

Effects of employment policies on health and health disparities

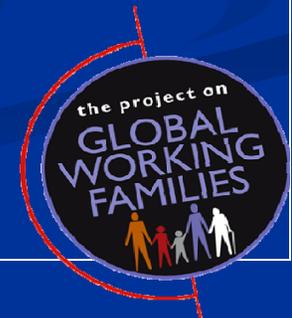
NIH Conference on Understanding and
Reducing Health Disparities: Contributions
from the Behavioral and Social Sciences

Jody Heymann M.D., Ph.D.

October 23, 2006

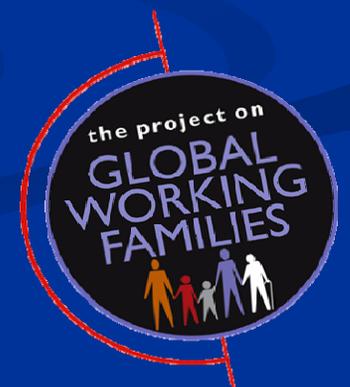
Research Program Components

- Mapping Global Trends: over 170 countries.
- In-depth Ethnographic Studies: more than 1,000 in-depth interviews in Mexico, Botswana, Vietnam, the United States, Honduras, and Russia.
- Statistical Analysis of National Household Surveys: 55,000 households from Botswana, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, the United States, and Vietnam.
- Systematic Review of Legal and Policy Framework: examination of policies in 180 nations.



Demographic and Laborforce Transformations

Movement away from laboring where children can accompany, away from work where adults control hours to work where supervisors determine hours and families not present.

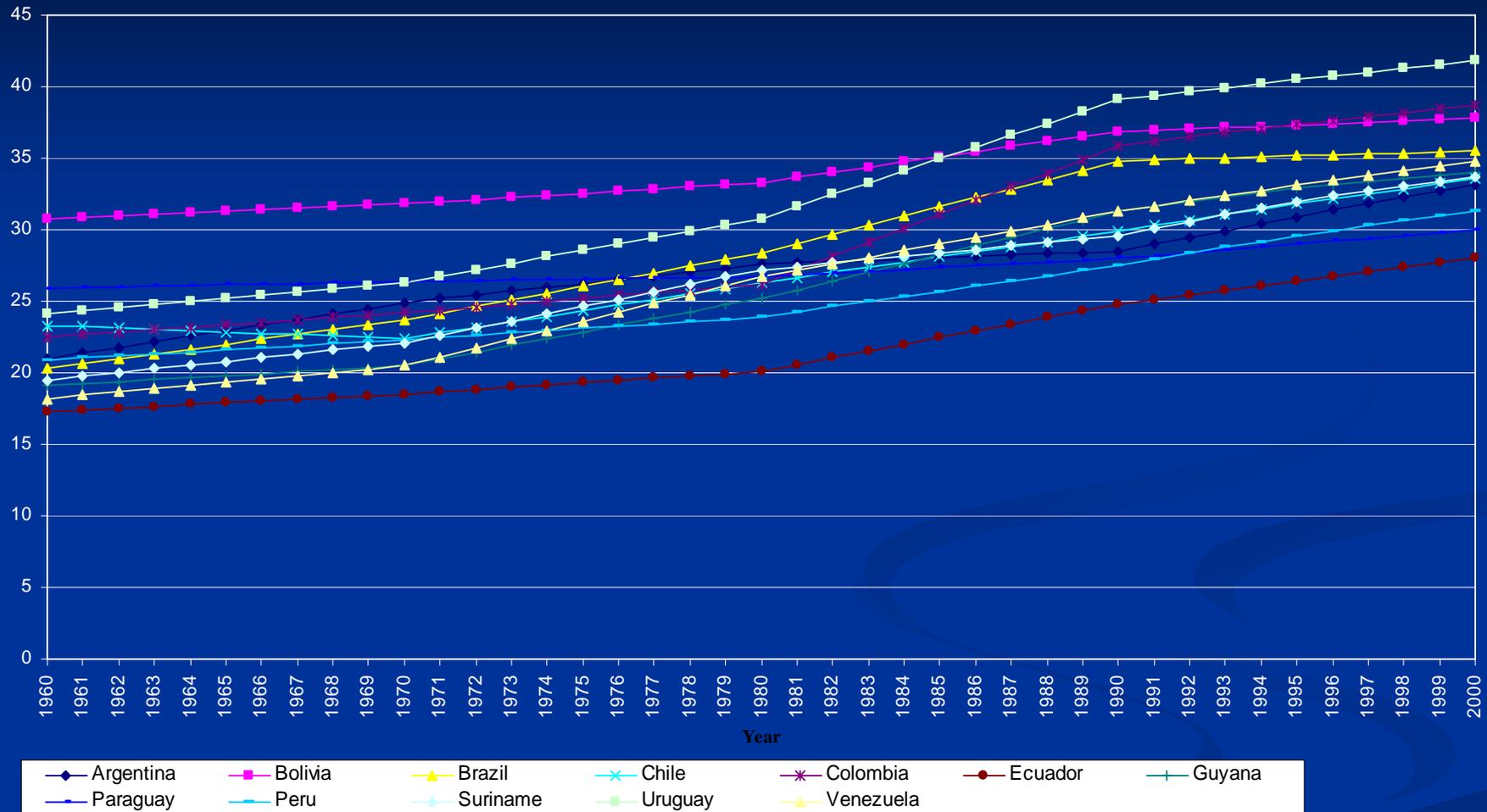


Female share of total labor force (%) - North America



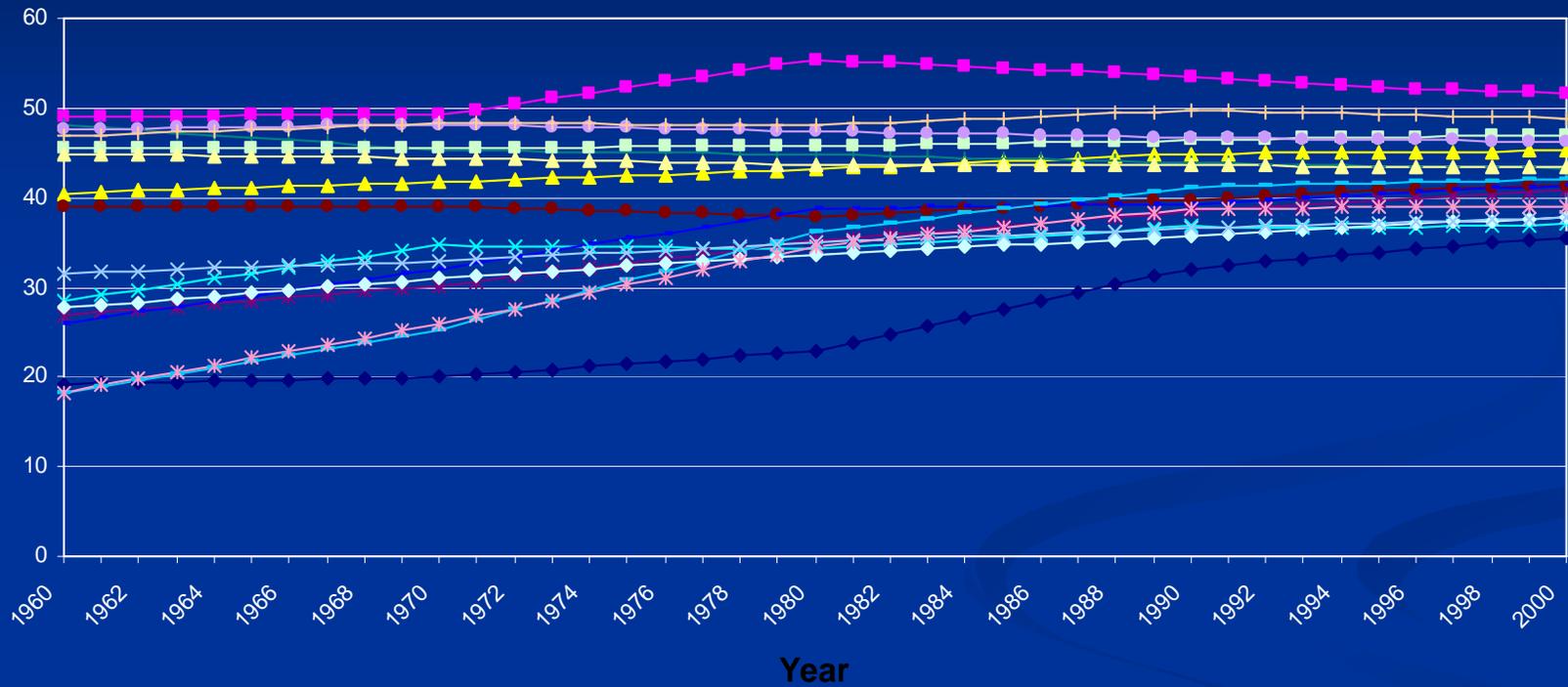
Source: World Bank. 2002. World Development Indicators 2002. Washington, D.C.

