A Child's Day: Living Arrangements, Nativity, and Family Transitions: 2011 (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being)

Household Economic Studies

By Lynda Laughlin

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INTRODUCTION

The well-being of children is a growing area of interest to researchers and policy makers who focus on the social, cognitive, and economic security of children as they transition from preadolescents to young adults. This report uses a variety of indicators to portray aspects of children's well-being. The findings come from interviews conducted in the fall of 2011 for the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP).

Families have become increasingly diverse and complex in recent decades. One out of five children in the United States lives with at least one foreign-born parent and the population of children is projected to become even more diverse in the decades to come.[1] The share of children living with two biological married parents has declined and the proportion of children living in stepfamilies or families formed outside of marriage has become more common.[2] Families are also experiencing more fluidity in living arrangements, employment, and residential location.[3]

This report highlights how family structure, nativity, and family instability are associated with selected measures of child well-being. Measures of child well-being include family reading practices, shared meal times, television rules, children's extracurricular activities, and school performance, as well as early child care experiences (see definition box for "SIPP Child Well-Being Data"). The report contains four sections: (1) household and family characteristics, (2) children's living arrangements and selected indicators of child well-being, (3) selected indicators of child well-being for children living with foreign-born parents, and (4) household and economic transitions and selected indicators of child well-being.

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

In the fall of 2011, 46.7 million of 74.3 million (63 percent) children under 18 were living with two married parents (see Table 1). An additional 3.8 million (5 percent) children lived with two unmarried parents. Around 18 million (24 percent) children lived with a single female reference parent, while 2.6 million (4 percent) were living with a single male reference parent (see definition box for "Reference Parent"). Another 3.3 million (5 percent) did not live with either parent and instead resided with a guardian (such as an other relative or a nonrelative acting as a guardian for the child in the absence of parents).[4]

[1] Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2013*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

[2] Rose M. Kreider and Renee Ellis, "Living Arrangements of Children: 2009," Household Economic Studies, P70-126, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2011.

[3] Andrew J. Cherlin, "Demographic Trends in the United States: A Review of Research in the 2000s," *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 2010 403–419.

[4] Fifty-five percent (1,825,000) of children who do not live with a parent live with a grandparent.

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SIPP Child Well-Being Data

The 2008 panel of the nationally representative SIPP included a child well-being topical module in the tenth wave of interviews conducted in September–December 2011. The SIPP collects information on a variety of child well-being indicators to illustrate what children experience on a daily basis, including difference in family living arrangements, economic and social environments, and the types of neighborhoods where children live. Experiences with nonrelative child care arrangements, daily interactions with parents, television rules, performance in school, and participation in extracurricular activities are other indicators of child development and future well-being. While the SIPP collects data on a variety of child well-being indicators, the current report highlights only a selected number of measures (see Appendix A for survey questions and measures used in this report). Additional information on all the indicators of child well-being collected by the SIPP can be accessed at <www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/children/data/sipp/well2011/tables.html>.

Reference Parent

Respondents in the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) child well-being topical module are parents living with their children under 18 years old. In households where both parents are present, the mother is the reference parent. Questions for each child are asked of the reference parent. If the mother is not available for an interview, the father of the child is asked to provide proxy responses for her. In single-parent families, the resident parent is the reference parent. If neither parent is in the household, the guardian is the reference parent. Reference parents include biological, step, and adoptive parents, and may also include other relatives or nonrelatives acting as a guardian for children who do not live with their parents. In these data, 96 percent of the children had a female reference parent, usually the mother. Data obtained from males who were the reference parent are included with the data from females. Respondents 15 to 17 years old, who themselves may be parents, had their childhood well-being reported by their parents when they live with them in the household. In this report, unless otherwise noted, the term *parent* is used to refer to the reference parent.

In 2011, 54 percent of children were White, non-Hispanic; 24 percent were Hispanic; 15 percent were Black; and 4 percent were Asian. A little over one in five children (17.5 million) lived with at least one foreign-born parent.

Twenty-two percent (16.6 million) of children lived in families with incomes that fell below poverty.[5]

Twenty-four percent (17.6 million) lived in families with monthly incomes at 100 to 199 percent of poverty and 16 percent (12.1 million) lived in families with monthly incomes at 200 to 299 percent of poverty. An additional 25.9 million (35 percent) children lived in families with monthly incomes at 300 percent of poverty or higher.

Figure 1 illustrates how child poverty varied by family structure. A lower percentage of children living in a married-couple family lived below poverty (14 percent) compared to children living with two unmarried parents (37 percent) or with a single mother or father (41 percent). The economic status of children living with cohabiting parents more closely resembled single-parent families. Children living with single parents were more likely to be in poverty compared to children living with two unmarried parents (41 percent and 37 percent, respectively). Almost half of children living with two married parents lived in a family with monthly incomes at or above 300 percent of poverty.

Almost two-thirds (65 percent) of children lived in households that participated in at least one or more of the following government aid programs: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);[6] the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); Medicaid; and the National School Lunch Program. The largest number of children who lived in households that received government aid participated in the National School Lunch Program (35.0 million), followed by Medicaid (26.4 million), SNAP (17.3 million), WIC (6.4 million), and TANF (2.3 million).

[5] For details on poverty definitions and thresholds, visit U.S. Census Bureau's Poverty Web site at <www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty.html>.

[6] The Food Stamp Program was renamed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in 2008.

Table 1.

Children Under 18 Years Old by Selected Characteristics: 2011

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	All children		Under 6 years		6 to 11 years		12 to 17 years	
	Number	Margin of error[1]	Number	Margin of error[1]	Number	Margin of error[1]	Number	Margin of error[1]
Total children, 2011	**74,294**	**234**	**25,556**	**497**	**24,922**	**494**	**23,816**	**487**
CHILD								
Sex								
Female	36,351	528	12,489	388	12,212	384	11,650	377
Male	37,942	529	13,067	395	12,710	390	12,165	384
Race and Hispanic Origin								
White alone	55,840	479	18,895	453	18,880	453	18,065	446
Non-Hispanic	40,060	529	13,577	401	13,267	401	13,216	397
Black alone	11,153	370	3,877	230	3,668	224	3,608	222
Asian alone	2,831	198	1,054	122	875	111	902	113
Hispanic (any race)	17,650	442	6,200	286	6,178	285	5,272	265
Presence of Parents[2]								
Married—two parents	46,682	520	15,586	423	16,022	427	15,074	418
Unmarried—two parents	3,760	226	2,159	173	1,066	123	535	87
Mother only	17,897	445	6,032	282	5,849	278	6,016	282
Father only	2,607	190	650	96	966	117	991	118
Guardian	3,347	214	1,129	126	1,019	120	1,199	130
Nativity[3]								
Native	56,835	473	19,541	282	18,975	454	18,319	448
At least one foreign born parent	17,459	441	6,015	458	5,947	281	5,497	271
FAMILY AND REFERENCE PARENT CHARACTERISTICS								
Educational Attainment								
Less than high school	9,464	345	3,358	215	3,200	210	2,906	200
High school graduate	17,148	438	6,170	285	5,419	269	5,559	272
Some college	11,318	372	4,003	233	3,868	229	3,447	217
Bachelor's degree or higher	21,470	472	7,978	320	7,047	303	6,445	291
Monthly Family Income								
Under $1,500	10,678	363	4,004	233	3,680	224	2,994	203
$1,500 to $2,999	14,079	407	4,954	258	4,898	256	4,227	239
$3,000 to $4,499	11,672	377	3,884	230	3,944	232	3,844	229
$4,500 and over	35,724	527	11,793	379	11,711	378	12,220	384
Income not reported	2,140	173	920	114	690	99	530	87
Poverty Status[4]								
Below poverty	16,612	433	6,513	292	5,712	275	4,387	244
At or above poverty	55,540	481	18,123	447	18,520	450	18,897	453
100 to 199 percent of poverty	17,580	442	5,941	280	5,984	281	5,655	274
200 to 299 percent of poverty	12,106	383	3,694	225	4,216	239	4,196	529
300 percent of poverty or higher	25,854	498	8,488	329	8,320	326	9,046	338
Program Participation[5]								
Received aid from at least one of the following:	47,939	516	13,185	396	18,094	446	16,660	153
TANF	2,279	178	915	114	693	99	671	98
Food stamps	17,321	440	6,990	302	5,882	279	4,449	80
WIC	6,350	289	6,297	287	X	X	53	28
Medicaid	26,350	500	10,276	358	8,734	333	7,340	309
National School Lunch Program	34,959	526	2,541	188	17,052	437	15,366	421
Did not receive aid	26,356	500	12,371	386	6,829	299	7,156	305

X Not applicable.

[1] This figure added to or subtracted from the estimate provides the 90 percent confidence interval.

