

Teacher Information: Italics in new to 2008

THE AMERICAN FAMILY

Have students describe the stereotypical family of working dad, stay-at-home mom, and two or three children. Discuss: "Is this the typical family of today?" (You may wish to refer to television families with which students are familiar.) Today, this family form comprises only 10 percent of all households.

Some of the trends in families are shown on this transparency. (Have students help identify advantages and disadvantages of each of the following family forms as you discuss them.)

LIVING ALONE

Many people never marry; others may live alone after their spouse dies; 60% of these people are women.

Statistics show that one out of 24 adults will remain single throughout his/her adult life. This may be seen as a commitment to independence in both the young and the elderly. For a small minority, singleness is based on financial limitations, physical abnormalities, or poor social skills.

The proportion of households consisting of one person living alone increased from 17 percent in 1970 to 26 percent in 2005.

POSSLQs (poss el cues)

POSSLQs refers to persons of the opposite sex sharing living quarters without the benefit of marriage.

Most of these are young adults (70%), who have no children. There is increasing social tolerance of these arrangements, if not social acceptance. For many people, cohabitation is becoming more like the first stage of marriage. Statistically, couples who live together before marriage divorce just as often as those who marry before living together. The main problem of living together without marriage is that it is so easy to walk out on one another, leaving deep emotional scars.

According to the 2000 Census, there are currently about 11 million people living with an unmarried partner in the U.S. This includes both same-sex and different-sex couples.

- U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

An estimated 5.08 million adult couples were cohabitating in 2004. USA Today, 22 July 2005.

Cohabitating couples have twice the breakup rate of married couples.

Divorce declining, but so is marriage, Sharon Jayson. USA Today 18 July 2005.

Studies show that children raised by cohabiting parents have more school and emotional problems.

Sex and sensibilities. USA Today, 17 May 2005.

More than 2/3 of married couples in the US say they lived together before marriage.

'Cohabitation is replacing dating,' Sharon Jayson, USA Today 18 July 2005.

MARRYING LATER IN LIFE

Many young adults are stunned with the economics of living without an adequate education. This throws them into the web of low income, and makes it very difficult to rise to a higher socioeconomic level. As a result, more young people are not marrying or are marrying later. The average age of first marriage has risen to 25.9 years for men and 23.6 years for women. Today's marriage ages are very similar to the marriage ages in the early part of this century.

The 2006 Census states 27.1 years for men and 25.8 years for women. In Utah, couples wed at the earliest age - 21.9 years for women and 23.9 for men. Washington, D.C. has the latest age for marriage with an average of around 30 years.

<http://www.yourweddingplace.com/news/news%20couples%20marry%20later.htm>

COUPLES HAVING CHILDREN LATER IN LIFE

The average age of parents having their first child has climbed steadily in recent years. The cost of rearing a child from birth through college has been estimated at nearly \$200,000. More couples are waiting to become parents until their careers are established.

COUPLES WITH FEWER CHILDREN

Among couples who do have children, the average number of children per family dropped to 1.8, down from the peak of 3.6 in 1957.

COUPLES WITH NO CHILDREN

Due to career commitments, fertility problems, or just because they enjoy their childless lifestyles, many couples are remaining Double Income, No Kids couples.

As a National Marriage Project's analysis of Census Bureau data shows, women are now entering their active childrearing years at older ages than in the past and ending child-rearing years at younger ages. In 1970, 73.6 percent of women, ages 25-29, had already entered their childrearing years and were living with at least one minor child of their own. By 2000, the share had dropped to 48.7 percent. In 1970, 27.4 percent of women, ages 50-54, had at least one minor child of their own in the household. By 2000, the share of such women had fallen to 15.4 percent.

A growing percentage of women today are not having any children. In 2004, almost one out of five women in their early forties was childless. In 1976, it was one out of ten.

<http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/SOOU/TEXTSOOU2006.htm>

DIVORCED ADULTS

Americans take marriage very seriously. The more we expect from a marriage, the higher the chance of divorce. Approximately 60% of all divorces involve couples with children in the home.

<http://www.census.gov/Press->

[Release/www/releases/archives/marital_status_living_arrangements/010624.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/marital_status_living_arrangements/010624.html)

Discuss with students:

How do you feel about families that are divorced?

