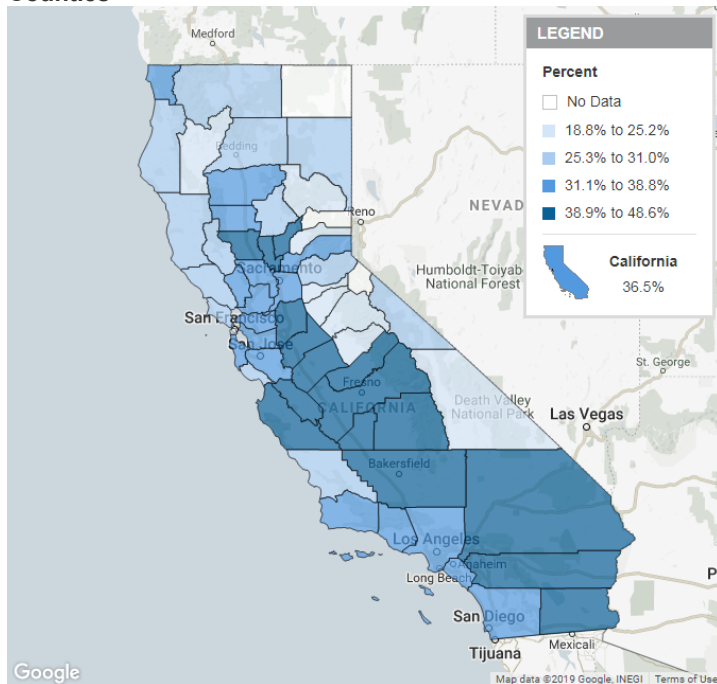


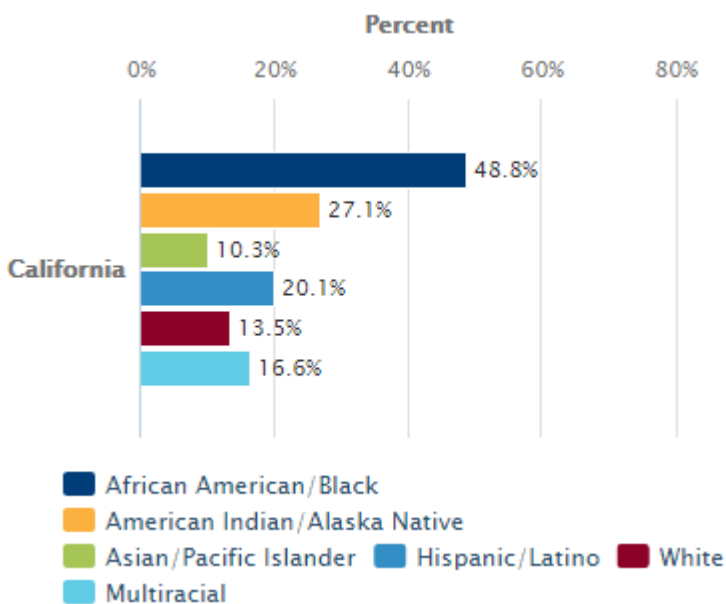
## Family Structure in California

Percentage of Households with Children: 2010-2014; Showing Counties



**Definition:** Estimated percentage of households with and without children under age 18 (e.g., in 2010-2014, 36.5% of California households had children under age 18).  
**Data Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#) (Dec. 2015).

Children in Female-Headed Households, by Race/Ethnicity: 2010-2014



### What It Is

On kidsdata.org, [measures of family structure](#) include: households with and without children under age 18; family structure for children, overall, and by race/ethnicity; and children in the care of grandparents. These data are estimates based on the U.S. Census Bureau's [American Community Survey](#) (ACS). Data are available for:

- Cities, school districts, and counties with 65,000+ residents, as single-year estimates;
- Cities, school districts, and counties with 10,000+ residents, as 5-year estimates (however, for family structure by race/ethnicity, data are provided as 5-year estimates for regions of 50,000+ residents); and
- Legislative districts, as 5-year estimates.

### Why This Topic Is Important

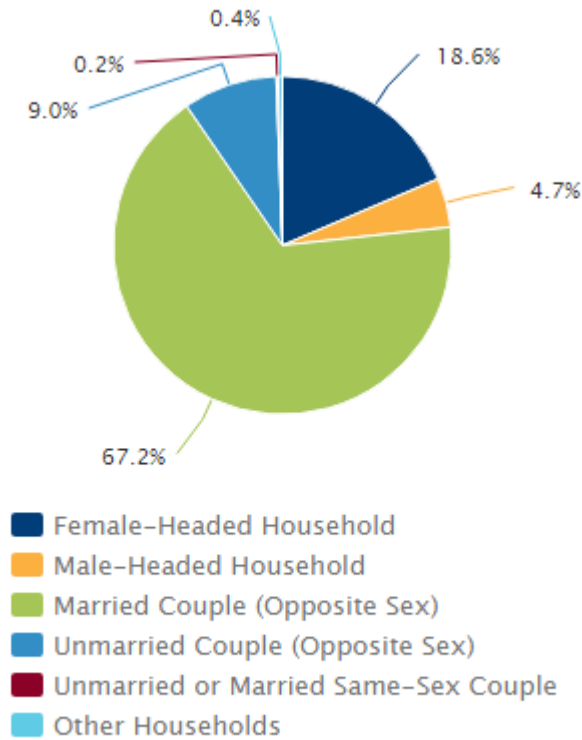
Child well being is influenced by the family environment and the presence of caring, stable adults. Family structure and the nature of the family relationships, in particular, are important factors in child development (1, 2). For example, single-parent families are more likely than two-parent families to have lower incomes and experience financial hardship (3). Financial hardship can affect families' ability to provide the environment and experiences a child needs for optimal cognitive, emotional, and physical development (4). In addition to adequate family income, positive child development is influenced by factors such as parental affection, responsiveness, and consistency, as well as high quality relationships between parents or significant adults (2). These factors are more critical than the family structure itself (3).

Over the past 30 years, the percentage of children living in households with two married parents has declined nationwide, while the percentage in families headed by a single parent or grandparents has increased (3, 5). Though it is not clear if the percentage of children living with same-sex partners has increased in recent decades (due to data limitations), research shows that children in these families are as well adjusted as children with heterosexual parents (2). Studies indicate that child development is not influenced by the gender or sexual orientation of parents (2).

### How Children Are Faring

**Definition:** Estimated percentage of children under age 18 in households, by household type and race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2010-2014, 48.8% of African American/black children in California lived in female-headed households).  
**Data Source:** [Population Reference Bureau](#), analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's [American Community Survey](#) microdata files (Mar. 2016).

### Family Structure for Children: 2014 California



**Definition:** Estimated percentage of children under age 18 in households, by household type (e.g., in 2014, 18.6% of California children lived in female-headed households).  
**Data Source:** [Population Reference Bureau](#), analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's [American Community Survey](#) microdata files (Nov. 2015).

In 2014, more than one-third of California households (36%) included children, similar to previous years. About two-thirds (67%) of California children lived in households headed by married couples of the opposite sex in 2014; the remaining percentage lived in households headed by single women (19%), single men (5%), unmarried couples of the opposite sex (9%), and married or unmarried same-sex couples (0.2%). Family structure varies by race/ethnicity. In 2010-14, an estimated 10% of Asian/Pacific Islander children in California lived in households headed by single women, while the same was true for about 49% of African American/black children. In 2014, an estimated 3% of California's children lived in the care of grandparents, similar to previous years, but percentages vary by county.

*View references for this text and additional research on this topic:*  
<https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/8/family-structure/summary>



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