

2019

## FP-19-25 Children's Family Structure, 2019

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# Children's Family Structure, 2019

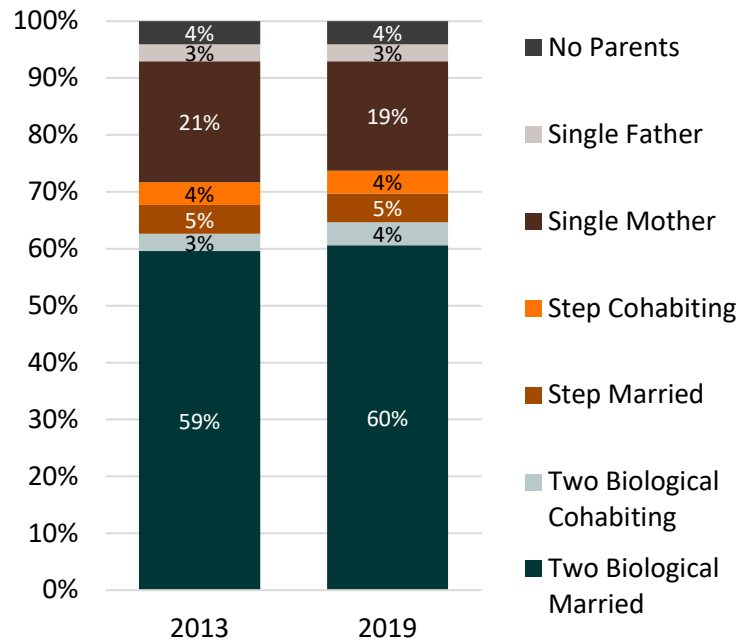
Author: Krista K. Payne

Over the last nine years, there has been little change in minor children's family structure (FP-17-15 & FP-13-19). This pattern of stability is consistent with prior work (Manning, Brown, & Stykes, 2014). Still, it is important to document patterns of children's family structure over time. Using data from the 2019 March Current Population Survey, this profile updates FP-13-19 by documenting the family structure of minor children (under the age of 18) in the U.S. We also describe variation by race/ethnicity and state-level variation in the share of children living with two married biological parents.

- The majority of children were living with two biological parents (64%). This percentage is slightly higher than the 62% observed in 2013 (FP-13-19).
  - In 2019, among children living with two biological parents, the large majority were living with married parents rather than cohabiting parents (94% vs. 6%). In 2013, 95% were living with married parents.
- The second most common family type was single parent families (22%). This percentage is slightly lower than the 24% in 2013 (FP-13-19).
  - A majority of these children were living with a single mother (86%) rather than a single father (14%). The share living with a single mother was nearly the same in 2013 at 87%.
- Nearly one-in-ten children was living in a stepfamily (9%)—the same as in 2013.

- Slightly more than half (56%) of children living in a stepfamily were living with married parents compared to 44% who were living with cohabiting parents.

Figure 1. Family Structure of Minor Children, 2013 & 2019

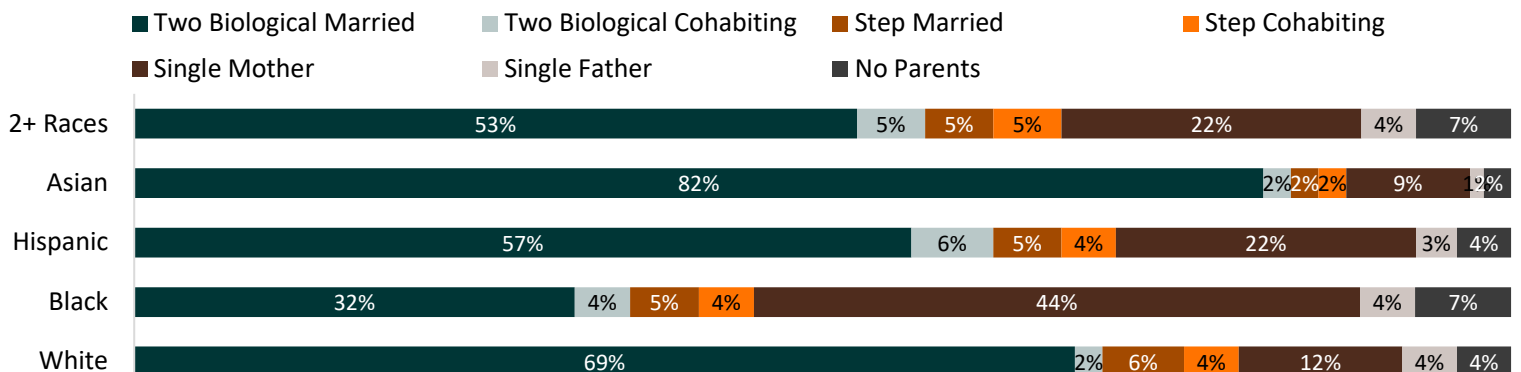


Source: NCFMR analyses of the March Current Population Survey; U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 & 2019

## Children's Family Structure by Race/Ethnicity, 2019

- Two biological parent families were most common among Asian children (84%) followed by White children (71%). Black children were the least likely to live with two biological parents (36%).
- Cohabiting parent families were most common among Hispanic and 2+ Races children (10%).
- Single mother families were most prevalent among Black children—44% were living with a single mother followed by 22% of Hispanic and 22% of 2+ Races children.