[2] Living with two parents (married or unmarried) or one parent refers to children who point to biological, step, or adoptive parents. Children who do not point to a biological, step, or adoptive parent point to a guardian in absence of a parent. Fifty-five percent of children who do not live with a parent live with a grandparent.

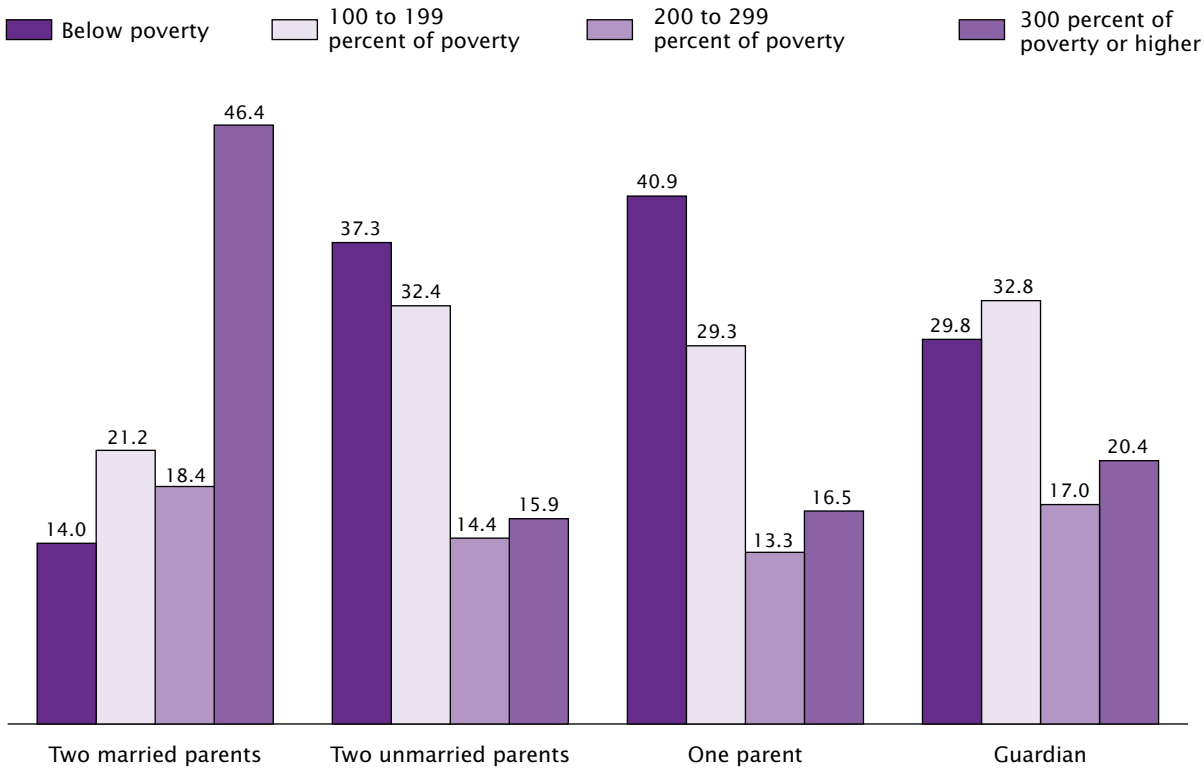
[3] Parental nativity status is based on the place of birth of one or more of the child's parents. A parent born in the United States is considered native born. A parent born outside of the United States is considered foreign born.

[4] Includes only children in households for which poverty status was determined.

[5] For families with income reported, programs include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); food stamps; Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); Medicaid; and the National School Lunch Program.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 panel, Wave 10.

Figure 1.
Percent of Children in Poverty by Presence of Parent(s): 2011[1]



[1] Living with two parents (married or unmarried) or one parent refers to children who point to biological, step, or adoptive parents. Children who do not point to a biological, step, or adoptive parent point to a guardian in absence of a parent.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 10.

CHILDREN'S LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND SELECTED INDICATORS OF CHILD WELL-BEING

This section addresses the relationship between children's living arrangements and selected measures of well-being. Children's living arrangements play an important role in shaping child development and future well-being. The household is the site of daily activities and provides children with social and economic resources. For the purposes of this report, children's living arrangements are defined by the relationship status of the reference parent. Four types of living arrangements are identified for children: living with *two married parents* (the reference parent is married to the child's other biological, step, or adoptive parent); living with *two unmarried parents* (the reference parent is unmarried but lives with the child's other biological, step, or adoptive parent); living with *one parent* (the reference parent is the only biological, step, or adoptive parent in the household); and *no parent* (child lives with a guardian in the absence of a biological, step, or adoptive reference parent).

One aspect of child well-being is the type of daily interaction that occurs between children and parents. The SIPP child-well being module included questions about the number of stories read to children, how often the parents eat meals with their children, and the existence of family TV rules.

Children living in single parent households are read to by a family member less often than children living with two married or unmarried parents.

Overall, around 1.5 million (7 percent) children 1 to 5 years old were not read to by a family member in the week preceding the survey (see Table 2). Among children living with two married parents, children 1 to 2 years old were more likely to never be read to by a family member in the past week compared with children 3 to 5 years old (8 percent and 5 percent, respectively).

Table 2.

Children Under 18 by Presence of Parent(s) by Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being: 2011

Selected indicators of child well-being	Numbers (in thousands)				Percent			
	Two parents[1]		Other families		Two parents[1]		Other families	
	Married	Unmarried	One parent[1]	Guardian[2]	Married	Unmarried	One parent[1]	Guardian[2]
Total children, 2011	**46,682**	**3,760**	**20,504**	**3,347**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Child Age								
Less than one	2,314	432	878	151	5.0	11.5	4.3	4.5
1 to 2 years old	4,982	753	2,114	405	10.7	20.0	10.3	12.1
3 to 5 years old	8,290	974	3,690	573	17.8	25.9	18.0	17.1
6 to 11 years old	16,022	1,066	6,815	1,019	34.3	28.4	33.2	30.4
12 to 17 years old	15,074	535	7,007	1,199	32.3	14.2	34.2	35.8
Family Reading Practices								
Never read to last week								
1 to 2 years old	388	40	195	20	7.8	5.3	9.2	4.9
3 to 5 years old	406	72	279	51	4.9	7.4	7.6	8.9
Read to 7 or more times per week								
1 to 2 years old	2,797	390	805	180	56.1	51.8	38.1	44.4
3 to 5 years old	4,471	488	1,512	263	53.9	50.1	41.0	45.9
Average times read to child per week								
1 to 2 years old	8.5	7.4	5.7	7.7	X	X	X	X
3 to 5 years old	6.8	6.2	6.0	6.3	X	X	X	X
Meals								
Breakfast together at least 5 days per week								
1 to 5 years old	4,653	669	2,334	424	35.1	38.7	40.2	43.4
6 to 11 years old	6,903	514	3,644	520	43.1	48.2	53.5	51.0
12 to 17 years old	7,559	257	3,679	684	50.1	48.0	52.5	57.0
Dinner together at least 5 days per week								
1 to 5 years old	2,025	281	1,169	221	15.3	16.3	20.1	22.6
6 to 11 years old	2,879	184	1,709	183	18.0	17.3	25.1	18.0
12 to 17 years old	4,790	137	2,460	388	31.8	25.6	35.1	32.4
Family Television Rules								
At least one television rule								
3 to 5 years old	7,504	892	3,307	531	90.5	91.6	89.6	92.7
6 to 11 years old	14,920	965	6,108	953	93.1	90.5	89.6	93.5
12 to 17 years old	11,708	424	5,213	893	77.7	79.3	74.4	74.5
All three types of television rules								
3 to 5 years old	6,080	677	2,567	462	73.3	69.5	69.6	80.6
6 to 11 years old	12,094	756	4,750	760	75.5	70.9	69.7	74.6
12 to 17 years old	7,577	215	3,247	570	50.3	40.2	46.3	47.5
Extracurricular Activities								
Sports								
6 to 11 years old	5,300	226	1,627	220	33.1	21.2	23.9	21.6
12 to 17 years old	6,580	169	2,372	427	43.7	31.6	33.9	35.6
Lessons								
6 to 11 years old	5,416	231	1,637	195	33.8	21.7	24.0	19.1
12 to 17 years old	4,708	100	1,695	247	31.2	18.7	24.2	20.6
Clubs								
6 to 11 years old	4,749	196	1,617	254	29.6	18.4	23.7	24.9
12 to 17 years old	5,080	100	1,798	241	33.7	18.7	25.7	20.1
Academic Performance								
Gifted classes								
6 to 11 years old	2,000	83	717	76	12.5	7.8	10.5	7.5
12 to 17 years old	4,263	69	1,571	244	28.3	12.9	22.4	20.4
Ever repeated a grade								
6 to 11 years old	432	42	363	67	2.7	3.9	5.3	6.6
12 to 17 years old	923	68	586	154	6.1	12.7	8.4	12.8
Ever suspended								
12 to 17 years old	800	26	712	165	5.3	4.9	10.2	13.8

See notes at end of table.

