

**THE SURVEY OF INCOME AND  
PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**

**Family complexity and changing household dynamics as measured in the  
2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation**

SEHSD Working Paper #2017-119  
SIPP Working Paper #281

Lindsay M. Monte, PhD  
Fertility and Family Statistics Branch  
U.S. Census Bureau

Issued November 19, 2017

# Family complexity and changing household dynamics as measured in the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation

Lindsay M. Monte, PhD.<sup>1,2</sup>

U.S. Census Bureau | SEHSD Working Paper

Prepared for the November 2017 Meeting of the Southern Economic Association

## Abstract

---

The Census Bureau has recently reengineered the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). Among its many innovations, we have significantly revised the content to improve the 2014 SIPP panel's ability to measure family diversity, complexity, and change. The 2014 SIPP added measures of multiple partner fertility, childbearing partnerships (even in the absence of coresident children), expanded details in household relationships, and included detailed information about each residence during the year, information about household composition changes during the year, and more. In this paper, I present the new measures of fertility and family and residential dynamics, and discuss the implications of the same for our understanding of families and households in the United States.

## Paper

---

Although nuclear families remain a prevalent family form, recent research suggests that families and households in the United States are often far more complex than simple mom-dad-kid households. For example, Martin et. al. (2017) found that more than 40 percent of children born in 2015 were born to an unmarried mother. Similarly, McLanahan and Percheski (2008) suggested that roughly half of American children are now expected to spend time in a single parent or step-parent family before reaching adulthood. Doubling up, or combining households, has increased (see Mykyta & Pilkauskas, 2016, for a review), as have multigenerational family households (see, for example, Hobbs, 2005), and recent research suggests that many men do not live with all of their minor children (see, for example, Monte, 2017a).

All of these data points suggest the need to consider the intricacies and nuances of families more carefully in economic research. Unfortunately, the study of family complexity within the social sciences is often hindered by insufficient data (see Guzzo, 2014, for a discussion).<sup>3</sup> Large,

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. The views expressed on methodological or operational issues are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau. Any error or omissions are the sole responsibility of the authors. All data are subject to error arising from a variety of sources, including sampling error, non-sampling error, modeling error, and any other sources of error. For further information on SIPP statistical standards and accuracy, see <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/tech-documentation/source-accuracy-statements.html>.

<sup>2</sup> The author is grateful for the input of Jason Fields, Renee Ellis, Peter Mateyka, and Matthew Marlay, all of the Census Bureau, who were co-authors on an earlier version of this paper.

<sup>3</sup> Family complexity is used to refer to multiple partner fertility (having children with multiple partners), cohabitation, stepfamilies, families spread across residences, and other family forms that are outside a simple, coresidential, nuclear family with married parents (see Carlson and Meyer, 2014, for an in-depth discussion).

national datasets often lack sufficient information on respondent's fertility histories or household relationships. Moreover, cross-sectional datasets do not capture the ways in which families shift and change over time. Although many researchers have done excellent work on family complexity despite data limitations, the desire for more complete information has been a running theme of much of the recent literature on this topic (e.g., Cancian, Meyer, and Cook, 2011; Klerman, 2007; Guzzo and Furstenberg, 2007).

In this paper, I demonstrate a number of ways in which the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), administered by the U.S. Census Bureau, can be used to inform such estimates. The SIPP is not a new dataset, but was overhauled prior to the 2014 panel, and has gained many important new measures addressing the nuances of family complexity. I use these data to present information about complex households and families, and to demonstrate the fluidity of residential patterns for families.

### Background

Since 2006, the U.S. Census Bureau has spent significant effort reengineering the SIPP. The SIPP has existed in various forms since 1984. The survey design called for a longitudinal panel survey, with the capacity to measure monthly dynamics in household economic well-being, program receipt, and family context. Based on the research of the Income Survey Development Program (ISDP), the original SIPP design involved interviews occurring every four months (three times per year) for the duration of the panel. In 1984, the first SIPP panel began as a paper survey with this design, and continued in this form with overlapping panel starts through the 1993 SIPP panel. With the 1996 panel, the survey moved to a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) design, and from overlapping to abutting panels; however, the basic survey design and content did not change.

In 2006, budgetary conditions threatened the cancellation of the SIPP program. In response, the Census Bureau, with significant support from the SIPP stakeholder community, began the re-engineering process that resulted in the redesigned 2014 SIPP instrument. Due to both budgetary constraints and concerns about respondent burden, the SIPP Survey Team decided that the best approach was to redesign the survey from the ground up. One of the fundamental changes was a switch to annual interviews, revisiting sample households once per year instead of every four months.

This extension to the recall period was enabled by the introduction of an Event History Calendar (EHC) to the SIPP (Fields and Callegaro, 2007), which facilitates recall over the lengthier gaps between interviews. Additionally, the EHC design allows for a style of conversational interviewing that had previously been impossible; using the new instrument, the Field Representative (FR) can now discuss different domains in the respondent's life in the order in which the respondent wishes to discuss them (Belli, 1998).

