



Research Update



Early career pediatricians satisfied with work despite challenges

from [AAP Research](#)

Many early career pediatricians have experienced major life events during the COVID-19 pandemic such as beginning new jobs, starting families or moving to new areas, according to recent findings from the AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study (PLACES).

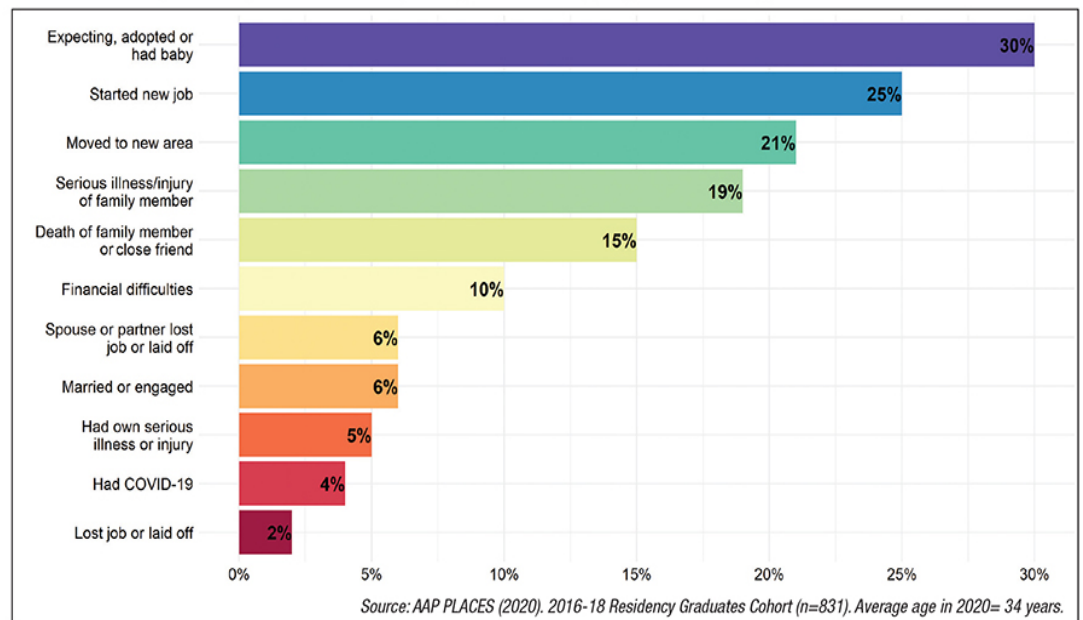
Data collected in 2020 from the newest PLACES cohort indicate that pediatricians who graduated residency between 2016 and 2018 are working in general pediatrics (38%), subspecialties (27%), as hospitalists (12%) or in other positions (2%). Nearly all (93%) are employees, not owners or independent contractors. Eighteen percent are in fellowship training and 2% are not working.

The average age of these PLACES pediatricians is 34 years, and three in four are women. Sixty-four percent identify as non-Hispanic White, 20% Asian, 7% Hispanic, 5% Black and 4% other. Eight in 10 pediatricians were married or had a partner, and half were parents.

Thirty percent of the pediatricians said they were expecting, adopted or had a baby in the last 12 months (see figure). One-fourth started a new job, and 21% moved to a new area. Pediatricians also reported difficult life events, such as the death of a loved one, financial difficulties or an illness or injury, though less frequently. These life experiences are similar to those reported by PLACES participants surveyed in 2013 at a similar age.

In 2020, about half of the early career pediatricians reported being very or moderately stressed at work and in balancing their professional and personal responsibilities. Most reported significant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many strongly agreed or agreed they are concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on the safety of loved ones due to their exposure as a physician (82%), safety of self as a physician (71%), finances of work setting (66%) and finances of own family (49%).

Percent of early career pediatricians reporting in 2020 they experienced major life event in last 12 months



At the same time, nearly all (95%) strongly agreed or agreed their work contributed to the health of families in their communities, and 83% are satisfied with their career as physicians.

PLACES is an AAP cohort study that tracks the career and life choices and experiences of pediatricians across their careers. Cohorts include pediatricians who graduated residency in 2016-'18, 2009-'11 and 2002-'04. Each cohort has about 900 participants; 852 of 916 participants in the 2016-'18 cohort completed the survey in August through December 2020.

RESOURCES

- The AAP Section on Early Career Physicians provides training, resources and support for early career physicians who are within 10 years of their residency or fellowship training. For information, visit <http://www.aap.org/soecp> or contact Britt Nagy at 630-626-6064 or bnagy@aap.org.
- For more information on the AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study, visit <http://www.aap.org/places> or contact Mary Pat Frintner at 630-626-6664 or mfrintner@aap.org.