



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Family Studies



Discovering what works for
families

Fathers and mothers: work and care

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IPAA WA Women in Public Sector
Leadership

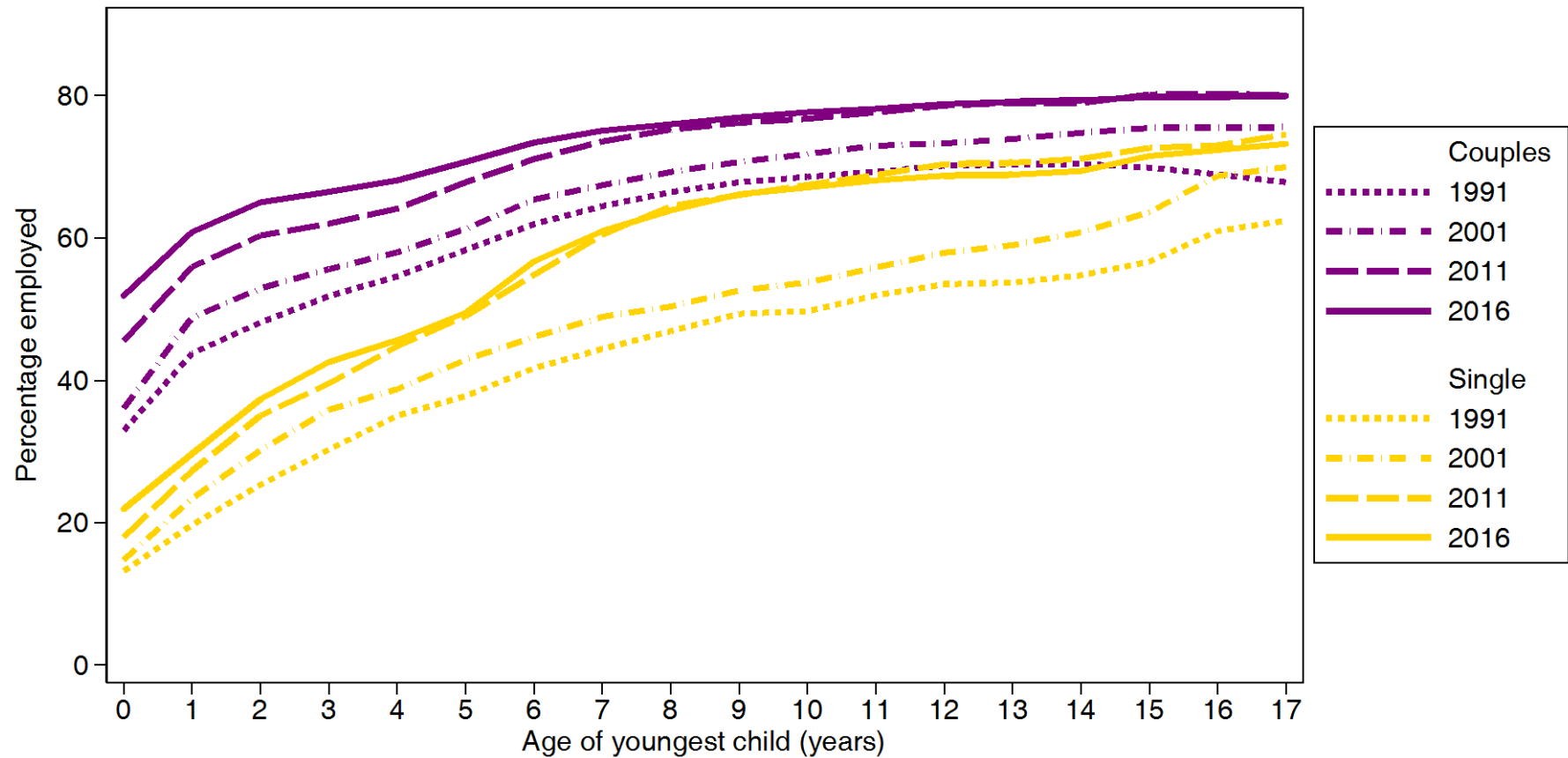


Acknowledgements



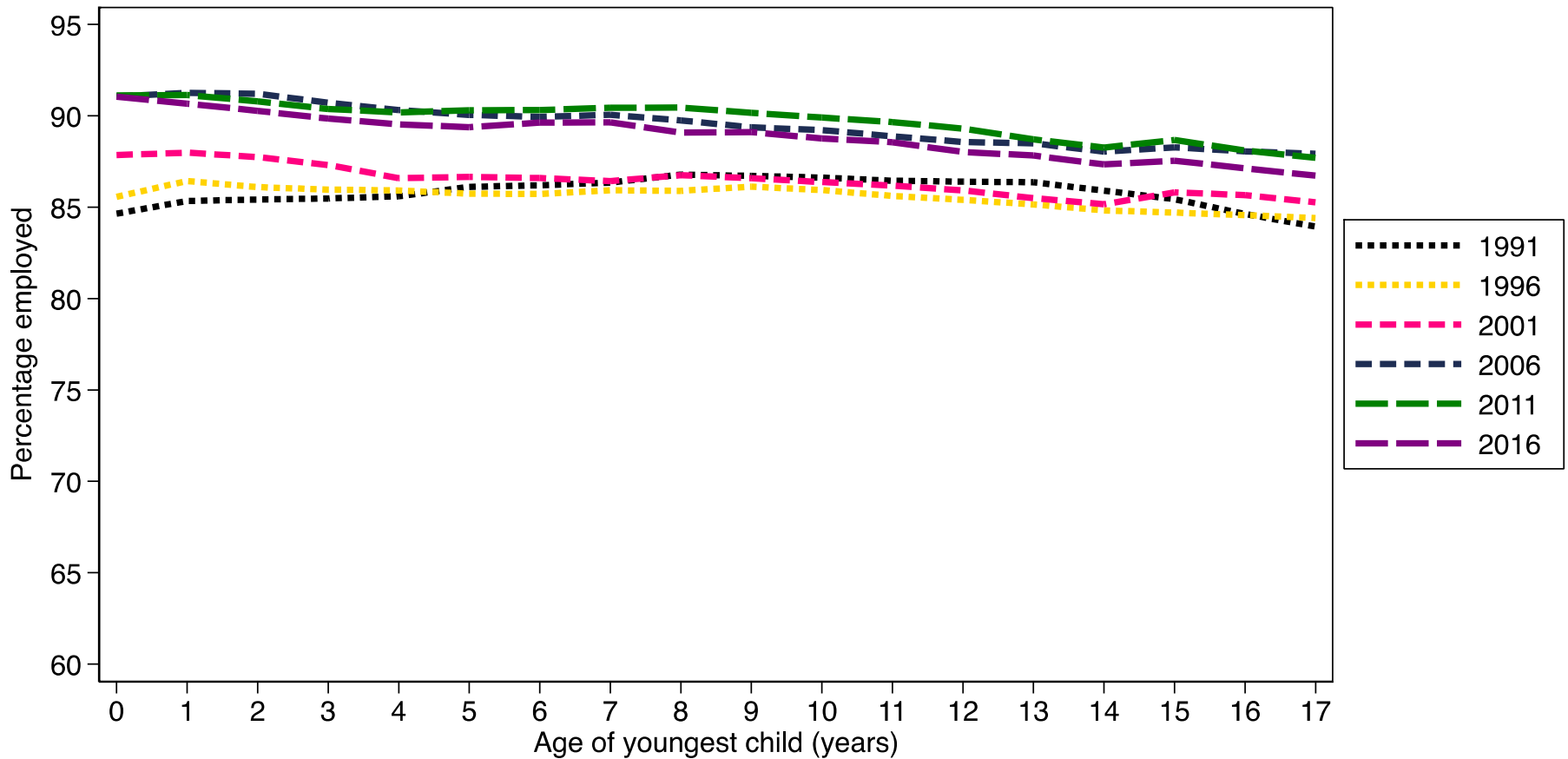
