

**STUDY ON U.S. PARENTS' DIVISIONS OF LABOR DURING COVID-19**  
**User Guide**  
**Waves 1-2**

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**Study Overview and Goals**

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically disrupted the lives of nearly every American household, fundamentally altering paid and unpaid domestic labor in families. At the onset of the pandemic in Spring 2020, parents had to adapt to stay-at-home orders, the closure of daycare facilities, virtual schooling, changing work conditions, and fears about contracting the virus. The preponderance of changes and immense stress of the pandemic led to immediate concerns that the burdens of managing families throughout this time would be disproportionately shouldered by mothers, threatening 60 years of progress toward gender equality.

The Study on U.S. Parents' Divisions of Labor During COVID-19 (SPDLC) aims to understand how parents responded to meet the challenges of the pandemic, how these responses changed throughout the duration of the pandemic, and how these responses will shape the gendered division of labor, broader patterns of gender inequality, and well-being over the long-term. Specifically, this study aims to address four key questions:

1. How do parents' divisions of domestic labor change throughout the pandemic?
2. What are the key factors that led to changes in parents' divisions of domestic labor?
3. How do changes in parents' divisions of domestic labor affect parents' (mothers' in particular) paid labor force participation?
4. How do changes in parents' divisions of domestic labor affect parents' well-being and relationship quality throughout the pandemic?

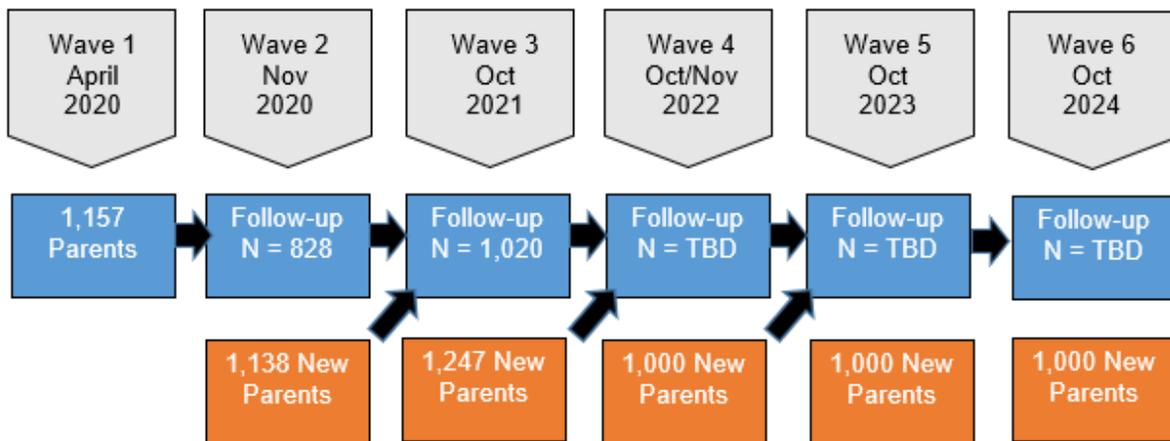
Through a focus on parents' divisions of labor throughout the pandemic, including analyzing both predictors and consequences of these divisions, the goal of SPDLC is to understand both short- and long-term impacts of the pandemic for the gendered division of labor, work-family issues, and broader patterns of gender inequality. In addition to including questions to assess parents' divisions of domestic and paid labor, the surveys used in SPDLC contain information on a variety of contextual factors such as workplace benefits, childcare and schooling arrangements, measures of well-being, and attitudinal measures. As such, these data are well-suited for analyzing how families have been affected by the pandemic, testing theories about gender inequality and the gendered division of labor, and informing public and workplace policies surrounding the intersection of gender, work, and family.

## **Study Design**

The overall study design includes six waves of data that span the period from March 2020 to October 2024. Data are collected in two phases that combines a longitudinal panel design with a repeated cross-section design. For the longitudinal panel, all parents who participate in at least one of the first four waves of the study are contacted to participate in all subsequent waves of the study. This design allows for an analysis of change in the division of labor within couples throughout the pandemic. For the repeated cross-section, data is collected from a new cohort of approximately 1,000 parents at each wave. This approach allows for an analysis of patterns of change over time at various stages throughout the pandemic. Surveys at each wave are compatible so that analyses of original and new respondents can be combined. Additionally, this approach builds in necessary feasibility to account for sample attrition and ensure that the overall study does not suffer from loss of variability and statistical power over

time. For example, Wave 3 involved a follow-up survey of respondents from Waves 1 and 2, along with a survey of a new cohort of parents. All respondents up through Wave 4 will be followed for two more waves (Waves 5 and 6) to insure at least three possible waves of data for all follow-up participants (following best practices associated with longitudinal data analysis; Nagin, 2005), and two new cohorts will also be included at each of these waves to complete the repeated cross-sectional design. Full details about the data collection plan can be seen in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 | Study Design**



**Data Availability**

All data collected for the Study on Parents’ Divisions of Labor During COVID-19 (SPDLC) will be publicly available for researchers to use free of charge. Each wave of data will become publicly available two years after the data is collected and cleaned. Currently, Waves 1 and 2 of SPDLC are publicly available. Wave 3 was collected in October 2021, and will become publicly available in October 2023. Wave 4 was in the field at the time of this report, and will become available in November 2024.

