

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

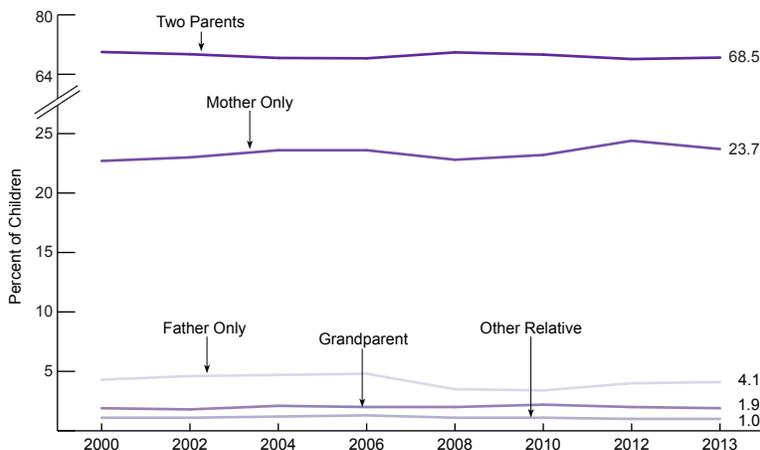
In 2013, more than two-thirds of all U.S. children less than 18 years of age lived in households with two parents (includes biological, adopted, or stepparents), nearly a quarter lived in a mother-only household, and 4.1 percent lived in a father-only household (figure 1). A small proportion of children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

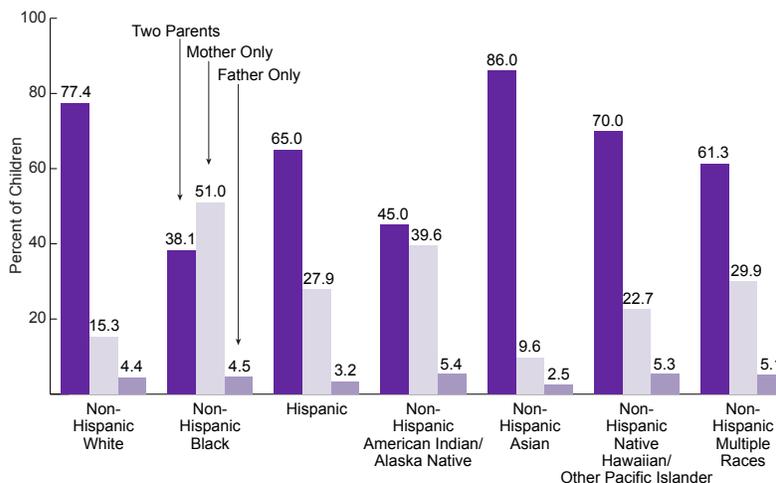
Household income as a percent of poverty is also related to family structure. In 2013, children in single-parent households were most likely to live in poverty, with 41.2 percent living in households with incomes below 100 percent of poverty (\$23,834 for a family of four in 2013), compared to 13.2 percent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

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



*A 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.

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



Data Sources

Figure 1 and 2. U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement. Analyses conducted by the Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology and Statistics Program.

Endnotes

1. Blackwell DL. Family structure and children's health in the United States: findings from the National Health Interview Survey, 2001–2007. National Center for Health Statistics. *Vital Health Statistics*. 2010;10(246).

Suggested Citation

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