Female share of total labor force (%) - South America



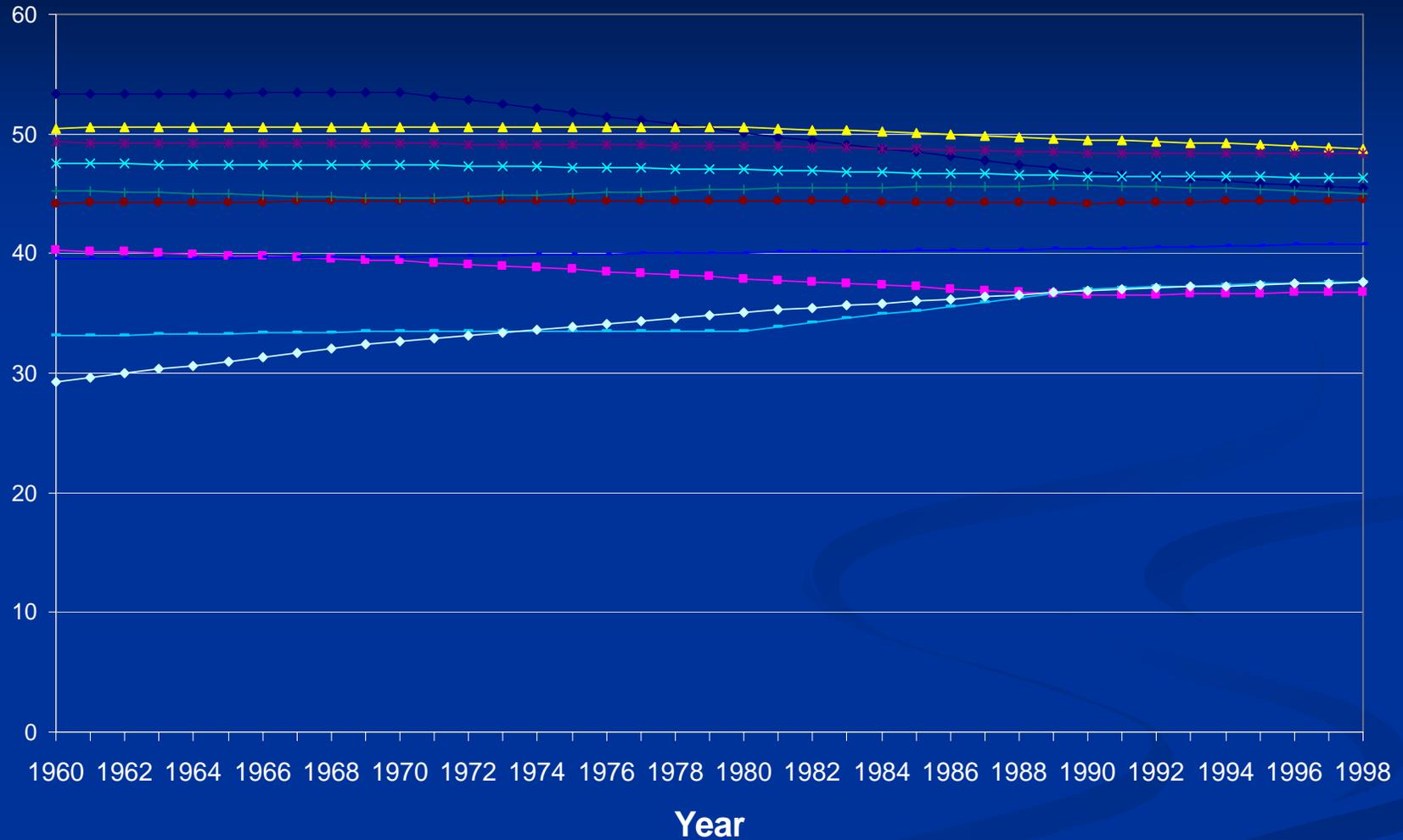
Source: World Bank. 2002. World Development Indicators 2002. Washington, D.C.

Female share of total labor force (%) - East Asia



Source: World Bank. 2002. World Development Indicators 2002. Washington, D.C.

Labor force, female (% of total) , Southern Africa



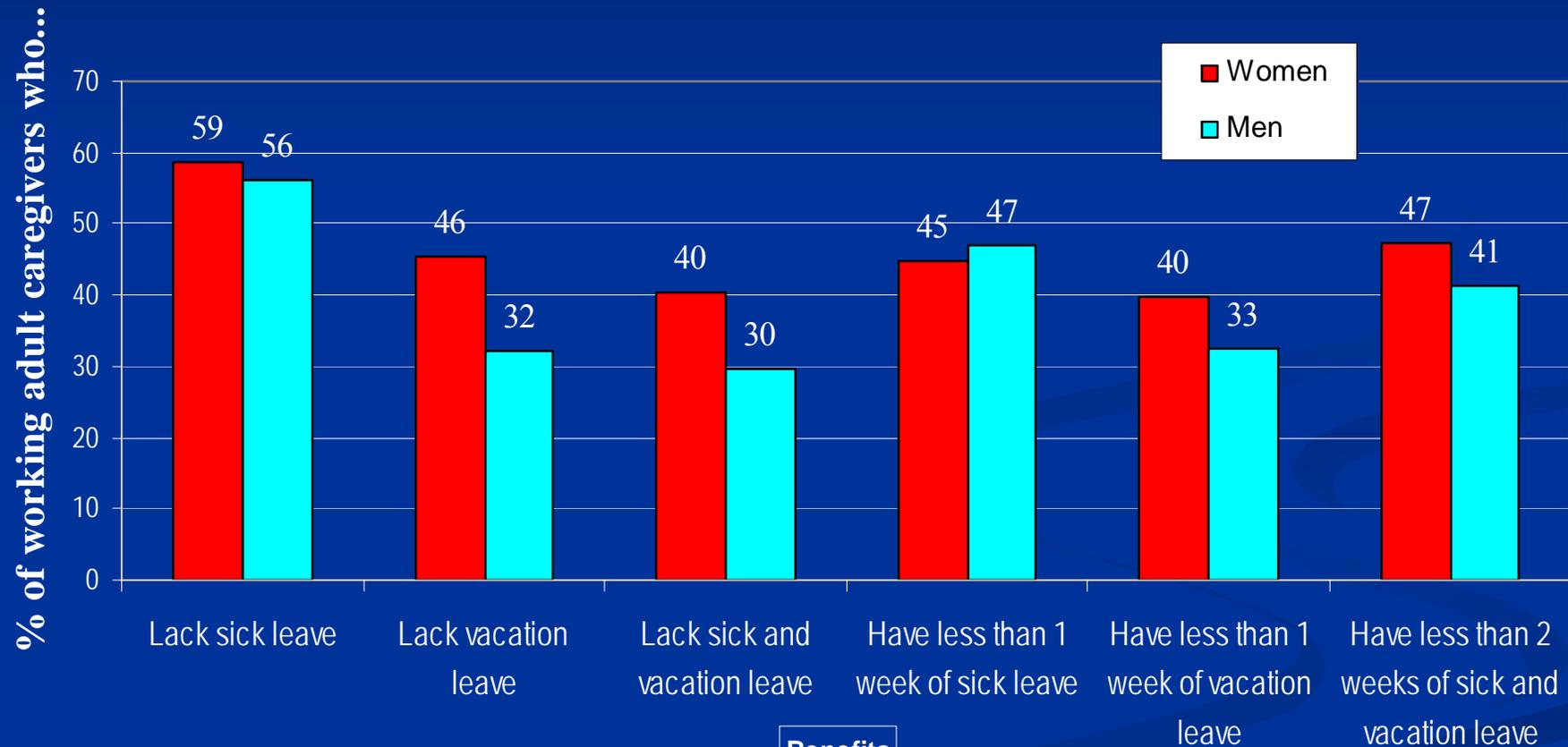
◆ Botswana ■ Lesotho ▲ Malawi × Angola * Mozambique
● Zimbabwe + Zambia — Namibia — Swaziland — South Africa

Source: World Development Indicators 2000, The World Bank

Disparities in the United States



Lack Basic Fringe Benefits (US)

