

CENSUS BRIEF

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS



Children with single parents—how they fare

CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME WITH BOTH PARENTS grow up with more financial and educational advantages than youngsters raised by one parent, as U.S. Census Bureau statistics have long shown. But even for those children living in single-parent homes, the marital status of the parent can affect the quality of life.

More than a quarter of America's children now live with one parent. This *Brief* provides a few glimpses of the living situations of such children.

Children living with a divorced parent typically have a big edge over those living with a parent who has never married—an even bigger edge if that parent is the father.

Never-married parents are significantly younger than divorced parents and on average tend to have fewer years of school completed and lower levels of income. Nonetheless, although age does have an effect, the differences remain.

DIVORCED PARENTS ARE MORE EDUCATED

About 85 percent of children living with either a divorced mother or father in 1995 were living with a parent who had finished high school. In contrast, among children living with a never-married parent, fewer than two-thirds had parents who had completed high school.

CHILDREN OF DIVORCED PARENTS ARE LESS LIKELY TO LIVE IN RENTAL HOMES...

Of the 19 million children of single parents, two-thirds lived in

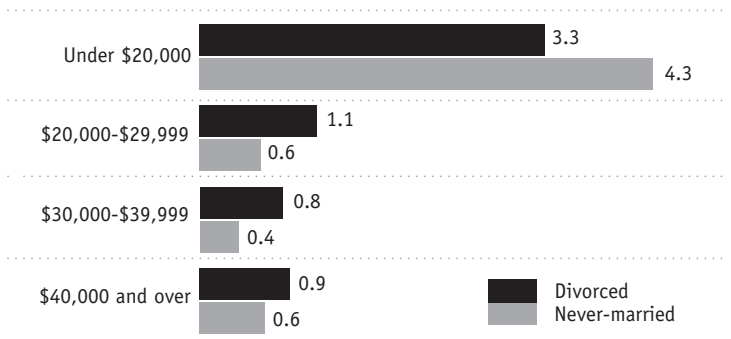
rented homes. In 1995, about 78 percent of children living with never-married parents and one-half (52 percent) of children living with divorced parents lived in rented homes.

... AND LESS LIKELY TO BE POOR

Nearly six of 10 children living with only their mother were near (or below) the poverty line. About 45 percent of children raised by divorced mothers and 69 percent of those raised by never-married mothers lived in or near poverty. Children living with their father (particularly if he was divorced) were more likely to be part of a family with a higher median income than those living with a single mom.

CHILDREN WITH DIVORCED AND NEVER-MARRIED MOTHERS, BY FAMILY INCOME (MARCH 1995)

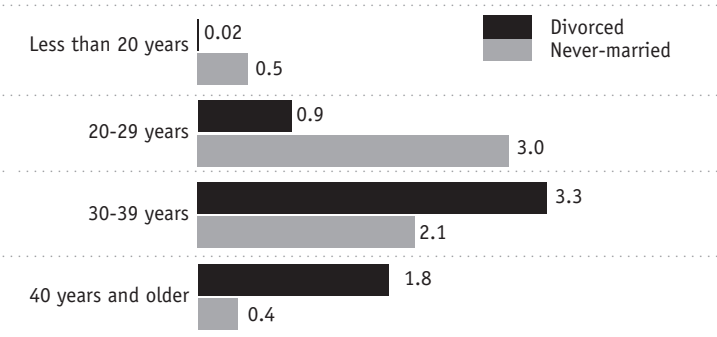
(In millions)



Employment was an important reason. While many single parents had jobs, there were 7.4 million children living with single moms who were unemployed or not in the labor force. Children of never-married mothers were twice as likely (59 percent) to have their moms unemployed or not in the labor force as children whose mothers were divorced (29 percent).

CHILDREN WITH DIVORCED AND NEVER-MARRIED MOTHERS, BY MOTHER'S AGE (MARCH 1995)

(In millions)



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PROFILE OF CHILDREN'S LIVING ARRANGEMENTS (CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18)

- In 1995, 48.3 million of the 70.3 million children under age 18 lived with two parents (69 percent); 18.9 million lived with only one parent (27 percent); and 3.0 million lived with neither parent (4 percent).
- Of children living with one parent, 38 percent lived with a divorced parent, 35 percent with a never-married parent, 19 percent with a separated parent, 4 percent with a widowed parent, and 4 percent with a parent whose spouse lived elsewhere because of business or some other reason.
- Four million children lived in the homes of their grandparents—for 11 percent of them, both parents were also in the household; for 52 percent, one parent was there; and for 37 percent, neither parent was present.
- Most single-parent children live in metropolitan areas (14.5 million), and six in 10 of them (9.2 million) are in cities with populations of 1 million or more.

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MORE INFORMATION:

Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1995 (Update), Series P20-491.

Detailed statistics can be obtained in printed tables (PPL-52) for \$28.50 from the Population Division (301-457-2422) or via the Internet at—

<www.census.gov/prod/www/titles.html#popspec> and—
<www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/ms-la.html>

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