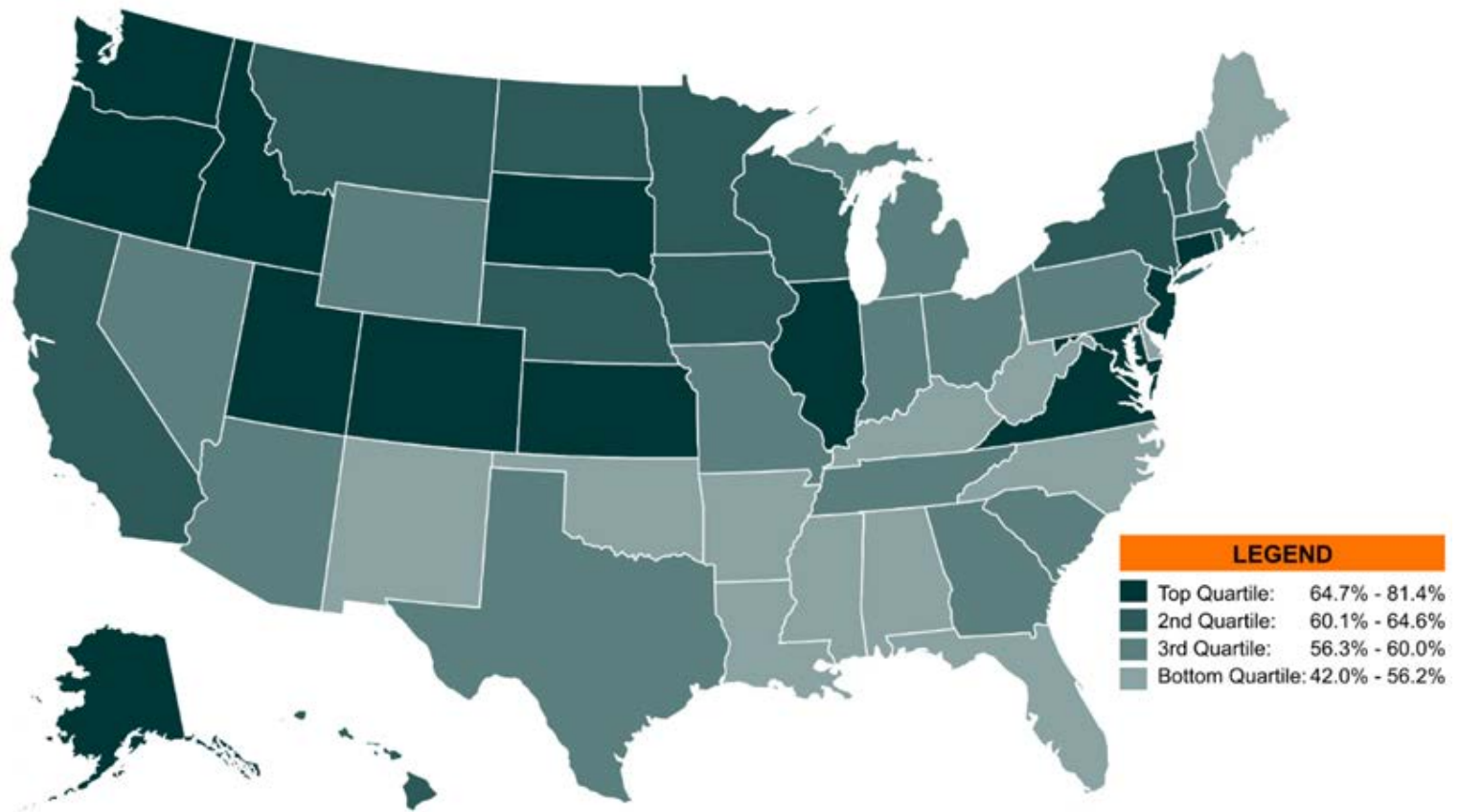
Figure 2. Family Structure of Minor Children by Race/Ethnicity, 2019



Source: NCFMR analyses of the March Current Population Survey; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

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

Figure 3. Geographic Variation in the Percentage of Children living with Two Biological Married Parents, 2019



Source: NCFMR analyses of the March Current Population Survey; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

- Wide variation exists in the share of children living with two married biological parents, ranging from 42% in Mississippi to 81% in Utah. Half of the states (including Washington, D.C.) had at least 60% of children living with two married biological parents.
- Similar to 2013, states with the largest share of children living with two married biological parents (top 25%) were predominately located in the Western region of the U.S. (Utah, Colorado, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Alaska).
- Utah was the only state to be in the top five in both 2013 and 2019, taking the number one spot in both years.
- Also similar to 2013, states with the smallest share of children living with two married biological parents (bottom 25%) were located in the Southern region of the U.S. (Oklahoma, North Carolina, Arkansas, Kentucky, Delaware, Florida, D.C., West Virginia, Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi).

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- Manning, W. D., Brown, S. L., & Stykes, J. B. (2014). Family complexity among children in the United States. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 654(1), 48-65. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0002716214524515>
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