- The views in this presentation are those of the presenter and not necessarily those of the Australian Institute of Family Studies or the Australian Government.
- Draws on data from:
 - 2016 and earlier Census of Population and Housing (Census, ABS)
 - Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA)

Mothers' employment: Couples, singles - up to 2016



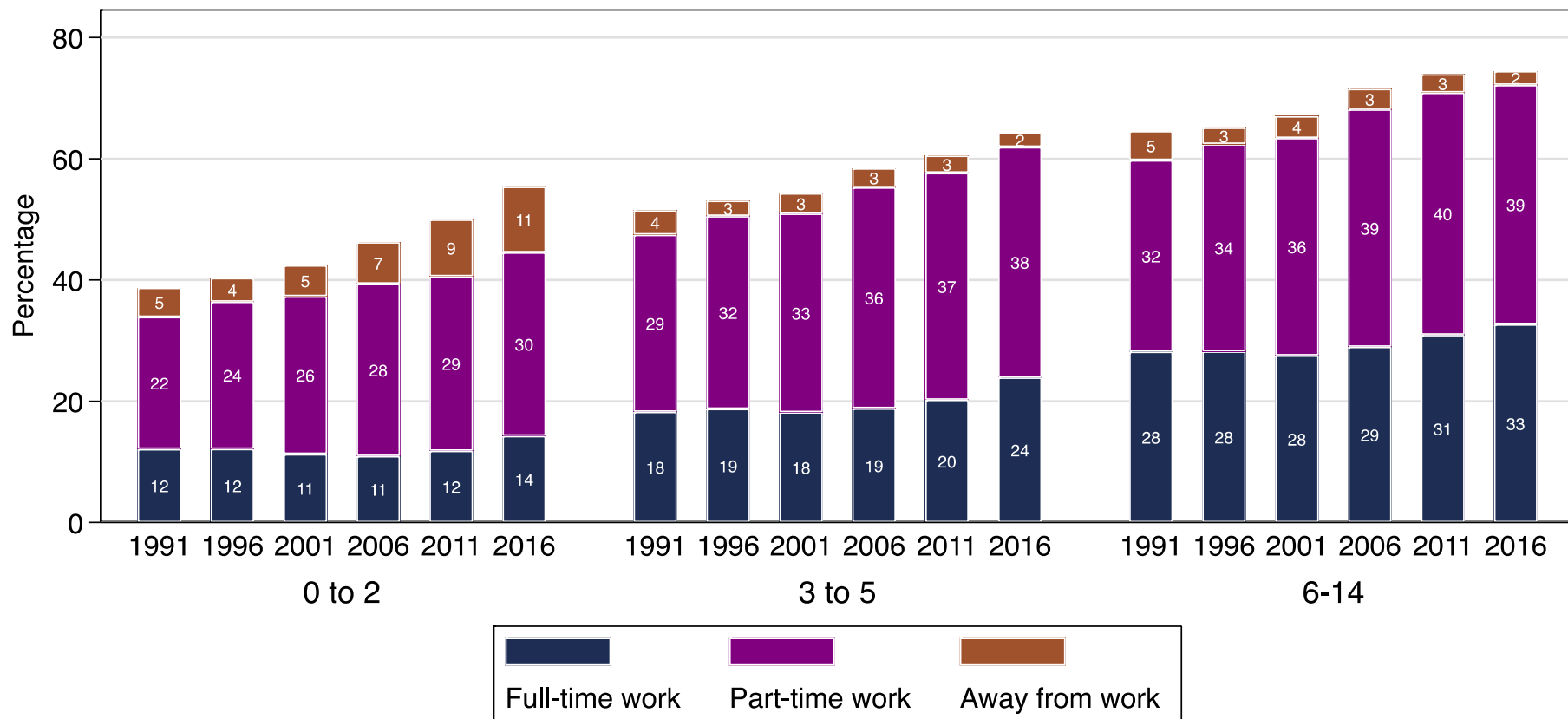
Source: Australian Census, customised data reports