Table 2.
Children Under 18 by Presence of Parent(s) by Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being: 2011—Con.

Selected indicators of child well-being	Numbers (in thousands)				Percent			
	Two parents[1]		Other families		Two parents[1]		Other families	
	Married	Unmarried	One parent[1]	Guardian[2]	Married	Unmarried	One parent[1]	Guardian[2]
Early Child Care Experiences[3]								
Less than 3	1,850	261	799	131	25.4	22.0	26.7	23.6
3 to 5 years old	3,570	373	1,693	247	43.1	38.3	45.9	43.1
6 to 11 years old	5,464	309	2,811	373	34.1	29.0	41.2	36.6
12 to 17 years old	4,249	111	2,225	335	28.2	20.7	31.8	27.9

X Not applicable.
[1] Living with two parents (married or unmarried) or one parent refers to children who point to biological, step, or adoptive parents.
[2] Children who do not live with a biological, step, or adoptive parent live with a guardian in absence of a parent.
[3] Includes only nonrelative child care providers such as Head Start, day care or preschool programs, babysitters, friends, or neighbors.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 panel, Wave 10.

It was also the case that a higher proportion of children 1 to 2 years old living with a single parent were never read to compared with children 1 to 2 years old living with cohabiting parents (9 percent and 5 percent, respectively).

Compared with children living with two married or unmarried parents, lower proportions of children living with a single parent were read to seven or more times per week—38 percent of children 1 to 2 years old and 41 percent of children 3 to 5 years old. Among children living with married parents, 56 percent of 1- to 2-year-olds and 54 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds were read to seven or more times per week. Not statistically different from similarly aged children living with two unmarried parents (52 percent and 50 percent, respectively).

Overall, children 1 to 2 years old living with two married parents were read to 8.5 times per week compared with 5.7 times for children of the same age living with a single parent. On average children 3 to 5 years old living with two married parents were read to 6.8 times per week, compared with 6.0 times per week for children 3 to 5 years old living with a single parent.

Elementary school- and high school-aged children living with a single parent were more likely to eat dinner with a parent than similarly aged children living with two unmarried parents.[7]

As Table 2 shows, children 12 to 17 years old are generally more likely to eat breakfast with at least one parent at least 5 days a week than children 1 to 5 years old. Older children living with two unmarried parents were the exception. Forty-eight percent of children 12 to 17 years old living with two unmarried parents had breakfast with at least one parent, not statistically different from the percent of children 1 to 5 years old living with a single parent (40 percent) or living in another type of household (43 percent). Regardless of a child's living arrangement, high school-aged children were also more likely to have breakfast than dinner at least 5 days a week with at least one reference parent. Older children may have more activities after school and are unavailable to share dinner with a parent. A higher proportion of children 6 to 11 years old and children 12 to 17 years old living with a single parent reported eating dinner with at least one parent at least 5 days a week than children living with two unmarried parents: 25 percent compared with 17 percent for 6- to 11-year-olds and 35 percent compared with 26 percent for 12- to 17-year-olds.

Thirty-five percent of children 1 to 5 years old living with married parents ate breakfast at least 5 days a week with a parent, not statistically different from the percent of children 1 to 5 years old living with two unmarried parents who did the same (39 percent).

Elementary and high school-aged children living with married parents were more likely to have television rules than children living with single parents.

The child well-being module asked reference parents whether there were rules for the types of TV programs their children could watch, how early or late their children could watch TV, and limits on the number of hours watched. In 2011, 86 percent of children 3 to 17 years old (53.4 million) lived in households with at least one type of television rule (see Table 2). Children 6 to 11 years old living with married parents were more likely to have at least one type of family TV rule (93 percent) than similarly aged children living with

[7] Elementary school age refers to children 6 to 11 years old and middle school and high school age refers to children 12 to 17 years old.

a single parent (90 percent). A similar pattern exists for children 6 to 11 years old and multiple TV rules—76 percent of children living with married parents had all three types of TV rules, compared with 70 percent of children living with a single parent.

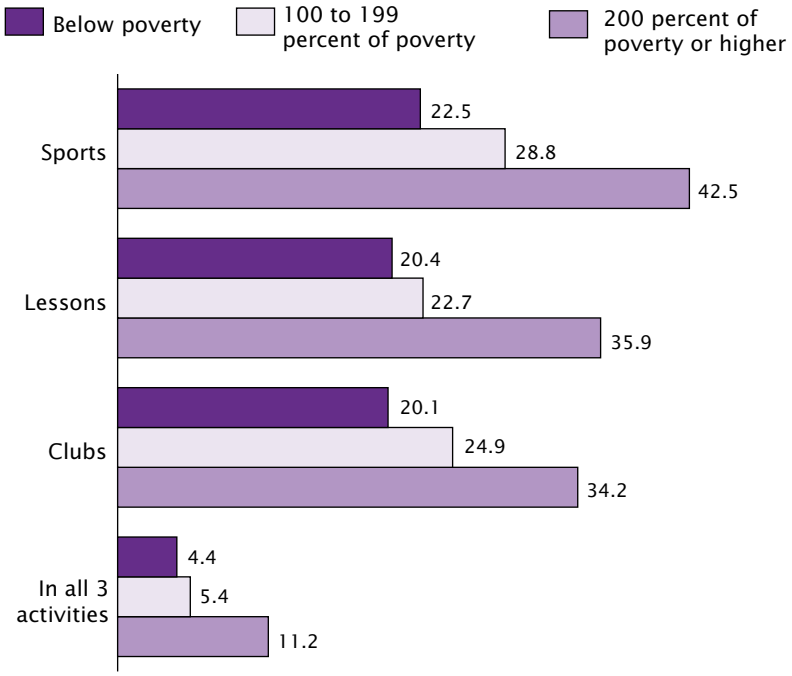
The frequency of imposing family TV rules is consistently lower for adolescents, but differences by the living arrangement of the child persist. Children 12 to 17 years old living with married parents are more likely to have all three types of TV rules (50 percent) than children living with two unmarried parents (40 percent) or children living with a single parent (46 percent).

Children living with two unmarried parents or a single parent had substantively similar rates of participation in sports or lessons.

Data about participation in extracurricular activities were limited to children 6 to 17 years old and were based on parents' responses to questions about children's involvement in three extracurricular activities: sports, clubs, and lessons. Participation in sports teams includes those sponsored by a school or those in organized leagues. Clubs include Scouts, a religious group, a Girls or Boys Club, or 4-H activities. Lessons were interpreted very broadly to include those taken after school or on weekends, in subjects like music, dance, language, computers, or religion. Examining activities other than attending classes provides a more complete picture of academic experiences than considering grades alone. Participation in extracurricular activities can influence how a child makes the transition to adulthood.[8]

[8] Joseph L. Mahoney, Reed W. Larson, and Jacquelynne S. Eccles, eds., *Organized Activities As Contexts of Development: Extracurricular Activities, After-School and Community Programs*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2005.

Figure 2.
Percent of Children 6 to 17 Years Old Participating in Extracurricular Activities by Family Poverty Status: 2011



Note: Percent of children in specified activities may exceed the total due to children participation in more than one activity.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 10.

Nationally, 16.9 million (35 percent) children 6 to 17 years old participated in sports activities (see Table 2). A higher proportion of children living with two married parents participated in sports activities compared with children in other living arrangements. Regardless of family type, a higher proportion of older children than younger children were likely to participate in sports.

Children living with married parents were more likely to participate in sports, clubs, or lessons. Children with fewer parents present may have more household responsibilities, leaving them with less time for involvement outside of school, or those families, which typically have lower incomes, may not be able to afford them. Children living with cohabiting parents or a single parent had comparable rates of participation in sports or lessons, regardless of the child's age. However, children living with a single parent were more likely to participate in clubs compared with children living with two unmarried parents.

Figure 2 shows that the poverty status of the child's family played an important role in the participation in extracurricular activities. Within each specified activity, children whose family poverty status was 200 percent of poverty or higher had greater activity participation levels than children living below poverty or those whose poverty status was 100 to 199 percent of poverty.

Ever repeating a grade was more common for high school-aged children living with two unmarried parents compared with high school aged-children living with married parents.

The SIPP child well-being module asked parents if their children were in a special class for gifted students or did advanced work in any subject. Table 2 shows that around 9 million (19 percent) 6- to 17-year-olds were in such a class in 2011. Children whose parents were married were more likely to be enrolled in gifted classes compared with children in other family living arrangements. Among children whose parents were married, 13 percent of children 6 to 11 years old and 28 percent of children 12 to 17 years old were enrolled in a gifted class.

