NIQ
Perspectives
Home, Family, Baby

April 15, 2026

Background:

Oil and gas prices are expected to increase as a result of the conflict involving the US, Israel, and Iran, which is leading to supply constraints.

These insights aim to evaluate gas's effect on the home, family, and baby sector and consumer demand by looking at historical trends related to rising gas prices, similar to impacts seen at the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Additional factors to consider:

- The overall economic impact on both US and global markets.
- The shortages in 2022 came after the COVID-19 pandemic; now that production capacity has been restored, these issues should ease unless international conflicts disrupt trade again.
- Unemployment has recently risen, partly due to significant workplace changes brought about by AI, affecting white-collar workers who were less impacted during COVID-19.
- Tariffs are evolving following the February 20th, 2026 Supreme Court decision, as the government reviews alternative routes.

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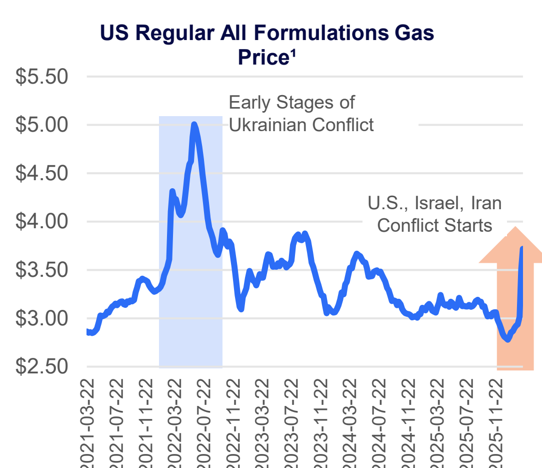
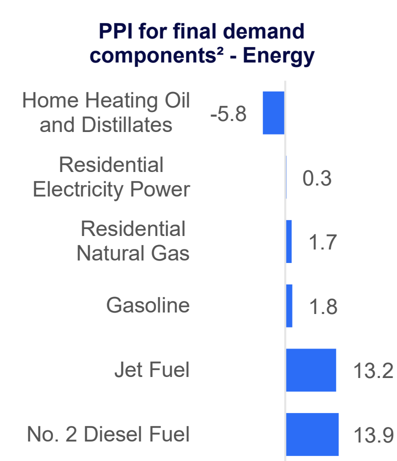
Cost Pressures:
Why Home, Family & Baby Feel the Squeeze After Fuel Spikes

Implications for Home/Family/Baby

Recent US actions in Middle East have caused a spike in gas prices

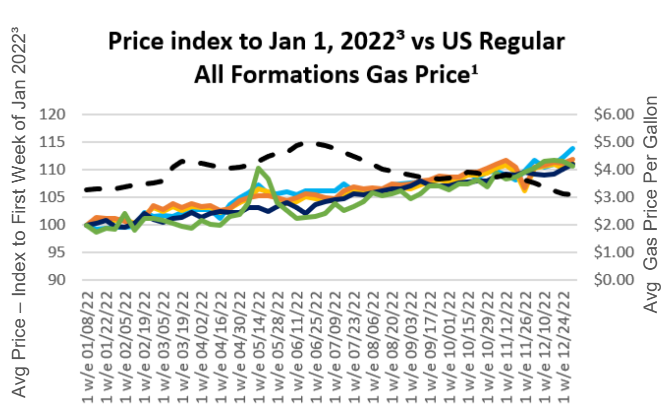
In February, the Producer Price Index for Diesel Fuel and Jet Fuel rose 13.9% and 13.2% respectively, leaving consumers wondering how quickly they will foot the bill for household essentials





Gas spikes in 2022 hit Home, Family, and Baby later, and the pressure lasts longer than the pump price

When gas surged to about $5 per gallon in mid 2022, total store inflation moved from 102 to 106, but Home, Family, and Baby did not peak immediately and instead climbed through year end. Even after gas prices eased, total HFB still finished higher at 111, which tells you the cost shock keeps flowing through pricing and logistics after fuel headlines fade. Marketers should plan for a delayed squeeze on shoppers and win by speaking clearly to value, promoting "stretch" solutions like multipacks and durable options, and timing offers for the months after a gas spike when HFB price indexes are still rising.



Price index for key dates³	3/19	6/18	9/24	12/31
TTL STORE	**102**	**106**	**108**	**114**
Total HFB	103	105	108	111
Home	103	106	109	112
Family	101	102	107	111
Baby	100	101	107	111
- - US Regular All Formulations Gas Price	$4.32	$5.00	$3.65	$3.00

Sources: [1]U.S. Energy Information Administration, US Regular All Formulations Gas Price, March 18, 2026. [2]U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics. Producer Price Index February 2026, [3]NielsenIQ Discover RMS, Total US xAOC, Avg Price indexed to W/E 01/08/22

Authors: Stephanie Canty, Associate Client Director; Michelle Rea, Associate Client Director; Darren Seifer VP Thought Leadership Home, Family, Baby

NIQ Perspectives
Home, Family, Baby

"Gas price shocks don't stop at the pump, and they ripple through Home, Family, and Baby categories for months. Brands that win are the ones that anticipate the delayed squeeze, show up with a clear value story, and make it easier for families to plan, stock up, and feel confident in every essential purchase."