Raw data and codebooks can be downloaded from three sources: Cardinal Scholar (<https://cardinalscholar.bsu.edu/>), ICPSR (<https://icpsr.umich.edu/>), and the Hive (<https://hive.utah.edu/>). Both Stata and SPSS files are available to download. The following data files are available: (1) a data file for each individual wave, which contains responses from all participants in that wave of data collection, (2) a longitudinal panel data file, which contains longitudinal follow-up data from all available waves, and (3) a repeated cross-section data file, which contains the repeated cross-section data (from new respondents at each wave) from all available waves. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>. In accordance with this license, all users of these data must give appropriate credit to the authors in any papers, presentations, books, or other works that use the data. A suggested citation to provide attribution for these data is included below:

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### **Data: Wave 1**

The Study on U.S. Parents' Divisions of Labor During COVID (SPDLC) uses survey data collected through Prolific ([www.prolific.co](http://www.prolific.co)). Prolific is an opt-in platform that was designed to facilitate scientific research using panel-based surveys. Prolific takes steps to ensure high quality data, such as collecting demographic characteristics and conducting regular [automated] data quality checks, which decreases the likelihood that dishonest panelists are included in a study and temporarily removes individuals from the panel if Prolific is unable to verify panelists' information (Palan & Schitter, 2018). Consequently, evidence suggests that samples obtained from Prolific are high quality and are more diverse than samples obtained from other opt-in

survey panels (Peer et al., 2017). Prolific’s platform also enables researchers to select a targeted sample based on the demographic characteristics of panelists and contact these same panelists for follow-up surveys. These features enabled us to target (and follow) our population of interest: partnered parents in the United States.

To be included in the SPDLC, respondents had to meet the following sampling criteria: (a) be at least 18 years old, (b) reside in the United States, (c) reside with a romantic partner (i.e., be married or cohabiting), and (d) be a parent living with at least one biological child. Samples include individual parents, who report on both themselves and their partners (e.g., partners’ participation in domestic tasks, partners’ employment characteristics). Prolific panelists who met these eligibility criteria were provided with the option to take the survey. Participants were informed that the survey would take approximately 18-20 minutes to complete. All panelists were provided monetary compensation in line with Prolific’s compensation guidelines, which require that all participants earn above minimum wage for their time participating in studies. To increase sample diversity, we oversampled men, Black individuals, individuals who did not complete college, and individuals who identified as politically conservative.

Wave 1 of the study was conducted in April 2020. A total of 1,207 parents completed the survey. Data quality checks were employed in line with best practices for online surveys (e.g., removing respondents who did not complete most of the survey or who did not pass the attention filters). A total of 4% of the initial respondents were removed from the sample for failing to pass data quality checks. As such, Wave 1 includes a final sample size of 1,157 parents (providing data for 2,314 partners).

The Wave 1 study design allows for an analysis of change in the early stages of the pandemic, as parents were asked to report on conditions both *before* the pandemic (i.e., before

mid-March 2020), and *after* the pandemic (i.e., in April 2020 when they completed the survey). The before/after approach was used across a number of key variables including parents' division of housework and childcare, paid work arrangements, childcare arrangements, relationship satisfaction and perceived fairness, and household income.

Although samples obtained through Prolific are nonprobability samples, evidence suggests that samples obtained from online panels tend to be fairly representative of those with regular internet access (Tourangeau, Conrad, & Cooper, 2013). In addition, results from models using samples taken from online panels tend to be similar to results using probability-based samples once demographic variables are sufficiently controlled (Jeong et al., 2019; Levay, Freese, & Druckman, 2016), and online panel studies produce remarkably similar patterns of statistical significance to studies using probability samples (Baker et al., 2013; Coppock, 2019; Jeong et al., 2019). Thus, these data are well-suited for understanding how and why parents' divisions of domestic labor changed throughout the pandemic and what consequences such changes may have for parents and families.

The overall sociodemographic profile of the Wave 1 sample is comparable to nationally representative estimates. Table 1 provides an overview of characteristics of the parents included in the Wave 1 survey. Comparing these estimates to data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), results suggest that the Wave 1 SPDLC sample is similar to the CPS in regard to percentage married (88% vs. 92%) and average number of children (1.93 vs. 1.92). There is also evidence that parents in the SPDLC are similar to nationally representative datasets in regard to political ideology (General Social Survey) and income (Survey of American Parents). In addition to these characteristics and those shown in Table 1, respondents came from throughout the US with 48 states represented (there were no respondents from Hawaii or Wyoming). There is also a

notable number of respondents who report being in same-sex relationships (N = 86; 7.5% of sample). Despite the similarities to nationally representative probability samples and diversity represented in these data, college educated parents and parents with no religious affiliation are over-represented in the Wave 1 sample (as shown in Table 1).

Table 1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of SPDLC New Cohort Samples

	Wave 1		Wave 2	
	Percentage or Mean	SD	Percentage or Mean	SD
<i>Gender</i>				
Woman	59.5%	-	53.9%	-
Man	39.8%	-	45.4%	-
Other	0.7%	-	0.7%	-
Married (vs. cohabiting)	87.5%	-	89.5%	-
Same-sex relationship	7.5%	-	4.6%	-
Age of youngest child	6.98	5.80	6.05	5.34
Number of children	1.93	0.95	1.65	0.83
<i>Religious affiliation</i>				
Catholic	18.7%	-	26.3%	-
Protestant	25.6%	-	26.3%	-
Agnostic	13.4%	-	11.0%	-
None	24.7%	-	22.5%	-
Other	15.6%	-	13.9%	-
<i>Political Party Affiliation</i>				
Republican	29.8%	-	29.5%	-
Democrat	42.7%	-	44.2%	-
Independent	21.4%	-	22.1%	-
Other	6.1%	-	4.1%	-
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>				
White	76.7%	-	78.0%	-
Black	7.4%	-	7.8%	-
Latinx	8.8%	-	6.5%	-
Asian	4.5%	-	4.8%	-
Other	2.6%	-	2.6%	-
Age	38.25	8.85	36.42	8.17
<i>Education</i>				
HS or less	10.0%	-	7.7%	-
Some college	29.9%	-	25.2%	-
Bachelor's degree	37.3%	-	37.3%	-
Advanced degree	22.7%	-	29.8%	-
<i>Household income</i>				
Less than \$36,000/year	20.9%	-	18.5%	-
\$36,000 – less than \$108,000/year	59.4%	-	57.8%	-
\$108,000/year or more	19.7%	-	23.7%	-
Employed	75.7%	-	75.8%	-

## **Data: Wave 2**

The second wave of the SPDLC was fielded in November 2020 in two stages. In the first stage, all parents who participated in W1 of the SPDLC and who continued to reside in the United States were re-contacted and asked to participate in a follow-up survey. Follow-up respondents were not required to be married or cohabiting at W2 (10 parents reported being separated/divorced or no longer in a romantic relationship). The W2 survey was posted on Prolific, and messages were sent via Prolific's messaging system to all previous participants. Multiple follow-up messages were sent in an attempt to increase response rates to the follow-up survey. Of the 1,157 respondents who completed the W1 survey, 873 at least started the W2 survey. After data quality checks, 5.2% of respondents were removed from the sample, resulting in a final sample size of 828 parents (a response rate of 72%). Attrition analyses examining sociodemographic differences between those who did and did not participate in the W2 survey showed that women and older respondents were more likely to participate at W2 than men and younger respondents. However, when comparing the demographic profile of all respondents at W1 and follow-up respondents at W2, there were no substantive or statistically significant differences between the two groups by gender, age, income, education, religion, political ideology, marital status, or age of youngest child (see Table 2 for time-invariant sociodemographic characteristics of the W2 follow-up sample).