How can divorce affect children?

How can divorce be avoided?

What must each person put into a marriage to make it work?

SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

Due to the rise in the divorce rate as well as the increase in the number of unmarried mothers, about one in four children lives with only one parent, most often the mother. The number of single-parent homes has more than doubled in the past 20 years.

In an average divorce, a woman's standard of living drops 73% after a divorce, while the ex-husband's standard jumps 42%. Thirty-four percent of families headed by women live in poverty. This is because women earn only 65% of what men earn and that many divorced fathers fail to make support payments.

Although joint-custody gets considerable attention, about 50% of the children in divorced families report having not seen their father in the last year; and only one of six report seeing their father once a week.

Over the last decade, reforms in child custody laws have increased. The number of father-headed single parent households continues to be a trend.

- *Twenty-six per cent of families with children are headed by a single parent.*
- *Of the 1.4 million single-parent families, about 20 per cent are headed by men. The number of men at the head of single-parent families is growing more than twice as fast as the number of women.*
- *The percentage of households headed by single parents showed little variation from 1994 through 2006, at about 9 percent, up from 5 percent in 1970, according to the latest data on America's families and households released today by the U.S. Census Bureau.*

GRANDPARENTS AS CAREGIVERS

Data from the U.S. Census show that the phenomenon of grandparents raising grandchildren is increasing. In 2000, 2.4 million grandparents were raising their grandchildren in the U.S., representing an approximate 30% increase from 1990 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). In Utah, the 2006 American Community Survey estimated that approximately 15,652 grandparents had primary responsibility for their grandchildren's care (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006).

http://www.imakenews.com/cppa/e_article000962634.cfm?x=b11,0,w

Grandparents are returning to the role of parents in ever-increasing numbers. Currently, 6.7% of families with children under 18 years of age are maintained by grandparents (U.S. Census Bureau, 1996). High rates of teenage pregnancy, incarceration, alcohol or other substance abuse, parental death, HIV/AIDS, divorce, child abuse and neglect, mental illness, and other economic and social conditions are contemporary problems contributing to the increase of the custodial-grandparent family typology (Minkler & Fuller-Thomson, 1999; Smith, Dannison & Vacha-Haase, 1998).

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/teaching-case/grandcommsmith.html>

GROWN CHILDREN MOVING BACK WITH THEIR PARENTS

Another trend is that grown children are living at home longer or are returning to their parent's homes.

Kids are either staying home longer after graduation because they cannot afford to move out, or they are coming back home for financial reasons. Often the kid is a divorced adult who cannot afford to live alone, or alone with children.

In 1985, 54 percent of 18-24 years-olds lived with parents, up from 43 percent in 1960. Between 1968 and 1983, the number of married couples ages 18-24 with one child at home increased from 6.36 percent to 7.40 percent, up 23 percent. Families with two children and parents ages 18-24 living at home increased from 2.23 percent to 4.17 percent, **up 98 percent.**

Factors influencing the trend are the high divorce rate, unemployment rate, increasing number of never-married women ages 25-29, increasing age at first marriage, a labor market with low-entry salaries for the majority of young adults, and high cost of housing.

Whatever the reason, shared living has become commonplace. In such an arrangement, families live closer together in more crowded conditions with less privacy. They need to learn to get along with each other. Students need to understand that there may be conflict and no privacy.

Having adult children at home can create conflict. The most common problems were time of coming and going (44%), cleaning and house maintenance (49%), use of household resources (36%), mealtime (33%), money and spending (31%), entertaining friends (23%), and rent and other charges (21%).

Both parents and children can suffer from this arrangement. The adult children suffer because they revert to immature, dependent ways while parents take on their normal roles of caretakers. This prevents the young adults from developing new roles and becoming more responsible for their lives. In addition, the young adults don't have a chance to meet intimacy needs.

Parents suffer because they don't have the freedom to develop further interests and strengthen their marriage as they might have done if the child(ren) had been gone.

