

New Family Measures: An Examination of Direct Measures of Cohabitation and Parent Pointers

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Background

Introduction

To better track changes in family structure, the Census Bureau has added two measures to the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) of the Current Population Survey (CPS).

1. A direct question on cohabitation allows the identification of couples in which neither is the household head (Kreider 2008).
2. A second 'parent-pointer' identifies each parent as either a biological, step, or adoptive parent. Previously, the CPS identified only one parent and that parent's spouse—children residing with two unmarried parents were counted as living with only one unmarried parent.

Current Study

This research uses the 2008 ASEC to examine the differences in children's living arrangements focusing on parental marital and cohabitation status. We examine the living arrangements of children, specifically distinguishing children according to race/ethnicity.

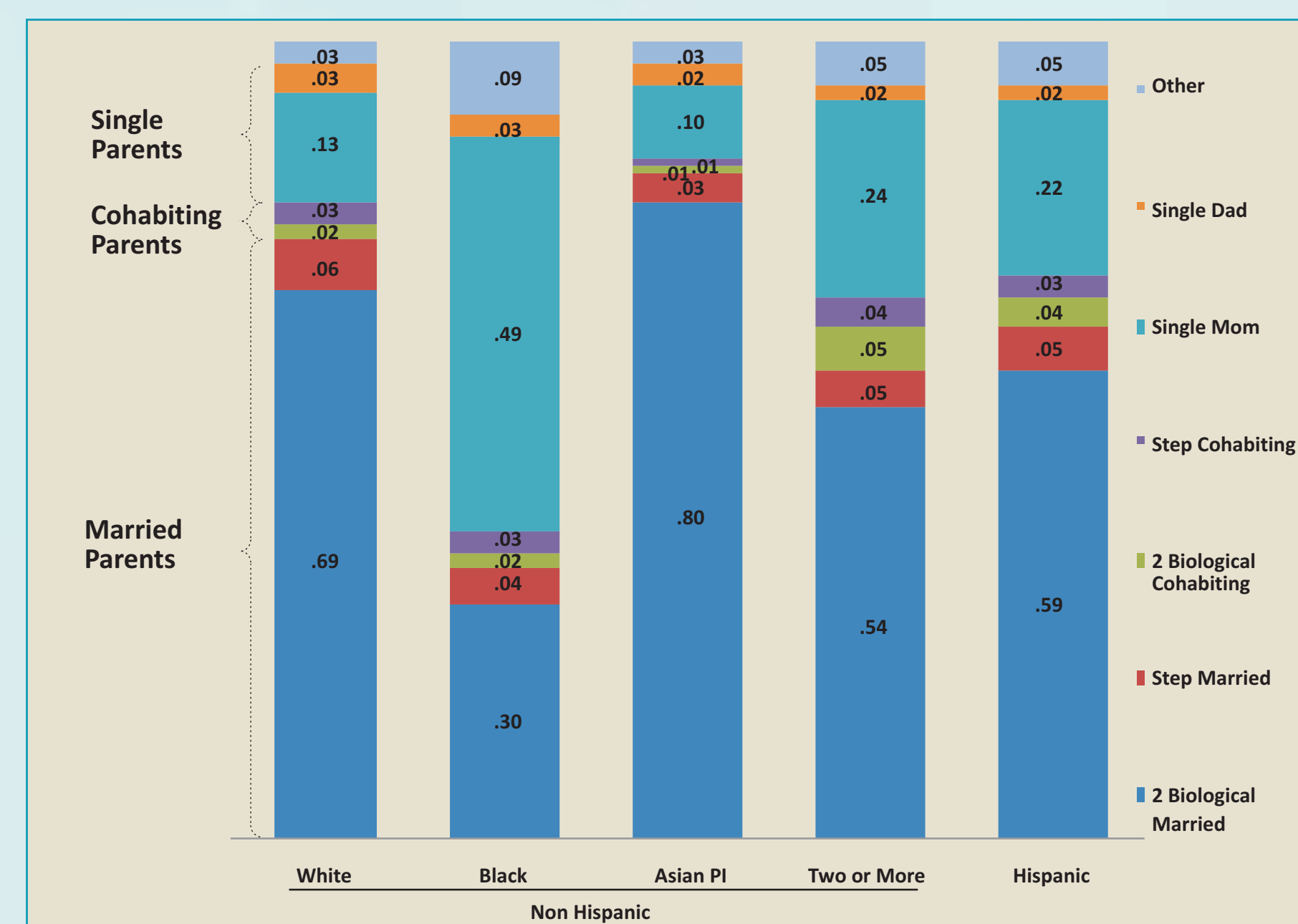
Data and Methods

Following Davern et al (2007) we apply estimated survey design-based estimators with strata as the lowest level of identifiable geography in the public use CPS file and cluster at the household with children as the level of analysis. All children ages 17 and under are included, regardless of relationship to household head. Unweighted N= 60,795.