In the second stage of W2 of the SPDLC, a new sample of parents was recruited. New parents had to meet the same sampling criteria as in W1 (be at least 18 years old, reside in the United States, reside with a romantic partner, and be a parent living with at least one biological child). Also similar to the W1 procedures, we oversampled men, Black individuals, individuals who did not complete college, and individuals who identified as politically conservative to

increase sample diversity. A total of 1,207 parents participated in the W2 survey. Data quality checks were employed in line with best practices for online surveys (e.g., removing respondents who did not complete most of the survey or who did not pass the attention filters). A total of 5.7% of the initial respondents were removed from the sample for failing to pass data quality checks (50 parents who did not complete at least 75% of the survey, and 19 parents who did not pass the attention filters). As such, the final sample size of new respondents at Wave 2 includes 1,138 parents (providing data for 2,276 partners). Sociodemographic characteristics of the W2 new cohort sample can be found in Table 1.

Both follow-up and new cohort panelists were informed that the survey would take approximately 20 minutes to complete. All panelists were provided monetary compensation in line with Prolific's compensation guidelines, which require that all participants earn above minimum wage for their time participating in studies. The surveys administered to both follow-up and new cohort panelists were designed to be compatible with each other, and most of the questions are identical in both surveys. However, there are some differences. First, for questions focusing on changes during the pandemic (e.g., changes in employment), follow-up respondents were asked about changes since the previous survey (i.e., April 2020) whereas new cohort respondents were asked about changes since the start of the pandemic (i.e., March 2020). Second, demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, education, etc.) are only collected at the time that parents enter the study. As such, these questions were not asked to follow-up respondents. Finally, questions about changes in relationship status (and demographic characteristics of new partners) are only asked of follow-up respondents.

Table 2. Time-Invariant Sociodemographic Characteristics of SPDLC Follow-Up Samples

	Wave 1 N = 1157		Wave 2 N = 828	
	Percentage or Mean	SD	Percentage or Mean	SD
<i><u>Gender</u></i>				
Woman	59.5%	-	61.5%	-
Man	39.8%	-	37.8%	-
Other	0.7%	-	0.7%	-
<i><u>Religious affiliation</u></i>				
Catholic	18.7%	-	18.8%	-
Protestant	25.6%	-	25.5%	-
Agnostic	13.4%	-	12.8%	-
None	24.7%	-	25.6%	-
Other	15.6%	-	17.2%	-
<i><u>Political Party Affiliation</u></i>				
Republican	29.8%	-	29.4%	-
Democrat	42.7%	-	42.9%	-
Independent	21.4%	-	22.0%	-
Other	6.1%	-	5.7%	-
<i><u>Race/Ethnicity</u></i>				
White	76.7%	-	77.9%	-
Black	7.4%	-	6.8%	-
Latinx	8.8%	-	8.3%	-
Asian	4.5%	-	4.7%	-
Other	2.6%	-	2.4%	-
Age	38.25	8.85	39.48	9.19
<i><u>Education</u></i>				
HS or less	10.0%	-	9.3%	-
Some college	29.9%	-	29.5%	-
Bachelor's degree	37.3%	-	39.1%	-
Advanced degree	22.7%	-	22.0%	-

## Key Variables

### *Domestic Labor*

Respondents were asked to report on the division of housework and childcare as well as their time spent on housework and childcare. We focused specifically on routine domestic tasks in SPDLC given that these are the most time consuming and most consequential for couples'

relationship quality (Blair & Lichter, 1991; Carlson et al., 2018; Craig, 2006; Hochschild & Machung, 1989).

Housework. In the Wave 1 survey, parents reported on six housework tasks: preparing and cooking meals, laundry, shopping for groceries and other household needs, washing dishes, house cleaning, and driving/transportation. Parents reported on how each of these tasks were divided (ranging from 1 = I did it all, to 3 = shared equally, to 5 = My partner did it all) both *before* the pandemic (**cookBR** through **driveBR**) and *since* the pandemic started (**cookAR** through **driveAR**). Parents also reported on how their own time (**cookC** through **driveC**) and their partner’s time (**cookCP** through **driveCP**) in each task changed since the pandemic (ranging from -2 = I am/partner is doing much less to 2 = I am/partner is doing much more).

In the Wave 2 survey, parents reported on their current division of six housework tasks: preparing and cooking meals, laundry, shopping for groceries and other household needs, washing dishes, house cleaning, and household management/organizing. Parents were asked about household management instead of driving to better capture the division of cognitive labor within families. Parents at Wave 2 were also asked to indicate how much time (in hours) both they and their partner spent in each of these tasks in the week prior to the survey.

