

Return of the Working Poor

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09/17/09 Baltimore, Maryland

Here's another trend of the "new normal": the working poor.

30% of Americans making \$100,000 or more each year are living paycheck to paycheck, reports a CareerBuilder study this week. That's up from 21% last year — a number that still seems awfully high.

61% of all Americans say they are in a similar bind... making just enough to finance their lifestyle every month. Just a year ago, 49% were living paycheck to paycheck.

The No. 1 way to make ends meet on a tough month? Cut savings. Check out these quick stats:

- 21% of correspondents have reduced or eliminated 401(k) contributions in the last six months
- 36% don't put any money toward retirement
- 33% don't save at all
- 30% that do put some away save less than \$100 a month.

Puts an interesting twist on the much belabored rising savings rate, doesn't it? The personal savings rate as reported by the government has nearly doubled from this time last year — from roughly 2.5% to 5%. But to what end?

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