Sources

- Casper, Lynne and Suzanne Bianchi. 2002. Continuity and Change in the American Family. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kreider, Rose. 2008. Improvements to Demographic Household Data in the Current Population Survey: 2007. Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division Working Paper.

What are the differences in family structure by race and ethnicity?

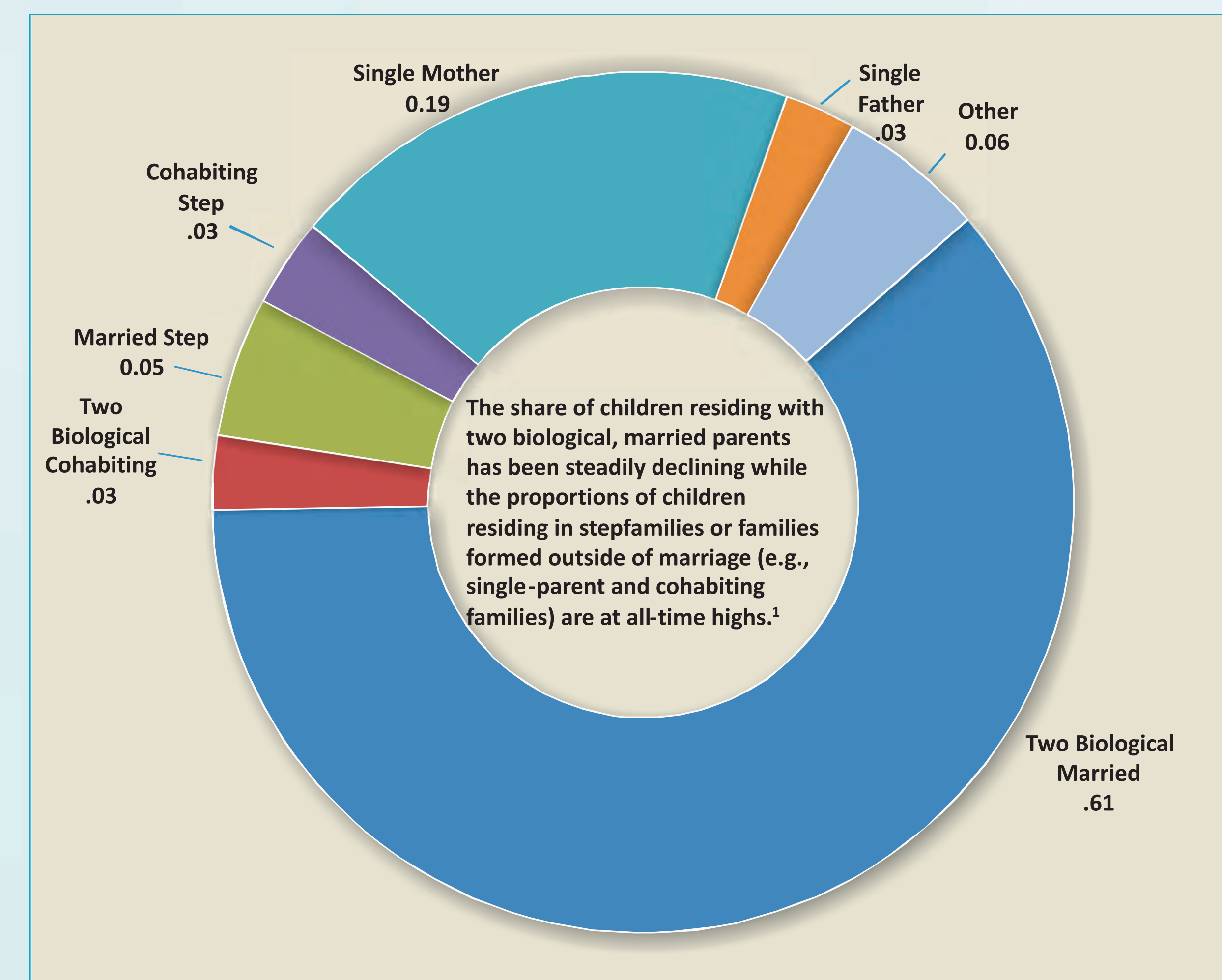


The majority of Hispanic, non-Hispanic white, and Asian/Pacific Islander children live in two married parent families.

