

Executive Summary

Background

Many children in the nation are cared for by parents before and after school each day. Other children spend time in various nonparental arrangements before and after school, either because their parents choose or are obliged to work during these hours or because the children are participating in programs or activities geared toward their enrichment or enjoyment. Some children stay with one relative before and after school, or different relatives on different days, while others are cared for by people not related to them, such as neighbors, regular sitters, or family day care providers. Many children participate in center- or school-based programs before and after school, while other children participate in before- or after-school activities such as sports, clubs, or community service. Still other children are responsible for themselves before and after school, some for a few minutes at a time, others for several hours.

Surveys conducted in the 1990s found that while most children in kindergarten through eighth grade are in school during most of the hours when their mothers work (Smith 2000; Casper, Hawkins, and O'Connell 1994), many types of nonparental arrangements are utilized by parents of school-age children during time before and after school. Approximately 39 percent of all children in kindergarten through third grade in 1995 received some form of nonparental care before and after school, spending an average of 14 hours per week in such care, and most received care in a private home from a relative (Brimhall, Reaney, and West 1999). Employed parents often depended on multiple arrangements to provide supervision for their children (Hofferth et al. 1991), possibly including self-care. In 1991, 8 percent of 5- to 14-year olds with working mothers were in self-care (Casper, Hawkins, and O'Connell 1994). There is evidence that factors such as a child's age, race/ethnicity, family income, and parent education level have all been found to be related to

children's participation in various types of before- and after-school arrangements.

This report presents findings from a national survey of families with children in kindergarten through eighth grade, the 2001 Before- and After-School Programs and Activities Survey of the National Household Education Surveys Program (ASPA-NHES:2001). This nationally representative study was conducted for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education. Households were sampled using random-digit-dialing (RDD) methods. Interviews were completed with parents of 9,583 children attending kindergarten through eighth grade. Computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) technology was used to conduct the interviews.

The survey asked parents about nonparental arrangements in which children participated before and after school during the school year, including care by relatives and people not related to the child; center- or school-based programs; scouting, sports, and other extracurricular activities; and self-care. These arrangements may be used primarily for the purposes of providing adult supervision for children or primarily for children's enrichment. Information was also collected about the characteristics of arrangements, parents' preferred types of after-school arrangements, and parents' ratings of aspects of their children's arrangements. An extensive array of household and family characteristic data was also collected.

This report provides various types of analyses based on data from the NHES:2001 Before- and After-School Programs and Activities Survey, including the extent of children's participation in nonparental arrangements during out-of-school hours and details the characteristics of participants and nonparticipants in these arrangements. All of the estimates presented in this report are based on data that were weighted to produce unbiased and consistent estimates of the

national totals. To test the differences between estimates, Student's *t* statistic was employed. All differences cited in the report are statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance.

Key Findings

Overall, 20 percent of children in kindergarten through eighth grade had regularly scheduled nonparental arrangements before school in 2001 (table A), and 50 percent had nonparental arrangements after school. The three most common after-school arrangements for children were center- or school-based programs (19 percent), relative care (17 percent), and self-care (13 percent). Fewer kindergarten through

eighth-grade children were in the care of a nonrelative (6 percent) or in extracurricular activities used for supervision (7 percent) after school. Survey findings indicate that

- Overall, children who had regular weekly scheduled arrangements (before and/or after school) spent on average 10.4 hours per week in them, or about 2 hours per day (not shown in tables). Children with regular weekly scheduled before-school arrangements spent on average 4.7 hours per week in them, and children with after-school arrangements spent on average 9.0 hours per week in them (table B).