Children who repeat a grade or have ever been suspended from school are less likely to stay academically on-track. Repeating a grade was more common for children 12 to 17 years old living with two unmarried parents (13 percent) than for children 12 to 17 years old living with married (6 percent).

Children aged 3 to 17 years old living with married parents or a single parent were more likely to have ever been in nonrelative child care compared with children living with two unmarried parents.

Increases in the number of working mothers, changes in family structure, and the desire to provide children with early childhood educational opportunities have all driven up the demand for nonrelative child care.[9] Although the direct impact of child care on child well-being has yet to be fully explored, growing proportions of children will likely experience nonrelative child care arrangements at early ages as long as parental employment remains stable and families seek out learning opportunities for their children. Table 2 presents the number of children ever in a child care arrangement other than an immediate family member for children under 18 by the child's family structure. Although the current characteristics of the family may not correspond to their characteristics at the time when their child first entered child care, the statistics in Table 2 provide one look at the different situations experienced by children living in varying family structures.

In 2011, 24.8 million children under 18 years old (33 percent) had been cared for regularly in a nonrelative child care arrangement at some point in their childhood. Among children less than 3 years old, 25 percent had experienced a regular nonrelative child care arrangement, compared with 43 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds. Among the older age groups, 36 percent of 6- to 11-year-olds had participated in nonrelative child care arrangements, and 29 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds had been cared for in a nonrelative child care arrangement.

Child care usage varies by the child's age and family structure. Regardless of the child's living arrangement, substantively similar percentages of children less than 3 years old had experienced a regular nonrelative child care arrangement, ranging from 22 percent for children living with two unmarried parents to 27 percent for children living with a single parent. Children 3 to 5 years old living with a single parent were more likely to have ever been in a nonrelative child care arrangement, compared with children living with unmarried parents (46 percent and 38 percent, respectively). Older children of single parents were more likely to have ever been in a nonrelative child care arrangement than children living with two married or unmarried parents—41 percent compared with 34 percent and 29 percent for 6- to 11-year-olds and 32 percent compared with 28 percent and 21 percent for 12- to 17-year-olds.

SELECTED MEASURES OF CHILD WELL-BEING FOR CHILDREN LIVING WITH FOREIGN-BORN PARENTS

Children of immigrants are the fastest growing and one of the most diverse segments of America's child population.[10, 11] To examine the well-being of children in immigrant families, this report compares children with foreign-born parents to those with native-born parents. Children of immigrants are those with one or more parents who were born outside of the United States and its territories, regardless of whether the child was born abroad or in the United States. Children in native-born families have no parent born outside of the United States.

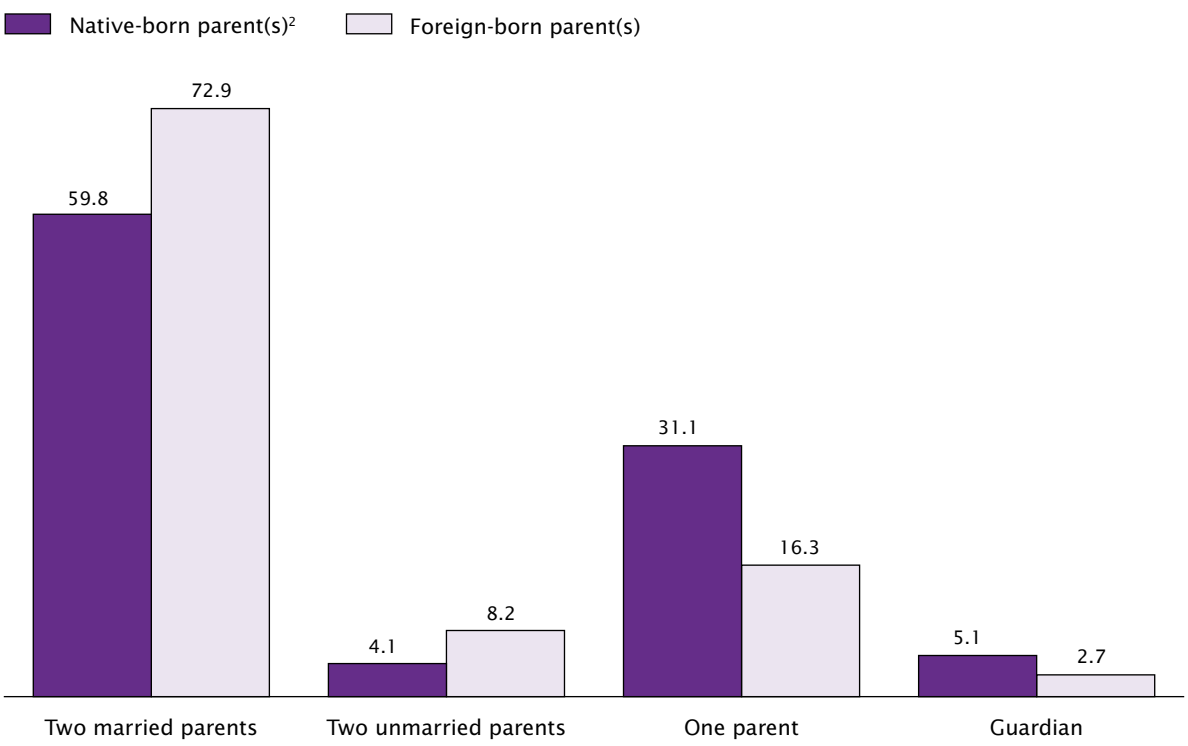
Figure 3 shows that children living with at least one foreign-born parent were more likely to live with two married parents (73 percent) than children with native-born parents (60 percent). Children with native-born parent(s) were more likely to live with a single parent than children with a foreign-born parent (31 percent and 16 percent, respectively). Smaller proportions of children lived with two unmarried parents or a guardian (4 percent and 5 percent for children of native-born parents; 8 percent and 3 percent for children of at least one foreign-born parent). Since married couple families tend, on average, to be better off economically, this may protect children in

[9] Lynda Laughlin, "Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Spring 2011," *Current Population Reports*, P70-135. U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2013.

[10] Ralph Salvador Oropesa and Nancy S. Landale, "Immigrant Legacies: Ethnicity, Generation, and Children's Familial and Economic Lives," *Social Science Quarterly,* 78, 1997, 399–416.

[11] Randolph Capps, et. al., *The Health and Well-Being of Young Children of Immigrants*. Urban Institute, 2005.

Figure 3.
Children's Living Arrangements by Nativity Status of Parent(s): 2011[1]
(In percent)



[1] Living with two parents (married or unmarried) or one parent refers to children who point to biological, step, or adoptive parents. Children who do not point to a biological, step, or adoptive parent point to a guardian in absence of a parent.
[2] Parental nativity status is based on the place of birth of one or more of the child's parents. A parent born in the United States or its terrorities is considerd native born. A parent born outside of the Untied States and its terrorities is considered foreign born.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 10.

immigrant families from some economic hardships. However, children with immigrant parents are still vulnerable to social and economic stresses including those inherent in the migration process.

Children in native-born families are read to more often than children in foreign-born families.

Table 3 shows that a higher proportion of children 1 to 5 years old with at least one foreign-born parent were not read to by a family member in the past week (24 percent) compared with children with native-born parents (11 percent). Slightly more than half (53 percent) of 1- to 2-year-olds with native-born parents were read to 7 or more times per week, compared with 43 percent of children of the same age with at least one foreign-born parent. Older children, 3- to 5-year-olds, with native-born parents were slightly more likely to be read to 7 or more times a week than 3- to 5-year-olds with at least one foreign-born parent (51 percent and 47 percent, respectively).

Children of native-born parents share dinner more often with a parent.

Similar percentages of children 6 to 11 years with native-born parents or foreign-born parents shared breakfast with a parent at least 5 days a week (46 percent and 47 percent, respectively). A similar pattern occurred among children 12 to 17 years old. Younger children were the exception, however. Children under 6 with a foreign-born parent had breakfast more often with a parent (40 percent) than children with a native-born parent (36 percent).

Overall, regardless of the reference parent's nativity, children were less likely to have dinner at least 5 days a week with their reference parent compared to breakfast. However children with native-born parents

Table 3.