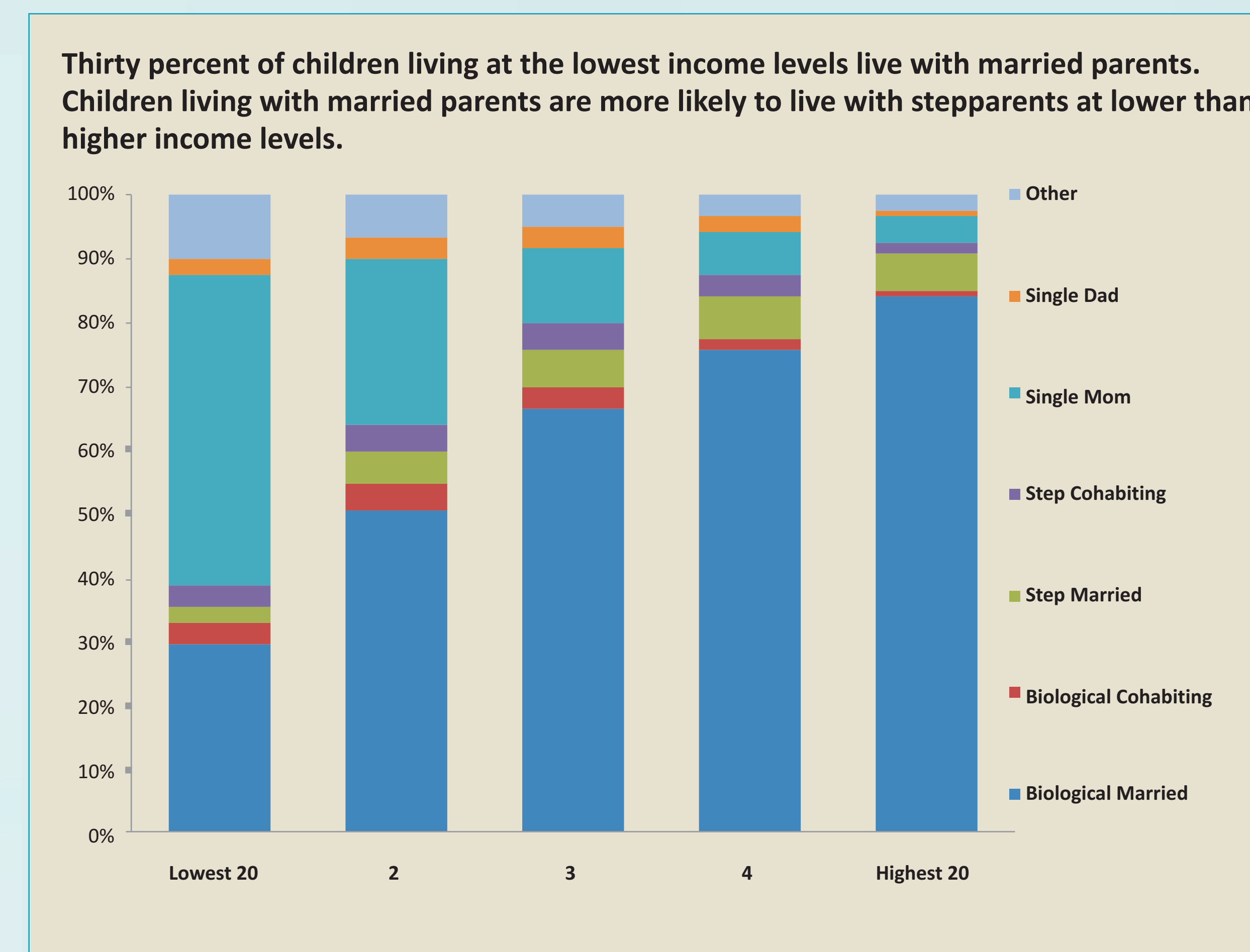
Only a third of non-Hispanic black children live in two married parent families. Non-Hispanic black and white children do not differ with respect to the proportion living in cohabiting families, but Hispanic children are more likely to live with cohabiting parents compared to other groups.

