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**Working Paper**

## Baby Steps: The Gender Division of Childcare during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

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# Baby Steps: The Gender Division of Childcare during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID19 pandemic has caused shocks to the demand for home childcare (with the closure of schools and nurseries) and the supply of home childcare (with many people not working). We collect real-time data on daily lives to document that UK families with young children have been doing the equivalent of a working week in childcare. Women have been doing the greater share, but overall, the gender childcare gap (the difference between the share of childcare done by women and the share done by men) for the additional, post-COVID19 hours is smaller than that for the allocation of pre-COVID19 childcare. However, the amount of additional childcare provided by men is very sensitive to their employment – the allocation has become more equal in households where men are working from home and where they have been furloughed/ lost their job. There are likely to be long-term implications from these changes – potentially negative for the careers of parents of young children; but also, more positively for some families, for sharing the burden of childcare more equally in the future.

**JEL Classification:** J21, J22, J24, J33, J63

**Keywords:** gender, childcare, COVID-19, Coronavirus

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## 1. Introduction

Since the COVID19 pandemic struck, governments around the world have introduced a range of non-pharmaceutical interventions in order to slow down the rate of transmission of the disease. In the UK, self-isolation measures for those with symptoms were imposed on March 12<sup>th</sup>, followed by social distancing measures encouraged for everyone on March 16<sup>th</sup>, school and nursery closures on March 20<sup>th</sup> and a general lockdown on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. These measures have brought about rapid and profound changes to people's everyday lives. For families with children, there have been major shocks both to the demand for home childcare and to the supply of home childcare. In the UK, following the example in many other countries, childcare providers (schools, colleges, nurseries and childminders) closed from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March to all but the children of key workers and vulnerable children, requiring millions of children to stay, and be looked after, at home. Work life has also changed beyond recognition. Only a minority of people are working in their regular place of work. Wherever possible, people have been asked to work from home and to juggle work with childcare responsibilities if they have young children. With the required closure of most places of work, an estimated one-quarter of the UK workforce is on furlough (i.e. temporarily laid off and paid by the government at 80 per cent of their wages up to £2,500), while an estimated three per cent have lost their job altogether.<sup>1</sup> There are now many parents who are not working and who have more potential childcare time on their hands.

This paper provides new evidence on the combined effect of these demand and supply shocks on the gender allocation of childcare within couples. To that end we collected real-time data on the division of childcare within households pre- and post-lockdown. We document that in normal times (pre-COVID19), childcare is unequally distributed between men and women. Own calculations using evidence from the 2015 UK Time Use Survey (TUS) shows that mothers of young children (aged  $\leq 12$ ) spend about 2 hours per day in childcare during a normal weekday or weekend day, whereas fathers spend around 45 minutes on a weekday and about an hour and fifteen minutes on a weekend day. We find a similar gap in our survey; pre-COVID19, women in couples did 65 per cent of childcare, equating to a 30 percentage point gender childcare gap (i.e. 65 – 35).

We estimate the within-household change in the allocation of childcare post-COVID19. Estimating within-household changes is important as it allow us to control for unobserved heterogeneity that might be correlated with both post-COVID19 employment outcomes and childcare allocation. We confirm that there has been a dramatic increase in the total amount of childcare provided at home. A typical family with young children (aged  $\leq 12$ ) in our sample is now doing an average of 40 hours additional childcare each week that would previously have been provided by external providers. This

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<sup>1</sup> Government figures indicate that 7.5million workers had been furloughed by 13th May 2020 out of a total workforce of 33 million (28 million employed and 5 million self-employed) as of January 2020. The number of people claiming unemployment benefit increased by 865,000 in April 2020.

is equivalent to an additional working week in childcare, and most of it is being done by women. On average, women do around ten more hours a week than men. Women have been more likely than men to lose employment as a result of the pandemic, but this does not explain all the gender gap in additional hours' childcare. Indeed, the amount of childcare provided by women is less sensitive to their own employment than it is for men.

On a more positive note, the allocation of additional childcare hours is more equal than the pre-COVID19 allocation of childcare. Estimates of the change in the difference in (female/ male) childcare shares indicates a small (c. 10 per cent) reduction in the gender childcare gap since lockdown. However, there is considerable variation by men's employment status – there is a small change to a more equal allocation when men work from home and bigger changes when men are furloughed/ not working. Hence any move towards a more equal allocation of childcare has been driven by the supply-side shock (more time not working) rather than the demand-side shock (the increase in childcare need); the additional burden of childcare is only shared more equally when men have more time on their hands.

This paper is related to recent studies that have discussed the gender impacts of the COVID19 pandemic. Most of these focus on the effects on male/female employment. Alon et al (2020) study pre-COVID19 employment and childcare in the US and make predictions about the likely impact of the pandemic. They predict that the negative employment effects of the pandemic for women are likely to be worse than those of a typical recession because of the impact of lockdown on retail and leisure industries, sectors that have a high female share. They also suggest that higher childcare needs will be a burden for women. Analysing data from the early days of the pandemic, Adams-Prassl et al (2020) find that women experienced a bigger drop in employment in the US, Germany and the UK; analysing time-use data, they also find that women do more of the additional childcare than men. Alon et al (2020) and Hapucheck and Petrongolo (2020) speculate that there may be some households where men do more childcare and that, following some of the evidence from paternity leave policies, the increase in man's childcare may have a positive effect in the longer term by changing social norms.<sup>2</sup>

Compared to these studies, our contribution is to show the actual (distribution of) changes in childcare allocation that have occurred since the pandemic started within a given household. Our paper is most closely related to preliminary work by Gonzalez and Ferre (2020). Using a self-selected sample of Spanish households, they show that there has been a shift to a more equal distribution of housework

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<sup>2</sup> The quasi-experimental evidence on the effects of paternity leave on household specialization is not clear cut. Farré and González (2019) and Tamm (2019) show that paternity leave leads a persistent increase in fathers' involvement in childcare in the case of Spain and Germany respectively. However, Ekberg, Eriksson, and Friebel (2013) do not find an effect of "daddy months" in Sweden in father's likelihood to take medical leave to care for children.

(driven mainly by men taking responsibility for shopping) and childcare. Compared to this study, our contribution is to provide complementary analysis for a different country (UK not Spain) and to analyse a representative sample of households (Gonzales and Ferre analyse a self-selected sample). We also look at how the change in the allocation of childcare within households of childcare relates to both the demand- and supply-side shocks.

