NCFMR
Family Profiles
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National Center for Family & Marriage Research
Bowling Green State University

Children's Family Structure, 2013

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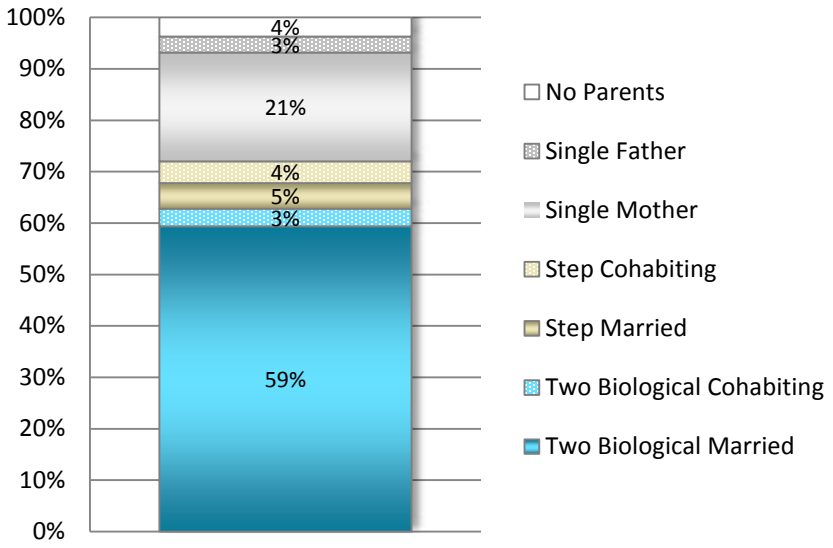
Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

- A majority of children are living with two biological parents (62%)—most of whom are living with married parents (95%).
- The second most common family type is single parent families (24%). A majority of these children are living with a single mother (87%).
- Seven percent of children live in a cohabiting parent family, of which less than half are living with two biological parents (43%).
  - Among children living in cohabiting stepparent families (one biological parent), 5% are living with a parent (biological or adoptive) in a coresidential same-sex relationship (not shown).

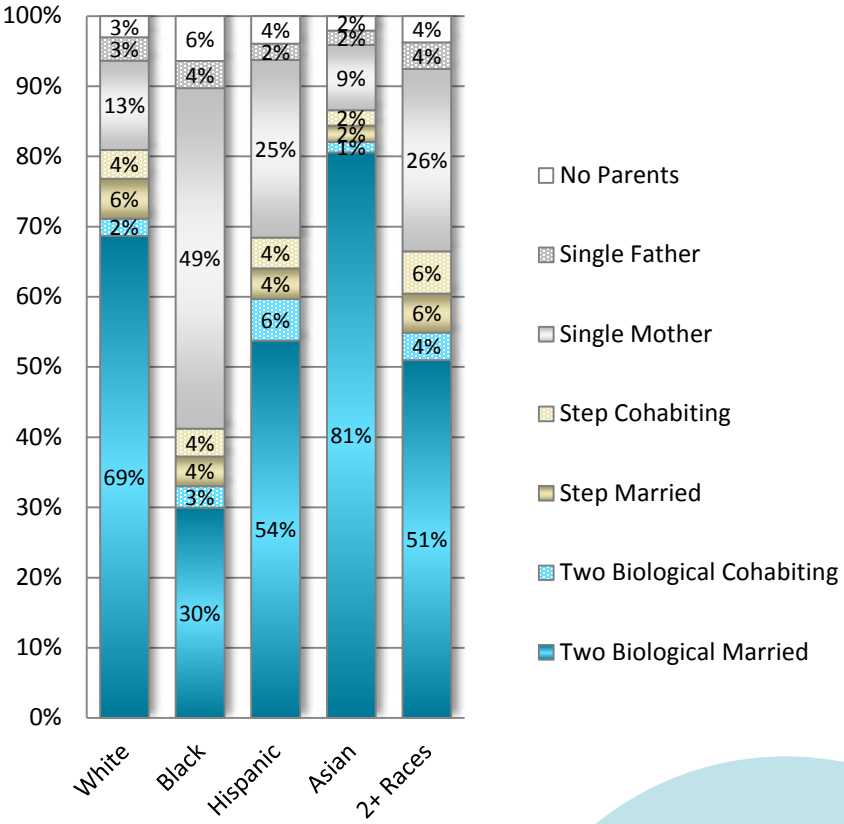
Figure 1. Family Structure of Minor Children, 2013



Source: Current Population Survey, 2013

Notes: 1. Columns may not total 100% due to rounding. 2. Due to small sample sizes, some family structure categories are collapsed: children living with same-sex cohabiting parents are included in the totals for cohabiting stepparent families; children living with a mother who is "married spouse absent" are included in the totals for single mothers (because absent fathers' relationship is not identified), similarly those living with a father who is "married spouse absent" are included in the totals for single fathers. 3. The category of two "biological" also includes children living with two adoptive parents.

Figure 2. Family Structure of Minor Children by Race/Ethnicity, 2013



Source: Current Population Survey, 2013

Notes: 1. Columns may not total 100% due to rounding. 2. Due to small sample sizes, some family structure categories are collapsed: see above. 3. Hispanic ethnicity is preferenced; Whites, Blacks, and Asians are non-Hispanic.

