



Why and How Do Low-income Hispanic Families Search for Early Care and Education (ECE)?

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Introduction

Child care assistance for low-income families is intended to reduce the cost of care for working parents, encourage children's participation in high-quality child care arrangements, and increase stability in parents' employment and children's care arrangements. Children from low-income backgrounds who access high-quality early care and education (ECE) programs fare better on many developmental outcomes than children who do not.¹ Common forms of child care assistance include federal subsidy programs, ECE programs such as Head Start/Early Head Start, and publicly funded universal pre-kindergarten programs. Understanding how low-income families search for and locate ECE programs that meet their needs, and how they obtain assistance to pay for ECE, is a critically important issue for researchers and policymakers.

Historically, Hispanic^a families have underutilized government assistance programs aimed at serving families who experience poverty, reporting that they do not need them or do not have knowledge of the assistance available or eligibility requirements.² Research has also found that Latino and other immigrant groups may not use federal assistance, due to a belief in helping their larger group (collectivist orientation),³ which could result in families foregoing support so that others may benefit, even when they themselves are eligible for assistance.⁴

Because the Hispanic population is growing rapidly and often faces considerable economic need⁵—and because ECE can play an important role in reducing racial/ethnic disparities in early learning and later school outcomes—it is important for the research and policy community to better

understand how and why low-income Hispanic parents search for ECE. This study takes a closer look at low-income Hispanic parents' reported reasons for conducting a search for an ECE provider or program for their young children.

This brief uses data from the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) to describe why low-income Hispanic parents with young children (birth to age 5) report searching for child care; comparison data for low-income non-Hispanic black and white parents are also reported.^b Prior research involving low-income families from various racial/ethnic backgrounds showed that parents report a variety of reasons for their ECE searches. There are also several important barriers to low-income families' use of care, including lack of availability, low affordability, and poor alignment with parents' work schedules.^{4,6} Understanding similar or shared concerns about ECE across U.S. racial and ethnic groups—along with differences across these groups—can guide outreach by programs and inform policy adjustments that might better serve diverse groups.

Key Findings

Although low-income Hispanic parents reported reasons for conducting an ECE search that were similar to those offered by their black and white peers, they reported fewer ECE search experiences overall. Low-income Hispanic parents were less likely to conduct an ECE search and, when they did, they were less likely to consider more than one provider. Their searches were also less likely to result in a change in provider for their child.

^a We use "Hispanic" and "Latino" interchangeably throughout the brief. Consistent with the U.S. Census definition this includes individuals having origins in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, as well as other "Hispanic, Latino or Spanish" origins.

^b In this analysis, child race/ethnicity is based on information provided by the household survey respondent. Children are classified as Hispanic/Latino if this was provided as a response to the question about ethnicity or the question about race. The white and black child race categories do not include children who were identified as multi-racial.



Low-income Hispanics were less likely to search for ECE than their black or white peers.

- When asked whether they had conducted a search for ECE within the past 24 months, a lower percentage of low-income Hispanic parents reported conducting a search, relative to white or black parents.
- While 35 percent of low-income Hispanic parents had searched for care, black families and white families searched at higher rates (49 percent and 41 percent, respectively). Overall, about 41 percent of low-income families had conducted a search for ECE in the past 24 months.

Across racial and ethnic groups, the main reasons for searching for ECE were consistent for all low-income parents.

- Parents most often searched for ECE to support their work schedules and to provide child enrichment or social opportunities. These two reasons were endorsed by 72 percent of families in the study who had searched for ECE.

However, there were differences, by age of child in the household, in the relative importance of factors that motivated parents' ECE searches.

- Low-income Hispanic parents with children ages 3 to 5 were significantly more likely to state that child enrichment was their reason for searching for ECE (44 percent), relative to black families (25 percent) with similar-aged children.

There were both similarities and differences between low-income Hispanic parents and their non-Hispanic peers in terms of how they considered different types of providers according to the age of their child.