Previously, the survey had a set of "core" questions, which were asked during each interview (i.e., every four months).<sup>4</sup> Additionally, each wave then had additional questions on specific

---

<sup>4</sup> Core questions were typically asked at the start of the interview. At the beginning of each household visit, the Census Bureau interviewer completed or updated a roster listing all household members, verified basic demographic

topics, contained in a series of “topical modules.”<sup>5</sup> SIPP stakeholders were engaged to refine the content and focus SIPP to meet critical needs. Moving to an annual interview allowed us to fold the disparate parts of the old SIPP interview into a single instrument. The new instrument contains both the “core” and the “topical module” questions.

From conversations with stakeholders, it became immediately clear that SIPP has a diverse user community, and that data users were invested in not losing content under the redesign. Given this, much of the prior SIPP content was retained in some form, and some content was expanded and updated. For example, the household relationship topical module, which asked about the detailed relationships among household members, was previously asked only once near the beginning of a panel. The detailed family relationship information resulting from this topical module was identified as some of the unique and high value content in the SIPP design. Therefore, the redesigned 2014 SIPP panel data was designed to enable the generation of detailed relationship matrices for every month of the reference period and for each wave of data collection. Similarly, fertility information was previously limited to a single topical module, administered only to women. These data provided important benchmarks, but were also deemed too limited. The 2014 panel instead asks each adult household member about their fertility, identifies multiple partner fertility, and by using dependent data, updates this information as needed in each subsequent wave’s interview.<sup>6</sup>

It is our hope that data from the 2014 SIPP panel, both variables retained from previous SIPP panels and variables that are new under the redesign, will be instrumental in future research on the topics of families, households, and relationships therein.<sup>7</sup> The following sections provide a more detailed overview of these data within the new SIPP instrument.

### Family and Household Measures within the SIPP

#### *Relationships:*

In prior iterations of the SIPP, information on relationships between household members came from four places: the relationship of each individual to the reference person, questions to identify the respondent’s coresident parents and spouse (often called parent and spouse pointers), and from the Wave 2 household relationship topical module, which asked respondents to identify the relationships of each household member to all others.<sup>8</sup> In the 2014 SIPP instrument, we use the relationship to householder at the time of the interview, and the parent and spouse identification questions, as well as a question identifying cohabiting partners to create a detailed relationship matrix for each month. These more expansive data will enable detailed measures of relationships within the household in all months of the reference period.

---

information about each person, and checked certain facts about the household. Core questions covering key areas of SIPP followed the initial questions and included Demographics; Labor Force; General Income; Assets; Health Insurance; Education; and Program Participation.

<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/tech-documentation/topical-modules.html> for the list of SIPP topical content.

<sup>6</sup> Dependent data refers to information collected in a previous interview. Dependent data are only available in Waves 2+ of any given panel.

<sup>7</sup> A content crosswalk, comparing data available in earlier SIPP panels to that available in the 2014 SIPP, is available with the Wave 1 data on the SIPP website: <http://www.census.gov/sipp/>.

<sup>8</sup> The reference person is the person (or one of the people) in whose name the house is rented or owned. If there are multiple owners or renters, the first person listed is deemed the “reference person.”

For example, the number of response categories for the relationship-to-reference-person question has been increased in the 2014 SIPP. This category expansion facilitates creating a monthly household relationship matrix, providing more information about other relatives and partners in the household. The household relationship matrix topical module collected in the 2008 SIPP panel showed 31 answer categories of relationships, which identified detailed relationships among all household members, but only at one point in time for the panel. In 2014, although we do not collect the full matrix of household relationships directly as we did in the Wave 2 relationship module, we use the following information to create a detailed monthly relationship matrix: time-varying lists of who is in the household each month, relationship to reference person at interview, spouse pointers, parent pointers, type of relationship to parent (biological, step, adoptive), marital status, marital history, cohabitation, a battery of questions about relationships to former household members, and lists of biological children from the fertility section. This monthly relationship matrix contains 19 detailed categories for every month of the panel.

Through the addition of new categories, we also gained the ability to examine the dynamics of these relationships in a way that has not been possible in the past. We added aunt/uncle, niece/nephew, and in-law categories (mother/father-in-law, daughter/son-in-law, and brother/sister-in-law), and split the husband/wife/spouse category and the boyfriend/girlfriend/partner category into same-sex and opposite-sex versions (i.e., opposite-sex spouse, same-sex spouse, opposite-sex partner, same-sex partner). The SIPP is the first of the Census Bureau's major demographic surveys to show these data this way.

The monthly spouse pointers were retained from previous panels. Marital status is available for each month, and a basic marital history is also collected. The marital history questions include times married, year of first marriage, year of current marriage for those married at interview, and measures of ever widowed and ever divorced. We also added monthly cohabitation pointers. Furthermore, although a detailed marital history topical module was not retained, it will be available from the SSA Supplement on Retirement, Pensions, and Related Content (including disability) sponsored by the Social Security Administration.