**Table 3. Division of Housework Tasks Variables**

	Wave 1		Wave 2
	Before Pandemic (March 2020)	During Pandemic (April 2020)	November 2020
<b>Preparing and cooking meals</b>			
Division of task	cookBR	cookAR	cookW2
Change in own time		cookC	
Change in partner’s time		cookCP	
Time spent in task			cookT_w2
Partner’s time spent in task			cookTP_w2
<b>Laundry</b>			
Division of task	laundryBR	laundryAR	laundryW2
Change in own time		laundryC	
Change in partner’s time		laundryCP	
Time spent in task			laundry_w2
Partner’s time spent in task			laundryTP_w2

<b>Shopping for groceries and other household needs</b>			
Division of task	shopBR	shopAR	shopW2
Change in own time		shopC	
Change in partner's time		shopCP	
Time spent in task			shopT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			shopTP_w2
<b>Washing dishes</b>			
Division of task	dishesBR	dishesAR	dishesW2
Change in own time		dishesC	
Change in partner's time		dishesCP	
Time spent in task			dishesT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			dishesTP_w2
<b>House cleaning</b>			
Division of task	cleanBR	cleanAR	cleanW2
Change in own time		cleanC	
Change in partner's time		cleanCP	
Time spent in task			cleanT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			cleanTP_w2
<b>Driving/transportation</b>			
Division of task	driveBR	driveAR	
Change in own time		driveC	
Change in partner's time		driveCP	
<b>Household management/organizing</b>			
Division of task			HHmanageW2
Change in own time			
Change in partner's time			
Time spent in task			HHmanageT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			HHmanageTP_w2

Childcare. Parents were asked to report on their childcare behavior focusing specifically on childcare involving their youngest child. As such, the survey focuses on childcare relative to a focal child instead of global indicators of total childcare required for all children. In the Wave 1 survey, parents were asked different questions about childcare based on whether their youngest child was younger than six years old, or between 6 and 17 years old; parents of children 18 years and older were not asked questions about childcare. Age six was used as the cutoff to differentiate between children of pre-school age and school-aged children given that the survey was administered toward the end of the school year in April. In the Wave 2 survey, which was administered closer to the beginning of the school year in November, parents of children younger

than five years old were asked the childcare questions for younger children and parents of children between 6 and 17 years old were asked the childcare questions for older children. For parents whose youngest child was five years old, they were asked a question about whether this child was currently in elementary school. Parents who responded no were asked the childcare questions about younger children and parents who responded yes were asked the childcare questions about older children.

The questions followed the same format as those described for housework. Parents of younger children reported on eight childcare tasks: physical care (bathing, feeding, dressing, etc.), talking to/listening to child, looking after child, putting child to bed, reading to child, playing with child, organizing/planning, and enforcing rules. In the Wave 1 survey, parents reported on the division of these tasks both *before* the pandemic (**CYphysicalBR** through **CYrulesBR**) and *since* the pandemic (**CYphysicalAR** through **CYrulesAR**). Parents also reported on how their own time (**CYphysicalC** through **CYrulesC**) and their partner's time (**CYphysicalCP** through **CYrulesCP**) in each task changed since the pandemic.

Parents of older children reported on nine childcare tasks: talking to/listening to child, monitoring child, attending child's events, reading with child, playing with child, organizing/planning, enforcing rules, picking up/dropping off child, and helping child with homework. In the Wave 1 survey, parents reported on the division of these tasks both *before* the pandemic (**COfalkBR** through **COhmworkBR**) and *since* the pandemic (**COfalkAR** through **COhmworkAR**). Parents also reported on how their own time (**COfalkC** through **COhmworkC**) and their partner's time (**COfalkCP** through **COhmworkCP**) in each task changed since the pandemic.

In the Wave 2 survey, parents reported on the same set of childcare tasks as in Wave 1. For the division of childcare, parents reported on how these tasks were currently divided. Parents at Wave 2 were also asked to indicate how much time (in hours) both they and their partner spent in each of these tasks in the week prior to the survey.

**Table 4. Division of Childcare Tasks Variables**

	Wave 1		Wave 2
	Before Pandemic (March 2020)	During Pandemic (April 2020)	November 2020
<b><i>Younger Children (less than age 6)</i></b>			
<b>Physical care (bathing, feeding, dressing, etc.)</b>			
Division of task	CYphysicalBR	CYphysicalAR	CYphysicalW2
Change in own time		CYphysicalC	
Change in partner's time		CYphysicalCP	
Time spent in task			CYphysicalT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			CYphysicalTP_w2
<b>Talking to/listening to child</b>			
Division of task	CYtalkBR	CYtalkAR	CYtalkW2
Change in own time		CYtalkC	
Change in partner's time		CYtalkCP	
Time spent in task			CYtalkT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			CYtalkTP_w2
<b>Looking after child</b>			
Division of task	CYlookBR	CYlookAR	CYlookW2
Change in own time		CYlookC	
Change in partner's time		CYlookCP	
Time spent in task			CYlookT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			CYlookTP_w2
<b>Putting child to bed</b>			
Division of task	CYbedBR	CYbedAR	CYbedW2
Change in own time		CYbedC	
Change in partner's time		CYbedCP	
Time spent in task			CYbedT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			CYbedTP_w2
<b>Reading to child</b>			
Division of task	CYreadBR	CYreadAR	CYreadW2
Change in own time		CYreadC	
Change in partner's time		CYreadCP	
Time spent in task			CYreadT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			CYreadTP_w2
<b>Playing with child</b>			
Division of task	CYplayBR	CYplayAR	CYplayW2
Change in own time		CYplayC	
Change in partner's time		CYplayCP	
Time spent in task			CYplayT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			CYplayTP_w2
<b>Organizing/planning</b>			

