



Children in self care

Fundamental facts from the
2004 Minnesota child care survey



More children age 10 to 12 are in self care throughout the year than five years ago.

- 41 percent are in self care during the school year (as one of the types regularly used), up from 26 percent five years ago.
- 42 percent are in self care during the summer (as one of the types regularly used), up from 20 percent five years ago.
- On average, they care for themselves about 4.5 hours per week during the school year and 10 hours per week during the summer, primarily before and after school or on weekends.
- Children age 10 to 12 from households with higher incomes are more likely to be in self care (45 percent, compared with 31 percent for households with low incomes).

Few Minnesota children younger than age 10 are in self care.

- 16 percent of children age 6 to 9 care for themselves during the school year, typically for 2.5 hours per week.
- 2 percent of children age 2 or younger and 3 percent of children age 3 to 5 are cared for by siblings age 12 or younger on a regular basis.

Parents use self care as their primary arrangement for 10-12-year-olds due to cost and lack of choice.

- For about 15 percent of children age 10 to 12, self care is the primary arrangement.
- 44 percent of these children's parents say they chose self care as the primary arrangement due to cost.
- 42 percent say they felt they had to take whatever child care arrangement they could get, compared with 31 percent using licensed care and 30 percent using family, friend and neighbor care.

Most Minnesota parents feel children must be age 12 or older to be safely left on their own in their neighborhood on a regular basis.

- 28 percent feel that children under age 12 can be safely left alone on a regular basis.
- 38 percent consider children age 12 old enough to be in self care regularly.
- 34 percent feel that children must be older than age 12 to be safely left on their own.
- 41 percent of children age 12 and younger staying alone or watching their younger siblings have had babysitting or home safety training, such as that offered by the Red Cross or community education

continued

More preteens are regularly on their own than five years ago.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Download fact sheets and full research reports—*Child Care Use in Minnesota and Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregivers*—at www.wilderresearch.org. 2004 Minnesota statewide household child care survey funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and conducted by Wilder Research, Richard Chase study director.

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This information is available in other forms to people with disabilities by contacting us at (651) 282-5329 (voice). TTY/TDD users can call the Minnesota Relay at 711 or (800) 627-3529. For the Speech-to-Speech Relay, call (877) 627-3848.