It's an international phenomenon: the kids that won't go away. The Italians call them "mammon", or "mama's boys". The Japanese call them "parasaito shinguru", or "parasite singles". In the United States they are known as "[boomerangs](#)", and in the U.K. they are called "[KIPPERS](#)", which is short for "kids in parents' pockets eroding [retirement savings](#)". U.S. census data for the year 2000 showed that more than 25% of Americans between the ages of 18 and 34 were living with their parents. For those aged 18 to 24, the number is 56% of men and 43% of women.

Boomerangs: Why Some Kids Never Leave The Nest

by Lisa Smith <http://www.investopedia.com/articles/pf/06/boomerangs.asp>

GRANDPARENTS LIVING WITH FAMILIES

Another returnee to the nest may be the elderly parent. This aging population creates special challenges for families. Often, the elderly family member requires care. With greater longevity, there are more elderly people and thus more opportunity for diseases. One such disease is Alzheimer's, which claims 2 to 4 million victims and is expected to double by the year 2000. Alzheimer's is a chronic, neurological illness which is terminal and leaves families emotionally and economically devastated. The facilities that exist to care for Alzheimer's patients are very expensive.

Adults who have responsibility for not only their children but also for their parents are called the sandwich generation. Caring for an elderly relative requires that some people reduce working hours or quit their jobs. However, on the positive side, think of the advantages of having grandparents nearby and really getting to know them and learn from their experiences and wisdom.

MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS

According to the 2000 Census, there were 3.9 million multigenerational family households in the United States, representing approximately 4% of all households. In 65% of these households, the grandparent is the householder and lives with their children and their grandchildren. In 33% of the multigenerational households, the grandparent lives in the home of their children (or son- or daughter-in-law) along with their children's children. In 2% of multigenerational households, both grandparents and great-grandparents, as well as children and grandchildren of the grandparents are living in the home. 2

REASONS FOR MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS

There are a number of reasons for multigenerational households, some being positive and others more difficult. According to the US Census Bureau, some of the most prevalent circumstances that lead to the larger number of multigenerational households in one geographic area over another are recent immigration, where new immigrants may choose to live with relatives, areas with housing shortages and high housing costs, and places with large numbers of single parents who choose to have grandparents assist with child rearing.³

http://www.gu.org/documents/A0/Multigenerational_Families.pdf

CASE STUDY:

Your grandmother has become forgetful and is unable to care for herself. She seems to forget simple things like eating, bathing, or even who her own children are. The decision is made to care for Grandma in your home and she moves in. Your grandma has always been a fun person to have around, but now you are finding it hard to take care of her. Your mother must bathe her and she is difficult to move. Sometimes the bathing must occur several times a day because she has lost control of some bodily functions. She forgets who you are and sometimes she wanders off and you must go through the neighborhood looking for her as if she were a lost child. Your parents are so tied down that on occasion you stay home and grandma sit so they can go out. There is no question that this restricts what you do as a family and the amount of time and attention your mother can give you. How do you feel?

BLENDED FAMILIES

Divorced parents, especially fathers, are likely to remarry. Therefore, many children are finding themselves living in a blended family. Thirteen percent of today's children are stepchildren.

Some advantages:

- The new couple often has more time alone while children are with the other parent.
- More opportunities to learn about negotiation and compromise.
- Relationships are seen as precious and unique.
- Parents learn how to let go in the process of children coming and going.
- Children have more role models of adult behavior.
- When both parents work, the family's earning potential is doubled.

Some challenges:

Emotional difficulties

It takes about two years for adult couples to feel that they are as strong a team as the parent-child team

It takes about 4-5 years for the whole family to feel oneness, to have a shared history

Persons not partnered before have great difficulty understanding the power of the ex-spouse bond and previous non-parents have difficulty understanding the power of the parent-child bond

Most parents have difficulty letting the child and the new step-parent develop a relationship of their own

It is difficult to blend a family with older children. Since the normal task of adolescence is moving away from the family, a new step-family interrupts this process.

Family members experience an identity change as they adapt to a new family situation.

Feelings of social isolation can result when a family relocates.

WORKING MOTHERS

How many of you think that a wife should stay at home with young children? How many of you think that will be the case in your future family? How many of your mothers work? How many of you want to be employed outside the home?

Today, the fastest growing segment of the work force is women with children under the age of three. More than half of American mothers with infants less than a year old are working outside the home, compared with only 31% in 1976. The majority of preschoolers have mothers holding jobs. Day care for these children can cost up to one-fourth of the family budget.

