

# WHO IS PROVIDING FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS? PART 2

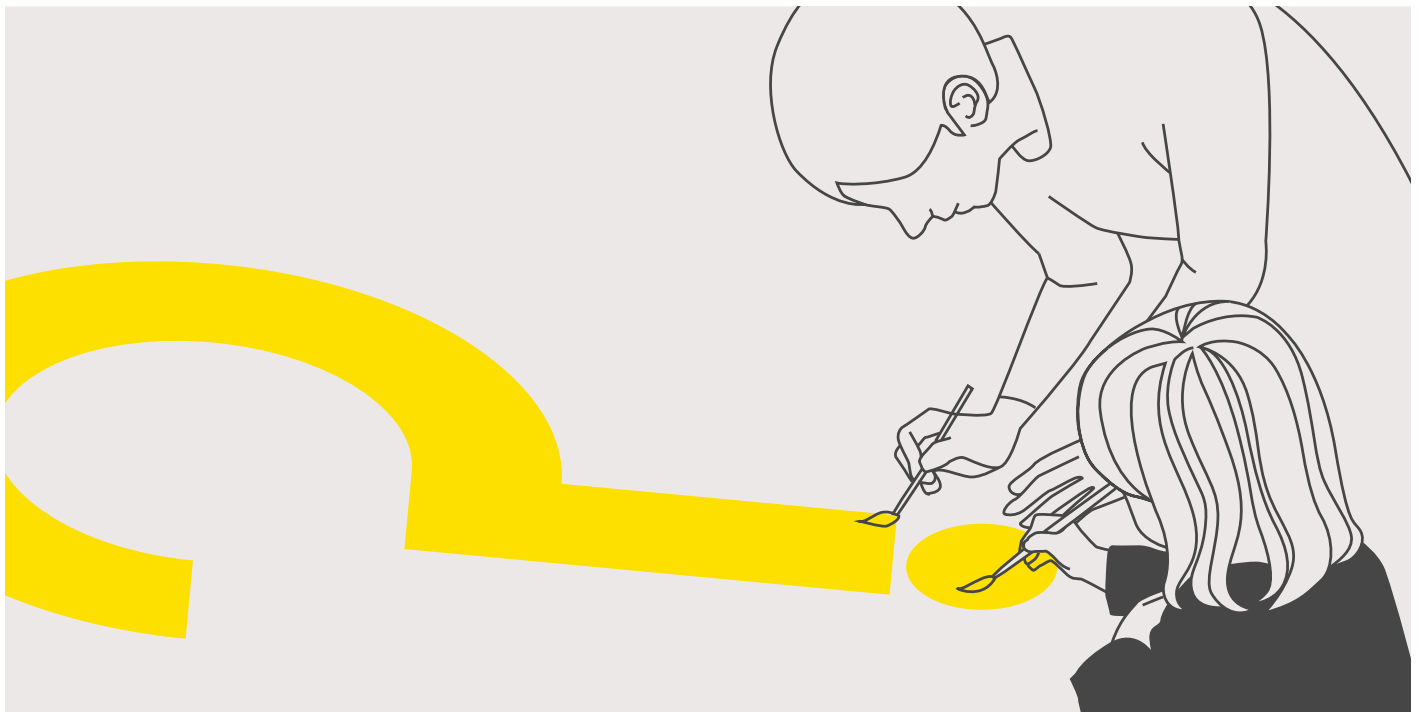
Food insecurity, economic hardship, and work schedule uncertainty negatively affect child care providers' emotional well-being.

In a previous fact sheet, we described challenges that child care providers are facing during the pandemic. Providers had been experiencing pronounced difficulties paying for basic needs.

We also found that this stress has been negatively affecting their emotional well-being. In our survey, one in four providers had at least one other job, and over 40% of reported

that providing child care accounted for less than half of their income.

In this fact sheet, we further describe the life of a child care provider.



designbysoapbox.com

Data from our national survey indicate that child care providers are facing significant challenges of food insecurity

and other economic hardships. Instability of work schedule also increases providers' emotional distress.