White children are more likely to live in married stepfamilies than any other group.

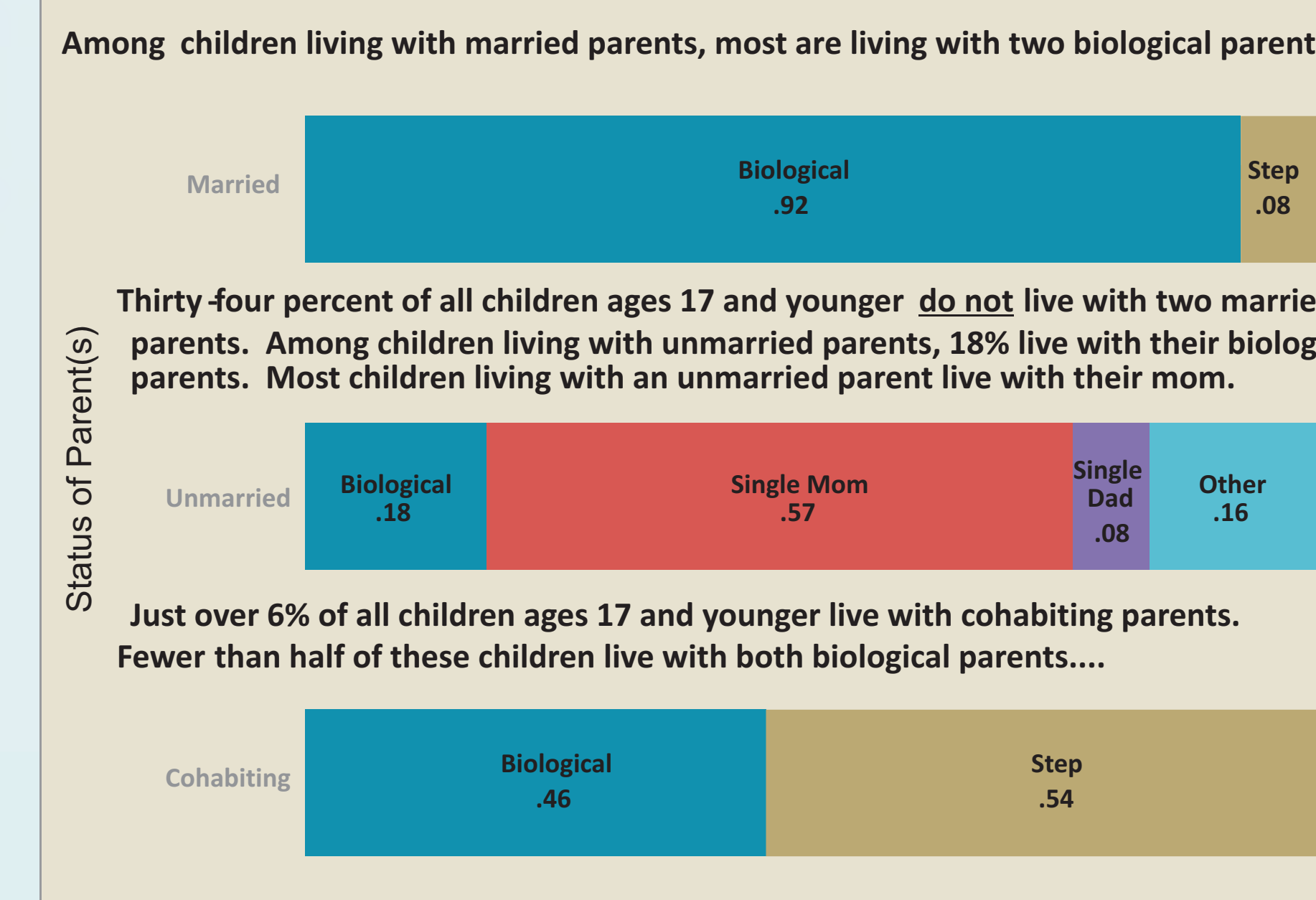
What are children's living arrangements?