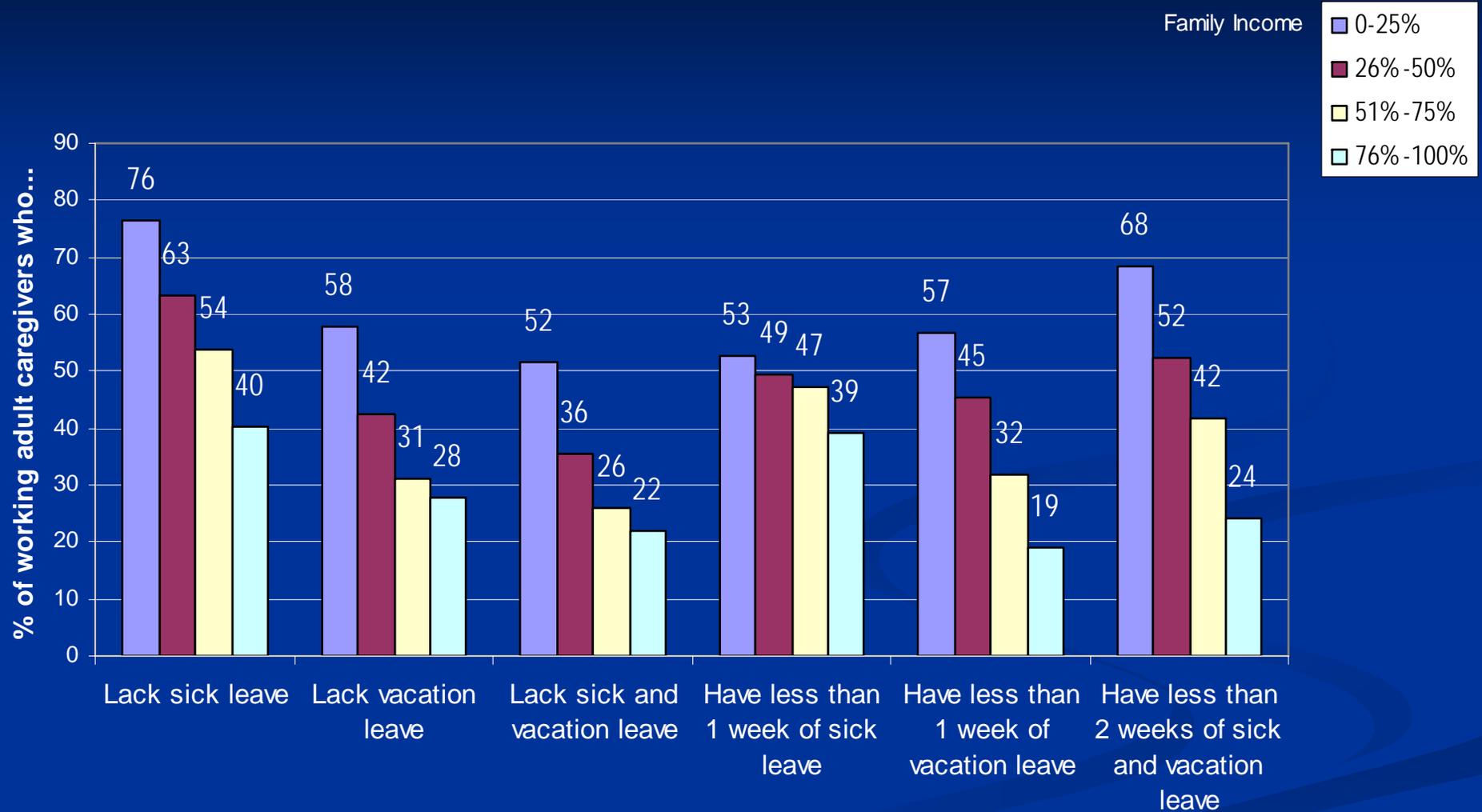


Benefits

Bars represent parents who lacked benefits some or all of the time they worked between 1990 and 1996 (1996 is most recent data available at time of study)

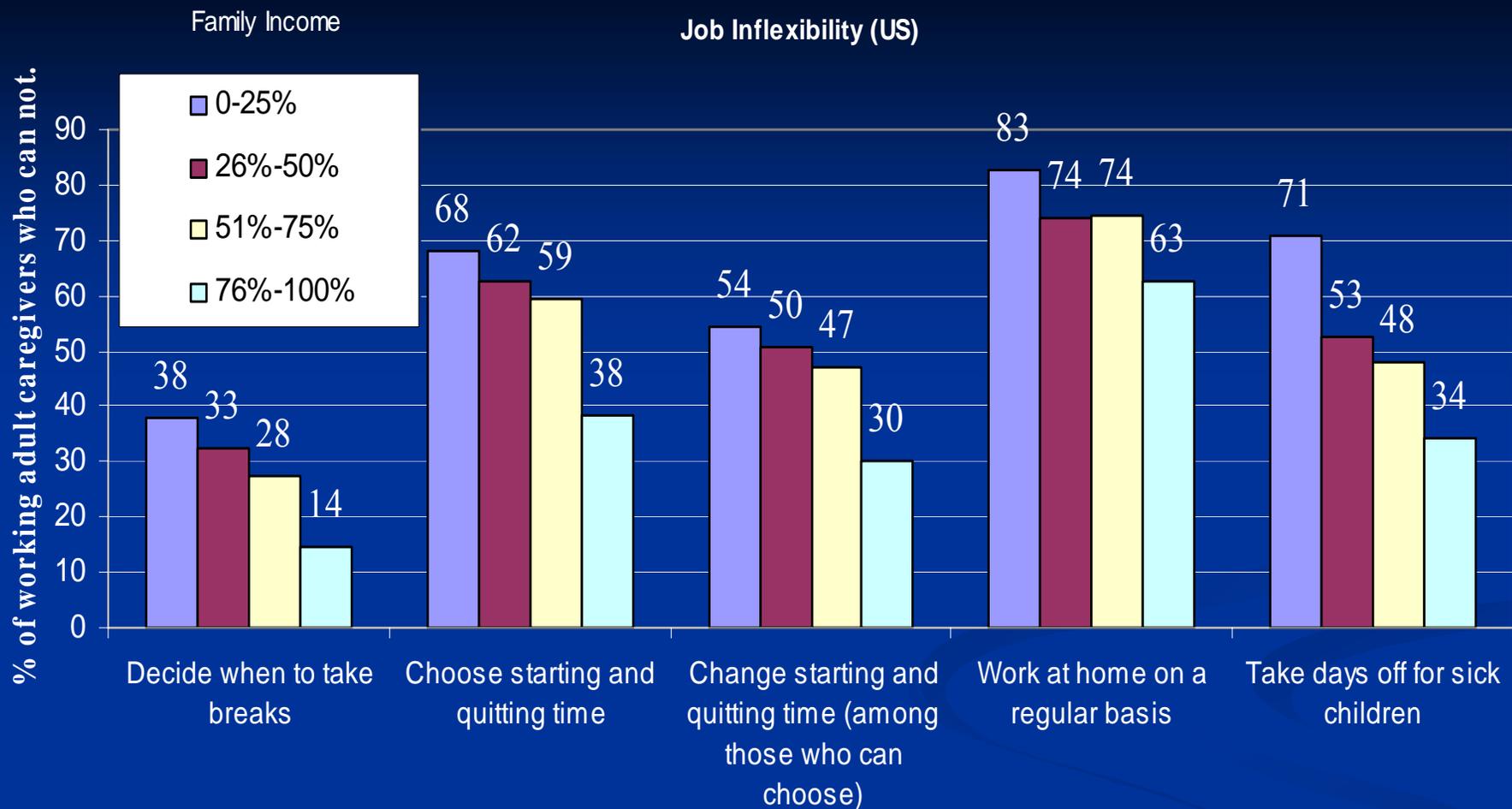
Heymann SJ. The Widening Gap: Why Working Families Are in Jeopardy and What Can Be Done About It. New York: Basic Books, 2000.