Fathers' employment trends



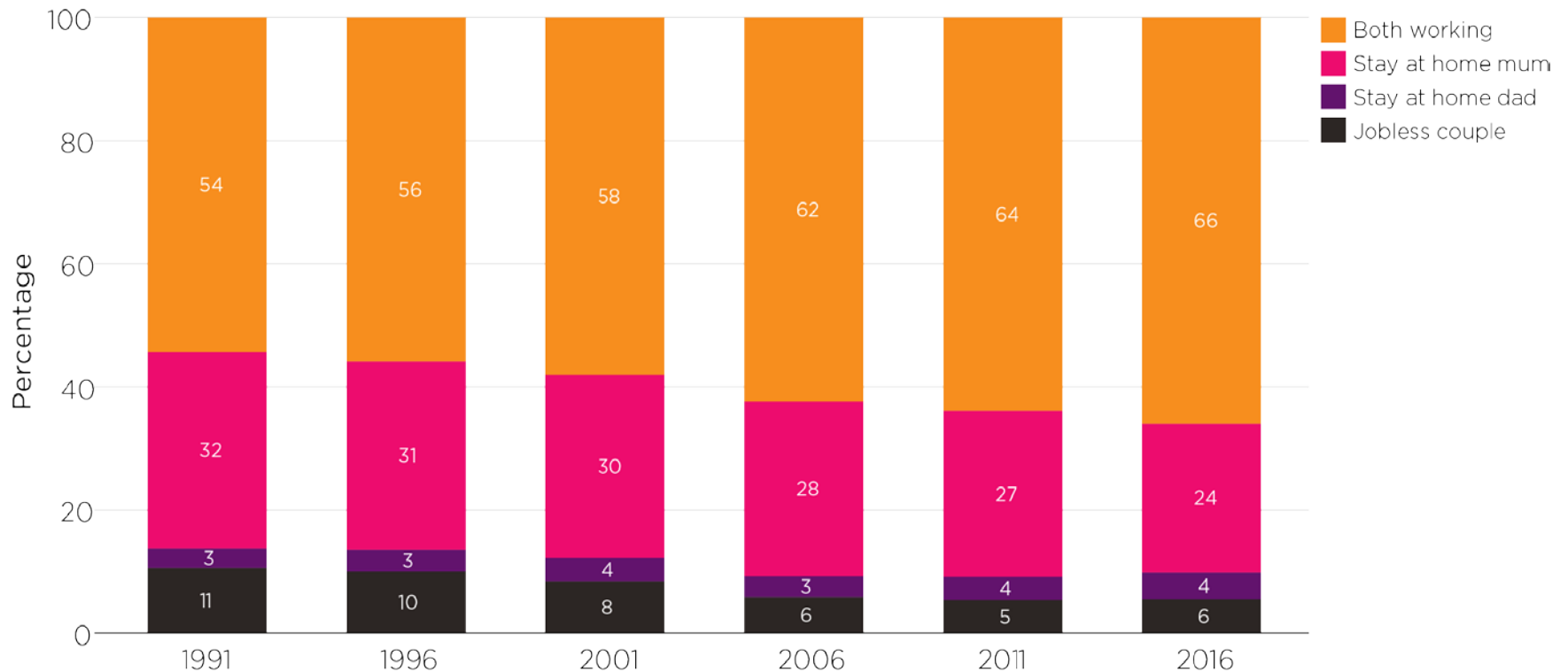
Source: Australian Census, customised data reports

Mothers' work hours by age of youngest child



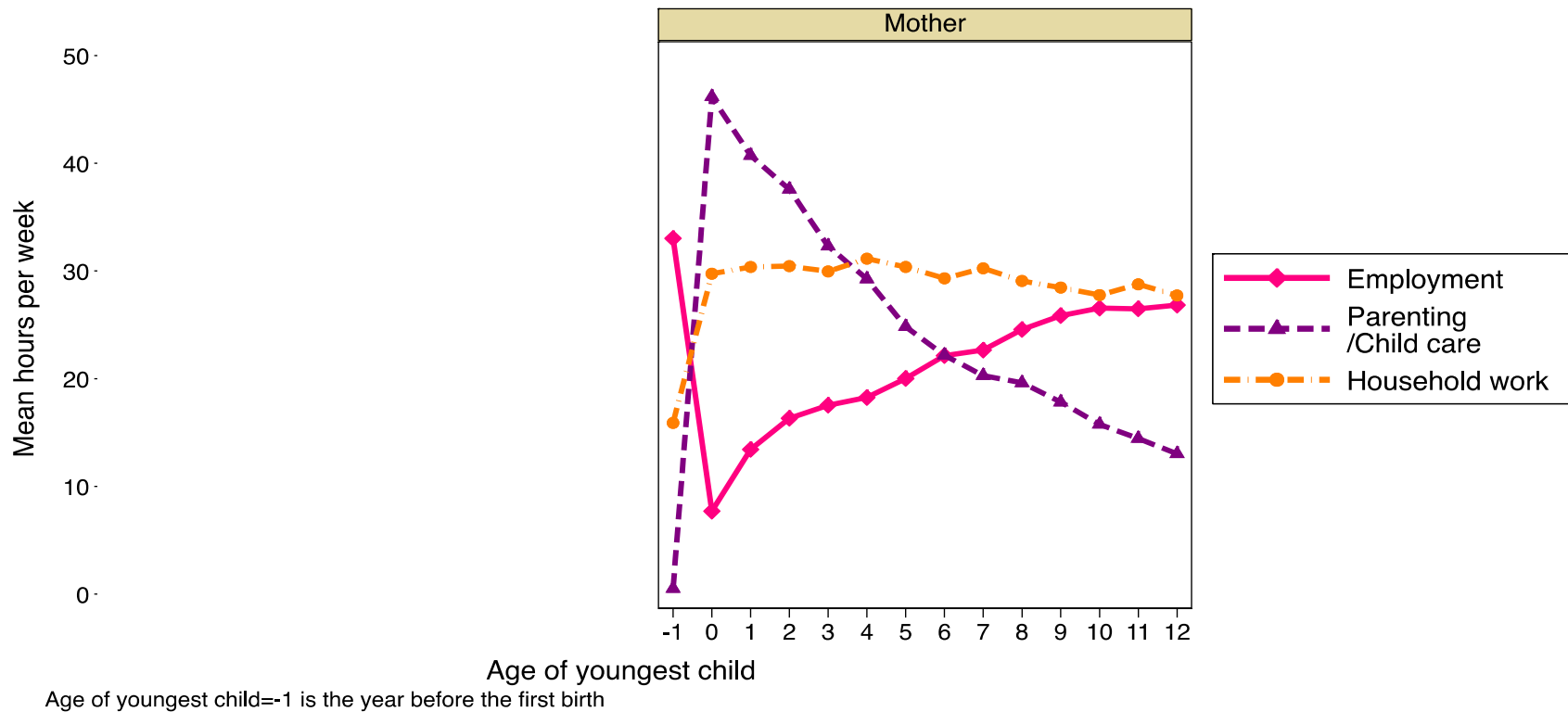
Away from work includes those classified as employed but with work hours of zero or not stated

