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FP-18-01 Grandchildren Living in a Grandparent-Headed Household

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FP-18-01

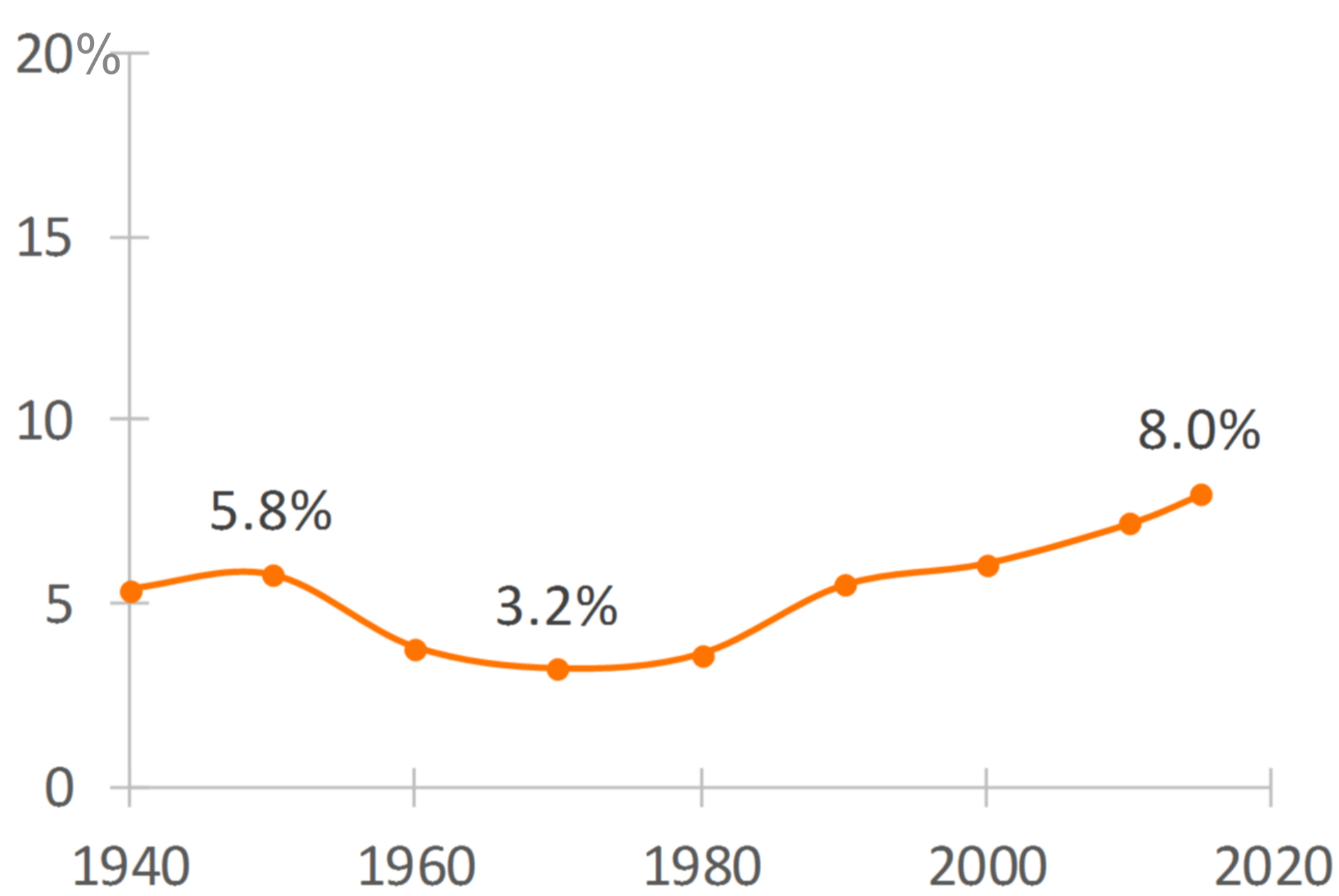
Grandchildren Living in a Grandparent-Headed Household

Huijing Wu

Over the past few decades, changes in family patterns have increased the diversity of children's living arrangements, including a gradual increase in children who are living in their grandparent's household. This profile updates FP-13-03 to examine trends in the proportion of children living in a grandparent-headed household and whether those children have a parent present in the household (e.g., three-generation household). Focusing on the child's perspective, this profile also examines the age distribution and poverty status of coresident grandchildren by the presence of a parent in 2015. Data for 1940-2000 are drawn from the Decennial Census, and data from 2010 and 2015 are based on the American Community Survey.