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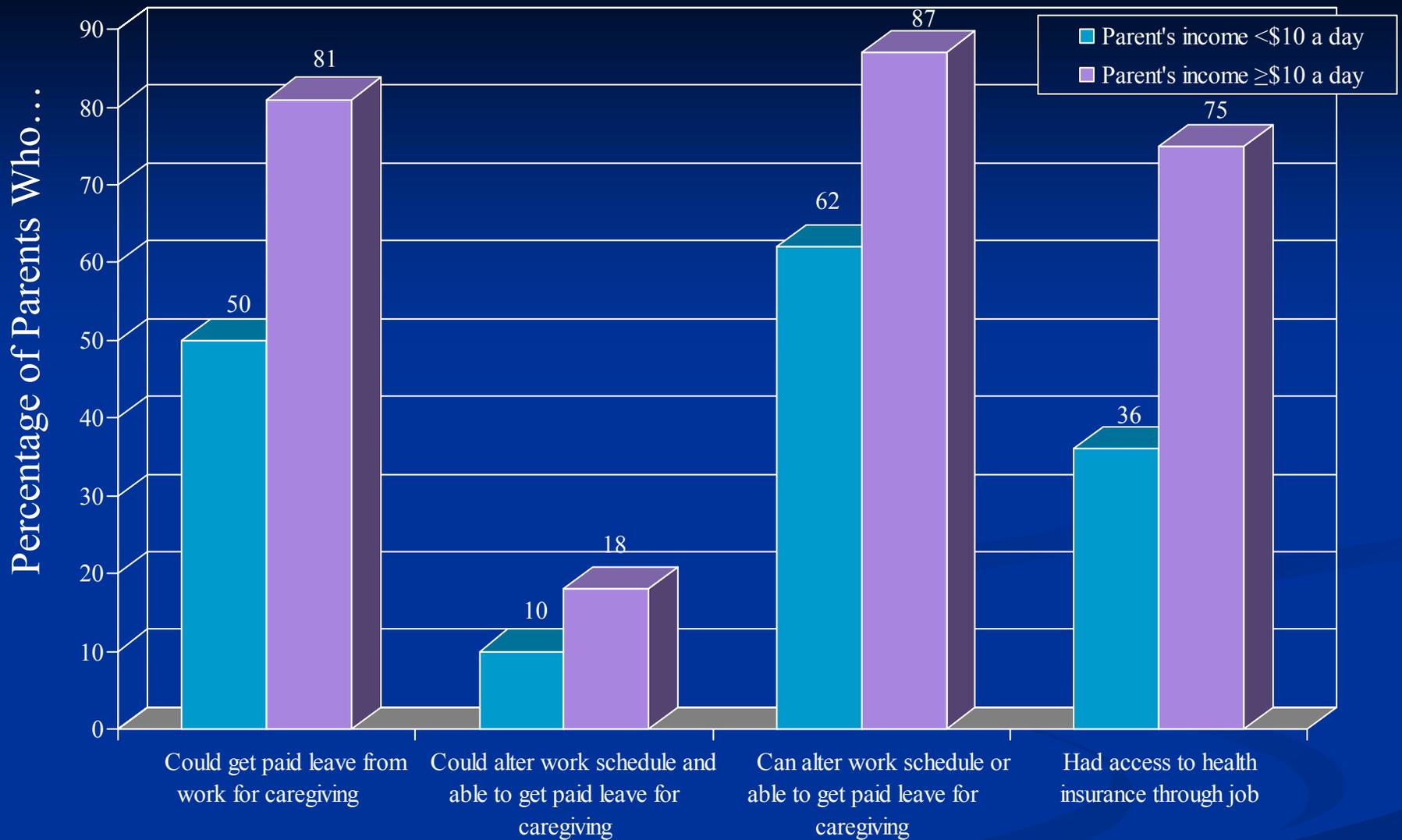
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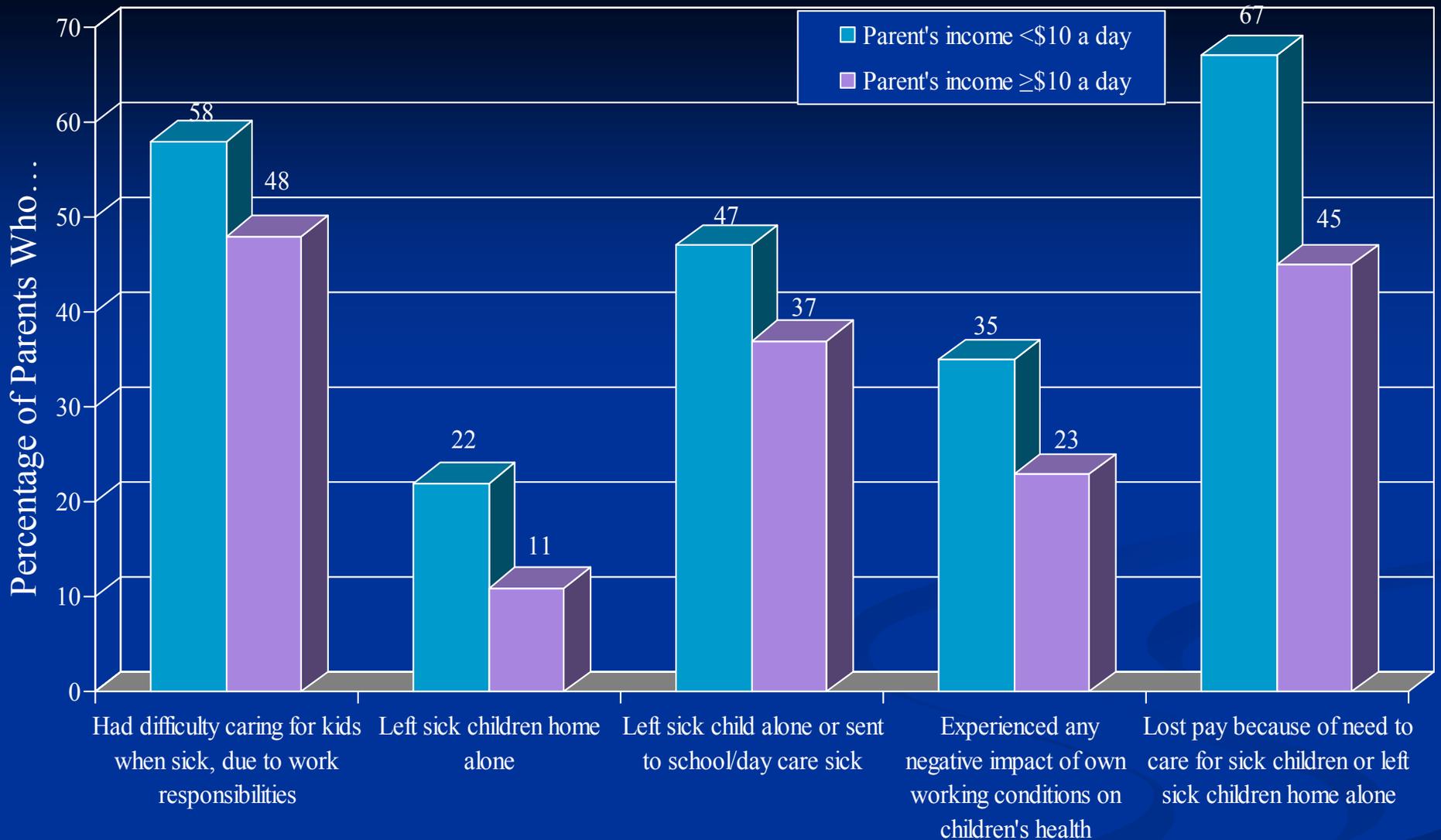
Global Disparities





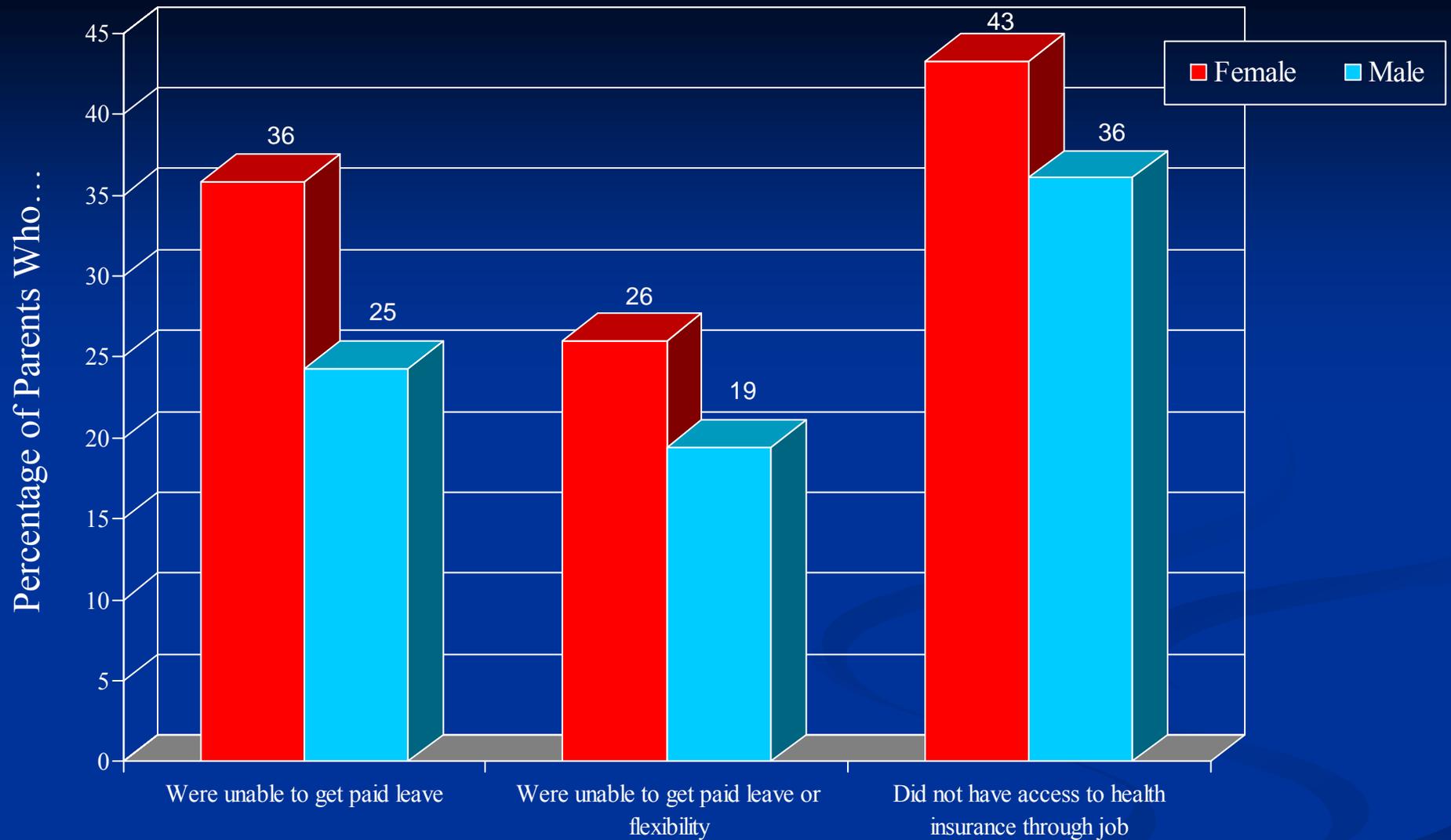
Low-Income Families Are More Likely to Lack Decent Working Conditions