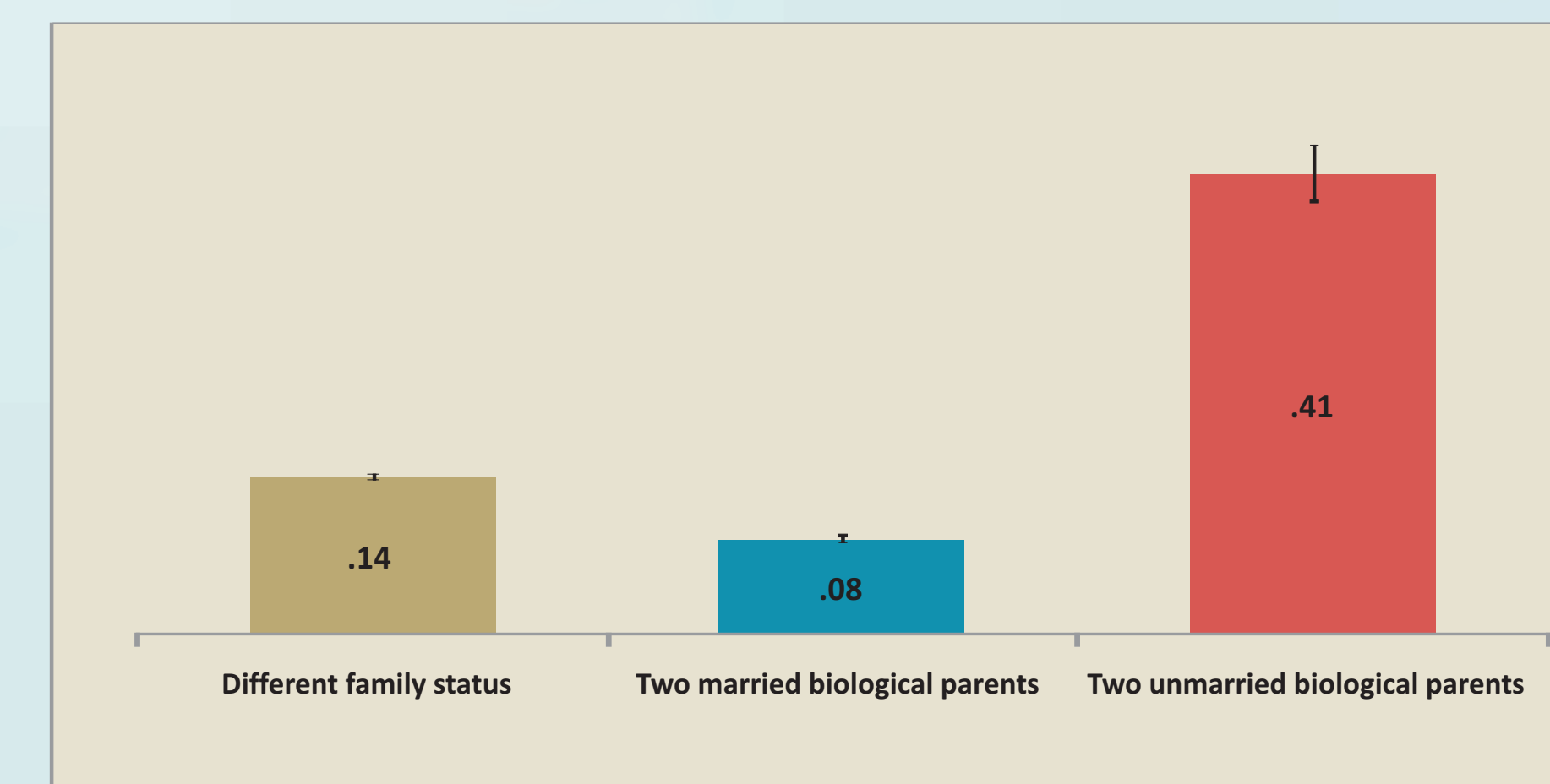
How do children's living arrangements vary by total household income?



Who are the parents in married and unmarried families?