This paper also contributes to an earlier literature that studies the effect of unemployment shocks on childcare and housework. Aguiar et al (2013) study the effect of the recession following the financial crisis on time use. Using the American Time Use Survey (ATUS), they find that men and women increase their non-market work as the probability of unemployment increase. About 5 per cent of foregone market work is reallocated to childcare, and women tend to reallocate more of foregone market work to core production activities (e.g., cooking, cleaning, laundry), whereas in the sample of men foregone market work hours are relatively more likely to be reallocated to watching TV. This study cannot explicitly study the within-household allocation as the ATUS survey only asks one member of the household about their use of time. Gimenez et al (2009) use the Spanish Time Use survey (STUS) to show that unemployment increases own-time devoted by men and women to childcare and housework activities without affecting the time spend by the other partner to these activities. In the case of COVID19, there is simultaneously a demand-side shock as well as a supply-side shock, making it a particularly interesting setting to study the allocation of childcare within the household.

## **2. Sample and variables**

### **2.1 Sample**

The questions were asked by Ipsos MORI as part of their regular omnibus survey. Interviews were conducted online with 4,341 respondents aged 18-60 between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020. Quota controls were set upon the interviews achieved and the resultant survey data are weighted to the known offline population profile of this audience (18-60).

The total sample with non-missing gender is 4,250 individuals. In section 3 we analyse the employments effects of COVID19, testing to see whether the impact has been the same for men and women, following Adams-Prassl (2020). For this analysis, we focus on a sub-sample of 2,782 respondents who were employed prior to 23<sup>rd</sup> March and with non-missing information on employment characteristics. For the analysis of the gender childcare gap we focus on a smaller subsample of respondents who are in couples and who have children aged  $\leq 12$ .

## 2.2 Key variables

In order to capture changes pre and post-COVID19 we asked respondents about their work arrangements before and after the lockdown on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the allocation of childcare within couples pre-COVID19 and about the number of additional hours, as well as their allocation, post-COVID19. As part of the omnibus survey, we have general demographics such as age and gender, as well as household socio-economic characteristics such as the number of children in the household below the age of 18, the age of children, respondent's educational attainment, and occupation categories.

We briefly summarise the questions used to elicit the key employment and childcare variables. Summary responses are in Table 1.

### *Employment status and working from home*

#### Pre-COVID19

*“Which of the following best applied to your [and your partner's] employment status **before** the coronavirus pandemic measures came into effect (prior to 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020)?”* Responses are: In (full or part time) employment; Self-employed; Not in (full or part time) employment; Other.

*“Still thinking about your employment **before** the coronavirus pandemic measures came into effect (prior to the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020). In general, during the times you were working, how frequently, if at all, did you work from home?”* We group the responses (Working from home all the time; Working from home at least once a week; Working from home at least once a month and Working from home less often) to create a single, ever worked from home indicator.

#### Post-COVID19

*“Which of the following, if any, best describes your [and your partner's] employment status after measures against the coronavirus came into effect on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2020?”*

Responses are: In employment, working from home all of the time; In employment, working from home some of the time; In employment, working in a workplace elsewhere all of the time (not working from home); Furloughed (temporarily laid off with pay); Not employed; Other. We group the two working from home responses in our analysis.

### *Childcare*

#### Pre-COVID19

*“Now thinking about childcare arrangements while education and childcare settings were **still open** (that is, during term times before the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020) for your children aged 17 and under. Who took care of your children when they were **not** in an education or childcare*



*setting?”* Each respondent with a partner asked to give one option for each of self, partner and other out of: All or almost all of the time; Most of the time (about three quarters); About half of the time; Less than half of the time (about a quarter); None or almost none of the time; Don’t know. We use this information to calculate the allocation of childcare within couples (excluding Other) pre-COVID using values of 0.9 for all or almost all of the time, 0.75 for most of the time, 0.5 for about half of the time. 0.3 for less than half of the time and 0.1 for none or almost none of the time.

## Post-COVID19

*Thinking now about the education and/or childcare that education and childcare settings normally provided for your children (e.g. schools/colleges, nurseries, after school clubs, childminders, etc.):*

*How many extra hours, if any, are you (and partner) personally having to look after your children on each day during a typical week? Please give your answer to the nearest hour and if unsure, please give your best estimate. If not spending any extra time, please put ‘0’. We use the information on the additional number of hours done by self and partner (winsorized to 12) to calculate the allocation of additional childcare within couples and the number of additional hours done by men and women. This question is asked for each day of the week, including weekends.*

### **3 Employment changes since COVID19**

We first look at changes in employment. Focusing on the early phase of the pandemic, Adams-Prassl et al (2020) report that 15 per cent of their sample of UK workers lost their jobs (they do not differentiate furlough from no longer working). In our survey we distinguish between those who are on furlough (i.e., who are employed but temporarily not working and paid by the government up to 80 per cent of their wages up to £2,500), and those who report that they are not working and not on furlough.

Table 1 reports summary statistics on levels of employment among the whole sample (i.e. not conditioning on pre-COVID19 employment). The numbers highlight the reduction in employment that has occurred and the increase in the number of people who are not working, whether on furlough or out of work. Within those who are working, there has been a shift from working at work to working from home. Before the pandemic, around 40 per cent of people in work (employed and self-employed) said that they ever worked from home; Of those who were previously employed but had never worked from home, more than one-quarter (28 per cent) are now working from home. This shift to home-

working during the crisis is likely to have long-term implications for working arrangements in the future.

As in Adams-Prassl et al (2020) we find that women are more likely than men to have stopped working during lockdown. Of those who report that they were working or self-employed prior to 20<sup>th</sup> March, 22 per cent are still working at their usual place of work (25 per cent of men and 18 per cent of women), 44 per cent are working from home (men = 43 per cent, women = 45 per cent), 26 per cent report that they have been furloughed (24 per cent of men and 28 per cent of women), while 8 per cent are not working (8 per cent of men and 9 per cent of women).

Table 2 reports estimated marginal effects from a multinomial logit regression on four possible employment outcomes (1 = still at work, 2 = working from home, 3 = on furlough and 4 = not employed). This is estimated on the sample of people who report that they are working (employed or self-employed) pre-COVID19.

