

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00:01 MAY 3, 2016

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The Shriver Report SNAPSHOT: Insight Into The Resilient American Mother

Today’s American Mom is Resilient and Optimistic but Deeply Concerned About the Complexities of the Modern Climate in Which She is Raising her Children

More than Half Fear that America is Becoming a Worse Place to be a Parent and Two Thirds Believe their Children are Less Safe than they Were as Kids

Nearly Two Thirds of Working Moms Believe American Businesses are making it “Nearly Impossible” For Them to Juggle Work and Family Demands

More Than Half are Living Paycheck to Paycheck

But Nine in Ten Report Being Optimistic about their Future, their Children’s Future and their Own Ability to Raise Independent and Caring Kids

American Mothers are Conflicted on Whether Technology and Social Media do More Harm than Good

An Overwhelming Number of American Moms Believe that Education is the Single Most Important Issue for Lawmakers to Address and are Much More Likely to Back a Candidate Who Supports Early Childhood Education

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:01 A.M. E.T. TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2016

LOS ANGELES, Tuesday, May 3, 2016 – Today’s American mom is resilient and optimistic but deeply concerned about the complexities of modern life and the environment in which she is doing her job according to a non-partisan survey of more than 1,000 mothers released today. *The Shriver Report Snapshot: Insight into the Resilient American Mother* reveals the modern mother is optimistic in her own strength and resolve to raise independent and caring children but challenged by the shortcomings of the entrenched institutions meant to support her.

In America today, more than half of all mothers are living paycheck to paycheck. Nearly two thirds of working moms say that the American business culture makes it “nearly impossible” to juggle work and family life. Mothers are torn on the role of social media and technology and are taking on a lion’s share

of housekeeping and parenting responsibilities. Overall two thirds of mothers believe that their children are less safe than they were as children and most say it is harder to be a mother today than it was in their parent's generation. In fact, a majority (53%) say America is becoming a worse place to raise children while only 15% believe it is getting better.

Yet, despite growing concerns about the challenges their children face – including declining moral values, violence in schools, sexual predators and bullying – most mothers express confidence about raising their children and are strikingly optimistic about their children's future. Nine of ten moms report they are at least “somewhat” optimistic about their children's future, and over half say they are “very optimistic.” Amidst this backdrop, the conflicted, yet resilient, American mom sees education reform as the best hope for their children's future and the top priority for leaders and lawmakers to address.

These findings are the result of a national survey commissioned by Save the Children, Save the Children Action Network and Shriver Media and conducted online by the national polling group, PSB, in March 2016. More than 1,050 mothers who are likely to vote in the 2016 presidential election participated in the survey, with a margin of error of $\pm 2.47\%$.

The findings come in the middle of a turbulent presidential election race in which the gender gap in voting between men and women is likely to become a significant factor in the November general election. In 2012, nearly 10 million more women than men voted for president. The gap could widen even further this fall when more than 20 million mothers with children living at home – more than 1 in 4 of all likely women voters – are expected to vote for president, making mothers who vote a sizable but often overlooked segment of the electorate.

According to the survey, most moms believe it is getting harder to be a parent today compared to previous generations and they worry about a host of social ills including a weakening economy, shifting American values, increased violence and a decline in the quality of education. In fact, when asked to identify the most important issue for the next president, mothers overwhelmingly cited education reform including making college more affordable, ensuring a fair chance to succeed in school and increased access to high quality early childhood education. Given all this, the survey also shows that American moms remain remarkably resilient and “optimistic”, believing that their children will achieve success through hard work despite many challenges.

“As a mother of four and an advocate for women's empowerment, I am thrilled to partner with Save the Children and the Save the Children Action Network to share this *Snapshot* on the modern American mom,” said Maria Shriver founder of Shriver Media and the Shriver Report Special Editions and Snapshots. “American mothers are resilient, tough and optimistic but political and business leaders - all of our institutions - need to adjust to the needs of the modern American family so that mothers and their children can not only survive but can thrive in today's complex environment.”