- Low-income Hispanic parents were significantly less likely than their white and black peers to consider

center-based care for their infant or toddler (ages 0 to 2), and significantly more likely than their black peers to consider a familiar home-based provider.

- Hispanic and non-Hispanic parents were equally likely to consider center-based care in their search for children ages 3 to 5.

Low-income Hispanic parents were less likely than their white peers to consider more than one provider, and less likely to change their provider after a search.

- Low-income white and black parents who conducted a search considered more than one provider at higher rates (60 percent, 58 percent) than Hispanic parents (50 percent). The difference between black and Hispanic parents was not significant.
- Low-income white parents made a change in their care arrangement at a significantly higher rate (63 percent) than low-income black (50 percent) and Hispanic parents (48 percent).

About this Series

This brief is part of an ongoing series aimed at better understanding the early care and education experiences of Latino children. This brief uses data from the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)—a set of four integrated, nationally representative surveys that describe the ECE landscape in the United States.

Other briefs in this series include:

Guzman, L., Hickman, S., Turner, K., & Gennetian, L. (2016). *Hispanic Children's Participation in Early Care and Education: Parents' Perceptions of Care Arrangements, and Relatives' Availability to Provide Care*. Bethesda, MD: The National Center for Research on Hispanic Families & Children.

Crosby, D.A. & Mendez, J.L. (2016). *Hispanic Children's Participation in Early Care and Education: Amount and Timing of Hours by Household Nativity Status, Race/Ethnicity, and Child Age*. Bethesda, MD: The National Center for Research on Hispanic Families & Children.

Crosby, D.A., Mendez, J.L., Guzman, L., & López, M. (2016). *Hispanic Children's Participation in Early Care and Education: Type of Care by Household Nativity Status, Race/Ethnicity, and Child Age*. Bethesda, MD: The National Center for Research on Hispanic Families & Children.

Crosby, D.A. & Mendez, J.L. (2017). *How Common Are Nonstandard Work Schedules Among Low-Income Hispanic Parents of Young Children*. Bethesda, MD: The National Center for Research on Hispanic Families & Children.

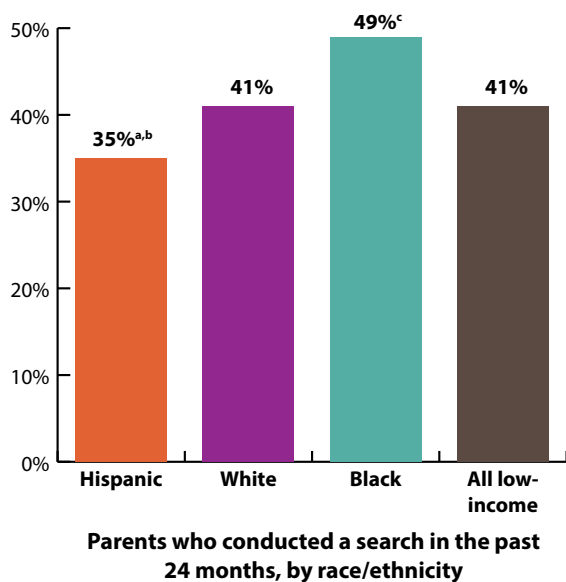
These publications can be found on the Center's website at: <http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/resources/publications/>.

Findings

The Search for ECE

Only about one-third of low-income Hispanic parents with young children from birth to age 5 (not yet in kindergarten) had conducted a search for ECE over the past 24 months. While 35 percent of low-income Hispanic parents had conducted a search, the rates for their white and black peers were higher (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Significantly fewer low-income Hispanic parents searched for ECE for their child compared to their non-Hispanic peers.



Note: Numbers are reported in percentages for the total number of focal children from birth to age 5 (not yet in kindergarten) who reside in households that are below 200% of the poverty threshold.

^aSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between Hispanic children and white children.

^bSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between Hispanic children and black children.

^cSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between white children and black children.

