

U.S. Census Bureau News

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Facts for
Features

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Father's Day: June 18

The idea of Father's Day was conceived by Sonora Dodd of Spokane, Wash., while she listened to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Dodd wanted a special day to honor her father, William Smart, a widowed Civil War veteran who was left to raise his six children on a farm. A day in June was chosen for the first Father's Day celebration — June 19, 1910, proclaimed by Spokane's mayor because it was the month of William Smart's birth. The first presidential proclamation honoring fathers was issued in 1966 when President Lyndon Johnson designated the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. Father's Day has been celebrated annually since 1972 when President Richard Nixon signed the public law that made it permanent.

66.3 million

Estimated number of fathers across the nation today. (From unpublished data.)

Remembering Dad

Nearly 95 million

The estimated number of Father's Day cards given last year in the United States, making Father's Day the fourth-largest card-sending occasion. (Source: Hallmark research)

50%

Percentage of all Father's Day cards that are purchased specifically by sons and/or daughters. Nearly 20 percent of Father's Day cards are purchased by wives for their husbands; the remaining cards are bought for grandfathers, sons, brothers, uncles and "someone special." (Source: Hallmark research)

72%

Percentage of Americans who plan to celebrate or acknowledge Father's Day. (Source: Hallmark research and National Retail Federation.)

- Neckties lead the list of Father's Day gifts. A good place to buy dad a tie or a shirt might be one of 9,189 men's clothing stores around the country in 2003. <<http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/03cbp/cbp03-1.pdf>>

- Other items high on the list of Father's Day gifts include those items you may find in dad's toolbox such as hammers, wrenches and screwdrivers. You could buy some of these items for dad at one of the nation's 14,864 hardware stores or 5,795 home centers in 2003.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/03cbp/cbp03-1.pdf>

22,410

Number of sporting goods stores in 2003. These stores are good places to purchase traditional gifts for dad such as fishing rods and golf clubs.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/03cbp/cbp03-1.pdf>

- More than 68 million Americans participated at a barbecue in the last year — it's probably safe to assume many of these barbecues took place on Father's Day.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/06statab/arts.pdf>, 2006 edition, Table 1230.

Mr. Mom

147,000

Estimated number of "stay-at-home" dads. These married fathers with children under 15 years old have remained out of the labor force for more than one year primarily so they can care for the family while their wives work outside the home. These fathers cared for 268,000 children under 15. <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hh-fam/shp1.pdf>

20%

Percentage of fathers with employed wives who were the primary caregiver for their preschooler. In contrast, 6 percent of fathers provided the most hours of care for their grade-school-aged child.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/p70-101.pdf>

32%

Percentage of fathers who regularly worked evening or night shifts and were the primary source of care for their preschoolers during their children's mother's working hours. For fathers working part-time, the proportion was 38 percent. For fathers who were not employed, it was 52 percent. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/p70-101.pdf>

How Many Fathers?

26.4 million

Number of fathers who are part of married-couple families with their own children under the age of 18.

Among these —

- 22 percent are raising three or more of their own children under 18 years old

(among married-couple family households only).

- 2 percent live in the home of a relative or a nonrelative.

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004.html>>

2.3 million

Number of single fathers, up from 400,000 in 1970. Currently, among single parents living with their children, 18 percent are men.

Among these fathers —

- 11 percent are raising three or more of their own children under 18 years old.
- 42 percent are divorced, 39 percent have never married, 15 percent are separated and 4 percent are widowed. (The percentages of those divorced and never married are not significantly different from one another.)
- 16 percent live in the home of a relative or a nonrelative.
- 22 percent have an annual family income of \$50,000 or more.

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004.html>>

Child-Support Payments

4.6 million

Number of fathers who provide child support. All in all, 84 percent of child-support providers are men, who provide median payments of \$3,600 annually.

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/004012.html>

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)

Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)

Women's History Month (March)

Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/

St. Patrick's Day (March 17)

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)

Older Americans Month (May)

Mother's Day (May 14)

Father's Day (June 18)

The Fourth of July (July 4)

Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)

Back to School (August)

Labor Day (Sept. 4)

Grandparents Day (Sept. 10)

Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)

Halloween (Oct. 31)

American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month
(November)

Veterans Day (Nov. 11)

Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 23)

The Holiday Season (December)

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: (301) 763-3030; fax: (301) 457-3670; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.