



The New York City Parent Survey

**Conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago
With funding from the Robin Hood Foundation**

Interviews: 03/31-04/20/2026

4,306 parents and caregivers of children ages 0-5 living in New York City

*Margin of sampling error: +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level
among all adults*

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled.

S0. Including yourself, how many adults aged 18 and older are living in your household right now?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
1	15
2	67
3	9
4+	8
SKIPPED ON WEB	-

N=

4,306

S1. How many children in your household, for whom you are the parent or primary caregiver, are between the ages of...?

NORC 03/31-04/20/2026	0	1	2+	SKP
0-5	-	77	23	-
6-12	62	24	8	6
13-17	78	11	4	7

N=4,306

S2. How old is your child age 0-5?/ What are the ages of your children ages 0-5?¹

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Less than 1	19
1	22
2	21
3	22
4	20
5	19

N=

4,306

¹ Respondents were asked the age of each of their children ages 0-5 with these possible choices for selection. This table reports the percentage of respondents who have children in each age category.

DOV_AMOUNT100 INSERTS.

	DOV_AMOUNT100	DOV_SMI85
<i>DOV_HHSIZE²</i>	<i>100% FPL in 2025</i>	<i>85% SMI in 2025-26</i>
1	\$15,650	\$59,055
2	\$21,150	\$77,226
3	\$26,650	\$95,396
4	\$32,150	\$113,568
5	\$37,650	\$131,738
6	\$43,150	\$149,909
7	\$48,650	\$153,316
8	\$54,150	\$156,723
9	\$59,650	\$160,130
10 or more	\$65,150	\$163,537

DOV_AMOUNT200=DOV_AMOUNT100 * 2

**HHINCOMENY. Which best describes your total household income for 2025 before taking out taxes?
Your best guess is fine.**

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Less than [DOV_AMOUNT100]	20
Between [DOV_AMOUNT100] and [DOV_AMOUNT200 -1]	19
[DOV_AMOUNT200] - [DOV_SMI85]	26
Greater than [DOV_SMI85]	34
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

4,306

Show if there is a child/children under the age of 6 in the household

**DISPLAY1. For the following questions, please think about the [child/children] you told us [is/are]
under 6 years old.**

² Household size was calculated by adding together S1A,S1B,S1C,and S0 (excluding skips) for the respondent.

Q5. In a typical week, do you regularly have someone besides yourself or your [child's/children's] other parent or parents care for [your child/any of your children] under 6 years old?

By regularly, we mean this person or program is expected to provide care every week, not occasional babysitting.

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Yes	64
No	35
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

4,306

Show if child/children under 6 does not have someone besides themselves or other parent who cares for the child/children in Q5

Q6. What best describes the child care you use?

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
I or another parent are the only regular caregivers	73
I only have a need for occasional care	8
I only need child care on a seasonal basis or limited times during the year	6
Other; please describe	12
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

1,230

Show if someone besides parents care for child/children under age of 6 in Q5

DISPLAY2. The following questions will ask more about your non-parental child care, when someone besides yourself or you [child's/children's] other parent or parents care for [your child/them], including teachers or educators.

Show if someone besides parents care for child/children under age of 6

Q8. In a typical week, which best describes the child care arrangement you use for [your child/each child]?

[PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO SELECTED EACH OPTION FOR AT LEAST ONE CHILD]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Another relative	27
Friend, neighbor, or other non-relative	9
Nanny or au pair	10
Family day care or home-based program	14
Child care center	22
School program	15
Combination of these options	11
I don't use nonparental care for this child	6

N=

3,070

Show if combination of child care arrangements are used for child/children in Q8

Q9. What combination of child care arrangements do you use? *Please select all that apply.*

[PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS SELECTED EACH OPTION FOR AT LEAST ONE CHILD. PERCENTAGES OUT OF RESPONDENTS WITH COMBINATION OF ARRANGEMENTS IN Q8 FOR ANY CHILD]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Another relative	53
Friend, neighbor, or other non-relative	34
Nanny or au pair	32
Family day care or home-based program	28
Child care center	42
School program	55

N=

364

Show if combination of child care arrangements are used for child/children in Q8

Q10. Which of the following do you use most often? By this we mean more hours in a typical week.

[PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS SELECTED EACH OPTION FOR AT LEAST ONE CHILD. PERCENTAGES OUT OF RESPONDENTS WITH COMBINATION OF ARRANGEMENTS IN Q8 FOR ANY CHILD]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Another relative	12
Friend, neighbor, or other non-relative	11
Nanny or au pair	9
Family day care or home-based program	9
Child care center	17
School program	27
Use equally as often or about the same amount of time	19

N=

364

Show if combination of child care arrangements are used for any child in Q8

Q11. Please describe how you use this combination of child care arrangements in a typical week.

[CODED OPEN-END RESPONSE – SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
School + separate after-school care	31
Some days formal care + some days informal care	23
Grandparent + other care	18
Separate caregiver for drop-offs/pick-ups	14
Separate arrangement for nights/weekends	6
Separate arrangement for school breaks/holidays	3
Mix of family and friends	3
Other	27
SKIPPED ON WEB	6

N=

364

Show if someone besides parents care for child/children under age of 6 in Q5

Q12. On a weekly basis, which best describes your typical non-parental child care schedule?

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Same days and hours week-to-week (e.g. Monday-Friday, full or part-time)	68
Days might vary, but hours are generally the same	14
Hours may vary, but days are generally the same	9
Both the days and hours change week to week	9
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

3,070

Show if someone besides parents care for child/children under age of 6 in Q5

Q13. Select the options below that best match the hours you currently use child care or pre-k during a typical week. Please think about the care you use regularly every week for [your child/all of your children] under 6 years old, and not occasional babysitting.

Note: Hours of operation are just examples.

Please select all that apply.

[RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-3 MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE]

NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026	Half day (e.g. 8 AM until 12 PM)	School day (e.g. 8 AM until 2-3 PM)	Full day (e.g. 8 AM until 5-6 PM)	Evenings (e.g. past 6 PM)	Overnight	None of these	SKP
Sunday	10	7	11	5	3	54	13
Monday	11	30	47	5	2	6	3
Tuesday	11	28	49	6	2	6	3
Wednesday	11	29	47	6	2	6	3
Thursday	10	29	46	6	2	6	4
Friday	12	26	44	5	3	10	3
Saturday	9	3	9	5	4	57	15

N=3,070

Q15. Do any of your children under 6 years old have, or do you believe they may have, a developmental delay or disability that impacts their care or learning?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Yes	16
No	83
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

4,306

Show if someone besides parents care for child/children under age of 6 in Q5

Q16. How did you find or learn about your current child care arrangements for your [child/children] under 6 years old?

Please select all that apply.

[RESPONSE OPTIONS RANDOMIZED]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Personal networks, such as family, friends, and other parents in your neighborhood	47
Community networks, including faith-based institutions and community centers	12
Online groups, including Facebook and parent groups	17
Child development professionals, such as teachers, social workers, pediatricians	15
Government directories or websites	8
Internet search (e.g., Google search)	28
Print advertisement, such as mailers or posted fliers	8
Digital advertisement (e.g. social media ads)	7
Social media creators/influencers	8
Saw the program in my neighborhood	17
Other; please describe	5
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

3,070

Q17. For your [child/children] under 6 years old, when choosing their current care, what mattered most to you?

Please select the top 3 that mattered most to you.

[RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-12 RANDOMIZED]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Curriculum or credentialed teachers	15
Program environment or amenities (e.g., type of indoor facilities, access to outdoor space)	19
Mixed-age learning/classrooms	4
Ability to have siblings at the same location	9
Level of trust in the caregiver or provider	47
Cost	42
Convenient location (e.g., close to home or work)	44
Hours of operation	23
Cultural fit and/or language access	12
Special needs support/accommodations	6
Number of children cared for (e.g. one-on-one or smaller group setting versus larger, classroom setting)	14
Having a consistent caregiver as child grows	15
I had limited or no choice	4
Other; please describe	2
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

4,306

Q18. What best describes how you feel about the amount of child care you have for your [child/children] under 6 years old?

