

Facts & Figures

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Mothers at Work

In 2003, the most recent year for which these data are available, 71.1 percent of mothers of children under 18 were in the workforce. This fact sheet includes brief descriptions and links to reports and analyses that relate to mothers' role as breadwinners. The time period covered is Mothers' Day 2004 to Mothers' Day 2005.

Social Security
February 2005

Private Accounts Compound Gender Gap:

- ❖ Proposals to shift Social Security from its current structure to a partially privatized system will create a special disadvantage for women, who are still paid less than equally educated males. That's because women typically spend more time in their 20s out of the workforce, often because they are attending school or are having and raising children. In the [Economic Policy Institute Snapshot](#), economist Bill Spriggs, with research assistant David Ratner, examines the motherhood penalty under private accounts.

Gender gap
January 2005

Gender Wage Gap Shrinks As Men's Earnings Slow:

- ❖ By late 2004, the gender gap in wages shrunk as the female median earnings jumped to 81% of male earnings, from 76% in the late 1990s. But that's because male median earnings, after rising consistently over the latter 1990s, have since flattened. Read more in this [EPI Snapshot](#).

Employment rates
October 2004

Female Employment Rates Decrease, Reversing Trend:

- ❖ Economic Policy Institute economist Sylvia Allegretto finds employment rates (the ratio of employment to population) for females decreased by 1.7 percentage-points since the last business cycle peak in March 2001. At this point in every past cycle since 1948, female employment rates have gone up. Allegretto illustrates this substantial decrease and reversal of historic upward trends with two graphs in this economic [Snapshot](#).

Single mothers
October 2004

New Report Maps Middle-Class Squeeze

- ❖ From 2000 to 2003, typical middle-income families lost ground before taxes, after taxes, and especially after taxes and health care expenditures. A [new analysis](#) by the Economic Policy Institute's Lawrence Mishel, Michael Ettlinger, and Elise Gould examines income trends for four kinds of families: married couples with children; single mothers; elderly couples 65 and older; and young singles age 25-34.

October 2004	<p>Safety Net for Single Mothers is Fraying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ For low-income single mothers, the safety net of programs such as welfare, unemployment insurance, and food stamps have helped to blunt the impact of an economic downturn. But we're moving towards a system that boosts single mothers' incomes in good times but fails to prevent losses in bad times. In this Snapshot, EPI senior economist Jared Bernstein looks at how the safety net for low-income single mothers is failing to prevent their incomes from contracting.
Family Time Squeeze July 2004	<p>Families Now Spend More Time at Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In this EPI Snapshot, Economic Policy Institute senior economist Jared Bernstein shows that more family members are participating in the job market and that average family work hours are up 11 percent since 1975, a trend that can erode the quality of family life, even as incomes rise.
<i>State Of Working America 2004-2005</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Facts about women ❖ Executive Summary
Issue Guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Social Security ❖ Minimum Wage
Questions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Call Nancy Coleman, Karen Conner, or Stephaan Harris in EPI's Communications Department: 202-775-8810 ❖ Email your query to news@epinet.org.