Column 1 shows the raw differences (without controls). Women are nearly 7 percentage points less likely than men to still be at work. They are 4 percentage points more likely to be furloughed [ $p=0.020$ ] and 2 percentage points more likely to be not working [ $p=0.011$ ]. The estimated magnitudes change little when we add controls (in column 2), including a full set of occupational dummies (column 3). One possible hypothesis for the gender gap is that, where there was an element of choice, women may have been more likely to stop working in order to meet the increased demand for home childcare. However, results in Table 2, panel B show that the gender gap is also present among women without kids, indicating that other (non-child related) factors account for at least some of the (unexplained) gender gap. Even so, we cannot rule out that employment changes are endogenous with respect to childcare arrangements. Results in Table 2, panel B, column 3 include as an additional control the pre-COVID19 childcare gap (ie the within-household difference between the share of childcare done by women and the share of childcare done by men) in the regression. We interact the childcare gap with gender. The results show that the allocation of childcare (pre-COVID19) is correlated with employment outcomes (post-COVID19). The opposite signs for men and women imply a similar relationship between individuals' share of childcare and their post-COVID19 employment – men and women who did a smaller share of childcare are less likely to be on furlough and more likely to be working from home. If men working from home are observed to do less childcare post-COVID19 than e.g. men who are not working, at least part of this may be explained by less childcare, pre-COVID. This endogeneity motivates our within-household, difference-in-differences estimates of changes in the gender childcare gap in Section 4, which allows us to control for unobserved household-level heterogeneity.

Before moving on, it is interesting to look at the impact of other characteristics on employment outcomes. Our findings broadly mirror those found by Adams-Prassl et al (2020). Table 2, panel A,

shows that having a degree is associated with working from home (rather than at work) and being furloughed rather than being out of work. Those who were self-employed were more likely not to be working and less likely to be furloughed, reflecting the fact that UK Government furlough support for self-employed workers did not come into effect until 13<sup>th</sup> May, after our data collection. Not surprisingly, those who had previously worked from home, were more likely to report working from home and were less likely to be furloughed and not working. Pre-COVID19, 40 per cent of people in work reported that they occasionally/ sometimes/ always worked from home (41 per cent of men and 39 per cent of women). But there are also many who are working from home for the first time. Of those who reported that they previously never worked from home, 28 per cent are now doing so. This move to home-working may lead to longer-term changes in working arrangements.

#### 4 Childcare changes since COVID19

The closure of UK schools and other childcare providers to all but the children of key workers and vulnerable children from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March left millions of children requiring home childcare.

Prior to COVID19, the allocation of childcare within households was uneven, with women bearing the greater share. Focusing only on the childcare done within the household (ie ignoring external childcare), the average share of childcare done by women was 65.3 per cent. This represents a gender childcare gap of 30.4 percentage points (=65.3 – 34.7).

The magnitude of the estimated gap from our survey (pre-COVID19) is similar that that observed in the UK 2014-15 Time Use Survey (UKTUS). The UKTUS collects diary information at the household level on 10-minute intervals for a 24-hour period during weekdays and weekend days for a representative sample of individuals in the UK. We calculate an equivalent share of childcare done by women in this sample by dividing the daily minutes in childcare by the women over the daily minutes in childcare by the man in a given household. Daily minutes of childcare for every respondent by adding up the minutes reported in childcare as the primary activity in a given day. Childcare includes physical care and supervision, feeding, teaching, reading, talking, and accompanying the child to do activities among others. Women spend an average of 126 minutes per weekday and 113 minutes per weekend day, whereas men spend an average of 46 minutes during a weekday and 72 minutes during a weekend day. These figures result in a share of childcare by women (men) between 60 (40) per cent during weekdays and 73 (27) per cent during the weekend.

Post COVID19, there have been several dramatic changes to home childcare that we summarize below.

There has been a **sizeable increase in the total amount of home childcare** provided. Couples with young children (aged 12 or under) self-report doing an average of 40 (median)/ 49.7 (mean) hours of

additional childcare per week. In other words, families are taking on the equivalent burden of a working week in additional childcare. This figure is more than double the time spent on childcare prior to COVID19. Evidence from the 2014-15 UKTUS reveals weekly time spent in childcare by households to be around 20 hours per week.<sup>3</sup> Note that these are self-reported additional hours of childcare – there may be a concern that they are over-estimates. However, previous studies have shown that estimates on housework from stylized questions (such as how much housework you do per week) are meaningfully associated with actual housework measures derived from diaries (Borra, Browning, and Sevilla, forthcoming; Hill, 1985; Robinson, 1985). Similarly, for childcare Del Bono et. al., (2016) validate frequency in childcare activities from the Millennium Cohort Survey and show that these measures are meaningfully associated with actual maternal time in childcare in the 2014-15 UKTUS survey.

**Women are doing the majority of the additional home childcare.** Table 3 summarizes additional hours of childcare post-COVID19 by gender. On average, women have been doing 30 (median)/ 30.3 (mean) additional hours' childcare per week, compared to 15 (median)/ 19.4 (mean) done by men. It is important to emphasize that these figures suggest a substantial increase in childcare (in absolute number of hours) done by men. 2014-2015 UKTUS estimates indicate that, in “normal” (pre-COVID19) times, women do an average of 15 hours per week and men do average of 6 hours per week. But the gender childcare gap is also large in absolute number of hours. Comparing median hours, the gender childcare gap equates to an additional ten hours done by the “typical” mother compared to the “typical” father each week.

The amount of additional childcare that is done by men and women is correlated with their post-COVID19 employment. This is shown in Figure 1, panel A, which plots average total additional hours for men and women according to their own employment. The figure indicates that the amount of additional **childcare is more sensitive to own-employment in the case of fathers than it is in the case of mothers.** Total hours of childcare per week vary by employment status for both men and women but to a greater extent in the case of men.

Although women are more likely not to work than men, **lower levels of employment do not account for all of women's higher number of childcare hours.** Figure 1, panel A, shows that mothers are doing more childcare than fathers, irrespective of their employment. Indeed, women who are at work/working from home are doing as many additional hours of childcare as men who are furloughed. One possibility is that partner's employment status (which is correlated with own-employment status) might also drive variation in the amount of childcare by own-employment status. However, Figure 1,

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<sup>3</sup> As is standard in the literature, we calculate the weekly time in housework by adding up daily childcare for the couple. To that end, we multiply daily weekday numbers by five and daily weekend numbers by two for each individual in a couple.

panel B, suggests that there is less sensitivity to partner’s employment status than to own-employment status, particularly in the case of women.