[HALF ASKED RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
I have less child care than I need	39
I generally have the right amount of child care for my needs	56
I have more child care than I need	5
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

4,306

Q19. Please describe your familiarity with the following government programs:

[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED, HALF SAMPLE ASKED RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026	Not familiar or never heard of it	I am aware of it but haven't used it	I've applied or tried to use it, but was unable to	I have used it before but not currently	I am currently using it	SKP
Early Head Start/Head Start	37	36	6	9	7	5
Child care vouchers/ Child Care Assistance Program	38	31	9	7	10	5
Subsidy for friend, family, neighbor care/ legally exempt child care	59	21	4	6	4	6
Early Intervention	39	32	6	11	8	6
3-K	19	39	5	17	14	5
Pre-K	11	44	5	17	18	5
Empire State Child Credit	58	19	5	5	8	5
New York State Paid Family Leave	23	29	5	30	7	5

N=4,306

DISPLAY3. In the next section, we want to understand how much families are paying for child care across the city. Please include any informal payments to friends and family in your estimates.

Q21. Do you currently have out-of-pocket child care costs or bills?

Consider any payment for child care you have on a regular basis, beyond costs covered by other sources, such as a voucher or 3-K/Pre-K.

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Yes	60
No	40
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

4,306

Show if currently have out-of-pocket child care costs or bills in Q21

Q22. In a typical month, how much does your household spend on child care for [your child/all of your children] under 6 years old? Your best guess is fine.

[CODED NUMERIC TEXTBOX]

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Less than \$1,000	46
\$1,000-1,999	21
\$2,000-2,999	14
\$3,000-3,999	9
\$4,000-\$4,999	3
\$5,000 or more	5
SKIPPED ON WEB	2

N=

3,004

DISPLAY4. We want to learn about your experiences of and views on parental leave after the birth or adoption of a child. For these questions, please think about your youngest child who is under 6 years old. If you're currently on leave, please answer with your expected plans.

Q23. When your youngest child was born, were you employed?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Yes	77
No	23
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

4,306

Show if employed when youngest child was born in Q23

Q24. When your youngest child was born, did you take any time off from work?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Yes	86
No	14
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N= 3,536

Show if took time off work when youngest child was born in Q24

Q25. Were you paid for the time you took off from work?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Yes, I used paid leave for the entire time	55
Yes, I used a mix of paid and unpaid leave	30
No, I used unpaid leave	15
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N= 3,246

Show if used paid leave entire time or a mix of paid and unpaid leave in Q25

Q26. Which of the following types of paid leave did you use?

Please select all that apply.

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
New York State's Paid Family Leave policy	65
My employer's paid parental leave policy	54
Temporary disability insurance	20
Paid sick leave	23
Paid vacation time	35
Other; please describe	3
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N= 2,943

Show if took unpaid leave in Q25 or if only used options other than “New York State’s Paid Family Leave” policy in Q26

Q26B. Why didn’t you use New York State’s Paid Family Leave program?

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
I wasn’t aware of it	36
I didn’t think I was eligible	14
I wasn’t eligible	12
My claim was denied	2
I couldn’t afford to take it	4
I preferred my employer’s paid leave policy ³	13
Concern I’d lose my job or health insurance	4
Concern my employer would retaliate against me	4
Other; please describe	9
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

1,250

Show if took time off work when youngest child was born in Q24

Q27. Did you return to work after taking leave?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Yes	93
No	7
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

3,246

³ This option was only shown if the respondent used their employer’s paid parental leave policy in Q26.

Show if took time off work when youngest child was born in Q24

Q28. How much time did you take off from work, or plan on taking if you are currently on leave?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Less than a week	3
1-2 weeks	10
1 month (3-4 weeks)	16
2 months (5-8 weeks)	13
3 months (9-12 weeks)	24
4 months (13-16 weeks)	9
5 months (17-20 weeks)	7
6 months (21-24 weeks)	8
7 months (25-28 weeks)	2
8 months (29-32 weeks)	1
9 months (33-36 weeks)	*
10 months (37-40 weeks)	*
11 months (41-44 weeks)	*
12 months (45-52 weeks)	1
Over 12 months	3
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

3,246

Show if used "New York State's Paid Family Leave" policy in Q26 and took 8 weeks or less off work in Q28

Q28_2. You shared that you used New York State's Paid Family Leave policy, which provides up to 12 weeks of leave, but took less time off than that. How did you decide how much leave to take? Select all that apply.