*Table 1 about here*

The data collected in Wave 1 of the 2014 SIPP panel inform a portrait of the diversity of coresidential relationships in the United States at the time of the interview.<sup>9</sup> Table 1 shows the types of households observed at the interview. For example, 21.8 percent of the sample was living in a “nuclear” family household at the time of the Wave 1 interview, consisting of married parents and their children; 9.9 percent were single parents living with children.<sup>10</sup> About 28 percent of people lived alone, and roughly one quarter lived with a spouse or partner only at the time of the interview. However, this leaves about 15 percent of people who lived in more

---

<sup>9</sup> Most interviews were conducted between February and May of 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Sociological literature has long defined “nuclear family” as a family consisting of parents and children living independently from other relatives (see, for example, Sussman, 1959). For this paper, children include biological, step-children, and adoptive children, and spouses include both opposite-sex and same-sex children.

complex households than these, including living with extended family, roommates, and assorted non-relatives.

The complexity of respondents' living arrangements are brought into sharper relief when we examine the relationship matrix for each respondent in December of 2013. Table 2 shows the breakdown of individual relationships in December of the reference year; these relationships are neither mutually exclusive nor cumulative.<sup>11</sup> Roughly 39 percent of people lived with a spouse, and about 6 percent lived with a cohabiting partner; 0.6 percent were in a coresidential relationship with a same-sex spouse or partner. About 30 percent lived with a child (either biological child, step-child, adoptive child, or foster child, or son- or daughter-in-law of any age), and 33.8 percent lived with a parent (biological, step-, adoptive, or foster parent, or parent-in-law). Roughly one quarter lived with a sibling, and 3.0 percent lived with a grandparent. About six percent lived with some other relative (aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, etc.), and 7.5 percent lived with non-relatives.<sup>12</sup>

*Table 2 about here*

Household composition is especially important for children and their outcomes (see Child Trends, 2015, for a review of the literature), and the 2014 SIPP's expanded relationship identifiers help to better illuminate information about children's living arrangements. For example, in addition to the changes to the spouse/partner answer categories from gender-specific to gender-neutral, we also changed the parent pointers that store the person number of the record holder's coresident parent(s) into gender-neutral versions of these items. In previous years (and in all other Census Bureau surveys that use parent pointers) we asked respondents first if they had a mother in the household, and then if there was a father in the household. Under this formulation, same-sex parents could only identify one of the partners as a parent. In the 2014 SIPP, the survey asks all respondents whether they have a parent in the household, and, if they say yes to a first parent, whether they have a second parent in the household, and the responses collected are not constrained by the sex of either parent.

*Table 3 about here*

Table 3 shows some key markers of children's environments as of December of 2013. Although more than 95 percent of children under the age of 18 live with at least one parent, only about two thirds live with two parents, and less than 60 percent live with two biological parents; 0.2 percent of all children under 18 live with two same-sex parents. Almost 7 percent live with a step-parent, and about one in ten live with a grandparent. Among children under 18, 65.5 percent live with a full sibling (defined as someone with whom they share two biological parents), while 17 percent live with a half sibling (or a sibling with whom they share only one biological parent). In contrast, only about 2 percent of children live with a stepsibling.

---

<sup>11</sup> These relationship reports are not mutually exclusive, meaning that if a respondent reports living with a spouse and a child, they will be counted twice in the table. However, these counts are not cumulative; for example, a coresidential parent relationship is reported once, regardless of whether the respondent lived with one or two parents.

<sup>12</sup> These estimates diverge from those presented in Schondelmyer (2017) due to divergent methodologies.

The shift from a 4-month recall period to a 12-month recall period in the new SIPP instrument prompted concerns that the interviews would not capture within-year variation within households. For example, stakeholders worried that the SIPP would no longer capture information on short-term residents of the sampled households. To address this, the 2014 SIPP added a battery of questions about short-term household members who were not available to be interviewed. These persons, who lived with respondents during the reference year but who had moved out by the time of the interview, are not included in the sample but are nonetheless important for measures of household composition and household income.

In prior SIPP panels, the short reference period was presumed to capture these intermittent residents. To address their possible exclusion given the longer reference period, the 2014 SIPP panel is the first to include direct questions about these former household members, called Type 2 people. The Type 2 question battery asks about the Type 2 person's age, sex, months in the household, income, and the relationship of every person in the household to these Type 2 people.

*Table 4 about here*

Although Type 2 people are included in the arrays of relationships shown in Tables 2 and 3, these former residents are also worth assessing independently (see Table 4). Roughly 31 million people (about 10 percent of all SIPP respondents) reported having lived with someone during the reference year who was no longer in the household by the time of the Wave 1 interview.<sup>13</sup> Of those who reported having any such coresident person, more than 1 in 5 (21.6 percent) reported that they had lived with a no-longer-resident child, while 5.1 percent reported having lived with a Type 2 spouse, and 4.6 percent reported a Type 2 cohabiting partner.<sup>14</sup> About 5 percent reported a Type 2 grandparent and 4.5 percent reported a Type 2 grandchild, and 14.5 percent reported having lived with a Type 2 sibling. About 31 percent lived with a non-relative during the reference year who is no longer resident as of the interview.<sup>15</sup>

*Dynamic Measures*

The longer reference period also enables the examination of change in SIPP households. The longer reference period in the 2014 SIPP is facilitated using an Event History Calendar (EHC). The EHC is a calendar tool used to aid respondents' recall of events, and provides a visual representation of the time and key topics which the respondent may be working to recall. In conjunction with marital, job, and programmatic changes throughout the year, the EHC also allows the collection of up to five different residence spells (and the transitions between them) for each person in the household. This enables the Census Bureau to identify people who move more than once during a single year and to capture the timing of these moves in relation to other changes observed in the EHC. The instrument also collects detailed information about each residence, and about the household members at each residence.

