



## Impact of Stable Workforce Participation and Good Jobs on Household Income

One [study](#) suggests almost half of U.S. families with young children have faced a high risk of falling into poverty within the first six years of their child's life due to precarious employment. Moreover, [low-wage jobs](#) are commonplace in the U.S. Another [study](#) showed more than one-third of full-time working families do not earn enough to cover basic needs, and one-quarter of working families do not have access to health insurance. Not only may families with [low-incomes](#) struggle to afford basic needs (e.g., food, housing), but children who experience [poverty](#) during the first six years of life are also more likely to receive low-quality education. They are also less likely to enter a steady, well-paying job, and more likely to have poorer mental health.

## Impact of Stable Workforce Participation and Good Jobs on Child Health

Parent/caretaker employment in a high-quality, well paying job can profoundly impact child health and well-being. Specifically, parent/caretaker [economic security](#), directly influences child health, development and educational outcomes.

- **Physical Health:** A growing body of evidence suggests parents'/caregivers' employment status can directly impact their children's physical health. For example, a 2020 survey showed that mothers experiencing unemployment report high rates of [skipped or delayed medical appointments for their children](#). Moreover, another study shows unstable work schedules can hinder parents'/caretakers' ability to effectively manage their [child's asthma](#) by disrupting their ability to monitor their child's symptoms, administer medication, and schedule doctor's appointments. The study also found children with parents/caretakers facing unpredictable work schedules are more likely to experience increased asthma attacks and emergency room visits, which is likely due to greater household stress and economic insecurity. Lastly, maternal [precarious employment](#) is associated with an increased risk of their children being overweight or obese, attributable to lack of time to coordinate a nutritious diet and difficulty affording healthy foods.
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health:** [Research](#) demonstrates an association between parents/caretakers who have a positive work experience (i.e., feeling in control, effective, challenged, supported at work) and positive child development and behavioral health outcomes. Parents/caretakers who are precariously employed are more likely to experience [job stress](#) than individuals who are engaged in less precarious work, which can impact the whole family, including their [children's well-being](#). Moreover, families experiencing job loss report higher levels of stress across both parents/caretakers and adolescents. Studies also show parental unemployment is associated with higher risk of [adverse childhood experiences](#), such as risk for neglect and child maltreatment, which can have long-term behavioral health impacts.<sup>4</sup>
- **Social Drivers of Health:** Precarious employment and employment in jobs that do not pay [family-sustaining wages](#) can impact key social drivers affecting child short- and long-term health and well-being, such as [food](#) and [housing](#) adverse childhood experiences such as risk for