“Clearly, moms believe it's much harder to raise kids today than it was in the past. But moms of all political persuasions see education reform as the number one task of the next president,” said Mark Shriver, President of Save the Children Action Network. “In fact, 83 percent of moms – Republicans, Democrats and Independents – said they would likely support a political candidate who is in favor of expanding quality early childhood education programs in the U.S., which they believe is critical to America's future. These moms know that all kids deserve a strong start in life.”

"This Mother's Day it's important to not only celebrate moms, but also to really listen to what they need," said Carolyn Miles, President and CEO of Save the Children. "This poll tells us that women are feeling a lot of pressure, and are demanding more from their partners, workplaces, and elected leaders. I've met mothers across the U.S., some hanging on by a thread, and it's clear that if we want to see stronger families and communities, then we need to support mothers because they are the backbone of society. We can't underestimate the power of a mother. Some of our most critical programs to support children, schools and communities are created and sustained by moms. As a mom myself, I want to continue to help support mothers because if we support the moms, then we help to create stronger families, communities, and our country."

SNAPSHOT'S KEY FINDINGS

An Overwhelming Number of American Moms Believe that Education is the Most Important Issue for Business Leaders, Lawmakers and Parents to Address

- Most mothers cite education reform as the next president's top priority, recommending a special focus on addressing the high cost of college tuition and ensuring children have a fair chance to succeed in school. The survey also found 83% of moms likely to support a political candidate who supported providing access to and improving the quality of early childhood education programs in America.
- American moms want their kids to get a good education, not go to war. The most damaging thing the next president can do for their children according to American moms is get the US into another war.

A Majority of U.S. Moms —Say America is Becoming a Worse Place to Raise Children

- Only 15% of American mothers believe America is becoming a better place to raise children while 53% say it is worsening. White (57%) and Black (54%) mothers are especially critical of the country's direction.
- 56% say it is harder to parent today than it was in their parents' generation
- When asked which issues were among the top three reasons America is becoming a worse place for kids, 53% cited increased violence, 36% said worsening economic conditions, 35% mentioned an undervaluation of social standards and 33% said the quality of education is worsening.
- Two-thirds of mothers believe their children are less safe than they were as children. White and black mothers are more inclined to feel this way. Mothers rank declining moral values (35%), violence in schools (33%), sexual predators (27%) and bullying (26%) at the top of their list of concerns for their children.

Despite Deep Concerns, Faith in the American Dream Prevails for 9 in 10 American Moms Who Say they are “Optimistic” about their Children’s Future, their own Future and Believe Hard Work will Lead to Success

- 9 in 10 moms say they are “very” or “somewhat” optimistic about their children’s future and over half (52%) say they are “very optimistic.” 9 in 10 are also optimistic about their own future.
- White mothers are most likely to say that America is becoming a worse place to raise kids and are most likely to cite declines in social standards and the quality of education as reasons. Black mothers are the most optimistic about the future but are also the most worried about school violence. While 6 in 10 Latinas were optimistic for their kids’ futures they were the most likely to say they were “anxious” about that future.
- When mothers were asked to describe their feelings about their children’s future, “hopeful” and “optimistic” were the most commonly referenced words though they were immediately followed by “worried,” “uncertain” and “anxious.”
- 3 in 4 say with hard work their kids will achieve personal and professional success – it will just be harder for them than earlier generations. Specifically, 76% say they are confident that their kids will be able to achieve their personal and professional goals if they work hard. Only 24% say that they are worried that their children will not be able to achieve success.

