

# Fidelity® Study: The Pandemic's Impact on Women

## Fidelity Investments'® Pandemic Impact Study

examines the attitudes and behaviors of American caregivers related to work and money, months into the COVID-19 pandemic. The following data reflects findings from women looking at how they're feeling about juggling work and home responsibilities, and how that may be influencing career decisions.

The pandemic is challenging Americans in unprecedented ways, driving many women in particular to reevaluate how they manage work and home responsibilities. In fact, Fidelity finds that more women are considering stepping back from the workforce but are more engaged with their finances than before the pandemic.



Approximately **4-in-10 (39%)** women **are considering a change to their work life**, either leaving their job or reducing their hours due to **increased caregiving responsibilities**

Why are women **considering stepping back** from the workforce?

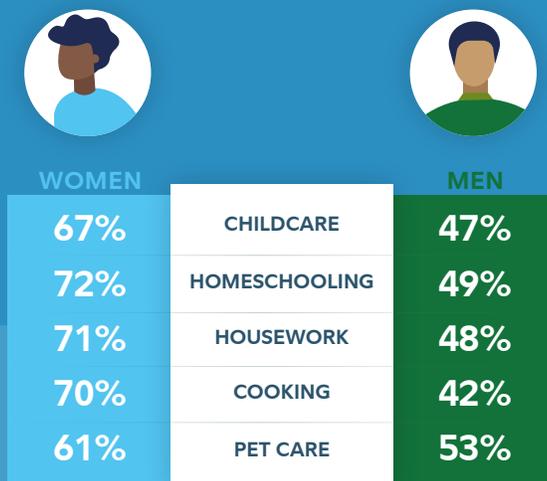


# How is the pandemic affecting women's daily lives?

## SHOULDERING THE RESPONSIBILITIES

While caregiving responsibilities may be the most pressing challenge working mothers are trying to manage, it's certainly not the only one. Since the onset of the pandemic, among those who are married or living with a partner, **45% say they've taken on an even larger share of household responsibilities compared to their significant other.**

Women are significantly more likely to say that they're shouldering a majority of the work. Here are the percentages of work women and men report doing compared to their partners:



## SOME OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES WOMEN SAY THEY'RE FACING DUE TO THE PANDEMIC

### SELF-CARE



**49%**  
cutting back on self-care, including finding "me time"

### HEALTH



**34%**  
maintaining a healthy diet

### PRODUCTIVITY



**33%**  
prioritizing their day to stay productive



**48%**  
feeling cut off from friends and family



**41%**  
sleeping less



**34%**  
making time to exercise and stay active



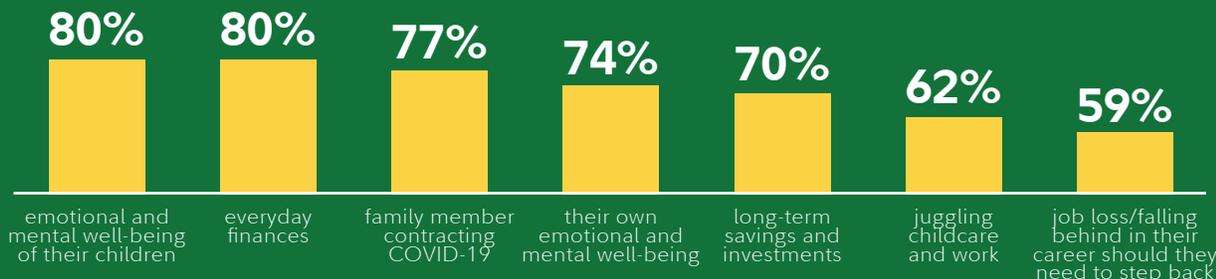
**28%**  
feeling more distracted and less productive while working



**22%**  
putting in more hours working from home

Overall, **60% of women say they are feeling much more stressed**, with a range of concerns weighing them down.

## LEADING STRESSORS FOR WOMEN



## THE SILVER LINING

The pandemic has been a catalyst for many women to become more actively engaged in their finances.