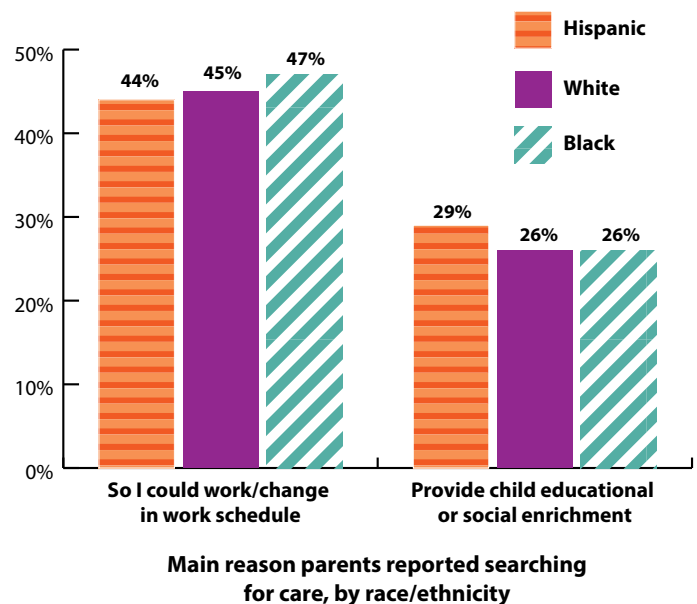
Main Reasons Behind Low-Income Hispanic Parents' Search for ECE

Parents in the study were asked to think about their most recent search for ECE and to report their main reason for seeking child care. As shown in Figure 2, **low-income parents most commonly identified work (or a change in work schedule) as their primary reason for conducting a search. The second-most common reason endorsed by parents was to provide their child with educational or social enrichment.** Combined, these two reasons accounted for 72 percent of the parents who conducted a search, with negligible differences between low-income Hispanic parents and their non-Hispanic peers. Low-income black parents were slightly more likely to list work as their reason for

searching for care, relative to low-income Hispanic and white parents. Low-income Hispanic parents were also slightly more likely to report child enrichment as a reason relative to their black and white peers. However, these differences are not significant and very small.

Twenty-eight percent of parents reported that their main reason for conducting an ECE search was something other than work or child enrichment. Some of the reasons offered by parents included covering gaps in care left by a main provider, dissatisfaction with current care, current provider stopped providing care, a loss of eligibility, or parent attending school (see Table 1). Although the differences are not significant, low-income Hispanic and black parents were more likely (6 percent for both groups) than their white peers (3 percent) to cite a parent's enrollment in school as a reason for their search for care.

Figure 2. The main reasons for conducting an ECE search were similar across racial/ethnic groups.



Note: Numbers are reported in percentages for the total number of focal children from birth to age 5 (not yet in kindergarten) who reside in households that are below 200% of the poverty threshold. None of the differences across race/ethnic groups are statistically significant.

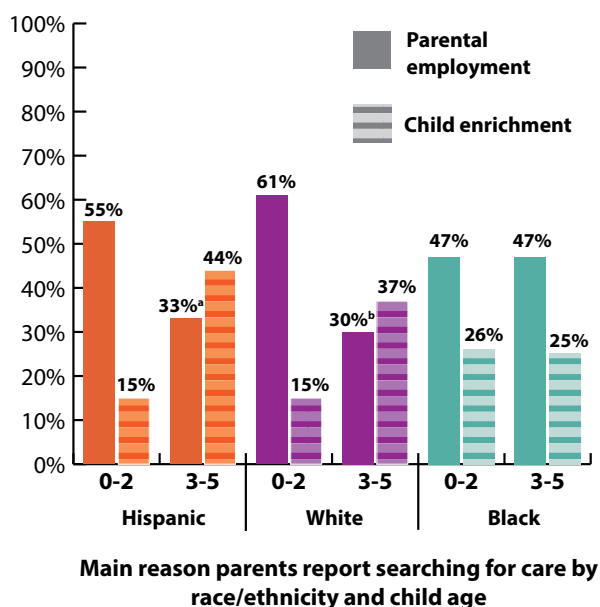
Reasons for Search: Child Age Matters

To examine whether parents' reasons for seeking ECE varied according to their child's developmental stage, we divided the sample of parents into those who searched on behalf of a child ages 0 to 2 (infant/toddler ECE) and those who searched for a child ages 3 to 5 (preschool ECE). This exploratory comparison revealed potential insight into possible differences between low-income

Hispanic parents seeking ECE and their non-Hispanic peers with children at different developmental stages.