Family employment – couple families, 1991 to 2016

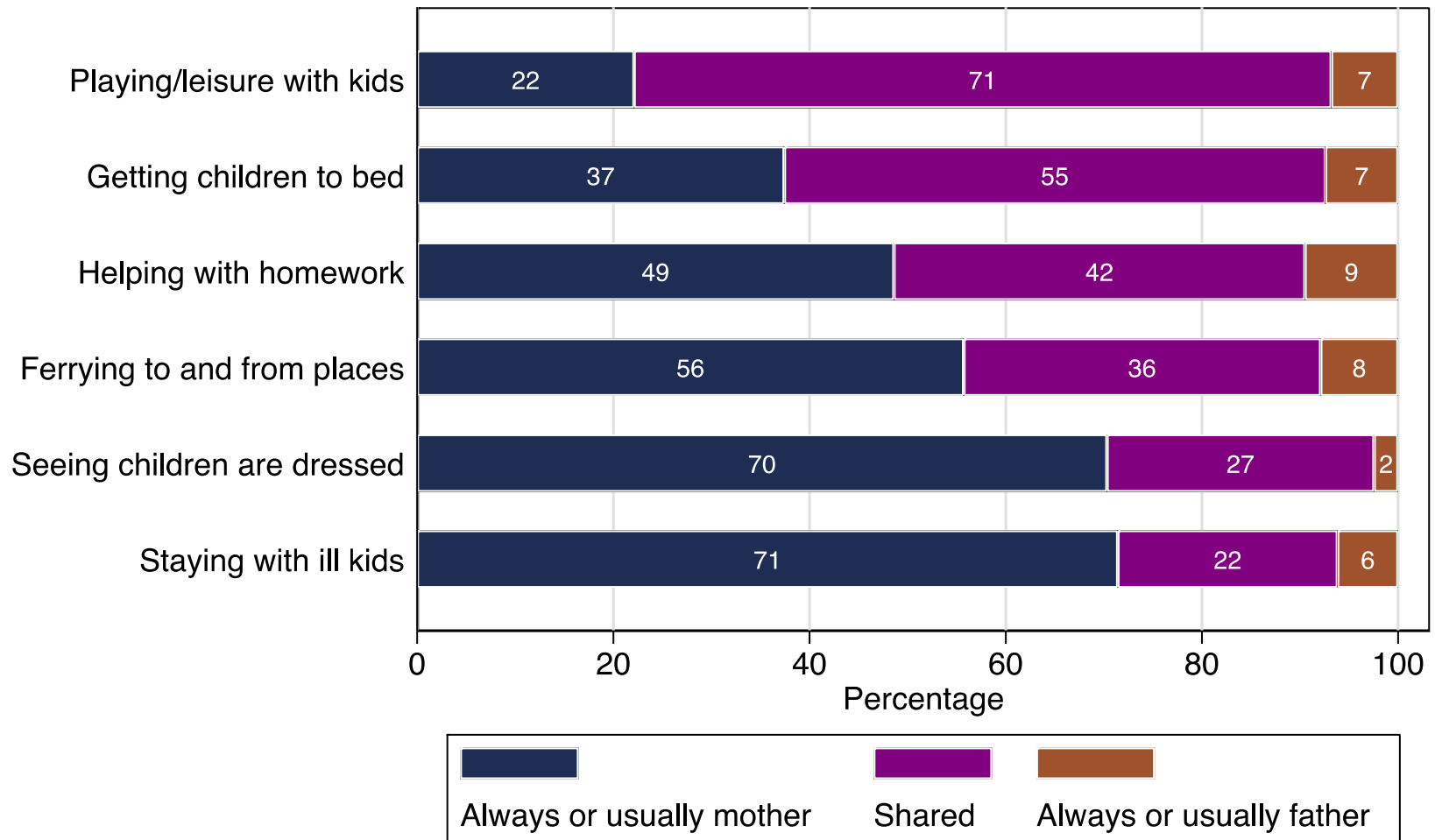


Source: Australian Census, customised data reports

Gender and work seen through the time use lens