Trends in the Proportion of Children Living in a Grandparent's Household

Figure 1. Percentage of Minor Children Living in Grandparent-Headed Households, 1940-2015



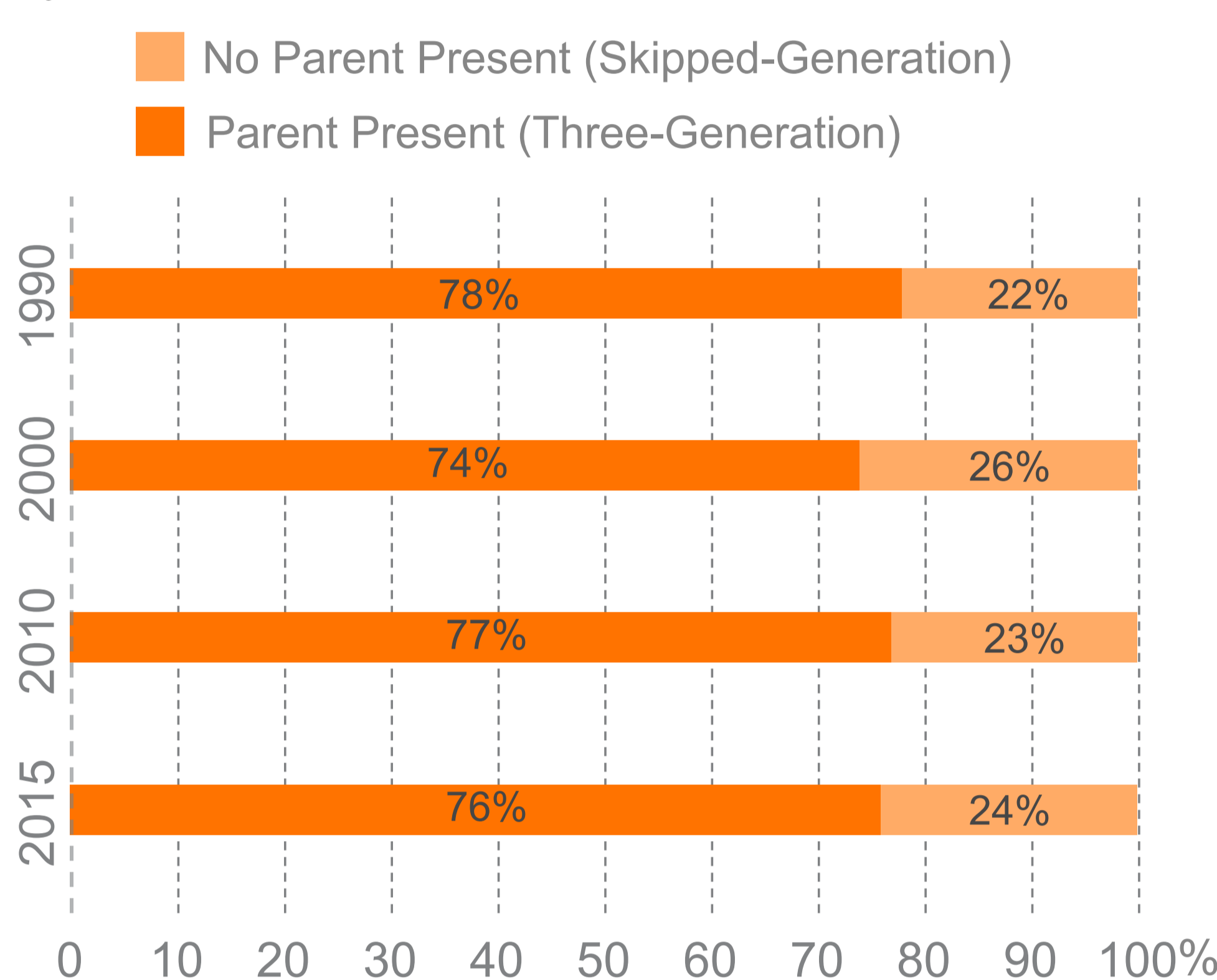
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, 1940-2000; American Community Survey, 2010, 2015, 1-year estimates

- The share of children living in a grandparent's household remained stable from 1940 to 1950 but declined from 5.8% to 3.2% between 1950 and 1970.
- Since 1970, the percentage of children living in a grandparent's household has more than doubled, reaching 8% in 2015. One in twelve children lived with a grandparent in 2015.

Trends in Children Living in a Grandparent's Household by Presence of Parent

- The majority (about three-quarters) of children in a grandparent-headed household also lived with their parents (three-generation household).
- Few changes have occurred in the share of children living in a skipped-generation household (no parent present). In 2015, one in four children lived with their grandparent and without a parent.