As shown in Figure 3, there were no statistically significant differences in the main reasons given by low-income Hispanic, black, and white parents for their search for infant and toddler care. For preschool children, however, black parents were more likely to cite employment concerns as search motivators than Hispanic and white parents. Hispanic parents were more likely than black parents to identify child enrichment as their main reason for searching for preschool-age care. Finally, Hispanic parents of children ages 3 to 5 were significantly more likely (5 percent) than black parents (1 percent) to report a parent's attendance at school as a main reason to search for care (not graphically depicted).

Figure 3. The main reasons given for low-income Hispanic parents' ECE searches vary by child age.



Note: Pairwise comparisons were conducted for within age and racial/ethnic groups and are reported in Table 2 and 3.

^aSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between Hispanic parents of children ages 3-5 and black parents of children ages 3-5.

^bSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between white parents of children ages 3-5 and black parents ages 3-5.

^cSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between Hispanic parents of children ages 3-5 and black parents of children ages 3-5.

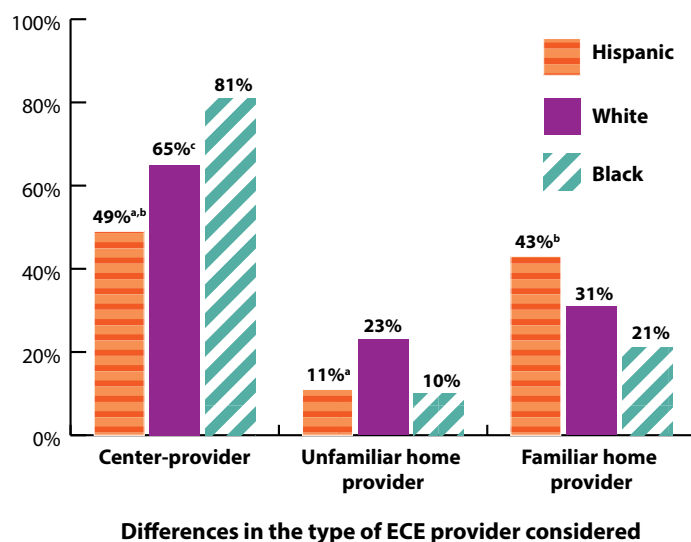
Type of Provider Considered: By Child Age

Some research examining parents' perceptions of ECE has shown that low-income Hispanic parents with young children rate the quality of center-based care similarly to their white and black peers, with most Hispanic, white, and black parents [holding favorable views](#) of the ability of centers to prepare children for school and teach them to get along with others.⁸ We expanded this research to see whether parents who searched for care considered

different types of providers. This analysis examined center-based care providers, familiar home-based providers, and nonfamiliar home-based providers.

As shown in Figure 4, low-income Hispanic parents were less likely than their non-Hispanic peers to consider center-based care for their infant or toddler-aged child. They were more likely to consider a familiar (i.e., a relative, friend, or someone whom they have a relationship with) home-based provider for their child ages 0 to 2, relative to black parents. These differences in considering center-based care do not exist for children ages 3 to 5 (not graphically depicted, see Table 3). Hispanic parents' likelihood of searching for center-based care was higher during this developmental period, such that they were comparable to their non-Hispanic peers in terms of consideration of a center-based provider for their preschool-aged child.

Figure 4. When parents searched for ECE for infants and toddlers, they considered different provider types.



Note: Pairwise comparisons were conducted within age and racial/ethnic groups and are reported in tables 2 and 3.

^aSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between Hispanic parents of children ages 0-2 and white parents of children ages 0-2.

^bSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between Hispanic parents of children ages 0-2 and black parents of children ages 0-2.

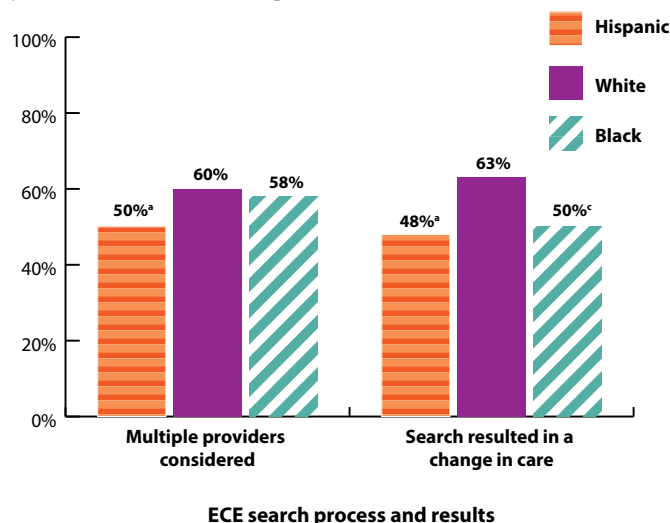
^cSignificant difference ($p < .05$) between white parents of children ages 0-2 and black parents of children ages 0-2.

ECE Search Process and Results

Finally, we examined the search process that parents used to consider providers, as well as the outcomes of searches by low-income parents. Figure 5 shows differences in the number of providers considered by parents from low-income Hispanic and non-Hispanic backgrounds. **Parents from low-income Hispanic backgrounds were less likely than their white peers to consider more than one provider.**

Low-income Hispanic parents conducting a search changed their care arrangement about half the time (48 percent), which was similar to their black peers (50 percent) but significantly less often than their white peers (63 percent).

Figure 5. Hispanic families considered fewer providers during an ECE search and were less likely to change providers after searching.



Note: Numbers are reported in percentages for the total number of focal children between the ages of birth to 5 (not yet in kindergarten) who reside in households that are below 200% of the poverty threshold.

*significant difference (p less than or equal to .05) between Hispanic children and white children

^b significant difference between Hispanic children and black children

^c significant difference between black children and white children

Summary and Implications

This brief used data from the NSECE (2012) to provide national estimates of the dimensions of low-income parents' ECE child care search processes, and how these unfold for low-income families from Hispanic backgrounds compared to their non-Hispanic peers. Relative to their white and black peers, a lower proportion of Hispanic parents reported conducting a search for care in the past 24 months. Hispanic parents (like their black peers) were also less likely than white parents to report that a change in care arrangements had resulted from the search.

What might explain these patterns? Perhaps Hispanic families have longer continued use of ECE over time and do not need or desire to search for new arrangements. If Hispanic families are truly in more stable ECE arrangements, it can be positive because stability of care has been linked to better child outcomes.⁷

Alternatively, an ECE search that does not result in a change may be due to a mismatch between Hispanic families' work needs and available care providers. One recent analysis showed that significant numbers of

Hispanic children [have parents who work some evening or weekend hours](#).⁸ The same study showed that Hispanic parents are somewhat more likely than white and black parents to receive short notice of their work schedules. As a result, a variable work schedule might also complicate Hispanic families' search for and selection of ECE arrangements that meet their needs. Taken together, the findings of both of these studies could mean that Hispanic families search for, but are unable to find, a care arrangement suitable for their child.