To explore the relationship between childcare hours and own- and partner-employment more systematically, we run an OLS regression of total additional hours on indicators for own- and partner’s employment. We also allow the correlation with own-employment to differ for men and women. The results are reported in Table 4. Comparing the results in columns (1) and (2) shows that there is a gender gap in additional childcare, conditional on own-and partner’s employment. Including employment controls reduces the gender gap (from 11.8 hours to 7.2 hours) but it remains statistically significant. The coefficients on partner’s employment in column (2) are economically small and statistically significant, with the exception of not employed, confirming (similar to previous studies, eg Gimenez et al, 2009) that the number of hours of additional childcare is less sensitive to partner’s employment than to own-employment. The results in column (3), including interactions between own-employment and gender, confirm that the number of additional hours’ childcare is less sensitive to women’s own-employment than it is to men’s.

Although women are bearing more of the burden, **the average within-household gender childcare gap (i.e. the difference between the share done by women and men) is smaller**. Compared to an initial average within-household childcare gap of 30.4 percentage points, the post-COVID19 gap in additional childcare hours is 27.2 percentage points (see Table 3). In other words, the allocation of the additional burden of childcare is more equal than the pre-COVID19 allocation. However, the extent to which the gap is smaller depends heavily on men’s employment.

We perform a “difference-in-differences” analysis of the effect of COVID19 on the within household childcare allocation. Specifically, we estimate the effect of COVID19 on the difference in the within-household (female/ male) shares before/ after lockdown. Our outcome variable (*Gap\_change<sub>i</sub>*) is the change before/ after COVID19 in the gender childcare gap for household *i* where the gap measures the percentage point difference in the share of childcare done by women and the share of childcare done by men, within the same household, i.e:

$$Gap\_change_{i1} = Gap_{i1} - Gap_{i0}$$

$$\text{where } Gap_{it} = Share_{f_{it}} - Share_{m_{it}}, t = 0, 1$$

We calculate this *Gap\_change* measure directly using our survey data, exploiting the fact that we observe the childcare allocation pre-COVID19 and the allocation of additional hours post-COVID19 for the same household. This allows us to control for unobserved heterogeneity that might be correlated with post-COVID19 employment outcomes when we look at the relationship between childcare allocation and employment. Averaging over all families, the gap has narrowed by 3.3

percentage points [ $p=0.278$ ]. However, further analysis, presented in Table 5, shows that this average change masks considerable variation by (post-COVID19) employment status.

Table 5 reports results from regressing the household-level `gap_change` on indicators for men's and women's employment status and additionally (in column 3) the pre-COVID19 household childcare gap. The results in column 3 show that there has been a 12 percentage point narrowing of the childcare gap when men work from home [ $p=0.089$ ]. There has been an even greater change when men have been furloughed or lost their jobs. The magnitudes of the changes in the gap in these cases when men are furloughed/ not employed are big enough to close the gap and move men to doing a majority share of the additional childcare. On the flipside, when women have lost their jobs, they have taken on an even greater share of the additional childcare than pre-COVID19 in these cases, the childcare gender gap has widened, moving women close to a 100 per cent share of the additional childcare.

## **5 Discussion**

For families with young children, the months of lockdown have meant providing many additional hours of childcare – equivalent to a full-time, working week. In many cases, these hours have had to be provided in addition to working at work or from home.

Women have done more of this childcare than men (roughly ten hours a week more). Partly, this is because they are less likely to be working but that does not account for all the difference. The quantity of childcare done by women is much less sensitive to their employment than it is for men and, indeed, women have done more childcare than men, irrespective of their employment status; women working from home have done more childcare than men on furlough/ or who have lost their job.

The burden of additional childcare may have damaging long-term consequences for the career prospects of parents with young children – and particularly for women. Coviello et al., (2015) show evidence from the judiciary documenting how judges who juggle more trials at once instead of working sequentially on few of them at each unit of time take longer in closing a case. When working from home during the lockdown it is hard to be as productive as someone without children if you are juggling work with near full-time childcare. In fact, evidence from on-line job markets shows that women earn 20% less per hour on average, which can partly be explained by women, women with young children, having more fragmented work patterns which affects their ability to complete a task (Adams, 2020). Similarly, in academia there is anecdotal and some statistical evidence that the share of working papers being published and submissions to journals by women has fallen post-COVID19 (Shurchkov, Olga. 2020). Employers need to recognise – and perhaps take measures to compensate parents for – the lockdown childcare burden.

There has been a shift from working at work to working from home. Of those who had never worked from home pre-COVID19, 28 per cent are now working from home. This may bring about a permanent positive change in working arrangements.

There have also been baby steps towards a more equal allocation. For many families, the allocation of the additional hours of childcare is more equal than the previous allocation of childcare. The gender childcare gap (the gap between the share done by women and the share done by men) has narrowed (from 30.5 percentage points to 27.2 percentage points). However, this has not happened uniformly across all families, however, but has been driven to some extent where men are working from home and, to a far greater extent, where men are on furlough/ have lost their jobs. In that respect, the effect of lockdown is similar to that of other childcare supply shocks that occurred during previous recessions but on a grander scale because of the furlough scheme (Aguiar and Hurst, 2013 and Gimenez et al, 2009). It remains to be seen whether the change is a permanent one. Some evidence from paternity leave policies suggest that temporary changes can have longer-term effects on social norms, evidenced by increases in the time that fathers spend in household activities, including childcare (Ferre and Gonzalez 2019 and Patnaik, 2019). Two things are different about COVID19 lockdown. The first is the scale of the demand-side shock. The changes have been profound. The total amount of childcare being done at home completely dwarves usual amounts because of the closure of almost all formal childcare. The impact has also been across the board, affecting all families, meaning that almost all men have increased the quantity of childcare that they do. But the second difference is that this is not a deliberate policy to promote a more equal distribution of childcare, but an unintended consequence of measures to stop a virus spreading. The changes that have been brought about may need to be recognised and reinforced to have longer term effects.