Figure 2. Minor Children Living in Grandparent-Headed Households by Presence of Parent, 1990-2015

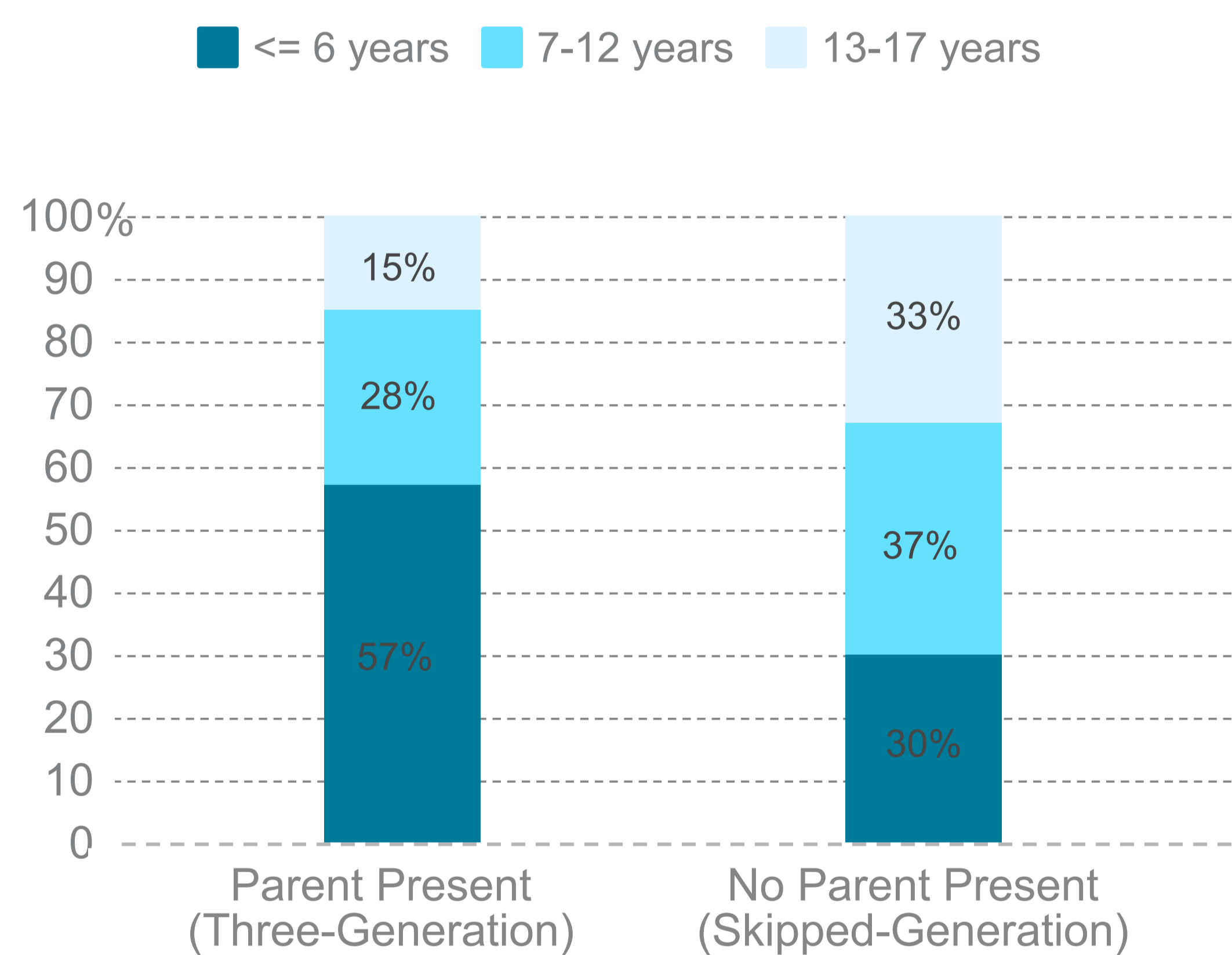


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, 1990 & 2000; American Community Survey, 2010, 2015, 1-year estimates

Since 1970, the percentage of children living in a grandparent's household has more than doubled...

Age Distribution of Children Living in a Grandparent's Household by Presence of Parent

Figure 3. Minor Children Living in Grandparent-Headed Households by Presence of Parent and Age Groups, 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr est. 2015

Among those living in a grandparent's household, children with a parent present were younger than those with no parent present.

- Among coresident grandchildren with a parent present (three-generation) in the household, over half (57%) were aged 6 or younger. Only 30% were aged 6 or younger among those without a parent present.
- Coresident grandchildren with no parent present (skipped-generation) in a grandparent-headed household were most often aged 7 to 12 (37%).

Note: Because IPUMS-USA made changes to the coding of variables related to household members' relationships to the reference person, the number of skipped generation households is different from that presented in FP-13-03.