---

<sup>13</sup> The author's unpublished analysis of these data found that the direct questions about former residents resulted in either proximate or higher reports of such individuals than were captured indirectly in shorter reference periods in the 2008 SIPP panel.

<sup>14</sup> The "child" designation includes biological, step, and adoptive, as well as children-in-law.

<sup>15</sup> None of the estimates for the percent who lived with, respectively, a spouse, a partner, a grandparent, or a grandchild are significantly different from each other, or from 5 percent.

*Table 5 about here*

Some of these changes are shown in Table 5. For example, more than one in ten people in the SIPP sample were observed to change residences at least once over the course of 2013.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, almost 15 percent of respondents had a change in the people with whom they lived – either that someone moved into the household, moved out, or that someone was born or died.<sup>17</sup> We also observe changes in marital status for 4.5 percent of adults in the SIPP; these changes can be marriages or divorces, or entry into separation or widowhood.

*Fertility:*

The new SIPP instrument now collects a complete fertility history for all respondents aged 15 and older. We ask for children ever born/biologically fathered, and year of birth for all children, as well as a small amount of information about the other biological parent of respondents' children.<sup>18</sup> These data yield a number of new measures, including multiple partner fertility, information on childbearing unions, as well as fertility information on a larger segment of the population than has previously been collected in a nationally representative federal survey.

For example, for the first time in a nationally representative federal survey, the 2014 SIPP collected information about multiple partner fertility. First, the survey includes a direct question about multiple partner fertility: “Do all of your biological children share the same biological mother/father?” Additionally, for all children reported by a respondent, the fertility sequence groups children by shared other parent. This information is collected regardless of whether the children and/or other parent are coresident in the interviewed household. These data allow the measurement of not only multiple partner fertility, but also half and full sibling relationships within and across households. This is a significant improvement in the ability to accurately consider the complexity and diversity in parent-child and sibling family relationships.

Moreover, information about the other parent is collected regardless of whether the respondent has multiple partner fertility. This information about the childbearing partnerships associated with each adults' children informs the question of whether currently partnered adults also have children in common.<sup>19,20</sup> For adults not living with any children, this means that we can know whether, for example, the three children that a wife reported having had are the same three

---

<sup>16</sup> Many respondents also reported being in a new residence as of January of the reference year. These reports are excluded from this count, which is why this number deviates from other published estimates of residential change.

<sup>17</sup> This estimate diverges from those presented in Schondelmyer (2017) due to diverging methodologies.

<sup>18</sup> Prior to the 2014 panel, the SIPP Fertility History Topical Module collected the number of children ever born for both men and women, but no additional information for men. Additionally, fertility questions were not asked of any never-married males under the age of 18. Women 15 and up who have had children were asked the month and year of their first and last births, and the residence of those children. These data were collected once in each panel.

<sup>19</sup> Note that the fertility questions capture shared fertility only between opposite-sex partners. Due to instrument and database limitations, as well as concerns about personally identifiable information, we do not currently allow same-sex couples to mutually identify as biological parents in the fertility section of the instrument.

<sup>20</sup> While the traditional SIPP fertility topical module provided details about a woman's fertility even if the children were not in the household, it did not identify childbearing unions unless the children were coresident at the time of the interview.



children that her husband reported. Previous data would only allow speculation as to whether any or all of those children were shared.

The 2014 SIPP additionally includes information about men's fertility. Although past iterations of the SIPP instrument have included some information on men's fertility, the 2014 SIPP panel is the first time that the SIPP has collected complete fertility histories for respondents of both sexes, which will yield parallel information for men and women. This allows not only a more complete picture of men's fertility, but will also permit gendered comparisons of family complexity and intra-household dynamics. By including this parallel data for both men and women, these data will additionally permit analyses of the validity of male fertility data, which has often been deemed unreliable (see, for example, Rendall et al., 1999).

*Table 6 about here*

Table 6 shows a subset of the available fertility information. For example, about 64 percent of adults aged 15 and older have biological children. Additionally, about 10 percent of adults have children with more than one person, and about a quarter of adults are grandparents. Distinctions are evident by parent gender, however. For example, more women report having had biological children than do men, and a higher percentage of women are grandmothers than is true of men who are grandfathers.<sup>21</sup>

*Why these distinctions matter:*

While the nuance of family and personal characteristics and experiences are important in their own right, they also can inform the economic literature. Table 7 shows the association between economic well-being and a diverse selection of the measures of family complexity previously discussed. These models were chosen simply to demonstrate the importance of family complexity for economic outcomes. The models and results are not intended to inform a specific research agenda, but instead to promote the inclusion of such measures in a diversity of models.

