Children’s Time Use and Parents’ Work Schedules
Evidence from the Spanish case
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Motivation
- Investigate how parents’ work schedules influence children’s time use.
- Studying children’s daily activities, and whether parents supervise these activities, is critical to understand child well-being.
- Spain represents an excellent case of study, as many parents in this country have a work schedule that brings them to engage in paid work until late in the evening (Gracia & Kalmin, 2015).

Data & Methods
- Data from the Spanish Time Use Survey 2006-2010
- Information collected by a diary of activities from 6am to 6am
- All members of the household aged over 9 years filled the diary
- Sample Selection: Children 10-16 years old who live with two parents and filled a diary during a weekday. N=593
- Dependent variables:
  * Total time with parents: hours with presence of at least one parent
  * Family Interactions: hours in meals or family activities with at least one parent
  * Educational Activities: hours of homework and reading after schooling time
  * Supervised TV: hours watching television without any parent present
  * Unsupervised Activity: hours in electronic activities without any parent
  * Internet: hours using internet without presence of any parent

Hypotheses
- Hypothesis 1: Parents’ evening work has negative effects on children’s time supervised by parents and interactive family time.
- Hypothesis 2: Parents’ evening work has negative effects on children’s time in educational activities.
- Hypothesis 3: Parents’ evening work has positive effects on children’s time in electronic, watching TV and internet without supervision.
- Hypothesis 4: The effects of evening work on the different measures of children’s time use are significant for low-educated parents, but not for high-educated parents.

Conclusions
- We contribute to previous studies by analyzing the links between parents’ evening work and children’s time use.
- Mothers’ evening work hours, but not fathers’, are negatively associated with children spending time in activities with parents, interactive family time, and educational activities.
- Mothers’ evening work hours, by contrast, are positively associated with children’s time in electronic activities, internet using, and watching TV without parental supervision.
- The negative effects of maternal evening work on children’s developmental activities only apply to less-educated families; highly-educated families seem to owe high resources to ensure that their children engage in more developmental activities.
- The study has general implications for broad debates on how parents’ work schedules influence child well-being.