Data Source:

Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek. *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 7.0* [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V7.0>

References:

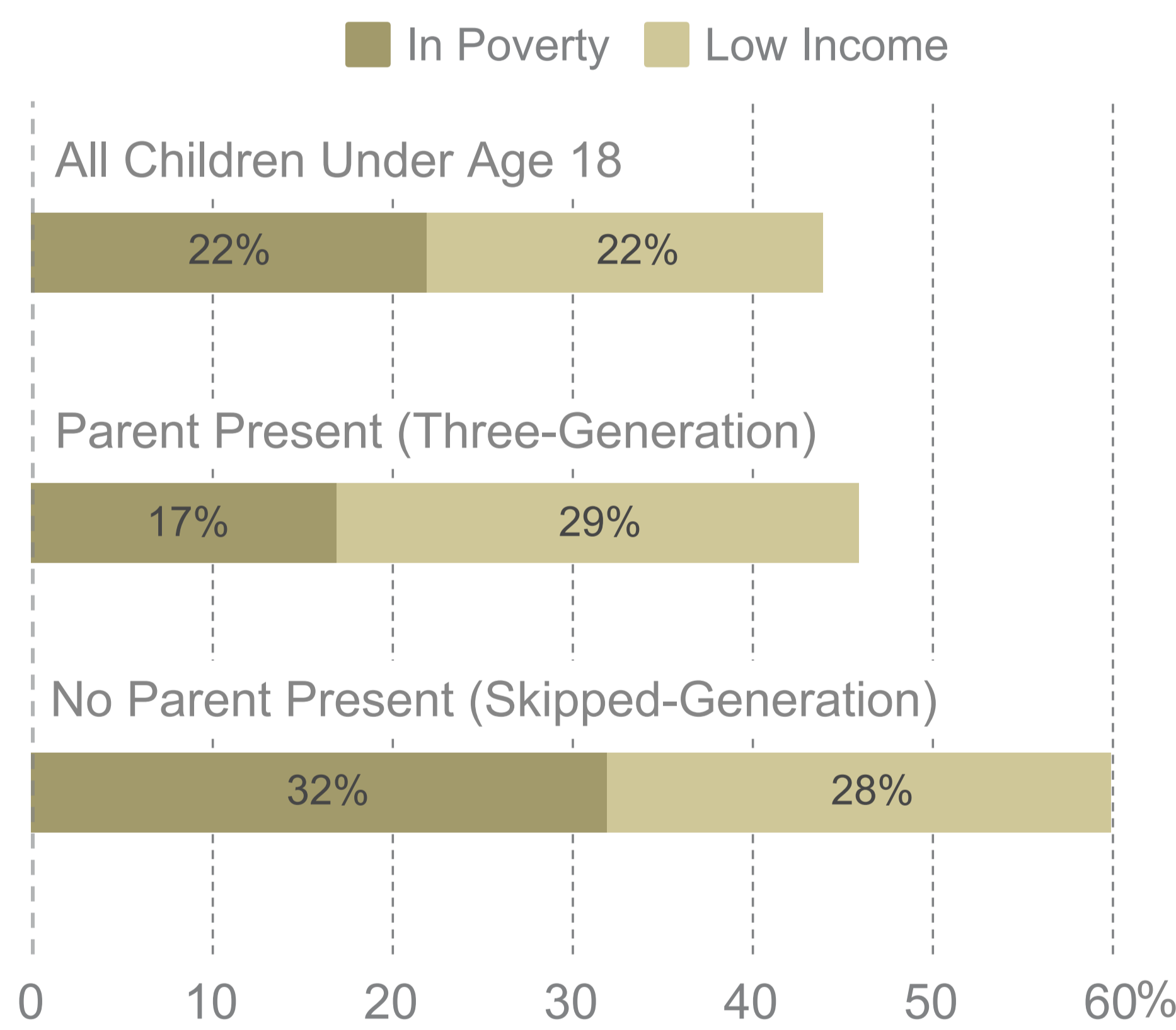
Wilson, B. (2013). Grandchildren: Living in a grandparent-headed household. *Family Profiles*, FP-13-03. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/college-of-arts-and-sciences/NCFMR/documents/FP/FP-13-03.pdf>

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Economic Disadvantage Among Children Living in a Grandparent's Household by Presence of Parent

Figure 4. Economic Disadvantage Among Minor Children Living in Grandparent-Headed Households by Presence of Parent, 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr est. 2015

- Children living in a three-generation household fare better economically than their counterparts living in skipped-generation households.
- Nearly twice as many children in skipped generation households were living in poverty (32%) than children in three-generation households (17%).

National Center for Family & Marriage Research

Family Profiles: Original reports summarizing and analyzing nationally representative data with the goal to provide the latest analysis of U.S. families. These profiles examine topics related to the NCFMR's core research themes.

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