FAMILY STRUCTURE

The number of parents in the household plays an important role in the growth and development of children. Previous studies found that two-parent households were generally associated with better health outcomes than single-parent households. For example, children in two-parent, married households were less likely than children in single-parent households to be in fair or poor health. Children in single-parent households were more likely to have a learning disability or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and certain chronic health conditions than children in two-parent, biological households.¹

In 2013, more than two-thirds of all U.S. children less than 18 years of age lived in households with two parents (includes biological, adopted, or stepparents), nearly a quarter lived in a mother-only household, and 4.1 percent lived in a father-only household (figure 1). A small proportion of children (1.9 percent) lived with a grandparent.

Between 2000 and 2013, the percentages of children under 18 years of age living in two-parent and single-parent households remained relatively stable.

Family structure differs with race and ethnicity. In 2013, less than half of non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native children lived in two-parent households, compared to 77.4 percent of non-Hispanic White children (figure 2). The majority of non-Hispanic Asian (86.0 percent), non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander (70.0 percent), non-Hispanic White (77.4 percent), and Hispanic (65.0 percent) children lived in two-parent households.

Household income as a percent of poverty is also related to family structure. In 2013, children in single-parent households were most likely to live in poverty, with 41.2 percent living in households with incomes below 100 percent of poverty ($23,834 for a family of four in 2013), compared to 13.2 percent of two-parent households.

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Figure 1. Family Structure* of Children Under Age 18, 2000–2013

![Graph showing family structure percentages from 2000 to 2013.]

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Figure 2. Family Structure of Children Under Age 18 Residing with at Least One Parent, by Race/Ethnicity, 2013

![Graph showing family structure percentages by race/ethnicity in 2013.]

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¹A small percentage of children less than 18 years of age (less than 1 percent) lived with only nonrelatives in 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2013; none of the children were living with only nonrelatives in 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006.
Data Sources

Endnotes