Table A. Percent of kindergarten through eighth-grade children participating in various before- and/or after-school arrangements (scheduled at least monthly): 2001

| Characteristic | Before-school | | After-school | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|------|
| | Percent | s.e. | Percent | s.e. |
| Any arrangements..... | 20 | 0.5 | 50 | 0.6 |
| Relative care..... | 7 | 0.4 | 17 | 0.5 |
| Nonrelative care..... | 3 | 0.3 | 6 | 0.3 |
| Center- or school-based program..... | 4 | 0.3 | 19 | 0.5 |
| Activities used for supervision..... | 1 | 0.1 | 7 | 0.4 |
| Self-care..... | 6 | 0.3 | 13 | 0.4 |
| Parental care only..... | 80 | 0.5 | 50 | 0.6 |

NOTE: s.e. is standard error. Home-schooled children are excluded. Includes arrangements regularly scheduled at least once per month. Detail does not sum to totals due to multiple response—children who had more than one type of arrangement are reported under each type.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Before- and After-School Programs and Activities Survey of the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 2001.

Table B. Mean number of hours per week kindergarten through eighth-grade children spent in before- and/or after-school arrangements (scheduled at least weekly): 2001

| Characteristic | All arrangements | | Types of arrangements | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------|-----------------------|------|------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|---------------------------------|------|-----------|------|
| | | | Relative care | | Nonrelative care | | Center- or school-based programs | | Activities used for supervision | | Self-care | |
| | Estimate | s.e. | Estimate | s.e. | Estimate | s.e. | Estimate | s.e. | Estimate | s.e. | Estimate | s.e. |
| Total number of children in before-school arrangements (thousands).... | 7,086 | 184 | 2,566 | 129 | 1,133 | 95 | 1,324 | 93 | 267 | 38 | 2,246 | 103 |
| Mean before-school hours | 4.7 | 0.1 | 5.0 | 0.2 | 5.5 | 0.3 | 4.5 | 0.2 | 2.2 | 0.2 | 3.5 | 0.1 |
| Total number of children in after-school arrangements (thousands)..... | 17,650 | 207 | 5,882 | 178 | 2,243 | 106 | 6,433 | 180 | 2,615 | 148 | 4,591 | 125 |
| Mean after-school hours | 9.0 | 0.2 | 9.7 | 0.3 | 9.5 | 0.3 | 7.5 | 0.1 | 4.2 | 0.1 | 4.8 | 0.1 |

NOTE: s.e. is standard error. Home-schooled children are excluded. May include hours after 6:00 p.m. Includes arrangements regularly scheduled at least once each week. Due to multiple response, children who had more than one type of arrangement are reported under each type.

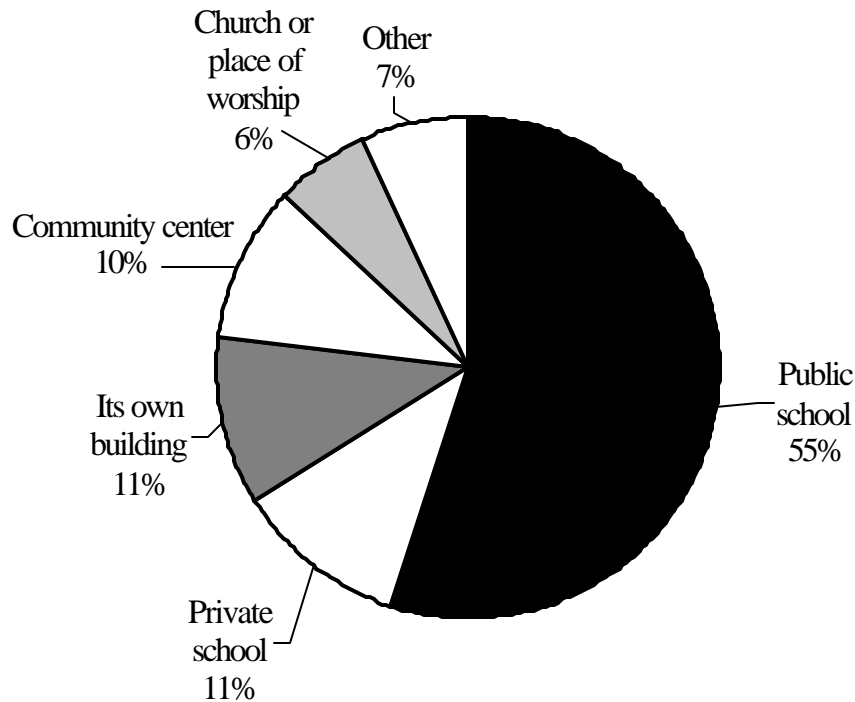
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Before- and After-School Programs and Activities Survey of the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 2001.