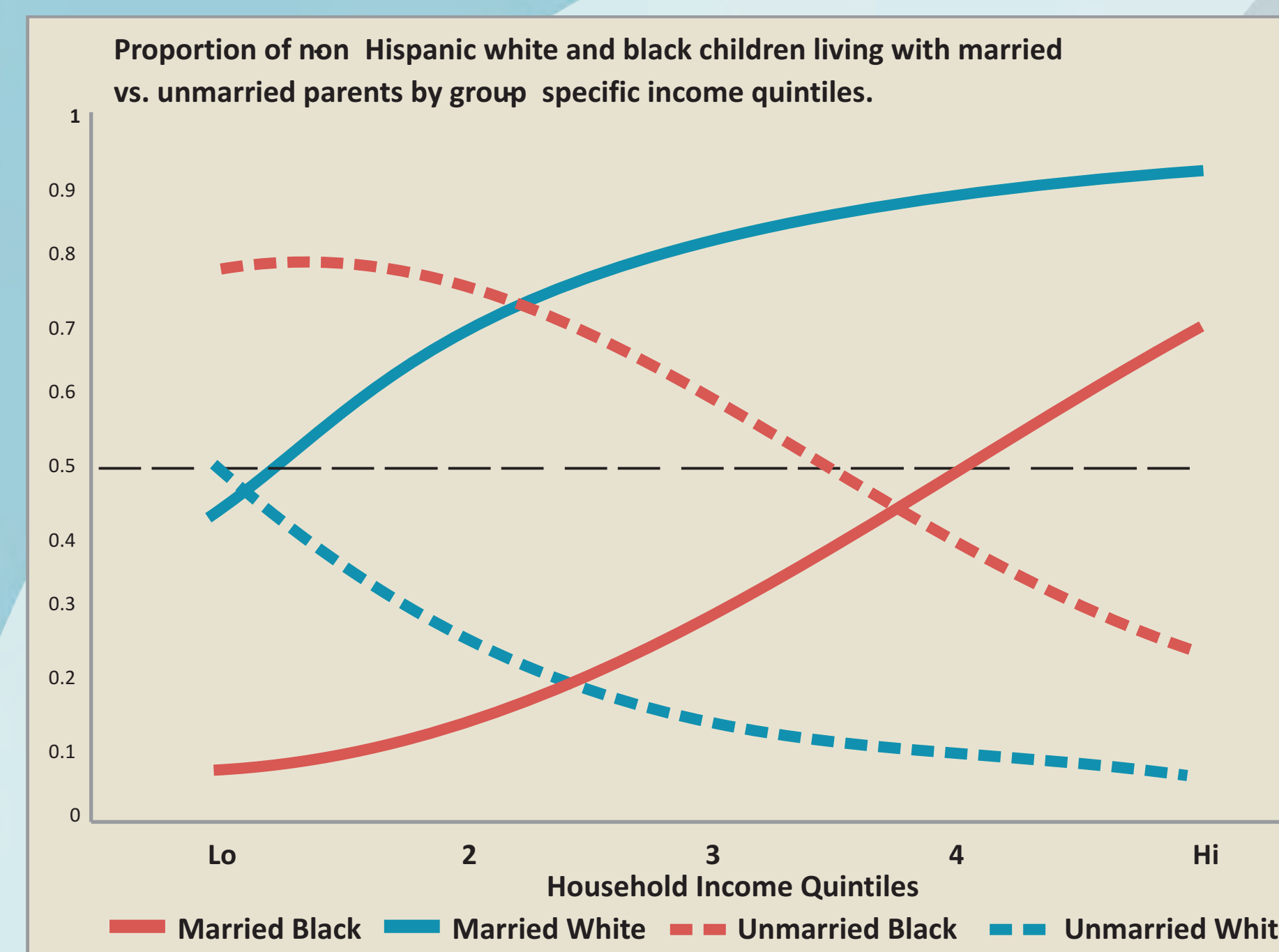
Within households, how many children don't share the same family structure?