## A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF CHILD CARE PROVIDERS FACE CHALLENGES RELATED TO FOOD INSECURITY

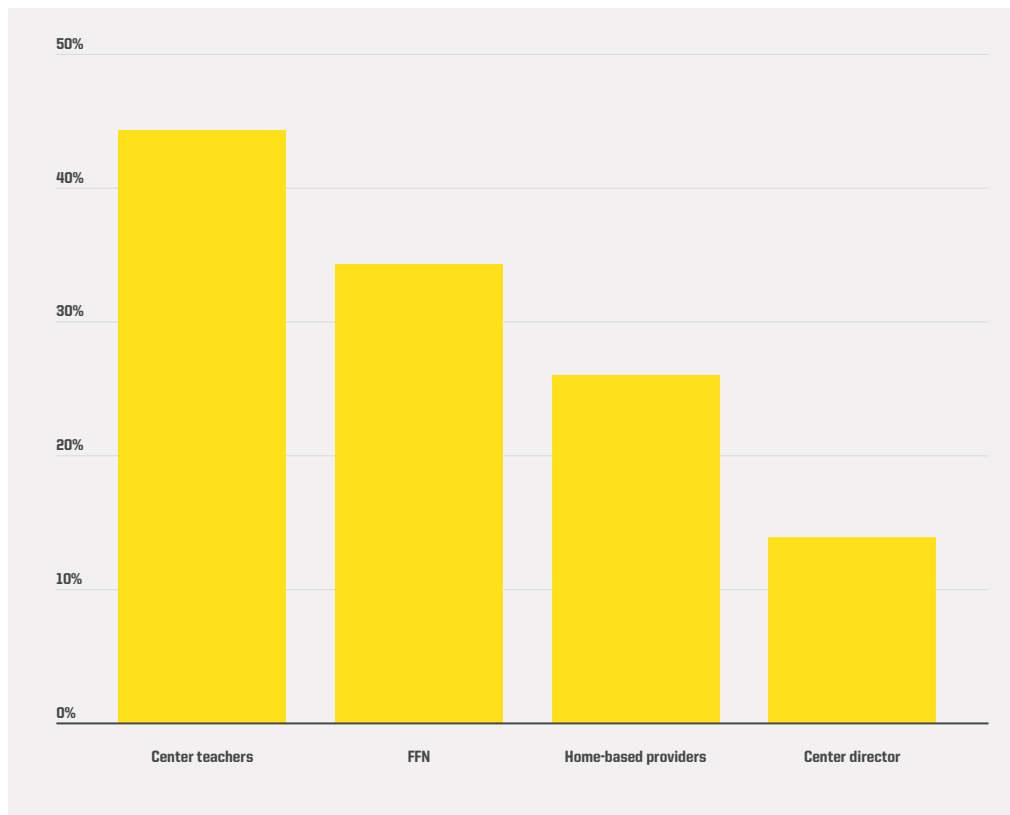
Before the COVID-19 pandemic, hunger was already a problem for 23% of child care providers (based on retrospective reports). This rate has increased to 29% based on data collected between February and July 2021.

- Reports of hunger are the highest among child care center teachers (44%), followed by individuals caring

for friends, family, or neighbors' children (FFN; 34%), home-based providers (26%), and child care center directors (14%) during the pandemic.

- Not surprisingly, child care providers who experience more hunger also report significantly higher levels of emotional distress (a composite of depressive, anxiety, stress, and loneliness symptoms).

Percentage of child care providers who experience food insecurity during the pandemic



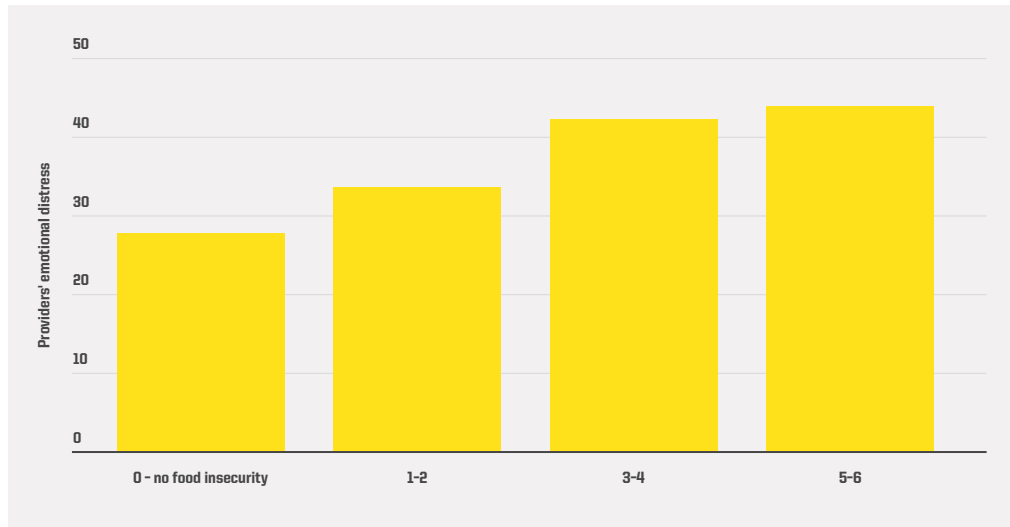

---

**“I used to have a secondary job. Unfortunately, I have been laid off from it. It helped to pay for medical services and extra activities such as speech class and swimming for my son. We are having to cut back to the basics.”**  
 Provider in Michigan