- Of those children who had at least some nonparental arrangements before and/or after school, almost one-third were in more than one regularly scheduled arrangement (figure 1 and table 3).
- Generally, younger children (in kindergarten through fifth grade) were more likely than older children (in sixth through eighth grade) to be in the care of a relative, in the care of a nonrelative, or in a center- or school-based program before and after school, and were less likely than older children to care for themselves during out-of-school time (tables 1 and 2).
- Differences existed across racial/ethnic groups: Black, non-Hispanic children were more likely than White, non-Hispanic and Hispanic children to be cared for by a relative and to be in self-care both before and after school. They were also more likely to participate in center- or school-based programs after school (tables 1 and 2).
- Two characteristics that were consistently related to nonparental arrangements were family type and mother’s employment status. Generally, single-parent households and households where mothers worked full time were more likely to have nonparental arrangements for their children before and after school (tables 1 and 2).

The survey also provided data on the characteristics of the nonparental arrangements of kindergarten through eighth graders in 2001, including children’s activities within their arrangements, the location and cost of arrangements, characteristics of relative and nonrelative care providers, and the number of children and adults present in different arrangement types. Survey findings indicate that

- In general, according to parents' reports, many children were engaged in education-related activities (such as homework) in all types of after-school arrangements (table 5). Many were also spending time in activities such as watching television, playing video games, and listening to music within their relative care, nonrelative care, and self-care arrangements after school.
- Children in relative care were more likely to be cared for in their own homes than children in nonrelative care (figure 2), and children in self-care after school were very likely to spend at least some of this time in their own homes rather than other places, such as other homes, public places, community centers, schools, or outdoors (figure 4). The majority of center- or school-based arrangements in which children participated were located in public schools (figure A).

Figure A. Percent of kindergarten through eighth-grade children attending before- and/or after-school center- or school-based programs (scheduled at least monthly) in various locations: 2001



NOTE: Standard errors are as follows: public school, 1.4; private school, 0.8; its own building, 1.0; community center, 0.9; church or place of worship, 0.7; other, 0.8. If more than one center- or school-based program was reported, only the one with the most hours is represented. Includes arrangements regularly scheduled at least once each month. Home-schooled children are excluded.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Before- and After-School Programs and Activities Survey of the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 2001.

- Many relative care providers were grandmothers of the children (52 percent) (figure 6), but 21 percent of relative care providers were siblings. Most children who had sibling care providers were cared for by brothers or sisters in their teens or older (86 percent); however, 14 percent were cared for by siblings between the ages of 10 and 12 (figure 7). Overall, 0.5 percent of all children were cared for by siblings between the ages of 10 and 12 (not shown in tables).
- With respect to cost, parents of 19 percent of children in relative care reported a fee (paid either by them or some other person or agency) for their children's relative care arrangements, while parents of 72 percent of children in nonrelative care reported a fee for their nonrelative care (table 7). Parents of 58 percent of children in a center- or

school-based program reported a fee. On average, for those children whose arrangements required a fee, parents paid \$5.60 per hour for relative care, \$7.90 per hour for nonrelative care, and \$5.60 per hour for center- or school-based programs.

This report presents a broad view of the out-of-school time of kindergarten through eighth-grade children in the nation in 2001. Results suggest that children's experiences before and after school were quite varied. Many children simply were in the care of their parents, while others were in one or more nonparental arrangements during at least some of their out-of-school time on school days. The variability in children's experiences in nonparental arrangements reflects how parents from different backgrounds managed the demands and contingencies of work, the availability of different types of arrangements, the cost and location of arrangements, and other factors.