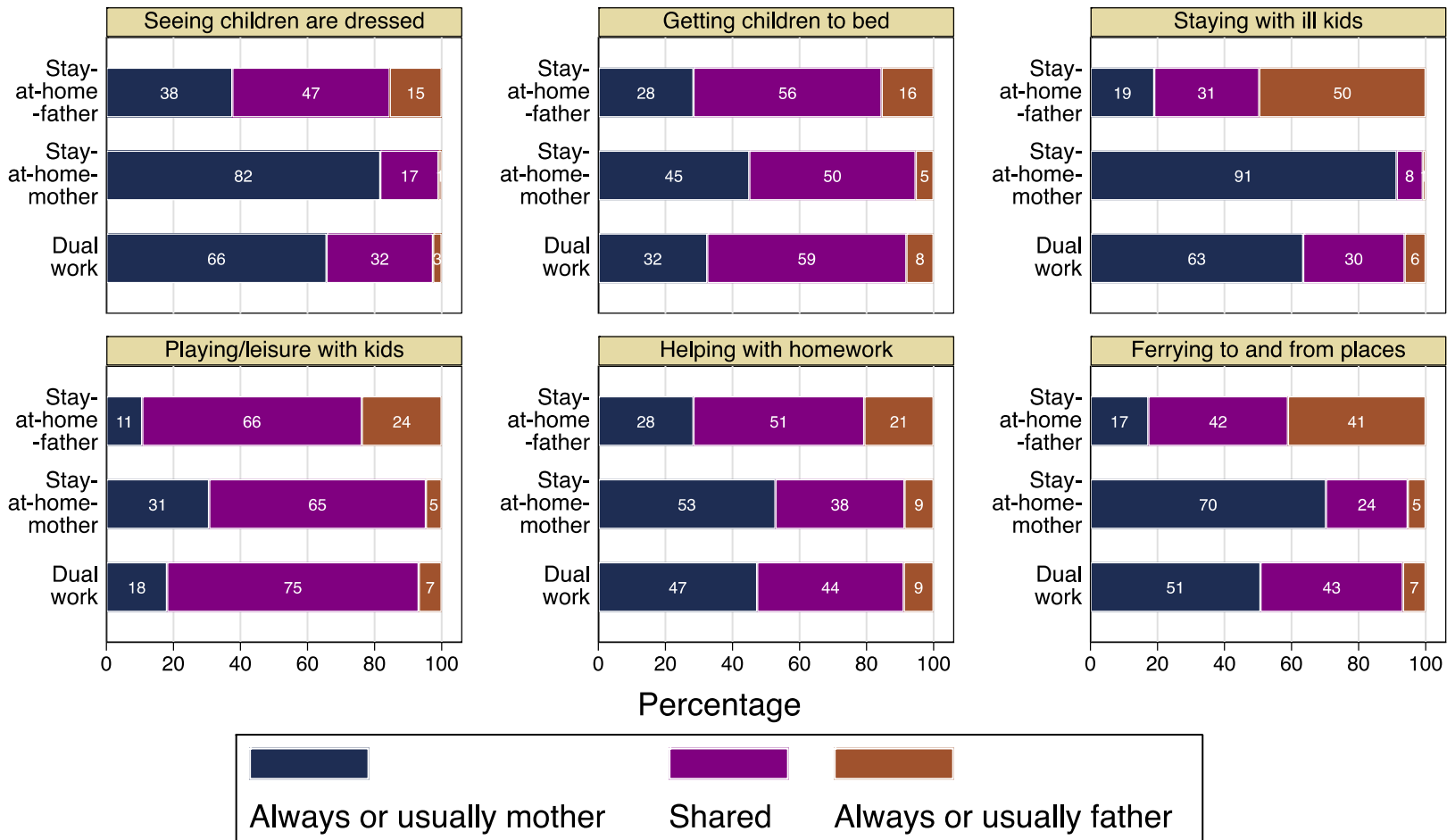


Sharing child care tasks



Source: Pooled data from HILDA Waves 1, 5, 8 11, 15

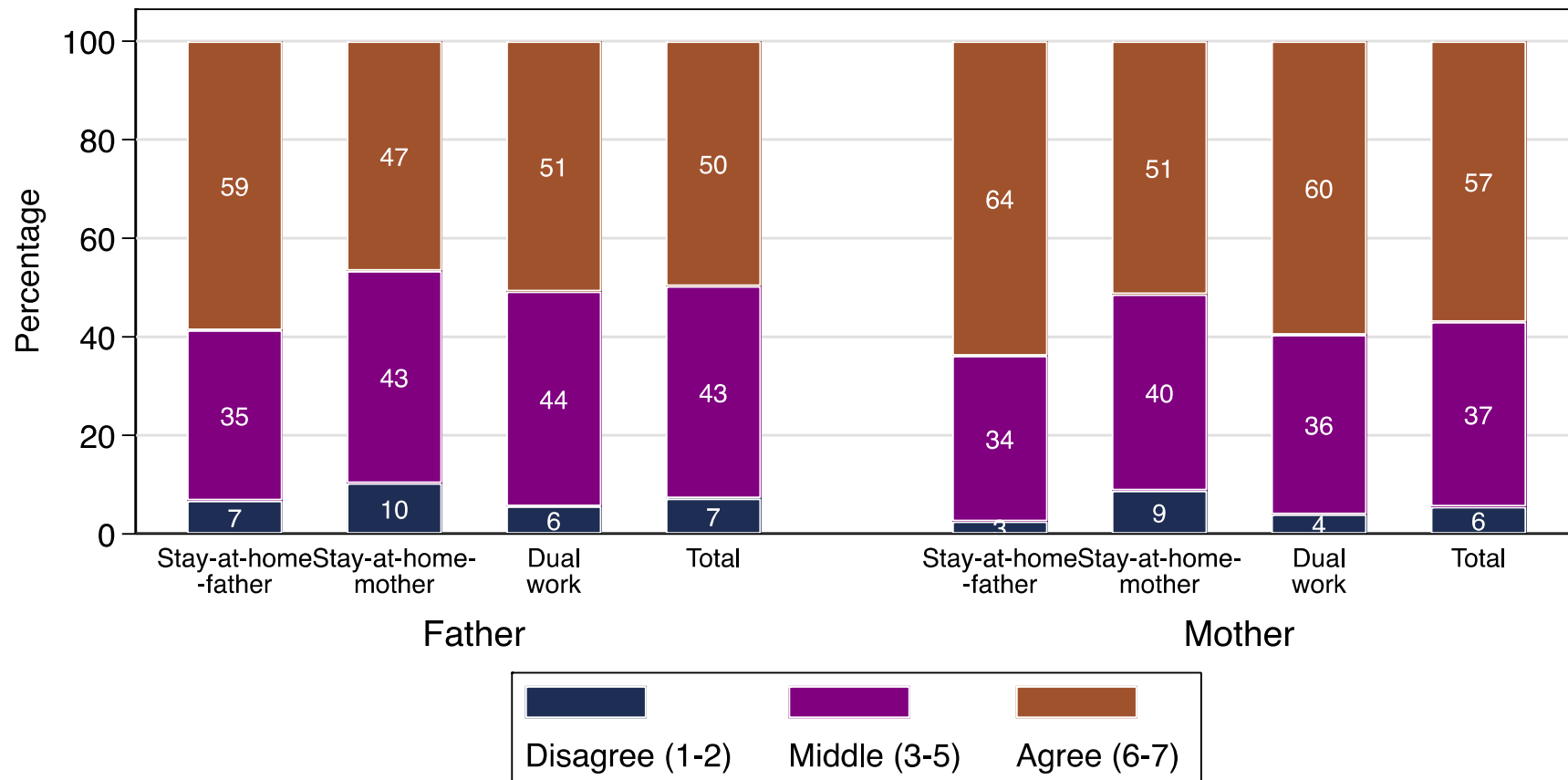
Sharing child care tasks – variation by parents' work