Children's Family Structure by Race/Ethnicity, 2013

- Two biological parent families are most common among Asian children (82%) followed by White children (71%). Black children are the least likely to live with two biological parents (33%).
  - The large majority of children living with two biological parents are living with married parents rather than cohabiting parents — over 90% of White, Black, Asian, and 2+ Races children have married parents, while 77% of Hispanic children do so.
- Cohabiting parent families are most common among Hispanic and 2+ Races children (10%).
- Single mother families are most prevalent among Black children—nearly half are living with a single mother (49%) followed by about one-quarter of 2+ Races and Hispanic children.

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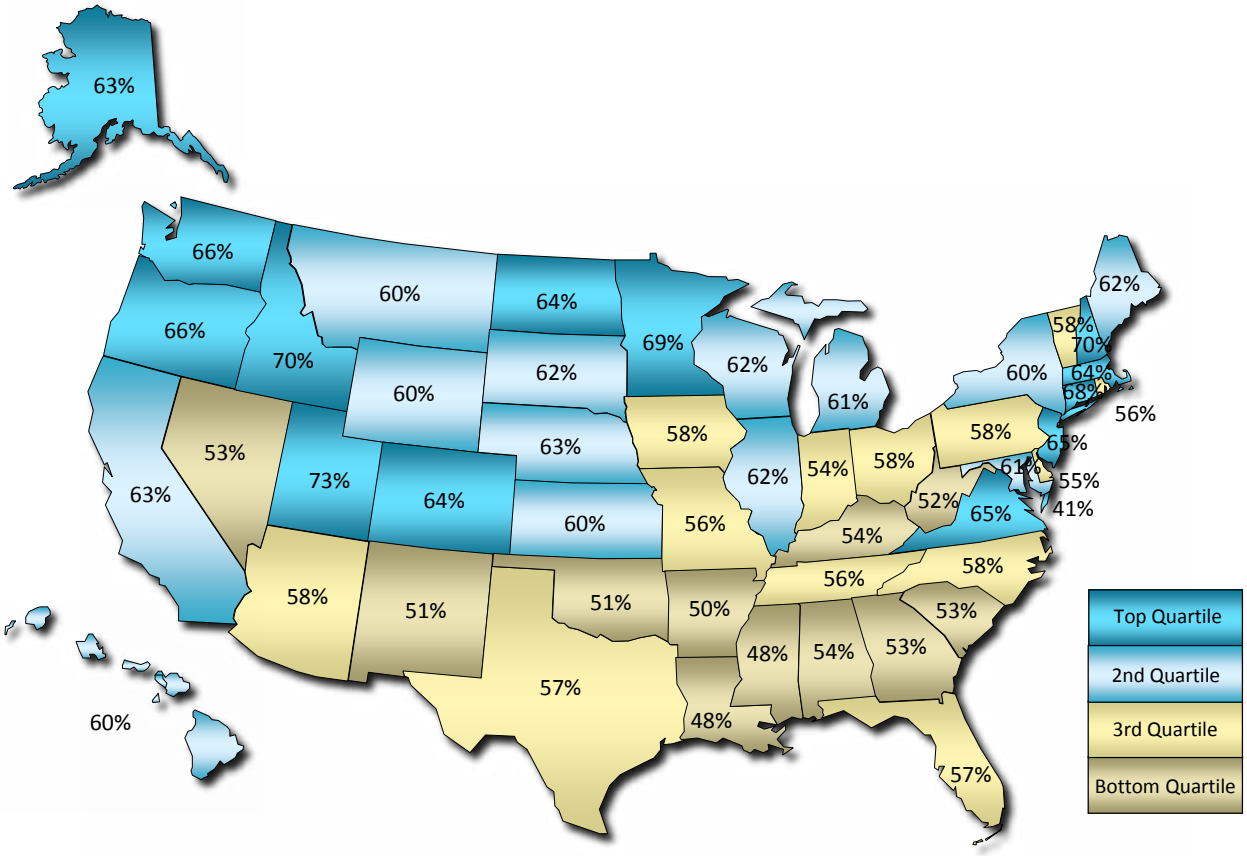
Geographic Variation in the Percentage of Children Living with Two Married Biological Parents, 2013

- Wide variation exists in the share of children living with two married biological parents ranging from 41% in D.C. to 73% in Utah. Half of U.S.' states (including Washington, D.C.) have at least 59% of children living with two married biological parents (teal states in Figure 3).
- States with the largest share of children living with two married biological parents (top 25%) are located in the Western region of the U.S. (Utah, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Colorado, and Alaska).
- States with the smallest share of children living with two married biological parents (bottom 25%) are located in the Southern region of the U.S. (Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, West Virginia, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and D.C.).

Figure 3. Geographic Variation in the Percentage of Children Living with Two Biological Married Parents, 2013



Source: Current Population Survey, 2013

Notes: The category of two "biological" also includes children living with two adoptive parents.

For more information on the living arrangements of Americans and their families, please see America's Families and Living Arrangements: 2012 Population Characteristics by Jonathan Vespa, Jamie M. Lewis, & Rose M. Kreider.

References

King, M., Ruggles, S., Alexander, J. T., Flood, S., Genadek, K., Schroeder, M. B., Trampe, B., & Vick, R. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 3.0. [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010.

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