Our analysis also showed that low-income Hispanic parents were less likely than their white peers to consider more than one provider during their search. This may indicate that the ECE search process is more burdensome for Hispanic households, particularly if language barriers make it more difficult for them to access information about care. Prior work has documented that Hispanic families are more likely to report difficulties with accessing ECE for reasons that include language, stigma, fear of government assistance, and lack of access to social networks that can connect them to resources to assist with child care searches.⁴ Families who have experienced mental health difficulties, or parents who lack the energy to navigate the ECE system due to multiple demands on their time, may also account for Hispanic parents' general consideration of fewer providers. These results support the idea that child care accommodation is driven by the degree of match (or mismatch) between parents' motivations for seeking ECE, and the availability of care that fits their circumstances. **For these reasons, it is critically important that researchers continue studying how Hispanic families experience the process of searching for care, and what factors could make their search easier or help them find care that fits what they seek.**

In terms of parents' reasons for seeking care, our findings showed consistency across low-income families from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Seventy-two percent of families cited parental work and child enrichment opportunities as their main reasons for an ECE search. However, some differences emerged when we considered child age. Low-income Hispanic parents searching for ECE on behalf of their preschool children were more likely than black parents to identify child enrichment as their primary reason, suggesting that Hispanics may be more receptive to providers that highlight how ECE enriches children's learning and growth just prior to kindergarten entry. Parents looking to pursue education for themselves may also seek ECE for child enrichment so that the entire family is engaged in learning opportunities. In this way, ECE serves as a work support for families and allows them to secure enrichment opportunities in the form of education for children and adults.

A set of converging findings shows that center-based care is a viable and desirable option for low-income Hispanic parents during the preschool years. The emerging picture shows that low-income Hispanic parents of preschoolers hold [generally favorable perceptions](#) of center-based care and [comparable utilization rates](#) of center-based care, compared to their low-income white peers.^{8,9}

With respect to infant/toddler care, this brief documents that low-income Hispanic parents primarily considered their work and education schedules when searching for care. Parents of younger children are likely willing to consider a range of options. Most notably in this study, such options included care by a familiar home provider, which may be more flexible and/or affordable (factors not examined in this study).¹⁰ Therefore, it is important for future researchers to continue to consider how family/friend/network providers fare in their roles as providers for Hispanic children, and to examine the quality of care in these arrangements.

Limitations/Future Research

One limitation of this study is that data were not available to determine whether families searching for care were looking for a first-time transition—that is, a transition from parental care to nonparental care—or whether the search was intended to lead to a change from one nonparental arrangement to another. The study also did not examine ECE options available in specific communities, so we cannot precisely explain why many families consider only one option, especially in communities where the supply of care is limited. Interpreting this finding—and better understanding low-income Hispanic parents' search processes—will require more data regarding the supply of providers and the local neighborhoods or communities where low-income Hispanic parents live and work.

Any explanation for fewer reported searches by low-income Hispanic households in the past 24 months must carefully consider family factors, work/economic constraints, and supply factors. In addition, researchers may need more information to determine if fewer searches indicate satisfaction with care, lack of information, or feelings of hopelessness about finding care that is affordable and meets family needs. Prior studies have found that low-income Hispanic families are no more likely than their non-Hispanic peers to have relatives available to provide care,⁸ so care by relatives is unlikely to account for lower searches overall. More research is needed on barriers to the search process, and about the meaning of the finding that Hispanic families are less likely than their non-Hispanic peers to consider multiple providers.

Overall Implications

A greater awareness of our findings related to child age and the main reasons for parents' ECE searches could boost the effectiveness of practitioners and ECE providers involved in outreach to Hispanic communities. A better understanding of the variation among racial and ethnic groups searching for ECE could allow providers in communities to highlight both the opportunities and constraints of certain arrangements when assisting families with selecting ECE arrangements that best meet their needs and/or preferences. For example, families who need variable hours or nonstandard hours of care may be better matched to a provider in the community who is flexible, rather than to an ECE arrangement with fixed schedules. As shown in this brief, selection of ECE did vary according to the age of the child. Future research studies and outreach efforts could attempt to better understand how searches differ for first-time parents, versus parents who have previous ECE search experience with their older children, and/or parents with prior positive and negative experiences with their children's enrollment in ECE.