[RESPONSE OPTIONS RANDOMIZED]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
I couldn't financially afford to take a longer leave	24
I wanted to return to work sooner	27
My employer or coworkers didn't support a longer leave	11
I was asked to return earlier by my employer	12
My work makes it hard to be away longer	31
I had already used some of the 12 weeks of leave for a different family caregiving event	22
I wasn't interested in taking a longer leave	13
My claim was not approved for a longer leave	8
Other; please describe	3
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

482

Q29. If money and your job security were not a concern, how many weeks of family leave would you like to have after the birth or adoption of a child?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Less than a week	2
1-2 weeks	6
1 month (3-4 weeks)	10
2 months (5-8 weeks)	9
3 months (9-12 weeks)	13
4 months (13-16 weeks)	7
5 months (17-20 weeks)	4
6 months (21-24 weeks)	14
7 months (25-28 weeks)	1
8 months (29-32 weeks)	2
9 months (33-36 weeks)	3
10 months (37-40 weeks)	1
11 months (41-44 weeks)	*
12 months (45-52 weeks)	15
Over 12 months	6
I would prefer to not to return to paid work and/or be a stay-at-home parent	4
SKIPPED ON WEB	2

N=

4,306

DISPLAY5. Previously, you shared with us the child care arrangements that you use in a typical week.

For the next few questions, you will be asked to think about what child care you want or would want during the first three years of your child's life.

Imagine that you could design your ideal situation. This might mean different hours or different options would be available and affordable to you as compared to today.

Even if your child is not yet the given age, please share your expected preference in the following questions. These details help us understand how parents' needs and wants might change as their children grow.

DISPLAY5A. In the next few questions, you'll be asked about the following types of care:

- Yourself/other parent – meaning yourself or your child's other parent/s or guardian/s
- Family member/relative – e.g., grandparent, aunt, uncle
- Non-relative – e.g., friend, neighbor, or nanny
- Family day care or home-based program – meaning a group of children in a licensed home-based/residential setting (the provider's home). This can include Head Start and pre-k programs.
- Child care center – meaning a group of children in a licensed program, not in someone's home. This can include Head Start and pre-k programs.
- School-based program – meaning a group child care or pre-k program within a school building

Q30. What child care arrangement would you most want to have at each given age? Please select the child care option you would want to use most often in a typical week.

Note: For the first year of life (under 1), think about the time after any parental leave is taken.

If your preferred option at 3 years old would be 3-K, please think about the setting you would most want the program to be offered in.

NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026	Myself/ other parent	Family member/ relative	Non-relative such as friend, neighbor, or nanny	Family day care or home-based program	Child care center	School- based program	SKP
Under 1 (0-11 months)	69	13	5	5	6	1	*
1 year old (12-23 months)	40	23	8	10	15	3	2
2 years old (24-35 months)	23	19	6	16	23	11	3
3 years old (36-47 months)	13	12	4	13	19	37	2

N=4,306

Show if selected any child care arrangement in Q30A-D.

Q31. In addition to the options you selected, is there another type of child care or combination of options that you would want to regularly use in a typical week?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Yes	44
No	56
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

4,302

Show if would regularly use another type of child care arrangement in Q31

Q32. Which of the following would you also want to use in a typical week?

Please select all that apply at the given age.

NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026	Myself/ other parent	Family member/ relative	Non-relative such as friend, neighbor, or nanny	Family day care or home- based program	Child care center	School- based program	SKP
Under 1 (0-11 months)	46	48	18	13	11	4	5
1 year old (12-23 months)	42	47	18	18	19	6	8
2 years old (24-35 months)	33	38	19	24	30	19	7
3 years old (36-47 months)	27	33	18	21	30	39	6

N=2,106

Q32_2. What makes the child care arrangements you just told us about the ideal choices for your family?

