts of COVID-19 on parents ^[1]

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Source: Statistics Canada

Format: Article

Publication Date: 14 Dec 2020

AVAILABILITY

Access full PDF online ^[2]

Excerpted from article

For families with children, the closure of schools and childcare facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted their daily routines. As a result, parents' caregiving responsibilities in relation to children have increased, along with concerns about balancing child care, schooling and work (Statistics Canada 2020).

Prior to the pandemic, women in Canada tended to perform a larger share of parental tasks than men. In 2015, for example, mothers spent an average of 2.6 hours per day on child care as a primary activity compared to 2 hours for fathers (Moyser 2018). A key question in the context of the pandemic, then, is whether the closure of schools and childcare facilities has deepened the pre-existing gender-based division of parental tasks within families.

Using data from the Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 3: Resuming Economic and Social Activities during COVID-19, this article examines how gender influences the division of parental tasks within families during the pandemic. For this reason, the analysis is limited to respondents who were living with a spouse or partner (hereafter referred to as "partner") at the time of the survey, and who reported performing any one of five parental tasks during the pandemic: playing with children or taking part in leisure activities with them; putting children to bed or seeing that they go to bed; homeschooling or helping children with homework; staying at home with the children; and taking children to or from school or day care.

Related link: COVID-19 is not an equal-opportunity virus. Women still do the lion's share of parenting tasks amid the pandemic ^[3]

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