Heymann SJ. *Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.



Low-Income Parents Are at Greater Risk of Experiencing Difficulties Caring for Their Sick Children

Source: Data from Project on Global Working Families in-depth interviews with working caregivers. Analyses in the above figure are based on households with a 0-14 year old. Income data from each survey have been converted to a common currency using the World Bank's purchasing power parity (PPP) conversion factors.



Women More Likely to Lack Decent Working Conditions

Heymann SJ. Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Women carry a disproportionate share of the caregiving burden. At the same time, they are more likely to face inadequate working conditions and social supports.

Women are more likely to:

- Lose job promotions or lose their jobs because of caring for a sick child (13% of women vs 2% of men).
- Lose pay because of caring for sick children (43% of women vs 27% of men).

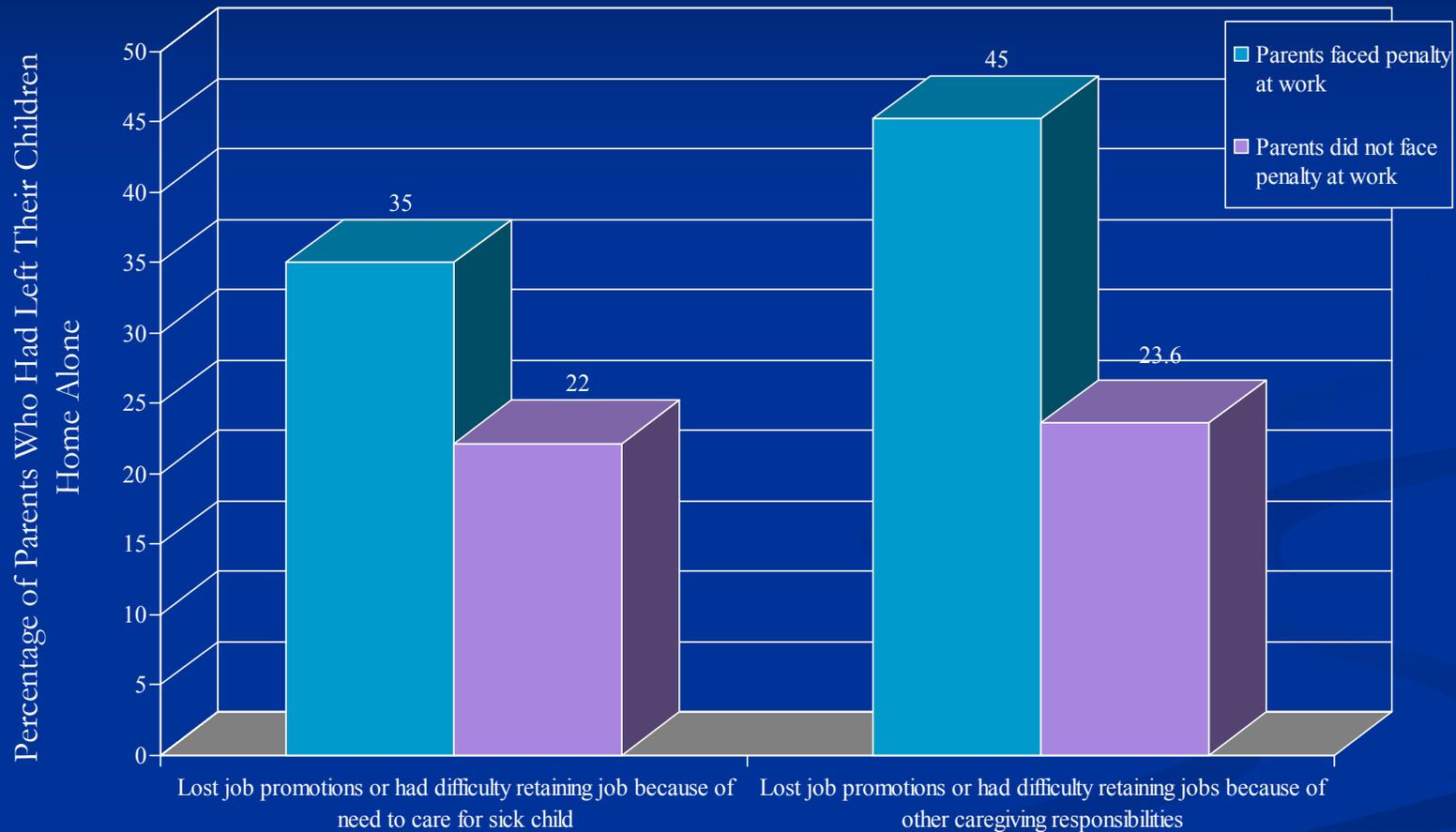
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Impact of Working Conditions on Child Health and Development



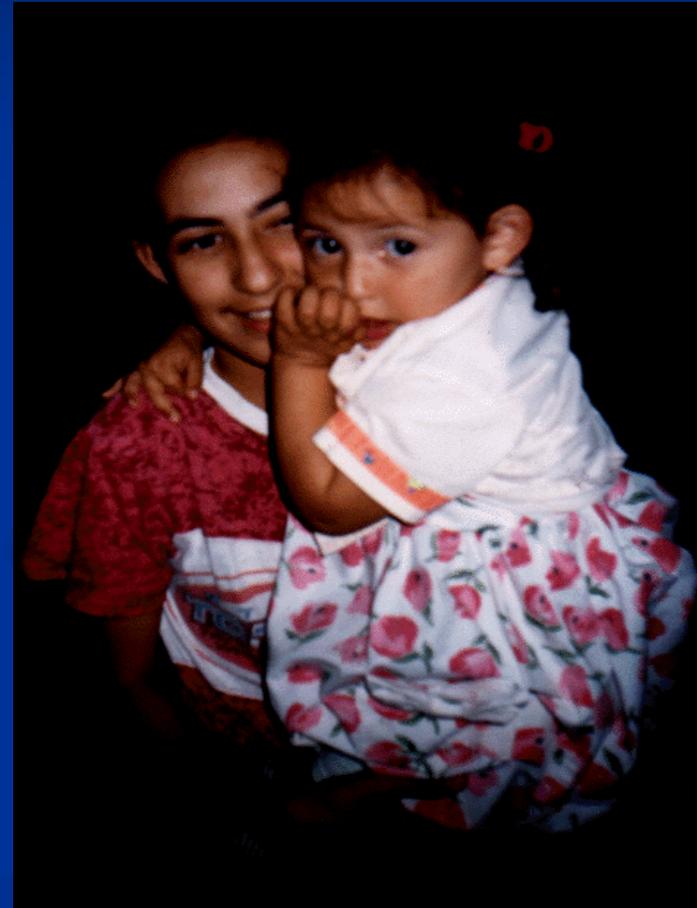
When Parents Face Penalties at Work for Caregiving, Pre-School Children are More Likely to Be Left Home Alone



Heymann SJ. Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

When Parents Have Poor Child Care Choices, Pre-School Children's Development Suffers

- 66% of parents who had to leave a child home alone or in the care of an unpaid child reported that the children had experienced accidents or other emergencies while the parent was working.
- 35% of parents who had to leave a child home alone or in the care of an unpaid child reported that the children had behavioral or developmental difficulties.



