

Parents Magazine Poll Shows More than 75 Percent of Parents Say Government Not Doing Enough to Address Family Problems

One in three parents give government officials an “F” on a range of family issues, from providing access to affordable health care to serving as good role models

NEW YORK, N.Y. – More than 75% (three out of four) of parents of children under 12 say that the government is not doing enough to address the key problems that modern families face, according to a poll by Parents magazine. One out of three respondents also give government officials an “F” across a range of issues, from access to affordable health care (31%) to serving as good role models for their children (30%). Respondents expressed high levels of dissatisfaction across the board, regardless of income level, age of children, and even party affiliation. Seventy-one (71%) percent of parents who identified themselves as Republicans said they felt the government could be doing more to help families.

Results of the poll will be presented at “Parents 2008: Putting Children on the National Agenda,” a conference to be held in New York City on Thursday, November 8, 2007, with a keynote address by Arianna Huffington. A full summary of the poll, entitled “What Keeps Parents Up at Night,” will be available at Parents.com.

The telephone survey of more than 1,000 parents of children 12 and under was commissioned by Parents and conducted by the Global Strategy Group from October 4 to October 7, 2007. The overall margin of error is +/-3.1% at the 95% confidence level.

“As America’s leading media voice, serving 15 million readers, we believe it is important to understand the challenges that parents in our society face,” says Sally Lee, Editor-in-Chief, Parents magazine. “Our goal, through our survey and our conference, is to try to draw attention to the needs of American families and to give our policy makers the opportunity to change the dialogue and to focus on the critical issues that today’s moms and dads are confronting.”

The poll also reveals that the majority of parents (54%) across all ethnicities and party affiliations believe that the No Child Left Behind Act has had no impact on their children’s education. One in six actually think it has had a negative effect. Additionally, if parents could determine the country’s spending priorities, they would devote more tax dollars to funding education (90%), health care (80%), and child care (58%). They consider the war in Iraq the lowest funding priority (45%).

Despite these concerns, parents are optimistic and think they are providing a better life for their children. Seventy-nine percent of parents surveyed believe they are able to provide a better standard of living for their children than they had growing up, and 71% are able to spend more time with their children than their parents did.

Other “What Keeps Parents Up at Night” key findings from Parents:

- One in two parents (51%) feel more stressed than their parents were – with single parents (61%), African Americans (57%) and city dwellers (57%), and moms (55%) leading the pack.
- Only 23% of parents polled say they have a will.
- The top two worries for parents are sexual predators in the community (80%) and the media's influence on children (80%).
- More parents (57%) are more concerned with saving for college than saving for retirement (22%).
- Forty-eight percent (48%) of working parents feel no pressure at all to stay home or stop working to care for their children, and only 20% of stay-at-home parents feel a lot of pressure to work or go back to work to provide for their children.
- When asked what they need more of, 45% of parents said time and only 27% said money. They also craved family outings (62%) more than time alone (22%).
- Environmental hazards are the top health concern among parents (18%). Childhood obesity (16%) and ADHD and other learning challenges (13%) were also top concerns.
- Parents would prefer their children spend more time using the Internet (31%) than watching television (19%).
- One in four children under the age of 5 have a television in their room.

Speakers will include: Kathleen McCartney, Ph.D., Dean, Harvard Graduate School of Education, on child care; Irwin Redlener, M.D., President and Founder, The Children's Health Fund, on health care; Harold Koplewicz, M.D., Director, New York University Child Study Center, on the mental-health epidemic; Hugh Sampson, M.D., professor, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, on allergies and environmental risks; and Harvey Karp, M.D., author, *The Happiest Baby on the Block* and *The Happiest Toddler on the Block*, on "Happy Children, Happy Families."

The "Parents 2008: Putting America's Children on the National Agenda" conference is made possible by Knorr and Ragu.

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About Parents

Parents, published monthly by Meredith Corporation, has been America's #1 family magazine for more than 80 years. Since its inception in 1926, it has been a trusted source for every generation of parents. Currently, the magazine is a powerful community of 15.6 million readers devoted to supporting the efforts of parents, educators, and others who strive to make the world a better place for our children. Parents can be found online at parents.com.

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