



THE OFFICIAL NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

# AAP News

## Studies find gender disparities in pediatrician pay, household duties

by from AAP Research

Two new papers from the AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study (PLACES) find important gender differences regarding income and household responsibilities.

Among early- to mid-career pediatricians, women report earning less than men and having more household and child care responsibilities at home ([Frintner MP, et al. \*Pediatrics\*. 2019;144:e20183955](#); [Starmer AJ, et al. \*Pediatrics\*. 2019;144:e20182926](#), respectively).

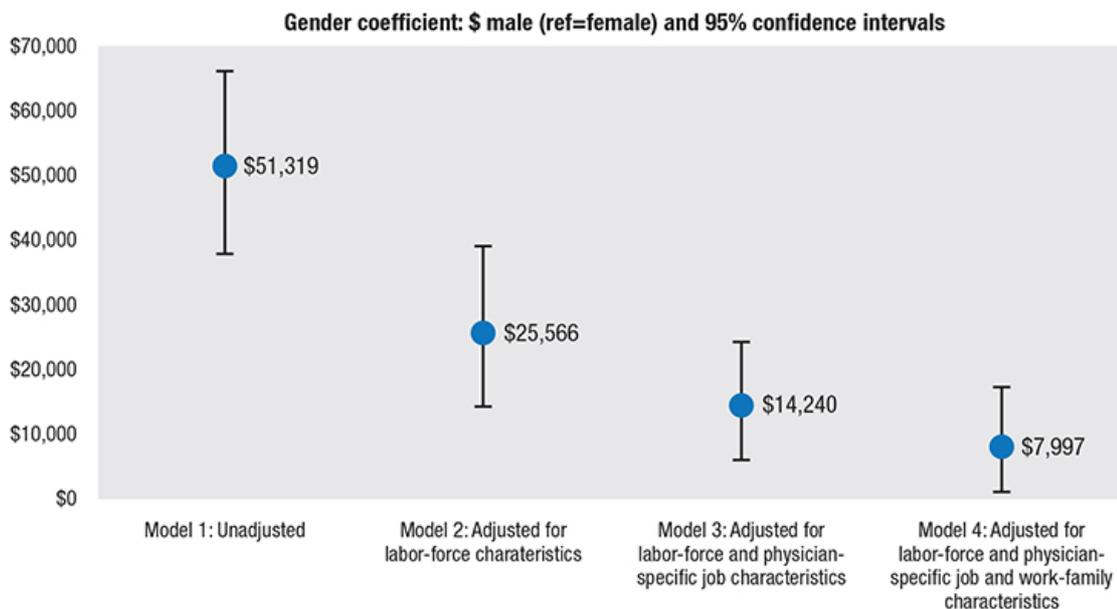
The average annual earnings were \$190,000 among PLACES participants, who were five to 14 years past residency when surveyed in 2016. With no adjustments for pediatrician characteristics, women reported earnings about 76% of what men reported.

This study also examined work differences between men and women that are important to consider when examining pay differences, such as work hours, subspecialty training and ownership status. For example, it is known that female pediatricians work fewer hours than male pediatricians on average and are more likely to be working in primary rather than subspecialty care.

This study adjusted for a comprehensive set of pediatrician characteristics. Even in the best-case scenario, adjusting for all available factors, women earned about 94% of what men earned, a gap of about \$8,000 per year at this career stage (see figure 1). The study reports national averages; individual and institutional experiences may vary.



**Figure 1: Estimated earnings gap between male and female early- to mid-career pediatricians: unadjusted and adjusted models**