Children Under 18 by Presence of Native- or Foreign-Born Parent(s) by Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being: 2011[1]

Selected indicators of child well-being	Number (in thousands)		Percent	
	Native-born parent(s)	At least one parent foreign born	Native-born parent(s)	At least one parent foreign born
Total children, 2011	**56,835**	**17,459**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Child Age				
Less than one	3,031	745	5.3	4.3
1 to 2 years old	6,468	1,785	11.4	10.2
3 to 5 years old	10,042	3,485	17.7	20.0
6 to 11 years old	18,975	5,947	33.4	34.1
12 to 17 years old	18,319	5,497	32.2	31.5
Family Reading Practices				
Never read to last week				
1 to 2 years old	384	259	5.9	14.5
3 to 5 years old	489	319	4.9	9.2
Read to 7 or more times per week				
1 to 2 years old	3,410	763	52.7	42.7
3 to 5 years old	5,109	1,625	50.9	46.6
Average times read to child per week				
1 to 2 years old	8.0	6.5	X	X
3 to 5 years old	6.6	6.3	X	X
Meals				
Breakfast together at least 5 days per week				
1 to 5 years old	5,985	2,096	36.3	39.8
6 to 11 years old	8,800	2,781	46.4	46.8
12 to 17 years old	9,341	2,838	51.0	51.6
Dinner together at least 5 days per week				
1 to 5 years old	2,888	808	17.5	15.3
6 to 11 years old	4,040	915	21.3	15.4
12 to 17 years old	6,396	1,380	34.9	25.1
Family Television Rules				
At least one television rule				
3 to 5 years old	9,110	3,124	90.7	89.7
6 to 11 years old	17,521	5,424	92.3	91.2
12 to 17 years old	13,903	4,336	75.9	78.9
All three types of television rules				
3 to 5 years old	7,201	2,584	71.7	74.2
6 to 11 years old	13,902	4,458	73.3	75.0
12 to 17 years old	8,755	2,855	47.8	51.9
Extracurricular Activities				
Sports				
6 to 11 years old	6,008	1,365	31.7	23.0
12 to 17 years old	7,730	1,818	42.2	33.1
Lessons				
6 to 11 years old	5,740	1,739	30.3	29.2
12 to 17 years old	5,331	1,419	29.1	25.8
Clubs				
6 to 11 years old	5,683	1,133	29.9	19.1
12 to 17 years old	6,007	1,212	32.8	22.0
Academic Performance				
Gifted classes				
6 to 11 years old	2,204	672	11.6	11.3
12 to 17 years old	4,939	1,208	27.0	22.0
Ever repeated a grade				
6 to 11 years old	708	197	3.7	3.3
12 to 17 years old	1,420	311	7.8	5.7
Ever suspended				
12 to 17 years old	1,423	279	7.8	5.1

See notes at end of table.

Table 3.
Children Under 18 by Presence of Native- or Foreign-Born Parent(s) by Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being: 2011[1]—Con.

Selected indicators of child well-being	Number (in thousands)		Percent	
	Native-born parent(s)	At least one parent foreign born	Native-born parent(s)	At least one parent foreign born
Early Child Care Experiences[2]				
Less than 3	2,561	480	27.0	19.0
3 to 5 years old	4,626	1,257	46.1	36.1
6 to 11 years old	7,210	1,747	38.0	29.4
12 to 17 years old	5,717	1,202	31.2	21.9

X Not applicable.
[1] Parental nativity status is based on the place of birth of one or more of the child's parents. A parent born in the United States is considered native born. A parent born outside of the United States is considered foreign born.
[2] Includes only nonrelative child care providers such as Head Start, day care or preschool programs, babysitters, friends, or neighbors.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 panel, Wave 10.

are more likely to have had dinner with a parent at least 5 days a week than children with at foreign-born parent. Children 12 to 17 years old with native-born parents had the highest percentage (35 percent) of eating dinner with a reference parent at least 5 days a week.

Although the vast majority of children experienced some type of limitation on TV viewing, regardless of family nativity status, older children had television rules less often.

Comparable proportions of preschool- and elementary school-aged children of native-born or foreign-born parents had at least one television rule.[12] Middle school- and high school-aged children—12 to 17 years old—with a foreign-born parent were more likely to have at least one television rule compared with children with native-born parents (79 percent and 76 percent, respectively).

A similar pattern exists when examining the proportion of children with three TV rules by age and parental nativity status. Between 72 percent and 75 percent of preschool- and elementary school-aged children had all three TV rules. Middle school- and high school-aged children were less likely to have all three TV rules compared to younger children. Older children with a foreign-born parent had a higher level of TV supervision than children with a native-born parent (52 percent and 48 percent, respectively).

Children with at least one foreign-born parent participated in sports or clubs less often than children with native-born parents.

Thirty percent of children 6 to 11 years old with native-born parents participated in lessons, not statistically different from the percentage of foreign-born children 6 to 11 years old who participated in lessons (29 percent). A smaller percentage (26 percent) of children 12 to 17 years old with at least one foreign-born parent participated in lessons compared with similarly aged children of native-born parents (29 percent). A larger percentage of children 6 to 11 years old with a native-born parent participated in clubs (30 percent) than similarly aged children with at least one foreign-born parent (19 percent). Participation in clubs was also more common for middle school- to high school-aged children with a native-born parent than children with at least one foreign-born parent (33 percent and 22 percent, respectively). Larger proportions of children 6 to 11 years old and children 12 to 17 years old with a native-born parent participated in sports than similarly aged children with at least one foreign-born parent.

Few differences emerged between children of native-born and foreign-born parents in measures of academic performance.

Children 12 to 17 years old with native-born parents were more likely to be enrolled in gifted classes than those with a foreign-born parent (27 percent and 22 percent, respectively). Repeating a grade was slightly more common for children 12 to 17 years old with native-born parents (8 percent) than older children with foreign-born parents (6 percent). Parents of children 12 to 17 years old were asked if their children had ever been expelled or suspended from school. Seven percent of children 12 to 17 years old had been suspended at least once. Children with native-born parents had been suspended more often than children of a foreign-born parent (8 percent and 5 percent, respectively).

[12] Preschool and elementary school aged refers to children 3 to 5 years old.

Children with a foreign-born parent were less likely to have ever been in nonrelative child care.

Table 3 shows that regardless of age, children living with at least one foreign-born parent were more likely to have been cared for by a relative than participate in nonrelative child care.

Almost half of children 3 to 5 years old with a native-born parent had been regularly cared for by someone other than members of their immediate family (46 percent) compared to 36 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds with a foreign-born parent. Over a third (20 million) of children under 17 with a native-born reference parent had ever been in nonrelative child care, compared with 27 percent of children with a foreign-born parent (4.7 million).

FAMILY TRANSITIONS AND SELECTED INDICATORS OF CHILD WELL-BEING

The longitudinal nature of the SIPP makes it possible to look at changes in household dynamics over time. This section of the report focuses on children who experience transitions in living arrangements, residential location, and parental employment and its association with selected measures of child well-being. This report looks at three types of transitions: family structure, residential, and parental employment.

Using SIPP Data to Measure Household and Economic Transitions

The SIPP is a longitudinal survey conducted every 4 months. The data collected at each 4-month interval are referred to as a wave. Data from the SIPP can be used cross-sectionally by looking at individual reference months, or longitudinally by following individuals as they are interviewed in successive waves throughout the survey. The 2008 SIPP Panel collected data over the course of 16 waves, covering 67 reference months from May 2008 to November 2013. The data in this section of the report includes up to 40 months of data collected through Waves 1 to 10 of the 2008 Panel covering calendar years 2008 to 2011.[13] Only children who were in sample for at least 12 months are included.[14]

The SIPP obtains detailed information on each person's relationship to every other person in the household at the time of the second interview, permitting the identification of parent-child relationships and the relationship of the reference parent to other members in the household (spouse, cohabiting partner, etc.). Based on this information, for each month, the reference parent and the identity of the reference parent's spouse or cohabiting partner (if there was one) was recorded.[15] A *family structure transition* occurred if the spouse or cohabiting partner was no longer in the household or if a new spouse or cohabiting partner moved into the household at any time over the 40-month period.

In each interview, respondents were asked if they worked for pay during the previous 4 months. The employment status for each parent in the household was recorded and an *employment transition* occurred if either parent lost or gained a job over the 40-month time period. Lastly, a *residential transition* occurred if the child's address changed at any point over the 40 months.

From these data, three additional measures capture whether the child experienced no transitions, at least one type of transition, or two or more types of transitions between 2008 and 2011.

Household and Family Characteristics by Type of Transition

The most common type of transition that children experienced was a change in a parent's employment status.

As shown in Table 4, 18 percent of children experienced at least one exit or entrance of a parent or a parent's cohabiting partner between 2008 and 2011. Children under 6 years old are more likely to experience an exit or entrance of a parent or parent's cohabiting partner compared with children 6 to 17 years old (31 percent and 13 percent, respectively). Substantively similar proportions of children with native-born or foreign-born parents experienced a family structure transition (18 percent and 19 percent, respectively).

Children living in families below poverty were more likely to experience a family structure transition (22 percent), compared with children living in families at or above poverty (17 percent). Poverty

[13] The most recent child well-being topical module was conducted in wave 10 of the 2008 SIPP Panel.

[14] The 12 months in sample did not have to be consecutive.