Division of task	CYorganizeBR	CYorganizeAR	CYorganizeW2
Change in own time		CYorganizeC	
Change in partner's time		CYorganizeCP	
Time spent in task			CYorganizeT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			CYorganizeTP_w2
<b>Enforcing rules</b>			
Division of task	CYrulesBR	CYrulesAR	CYrulesW2
Change in own time		CYrulesC	
Change in partner's time		CYrulesCP	
Time spent in task			CYrulesT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			CYrulesTP_w2
<b><i>Older Children (ages 6-17)</i></b>			
<b>Talking to/listening to child</b>			
Division of task	COTalkBR	COTalkAR	COTalkW2
Change in own time		COTalkC	
Change in partner's time		COTalkCP	
Time spent in task			COTalkT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COTalkTP_w2
<b>Monitoring child</b>			
Division of task	COMonitorBR	COMonitorAR	COMonitorW2
Change in own time		COMonitorC	
Change in partner's time		COMonitorCP	
Time spent in task			COMonitorT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COMonitorTP_w2
<b>Attending child's events</b>			
Division of task	COeventBR	COeventAR	COeventW2
Change in own time		COeventC	
Change in partner's time		COeventCP	
Time spent in task			COeventT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COeventTP_w2
<b>Reading with child</b>			
Division of task	COreadBR	COreadAR	COreadW2
Change in own time		COreadC	
Change in partner's time		COreadCP	
Time spent in task			COreadT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COreadTP_w2
<b>Playing with child</b>			
Division of task	COplayBR	COplayAR	COplayW2
Change in own time		COplayC	
Change in partner's time		COplayCP	
Time spent in task			COplayT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COplayTP_w2
<b>Organizing/planning</b>			
Division of task	COorganizeBR	COorganizeAR	COorganizeW2
Change in own time		COorganizeC	
Change in partner's time		COorganizeCP	
Time spent in task			COorganizeT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COorganizeTP_w2
<b>Enforcing rules</b>			
Division of task	CORulesBR	CORulesAR	CORulesW2
Change in own time		CORulesC	
Change in partner's time		CORulesCP	

Time spent in task			COrulesT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COrulesTP_w2
<b>Picking up/dropping off child</b>			
Division of task	COpickupBR	COpickupAR	COpickupW2
Change in own time		COpickupC	
Change in partner's time		COpickupCP	
Time spent in task			COpickupT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COpickupTP_w2
<b>Helping child with homework</b>			
Division of task	COhworkBR	COhworkAR	COhworkW2
Change in own time		COhworkC	
Change in partner's time		COhworkCP	
Time spent in task			COhworkT_w2
Partner's time spent in task			COhworkTP_w2

### Non-Parental Childcare

Parents of pre-school aged children were asked about nonparental childcare arrangements for their youngest child. In the Wave 1 survey, parents were asked whether their youngest child spent time in childcare/preschool both *before* (**childcareB**) and *since* the pandemic (**childcareA**), how many hours per week the child spent in childcare (**cchoursB** and **cchoursA**), and the type of childcare/daycare used (**ccformB** and **ccformA**). Parents who were not using daycare/childcare were also asked to provide the primary reason why they are not using daycare/preschool (**noccare**). In the Wave 2 survey, parents were asked identical questions specific to their current non-parental childcare arrangements.

Table 5. Non-Parental Childcare Variables

	Wave 1		Wave 2
	Before Pandemic (March 2020)	During Pandemic (April 2020)	November 2020
Does youngest child spend time in non-parental childcare/preschool	childcareB	childcareA	childcare_w2
Hours spent in non-parental childcare/preschool	cchoursB	cchoursA	cchours_w2
Type of non-parental childcare/preschool	ccformB	ccformA	ccform_w2
Reason youngest child is not in non-parental childcare/preschool		noccare	noccare_w2

## Schooling

Parents of school-aged children were asked questions about their youngest child’s school arrangements. In the Wave 1 survey, parents reported on how many hours per week their child spent on schoolwork both *before* (**schoolworkB**) and *since* the pandemic (**schoolworkA**).

Parents also indicated whether their child participated in e-learning (**elearn**) and how many hours of e-learning were required per day (**elearnhrs**). Parents were also asked whether they were creating or finding any additional educational content for their child (**createedu**), and if so, who was primarily responsible for this task (**who\_edu**).

In the Wave 2 survey, parents reported on the current format of their children’s school (e.g., in-person, hybrid, virtual, or homeschooled; **schooltype\_w2** and **hmschool\_w2**), how many hours children spend in school (**inschtime\_w2**), how many hours per week children currently spend on schoolwork (**schhmtime\_w2**), who is primarily responsible for assisting with children’s e-learning (**elearn\_asst\_w2**) and how many hours per week parents spend assisting with children’s e-learning (**hrs\_elearn\_w2**). Parents were also asked the same questions about creating additional educational content for their children as in the Wave 1 survey.

Table 6. Schooling Variables

	Wave 1		Wave 2
	Before Pandemic (March 2020)	During Pandemic (April 2020)	November 2020
Format of child’s school			schooltype_w2; hmschool_w2
Hours per week child spends in school			inschtime_w2
Hours per week child spends on schoolwork	schoolworkB	schoolworkA	schhmtime_w2
Child participates in e-learning		elearn	
Number of hours of e-learning required per day		elearnhrs	
Who is responsible for assisting with e-learning			elearn_asst_w2
Hours per week assisting with e-learning			hrs_elearn_w2
Parents create additional educational content for child		createedu	createedu_w2
Who is responsible for creating additional educational content		who_edu	who_edu_w2

### *Paid Work*

Parents were asked to provide information about their own employment situation and their partner's employment (in separate sections of the survey). In the Wave 1 survey, parents reported on employment both *before* and *since* the pandemic. Questions include whether parents/partners were employed (**employB/A** and **employB/A\_P**). For parents/partners who were employed, parents reported on average hours worked per week (**workhoursB/A** and **workhoursB/A\_P**), having a flexible schedule (**flexB/A** and **flexB/A\_P**), being able to work from home (**homeB/A** and **homeB/A\_P**), and frequency of working from home for those who were able to work from home (**homefreqB/A** and **homefreqB/A\_P**). Parents also reported on whether they/their partners were laid off due to the pandemic (**lostjob** and **lostjob\_P**), whether those who were laid off were receiving unemployment benefits (**unemploy** and **unemploy\_P**), and whether they/their partners left their job or reduced work hours due to the pandemic (**leftjob** and **leftjob\_P**).