[CODED OPEN-END RESPONSE]

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Safety / trust-driven / less worry about the child	13
Schedule / flexibility-driven	10
Want to raise child themselves, child should be with parent, want to be with child	9
Varies by child's age	9
Want child around family (non-parent)	6
Best for child's growth/education/development	6
Convenience/proximity	5
Cost / affordability-driven	5
What's good/best for the child/children/their happiness	3
General positive responses	3
Socialization	2
Quality of care	1
Other	8
DON'T KNOW	*
SKIPPED ON WEB	19

N=

4,306

Show if did not select family day care or home-based program, child care center, or school-based program for any age in Q30 or Q32

Q33. In addition to the options you selected, how likely would you be to use each of the following arrangements for your [child/children] before they turned 4, if a space was available to you at no cost?

[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED, HALF SAMPLE ASKED RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026	Extremely /very likely NET	Extremely likely	Very likely	Some- what likely	Not very/not at all likely NET	Not very likely	Not likely at all	SKP
Family day care or a home- based program	42	15	27	32	24	12	12	2
Child care center	37	13	24	34	27	13	14	2
School-based program	51	21	30	30	16	7	9	2

N=724

DISPLAY6. Remember, imagine additional hours or days were available and affordable to you.

**Consider: What would help you cover current gaps or give you time to pursue different opportunities?
How would you want your child's care to change as they grow?**

Show if selected family day care or home-based program, child care center, or school-based program in Q30 or Q32

Q34. You selected:

- [Show if “Family day care or home-based program” in Q30 or Q32:] Family day care or home-based program
- [Show if “Child care center” in Q30 or Q32:] Child care center
- [Show if “School-based program” in Q30 or Q32:] School-based program

as what you would want to use either most often or regularly for the ages below.

What best matches the hours a day you would want to use this child care in a typical week? Consider what you want even if it is different from what you used today or in the past.

[AGES ONLY DISPLAYED WHERE RESPONDENT SELECTED FAMILY DAY CARE OR HOME-BASED PROGRAM, CHILD CARE CENTER, OR SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAM IN Q30 OR Q32]

NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026	Half day (e.g. 8 AM until 12 PM)	School day (e.g. 8 AM until 2-3 PM)	Full day (e.g. 8 AM until 5-6 PM)	None of these	SKP
Under 1 (0-11 months) (N=911)	17	26	48	8	2
1 year old (12-23 months) (N=1,840)	18	22	53	4	3
2 years old (24-35 months) (N=2,834)	15	29	52	2	2
3 years old (36-47 months) (N=3,434)	9	33	55	1	2

Show if selected family day care or home-based program, child care center, or school-based program in Q30 or Q32

Q35. Again you selected:

- [Show if “Family day care or home-based program” in Q30 or Q32:] Family day care or home-based program
- [Show if “Child care center” in Q30 or Q32:] Child care center
- [Show if “School-based program” in Q30 or Q32:] School-based program

as what you would want to use either most often or regularly for the ages below.

What best matches the days you would regularly want to use this child care in a typical week? Consider what you want even if it is different from what you used today or in the past.

[SELECT ALL THAT APPLY; RESPONSE OPTIONS 1 AND 2 ARE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE; AGES ONLY DISPLAYED WHERE RESPONDENT SELECTED FAMILY DAY CARE OR HOME-BASED PROGRAM, CHILD CARE CENTER, OR SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAM IN Q30 OR Q32

NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026	Some weekdays (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday)	All weekdays (Monday through Friday)	Weekends (Saturday and/or Sunday)	SKP
Under 1 (0-11 months) (N=911)	25	67	12	4
1 year old (12-23 months) (N=1,840)	24	72	13	1
2 years old (24-35 months) (N=2,834)	20	76	11	1
3 years old (36-47 months) (N=3,434)	14	81	11	1

Show if selected myself/other parent, family member or relative or a non-relative friend, neighbor, or nanny in Q30 or Q32

Q36. You selected:

- [Show if “Myself/other parent” in Q30 or Q32] Myself/other parent
- [Show if “Family member or relative” in Q30 or Q32] Family member or relative
- [Show if “Non-relative such as a friend, neighbor, or nanny” in Q30 or Q32] Non-relative such as a friend, neighbor, or nanny

as what you would want to use either most often or regularly for the ages below.

