

Study: Young pediatricians satisfied with careers

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Pediatricians launching their careers today are key to the future of pediatrics. The Academy is preparing to recruit a new cohort of young pediatricians for the Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study (PLACES).

Started in 2012, PLACES is an ongoing longitudinal study to get accurate and current information on the experiences and opinions of early and mid-career pediatricians.

Participants give annual updates on core issues related to career choice and satisfaction, work-life balance, work environment, daily stressors, life changes and emerging issues in pediatrics.

Their input on emerging issues has been particularly valuable to the Academy. Key issues have included Maintenance of Certification, responsibilities at home, staying current on new medical information and administrative tasks.

The commitment among pediatricians participating in PLACES has been strong, with eight in 10 completing the survey each year.

“PLACES has been a wonderful opportunity for me to be more cognizant of and thoughtful about the variety of challenges and rewards at different stages of my career,” said one participant. “It helped me to recognize when I needed a change in my career path and for that I am grateful.”

Data collected in 2017 from pediatricians who graduated from residency six to eight years ago show they are busy managing their careers and families (see figure).

- Four in 10 are in general pediatrics, 38% in subspecialty care, 13% in hospitalist care and 4% in nonclinical work.
- Nearly a quarter (22%) are working part time.
- Among those working full time, almost half are earning \$200,000 or more a year.
- They are juggling both work and family. Nine in 10 are married/partnered, 81% have children and 71% are in two-parent working families.
- Overall, they express high levels of satisfaction with their jobs and careers.

Careers, finances, family and satisfaction of early career pediatricians (average age=38), n=761



- **42%** are in general pediatrics, **38%** in subspecialty care, **13%** in hospitalist care, **4%** in nonclinical work, **2%** not working
- **83%** are employees
- **22%** are working part time



- **46%** of those working full time earn \$200,000 or more a year
- **74%** are earning as much (54%) or more (20%) than they expected when leaving residency
- **74%** own rather than rent their home



- **76%** are women
- **89%** are married/partnered; **27%** of their partners are physicians
- **71%** are in two-parent working families



- **50%** agree their work-life balance is what they expected when leaving residency
- **87%** find their work personally rewarding
- **83%** are satisfied with their career as a physician

Source: AAP PLACES surveys (2015-2017); 2009-2011 residency graduate cohort

“PLACES has put the voice of early and mid-career pediatricians at the table when we develop plans for the future,” said AAP President Colleen A. Kraft, M.D., M.B.A., FAAP. “We are very grateful for the participation of current PLACES participants and excited that we will be recruiting a third cohort into the project. PLACES has shown us the future of pediatrics is in excellent hands.”

The current cohort of pediatricians in PLACES graduated from pediatric residency in 2009-'11 (average age 38 years) or 2002-'04 (average age 45 years). The cohort to be recruited in 2019 will have graduated in 2016-'18, so the AAP is assured of continuing to gather the perspective of pediatricians at the start of their career.

Resources

- For more information on the AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study, visit www2.aap.org/research/places.htm or contact Mary Pat Frintner, in the AAP Division of Health Services Research, at 630-626-6664 or mfrintner@aap.org.
- [Additional Research update columns](#)

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