In the Wave 2 survey, questions were worded slightly differently for follow-up respondents and new cohort respondents. Follow-up respondents were asked about their current employment situation and any changes to their employment since the last survey in April 2020. New cohort respondents reported on their current employment situation and any changes to their employment since the beginning of the pandemic. A similar set of paid work variables are included in Wave 2, although separate questions were asked about whether parents/partners left their job (**leftjob\_w2** and **leftjobP\_w2**) or reduced their work hours (**hrsreduce\_w2** and **hrsreduceP\_w2**). Questions were also asked to obtain additional information about what month parents were laid off, furloughed, or let go from their job (**unemp\_date\_w2** and **unemp\_dateP\_w2**), whether parents previously received unemployment benefits

(**unemp\_ben\_w2** and **unemp\_benP\_w2**), how many weeks they received unemployment benefits (**unemp\_length\_w2** and **unemp\_lengthP\_w2**), and reasons why parents voluntarily left their job (**leftjob\_why\_w2** and **leftjobP\_why\_w2**) or reduced their work hours (**hrsreduce\_why\_w2** and **hrsreduceP\_why\_w2**).

**Table 7. Paid Work Variables**

	Wave 1		Wave 2
	Before Pandemic (March 2020)	During Pandemic (April 2020)	November 2020
<b>Employment status</b>			
Respondent	employB	employA	employA_w2
Partner	employB_P	employA_P	employP_w2
<b>Hours worked per week</b>			
Respondent	workhoursB	workhoursA	workhoursA_w2
Partner	workhoursB_P	workhoursA_P	workhoursP_w2
<b>Flexible work schedule</b>			
Respondent	flexB	flexA	flexA_w2
Partner	flexB_P	flexA_P	flexP_w2
<b>Able to work from home</b>			
Respondent	homeB	homeA	homeA_w2
Partner	homeB_P	homeA_P	homeP_w2
<b>Frequency of work from home</b>			
Respondent	homefreqB	homefreqA	homefreqA_w2
Partner	homefreqB_P	homefreqA_P	homefreqP_w2
<b>Laid off due to pandemic</b>			
Respondent		lostjob	lostjob_w2
Partner		lostjob_P	lostjobP_w2
<b>Currently receiving unemployment benefits</b>			
Respondent		unemploy	unemploy_w2
Partner		unemploy_P	unemployP_w2
<b>Previously received unemployment benefits</b>			
Respondent			unemp_ben_w2
Partner			unemp_benP_w2
<b>Weeks received unemployment benefits</b>			
Respondent			unemp_length_w2
Partner			unemp_lengthP_w2
<b>Left job or reduced hours voluntarily</b>			
Respondent		leftjob	leftjob_w2; hrsreduce_w2
Partner		leftjob_P	leftjobP_w2; hrsreduceP_w2
<b>Why left job voluntarily</b>			
Respondent			leftjob_why_w2
Partner			leftjobP_why_w2

<b>Why reduced hours voluntarily</b>			
Respondent			hrsreduce_why_w2
Partner			hrsreduceP_why_w2

*Paid leave/leave*

A number of items are included in the survey to assess parents' leave-taking. When parents first enter the study, they are asked whether they (**leave**) and their partner (**leaveP**) took time off work when their youngest child was born, and if so, the length of leave taken (**leavefreq** and **leavefreqP**). In subsequent waves, follow-up panelists were asked similar questions about leave-taking for any new children that were born since the study began. In Wave 2, additional questions were added to assess whether parents were aware of the expansion of paid leave benefits during the early part of the pandemic (**FFCAaware\_w2**) and whether parents/partners took advantage of this policy (**FFCAuse\_w2** and **FFCAuseP\_w2**). Parents were also asked whether they (**pdleave\_w2**) or their partner (**pdleaveP\_w2**) had used any form of paid leave during the pandemic, the source of paid leave (**pdleave\_source\_w2** and **pdleave\_sourceP\_w2**), and length of leave taken (**pdleave\_length\_w2** and **pdleave\_lengthP\_w2**).

Table 8. Paid Leave Variables

	Wave 1	Wave 2
<b>Took time off work for birth of youngest child</b>		
Respondent	leave	leave_w2
Partner	leaveP	leaveP_w2
<b>Length of time off work for birth of youngest child</b>		
Respondent	leavefreq	leavefreq_w2
Partner	leavefreqP	leavefreqP_w2
<b>Took time off work for birth of new child</b>		
Respondent		leave_newbaby_w2
Partner		leave_newbabyP_w2
<b>Length of time off work for birth of new child</b>		
Respondent		leavedur_newbaby_w2
Partner		leavedur_newbabyP_w2
Aware of Families First Coronavirus Response Act		FFCAaware_w2
<b>Took leave using Families First Coronavirus Response Act</b>		
Respondent		FFCAuse_w2
Partner		FFCAuseP_w2

<b>Used any form of paid leave</b>		
Respondent		pdleave_w2
Partner		pdleaveP_w2
<b>Source of paid leave</b>		
Respondent		pdleave_source_w2
Partner		pdleave_sourceP_w2
<b>Length of paid leave taken</b>		
Respondent		pdleave_length_w2
Partner		pdleave_lengthP_w2

### *Relationship Satisfaction and Fairness*

To assess parents' relationship satisfaction with their partners, parents were asked both general and specific questions about relationship satisfaction. In the Wave 1 survey, parents were first asked a general question about relationship satisfaction both *before* (**relsatB\_1**) and *since* (**relsatA\_1**) the pandemic. Parents were also asked how satisfied they were with specific aspects of their relationship both *before* (**satisfiedB\_1** through **satisfiedB\_5**) and *since* the pandemic (**satisfiedA\_1** through **satisfiedA\_5**). Specifically, parents reported on satisfaction with (a) the division of household tasks, (b) the division of childcare tasks, (c) how they and their partner managed money, (d) amount of time spent with partner, and (e) their sex life. Each satisfaction item ranged from 0 = not at all satisfied to 10 = completely satisfied.

Parents were also asked questions about perceived fairness across various aspects of their relationship with their partners. For each item, responses ranged from 1 = very unfair to me to 5 = very unfair to my partner. In the Wave 1 survey, parents reported on perceived fairness in regard to household chores, childcare, financial decisions, financially supporting family, and paid work time, and provided their perceptions of fairness both *before* (**choresFB** through **pdwkFB**) and *since* the pandemic (**choresFA** through **pdwkFA**).

In the Wave 2 survey, the same items used to measure relationship satisfaction and perceived fairness at Wave 1 are included. Parents were asked to report on their current level of satisfaction and how fairly they think they and their partners currently share responsibilities.