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**Table 1 Summary statistics**

	Full sample		Couples with young children (aged <=12)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Age	41.6	37.5	37.0	36.3
Degree (0/1)	0.446	0.478	0.529	0.490
Pre COVID				
Working	0.639	0.592	0.806	0.502
Of whom, WFH	0.411	0.391	0.431	0.429
Self-employed	0.077	0.066	0.074	0.056
Not working	0.232	0.272	0.090	0.385
Other	0.053	0.080	0.031	0.056
Post COVID				
At work	0.197	0.135	0.265	0.115
WFH	0.330	0.315	0.441	0.269
Furloughed	0.186	0.197	0.155	0.141
Not employed	0.287	0.353	0.140	0.457
N	1983	2267	207	263

Notes to table: *Degree* includes NVQ4 / HNC / HND / Bachelor's degree or similar/ NVQ5 or post-graduate diploma. Current and retrospective employment status collected post-COVID19. For further information on the questions asked, see Section 2.

**Table 2: Estimated marginal effects (multinomial logit), post-COVID employment status**

**A Sample of individuals working pre-COVID**

	(1)		(2)		(3)	
	Marginal effect	p-value	Marginal effect	p-value	Marginal effect	p-value
Female						
At work	-0.066	0.000	-0.059	0.000	-0.052	0.001
Working from home	0.004	0.838	0.003	0.879	-0.001	0.951
Furloughed	0.039	0.020	0.028	0.086	0.032	0.058
Not employed	0.023	0.011	0.028	0.006	0.021	0.039
Kids (0/1)						
At work			0.026	0.110	0.023	0.143
Working from home			0.023	0.216	0.025	0.162
Furloughed			-0.021	0.250	-0.021	0.216
Not employed			-0.029	0.013	-0.026	0.020
Degree (0/1)						
At work			-0.104	0.000	-0.076	0.000
Working from home			0.217	0.000	0.128	0.000
Furloughed			-0.103	0.000	-0.051	0.003
Not employed			-0.009	0.313	0.000	0.982
Self-employed (0/1)						
At work			0.003	0.917	-0.008	0.767
Working from home			-0.049	0.151	-0.018	0.576
Furloughed			-0.121	0.001	-0.133	0.000
Not employed			0.167	0.000	0.161	0.000
Pre-WFH (0/1)						
At work			-0.107	0.000	-0.075	0.000
Working from home			0.241	0.000	0.189	0.000
Furloughed			-0.108	0.000	-0.081	0.000
Not employed			-0.025	0.016	-0.031	0.002
Age = 30s						
At work			0.010	0.618	0.020	0.308
Working from home			0.033	0.149	0.010	0.654
Furloughed			-0.028	0.212	-0.029	0.184
Not employed			-0.015	0.230	0.000	0.948
Age = 40s						
At work			0.030	0.163	0.033	0.116
Working from home			0.033	0.185	0.015	0.519
Furloughed			-0.043	0.062	-0.041	0.081
Not employed			-0.019	0.160	-0.008	0.564
Age = 50s						
At work			0.045	0.037	0.046	0.030
Working from home			-0.003	0.898	-0.015	0.540
Furloughed			-0.065	0.005	-0.066	0.004
Not employed			0.022	0.127	0.035	0.020
Occupation	No		No		Yes	
N	2,782		2,782		2,782	

Notes to table: Marginal effects estimated at mean values of co-variates. The sample includes only those respondents who reported that they were working (employed/ self-employed) pre-COVID19. *Degree* includes NVQ4 / HNC / HND / Bachelor's degree or similar/ NVQ5 or post-graduate diploma. Self-employed and pre-WFH (= ever worked from home) refer to pre-COVID19 status

## B With/ without kids

	No kids		Kids <=12		Kids <=12	
	Marginal effect	p-value	Marginal effect	p-value	Marginal effect	p-value
Female						
At work	-0.069	0.000	-0.101	0.032	-0.043	0.693
Working from home	0.023	0.283	-0.010	0.846	-0.003	0.966
Furloughed	0.025	0.219	0.055	0.195	0.025	0.669
Not employed	0.021	0.113	0.056	0.044	0.021	0.648
Childcare gap (pre)						
At work					-0.059	0.390
Working from home					0.224	0.004
Furloughed					-0.130	0.080
Not employed					-0.034	0.561
Gap x Female						
At work					-0.043	0.693
Working from home					-0.235	0.052
Furloughed					0.168	0.116
Not employed					0.110	0.174
Other controls						
			Degree			
			Self-employed			
			WFH (pre)			
			Ageband			
N	1,845		312		312	

Notes to table: Marginal effects estimated at mean values of co-variates. The sample includes only those respondents who reported that they were working (employed/ self-employed) pre-COVID19. *Childcare gap (pre)* refers to the within-household difference between the share of childcare done by the woman and the share of childcare done by the man, prior to COVID-19 (retrospectively reported). A positive “gap” indicates that the woman does a greater share than the man.

**Table 3: Allocation of childcare between women and men**

	Women		Men	
<b>Post-COVID19:</b>				
Additional hours per person	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
Total per week (seven days)	30	30.3	15	19.4
Total, weekdays (five days)	28	25.4	10	15.2
Average per day (seven days)	4.3	4.5	2.4	2.9
Average per weekday (five days)	6	5.2	2.4	3.2
<b>Within-household share of childcare:</b>				
Mean, pre-COVID19	65.3%		34.7%	
Mean, post-COVID19	63.6%		36.4%	
N	290		290	

Notes to table: Additional hours of childcare refer to the (self-reported) additional hours done by men and women each day (compared to pre-COVID19). Respondents are asked to report the hours done by themselves and their partners each day. These are aggregated to produce weekly totals. The shares are based on self-reported shares for respondents and their partners (pre-COVID) and self-reported total hours for respondents and their partners (post-COVID). For further information on questions asked, see Section 2.

**Table 4: OLS regression results.****Outcome = total hours additional childcare per week (post-COVID19)**

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Female	11.834 (1.649)	7.248 (1.732)	14.074 (4.350)
WFH		1.337 (2.373)	3.247 (2.867)
Furloughed		8.539 (2.797)	13.038 (3.663)
NotEmployed		13.471 (2.663)	15.868 (3.882)
Partner_WFH		-1.595 (2.373)	-1.130 (2.383)
Partner_Furloughed		-1.355 (2.797)	-1.198 (2.796)
Partner_NotWorking		-8.705 (2.663)	-8.419 (2.665)
Female_WFH			-6.836 (4.953)
Female_Furloughed			-11.568 (5.802)
Female_Not employed			-7.408 (5.638)
Constant	18.938 (1.166)	19.003 (2.663)	16.756 (2.952)
N	580	580	580

Notes to table: Table reported estimated coefficients and standard errors. Additional hours of childcare refer to the (self-reported) additional hours done by men and women each day (compared to pre-COVID19). Respondents are asked to report the hours done by themselves and their partners each day. These are aggregated to produce weekly totals. For further information on questions asked, see Section 2.

