

U.S. Single Parent Households

[The following was submitted to POST staff from My Safe Harbor]

A report from the U.S. Census Bureau reveals that 62% of new moms in their early 20s are unmarried. The report also found that 36% of all moms were unwed in 2011, up from 31% in 2005. In families with incomes of less than \$10,000, that number goes up to 69%.

Single moms are one of the most disadvantaged groups in the U.S. — nearly 30% of their families live under the poverty line, according to the US Census, as compared with 62% of families with married parents.

- 18.4% of all births in the U.S. in 1980 were to unmarried women
- 40.6% of all births in the U.S. in 2008 were to unmarried women

In 1960, just 5 million children under 18 lived with only their mother. By 1980 that number had more than doubled. Today, according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 19 million children live in single-mother families, up from 17 million in 2000. In some school districts today, including several in New York and Michigan, the majority of families are led by a single mother.

Twenty five million children are growing up without fathers in the home. That's 40% of the kids in America. As reported by the Center for Children and Families:

- 40% of all live births in the US are to single mothers.
- 90% of welfare recipients are single mothers.
- 70% of gang members, high school dropouts, teen suicides, teen pregnancies and teen substance abusers come from single mother homes.

Statistically, a child in a single-parent household is far more likely to experience violence, commit suicide, continue a cycle of poverty, become drug dependent, commit a crime or perform below his peers in education.

According to the Single Parent Success Foundation, a national nonprofit that encourages educational opportunities for single parents:

- 63% of suicides nationwide are individuals from single-parent families.
- 75% of children in chemical dependency hospitals are from single-parent families.
- More than half of all youths incarcerated in the U.S. lived in one-parent families as a child

Thirty-seven percent of families led by single mothers nationwide live in poverty. Comparatively, only 6.8% of families with married parents live in poverty, according to data from 2009 compiled by the Heritage Foundation.

Consider these dire statistics from single parent households:*

- 63% of youth suicides (Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of the Census)
- 90% of all homeless and runaway children
- 85% of all children that exhibit behavioral disorders (Source: Center for Disease Control)
- 80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger (Source: Criminal Justice & Behavior, Vol 14, p. 403-26, 1978.)
- 71% of all high school dropouts (Source: National Principals Association Report on the State of High Schools.)
- 75% of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers (Source: Rainbows for All God's Children.)
- 70% of juveniles in state-operated institutions (Source: U.S. Dept. of Justice, Special Report, Sept 1988)
- 85% of all youths sitting in prisons (Source: Fulton County Georgia jail populations, Texas Department of Corrections 1992)

*U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2011 American Community Surveys, 2012 Condition of Children in Orange County, America's Families and Living Arrangements: 2012 by Jonathan Vespa and Jamie M. Lewis



Becky Ahlberg, Executive Director

819 South Harbor Blvd., Anaheim, CA 92805
714.399.0590 x 208 becky@mysafeharbor.org