SNAPSHOT

CHILD CARE AND ARKANSAS’ ECONOMY IN 2021

Child care is a key support for Arkansas’ workforce.

53% of those working in Arkansas are parents.

37% of those parents have young children.

Access to child care is especially critical for Black mothers.

74% of Black mothers with young children are single parents, compared with 34% of Latina mothers and 24% of white mothers with young children.

Young parenthood boosts men’s labor force participation but depresses women’s labor force participation.

72% and 81% of childless Arkansan women and men, respectively, participate in the labor force.

Corresponding figures are 67% for mothers with young children and 94% for fathers with young children.

High child care costs challenge families with young children.

(average cost)

$6,100 per child per year = 12% of median household income

The child care industry is struggling.

The child care workforce has decreased by 4% in Arkansas since the start of the pandemic.

500 workers have left the industry.

NOTES: This fact sheet was prepared by Samantha Evans, Charles Gascon, Ana Kent and Ngân Trần of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Statistics are based on prime-age civilian adults ages 25-54. Young children are defined as ages 0-5. “Single” is defined as married with spouse absent, separated, divorced, widowed or never married/single. Average cost and child care workers are rounded to the nearest 100.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ definition of affordable child care is no more than 7% of household income. See Zeytoon Nejad Mosaviani (2017) for the effect of parenthood on labor force participation.