

## Research Update



A program of the American Academy of Pediatrics

# Major life events common among young pediatricians

from the **AAP Department of Research**

Young pediatricians are not only busy starting their careers, they also are experiencing other major life events, including getting married, having a child and dealing with the death of a loved one, according to recent findings from the AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study (PLACES).

The longitudinal study was launched in 2012 to track the job paths and lives of early career pediatricians. Participants have completed three consecutive annual surveys (2012-2014). Major life experiences were common among the young pediatricians during this time period.

In 2012, 77% were married and 51% were parents. By 2014, 87% were married and 67% were parents.

About two-thirds started new jobs, and more than half moved to new areas between 2012 and 2014 (see Figure 1). In addition, more than half were expecting, adopted or had a child, while one-third dealt with serious illnesses or injuries of family members and/or deaths of family members or close friends during this time period. One in five experienced financial difficulties sometime in the last three years, and one in 10 dealt with their own serious illness or injury.

Though less frequently, PLACES pediatricians reported other difficult life events, including being named as a defendant in medical negligence lawsuits, miscarriage and infertility.

In 2014, most were satisfied with their work (84%), careers as physicians (84%) and life overall (67%) (see Figure 2). While only 2% were very stressed at home and 6% were very stressed at work, 14% were very stressed balancing work and personal responsibilities.

Pediatricians experiencing financial difficulties in the last three years were more likely than those without financial difficulties to be very stressed at work (11% vs. 5%) and balancing work and personal responsibilities (21% vs. 12%).

Young pediatricians who were expecting, adopted or had a baby between 2012 and 2014 were more likely than those who did not have this experience in the last three years to report being completely or very satisfied with their life in 2014 (72% vs. 61%, respectively).

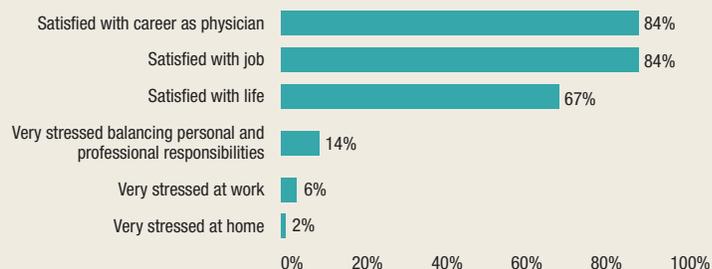
Among participants who graduated from residency less than six years ago (average age = 35 years), 76% are women, 41% are prac-

**Figure 1**  
Young pediatricians reporting that they experienced major life event in 2012-'14 (n=903)



Source: AAP PLACES, Annual Survey 1-3 (2012-'14); pediatricians less than six years post-residency in 2014

**Figure 2**  
Stress and satisfaction reported by young pediatricians in 2014 (n=819)



Source: AAP PLACES, Annual Survey 3 (2014); pediatricians less than six years post-residency in 2014

ticing general pediatrics, 38% are in fellowship training or practicing subspecialty care, and 15% are hospitalists. Eighty-seven percent are employees, not owners in a practice, or independent contractors.

PLACES includes two cohorts: the 2009-'11 Residency Graduates Cohort described in this article and the 2002-'04 Residency Graduates Cohort. PLACES has approximately 900 participants in each cohort and includes both AAP members and nonmembers and general pediatricians, subspecialists and hospitalists. Over 90% of participants have responded to the annual surveys.

*For more information on PLACES, visit [www2.aap.org/research/places.htm](http://www2.aap.org/research/places.htm) or contact Mary Pat Frintner, M.S.P.H., in the AAP Division of Health Services Research, at 800-433-9016, ext. 7664, or [mfrintner@aap.org](mailto:mfrintner@aap.org).*