Heymann SJ. Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Frequency of Inadequate Care for Sick Children

- Parents play a critical role in caring for children as they recover from illnesses and injuries. Parents' involvement has been shown to speed children's recovery.
- In Botswana, 59% of parents who experienced difficulties at work because of caregiving had to leave a sick child home alone. This was the case for 42% of respondents in Mexico and 49% in Vietnam.



Heymann SJ. Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Relationship between Parental Night Work and Probability Child Is Suspended from School

Stepwise Regression Model Controlling For	Odds Ratio for Night Work
Family income	2.91
Parental education	2.91
Marital status of parents	2.71
Child's gender	2.73
Age of child	2.72*

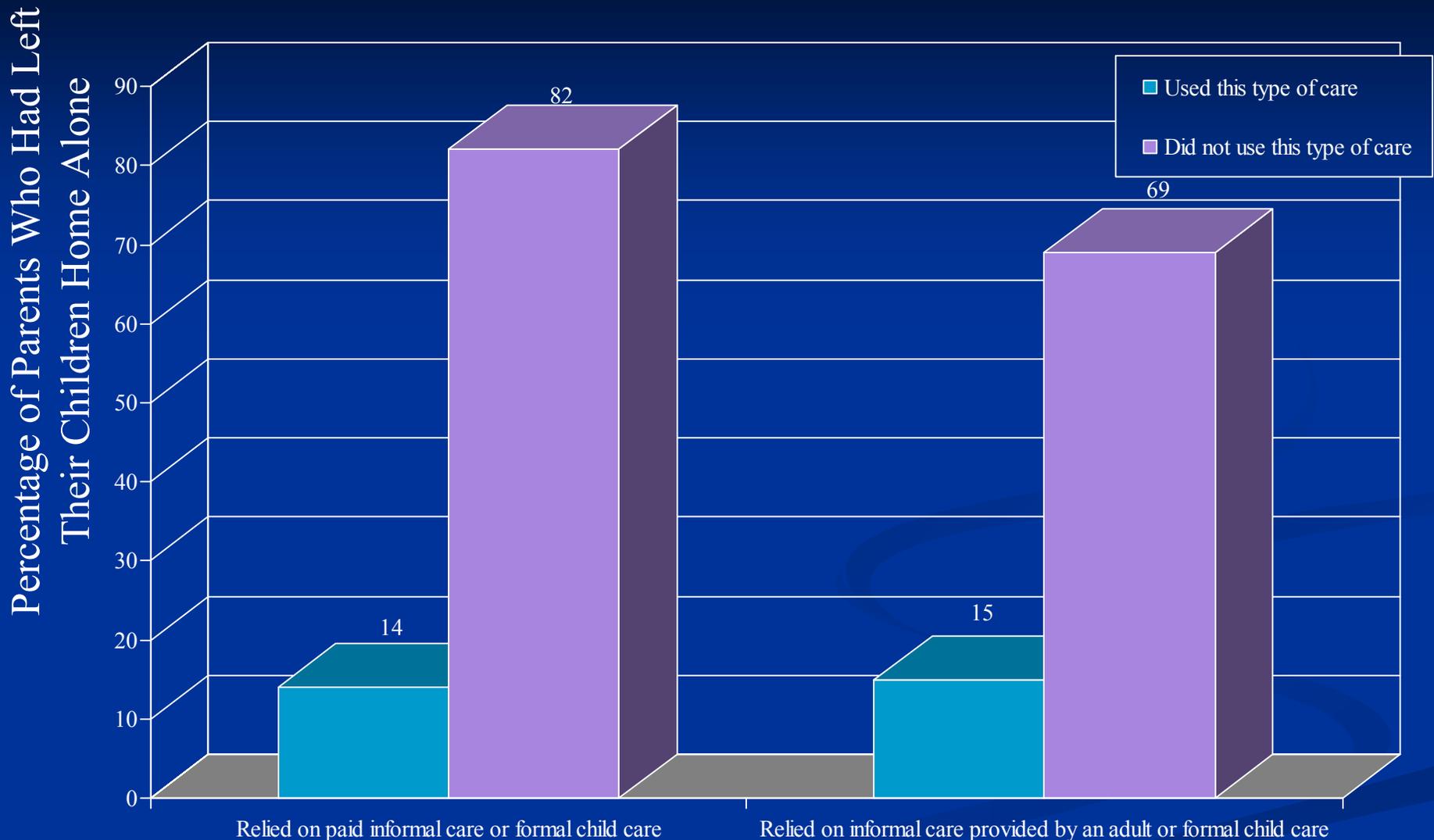
* The children of parents who work nights are 2.72 times as likely (172 percent more likely) to have gotten into trouble and been suspended from school. This is the case even after taking into account family income, parental education, marital status of parents, child's gender, and age of child. This finding was statistically significant, with $p = 0.007$.

Source: Heymann, J. The Widening Gap: Why America's Working Families Are in Jeopardy and What Can Be Done About It. New York: Basic Books.

Considering Potential Policy and Research Implications

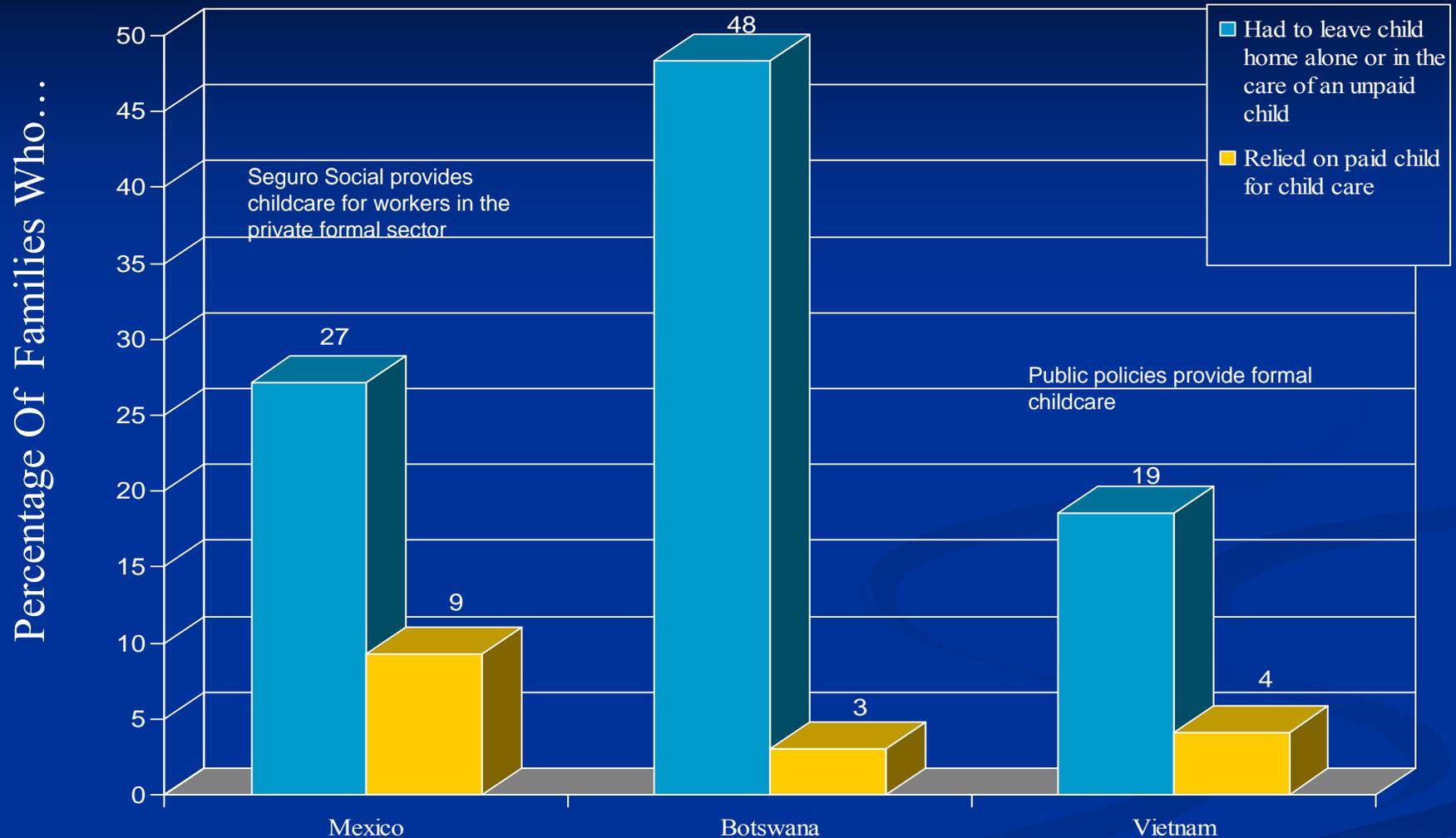


When Parents Have Access to Affordable Childcare Provided by Adults or Other Paid Caregivers, Children Are Less Likely to Be Left Home Alone



