

NOTE: Improvements to data collection about families in CPS 2007

In 2007, the collection of two family concepts changed.

1. Addition of a second parent pointer, and type of parent.

Previously, CPS contained one parent pointer—each person could “point” to one parent. If that parent was married, they were considered to be living with two parents. Beginning in 2007, CPS now collects information about the presence of two parents. Previously, children pointed to only one parent, but with a second parent pointer, children may now point to both a mother and a father, and it is possible to see children who are living with two parents who are not married to each other. For each parent indicated, respondents were asked to indicate whether this was the biological, step or adoptive parent of the child.

2. Addition of a direct question about cohabitation.

Since 1996, the relationship to householder item in CPS has contained a category “unmarried partner.” This category remains, but in addition, beginning in 2007, there is a direct question for adults living with a nonrelative that asks whether they have a boyfriend, girlfriend, or partner living in the household. In this way, unmarried partner couples in which neither is the householder can be identified.

These changes affect some of the detailed tables listed here. For example, in Tables C1-C9, children listed as living with two parents include those living with unmarried parents when each of these parents is indicated as the child’s mother and father. Previously, these children would have been in either the “maintained by mother” or “maintained by father” categories, since it was not possible to see the presence of the second parent, since the child’s parents were not married to each other. Being able to link a child to both of their parents even when those parents are not married to each other also affects the family groups tables (Tables FG5-FG9).

For further information, see the working paper listed below:

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps08/twps08.pdf>

NOTE: Please note that further edits to the public use data were done in order to reconcile some inconsistent cases. Consequently, replication of these tables may yield slightly different estimates.