Attitudes to gender roles reversed



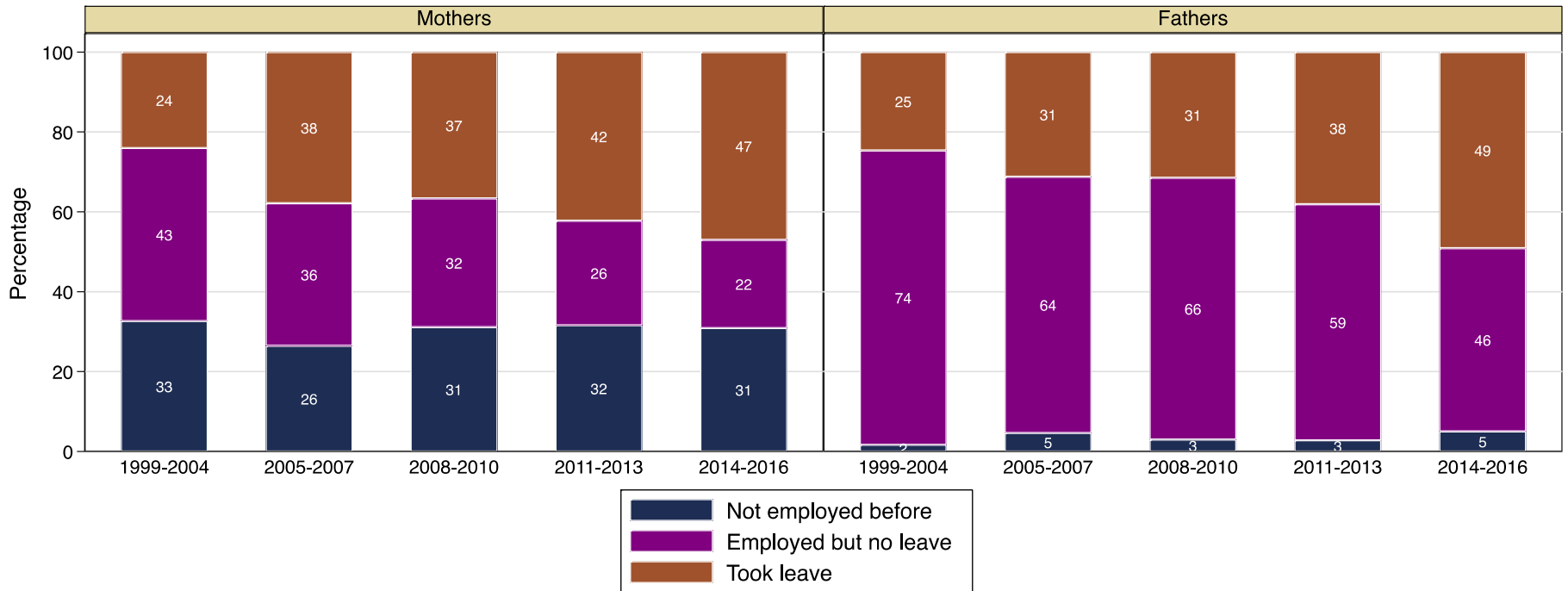
Children do just as well if the mother earns the money and the father takes care of the home and children