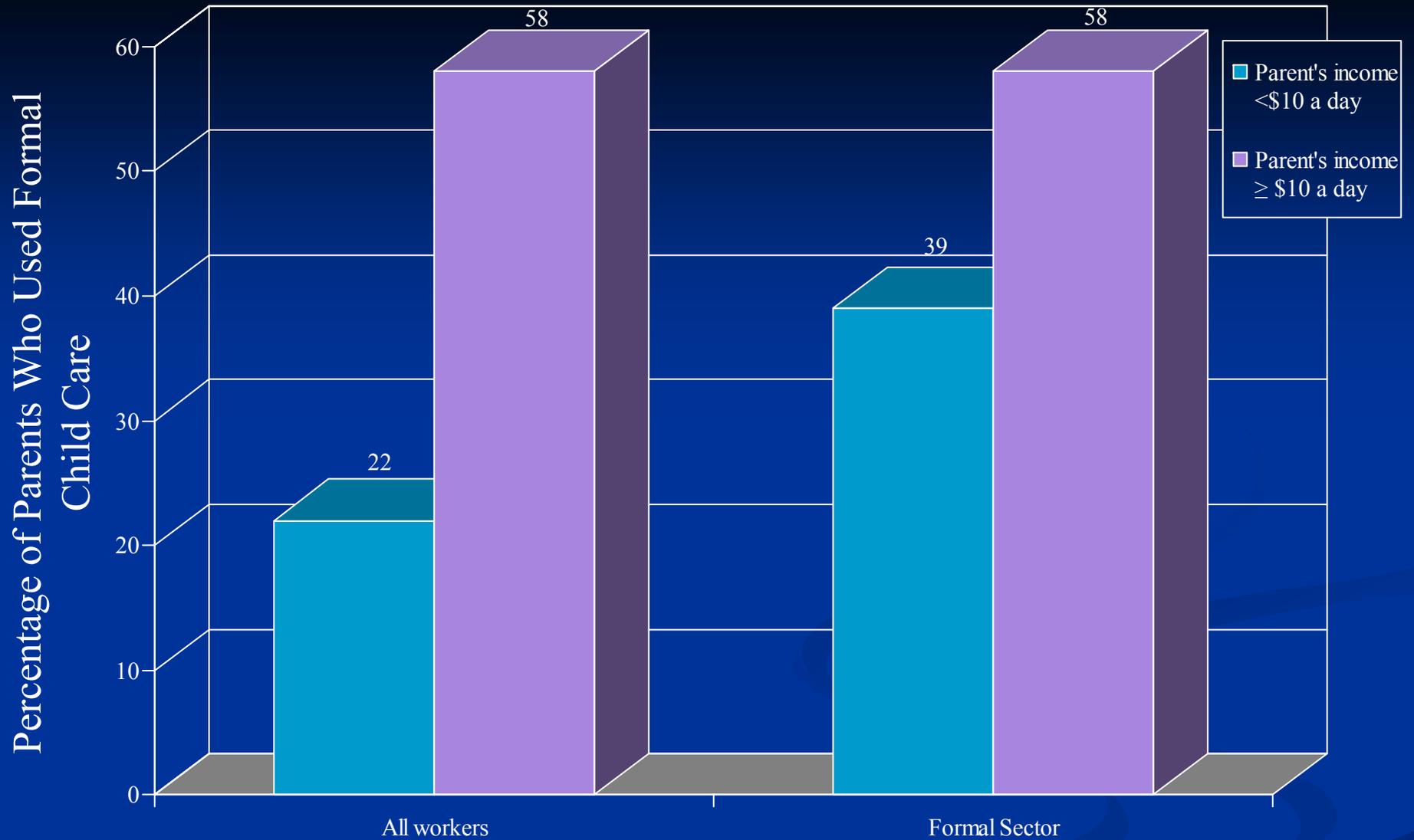
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Childcare policies can make a significant difference:



Frequency Children Are Left Alone or in the “Care” of Other Children

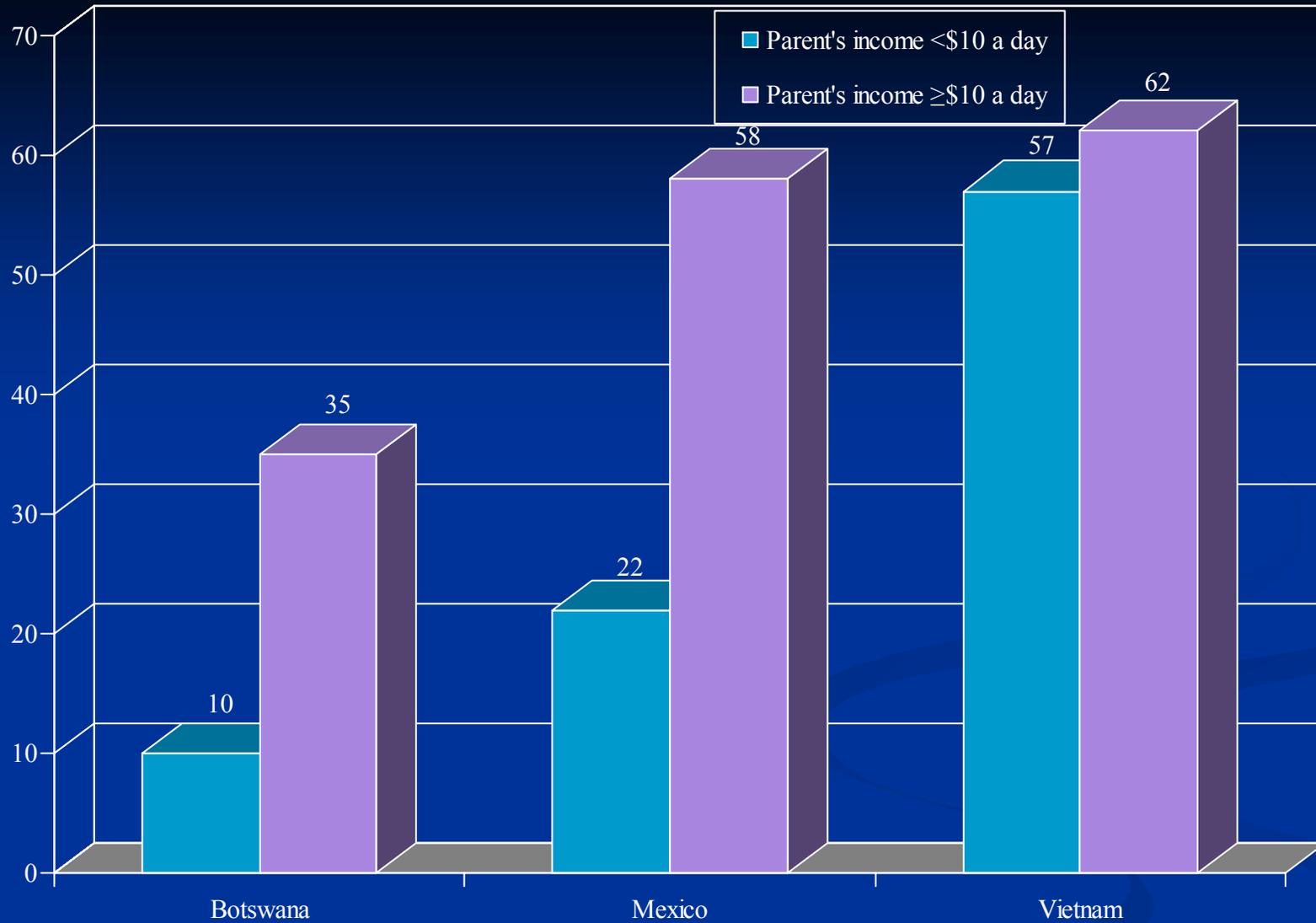
Source: Data from Project on Global Working Families in-depth interviews with working caregivers. Analysis is based on households with a 0-5 year old.