On the positive side, many latch-key children get a head start on maturity. They become more responsible and self-reliant.

A dual-career marriage is full of risks and pressures. The demands of work keep parents away from their children. Parents who resent the separation from their children may not be committed enough to their jobs, sacrificing salaries and promotions to preserve their family lives. The average working woman, additionally, bears the primary responsibility for care of the children and the housework after a full day of employment. Women have 15 fewer hours of leisure a week than men.

Some solutions may be:

1. A return to the traditional role of stay-at-home mom (an economic impossibility for many).
2. Working at home. What would be some of the options? Computers have given this possibility a big boost.
3. Househusband, Mr. Mom. This works well if the husband brings home a smaller paycheck than his wife, is in between jobs, works out of a home office, and especially is committed to equality and fairness.
4. The Mommy Track. Some businesses offer benefits for parents, such as parental leave, part-time work, time off with pay when employees must care for sick children, flexible work hours or job-sharing arrangements, on-site day care, etc.

Is the American family dying or ceasing to exist? Consider this:

Nine out of ten people continue to live in households as family members.

Nine out of ten young adults marry.

The majority (three out of four) of those who divorce will remarry.

The majority of those who marry will have children.

In a national survey:

More than 78% of respondents get a great deal of satisfaction from family life.

67% of married respondents indicated they were very happy with their marriage.

An overwhelming majority of children reported their family as being close and intimate.

DIVORCED ADULTS

ASSIGNMENT: Assign each student to be a mythical family headed for divorce. Let them work through the processes associated with divorce: property settlement, child custody, and divorce costs. Let them conduct research on divorce laws. Let them identify solutions for saving the marriage. How could the divorce have been avoided? How could students have predicted before marriage that it might end in divorce?

SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

ASSIGNMENT: Let students conduct research into options that are available to women who are divorced. What agencies and organizations are available to help them cope emotionally and financially?

GRANDPARENTS LIVING WITH FAMILIES

ASSIGNMENT: Use case studies of families where older children or grandparents live at home. Discuss why it is necessary for them to live with their families. Ask students to tell how they would feel if they were (1) the children or grandparents and (2) the parents. Ask students if they see an increase in numbers of families they know where older children remain at home longer. Let students discuss conflicts arising from living together and use practical reasoning to find resolutions. Use role playing or simulation to let students see conflicts as well as possible solutions. Ask students to project themselves into their futures. Where do they see themselves living? If they must live with their family, what steps can they take to get along with them? What if their elderly parents must live with them? Can they understand others' points of view? Ask them to describe TV families they know get along well or have conflict. Can they analyze these families and why they do or do not get along? What are effective ways in which they cope?

REMARRIAGE AND PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS

SINGLE PARENTING—An intact family is the basic social unit. A mother, father, and children are the preferable setting for rearing children. Both parents provide role models for adult living and can best nurture, train, and teach the children in their home. Children benefit from learning how adult males and females interact in a happy marriage.

Single parents must overcome the loss of an efficient economic unit, where the labor is divided between two partners. A single parent must supply the money for the family. For most women, this means a reduction in the amount of money the family will have. Even with child-support money paid by the non-custodial parent, single parents are faced with the difficult chore of obtaining work with sufficient pay to support the family. A large majority of single parents do not receive child support, and if they do, it is often insufficient.

Because the single parent must be in the work force, child care becomes a problem if there are small children in the home. Time becomes a scarce commodity for single parents, as they try to balance the responsibilities of mother, father, homemaker, and breadwinner. Being a single parent is often very complicated, and presents unique challenges.

REMARRIAGE AND STEP-PARENTING—Not all divorced people will remarry. Some have no desire to enter into a personal relationship again, and some are unable to find a suitable mate for their needs. Many people feel the need to heal their emotional wounds by dating immediately after a divorce. Others wait and are cautious about bringing anyone into their lives and the lives of their children. It is wise for divorced people to realize that they must deal with the emotional pain and scars from their first marriage before entering into another relationship.