Mothers' and fathers' employment and use of leave for births, 1999 to 2016



By period in which the birth occurred

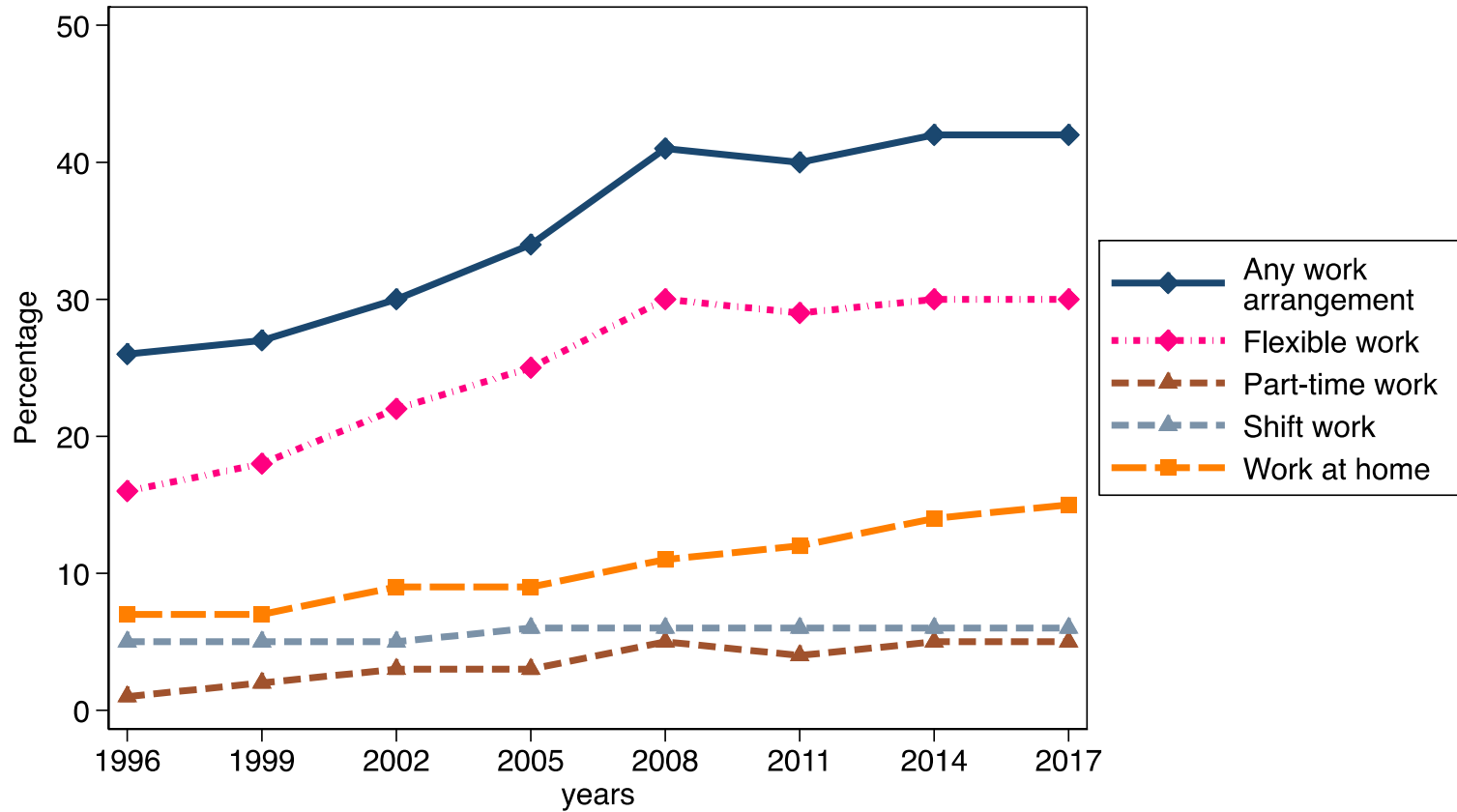


Respondents were asked about “formal” leave – paid or unpaid leave agreed with employer.

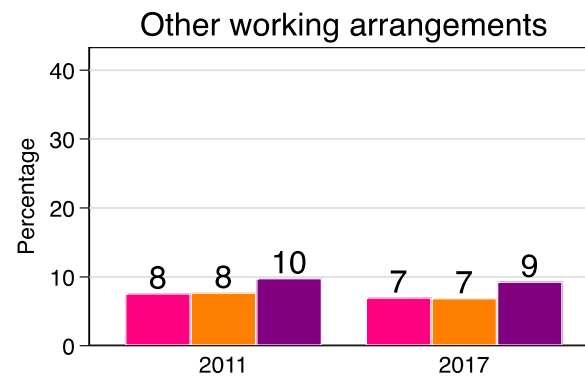
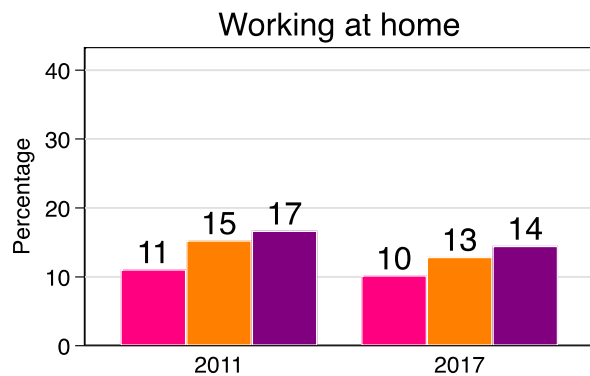
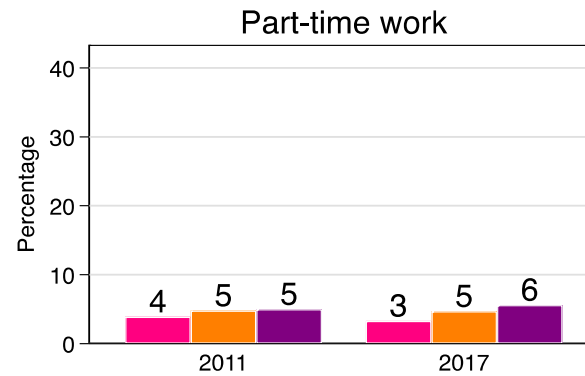
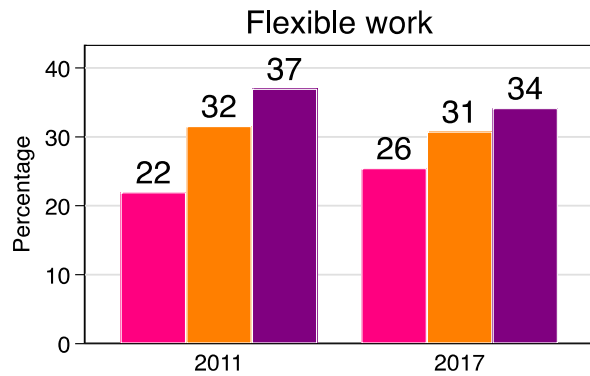
“Employed but no leave” includes those who left work as well as those who stayed on and took no leave