What best matches the hours a day you would want to use this child care in a typical week? Consider what you want even if it is different from what you used today or in the past.

[AGES ONLY DISPLAYED WHERE RESPONDENT SELECTED MYSELF/OTHER PARENT, FAMILY MEMBER OR RELATIVE, OR NON-RELATIVE IN Q30 OR Q32]

NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026	Half day (e.g. 8 AM until 12 PM)	School day (e.g. 8 AM until 2-3 PM)	Full day (e.g. 8 AM until 5-6 PM)	None of these	SKP
Under 1 (0-11 months) (N=3,886)	20	15	44	19	2
1 year old (12-23 months) (N=3,295)	20	17	42	17	4
2 years old (24-35 months) (N=2,472)	18	22	41	15	4
3 years old (36-47 months) (N=1,871)	15	28	39	14	4

Show if selected myself/other parent, family member or relative or a non-relative friend, neighbor, or nanny in Q30 or Q32

Q37. Again you selected:

- [Show if “Myself/other parent” in Q30 or Q32] Myself/other parent
- [Show if “Family member or relative” in Q30 or Q32] Family member or relative
- [Show if “Non-relative such as a friend, neighbor, or nanny” in Q30 or Q32] Non-relative such as a friend, neighbor, or nanny

as what you would want to use either most often or regularly for the ages below.

What best matches the days you would regularly want to use this child care in a typical week? Consider what you want even if it is different from what you used today or in the past.

[SELECT ALL THAT APPLY; RESPONSE OPTIONS 1 AND 2 ARE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE; AGES ONLY DISPLAYED WHERE RESPONDENT SELECTED MYSELF/OTHER PARENT, FAMILY MEMBER OR RELATIVE, OR NON-RELATIVE IN Q30 OR Q32]

NORC 03/31-04/20/2026	Some weekdays (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday)	All weekdays (Monday through Friday)	Weekends (Saturday and/or Sunday)	SKP
Under 1 (0-11 months) (N=3,886)	29	60	26	6
1 year old (12-23 months) (N=3,295)	28	62	23	6
2 years old (24-35 months) (N=2,472)	28	60	21	6
3 years old (36-47 months) (N=1,871)	28	59	22	5

Q38. Would you be interested in evening or overnight care on a regular basis (e.g., weekly)?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
No	58
Yes, evening care (e.g., past 6pm)	20
Yes, overnight care	4
Both evening and overnight care	17
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

4,306

Q39A. Are there other hours, days, or schedules you would like to have child care besides what we've asked?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
No	90
Yes, please describe	9
SKIPPED ON WEB	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>4,306</i>

[CODED OPEN-END RESPONSE IF SELECTED YES]

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
School holiday / break care (DOE closures, summer, holidays, school breaks)	14
Evening care (after 6pm, nights, date nights)	13
Occasional weekend care	11
Regular weekend care	10
After-school / afternoon care (school pickup gaps, approx. 2:30–6pm)	9
Flexible / occasional care (as-needed, part-time, irregular schedules)	8
Early morning care (before 8am, early drop-off, 6–7am starts)	7
Emergency / last-minute care	5
Overnight care (overnight shifts, late night to morning)	3
In-home / babysitter support (nanny help, babysitter networks, verified sitters)	2
Other	16
SKIPPED ON WEB	2
<i>N=</i>	<i>509</i>

Q39B. What changes to child care in New York City would help your family most?