Table 9. Relationship Satisfaction and Fairness Variables

	Wave 1		Wave 2
	Before Pandemic (March 2020)	During Pandemic (April 2020)	November 2020
Overall relationship satisfaction	relsatB_1	relsatA_1	satisfied1_w2
Satisfaction with division of household tasks	satisfiedB_1	satisfiedA_1	satisfied2_w2
Satisfaction with division of childcare tasks	satisfiedB_2	satisfiedA_2	satisfied3_w2
Satisfaction with management of money	satisfiedB_3	satisfiedA_3	satisfied4_w2
Satisfaction with time spent with partner	satisfiedB_4	satisfiedA_4	satisfied5_w2
Satisfaction with sex life	satisfiedB_5	satisfiedA_5	satisfied6_w2
Perceived fairness in division of household chores	choresFB	choresFA	choresF_w2
Perceived fairness in division of childcare	childcareFB	childcareFA	childcareF_w2
Perceived fairness in financial decisions	findecFB	findecFA	findecF_w2
Perceived fairness in financially supporting family	finsupFB	finsupFA	finsupF_w2
Perceived fairness in paid work time	pdwkFB	pdwkFA	pdwkF_w2

### *Health*

There are a number of items included in the survey to assess health within families. In the Wave 1 survey, parents reported on whether they (**covidtest**) or someone in their household (**covidHH**) tested positive for COVID and their relationship to the respondent (**covid\_rel\_1-covid\_rel\_6**), whether anyone in the household has a chronic illness (**illness**) and their relationship to the respondent (**illnessrel\_1 – illnessrel\_7**), and whether anyone in the household is immune-compromised (**immune**) and their relationship to the respondent (**immunerel\_1 – immunerel\_7**). Parents in the Wave 1 survey also reported on whether they or their partner were diagnosed with a mental illness before the pandemic (**mentalB** and **mentalB\_P**), as well as the overall self-rated health of both themselves and their partners before the pandemic (**healthallB** and **healthallB\_P**).

Similar health questions were included in the Wave 2 survey. Parents reported on whether they or someone in their household tested positive for COVID and their relationship to the respondent, as well as whether they or their partner were diagnosed with a mental health illness. For each of these items, follow-up respondents were asked whether these things had occurred since the last survey in April 2020, and new cohort respondents were asked whether

these things occurred since the start of the pandemic. Respondents also reported on the current self-rated health of both themselves and their partners.

**Table 10. Health Variables**

	Wave 1		Wave 2
	Before Pandemic (March 2020)	During Pandemic (April 2020)	November 2020
<b>Have you tested positive for COVID</b>		covidtest	covidtest_w2
<b>Has someone in your household tested positive for COVID</b>		covidHH	covidHH_w2
What is their relationship to you?		covid_rel_1- covid_rel_6	covid_rel_1_w2- covid_rel_6_w2
<b>Does anyone in your household have a chronic illness</b>		illness	illness_w2*
What is their relationship to you?		illnessrel_1- illnessrel_7	illnessrel_1_w2- illnessrel_7_w2*
<b>Is anyone in the household immune-compromised</b>		immune	
What is their relationship to you?		immunerel_1- immunerel_7	
<b>Diagnosed with a mental illness</b>			
Respondent	mentalB		mental_w2
Partner	mentalB_P		mental_P_w2
<b>Overall self-rated health</b>			
Respondent	healthallB		healthallB_w2
Partner	healthallB_P		healthallB_P_w2

\*Indicates variables that were only asked to new cohort respondents.

*Income*

In the Wave 1 survey, parents reported on their household income both *before* (**HHincomeB**) and *since* the pandemic (**HHincomeA**), indicating one of the following categories of monthly income after taxes: (a) less than \$1,000/month, (b) \$1,000-\$1,999/month, (c) \$2,000-\$2,999/month, (d) \$3,000-\$4,999/month, (e) \$5,000-\$6,999/month, (f) \$7,000-\$8,999/month, or (g) \$9,000/month or more. Parents also reported on relative earnings between themselves and their partners both *before* (**relincB**) and *since* the pandemic (**relincA**), with responses ranging from 1 = I earn all the household income to, 4 = we earn the same amount, to 7 = my spouse/partner earns all the household income.

In the Wave 2 survey, parents reported on their current household income (**HHincome\_w2**) as well as household income in 2019 – the year prior to the pandemic (**HHearnings\_w2**). Parents also answered separate questions about their own personal income both currently and in 2019 (**income\_w2** and **income2019\_w2**) and their partner’s personal income both currently and in 2019 (**income\_w2** and **income2019P\_w2**). Variables about respondent’s and partner’s personal income should be used to measure relative earnings between partners in the W2 data.

Table 11. Income Variables

	Wave 1		Wave 2
	Before Pandemic (March 2020)	During Pandemic (April 2020)	November 2020
Current household income	HHincomeB	HHincomeA	HHincome_w2
Relative earnings between self and partner	relincB	relincA	
Current respondent income			income_w2
Current partner income			incomeP_w2

### *Demographic Characteristics*

Respondents were asked to provide information about themselves (and in some cases, their partners) on a variety of demographic factors. Respondents provide this information one time when they enter the study. Specifically, respondents were asked questions about their own and their partner’s gender (**gender** and **gender\_P**), age (**age** and **ageP**), race (**race** and **race\_P**), Hispanic ethnicity (**latinx** and **latinx\_P**), highest educational attainment (**educ** and **educ\_P**), and whether they were previously married (**prevmar** and **prevmarP**). In addition, respondents were asked questions about their own political ideology (ranging from 1 = very conservative to 7 = very liberal; **poli**), political affiliation (**party**), religious affiliation (**relig**), marital status (**married**), having a child from a previous relationship (**prevchild**), residing with extended family members (**extend**) and state of residence (**state**).