Once a person decides to remarry, he/she will face a whole new set of traditions, rules, and extended relationships. Life will be different than it has been in the past, and flexibility and humor will help the new marriage work. Many issues must be addressed, such as the authority of the new spouse in the eyes of the children, conflicting child-rearing techniques, a child's divided loyalty for the non-custodial parent and possible jealousy of the new step-parent, physical space arrangements, and the need for privacy for the newly married couple. Financial decisions will play a vital part in the success or failure of the new unit, as partners work out earning, saving, and spending patterns. Patience is critical to the success of any remarriage. Happy, fulfilling new relationships take time.

The New York Times

Most Children Still Live in Two-Parent Homes, Census Bureau Reports

By [SAM ROBERTS](#)

Published: February 21, 2008

The American family may be under stress, but most children still live in two-parent households, the [Census Bureau](#) reported Wednesday.

Over all, 7 in 10 children live with two parents, about two-thirds live with two married parents, and about 6 in 10 live with both biological parents, according to the latest analysis, which is drawn from 2004 surveys.

In 1970, 85 percent of children were living with two parents and 11 percent with their mother only, proportions that shifted to a little more than 70 percent and slightly more than 20 percent, respectively, in 1990.

The comparable figures in 2004 were about 70 percent and 23 percent. The figures suggest that the tumultuous shifts in family structure since the late 1960s have leveled off since 1990.

“We’re not seeing the rapid change that was going on between 1970 and 1990,” said Rose M. Kreider, a Census Bureau demographer and author of the study of children’s living arrangements. “Evidently, we’re at a place where things are not moving very fast.”

Still, more than 1 in 4 children were living with only one parent.

The proportion who lived with two parents varied widely by race and ethnicity — 87 percent of Asians, 78 percent of non-Hispanic whites, 68 percent of Hispanics and 38 percent of blacks.

Among the nearly 19 million children living with their unmarried biological mothers, 18 percent were living in households where the mother had a partner.

Over all, 94 percent of the nation’s more than 73 million children were living with at least one biological parent, 8 percent lived with at least one stepparent, 2 percent lived with at least one adoptive parent, nearly 4 percent were living without either parent, and a little more than 2 percent were living with their grandparents only.

Nearly 4 in 10 children lived with at least one sibling.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Majority of Children Live With Two Biological Parents

Nearly 45 million (61 percent) of the nation's 73 million children younger than 18 lived with their biological mother and father in 2004 regardless of the parents' marital status, according to a U.S. Census Bureau report released today.

Of these children, 42.7 million lived with both parents who were married to each other. Another 4.1 million lived with a biological mother and stepfather, according to *Living Arrangements of Children: 2004* [PDF]. An additional 19.3 million children lived with one parent, with the majority of those (88 percent) residing with their mother.

There were 12.2 million children (representing 17 percent of all children) who lived with a stepparent, stepsibling and/or half sibling.

Among children in these "blended" families, 71 percent lived with at least a half sibling, 46 percent with a stepparent and 10 percent with a stepsibling.

Other highlights:

- Overall, 94 percent of children lived with at least one biological parent, while 8 percent lived with at least one stepparent and 2 percent lived with at least one adoptive parent.
- As for parents, 30.2 million men lived with at least one of their children younger than 18, compared with 37.8 million women. A higher percentage of the mothers (94 percent) lived with their biological children than the fathers (85 percent).
- Most children lived with at least one sibling (79 percent). The majority (64 percent) lived with one or two siblings, while 5 percent lived with four or more siblings. Twelve percent of children younger than 18 lived with a half sibling.
- Overall, 13.4 million children lived in extended families containing someone other than their parent or sibling. Of these, about 6.5 million lived with at least one grandparent, with 1.6 million of these children having no parent present.
- Approximately 2.2 million children were living with a mother who married, divorced or was widowed in the year prior to the survey date.
- Of the 18.7 million children living with their unmarried biological mothers, 18 percent had mothers who were living with unmarried partners. In comparison, of the 4.2 million children living with their unmarried biological fathers, 53 percent were living with fathers who were living with an unmarried partner. Overall, 5 percent of children younger than 18 lived with a cohabiting parent.