[CODED OPEN-END RESPONSE]

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Lower cost / affordability	22
Extended / flexible hours (full-day care, after-school, evenings, weekends)	11
Free or universal childcare	8
Subsidies / vouchers / financial assistance	8
No changes needed	7
Increased availability / access for 2K / 3K / Pre-K programs (more spots, shorter waitlists, easier access)	6
Safety, oversight, and quality (background checks, cameras, inspections, trust)	4
Longer paid family leave	3
More local / neighborhood options (closer to home/work, neighborhood-based care)	1
Support for children with disabilities	*
Other	7
DON'T KNOW	2
SKIPPED ON WEB	21

N=

4,306

DISPLAY7. The following questions help us understand what families look for and how they make decisions about child care.

Q40. When selecting a child care program for your [child/children] under 6 years old, which measures of quality are most important to you?

Please select the top 3 that are most important to you.

[RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-7 RANDOMIZED]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Small class or program sizes / low child-to-teacher ratios	39
Educators/teachers with early childhood education degrees/credentials	41
Specific approach to learning (e.g., play-based, Montessori, language immersion)	32
Focus on school readiness / early literacy and math skills	38
Outdoor play and physical activity opportunities	40
Cultural responsiveness / program that reflects your family's culture and language	19
Health and safety standards	54
Other; please describe	3
SKIPPED ON WEB	1
N=	4,306

Q41. Which description most closely matches what you want your [child/children] child care experience to focus on?

[HALF ASKED RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Mostly free play and social development, with some structured learning activities	23
Equal balance of play-based and structured learning, such as early literacy and math skills	52
Mostly structured learning, school readiness, and academic preparation, with some free play and social development	24
SKIPPED ON WEB	1
N=	4,306

Q42. How would having affordable child care that meets your family's needs change your life?

[CODED OPEN-END RESPONSE]

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Improved financial stability / ability to save and stay in the city	27
General positive impact	14
Work stability or work benefits (not income)	10
Reduced stress / improved mental well-being (less anxiety, peace of mind, burnout reduction)	9
Better work-life balance	3
No impact / no change	3
Child development and learning benefits (socialization, education, school readiness)	2
Ability to have more children	1
Other	5
DON'T KNOW	1
SKIPPED ON WEB	24

N=

4,306

DISPLAY8. In this final section, we'll ask a few demographic questions to help us understand the unique challenges people face when accessing child care. Your responses are completely anonymous. You can skip any questions you're not comfortable answering.

AGE2. What is your current age?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
18-24	6
25-34	34
35-44	47
45+	12
SKIPPED ON WEB	2

N=

4,306

HISPAN. Are you of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino descent?

RACE. What is your race?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
White, non-Hispanic	32
Black, non-Hispanic	17
Hispanic	29
Asian or Asian American	13
Other	8
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

4,306

OTHLANG1. What language do you speak most often at home?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
English	65
Spanish	24
Other	10
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

4,306

EDUC. What is the highest level of school you have completed?

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Less than a high school diploma	7
High school graduate or equivalent	27
Some college	20
Bachelor's degree	19
Post graduate study or professional degree	25
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

4,306

EMPLOY. Which of the following best describes your work situation? Please think about any paid work you do.

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Working full-time (35+ hours per week)	65
Working part-time (less than 35 hours per week)	12
Employed but on leave from work	2
Not working - looking for work	7
Not working - unable to work	2
Not working - in school	1
Not working – stay-at-home parent or caregiver	8
Retired	1
Other, please specify	2
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

4,306

Show if Working full-time, part-time, or employed but on leave at EMPLOY.

EMPLOY2. Which of the following best describes your work situation?

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Regular daytime schedule, such as between the hours of 6 AM and 6 PM	74
Regular evening schedule, such as between the hours of 2 PM and 12 AM	6
Regular overnight schedule, such as between the hours of 9 PM and 8 AM	3
Rotating shift, or one that changes regularly from days to nights	4
Variable schedule, or one that changes day to day or week to week	7
Split shift, or one consisting of two distinct periods each day	1
Other, please specify	3
SKIPPED ON WEB	*

N=

3,558

GENDER. What is your gender?

	NORC 03/31-04/20/2026
Male	44
Female	54
Other	*
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

4,306

HOUSING. What best describes your housing situation?