The outcome of interest in all models is an annual measure of poverty at the household level in 2013.<sup>22</sup> This simple measure of whether the household's income is above the federal poverty line (FPL) for a household of that size provides a very generic measure of economic well-being, and is used solely as a means to demonstrate the importance of family complexity for economic research.

The predictors of interest were chosen to demonstrate the importance of a wide variety of family complexity measures. Again, there was not a specific research purpose; the predictors could have been any of a variety of measures. These predictors were chosen to highlight the uniform importance of fertility, relationships, and household change, for both adults and children. First, I model the relationship between multiple partner fertility (or MPF, which is when a parent has

---

<sup>21</sup> See Monte (2017b) for additional details about differences in men's and women's reports of fertility: <https://www.census.gov/library/working-papers/2017/demo/SEHSD-WP2017-45.html>.

<sup>22</sup> The SIPP provides multiple measures of poverty. In this paper, I use household poverty because family poverty measures only include the income and economic burden of individuals related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Given the variety of families and households included here, the household poverty measures, which includes everyone living in a residence, are believed to be a more complete representation of these households' economic well-being.

children with more than one partner) and poverty, as MPF is often unobservable in other datasets unless the children in question live in the household. Second, I model household changes, to demonstrate the importance of the longitudinal and change measures available to users of the SIPP. Third, I look at childbearing unions as a demonstration of the importance of the detailed information about how people are related to each other. And finally, I look at multigenerational households, as a way to show the importance of examining families and households beyond just parents and children.

All models control for the gender, age, race, ethnicity, and household composition of the respondents. Models using adults additionally control for the cumulative fertility, marital status, and educational attainment.

*Table 7 about here*

Models 1 and 2 show results for adults not living alone.<sup>23</sup> The variable of interest in Model 1 is whether either the respondent or their partner (if applicable) have children with more than one person. Multiple partner fertility is shown to be significantly associated with increased odds of household poverty. Model 2 examines the import of changes in household composition in 2013 – either people moving in or people moving out over the course of the year. Similar to MPF, these compositional changes are also significantly associated with increased odds of household poverty.

Both of these models account for the “usual suspects” often included as controls, such as household composition and total fertility. Even so, however, the additional factors of a complex fertility history or change in household composition carry weight in explaining household poverty. This suggests that the nuanced family complexity measures available in the SIPP can and should inform economic analyses.

Model 3 includes only parents: adults who reported having given birth to or biologically fathered children. The variable of interest is whether the respondent is in a childbearing union with a partner, meaning that the respondent both has a partner, and that they and their partner have at least one biological child together. Even net of controls for marriage, being in a childbearing union is shown to be associated with lower odds of household poverty.

Model 4 uses only children under 18, and examines the association between multigenerational households and poverty for children. Given the age of this particular sample, marital status, fertility, and educational attainment are excluded from these models. Multigenerational households include at least three generations – the child, their parent or parents, and at least one grandparent - although there may also be additional people in the households labeled multigenerational. These results show that, although we often think of extended family homes as protective for children (see Bengtson, 2001, for a discussion), the families that are in this type of living arrangement have higher odds of living in poverty.

---

<sup>23</sup> Adults living alone are excluded as these models are intended to show the significance of assorted measures of household complexity.

These measures, which include abstract markers of fertility regardless of parent gender or presence of children in the home, as well as longitudinal measures of households, and detailed accounting of coresidential networks, show the importance of family complexity in economic research. These models do not pretend to explain causality, but they demonstrate that economic measures and personal experiences (not just demographic characteristics) are interrelated in significant ways. Given the significance of these measures in a national sample, the breadth and depth of the SIPP offers great potential for deeper examination of economic predictors and outcomes.

#### The SIPP and the Study of Complexity

The design goals for the new SIPP instrument are focused on offering policymakers and researchers data that can be used to provide nationally representative estimates for the evaluation of annual and sub-annual dynamics of income, the movements into and out of government transfer programs, the effect on family and social context of individuals and households, and their interactions. The first National Academies SIPP report emphasized that SIPP should remain flexible to respond to changing requirements associated with measuring the household economic situation of the population (see recommendation 2-1 of Citro and Kalton, 1993). The changes enacted in the 2014 SIPP panel demonstrate adherence to that goal.<sup>24</sup>

These changes to SIPP also reflect a commitment to continued efforts to improve the data collected in the Federal Statistical System. Through the detailed data collected on relationships, residential dynamics, and expanded fertility information, the 2014 SIPP will provide a significantly improved source of longitudinal information about each interviewed household member over the course of four years. These new data offer a rich source of information to study the dynamic nature of family living arrangements and relationships, and further the mission to provide this information on its own merit and in a data system that allows household economic situations to be more clearly understood.

---

<sup>24</sup> This recommendation reads: “The National Academies recommend that SIPP focus on the two primary goals of providing improved information on the distribution of income and other economic resources for people and families and on eligibility for and participation in government assistance programs. Within these two goals most attention should be paid to improving the information for people who are economically at risk. A third important but subordinate goal is for SIPP to have a capability to respond to current policy needs for data in topical areas that are related to the core subjects of SIPP.”