**Table 5: OLS regression results****Outcome = within household change in the gender childcare gap**

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Constant	-0.033 (0.030)	-0.023 (0.103)	0.083 (0.098)
Man_WFH		-0.076 (0.078)	-0.126 (0.074)
Men_Furloughed		-0.253 (0.097)	-0.317 (0.091)
Man_NotWorking		-0.221 (0.103)	-0.372 (0.099)
Woman_WFH		0.014 (0.111)	0.043 (0.103)
Women_Furloughed		0.255 (0.120)	0.290 (0.112)
Woman_NotWorking		0.136 (0.110)	0.338 (0.108)
Pre_gap			-0.476 (0.074)
N	290	290	290

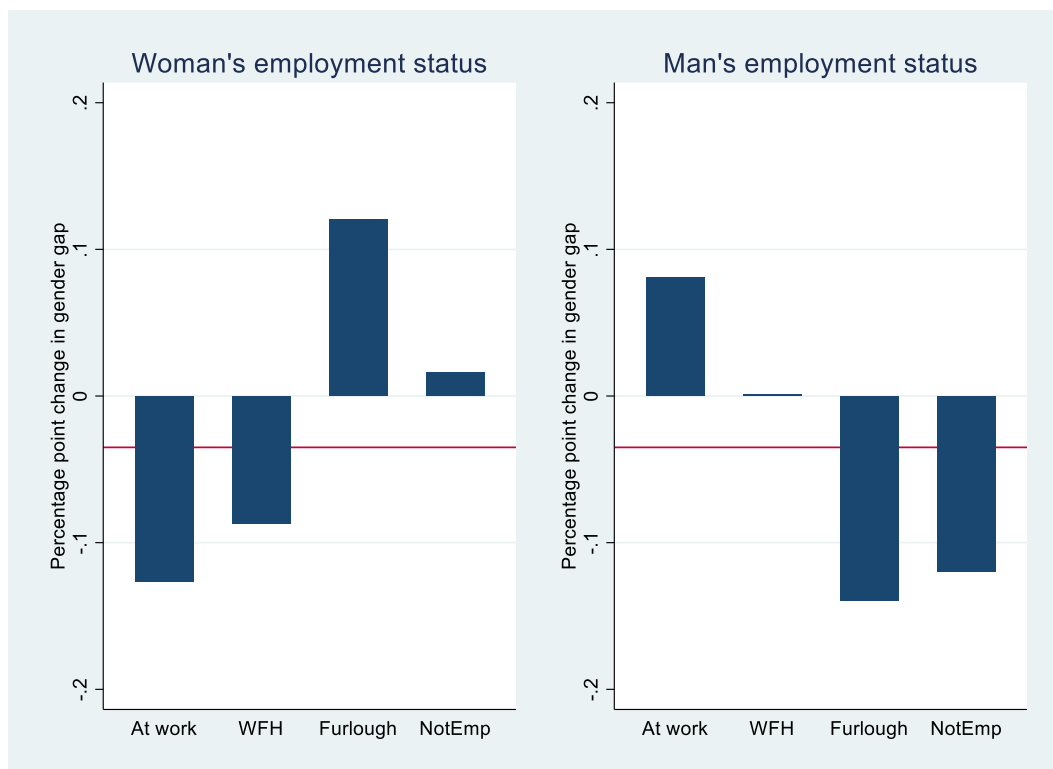
Notes to table: The gap change refers to the within-household change before/after COVID19 in the gender childcare gap, where the gender childcare gap is defined as the difference between the share of childcare done by women and the share of childcare done by men. Pre-COVID refers to all childcare; Post-COVID19 refers to the additional hours of childcare. The Pre-COVID gender gap is 30.4. A negative number corresponds to a narrowing of the gender childcare gap. For further information on questions asked, see Section 2.

**Figure 1: Additional hours' childcare (total per week), by post-COVID19 employment status**



Notes to table: The figure shows average self-reported total hours additional childcare done by men and women post-COVID19. For further information on questions asked, see Section 2.

**Figure 2: Changes in the within-household gender childcare gap**



Notes to figure: The gap change refers to the within-household change before/after COVID19 in the gender childcare gap, where the gender childcare gap is defined as the difference between the share of childcare done by women and the share of childcare done by men. Pre-COVID refers to all childcare; Post-COVID19 refers to the additional hours of childcare. The Pre-COVID gender gap is 30.4. A negative number corresponds to a narrowing of the gender childcare gap. For further information on questions asked, see Section 2.



## Appendix A

## Questionnaire

[Standard Screener: DO NOT MODIFY OR TRANSLATE]

BOYSPEC1\_GIRLSPEC1\_format [Hidden]. Hidden question: Age of children

- Use BOYSPEC1\_GIRLSPEC1\_format [Hidden] response list

### ASK ALL

Q0. Just to check, do you have a partner you live with? This could be someone you are married to/in a civil relationship with or a person with whom you are co-habiting.

#### SINGLE CODE

1. Yes, I live with a partner
2. No, I do not live with a partner
3. Prefer not to say

### ASK ALL

We are interested in how your life may have been affected by what the Government has asked us to do in response to the coronavirus.

### ASK ALL

Q1A Which of the following best applied to your [IF CODE 1 AT Q0 and your partner's] employment status **before** the coronavirus pandemic measures came into effect (prior to the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020)?

#### PROGRESSIVE GRID, SINGLE CODE PER ROW

##### ROWS

1. You
2. Your partner IF CODE 1 AT Q0

##### COLUMNS

1. In (full or part time) employment
2. Self-employed
3. Not in (full or part time) employment
4. Other
5. Prefer not to say
6. Don't know

### ASK ALL WHERE SELF OR PARTNER IS IN PAID EMPLOYMENT (Q1A\_1 or \_2=1-2)

Q1B Which of the following best applies to **where** [IF Q1A\_1=1-2 you] [IF Q1A\_1 AND \_2=1-2 and] IF Q1A\_2=1-2 your partner] used to work before the coronavirus pandemic measures came into effect (to the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020)? Did you work from home, and how much did you work elsewhere (at an office or another workplace, working outside, working in other people's homes).

Still thinking about your employment **before** the coronavirus pandemic measures came into effect (prior to the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020). In general, during the times you were working, how frequently, if at all, did you work from home?