In conclusion, there is a pressing need for continued research on parents' reasons for their ECE searches, as well as strategies for locating reasonably priced and accessible child care that meets families' needs. A greater understanding of these factors could enhance economic self-sufficiency for low-income Hispanic households with young children.



Why research on low-income Hispanic children and families matters

Hispanic or Latino children currently make up roughly 1 in 4 of all children in the United States,^a and by 2050 are projected to make up 1 in 3, similar to the number of white children.^b Given this increase, how Hispanic children fare will have a profound impact on the social and economic well-being of the country as a whole.

Notably, though, 5.7 million Hispanic children, or one third of all Hispanic children in the United States, are in poverty, more than in any other racial/ethnic group.^c Nearly two thirds of Hispanic children live in low-income families, defined as having incomes of less than two times the federal poverty level.^d Despite their high levels of economic need, Hispanics, particularly those in immigrant families, have lower rates of participation in many government support programs when compared with other racial/ethnic minority groups.^{e-g} High-quality, research-based information on the characteristics, experiences, and diversity of Hispanic children and families is needed to inform programs and policies supporting the sizable population of low-income Hispanic families and children.

^a Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2017). America's children: Key national indicators of well-being, 2017, Table POP3. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office. Retrieved from <http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables.asp>.

^b Ibid.

^c DeNavas-Walt, C. & Proctor, B.D. (2015). Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014, Table B-2, Current Population Reports, P60-252. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf#TableB-2>.

^d Lopez, M. H. & Velasco, G. (2011). Childhood poverty among Hispanics sets record, leads nation. Washington, DC: Pew Research Hispanic Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2011/09/28/childhood-poverty-among-hispanics-sets-record-leads-nation/>.

^e Williams, S. (2013). Public assistance participation among U.S. children in poverty, 2010. Bowling Green, Ohio: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. Retrieved from http://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1021&context=ncfmr_family_profiles.

^f Lichter, D., Sanders, S., & Johnson, K. (2015). Behind at the starting line: Poverty among Hispanic infants. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire, Carsey School of Public Policy. Retrieved from <http://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1250&context=carsey>.

^g Child Trends Databank. (2014). Health care coverage. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=health-care-coverage>.

Data and Methodology

Data for this brief came from the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), a set of four integrated surveys that depict early care and education (ECE) experiences in the United States from different perspectives, including parents and nonparental care providers. This analysis used data from the NSECE Household Public-Use file, which includes parent-reported information about whether the family engaged in an ECE search for the focal child during the past 24 months, the factors considered in the search, reasons for searching, the number of providers considered, and the results of the search process.

Our analytic sample included 3,270 low-income Hispanic, white (non-Hispanic), and black (non-Hispanic) parents with a focal child younger than age six (not yet in kindergarten); low-income is defined as less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Other racial/ethnic groups were omitted from the analysis because of relatively small sample sizes among those respondents who had conducted an ECE search for a focal child in the target age range.

This brief refers to child care and ECE as interchangeable terms inclusive of a range of providers, including home-based and center-based providers. These terms also include other activities that involve nonparental care; these may be short-term arrangements for children's enrichment, or drop-in care that offers families flexibility and care with short notice.

Pairwise comparisons were used to test the statistical significance of mean differences between the three racial/ethnic groups. Analyses were conducted in Stata 12 and weighted to be representative of U.S. households with young children in 2012.

Table 1. Pairwise Comparisons among Study Variables

	Low-income overall	Hispanic	White	Black	Significant pairwise differences
	n=3270	n=1307	n=1281	n=682	
Conducted ECE search in past 2 years	41%	35%	41%	49%	H<W, H<B, W<B
Among those who searched:	n=1232	n=420	n=510	n=302	
Considered multiple providers	57%	50%	60%	58%	H<W (p=.05)
Search resulted in change	56%	48%	63%	50%	H<W, B<W
Main reason was employment	45%	44%	45%	47%	
Main reason was child enrichment	27%	29%	26%	26%	
Main reason was covering gaps in care	3%	2%	4%	3%	
Main reason was dissatisfaction with provider	4%	4%	4%	7%	
Main reason was current provider stopped	4%	5%	5%	3%	
Main reason was loss of eligibility	1%	1%	1%	2%	
Main reason was parent attending school	4%	6%	3%	6%	
Search included a center provider	71%	64%	70%	79%	H<B, W<B
Search included an unfamiliar home provider	14%	10%	18%	8%	H<W, B<W
Search included a familiar home provider	25%	31%	23%	24%	H>W

