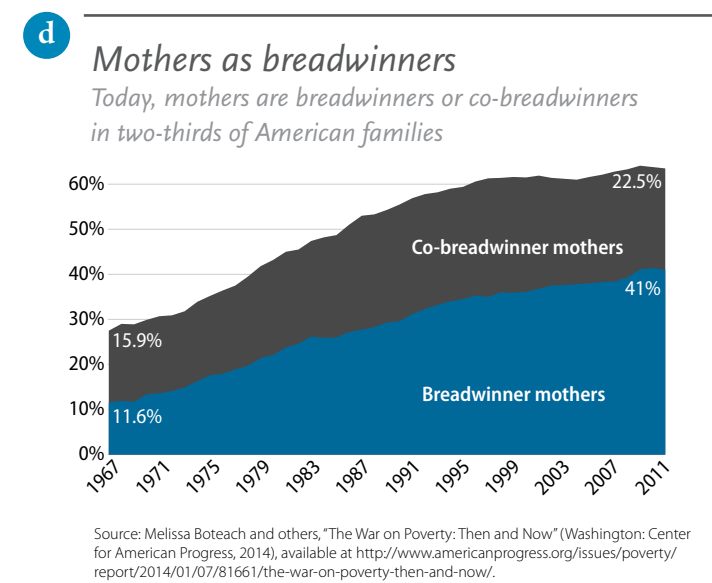
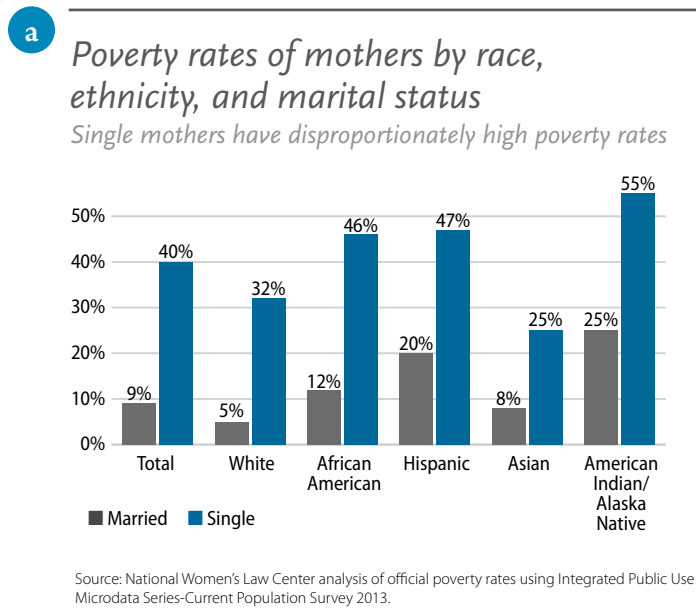


# Mothers

More than 35 million mothers live with minor children in the United States; 6.5 million, nearly one in five, are poor; and another 3.6 million live between 100 percent and 150 percent of the poverty line. The challenges of unequal pay and low wages that many women face—especially women of color—are compounded by the additional responsibilities many mothers bear, particularly single mothers. For many mothers, quality child care is unaffordable, work schedules are unpredictable and inflexible, and they have no paid sick or family leave.

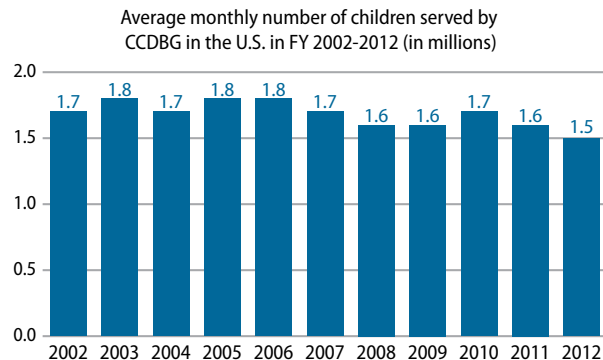
Despite these obstacles, mothers are playing an increased role in their families' economic security and the nation's economy as breadwinners or co-breadwinners in two-thirds of American families. There is a lot of work to be done to ensure that mothers are provided the same economic opportunities to thrive not only as individuals but also for their families and for the nation.



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### Access to child care assistance

Just more than 1 in 6 eligible children are served by federal child care assistance, fewer than a decade ago

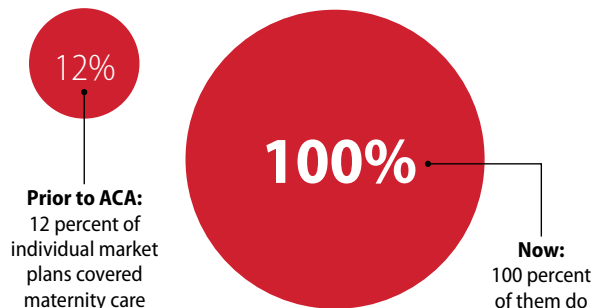


Sources: Center for Law and Social Policy calculations of Health and Human Services administrative data. See Hannah Matthews and Stephanie Schmit, "Child Care Assistance Spending and Participation in 2012: A Record Low" (Washington: Center for Law and Social Policy, 2014).

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### Mothers benefit from the Affordable Care Act

Women can now access the maternity coverage they need to ensure healthy pregnancies



Source: National Women's Law Center, "Turning to Fairness: Insurance discrimination against women today and the Affordable Care Act" (2012).

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### Mothers in low-wage jobs

More than 1 in 5 working mothers would get a raise if the federal minimum wage were increased to \$10.10 per hour



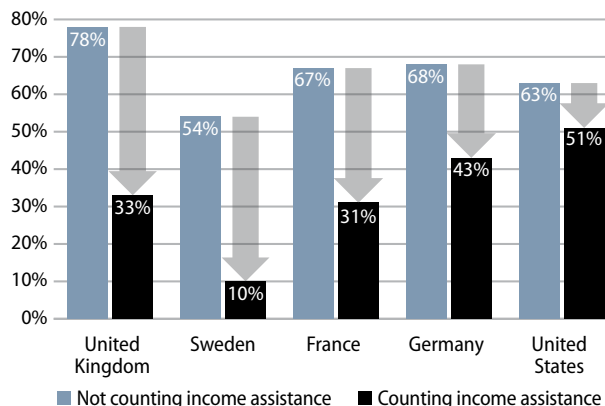
Note: "Working mothers" refers to women in the paid workforce with children under age 18 living at home.

Source: Unpublished estimates from the Economic Policy Institute.

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### U.S. can do more: Poverty rates for children in single-mother families

Relative child poverty rates before and after receiving income assistance, by country



Source: Timothy Casey and Laurie Maldonado, "Worst-Off: Single-Parent Families in the United States" (New York: Legal Momentum, 2012), Table 8.

American workplaces are still not family friendly, and our nation's work and income supports fail to meet the needs of low-income mothers. These shortcomings disproportionately affect single mothers, mothers of color, and the children of both. While single mothers in many countries are at higher risk of poverty than other parents, the United States does far less to alleviate poverty for single mothers and their children than many of its international counterparts.

There are clear policy solutions to help remedy these disparities, including paid family and medical leave so working mothers are not forced to choose between staying home to care for a sick child or losing their jobs; raising the minimum wage and strengthening equal pay laws to help close the wage gap, which is especially large for mothers; and expanding high-quality pre-K and child care to enable families to work. These popular policies, backed by at least 80 percent of Americans, are a win-win, effectively supporting families and the economy.