**Note:** Dollar amounts are the log of annual earnings (95% confidence interval) converted back to original scale (\$).

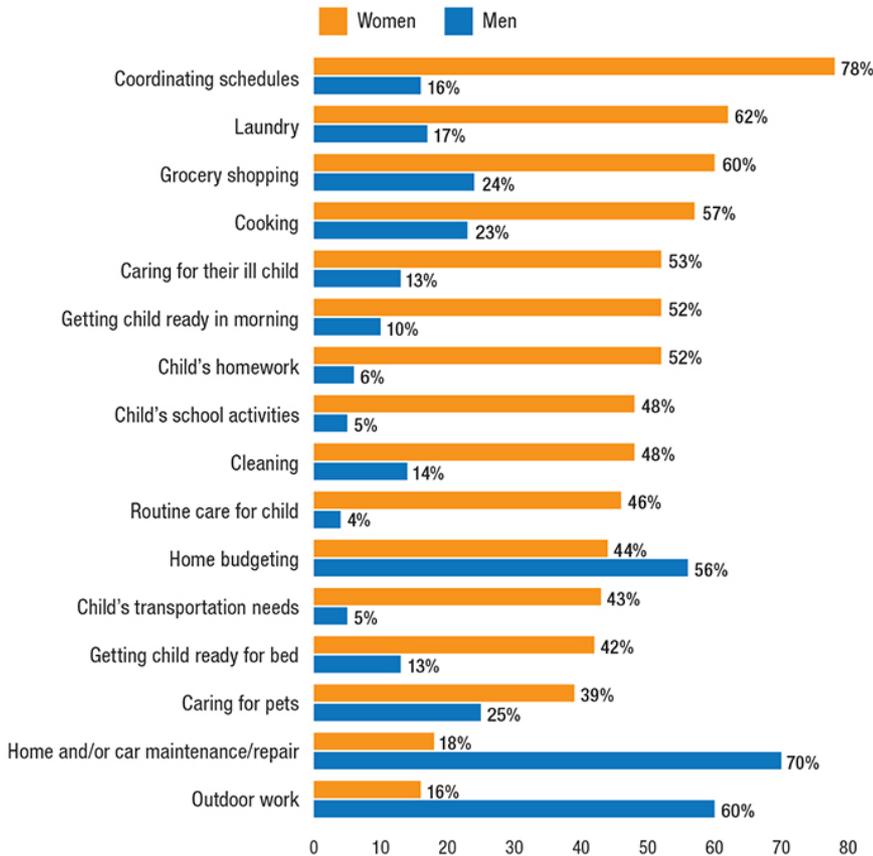
Labor-force characteristics included years since residency training completion, race and ethnicity, medical school location, region of country, hours worked per week and specialty. Physician-specific job characteristics included years in current position, number of patients seen in a typical week, ownership status, work area, academic setting and compensation method. Work-family characteristics included marital status, parental status, choices made for own children, choices made for work environment and work reduction over past five survey years.

**Source:** Frintner MP, et al. *Pediatrics*. 2019;144:e20183955  
AAP PLACES Annual Survey, 2016. Average age=40 years.

PLACES participants also were surveyed in 2015 about their work-life balance. Women were more likely than men to report having primary responsibility for 13 of 16 household responsibilities, such as cleaning, cooking and routine care of their own children (see figure 2). For example, 62% of women and 17% of men reported having primary responsibility for laundry, and 52% of women and 6% of men had primary responsibility for their child's homework.



**Figure 2: Percent of male vs. female early- to mid-career pediatricians who report they have the primary responsibility for household and child care tasks**



Source: Starmer AJ, et al. *Pediatrics*. 2019;144:e20182926  
AAP PLACES Annual Survey, 2015.

While outsourcing of household-related work has been suggested to help increase work-life balance, only about half of women and one-third of men reported hiring help for cleaning, and fewer reported hiring help for other household responsibilities.

"Compared to past generations, pediatrics has made strides in increasing workplace flexibility, yet women still face challenges with professional advancement," said AAP President Kyle E. Yasuda, M.D., FAAP. "The Academy is committed to the support of gender equity in the pediatric workforce. The information in these studies provides data to inform the profession's discussion on the current status of gender equity and strategies needed going forward."

Launched in 2012, PLACES is an ongoing study of early- to mid-career pediatricians who completed residency in 2002-'04 and 2009-'11. The project includes both AAP members and nonmembers and general pediatricians, subspecialists and hospitalists. A new cohort was recruited in 2019 (graduated residency in 2016-'18), so the AAP can continue to gather the perspective of pediatricians starting their careers.



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## Resources

- [The Women's Wellness through Equity and Leadership \(WEL\) project plans to continue collaborating around leadership and gender equity in medicine to help foster long-term change. WEL is led by the AAP, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Physicians, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Psychiatric Association and the American Hospital Association.](#)
- [Learn more about individual resilience; how to recognize burnout in yourself and colleagues; and how to build your own wellness plan with strategies for improving work-life integration on the new AAP Pediatrician Wellness portal.](#)
- [For more information on the AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study, visit \[www.aap.org/places\]\(http://www.aap.org/places\) or contact Mary Pat Frintner, in AAP Health Services Research, at 630-626-6664 or \[places@aap.org\]\(mailto:places@aap.org\).](#)
- [Additional Research Update columns](#)