#### PROGRESSIVE GRID, SINGLE CODE PER ROW

##### ROWS

1. You IF Q1A\_1=1-2
2. Your partner IF Q1A\_2=1-2

##### COLUMNS

1. Working from home all the time
2. Working from home at least once a week
3. Working from home at least once a month

4. Working from home less often
5. †Did not previously work from home
6. Prefer not to say
7. Don't know

#### ASK ALL

Q1C.

Which of the following, if any, best describes your [IF CODE 1 AT Q0=and your partner's] employment status after measures against the coronavirus came into effect on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2020? [IF CODE 1 AT Q0=Please select the one that applies for yourself and the one that applies for your partner]. If you have more than one job, please think about the job you consider to be your main job.

#### RESPONSIVE GRID. SINGLE CODE PER ROW

##### ROWS

1. You
2. Your partner IF CODE 1 AT Q0

##### COLUMNS

1. In employment, working from home all of the time
2. In employment, working from home some of the time
3. In employment, working in a workplace elsewhere all of the time (not working from home)
4. Furloughed (temporarily laid off with pay)
5. Not employed
6. Other
7. Don't know
8. Prefer not to say

#### [IF HAS A PARTNER WHO WAS PREVIOUSLY OR CURRENTLY IN WORK [1A\_2 OR Q1C=1-2]

QPOCC In which of the below categories does your partner's occupation fall?

Select only one

- Legislators, senior officials and managers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_1100 Legislators and senior officials
- Corporate managers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_1210 Directors and chief executives
- Production and operations department managers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_1221 Production and operations department managers in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing
  - \_1222 Production and operations department managers in manufacturing
  - \_1223 Production and operations department managers in construction
  - \_1224 Production and operations department managers in wholesale and retail trade
  - \_1225 Production and operations department managers in restaurants and hotels
  - \_1226 Production and operations department managers in transport, storage and communications
  - \_1227 Production and operations department managers in business services
  - \_1228 Production and operations department managers in personal care, cleaning and related services
  - \_1229 Production and operations department managers not elsewhere classified
- Other department managers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_1231 Finance and administration department managers

- \_1232 Personnel and industrial relations department managers
- \_1233 Sales and marketing department managers
- \_1234 Advertising and public relations department managers
- \_1235 Supply and distribution department managers
- \_1236 Computing services department managers
- \_1237 Research and development department managers
- \_1239 Other department managers not elsewhere classified
- General managers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_1311 General managers in agriculture, hunting, forestry/ and fishing
  - \_1312 General managers in manufacturing
  - \_1313 General managers in construction
  - \_1314 General managers in wholesale and retail trade
  - \_1315 General managers of restaurants and hotels
  - \_1316 General managers in transport, storage and communications
  - \_1317 General managers of business services
  - \_1318 General managers in personal care, cleaning and related services
  - \_1319 General managers not elsewhere classified
- Physical, mathematical and engineering science professionals [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_2110 Physicists, chemists and related professionals
  - \_2120 Mathematicians, statisticians and related professionals
  - \_2130 Computing professionals
- Architects, engineers and related professionals [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_2141 Architects, town and traffic planners
  - \_2142 Civil engineers
  - \_2143 Electrical engineers
  - \_2144 Electronics and telecommunications engineers
  - \_2145 Mechanical engineers
  - \_2146 Chemical engineers
  - \_2147 Mining engineers, metallurgists and related professionals
  - \_2148 Cartographers and surveyors
  - \_2149 Architects, engineers and related professionals not elsewhere classified
- Life science and health professionals [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_2210 Life science professionals
  - \_2220 Health professionals (except nursing)
  - \_2230 Nursing and midwifery professionals
  - \_2300 Teaching professionals
- Other professionals [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_2410 Business professionals
  - \_2420 Legal professionals
  - \_2430 Archivists, librarians and related information professionals
  - \_2440 Social science and related professionals
  - \_2450 Writers and creative or performing artists
  - \_2460 Religious professionals
- Physical and engineering science associate professionals [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_3110 Physical and engineering science technicians
  - \_3120 Computer associate professionals
  - \_3130 Optical and electronic equipment operators
  - \_3140 Ship and aircraft controllers and technicians
  - \_3150 Safety and quality inspectors
  - \_3200 Life science and health associate professionals
  - \_3300 Teaching associate professionals

- Other associate professionals [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_3410 Finance and sales associate professionals
  - \_3420 Business services agents and trade brokers
  - \_3430 Administrative associate professionals
  - \_3440 Customs, tax and related government associate professionals
  - \_3450 Police inspectors and detectives
  - \_3460 Social work associate professionals
  - \_3470 Artistic, entertainment and sports associate professionals
  - \_3480 Religious associate professionals
- Clerks [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_4100 Office clerks
  - \_4200 Customer services clerks
- Personal and protective services workers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_5110 Travel attendants and related workers
  - \_5120 Housekeeping and restaurant services workers
  - \_5130 Personal care and related workers
  - \_5140 Other personal services workers
  - \_5160 Protective services workers
  - \_5200 Models, salespersons and demonstrators
- Skilled agricultural and fishery workers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_6000 Skilled agricultural and fishery workers
- Craft and related trades workers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_7100 Extraction and building trades workers
- Metal, machinery and related trades workers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_7210 Metal moulders, welders, sheet-metal workers, structural - metal preparers, and related trades workers
  - \_7220 Blacksmiths, tool-makers and related trades workers
  - \_7230 Machinery mechanics and fitters
  - \_7240 Electrical and electronic equipment mechanics and fitters
- Precision, handicraft, printing and related trades workers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_7310 Precision workers in metal and related materials
  - \_7320 Potters, glass-makers and related trades workers
  - \_7330 Handicraft workers in wood, textile, leather and related materials
  - \_7340 Printing and related trades workers
- Other craft and related trades workers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_7410 Food processing and related trades workers
  - \_7420 Wood treaters, cabinet-makers and related trades workers
  - \_7430 Textile, garment and related trades workers
  - \_7440 Pelt, leather and shoemaking trades workers
- Plant and machine operators and assemblers [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_8000 Plant and machine operators and assemblers
- Elementary occupations [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_9100 Sales and services elementary occupations
  - \_9200 Agricultural, fishery and related labourers
  - \_9300 Labourers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport
- Armed forces [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_9888 Armed forces
- Did not work before [EXPANDABLE HEADER]
  - \_9991 Unemployed and not looking for a job / Long-term sick or disabled
  - \_9992 Pupil /Student/ in full time education
  - \_9993 Looking after the home/unpaid family carer

1. Don't know
2. Prefer not to say

**ASK ALL WHERE SELF OR PARTNER STILL IN EMPLOYMENT (Q1C\_1 OR \_2=1-2)**

Q3 [IF Q1C\_2=NOT 1-2 AND Q1C\_1=1-2 Are you] [Q1C\_2= 1-2 AND Q1C\_1=NOT 1-2 Is your partner] [IF Q0=1 AND Q1C\_1 AND \_2=1-2 Are you or your partner] a key worker?

