

THE PANDEMIC LABOR MARKET EXPERIENCE OF MOTHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

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FEDERAL RESERVE BANK
OF MINNEAPOLIS



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PARENTS AND CAREGIVING

BASED ON WORK BY BOESCH,
GRUNEWALD, NUNN, AND PALMER



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LFPR DECLINE FOR PARENTS

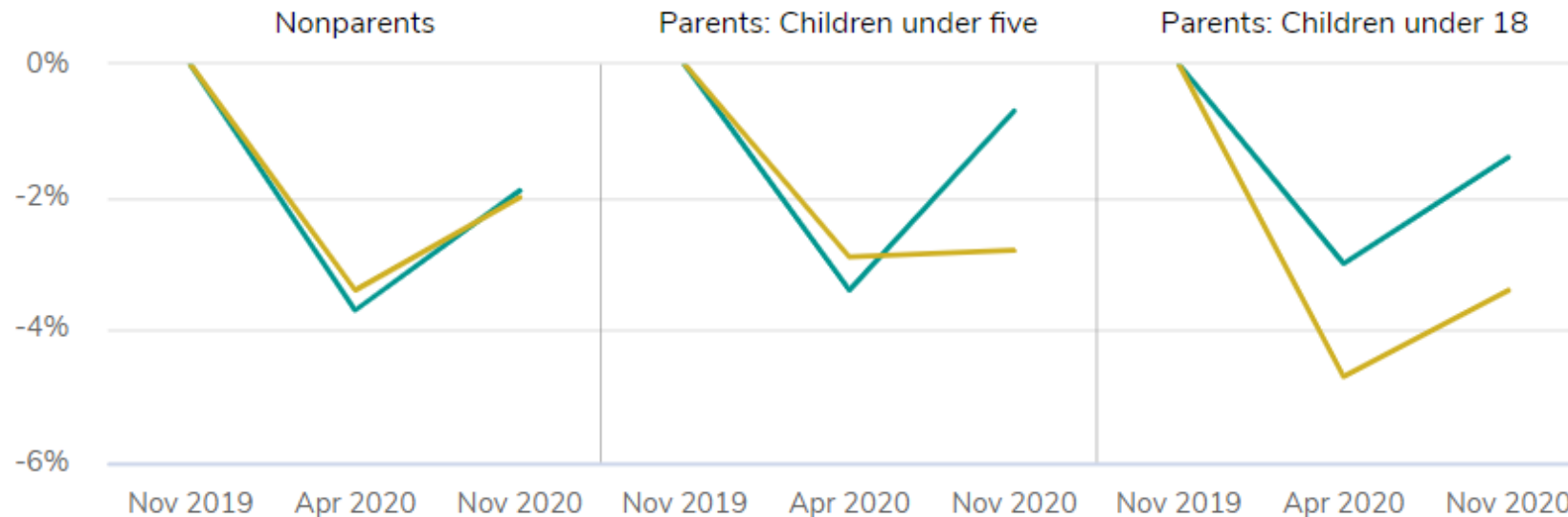
- Mothers' LFPR dropped dramatically in 2020
- Mothers (aged 25-54) of 0-17 year-olds
 - More than 3 pp below pre-pandemic baseline LFPR
 - But recovering
- Mothers (aged 25-54) of 0-4 year-olds
 - Almost 3 pp below
 - Not yet recovering
- Fathers (aged 25-54) of 0-4 year-olds
 - Similar declines through Apr 2020
 - But largely recovered by Nov 2020



PARENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC RECESSION

Fathers and mothers of young kids both left the labor force, but fathers were more likely to return

Percentage point change in labor force participation rate over time for male and female workers