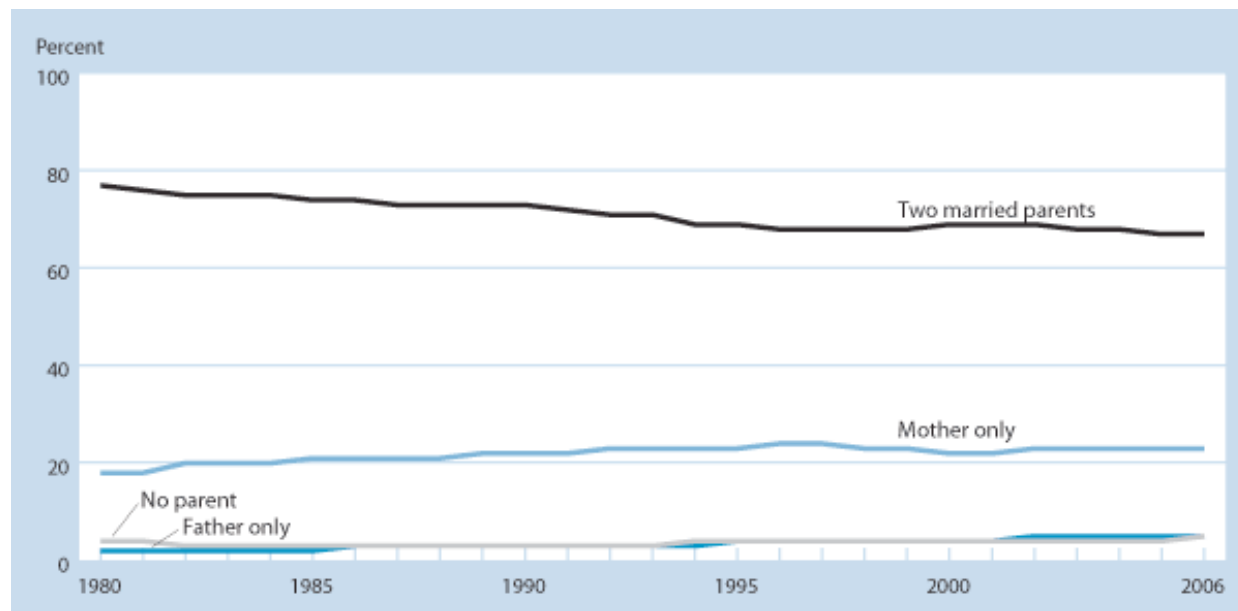
These data were collected from June 2004 through September 2004 in the Survey of Income and Program Participation. As in all surveys, these data are subject to sampling and nonsampling error. For further information on the source of the data and accuracy of the estimates, including standard errors and confidence intervals, go to <<http://www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/source.html>>.

America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2007

Family Structure and Children's Living Arrangements

Children's family structure is associated with the economic, parental, and community resources available to children and their well-being.

Indicator FAM1.A: Percentage of children ages 0–17 by presence of married parents in the household, 1980–2006