## Scales

### *Self-Efficacy*

Parents responded to a number of items at each wave intended to measure self-efficacy. These items are adapted from Pearlin's mastery scale (Pearlin et al., 1981) and the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 2015), and the scale is taken from the American Changing Lives Survey (<https://acl.isr.umich.edu/>). Specifically, parents were asked to report their level of agreement (ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 4 = strongly disagree) to the following items: (a) sometimes I feel that I am being pushed around in life (**control\_1**), (b) there is really no way I can solve the problems I have (**control\_2**), (c) I take a positive attitude toward myself (**control\_3**), (d) at times I think I am no good at all (**control\_4**), (e) all in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure (**control\_5**), and (f) I can do just about anything I set my mind to (**control\_6**).

Table 12. Self-Efficacy Scale

	Wave 1	Wave 2
Sometimes I feel that I am being pushed around in life	control_1	control_1_w2
There is really no way I can solve the problems I have	control_2	control_2_w2
I take a positive attitude toward myself	control_3	control_3_w2
At times I think I am no good at all	control_4	control_4_w2
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	control_5	control_5_w2
I can do just about anything I set my mind to	control_6	control_6_w2
<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	<i>0.88</i>	<i>0.88</i>

### *Communication with Partner*

Six items are included at each wave to measure parents' communication with their partner. These items are taken from the Marriage and Relationship Survey (Licther & Carmalt, 2009). Parents were asked to indicate their agreement (ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree) to the following statements: (a) I find it hard to tell my partner certain things because I am not sure how they will react (**react**), (b) My partner listens to me when I need

someone to talk to (**listen\_P**), (c) It is hard for me to talk with my partner (**hardtalk**), (d) My partner and I discuss things together before making important decisions (**discuss**), (e) When we are having a problem, my partner often gives me the silent treatment (**silence**), and (f) I feel that I can tell my partner anything (**tellanything**).

Table 13. Communication Scale

	Wave 1	Wave 2
I find it hard to tell my partner certain things because I am not sure how they will react	react	reactW2
My partner listens to me when I need someone to talk to	listen_P	listenP_w2
It is hard for me to talk with my partner	hardtalk	hardtalkW2
My partner and I discuss things together before making important decisions	discuss	discussW2
When we are having a problem, my partner often gives me the silent treatment	silence	silenceW2
I feel that I can tell my partner anything	tellanything	tellanythingW2
<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	0.85	0.85

### *Gender Attitudes*

Six items are included at each wave to measure parents' gender attitudes. These items are taken from the National Survey of Families and Households (Sweet & Bumpass, 1996). Parents were asked to indicate their agreement (ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree) to the following statements: (a) Preschool children are likely to suffer if their mother is employed (**childsuffer**), (b) It is OK for mothers to work full-time when their youngest child is under age 5 (**momworkFT**), (c) If a husband and wife both work full-time, they should share household tasks equally (**equaltasks**), (d) Women and men should share equally in the raising of children (**equalccare**), (e) Parents should encourage just as much independence in their daughters as in their sons (**independence**), and (f) It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home and family (**breadwinner**).

Table 14. Gender Ideology Variables

	Wave 1	
Preschool children are likely to suffer if their mother is employed	childsuffer	childsufferW2
It is OK for mothers to work full-time when their youngest child is under age 5	momworkFT	momworkFT_w2

If a husband and wife both work full-time, they should share household tasks equally	equaltasks	equaltasksW2
Women and men should share equally in the raising of children	equalccare	equalccareW2
Parents should encourage just as much independence in their daughters as in their sons	independence	independenceW2
It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home and family	breadwinner	breadwinnerW2
<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	0.72	0.72

### *Depressive Symptoms*

Parents were asked to report on any depressive symptoms they experienced in the past week using ten questions from the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D-10). These items are labeled **depress** (**depress\_1** to **depress\_10**) and show high internal consistency in the full sample.

Table 15. CESD-10 Scale

	Wave 1	Wave 2
Bothered by things that don't usually bother me	depress_1	depress_1_w2
Trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing	depress_2	depress_2_w2
Felt depressed	depress_3	depress_3_w2
Felt that everything I did was an effort	depress_4	depress_4_w2
Felt hopeful about the future	depress_5	depress_5_w2
Felt fearful	depress_6	depress_6_w2
Sleep was restless	depress_7	depress_7_w2
Was happy	depress_8	depress_8_w2
Felt lonely	depress_9	depress_9_w2
Could not "get going"	depress_10	depress_10_w2
<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	0.90	0.90

### *Stress*

Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) was included to measure parents' stress. Respondents responded to ten items on how often they felt/thought about various things over the past month, ranging from 1 = *never* to 5 = *very often* (**PSS**).

Table 16. Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale

	Wave 1	Wave 2
How often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?	PSS_1	PSS1_w2
How often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	PSS_2	PSS2_w2
How often have you felt nervous and "stressed"?	PSS_3	PSS3_w2
How often have you felt confident about your ability to handle personal problems?	PSS_4	PSS4_w2

How often have you felt that things were not going your way?	PSS_5	PSS5_w2
How often have you found that you could not cope with all the things you had to do?	PSS_6	PSS6_w2
How often have you been able to control irritations in your life?	PSS_7	PSS7_w2
How often have you felt that you were on top of things?	PSS_8	PSS8_w2
How often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control?	PSS_9	PSS9_w2
How often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?	PSS_10	PSS10_w2
<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	.91	.91

## Weights

To help provide estimates that are more representative of U.S. partnered parents, the SPDLC includes sampling weights. Weights can be included in statistical analyses to make estimates from the SPDLC sample representative of U.S. parents who reside with a romantic partner (married or cohabiting) and a child aged 18 or younger based on age, race/ethnicity, and gender. National estimates for the age, racial/ethnic, and gender profile of U.S. partnered parents were obtained using data from the 2020 Current Population Survey (CPS). Weights were calculated using an iterative raking method, such that the full sample in each data file matches the nationally representative CPS data in regard to the gender, age, and racial/ethnic distributions within the data. This variable is labeled **CPSweightW1** in the Wave 1 dataset, **CPSweightW2** in the Wave 2 dataset, and **CPSweightLW2** in the longitudinal dataset (which includes Waves 1 and 2). There is not a weight variable included in the W1-W2 repeated cross-section data file.

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