## References

- Belli, R. F. (1998). "The structure of autobiographical memory and the event history calendar. Potential improvements in the quality of retrospective reports in surveys." *Memory*, 6: 383-406.
- Bengtson, V. L. (2001). "Beyond the Nuclear Family: The Increasing Importance of Multigenerational Bonds." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63: 1-16.
- Cancian, M., Meyer, D.R., and Cook, S.T. (2011). "The Evolution of Family Complexity from the Perspective of Nonmarital Children." *Demography*, 48(3): 957-982.
- Carlson, M.J. and Meyer, D.R. (Eds.) (2014). "Family Complexity, Poverty, and Public Policy [Special Issue]." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 654(1).
- Child Trends. (2015). "Family Structure: Indicators of Child and Youth Well-being." Downloaded on October 1, 2017, from: [https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/59\\_Family\\_Structure.pdf](https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/59_Family_Structure.pdf).
- Citro C. and Kalton, G. Eds.(1993) *The Future of the Survey of Income and Program Participation. Panel to Evaluate the SIPP, Committee on National Statistics. National Academy Press, Washington D.C.*
- Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2001). "Counting Couples: Improving Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage, and Coabitation Data in the Federal Statistical System." [http://www.childstats.gov/pdf/other\\_pubs/ccr.pdf](http://www.childstats.gov/pdf/other_pubs/ccr.pdf)
- Fields, J.M., and Callegaro, M. (2007). "Background and Planning for Incorporating an Event History Calendar into the Re-Engineered SIPP." Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology, Alexandria, VA. [http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/programs-surveys/sipp/about/Re-engineered-SIPP/Federal\\_Committee\\_on\\_Statistical\\_Methodology-Background\\_and\\_Planning\\_for\\_an\\_Event\\_History\\_Calendar\\_into\\_SIPP\\_12.20.07.pdf](http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/programs-surveys/sipp/about/Re-engineered-SIPP/Federal_Committee_on_Statistical_Methodology-Background_and_Planning_for_an_Event_History_Calendar_into_SIPP_12.20.07.pdf)
- Guzzo, K.B. (2014). "New Partners, More Kids: Multiple-Partner Fertility in the United States." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 654(1): 66-86.
- Guzzo, K.B. and Furstenberg, F.F. (2007). "Multipartnered Fertility Among American Men." *Demography*, 44(3): 583-601.
- Hobbs, F. (2005). "Examining American Household Composition: 1990 and 2000." *Census 2000 Special Reports, CENSR-24, U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C..*
- Klerman, L.V. (2007). "Multipartnered Fertility: Can it be reduced?" *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 39(1): 56-59.

- Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Osterman, M.J.K., et al. (2017). "Births: Final data for 2015." National Vital Statistics Report, 66(1). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.
- McLanahan, S., and Percheski, C. (2008). "Family structure and the reproduction of inequalities." Annual Review of Sociology, 34: 257-276.
- Monte, L.M. (2017a). "Fertility Research Brief." Current Population Reports, P70BR-147, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC:  
<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2017/demo/p70br-147.pdf>.
- Monte, L.M. (2017b). "Multiple Partner Fertility in the United States: A Demographic Portrait." Working paper #SEHSD-WP2017-45, available from  
<https://www.census.gov/library/working-papers/2017/demo/SEHSD-WP2017-45.html>.
- Mykyta, L., and Pilkauskas, N. (2016). "Household composition and family wellbeing: Exploring the relationship between doubling up and hardship." U.S. Census Bureau, SEHSD Working Paper #2016-10, downloaded from:  
<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2016/demo/SEHSD-WP2016-10.pdf>.
- National Center for Family and Marriage Research. (2012). Counting Couples, Counting Families: Executive Summary. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University.  
<https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/college-of-arts-and-sciences/NCFMR/documents/Research%20Conferences/Counting%20Couples/Executive-Summary.pdf>.
- Rendall, M.S., Clarke, L., Peters, H.E., Ranjit, N., and Verropoulou, G. (1999). "Incomplete Reporting of Men's Fertility in the United States and Britain: A Research Note." Demography, 36(1): 135-144.
- Schondelmyer, E. (2017). "Demographics and Living Arrangements: 2013." Current Population Reports, P70BR-148, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC:  
<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2017/demo/p70br-148.pdf>.
- Sussman, M.B. (1959). "The Isolated Nuclear Family: Fact or Fiction." Social Problems, 6(4): 333-340.

**TABLE 1: Household types at interview (February-June 2014)**

(Numbers in thousands)

	Number	Percent	Margin of Error (1)
Total households	125,906	100.0	0.0
"Nuclear family" households (2)	27,418	21.8	0.4
"Nuclear families" including cohabiting family households	30,209	24.0	0.5
Single parents living with children	12,428	9.9	0.3
Persons living alone (3)	35,564	28.2	0.5
Couple households: spouses/partners only, no children (3)	31,556	25.1	0.6
Extended kin households (4)	10,398	8.3	0.3
3-generation households (5)	841	0.7	0.1
Roommate households (6)	2,925	2.3	0.2
Other configurations (7)	5,617	4.5	0.3

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 Panel, Wave 1

(1) This number, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, represents the 95-percent confidence interval around the estimate.