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Own	32
Rent	54
Rent and use a voucher (e.g. Section 8, CityFHEPS)	5
Live in private housing without paying rent (e.g. with family or friends)	2
Public housing (NYCHA)	3
Supportive housing	1
Shelter	1
Other	2
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

4,306

BOROUGH. Which New York City borough do you live in?

	NORC 03/31- 04/20/2026
Bronx	18
Brooklyn	33
Manhattan	15
Queens	27
Staten Island	6
SKIPPED ON WEB	1

N=

4,306

Study Methodology

This survey was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago with funding from the Robin Hood Foundation. Staff from NORC at the University of Chicago and New Practice Lab, and the Robin Hood Foundation collaborated on all aspects of the study.

Interviews were conducted March 31-April 20, 2026, with 4,306 New York City adult residents age 18 in the U.S. with children ages 0-5.

Data for the probability-based sample are collected using an address based (or ABS) approach that allows residents to complete the interview via web. The sampling frame is based on an extract of the U.S. Postal Service delivery-sequence file (DSF). The DSF provides sample coverage of approximately 97% of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings. Addresses were limited to the five boroughs of New York City and stratified by the likelihood that the household included a child aged 0–5 years. Addresses with a higher likelihood of having young children were oversampled.

All sampled households are mailed a postcard inviting them to complete the survey online using a unique PIN. Phone numbers were obtained from consumer records matched to the address from Verisk, and those who did not respond to the postcard were texted to complete the survey via a direct link. Postcards are addressed to: CURRENT RESIDENT. There is no within-household selection for households with multiple adults.

Probability interviews were conducted online, with 1,372 completing via web. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish, and respondents were offered a monetary incentive for completing the survey.

Cint provided 1,149 non-probability interviews with parents of children ages 0-5 living in New York City. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish, and via the web only. For panel recruitment, Cint uses invitations of all types including email invitations, phone alerts, banners, and messaging on panel community sites to include people with a diversity of motivations to take part in research.

Additional non-probability sample was collected via an open link where respondents could provide their email address and key demographic and geographic information. Sample was collected via this open link from March 31 through April 17. Any duplicate email addresses were removed, and all eligible respondents were then emailed a direct link to complete the survey. Early respondents to the open link survey but nonresponders to the main survey were sent a follow up email. Interviews were conducted via web in English and Spanish, and 1,785 completed the survey.

Because non-probability panels do not start with a frame where there is known probability of selection, standard measures of sampling error and response rates cannot be calculated.

Quality assurance checks were conducted to ensure data quality. In total, 116 interviews were removed for nonresponse to at least 50% of the questions asked of them, for completing the survey in less than one-third the median interview time for the full sample, or for straight-lining all grid questions asked of them. These interviews were excluded from the data file prior to weighting.

In order to incorporate the nonprobability samples, NORC used TrueNorth calibration, an innovative hybrid calibration approach developed at NORC in order to explicitly account for potential bias associated with the nonprobability sample. TrueNorth uses a tree-based non-parametric supervised learning algorithm to classify respondents based on their survey responses and apply a ratio adjustment to adjust the weights for the nonprobability sample to bring weighted distributions of the nonprobability sample in line with the population distribution. Such calibration adjustments help to reduce potential bias, yielding more accurate population estimates. A raking process is also used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any noncoverage or under and oversampling resulting from the study sample design. Raking variables included age of parent, gender of parent, household income, race/ethnicity, education of parent, housing tenure (own, rent/other), age(s) of child(ren) in the household, language most spoken in household, and borough. Population control totals for the raking variables were obtained from the 2024 American Community Survey. The weighted data reflect the New York City population of parents and caregivers of children ages 0-5.

The overall margin of error for the combined sample is +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured error in this or any other survey.

For the open-ended questions (Q11, Q32_2, Q39A, Q39B, and Q42), responses were initially classified using Microsoft Copilot. These codes were reviewed, validated, and adjusted as needed by a human coder for reporting.

Complete questions and results are available at <https://www.norc.org/research/projects/understanding-child-care-needs-new-york-city-families.html>.

For more information, email info@norc.org.