[15] With the exception of data from the second interview (wave 2), cohabiting partners of the reference parent could not be identified in all months if they were not the householder or partnered with the householder.

can affect families economically, socially, and emotionally and can lead to family instability.[16]

Almost one in three children moved at least once between 2008 and 2011. A higher proportion of Black children than White, non-Hispanic or Hispanic children moved at least once: 39 percent compared with 25 percent and 31 percent, respectively. Differences in residential mobility are also related to poverty. Forty-two percent of children living in families below poverty moved at least once between 2008 and 2011. The percentage of children who experienced a residential move was lower for children at or above poverty (25 percent). Among children at or above the poverty line, those living in households at 300 percent of poverty or higher were less likely to move at least once between 2008 and 2011 (18 percent) than children living in households at 299 percent of poverty or lower.

Parents who have steady employment may be better able to provide consistent economic support, while parents who go through many job changes may have unpredictable work schedules and irregular income. On the other hand, a parent who changes jobs in order to earn more or to obtain a schedule that allows them more time with their children might benefit the family. Thirty-two percent of children had a least one parent or guardian who had an employment change between 2008 and 2011. White, non-Hispanic children were less likely to experience transitions in parental employment (29 percent) compared with Black or Hispanic children (39 percent and 37 percent, respectively). Parental employment transitions are also related to poverty—44 percent of children living in families below poverty experienced transitions in parental employment compared with less than one-quarter of children living in the highest income group (300 percent of poverty or higher).

In general, over half of children under the age of 17 experienced at least one of the types of transitions highlighted in this report at least once between 2008 and 2011. Twenty percent of children experienced two or more types of transitions. The most common type of transition experienced by children was a change in parental employment (32 percent). The 2008 SIPP data were collected during the latest economic recession, which lasted from 2007 to 2009.[17] Recession effects may have undermined the stability of parental employment, particularly for fathers.[18]

Changes in the home environment and economic resources often overlap.[19] Figure 4 shows how often changes in family structure, residential location, and parental employment coincided among children who had at least one transition between 2008 and 2011. Overall, 56 percent (38.2 million) of children experienced at least one transition. Of the 12.4 million children who experienced a family structure transition, 4.8 million also experienced a parental employment transition (39 percent). Among children who moved (19.6 million), a higher proportion of children were more likely to have also experienced a parental employment transition (42 percent) than to have undergone a residential move and change in family structure (26 percent). Overall, 3 percent (2.3 million) of children encountered all three transitions at least once between 2008 and 2011. Table 4 shows that children living below poverty were more likely to have encountered all three transitions compared to children living at or above poverty (6 percent and 3 percent, respectively).

Children who experienced family and household transitions were more often under 6 years of age, Black, and in families below poverty.

A larger proportion of children under age 6 experienced at least one type of transition compared with older children (69 percent and 51 percent, respectively). Younger

[16] Kathryn Edin and Rebecca Joyce Kissane, "Poverty and the American Family: A Decade in Review," *Journal of Marriage and Family,* 72, 2010, 460–479.

[17] For periods of recession in the United States, see the National Bureau of Economic Research, <www.nber.org/cycles.html>. The most recent recession began December 2007 and ended June 2009.

[18] Marybeth J. Mattingly, Kristin Smith, and Jessica Bean, *Unemployment in the Great Recession: Single Parents and Men Hit Hard.* Carsey Institute, 2011.

[19] See David K. Ihrke, Carol S. Faber, and William K. Koerber, "Geographic Mobility: 2008 to 2009." *Current Population Reports*, P20-565, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC., 2011, and Susan L. Brown, "Family Structure Transitions and Adolescent Well-Being," Demography, 43, 2006, 447–461.

Table 4.

Family Structure, Residential, and Economic Transitions for Children Under 18 Between 2008 and 2011 by Selected Characteristics

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total	Family structure transition		Residential transition		Employment transition		Number of transitions							
		Change in the number of parents or parent's partners[1]	Percent	Moved at least once between 2009–2011	Percent	At least one parent had an employment change[1,2]	Percent	No transitions	Percent	At least one type of transition	Percent	Two or more types of transitions	Percent	All three types of transitions	Percent
Total children, 2011	**67,984**	**12,359**	**18.2**	**19,623**	**28.9**	**22,041**	**32.4**	**29,818**	**43.9**	**38,166**	**56.1**	**13,569**	**20.0**	**2,287**	**3.4**
CHILD CHARACTERISTICS															
Sex															
Female	33,181	6,148	18.5	9,702	29.2	10,729	32.3	14,394	43.4	18,787	56.6	6,696	20.2	1,097	3.3
Male	34,803	6,210	17.8	9,921	28.5	11,312	32.5	15,424	44.3	19,380	55.7	6,874	19.8	1,190	3.4
Age															
Under 6	20,448	6,333	31.0	6,846	33.5	7,887	38.6	6,384	31.2	14,065	68.8	5,933	29.0	1,069	5.2
6 to 17 years old	47,536	6,026	12.7	12,777	26.9	14,154	29.8	23,434	49.3	24,102	50.7	7,637	16.1	1,218	2.6
Race and Hispanic Origin															
White alone	51,011	9,021	17.7	13,629	26.7	15,831	31.0	23,584	46.2	27,427	53.8	9,377	18.4	1,677	3.3
Non-Hispanic	36,456	6,242	17.1	9,163	25.1	10,576	29.0	17,877	49.0	18,579	51.0	6,261	17.2	1,140	3.1
Black alone	10,273	2,088	20.3	4,005	39.0	4,039	39.3	3,441	33.5	6,831	66.5	2,874	28.0	427	4.2
Asian alone	2,621	434	16.6	731	27.9	691	26.4	1,219	46.5	1,402	53.5	405	15.5	50	1.9
Hispanic (any race)	16,264	3,275	20.1	5,003	30.8	6,088	37.4	6,174	38.0	10,089	62.0	3,639	22.4	133	0.8
Nativity[3]															
Native	51,776	9,247	17.9	15,236	29.4	16,567	32.0	23,258	44.9	28,518	55.1	10,609	20.5	1,924	3.7
At least one foreign-born parent	16,208	3,112	19.2	4,386	27.1	5,474	33.8	6,559	40.5	9,649	59.5	2,961	18.3	363	2.2
FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS															
Poverty Status															
Below poverty	14,388	3,142	21.8	6,090	42.3	6,388	44.4	4,275	29.7	10,113	70.3	4,710	32.7	797	5.5
At or above poverty	51,789	8,773	16.9	12,880	24.9	14,703	28.4	24,946	48.2	26,844	51.8	8,187	15.8	1,326	2.6
100 to 199 percent of poverty	16,380	3,422	20.9	5,523	33.7	6,309	38.5	5,714	34.9	10,666	65.1	3,910	23.9	678	4.1
200 to 299 percent of poverty	11,253	1,961	17.4	2,976	26.4	3,379	30.0	5,174	46.0	6,080	54.0	1,873	16.6	363	3.2
300 percent of poverty or higher	24,156	3,390	14.0	4,381	18.1	5,015	20.8	14,058	58.2	10,098	41.8	2,404	10.0	285	1.2

[1] Includes only biological, step, or adoptive parents.

[2] At least one parent had an employment change.

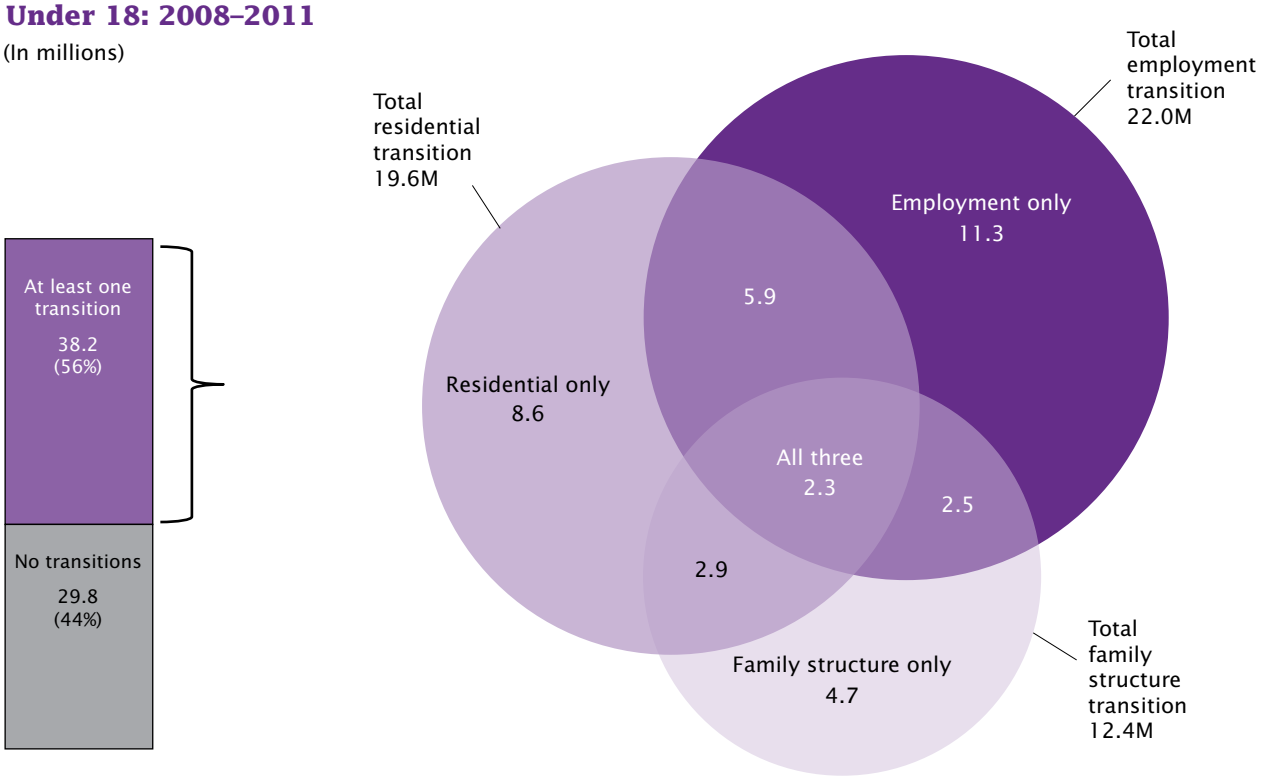
[3] Parental nativity status is based on the place of birth of one or more of the child's parents. A parent born in the United States is considered native born. A parent born outside of the United States is considered foreign born.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 panel, Waves 1–10.