Almost Two Thirds of American Moms Believe American Businesses are making it “Nearly Impossible” for Them to Juggle Work and Family

- A majority of moms (55%) are living paycheck to paycheck and staying on top of bills is the leading cause of stress. This includes a majority of moms working full time and two thirds of those earning less than \$75,000 a year.
- The survey provides additional support for the 2013 Shriver Report: *A Woman’s Nation Pushes Back from the Brink* produced by A Woman’s Nation which first reported that one in three women in America are living on the brink of poverty – 42 million women plus the 18 million children who depend on them.
- Nearly two thirds (62 percent) of moms working full time believe that American business culture makes it “nearly impossible” to balance their responsibilities to family and work.
- More than four in 10 (42%) American moms report feeling “more stress” than those around them.
- The vast majority of mothers – including those who work full time – say they are responsible for the lion’s share of household and parenting duties. 82% of mothers,

including 75% of those who work full time, say they take on a larger role in house work than their partner. Similarly, 75% of mothers (including 70% who work full time) say they take on more parenting duties than their partner.

- One in 3 moms (34%) relies on outside childcare, and less than a third of American moms rely on their family members for childcare always or often.
- When asked what employer benefits would most help their families, the most popular responses were: flexible work hours (53%), more affordable health care (51%) and good retirement benefits (49%).
- Paid leave for caregiving (16%), in-office day care (15%) and paid parental leave (11%) ranked much lower overall but higher among millennial moms with young children.

Moms Value Independence Above Other Qualities – Especially for Daughters - and One Third Say “Caring” is the Most Important Quality for Both Sons and Daughters in the Most Powerful Nation in the World

- 46% of mothers rank “independence” as a top quality they want to see in their daughters. 35% of mothers want the same for their sons. Being successful, caring and intellectually curious are also critical qualities in both sons and daughters for American moms. American mothers emphasize being “honorable” and “committed to family” for their sons.

Younger (Millennial) Moms are Most Optimistic, Most Secure in Society’s Expectations of Them and Most Frustrated by Corporate America

- 51% of Millennial moms (those aged 18 to 34) say they are “very optimistic” about their own future, compared to 38% of Gen X moms (aged 35 to 50) and 32% Baby Boomers (aged 51 to 70). 65% of millennial moms say they are very optimistic about their children’s future, compared to 47% of Gen X moms and 44% of Boomer moms.
- 68% of millennial moms feel that American business culture has made it “nearly impossible” to balance family and work compared to 60% of Gen X and 54% of Baby Boomer moms.
- 84% of millennial moms say they have a clear sense of what society expects from them.

American Moms Think a Mother Would Best Represent Their Children in Political Office; Hillary Clinton Receives Most Support from Moms Polled

- 28% say Hillary Clinton would best represent their children’s needs in the White House followed by Bernie Sanders (20%) Donald Trump (15%) and Ted Cruz (8%).

- Most mothers agree that elected officials who are mothers themselves are likely to do more for their children than those who are not.

Impact of Social Media and Technology Divides American Moms Evenly

- American moms are conflicted about the role technology plays in their children's lives. 50% say its prevalence has had a positive effect on their children while 50% say it has or will hurt their children.
- The four biggest concerns mothers have about technology and social media are: online predators, exposure to inappropriate or sexual content, a lack of real life interaction and a lack of physical activity and exercise.
- The 50% of moms who say technology has had a positive impact mention increased access to educational tools, its help preparing kids for a technology-driven future and the ability connect with friends and family.

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Save the Children gives children in the United States and around the world a healthy start, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. We invest in childhood – every day, in times of crisis and for our future. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Save the Children Action Network is the political voice for kids. We believe that every child deserves the best start in life. That's why we're building bipartisan will and voter support to make sure every child in the U.S. has access to high-quality early learning and that no mother or child around the globe dies from a preventable disease. By investing in kids and holding leaders accountable, we are helping kids from birth to age five survive and thrive.

PSB (formerly Penn Schoen Berland) conducted the survey March 7 – 15, 2016. PSB conducted 1,053 online interviews with American mothers on their opinions on The 2016 Presidential Election and Expectations for their own and their Children's Future. To qualify for the survey, mothers must have at least one child under 18 living at home and be likely to vote in the 2016 presidential election. The sample was demographically representative of ages, ethnicities and political affiliations. Margin of error for the total general population sample is $\pm 2.47\%$.