(2) This sample is limited to parent householders living with children; the children may be of any age and includes biological, step-, and adoptive children. Spouses may be opposite-sex or same-sex.

(3) Limited to persons aged 15+.

(4) Persons in such households may include parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, siblings, in-laws, and other relatives.

(5) Limited to households containing three generations, with no other residents: child/grandchild, parent/child, grandparent/parent.

(6) Limited to persons living only with non-relatives categorized as roommates or roomer/boarders.

(7) The "other" category includes cohabiting "nuclear" families.

**TABLE 2: Household composition (December 2013)**

(Numbers in thousands)

	Number	Percent	Margin of Error (1)
Total population	311,768	100.0	0.0
Household relationships (2)			
Lives with a spouse (3)	122,232	39.2	0.4
Lives with an unmarried partner (3)	19,132	6.1	0.3
Lives with a same-sex spouse or partner	1,843	0.6	0.1
Lives with child who points to them as parent (4)	92,784	29.8	0.4
Lives with parent (5)	105,418	33.8	0.2
Lives with sibling (6)	78,570	25.2	0.3
Lives with grandparent	9,439	3.0	0.2
Lives with grandchild	7,657	2.5	0.1
Lives with other relative (7)	19,739	6.3	0.4
Lives with non-relative (8)	23,487	7.5	0.4

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 Panel, Wave 1

- (1) This number, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, represents the 95-percent confidence interval around the estimate.
- (2) The relationships shown are not mutually exclusive.
- (3) Includes both opposite- and same-sex relationships.
- (4) Includes biological, step, adoptive, and foster children, as well as children-in-law. This measure reflects only that the respondent lived with at least one child; the respondent may live with more than one, but that is not measured here.
- (5) Includes biological, step, adoptive, and foster parents, as well as parents-in-law. This measure reflects only that the respondent lived with at least one parent; the respondent may live with more than one, but that is not measured here.
- (6) Includes biological, step, and adoptive siblings, as well as brothers- and sisters-in-law.
- (7) Includes aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, and other relative who is not a parent, child, sibling, grandparent or grandchild.
- (8) Includes roommates, housemates, roomers, boarders, and "other non-relatives."

**TABLE 3: Children's families and living arrangements (December 2013)**

(Numbers in thousands)

	Number	Percent	Margin of Error (1)
All persons <18	73,541	100.0	0.0
Lives with at least one parent	71,015	96.6	0.4
Lives with two parents (2)	49,057	66.7	1.0
Lives with two biological parents	43,406	59.0	0.9
Lives with two same-sex parents	115	0.2	0.1
Lives with at least one step-parent	5,010	6.8	0.5
Lives with at least one grandparent	7,455	10.1	0.7
Lives with full sibling(s) (3)	48,186	65.5	1.0
Lives with step sibling(s)	1,643	2.2	0.4
Lives with half sibling(s) (4)	12,488	17.0	1.0

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 Panel, Wave 1

- (1) This number, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, represents the 95-percent confidence interval around the estimate.
- (2) Includes both opposite- and same-sex relationships.
- (3) Full siblings are siblings with whom the child shares two biological parents.
- (4) Half siblings are siblings with whom the child shares only one biological parent.



**TABLE 4: Transient relationships over the reference year (Calendar year 2013)**

(Numbers in thousands)

	Number	Percent	Margin of Error (1)
Population who report having lived with someone during the year who is no longer living there at interview	31,229	100.0	0.0
Relationships to these household members (2)			
Lived with a spouse (3)	1,599	5.1	0.5
Lived with an unmarried partner (3)	1,439	4.6	0.5
Lived with child (4)	6,760	21.6	1.4
Lived with parent (5)	5,243	16.8	1.3
Lived with sibling (6)	4,531	14.5	1.1
Lived with grandparent	1,528	4.9	0.7
Lived with grandchild	1,395	4.5	0.6
Lived with other relative (7)	5,025	16.1	1.5
Lived with non-relative (8)	9,637	30.9	1.9

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 Panel, Wave 1

- (1) This number, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, represents the 95-percent confidence interval around the estimate.
- (2) The relationships shown are not mutually exclusive.
- (3) Includes both opposite- and same-sex relationships.
- (4) Includes biological, step, adopted, and foster children, as well as children-in-law. This measure reflects only that the respondent lived with at least one child; the respondent may live with more than one, but that is not measured here.
- (5) Includes biological, step, adoptive, and foster parents, as well as parents-in-law. This measure reflects only that the respondent lived with at least one parent; the respondent may live with more than one, but that is not measured here.
- (6) Includes biological, step, and adoptive siblings, as well as brothers- and sisters-in-law.
- (7) Includes aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, and other relative who is not a parent, child, sibling, grandparent or grandchild.
- (8) Includes roommates, housemates, roomers, boarders, and "other non-relatives."