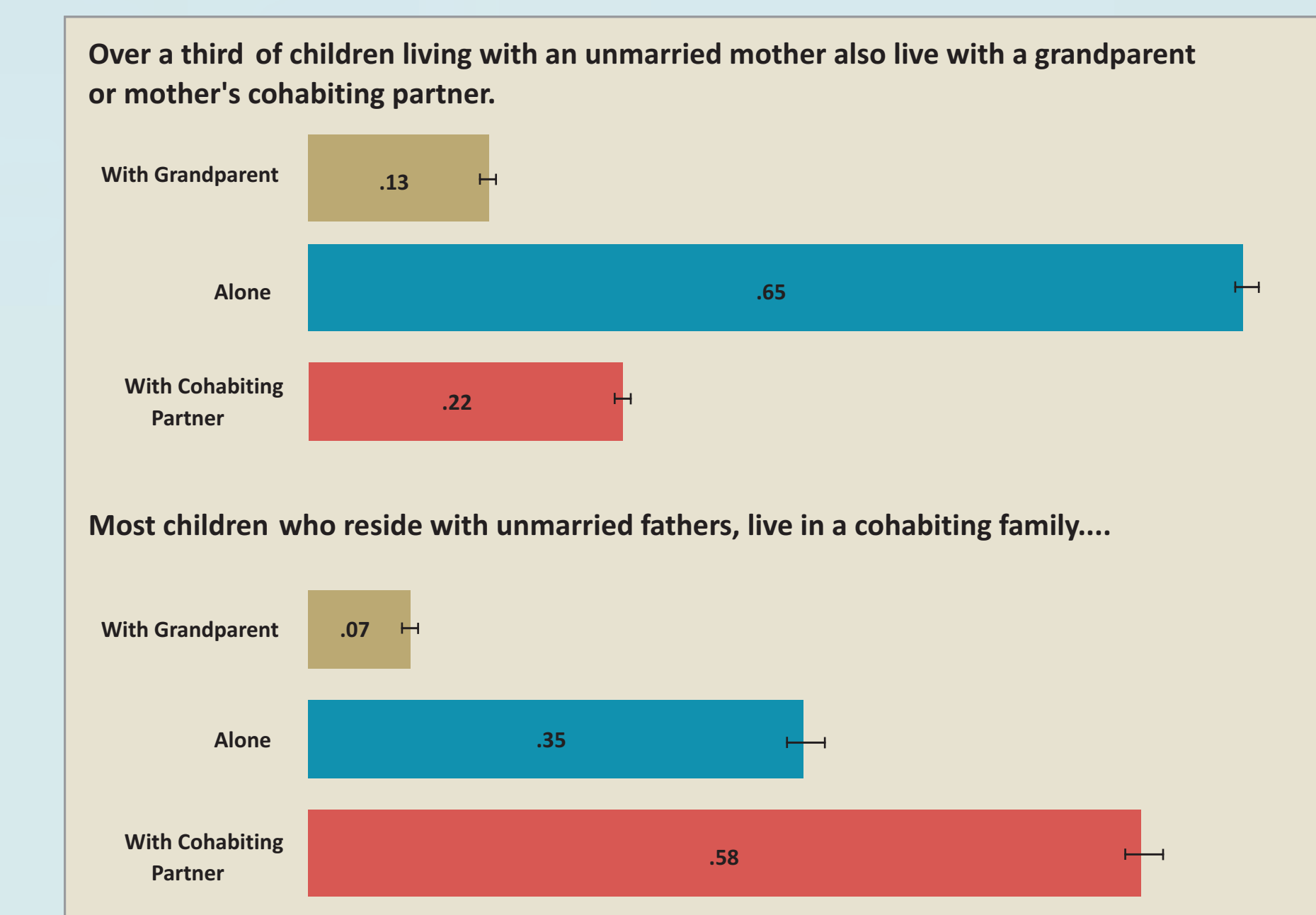
At what income and education levels do more children live in married rather than unmarried families?

The proportion of children living with married parents increases more sharply among non-Hispanic Black than among non-Hispanic white children along the income gradient.

At least half of white children live in married couple families at the lowest levels of income, but it is not until the 4th quintile that at least half of black children live with married parents.



Do unmarried parents live alone?