Mexico's Mandate to Provide Child Care for Employees in the Formal Sector Helps Narrow Income Disparities in that Sector

Heymann SJ. *Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

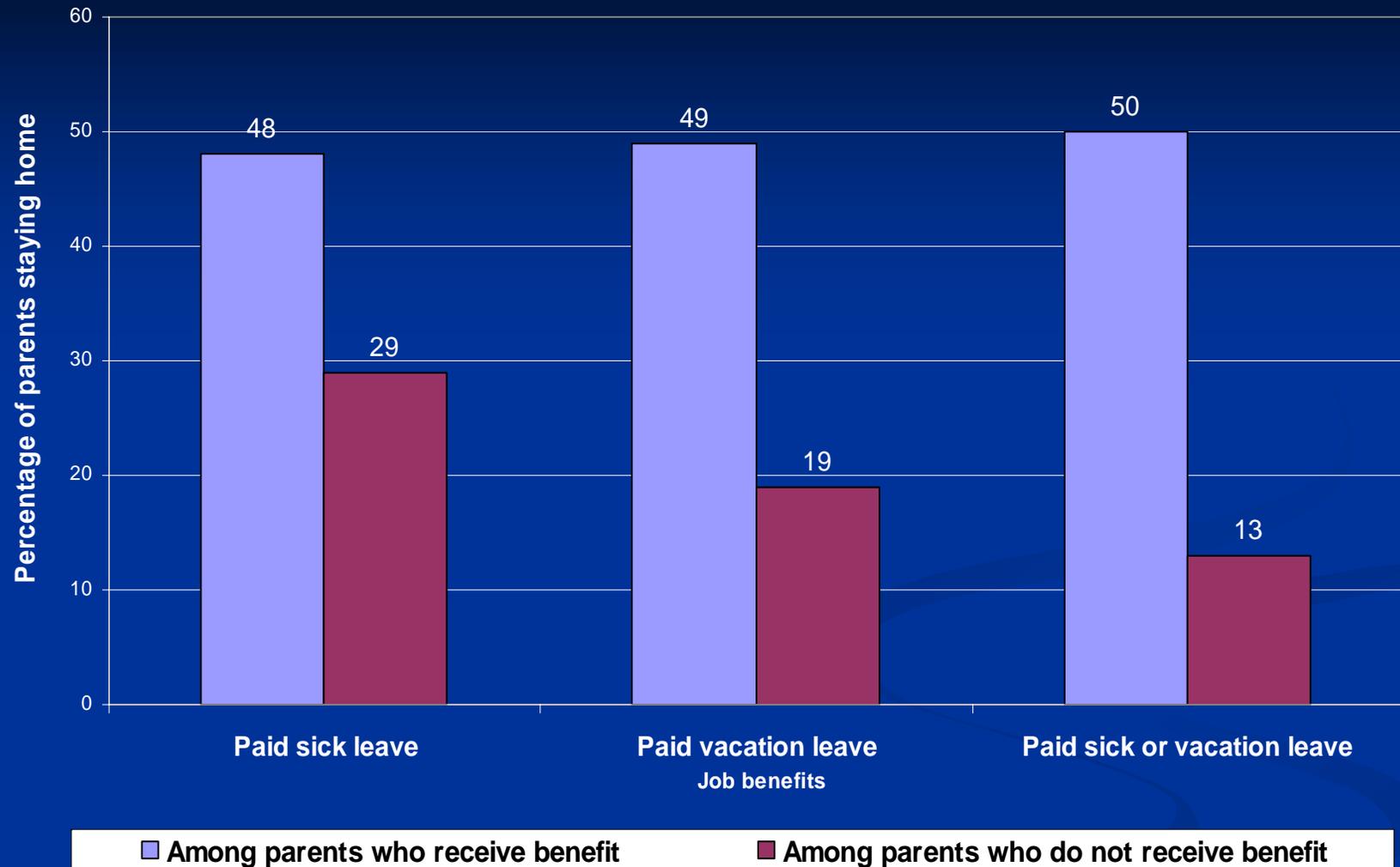
Percentage of Parents Who Used Formal Child Care



More Universally Available Public Child Care in Vietnam Narrows Income Disparities

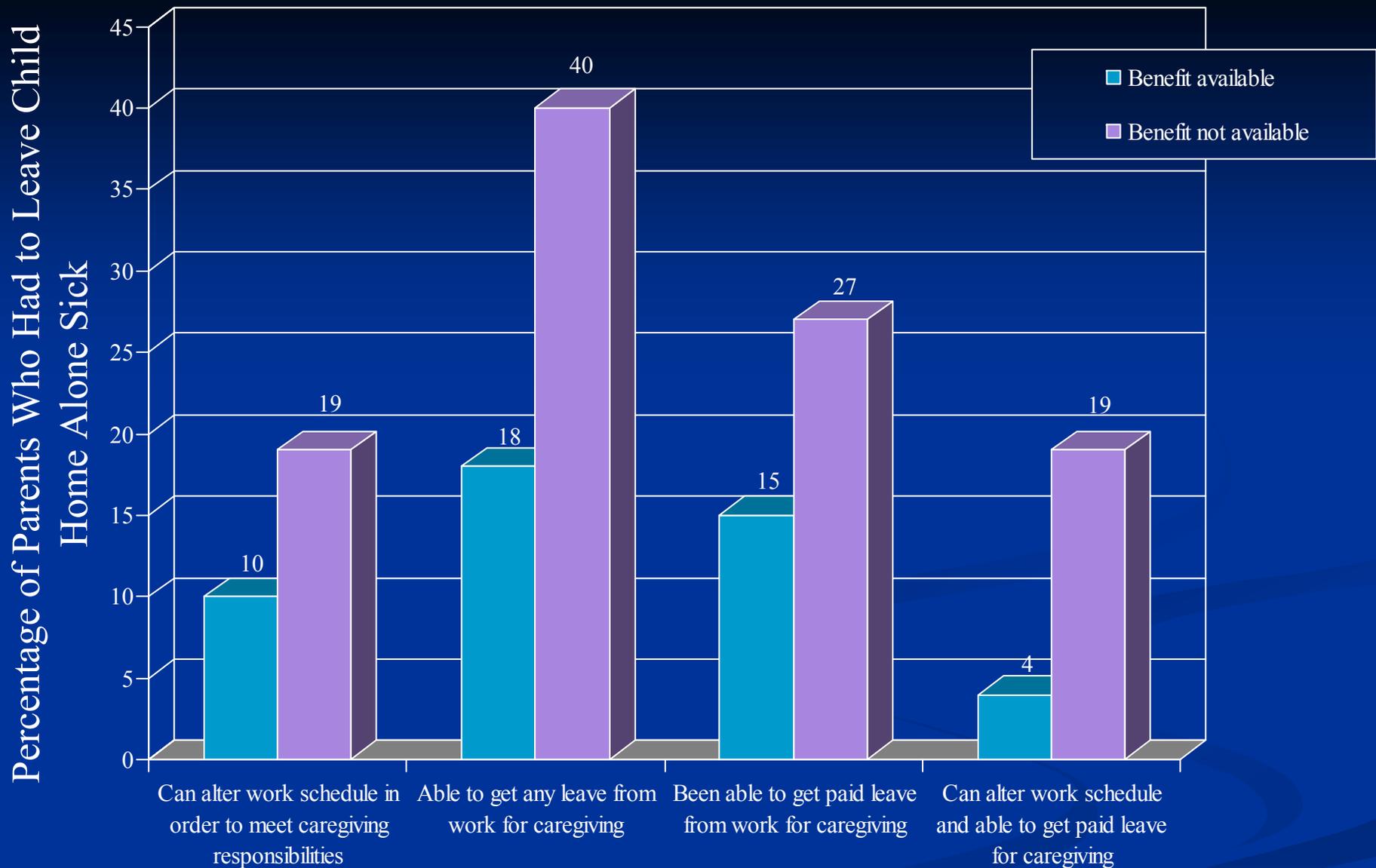
Heymann SJ. Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Percentage of Parents who Stay Home with Sick Children, by Job Benefit



Note: The above figure is based on analyses we conducted with data from the Baltimore Parenthood Study.

Source: Heymann, J. [The Widening Gap: Why America's Working Families Are in Jeopardy and What Can Be Done About It](#). New York: Basic Books.



When Parents Have Decent Working Conditions, They Are Less Likely to Have to Leave Children Home Alone Sick

Heymann SJ. *Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

What are the policy priorities?

- Paid annual leave
- Paid sick leave
- Limits to mandatory overtime
- Adequate family wage
- Universal access to early childhood care and education
- Universal access to out-of-school care



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- **Heymann, SJ,** Earle A., Simmons S, Breslow SM, and Kuehnhoff A. Work, Family, and Equity Index: Where Does the United States Stand Globally? Project on Global Working Families, Harvard School of Public Health. June 2004. www.globalworkingfamilies.com
- **Heymann SJ** and Beem C, eds. Unfinished Work: Building Equality and Democracy in an Era of Working Families. New York: The New Press, 2005.