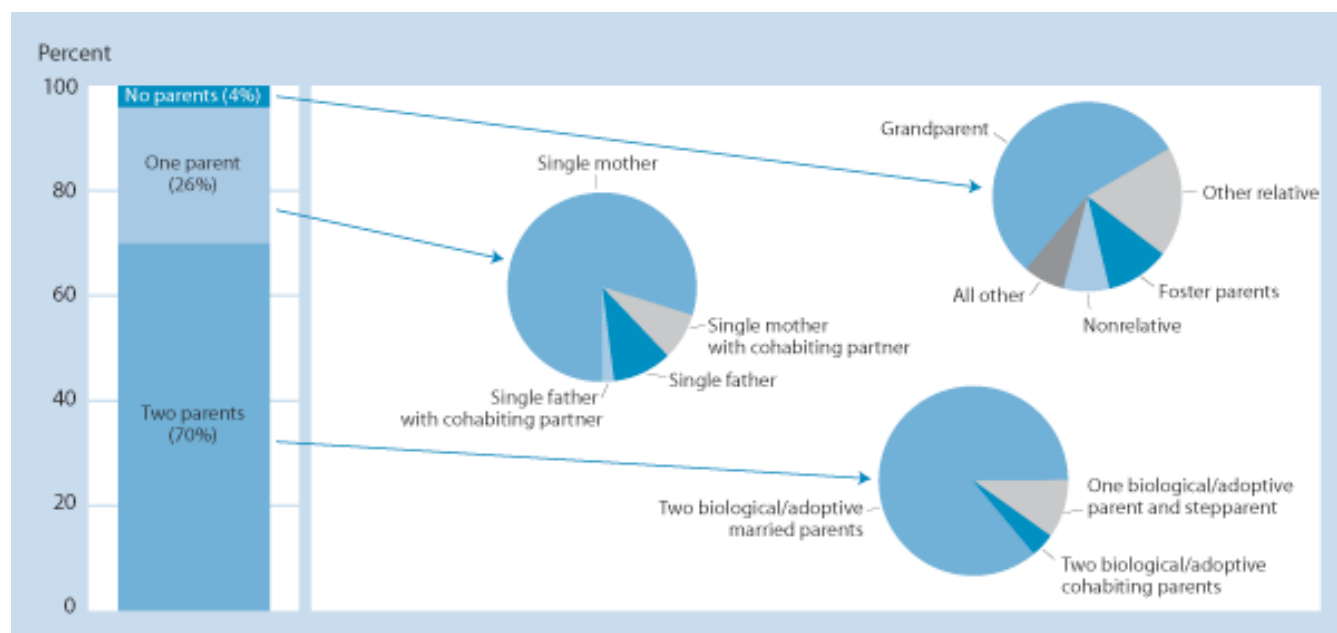
NOTE: The category "two married parents" includes children who live with a biological, step, or adoptive parent who is married with his or her spouse present. If a second parent is present and not married to the first parent, then the child is identified as living with a single parent. The majority of children who live with neither parent are living with grandparents or other relatives. Others who live with neither parent are living with foster parents or other nonrelatives.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau. [Current Population Survey](#), Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

- In 2006, 67 percent of children ages 0–17 lived with two married parents, down from 77 percent in 1980.
- In 2006, nearly one quarter (23 percent) of children lived with only their mothers, 5 percent lived with only their fathers, and 5 percent lived with neither of their parents.^{1,2}
- In 2006, 76 percent of White, non-Hispanic, 66 percent of Hispanic, and 35 percent of Black children lived with two married parents.³
- The proportion of Hispanic children living with two married parents decreased from 75 percent in 1980 to 66 percent in 2006.
- The proportion of all children living with a single father increased from 2 percent in 1980 to 5 percent in 2006.

While most children spend the majority of their childhood living with two parents, some children have other living arrangements. Information about the presence of parents and other adults in the family, such as the parent's unmarried partner, grandparents, and other relatives, is important for understanding children's social, economic, and developmental well-being.

Indicator FAM1.B: Percentage of children ages 0–17 living in various family arrangements, 2004



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, [Survey of Income and Program Participation](#).

- FAM1.B provides more detailed data about children's living arrangements, using information about the corresponding parents for each child, as well as the detailed type of relationship between parent and child—biological, step, or adoptive. In 2004, there were about 73 million children ages 0–17. Seventy percent of them lived with two parents, 26 percent lived with one parent, and about 4 percent lived in households without parents.
- Among children living with two parents, 90 percent lived with both biological or adoptive parents and 10 percent lived with a biological or adoptive parent and a stepparent. About 75 percent of children living with at least one stepparent lived with their biological mother and stepfather.
- About 4 percent of children who lived with both biological or adoptive parents had parents who were not married.
- The majority of children living with one parent lived with their single mother. Some single parents had cohabiting partners. Sixteen percent of children living with single fathers and 10 percent of children living with single mothers also lived with their parent's cohabiting partner. Out of all children ages 0–17, 4.2 million (6 percent) lived with a parent or parents who were cohabiting.
- Among the 2.9 million children (4 percent) not living with either parent in 2004, 56 percent (1.6 million) lived with grandparents, 19 percent lived with other relatives, and 25 percent lived with nonrelatives. Of children in nonrelatives' homes, 42 percent (308,000) lived with foster parents.
- Older children were less likely to live with two parents—64 percent of children ages 15–17 lived with two parents, compared with 68 percent of children ages 6–14 and 75 percent of those ages 0–5. Among children living with two parents, older children were more likely than younger children to live with a stepparent and less likely than younger children to live with cohabiting parents.