

---

## Unemployed Workers With Children

*Findings from a national survey of unemployed workers, conducted by  
Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.*

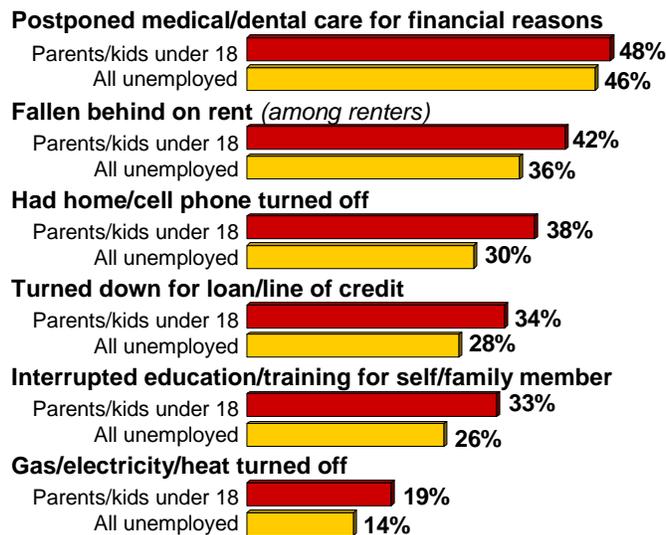
Approximately half (47%) of the unemployed workers in the sample have children under age 18 that live with them. Compared with the full sample, they are slightly more likely to be married, more likely to be younger (80% are under age 45), and more likely to have someone else in their household or an immediate family member who also has lost their job (27% have someone else in their household that has lost a job, compared with 21% of all unemployed workers). They also are more likely to have a fellow household or family member who has had to start a job or increase work hours to provide for their family.

- ◆ On average, unemployed workers with children have been unemployed 6.4 months of the past year, compared with an average of 6.7 months among all unemployed workers.
- ◆ Unemployed workers with children express concern about their ability to meet their family's basic needs and are fairly split on their outlook for the future. Half (51%) feel more worried and concerned about being able to achieve their economic and financial goals while 46% feel hopeful and confident.
  - More than six in 10 are very (45%) or fairly (17%) concerned that they will not have the resources to meet their family's basic needs in the next three to six months.
  - Their outlook for their children also is split, with 49% saying they feel worried and concerned about their children's ability to achieve their goals as they grow into adults, and the same proportion saying they feel hopeful and confident.
- ◆ Meeting basic food and grocery needs is especially challenging for unemployed workers with children.
  - 68% cut back spending on food and groceries
  - 43% have had trouble paying for their family's basic groceries
  - 40% received free food from family's or friends
  - 34% received free or reduced meals at school for their children
  - 26% skipped meals because they lacked the money to pay for food
  - 20% received food from a food pantry or charity
- ◆ The impact of unemployment on families is severe and affects everything from personal relationships to the ability to pay for basic day-to-day expenses. An overwhelming 81% of unemployed workers with children say family stress has increased.
  - 79% have cut back on driving due to gas prices
  - 61% have cut back spending on their children for things such as clothing and school supplies

- 56% have borrowed money to pay current expenses and 28% have increased their credit card debt
- ♦ Likely due to the responsibilities that come with raising children and supporting a family, in many areas, unemployed workers with children demonstrate even higher levels of hardship than average.

## Challenges Faced By Unemployed Workers Who Have Children

*% saying this has happened to them while unemployed*



- ♦ Nearly nine in 10 unemployed workers with children who have received UI benefits characterize them as very (72%) or fairly (15%) important in helping them to meet their family's needs, with food and groceries and rent or mortgage expenses being the most frequently cited things that UI benefits helped them pay for.
- ♦ Seven in 10 (71%) unemployed workers with children believe more government employment services are needed and an overwhelming 76% characterize extending UI benefits beyond 13 weeks as very helpful.

*From November 14 to 18, 2008, Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc., conducted a nationwide telephone survey among 400 unemployed adults, defined as currently unemployed and looking for work, not on layoff, generally available to start work, and having looked for work within the past 12 months. These criteria used for selecting respondents means that the survey includes more long-term unemployed adults than those included in definitions used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In order to include unemployed workers who are a part of the growing number of cell-phone only households, approximately 10% of the interviews were conducted among cell-phone only households. The margin of error for the full sample is ±4.9 percentage points and is higher for specific subgroups.*