Darren Seifer
Vice President, Thought Leadership Home, Family & Baby NielsenIQ

The takeaway…

- Expect a "lagging cost wave" that outlasts fuel headlines
- "Essential" doesn't mean "immune"—loyalty softens under budget pressure
- Fuel volatility can accelerate eCommerce dependence. Plan supply and pack architecture accordingly

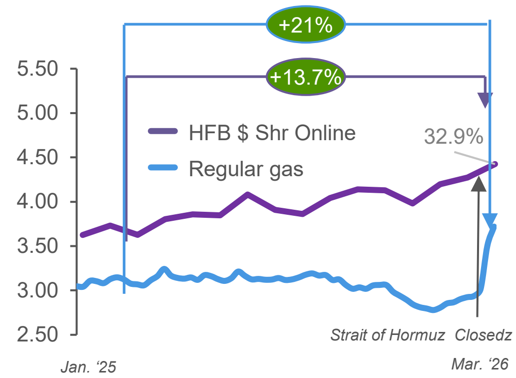
Your next move…

- Build a "delayed squeeze" activation calendar (time to the aftershock not the spike)
- Lead with a clear value architecture: good-better-best + justified price points
- Meet the "planful household" where they are: optimize for consolidated, online baskets

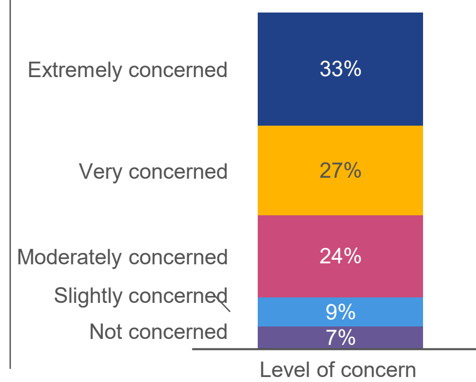
Gas prices squeeze the household budget

Every dollar spent at the pump is a dollar pulled from the basket. This pressure shows up quickly in how families shop for essential Home, Family, and Baby needs. Online purchasing allows shoppers to preserve their own gasoline dollars by consolidating trips, reducing travel altogether, and planning baskets more deliberately. As fuel costs rise, HFB's online share has continued to grow, signaling that eCommerce is increasingly embedded in how consumers manage cost pressure during periods of energy volatility.

U.S. Energy Information Administration Fuel Price Trend[1] vs HFB Online $ Share[2]



Level of Concern about Increasing Gas Prices[3]



HFB is "essential," but consumers still adjust when budgets tighten

Avg EQ prices rose from Q4 2022 to Q4 2025 across HFB with Total HFB up +9.5%, Home up +10.4%, Family up +6.2%, and Baby up +1.2%, which tells you these categories absorbed inflation but not evenly. Price sensitivities remained comparatively low meaning these are essential categories to consumers. Even with "essential" protection, rising prices can shift behaviors toward fewer impulse add-ons, more deal seeking, more private label consideration, and tighter trip planning.

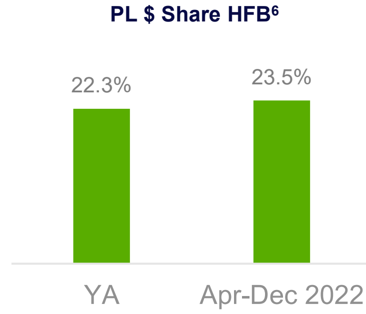
	Avg EQ Price[4] Q4 2022	Change	Avg EQ Price[4] Q4 2025	Price Sensitivity[5] Q4 2022	Change	Price Sensitivity[5] Q4 2025
Total Store	$0.71	+12%	$0.80	-1.1	+15%	-1.2
Total HFB	$0.13	+9.5%	$0.14	-1.1	0%	-1.1
Home	$0.11	+10.4%	$0.12	-1.4	-7.1%	-1.3
Family	$0.28	+6.2%	$0.29	-1.0	+10%	-1.1
Baby	$0.20	+1.2%	$0.20	-1.1	0%	-1.1

In 2022 inflation, private label gained share in HFB

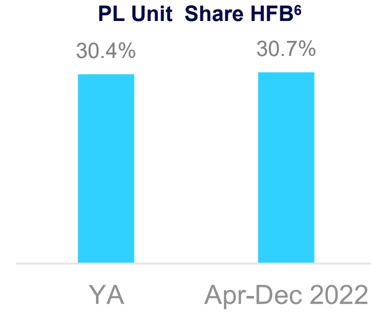
The 2022 price increases reshaped demand even for home, family, and baby. "Essential" does not mean "immune" from eroding loyalty. Protect share with clear good-better-best options, strong entry price points, and brand proof that makes trading back up feel worth it.

April 2022-Dec 2022 vs YA

PL $ Share HFB[6]



PL Unit Share HFB[6]



Take this quick survey to provide feedback

Rising gas prices and geopolitical instability often signal broader inflation, tightening household budgets and pushing consumers toward more deliberate, value-driven decisions. Shoppers now enter these moments with memory and context, where lessons from COVID-era shortages and fuel-driven price shocks have reshaped behavior, reinforcing planning, preparedness, and reduced impulse. As new instability introduces fresh price pressure, retailers and manufacturers alike must respond with clarity, discipline, and a clearly articulated value strategy. Strong collaboration, simplified choices, and well-justified price points will be critical to meeting the needs of a more cautious consumer and sustaining growth through prolonged uncertainty.

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Looking for more? Contact your NIQ partner.

Sources: [1]U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). Gasoline Fuel Update. U.S. Department of Energy. https://www.eia.gov/petroleum/gasdiesel/, Accessed 3/18/2026 and [2]NielsenIQ OmniShopper ; [3]NIQ, BASES Quick Question Omnibus Survey, n=2,024, March 2026; [4]NielsenIQ Discover RMS, | [5]PnP Core Models, Regular Price Elasticity for Total US xAOC, [6]NielsenIQ Discover RMS

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