In 2012, researchers at the Census Bureau changed the focus of the Current Population Survey (CPS) Fertility Supplement, as follows:

- Expanded age range: 15–50, instead of 15–44.
- Questions about timing of first birth (instead of most recent birth).
- New questions about women’s relationship circumstances at the time of their first birth.

These new, nationally representative data allow for more extensive retrospective examination of the relationship status of women at the time that they entered motherhood.

### Relationship Status at First Birth for Women Age 15–50 in the United States

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**2011), and that nearly half of all non-marital first births in the late 2000s occurred within cohabiting unions.**

However, recent decades have made apparent a third family form into which children are born – cohabiting relationships. In the context of the shift to focus on first births, researchers at the Census Bureau added two questions about relationships at first birth.

**The focus of the CPS Fertility Supplement was changed from most recent birth to first birth to reduce redundancy with the American Community Survey. In the context of the shift to focus on first births, researchers at the Census Bureau added two questions about relationships at first birth.**

**Legends:**

- Full sample: all women age 15–50 with first birth in 2011 and 2012.
- Married at first birth: all women age 15–50 who were married at the time of their first birth.
- Cohabiting at first birth: all women age 15–50 who were cohabiting at the time of their first birth.
- Neither married nor cohabiting at first birth: all women age 15–50 who were neither married nor cohabiting at the time of their first birth.

**Data Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, June 2012 Fertility Supplement.

*indicates significance at the .05 level.

**WORKS CITED:**

- L. Hofferth & L. M. Casper (Eds.), Handbook of measurement issues in family research (pp. 35–52).

**FIGURE 1:**

Relationship Contexts at First Birth for Women Age 15–40 in the United States, 2011.

**FIGURE 2:**

The proportion of young women who are married, cohabiting, or neither at time of first birth, by age at first birth.

**FIGURE 3:**

Relationship Status at First Birth for Women Age 15–50 in the United States, 2011.

**FIGURE 4:**

Age at First Birth, by Relationship Status at First Birth, and Time Since First Birth.

**FIGURE 5:**

Current Relationship Status by Previous Relationship Status at the Birth of First Born Child, Within Five Births.

**FIGURE 6:**

Percent Ever Married at Time of Interview, by Duration since First Birth.