---

**“So much turnover and to reduce the adults bouncing between rooms means that we are working harder but not making any more money than we did last year. The wages are low and the stress is high.”**  
 No state given

Association between food insecurity levels and providers' emotional distress\*



\* We ask providers about their experiences with four symptoms of emotional distress: stress, loneliness, anxiety, and depression. Responses for each symptom were averaged to create a single score and transformed to a range of 0-100 for each provider.

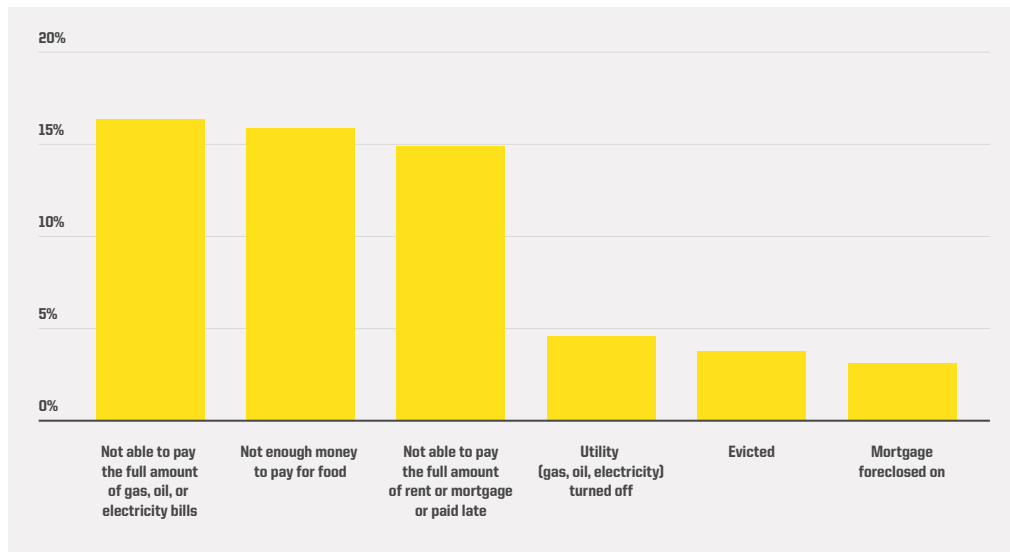
## OTHER ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS AMONG THE CHILD CARE WORKFORCE

- Providers are experiencing other types of economic hardship during the pandemic, including not being able to afford food, pay utilities, or pay the full amount of rent or mortgage. They also report having utilities turned off, eviction, and mortgage foreclosure.
- Child care center teachers are experiencing the highest amount of economic hardships compared to the other types of providers.

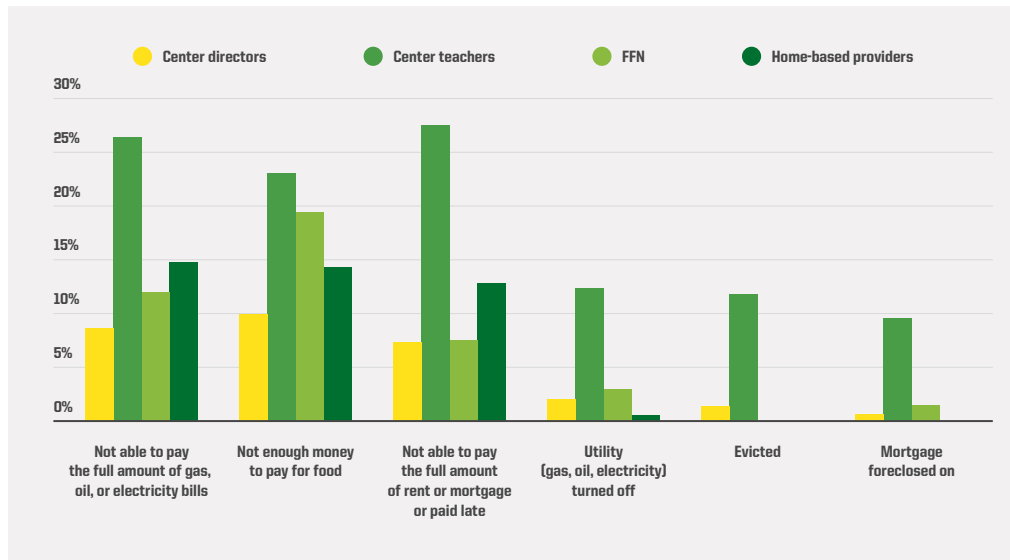
**“I make just enough money not to be eligible for subsidized health care, but not enough to afford it. I would like policymakers to know many educators such as myself are just barely treading water right now.”**

