Recently Divorced Adults with Resident Minor Children

The U.S. divorce rate has dropped by nearly 25% since 1979 (FP 15-18) with 17.5 women divorcing per 1,000 married women in 2014. Many of these divorces are among parents, yet there is no recent data on parenthood status among divorced individuals (Koichi, 2010). This profile addresses this gap by using data from the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS). 1-year estimates identify whether there are children present in the household among individuals ages 15-60 who experienced a divorce ("divorced") in the past year. Some divorces have nonresident children, so these estimates of the proportion of recent divorces involving children are conservative. We compare divorces to their counterparts: married parents who did not experience a divorce in the past year ("consensual married"). We also examine the prevalence of resident minor children among recent divorces by race/ethnicity and educational attainment.

Household Presence and Age of Minor Biological Children

Reports of Minor Children

- In 2014, 38% of all recent divorces reported having at least one minor biological child living in their household.

- Among those consistently married, 60% had at least one minor child.

Minor Children by Age Group

- Of those who have a biological child in the household, the share of minor children in different age groups varies between recently divorced and consistently married individuals.

- Over four out of five (84%) recently divorced parents have a preschool-aged child in the household, as do 67% of consistently married parents. One in five (21%) of divorced and 15% of married parents have a school-aged child in the household.

- A greater share of consistently married parents (21%) only have school age children (ages 6-17) living in the household, in contrast to 18% of divorced parents.

Recent Divorces with Resident Minor Children

Race & Ethnicity

- Minimal race/ethnic variation exists in the share of recent divorces living with minor children, with the exception of Asian parents.

- Almost 40% of recently divorced Hispanics report a minor child in the home compared to only 30% of Asian parents.

- Comparable shares of Black and White divorcees report having a minor child in the home (34% and 36%, respectively).

Educational Attainment

- A curvilinear association between education and the presence of children in the household exists.

- The proportion of recent divorces with a minor biological child is highest among those without a high school degree (37%) and those with a college degree.

- The proportion of recent divorces with a minor biological child is lowest among those with only a high school degree (30%).

References:


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