A key worker is a worker who is considered to provide essential services during the coronavirus pandemic (e.g. working in health, social care, education and childcare, key public services, local and national government, food and essential services, public safety and national security, transport)

**SINGLE CODE. IF Q1C\_2 IS NOT ASKED, TREAT AS Q1C\_2=NOT 1-2**

1. [Q1C\_1 AND \_2=1-2] Yes, both my partner and I are key workers
2. [Q1C\_2=1-2] Yes, my partner is a key worker
3. [Q1C\_1=1-2] Yes, I am a key worker
4. No, [Q1C\_2=NOT 1-2 I am not a key worker] **SHOW IF Q1C\_1 AND \_2=1-2** neither I nor my partner is a key worker]
5. Don't know

**New screen - SHOW ALL WITH KIDS (KIDS02=1+)**

The next few questions are about childcare arrangements.

**ASK ALL WITH KIDS02=1+**

**Q6B.**

The closure of most education and childcare settings (e.g. schools/colleges, nurseries, after school clubs, childminders, etc.) from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March has affected childcare arrangements for some people.

Now thinking about childcare arrangements while education and childcare settings were **still open** (that is, during term times before the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020) for your children aged 17 and under. Who took care of your children when they were **not** in an education or childcare setting?

If your children don't need much childcare, for example older children, please only think about the childcare that they do need, even if it isn't very much.

**SINGLE CODE PER ROW, RESPONSIVE GRID**

1. Myself
2. My partner [show if partner Q0=1]
3. Other people (e.g. au pair, parents with shared custody, other relatives in or outside the household)

**COLUMNS**

1. All or almost all of the time [SINGLE CODE PER COLUMN – IF SELECTED, OTHER ANSWERS MUST BE 5 OR 6]
2. Most of the time (about three quarters)
3. About half of the time
4. Less than half of the time (about a quarter)
5. None or almost none of the time [CANNOT BE SELECTED AT ALL 3]
6. Don't know
7. Not applicable – my children are all over the legal age at which they need childcare

**ASK ALL WITH KIDS02=1+**

**Q7.**

Now thinking about the period of time since most education and childcare settings closed (e.g. schools/colleges, nurseries, after school clubs, childminders, etc.).

**[IF QKIDS02=2+ Are any of your children] [IF QKIDS02=1 Is your child]** aged 17 and under still going to any of the following childcare or educational settings (either full or part time)?

Please do not include any distance learning, where your child is having lessons virtually (e.g. online or by phone, etc.)

**MULTI CODE**

1. School/college
2. Nursery/daycare
3. Childminder
4. Other registered childcare settings
5. **[IF QKIDS02=2+ None of my children are] [IF QKIDS02=1 My child is]** not still going to any of these **[SINGLE CODE]**
6. Don't know **[SINGLE CODE]**

**ASK ALL WITH KIDS02=1+**

**Q8B.** Thinking now about the education and/or childcare that education and childcare settings normally provided for your children (e.g. schools/colleges, nurseries, after school clubs, childminders, etc.)

Since education and childcare settings closed.

How many extra hours, if any, are you **[IF PARTNER Q0=1 or your partner]** personally having to look after your children on each day during a typical week? Please give your answer to the nearest hour and if unsure, please give your best estimate. If not spending any extra time, please put '0'.

**ROWS:**

1. Me
2. My partner **IF PARTNER Q0=1**

**COLUMNS:**

1. Monday **NUMERIC 0-24**
2. Tuesday **NUMERIC 0-24**
3. Wednesday **NUMERIC 0-24**
4. Thursday **NUMERIC 0-24**
5. Friday **NUMERIC 0-24**
6. Saturday **NUMERIC 0-24**
7. Sunday **NUMERIC 0-24**
8. Don't know

#### ASK ALL

Q10. With many people spending more time at home, there may be additional household tasks (e.g. shopping, cooking, cleaning, tidying up, etc.).

Thinking about how the household tasks you do might have changed since the coronavirus pandemic measures came into effect (on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2020). How many additional hours of household tasks, if any, have you personally been doing each week? If you're not sure, please give your best estimate.

#### SINGLE CODE

1. I've been spending fewer hours on household tasks than before
2. No extra hours
3. Less than 1 hour
4. From 1 hour up to 2 hours
5. From 2 hours up to 3 hours
6. From 3 hours up to 4 hours
7. From 4 hours up to 5 hours
8. From 5 hours up to 7 hours
9. From 7 hours up to 10 hours
10. More than 10 hours per week
11. I'm not involved in any household tasks
12. Don't know

#### ASK ALL

Q11. Thinking now about how you might provide help and support for people outside of your immediate household. These could be activities you may have done for friends, family, neighbours, or other members of the community.

Please include things you could be doing now as well as things you may have done before but can no longer do because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Please consider things such as:

- Driving people to and from appointments
- Running errands (e.g. picking up shopping)
- Going to a neighbour's house to feed their pets while they're away
- Taking in parcels for people who aren't in

Compared to a typical week before the coronavirus pandemic measures came into effect on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020, are you spending more or less time providing support to people outside your home each week, or is it about the same?

#### SINGLE CODE, FORWARD/REVERSE SCALE 1-3

1. More time
2. About the same amount of time
3. Less time
4. I did not / do not do this
5. Don't know

#### ASK IF PROVIDING MORE SUPPORT OR LESS SUPPORT (Q11=1 OR 3)

Q11B:

Thinking about how you might provide help and support for people outside of your immediate household before and after the measures against the coronavirus pandemic came into place (on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2020). How many hours of help and support, if any, have you personally been doing each week? If you're not sure, please give your best estimate. Please give your answer to the nearest hour.

**NUMERIC GRID**

1. **Before** 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020
2. **After** 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

**ROWS**

3. **[NUMERIC 0-168]**
4. Don't know