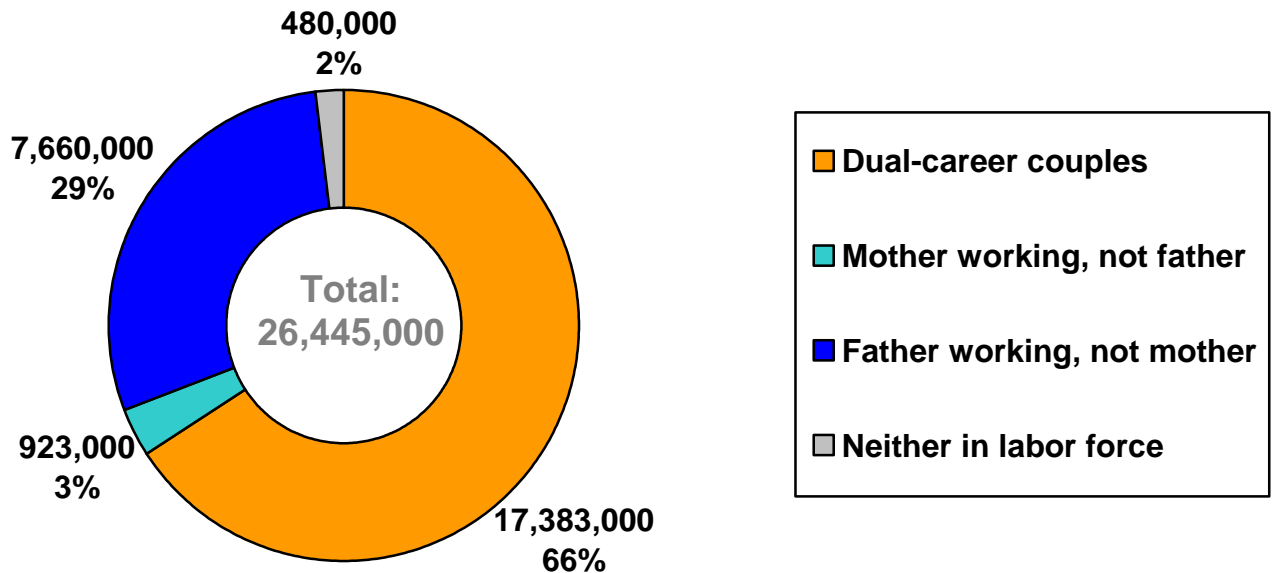




QUICK TAKES • Working and Stay-at-Home Mothers

- In March 2003, there were 26,445,000 married mothers with children under 18 in the United States. ¹



- In March 2003, there were 10,142,000 single mothers with children under 18, and they had a labor force participation rate of 78.1% (7,926,000 single mothers in the labor force). This is compared to 2,260,000 single fathers with children under 18, and they had a labor force participation rate of 89.5% (2,022,000 single fathers in the labor force). ²
- In 2003, 53.7% of all mothers with infants were involved in the labor force, down from the 56.1% in 2002. ³
 - However, there has been a significant increase of mothers with infants in the labor force for a generation, from 31.0% in 1976 ⁴
- The overall labor force participation rate of mothers with children under 18 is 71.1%, a slight decrease from 71.8% in 2002. ⁵
- In the past 50 years, fertility rates of American women have fluctuated sharply. ⁶
 - During the peak of the Baby Boom in the late 1950s, women were having children at a rate of more than 3.5 births per woman
 - By the mid-1970s, the total fertility rate fell to 1.8 births per woman
 - Around the turn of the century, the fertility rate has fluctuated between 2.0 and 2.1 births per woman, a rate below the level required for the natural replacement of the population (which is about 2.1)
- According to a Society for Human Resource Management study, 18.0% of the organizations surveyed offered employees a lactation program or a designated room for nursing mothers. ⁷

- In Fiscal Year 2003, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission received 4,649 charges of pregnancy-based discrimination, a 24% increase from 1996. ⁸
 - Pregnant woman have complained of being fired when they revealed their pregnancies or employers refusing to hire them, refusing to follow pregnancy and maternity leave laws, restricting health insurance, or restricting fringe benefits
- Working mothers tend to earn less over their lifetimes than men. One study calculated about a 7.0% hourly wage penalty for motherhood per child among American women, citing some combination of loss of job experience, less productivity at work, a tendency to seek lower-paying mother-friendly jobs, and employer discrimination against women with children. ⁹

Sources

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UPDATED 1-5-05