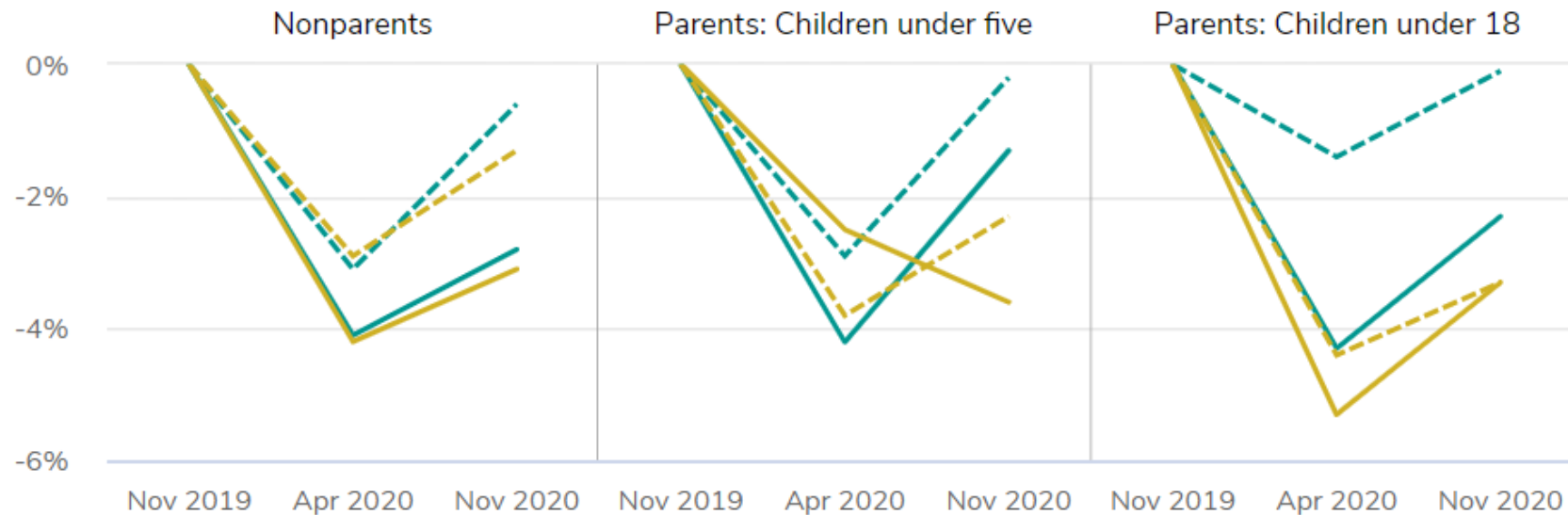
Note: Estimates include only 25- to 54-year-olds. *Parents: Children under 18* includes parents whose youngest child living in their home is 17 or younger. *Parents: Children under five* includes parents whose eldest child living in their home is four or younger. *Nonparents* are those who do not have children of any age living in their home. Source: Authors' calculations using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey 2019–2020 (accessed via IPUMS–CPS).



PARENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC RECESSION

Parents without four-year college degrees have recovered more slowly

Percentage point change in labor force participation rate over time for male and female workers, with (dashed line) and without (solid line) bachelor's degrees



Note: Estimates include only 25- to 54-year-olds. *Parents: Children under 18* includes parents whose youngest child living in their home is 17 or younger. *Parents: Children under five* includes parents whose eldest child living in their home is four or younger. *Nonparents* are those who do not have children of any age living in their home. Source: Authors' calculations using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey 2019–2020 (accessed via IPUMS-CPS).

CAREGIVING RESPONSIBILITIES

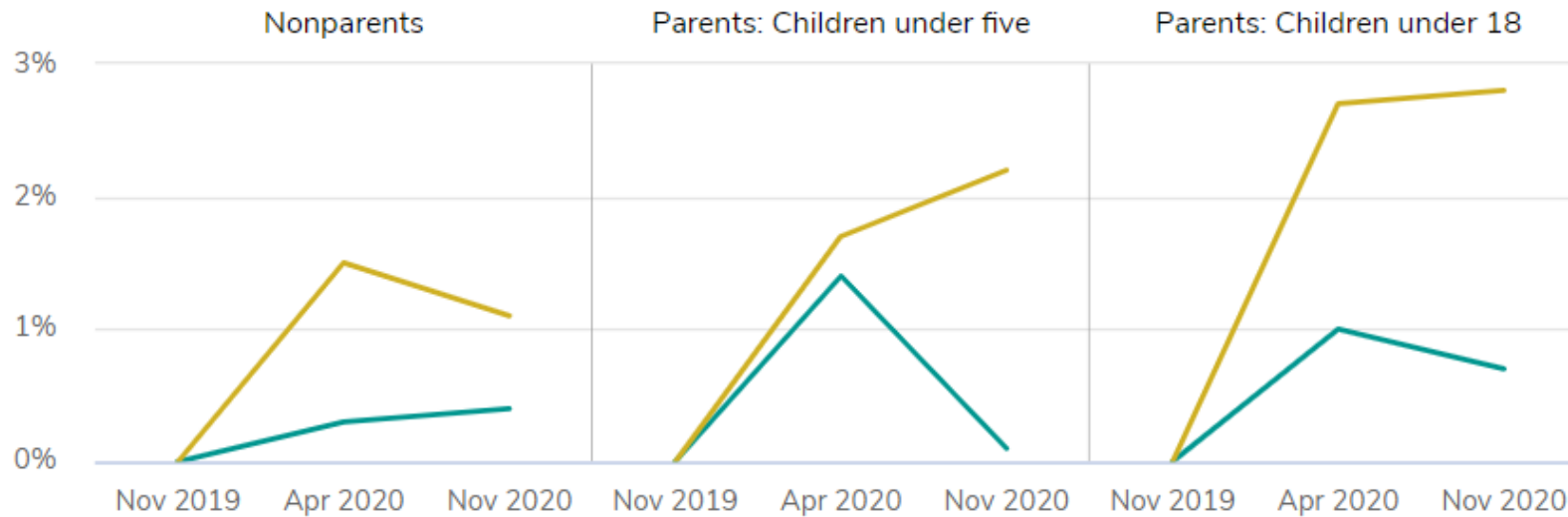
- Parents' LFPR declines mirrored by increases in caregiving as reason for nonparticipation
 - Mothers of 0-4 year-olds in Nov 2020: > 2 pp above pre-pandemic baseline
 - Fathers of 0-4 year-olds in Nov 2020: back to pre-pandemic baseline
- Nonparents also reported (smaller) increases



PARENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC RECESSION

Mothers have increasingly left the labor force because of care responsibilities

Percentage point change over time in share of individuals not in the labor force due to home or family care, for male and female individuals



Note: The estimates show the change from November 2019 in the number of people in each group reporting that they are not in the labor force due to home or family care, divided by the total population of each group. Estimates include only 25- to 54-year-olds. *Parents: Children under 18* includes parents whose youngest child living in their home is 17 or younger. *Parents: Children under five* includes parents whose eldest child living in their home is four or younger. *Nonparents* are those who do not have children of any age living in their home.

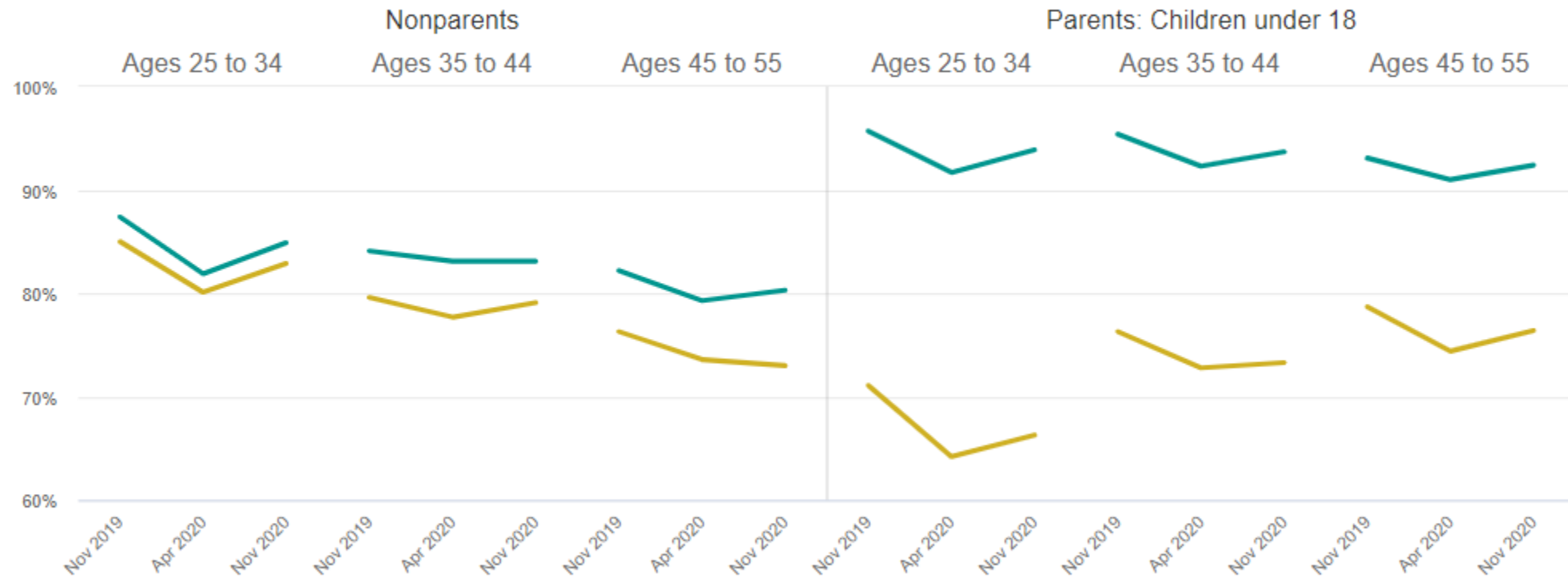
Source: Authors' calculations using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey 2019–2020 (accessed via IPUMS-CPS).



PARENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC RECESSION

Labor force participation by worker's age and parenthood

Pandemic-era trends for **male** and **female** individuals

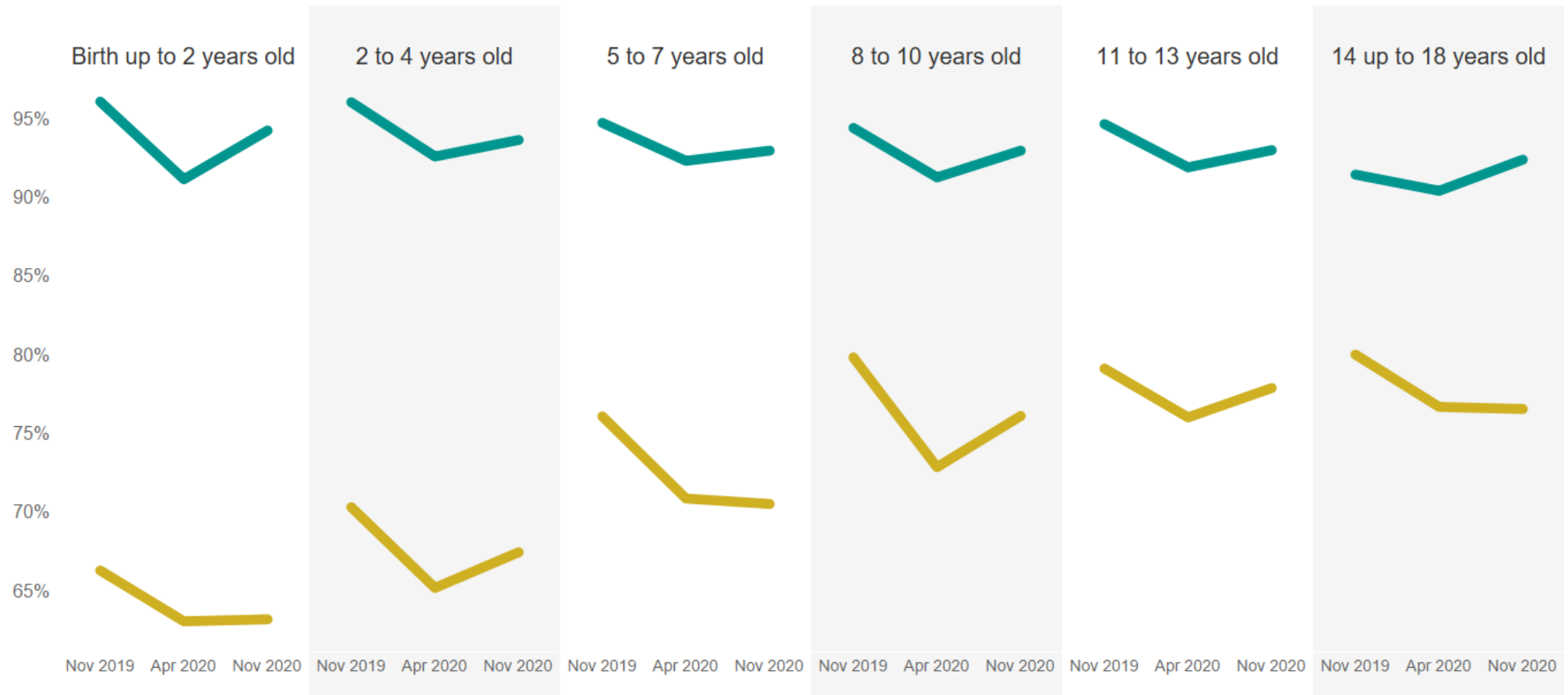


Note: Estimates include only 25- to 54-year-olds. Children under 18 includes parents whose youngest child living in their home is 17 or younger. *Parents: Children under five* includes parents whose eldest child living in their home is four or younger. *Nonparents* are those who do not have children of any age living in their home.
 Source: Authors' calculations using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey 2019–2020 (accessed via IPUMS-CPS).

PARENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC RECESSION

Labor force participation by parent's sex and youngest child's age

Pandemic-era trends for **male** and **female** individuals



Note: Estimates include only 25- to 54-year-olds.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey 2019–2020 (accessed via IPUMS-CPS).



FUTURE RESEARCH

- Want to explore:
 - Racial disparities
 - Household structure
 - Occupational mix
- Plan to update LFPR analysis in summer 2021
- Relatedly, will soon publish work on ECE workforce
 - Dramatic declines in employment
 - Disproportionately low-income women