Source: HILDA Wave 15, 2015

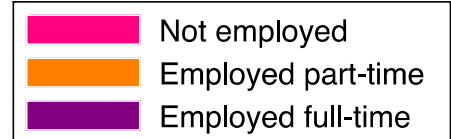
Work arrangements used to care for children



Work arrangements used to care for children



By mothers' employment



Examples of “other” work arrangements used by mothers



I work from home, self-employed. I choose my own hours

Very casual, very flexible hours

I was able to take my child to work all the time

Did work much shorter hours. Flexibility of being self employed contractor was the key

“Other” work arrangements included
reference to father providing care



Partner had child during the day while I worked

*Days working in office my husband would stay home
with our daughter*

*Worked night shift or weekends when husband was
home with baby*

“Other” work arrangements by fathers



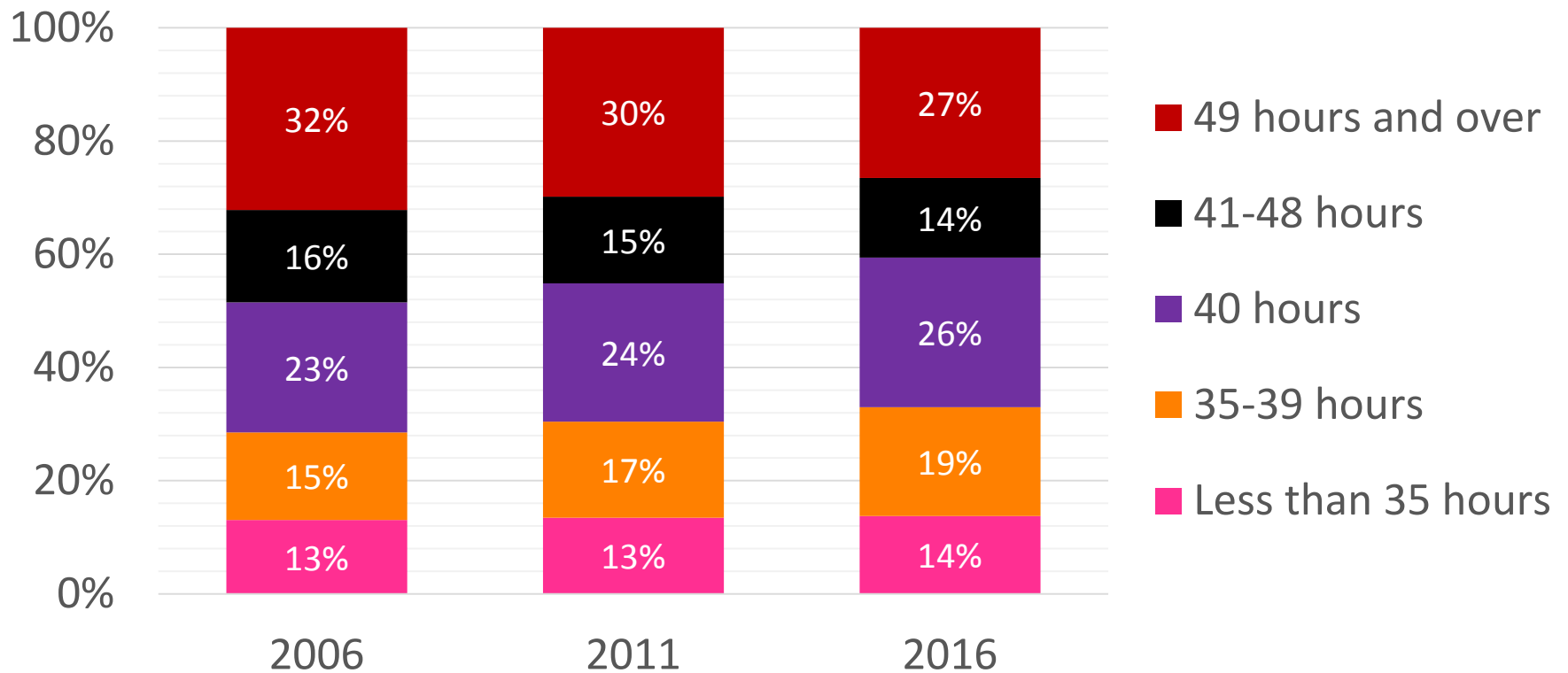
Because he is self-employed, he can work his job around our needs

Self employed so he can swap days off sometimes and be flexible

We work a rotating roster so one of us is always at home

Although he works long hours, he also does a lot of work from home and is extremely helpful

Changing work hours of employed fathers, 2006, 2011, 2016



Summary – fathers at work

- **Very gendered patterns remain engrained in work and family roles**
- It is mothers' employment, not fathers', that has changed over recent decades
- Most agree that gender role reversal is OK, but the actual arrangements are far from reflecting this
- Fathers' work characteristics still very different to mothers: in particular part-time work still more likely for mothers
- Family roles do vary with parental work characteristics
- Is work becoming more conducive to father involvement?
 - Lower work hours?
 - Increasing use of flexible arrangements to help with the care of children?

Final thoughts

- Do parents talk about sharing the load a different way, or do gendered roles just happen?
- Changing gender roles within the family means both parents need to be committed to this
 - This might mean sharing a role (stay at home parent; breadwinner), rather than having that as your primary role, or having the other parent do that as their primary role
 - Barriers to this can be at the workplace level – whether real or perceived