



PARENTING AND CLASS: FAMILY BUDGETS IN MEMPHIS, TN

AN ANALYSIS OF UPPER, MIDDLE, AND WORKING CLASS FAMILY BUDGETS

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3/31/25

CDFS 2101

INTRODUCTION

- Introduction to the socioeconomic disparities and their impact on family budgeting and lifestyle.
- This is an outline of the three family classifications: upper, middle, and working class.

UPPER CLASS FAMILY BUDGET

- **Economic Security:** With over \$1 million in annual income and significant assets, this family enjoys high economic security, affording a luxurious lifestyle without financial strain.
- **Housing Costs:** Large investments in high-end real estate ensure not only a prestigious address but also safety, privacy, and an environment conducive to networking with other affluent families.
- **School Costs:** The ability to pay for top-tier private education provides children with superior educational resources and extracurricular programs, setting a foundation for future success.

UPPER CLASS FAMILY LIFESTYLE

- **Clothing and Personal Items:** Shopping at exclusive boutiques and designer stores, these children are often dressed in the latest fashions, which can enhance their social standing among peers.
- **Activities:** Access to elite sports clubs, arts, and other culturally enriching activities support comprehensive personal development from a young age.
- **Vacations:** Regular luxury travel broadens horizons and provides cultural exposure that is educational and leisurely, fostering a global perspective.

MIDDLE CLASS FAMILY BUDGET

- **Economic Stability:** Stable yet mindful of budget constraints. The income supports a comfortable, though not lavish, lifestyle with limited room for financial
- **Housing Costs:** Homes in safe, suburban neighborhoods that offer a good balance between cost and quality of life.
- **School Costs:** Dependence on public schools that may vary in quality, with occasional investments in extracurricular activities that fit within a tighter budget.

MIDDLE CLASS FAMILY LIFESTYLE

- **Clothing and Personal Items:** Shopping at mainstream retailers like Target and Macy's, where cost-effectiveness is key, often requiring a balance between quality and affordability.
- **Activities:** Participation in community or school-sponsored sports and arts programs, which are more affordable
- **Vacations:** Focus on domestic travel, often to destinations within driving distance, emphasizing cost-effective vacations like camping or visiting national parks.

WORKING CLASS FAMILY BUDGET

- **Economic Challenges:** Constant budgeting is necessary to cover essentials, with little to no disposable income for unexpected expenses.
- **Housing Costs:** Limited to more affordable, potentially less safe neighborhoods, which may impact the family's overall well-being.
- **School Costs:** Reliance on public schools without the financial flexibility to afford additional educational resources.

WORKING CLASS FAMILY LIFESTYLE

- **Clothing and Personal Items:** Priority on affordability leads to shopping at discount stores and thrift shops to stretch the budget.
- **Activities:** Dependent on free or low-cost local community programs, which might limit exposure to diverse experiences.
- **Vacations:** Highly restricted, often limited to very local or minimal cost activities, focusing on free community events and locations.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

- **Social Mobility:** Discuss how economic resources influence access to education, healthcare, and networking opportunities that can significantly affect social mobility.
- **Stress and Family Dynamics:** Explore how financial stability or the lack thereof can influence family relationships, stress levels, and overall mental health.
- **Future Opportunities:** Analyze how the children's future opportunities are shaped by their economic backgrounds, including higher education and career prospects.