Provider in Massachusetts

Material hardship reported by child care providers



Material hardship reported by child care providers, by provider types

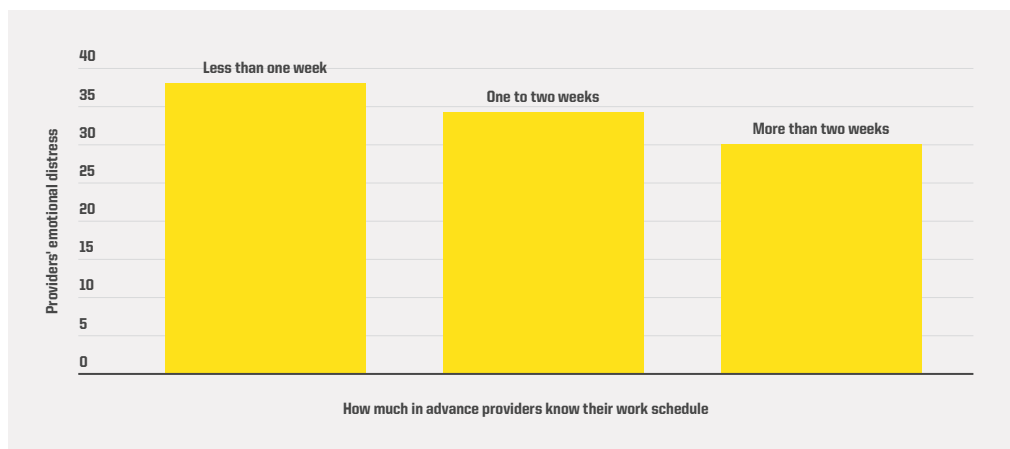


**“[My biggest concern is] keeping the business going financially, paying teachers enough to stay working there. My personal income is footing a lot of the bills to keep going.”**  
 Provider in Washington

## UNCERTAIN AND UNSTABLE WORK SCHEDULES ALSO AFFECT PROVIDERS’ EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

- Many providers don’t know their work schedule very far in advance. For example, nearly one in three (31%) only know their schedule two weeks in advance, and another 11% only know their schedule one to two weeks in advance.
- Work schedule uncertainty is related to increased emotional distress. As the chart below shows, the less in advance providers know their schedule, the higher their reports of emotional distress.

Association between work schedule and emotional distress\*



**“Our enrollment is really low. Without the [Paycheck Protection Program] we would not have survived. If children don’t start enrolling, we will be forced to close after 22 years in business.”**  
 Provider in Missouri

\* We ask providers about their experiences with four symptoms of emotional distress: stress, loneliness, anxiety, and depression. Responses for each symptom were averaged to create a single score and transformed to a range of 0-100 for each provider.

# ABOUT THE RAPID-EC PROJECT

RAPID-EC is under the direction of Philip Fisher, PhD, Director of the Center for Translational Neuroscience at the University of Oregon

The RAPID-EC project is an early childhood family well-being survey designed to gather essential information in a continuous manner regarding the needs, health promoting behaviors, and well-being of children and their families during the COVID-19 outbreak and recovery in the United States. The survey focuses on better understanding child development (and parents' concerns about development over time), caregiver mental health and well-being, and caregiver needs and utilization of resources.

RAPID-EC collects data from 1,000 caregivers in all 50 states twice per month. The survey collects snapshots of data across time with the ability to assess trends longitudinally.

Twice per month, the team posts analyses of survey findings, including policy recommendations and resources for additional reading.

1,000+

surveyed  
bi-weekly

74

surveys

10,000

unique  
households

50

US states