Where women were already building good planning and savings habits, many say they have **amplified those efforts in the last six months to shore up finances for the future**. In addition, more women are also **taking steps to better educate themselves (36%) and become more comfortable talking about money (35%)**.

Among activities where women have increased their focus:

# 67%

**OF WOMEN SAY THEY ARE NOW MORE ENGAGED IN MANAGING THEIR MONEY SINCE THE ONSET OF THE PANDEMIC**



**46%**  
cutting back on discretionary spending



**44%**  
following detailed budgets



**43%**  
creating or updating a financial plan



**40%**  
building up emergency savings

## NO MATTER WHAT DECISIONS FAMILIES ARE MAKING, FIDELITY IS HERE TO HELP

In this time when so many are experiencing a job change, whether that be a job loss or a decision to step back from the workforce, **it's important to understand how this can affect your finances today, but also for the long term** so you can plan accordingly to stay on track to reach future goals.

### Among potential impacts:

- **Retirement and healthcare contributions** and any employer matches
- **Compounding growth and potential investment earnings** of those contributions
- How your **social security** benefit may be calculated
- **Career development opportunities** along with the challenge of re-entering the workforce at a comparable salary



## LET'S CONSIDER ONE HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO



A 35-year old woman making \$75,000 a year is considering leaving her job. Taking one year away from her career could potentially mean almost \$160,000 less in retirement savings by the time she is 67 years old.\*

**TAKES ONE YEAR OFF**   **NO CAREER BREAK**



\*This hypothetical example shows estimated ending retirement plan balances for a woman who at the age 35 is earning \$75,000 in salary. The estimate assumes a 9% employee contribution rate to a workplace retirement account, with an additional 3% employer match, and a 1.22% annual real salary growth rate. Example assumes an 18% reduction in salary when returning after the on-year career break. Contributions are made at the beginning of every year and a 4.5% real rate of return is applied every year until the age 67 retirement age. The ending values do not reflect taxes, fees or inflation. If they did, amounts would be lower. Earnings and pre-tax contributions are subject to taxes when withdrawn. Distributions before age 59 1/2 may also be subject to a 10% penalty. Contribution amounts are subject to IRS and Plan limits. Systematic investing does not ensure a profit or guarantee against a loss in a declining market. This example is for illustrative purposes only and does not represent the performance of any security. Consider current and anticipated investment horizon when making an investment decision, as the illustration may not reflect this. The assumed rate of return used in this example is not guaranteed. Investments that have potential for 4.5% annual rate of return also come with the risk of loss.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT **WHAT MAKES FINANCIAL PLANNING DIFFERENT FOR WOMEN**, WITH SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS TO HELP WITH PERSONAL PLANNING, VISIT THE **FIVE FINANCIAL FUNDAMENTALS IMPACTING WOMEN**.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Women Talk Money

Join the weekly conversation, live every Wednesday or anytime on demand, to learn more about topics most relevant to women and ask your own most pressing money questions.

### Fidelity's Life Events Hub

Find a comprehensive library of additional tools, checklists and other resources to help plan for and manage major life moments.

### 24/7 Support

For those who want more hands-on help, Fidelity representatives are available at no cost to answer questions 24/7 at 1-800-FIDELITY, or online at Fidelity.com.

### ABOUT THE FIDELITY INVESTMENTS PANDEMIC IMPACT STUDY:

This study presents findings from a nationwide survey of 1,902 U.S. adults, 951 men and 951 women, ages 18+ who identify as a caregiver and were employed as of January 1, 2020. This survey was fielded August 25 – September 4, 2020 by Engine Insights, an independent research firm not affiliated with Fidelity Investments. The results of this survey may not be representative of all adults meeting the same criteria as those surveyed for this study.

### ABOUT FIDELITY INVESTMENTS:

Fidelity's mission is to inspire better futures and deliver better outcomes for the customers and businesses we serve. For more information about Fidelity Investments, visit [www.fidelity.com/about-fidelity/our-company](http://www.fidelity.com/about-fidelity/our-company).

Keep in mind that investing involves risk. The value of your investment will fluctuate over time, and you may gain or lose money.

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