Figure 4.

Relationship Between Family, Residential, and Employment Transitions for Children Under 18: 2008–2011

(In millions)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 panel, Waves 1–10.

children were also more likely to experience multiple types of transitions—29 percent compared with 16 percent of 6- to 17-year-olds (Table 4).

Black children were more likely to experience multiple family and household transitions. Two-thirds of Black children experienced at least one transition and 28 percent experienced at least two types of transitions. A greater proportion of Hispanic children experienced at least one transition (62 percent) than Asian (54 percent) or White, non-Hispanic children (51 percent).

Seven in ten children living in families below poverty experienced family or household change. Children living in families at or above poverty were less likely to experience at least one transition than children living in families below poverty. The proportions of children from families at 100 to 199 percent of poverty who experienced transitions were closer to those of children below poverty than children at 300 percent of poverty or higher. Regardless of the type of transition, children at 300 percent of poverty or higher had the lowest rates of transitions.

Family Transitions and Selected Measures of Child Well-Being

Instability in childhood—changes in family structure, moving, or inconsistent parental employment—may impact a child's long-term well-being.[20] The following section examines the relationship between family and household transitions that took place between 2008 and 2011 and selected measures of child well-being.

Middle school- and high school-aged children who have experienced a family structure transition were less likely to participate in certain extracurricular activities.

Children 12 to 17 years old who experienced a family structure transition were less likely to participate in sports or lessons than children who did not experience a family structure transition

[20] Shannon E. Cavanagh and Aletha C. Huston, "The Timing of Family Instability and Children's Social Development," *Journal of Marriage and Family,* 70, 2008, 1258–1269.

(Table 5). Forty-one percent of children with no family structure transition participated in sports compared with 33 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds who did experience a family structure transition. Family structure transitions had little impact on the academic performance of 12- to 17-year-olds. Similar percentages of children participated in gifted classes, repeated a grade, or were suspended from school. A family structure transition had no impact on the extracurricular activity participation for children between the ages of 6 to 11 years old.

Children who experienced residential transitions were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities and had lower levels of academic performance.

Children's participation in activities and school performance is associated with residential mobility. Twenty-six percent of children 6 to 11 years old who moved at least once between 2008 and 2011 participated in sporting activities, compared with 32 percent of children who did not move. A smaller percentage of children aged 6 to 11 who moved at least once took lessons compared with children who did not move (26 percent and 32 percent, respectively). Among children 12 to 17 years old, children who did not move were more likely to participate in each type of extracurricular activity as well as gifted classes than children who moved at least once. Repeating a grade was more common for children of both age groups who moved at least once between 2008 and 2011. Children 12 to 17 years old who did not move at least once were less likely to have ever been suspended from school (7 percent) than children who moved at least once (8 percent).

Parental employment changes were not associated with grade retention or school suspension.

Among children 6 to 11 years, those who had at least one parent who had an employment change were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities than children who did not experience a parental employment change. Twenty-six percent of children who experienced a parental employment change participated in sports, compared with 32 percent of children who experienced no parental employment change between 2008 and 2011.

A similar pattern followed for children 12 to 17 years old. Older children who had at least one parent experience an employment change were less likely to participate in sports and lessons than children who did not experience any parental employment changes.

Twelve percent of children 6 to 11 years old who did not experience a parental employment change were enrolled in gifted classes, not statistically different from similarly aged children who did experience a parental employment changes (11 percent). Children 12 to 17 years old who did experience a parental employment change were enrolled in gifted classes (26 percent), not different from similarly aged children who did not experience a parental employment change (24 percent). Parental employment changes were also unrelated to grade retention or school suspension.

Regardless of age or the type of transition, the same proportions of children interacted with their parents when it came to family reading time or meals.

Measures of parental interaction with children, such as family reading time or shared meals, did not statistically differ between children who experienced a transition and those who did not. For example, 51 percent of children 1 to 5 years old who did not experience a family structure transition were read to by a family member 7 or more times per week, not different from 49 percent of children who did experience a family structure transition. Regardless of transition status, between 48 percent to 52 percent of children were read to 7 or more times per week.

Over one-third of children 1 to 5 years old who did not experience a family structure transition ate breakfast with the reference parent at least 5 days a week, not different from children who did experience a family transition change (34 percent). Older children were more likely than younger children to share breakfast with a parent at least 5 days a week, but there was a statistically significant difference between 6- to 17-year-olds who did or did not experience family instability (48 percent and 52 percent, respectively).

Table 5.

Household Composition, Residential, and Economic Transitions for Children Under 18 Between 2008 and 2011 by Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being

(Numbers in thousands)

Selected indicators of child well-being	Family structure transition		Residential transition		Employment transition		Number of transitions		
	No change in the number of parents or parent's partners	Change in the number of parents or parent's partners[1]	No move	Moved at least once between 2008–2011	No job change	At least one parent had an employment change[1,2]	No transitions	At least one type of transition	Two or more types of transitions
Total children, 2011									
1 to 5 years old	14,116	6,332	13,602	6,847	12,561	7,888	6,384	14,065	5,932
6 to 11 years old	21,018	3,233	17,052	7,198	16,490	7,760	11,093	13,158	4,322
12 to 17 years old	20,492	2,793	17,707	5,578	16,891	6,394	12,341	10,944	3,315
Family Reading Practices									
Never read to last week									
1 to 5 years old	6.3	7.3	6.4	7.1	6.0	7.5	5.5	7.1	7.9
Read to 7 or more times per week									
1 to 5 years old	51.2	48.8	50.8	49.8	51.9	48.2	52.3	49.7	48.0
Average time read to child per week									
1 to 5 years old	6.9	7.1	7.2	6.6	7.1	6.7	7.3	6.8	6.7
Meals									
Breakfast together at least 5 days per week									
1 to 5 years old	35.1	34.0	35.0	34.5	36.5	32.1	37.0	33.8	32.8
6 to 17 years old	48.4	51.5	48.3	49.9	49.3	47.5	49.3	48.2	51.7
Dinner together at least 5 days per week									
1 to 5 years old	15.4	15.1	14.8	16.4	15.7	14.8	16.6	14.8	16.7
6 to 17 years old	26.0	27.1	26.9	24.0	27.2	23.7	27.4	24.9	23.5
Extracurricular Activities									
Sports									
6 to 11 years old	30.1	28.5	31.6	25.9	32.0	25.5	32.6	27.7	22.4
12 to 17 years old	41.0	32.9	41.3	35.8	41.4	36.3	43.8	35.7	34.7
Lessons									
6 to 11 years old	30.4	28.5	31.9	26.0	31.8	26.7	33.9	26.9	24.9
12 to 17 years old	28.8	24.6	29.6	24.0	29.5	25.2	30.6	25.7	21.6
Clubs									
6 to 11 years old	27.7	27.5	28.1	26.5	28.5	25.9	29.4	26.2	26.4
12 to 17 years old	30.7	27.9	31.0	28.2	31.0	28.5	32.2	28.2	27.5
Academic Performance									
Gifted classes									
6 to 11 years old	11.8	10.2	12.0	10.8	12.0	10.9	12.5	10.9	10.0
12 to 17 years old	25.8	25.0	26.4	23.4	26.2	24.2	27.2	24.0	23.7
Ever repeated a grade									
6 to 11 years old	3.6	3.8	3.0	5.1	3.6	3.7	3.0	4.1	4.5
12 to 17 years old	6.9	8.8	6.0	10.7	7.0	7.5	6.2	8.1	11.4
Ever suspended									
12 to 17 years old	6.9	8.5	6.7	8.4	7.0	7.4	6.7	7.6	8.9

[1] Includes only biological, step, or adoptive parents.
[2] At least one parent had an employment change.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 panel, Waves 1–10.