**TABLE 5: Change observed over the reference year (Calendar year 2013)**

(Numbers in thousands)

	Number	Percent	Margin of Error (1)
Total population	311,768	100.0	0.0
Persons who experienced a change in residence	37,958	12.2	0.4
Persons who experienced a change in household composition	46,354	14.9	0.5
All adults aged 15+	250,746	100.0	0.0
Adults who experienced a change in marital status	11,337	4.5	0.2

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 Panel, Wave 1

(1) This number, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, represents the 95-percent confidence interval around the estimate.

**TABLE 6: Fertility at interview (February-June 2014)**

(Numbers in thousands)

	Number	Percent	Margin of Error (1)
All adults aged 15+	252,089	100.0	0.0
Is a parent (2)	165,880	65.8	0.4
Has biological child(ren)	161,674	64.1	0.4
Has biological child(ren) with current spouse or partner (3)	91,800	36.4	0.5
Has biological child(ren) with more than one person	25,404	10.1	0.3
Is a grandparent (4)	69,518	27.6	0.3
All women aged 15+	130,253	100.0	0.0
Is a parent (2)	91,213	70.0	0.5
Has biological child(ren)	89,523	68.7	0.5
Has biological child(ren) with current spouse or partner (3)	45,877	35.2	0.5
Has biological child(ren) with more than one person	14,905	11.4	0.4
Is a grandparent (4)	40,277	30.9	0.4
All men aged 15+	121,836	100.0	0.0
Is a parent (2)	74,668	61.3	0.5
Has biological child(ren)	72,151	59.2	0.5
Has biological child(ren) with current spouse or partner (3)	45,923	37.7	0.5
Has biological child(ren) with more than one person	10,498	8.6	0.3
Is a grandparent (4)	29,241	24.0	0.4

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 Panel, Wave 1

(1) This number, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, represents the 95-percent confidence interval around the estimate.

(2) Includes biological, step, adoptive, and other parents.

(3) This is the sample who both has a coresident spouse or partner and who has biological children with that spouse or partner. Due to limitations of the data, childbearing unions are limited to opposite sex couples. Differences in sample sizes between men and women are due to weighting.

(4) These estimates differ from estimates of grandparents presented elsewhere due to differences in methodology. SIPP privacy protections do not allow respondents to identify as grandparents unless they are at least 30 years old and have a child who is at least 15. Therefore, most SIPP publications estimate grandparenthood as the percentage of adults aged 30+, with children aged 15+, who are grandparents. However, for this table, the population of grandparents is compared to the full population of adults, defined as anyone aged 15+.

**TABLE 7: Logistic regressions predicting household poverty by household characteristics/composition**

	Adults not living alone						Parents			Children		
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	Odds			Odds			Odds			Odds		
	Estimate	Ratio	P<.05	Estimate	Ratio	P<.05	Estimate	Ratio	P<.05	Estimate	Ratio	P<.05
Intercept	7.63	X	<.0001	7.70	X	<.0001	8.26	X	<.0001	0.18	X	0.1716
Respondent or spouse/partner (if present) has children with more than one partner	0.19	1.20	0.0034									
Household composition changes in 2013				0.42	1.52	<.0001						
Respondent is in a child-bearing union							-0.27	0.76	<.0001			
Respondent lives in a multigenerational household (1)										0.62	1.86	<.0001
Female (0/1, 1=yes)	0.19	1.21	<.0001	0.19	1.21	<.0001	0.22	1.25	<.0001	-0.02	0.98	0.6310
Age (continuous, in years)	-0.02	0.98	<.0001	-0.02	0.98	<.0001	-0.02	0.98	<.0001	-0.09	0.91	<.0001
Married (0/1, 1=yes)	-0.79	0.46	<.0001	-0.77	0.47	<.0001	-0.74	0.48	<.0001		(omitted)	
Children ever born/fathered (continuous)	0.09	1.10	<.0001	0.10	1.11	<.0001	0.09	1.09	<.0001		(omitted)	
White alone (0/1, 1=yes) (2)	-0.46	0.63	<.0001	-0.48	0.62	<.0001	-0.49	0.61	<.0001	-0.55	0.58	<.0001
Hispanic Origin (0/1, 1=yes) (3)	0.31	1.37	<.0001	0.33	1.39	<.0001	0.28	1.32	<.0001	0.88	2.40	<.0001
Educational Attainment (categorical, higher values = more education)	-0.19	0.83	<.0001	-0.19	0.82	<.0001	-0.20	0.82	<.0001		(omitted)	
Adults in household (continuous)	-0.43	0.65	<.0001	-0.45	0.64	<.0001	-0.45	0.64	<.0001	-0.57	0.56	<.0001
Children in household (continuous)	0.20	1.23	<.0001	0.20	1.22	<.0001	0.23	1.26	<.0001	0.29	1.33	<.0001

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 Panel, Wave 1

X = Not applicable

- (1) A multigenerational household includes at least three generations, but may include additional relatives and non-relatives.
- (2) Race is considered independently of ethnicity.
- (3) Persons of Hispanic origin may be any race.