Note. Respondents were asked for the main reason that they were looking for child care as part of semi-structured interviews. Some reasons originally listed in other category were recoded after data was collected and reported in the NSECE (2012) data set. Main reasons in the table do not sum to 100% due to the other less frequently endorsed reasons not analyzed in this study.

Table 2. Pairwise Comparisons for Study Variables for Children Ages 0–2

	Low-income overall	Hispanic	White	Black	Significant pairwise differences
	n=1159	n=624	n=604	n=331	
Conducted ECE search in past 2 years	40%	35%	39%	51%	H<B, W<B
Among those who searched:	n=554	n=189	n=226	n=139	
Considered multiple providers	61%	48%	65%	65%	H<W, H<B
Search resulted in change	50%	45%	56%	42%	
Main reason was employment	56%	55%	61%	47%	
Main reason was child enrichment	18%	15%	15%	26%	
Main reason was covering gaps in care	3%	1%	4%	1%	H<W
Main reason was dissatisfaction with provider	3%	2%	1%	10%	W<B
Main reason was current provider stopped	3%	7%	3%	0%	W<B
Main reason was loss of eligibility	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Main reason was parent attending school	6%	7%	3%	10%	
Search included a center provider	65%	49%	65%	81%	H<W, H<B, W<B
Search included an unfamiliar home provider	17%	11%	23%	10%	H<W, B<W
Search included a familiar home provider	31%	43%	31%	21%	H>B

Note. Respondents were asked for the main reason that they were looking for child care as part of semi-structured interviews. Some reasons originally listed in other category were recoded after data was collected and reported in the NSECE (2012) data set. Main reasons in the table do not sum to 100% due to the other less frequently endorsed reasons not analyzed in this study.

Table 3. Pairwise Comparisons for Study Variables for Children ages 3–5

	Low-income overall	Hispanic	White	Black	Significant pairwise differences
	n=1711	n=683	n=677	n=351	
Conducted ECE search in past 2 years	41%	34%	43%	47%	H<W, H<B
Among those who searched:	n=662	n=226	n=275	n=161	
Considered multiple providers	54%	52%	56%	50%	
Search resulted in change	63%	52%	69%	58%	H<W
Main reason was employment	34%	33%	30%	47%	H<B, W<B
Main reason was child enrichment	36%	44%	37%	25%	H>B
Main reason was covering gaps in care	3%	2%	3%	5%	
Main reason was dissatisfaction with provider	5%	5%	6%	3%	
Main reason was current provider stopped	5%	3%	6%	5%	
Main reason was loss of eligibility	2%	1%	1%	4%	
Main reason was parent attending school	3%	5%	2%	1%	H>B
Search included a center provider	76%	77%	75%	77%	
Search included an unfamiliar home provider	11%	9%	14%	6%	
Search included a familiar home provider	19%	20%	16%	26%	

Note. Respondents were asked for the main reason that they were looking for child care as part of semi-structured interviews. Some reasons originally listed in other category were recoded after data was collected and reported in the NSECE (2012) data set. Main reasons in the table do not sum to 100% due to the other less frequently endorsed reasons not analyzed in this study.

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About the Center

The National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families is a hub of research to help programs and policy better serve low-income Hispanics across three priority areas—poverty reduction and economic self-sufficiency, healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood, and early care and education. The Center was established in 2013 by a five-year cooperative agreement from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation within the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to Child Trends, in partnership with Abt Associates and New York University, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and University of Maryland, College Park.

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