One in four children had two or more types of transitions between 2008 and 2011.

Children who experience multiple transitions may experience less household and economic stability.[21] Table 5 shows that children 6 to 11 years old who did not experience a change in family structure, residence, or parental employment were more likely to participate in clubs than children who experienced at least one type of the aforementioned transitions (29 percent and 26 percent, respectively). Children who did experience at least two types of transitions between 2008 and 2011 were more likely to have ever repeated a grade at the time of the survey: 5 percent compared with 3 percent of 6- to 11-year-olds and 11 percent compared with 6 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds. Middle school- and high school-aged children who experienced two or more types of transitions were more likely to have been suspended from school than children 12 to 17 years old who did not experience any transitions (9 percent and 7 percent, respectively).

As shown in Table 5, there were relatively few differences in child outcomes between children who experienced at least one type of transition and children who experienced two or more types of transitions. For example, 28 percent of children 6 to 11 years old who experienced at least one type of transition participated in sporting activities, compared with 22 percent of children who experienced multiple types of transitions between 2008 and 2011. Children 12 to 17 years old with one transition were more likely to take lessons than children who experienced two or more types of transitions (26 percent and 22 percent, respectively). Older children with one transition were less likely to have ever repeated a grade compared with children with multiple transitions (8 percent and 11 percent, respectively).

Characteristics such as family income, parental education, and family size are inter-related and should be considered when evaluating the relationships between family and household transitions and child outcomes. This report presents a broad picture of the relationship between family and household change and child well-being and does not analyze in detail the independent contribution of particular parental and child characteristics to child well-being.[22]

SUMMARY

This report outlines some important aspects of childhood: children's living arrangements, nativity, and family and household transitions. These data show that these aspects of children's lives are related to their well-being. Children's living arrangements and family structure transitions were associated with various measures of child well-being. Children living with two married parents received more reading attention and television supervision than children living with a single parent. However, while the difference between the two groups was statistically significant, the magnitude of the differences was often small. Child well-being outcomes for children living with two unmarried parents were more similar to the outcomes of children living with a single parent than the outcomes of those living with two married parents. Older children who experienced a family structure transition were less likely to participate in certain extracurricular activities.

Children who had a foreign-born parent were more likely to be living with two married parents, but they had less parental interaction than children with a native-born parent. Children with a foreign-born parent were less likely to have ever been in nonrelative child care.

This report also provides baseline national level estimates of the percentages of children who experienced transitions related to family structure, residence, and parental employment. Over half (56 percent) of children experienced at least one type of transition between 2008 and 2011. The most common type of transition that children experienced was a change in a parent's employment status (32 percent). Family income was associated with the occurrence of a household or economic transition. Children living in economically well-off families (300 percent of poverty or higher) were less likely to experience a family, residential, or parental employment transition compared with children living in families with monthly incomes below poverty.

The impact of family and household transitions was most notable on children's extracurricular and academic performance. Time spent reading with children and shared

[21] Jay D. Teachman, "The Living Arrangements of Children and their Educational Well-Being," *Journal of Family Issues*, 29, 2008, 734–761.

[22] To isolate the contribution of individual factors that are related to behavioral outcomes for children, one would need a multivariate analysis which would control for the effect of many factors simultaneously. This type of analysis is in progress and will be released as a working paper.

meal times were not sensitive to changes in family structure, residence, or parental employment.

SOURCE OF THE DATA

The population represented (the population universe) in the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) is the civilian noninstitutionalized population living in the United States. The SIPP is a longitudinal survey conducted at 4-month intervals. The data in this report were collected from September through December 2011 in the tenth wave of the 2008 SIPP Panel. The institutionalized population, which is excluded from the population universe, is composed primarily of the population in correctional institutions and nursing homes (98 percent of the 4.0 million institutionalized population in Census 2010).

Although the main focus of the SIPP is information on labor force participation, jobs, income, and participation in federal assistance programs, information on other topics is also collected in topical modules on a rotating basis.

ACCURACY OF THE DATA

Statistics from surveys are subject to sampling and nonsampling error. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. This means the 90 percent confidence interval for the difference between the estimates being compared does not include zero. Nonsampling errors in surveys may be attributed to a variety of sources, such as how the survey was designed, how respondents interpret questions, how able and willing respondents are to provide correct answers, and how accurately the answers are coded and classified. The Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the production process—including the overall design of surveys, the wording of questions, review of the work of interviewers and coders, and statistical review of reports—to minimize these errors. The SIPP weighting procedure uses ratio estimation, whereby sample estimates are adjusted to independent estimates of the national population by age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. This weighting partially corrects for bias due to undercoverage, but biases may still be present when people who are missed by the survey differ from those interviewed in ways other than age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. How this weighting procedure affects other variables in the survey is not precisely known. All of these considerations affect comparisons across different surveys or data sources. The SIPP 2008 Panel Wave 10 experienced a 43 percent attrition of the original sample since Wave 1, which had a nonresponse rate of 19 percent.

For further information on the source of the data and accuracy of the estimates including standard errors and confidence intervals, go to <www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/programs-surveys/sipp/tech-documentation/source-accuracy-statements/2008/SIPP 2008 Panel Wave 05 - Core Source and Accuracy Statements.pdf> or contact Stephen Mack of the Census Bureau's Demographic Statistical Methods Division via e-mail at <Stephen.P.Mack@census.gov>.

Additional information on the SIPP can be found at the following Web sites: <www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/> (main SIPP Web site), <www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/workpapr/wp230.pdf> (SIPP Quality Profile), and <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/methodology/users-guide.html> (SIPP User's Guide).

MORE INFORMATION

The report and the detailed tables are available on the Internet at <www.census.gov>; search for child well-being data by clicking on the letter "C" in the "Index A to Z" section on the Web page and selecting "Children." The previous reports A Child's Day: 2006 (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being) (P70-118); A Child's Day: 2003 (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being) (P70-109); A Child's Day: 2000 (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being); and A Child's Day: Home, School, and Play (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being) with 1994 data are also found on this page.

CONTACT

For additional child well-being information, you may contact the authors of this report in the Fertility and Family Statistics Branch on 301-763-2416. You may also contact the author of this report by e-mail.

Lynda Laughlin

<Lynda.L.Laughlin@census.gov>

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Appendix Table A.

Selected Measures of Child Well-Being Question Text

Child well-being measure	Question text	Universe
Family reading practices	About how many times in the PAST WEEK, in total, did any family member read stories to [CHILD]? Number of times: @ (N) None	Children 1 to 5 years old
Shared mealtimes	In a TYPICAL WEEK LAST MONTH, how many DAYS did [REFERENCE PARENT] eat BREAKFAST with [CHILD]. In a TYPICAL WEEK LAST MONTH, how many DAYS did [REFERENCE PARENT] eat DINNER with [CHILD].	Children 1 to 17 years old
Family television rules	Are there family rules for [CHILD] about what television programs [CHILD] can watch? (1) Yes (2) No Are there family rules about how early or late [CHILD] may watch television? (1) Yes (2) No Are there family rules about how many hours [CHILD] may watch television? (1) Yes (2) No	Children 3 to 17 years old
Extracurricular activities		
Lessons	Did [CHILD] take lessons after school or on weekends in subjects like music, dance, language, computers, or religion? (1) Yes (2) No	Children 6 to 17 years old
Clubs	Did [CHILD] participate in any clubs or organizations after school or on weekends, such as Scouts, a religious group, or a Girls or Boys club? (1) Yes (2) No	Children 6 to 17 years old
Sports	Was [CHILD] on a sports team either in or out of school? (1) Yes (2) No	Children 6 to 17 years old
Academic performance		
Gifted class	Did [CHILD] go to a special class for gifted students, or do advanced work in any subjects? (1) Yes (2) No	Children 6 to 17 years old
Repeated a grade	Has [CHILD] repeated any grades, or been held back for any reasons? (1) Yes (2) No	Children 6 to 17 years old
Suspended	Has [CHILD] ever been suspended, excluded, or expelled from school? (1) Yes (2) No	Children 12 to 17 years old
Early child care experiences	Other than members of [CHILD]'s immediate family, has [CHILD] EVER been cared for regularly in any Head Start, day care, or preschool programs or by any day care providers or babysitters? (1) Yes (2) No	Children 0 to 17 years old