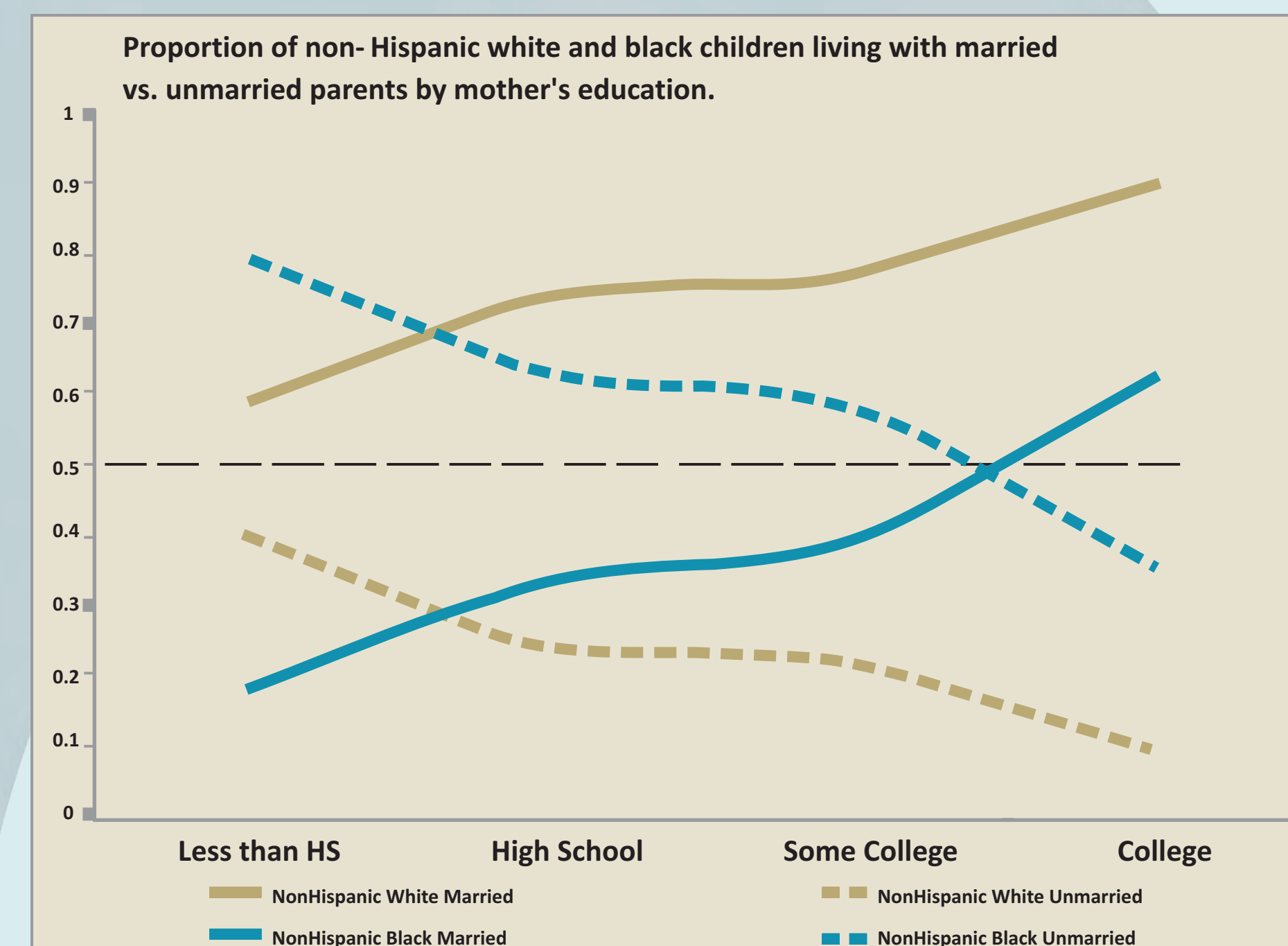


Among children living in households with more than one child, 14% of those children do not share the same family status as the other children in the household.

Among children living in two married biological parent families with at least two children, 8% share the household with another child that has a different set of parents.

Among children living with two unmarried biological parents, two out of five live with a child that has a different set of parents.

There is a persistent black-white gap in children's living arrangements across all education levels. At least half of white children live with married parents across all levels of mother's education. But among black children, the turning point occurs among mothers with a college degree.



Opportunities

The NCMR offers funds for the following positions and grant opportunities:

- Pilot Data Collection
- External Grant - Families and Financial Instability
- External Grant - African American Marriage and Family Stability
- Internal Small Grants Competition
- Visiting Scholars
- Postdoctoral Fellowships
- Graduate and Undergraduate Training
- Graduate Research Assistantships
- Research Affiliates

News and Notes



News and Notes
April 2009

Welcome

The National Center for Marriage Research (NCMR), established in 2007 at Bowling Green State University (BGSU), welcomes you to News and Notes, our monthly electronic newsletter. News and Notes aims to keep you informed about the activities of the National Center for Marriage Research. We will also announce funding and research opportunities, provide registration information for conferences and workshops, and keep you up to date on current research findings.

NCMR Offers Summer Workshops

Using Secondary Data for Analysis of Marriage and Family
June 18-19, 2009
2009 University Consortium for Behavioral and Social Research
University of Michigan

The National Center for Marriage Research is sponsoring a summer workshop that focuses on analyzing marriage and family research questions using the following four data sources:

- Fragile Families
- National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health
- National Survey of Family Growth
- National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

The workshop is free, and the NCMR is offering travel stipends for up to five students (\$750 maximum). Data Sharing for Demographic Research at the University of Michigan is hosting the workshop from June 18-19.

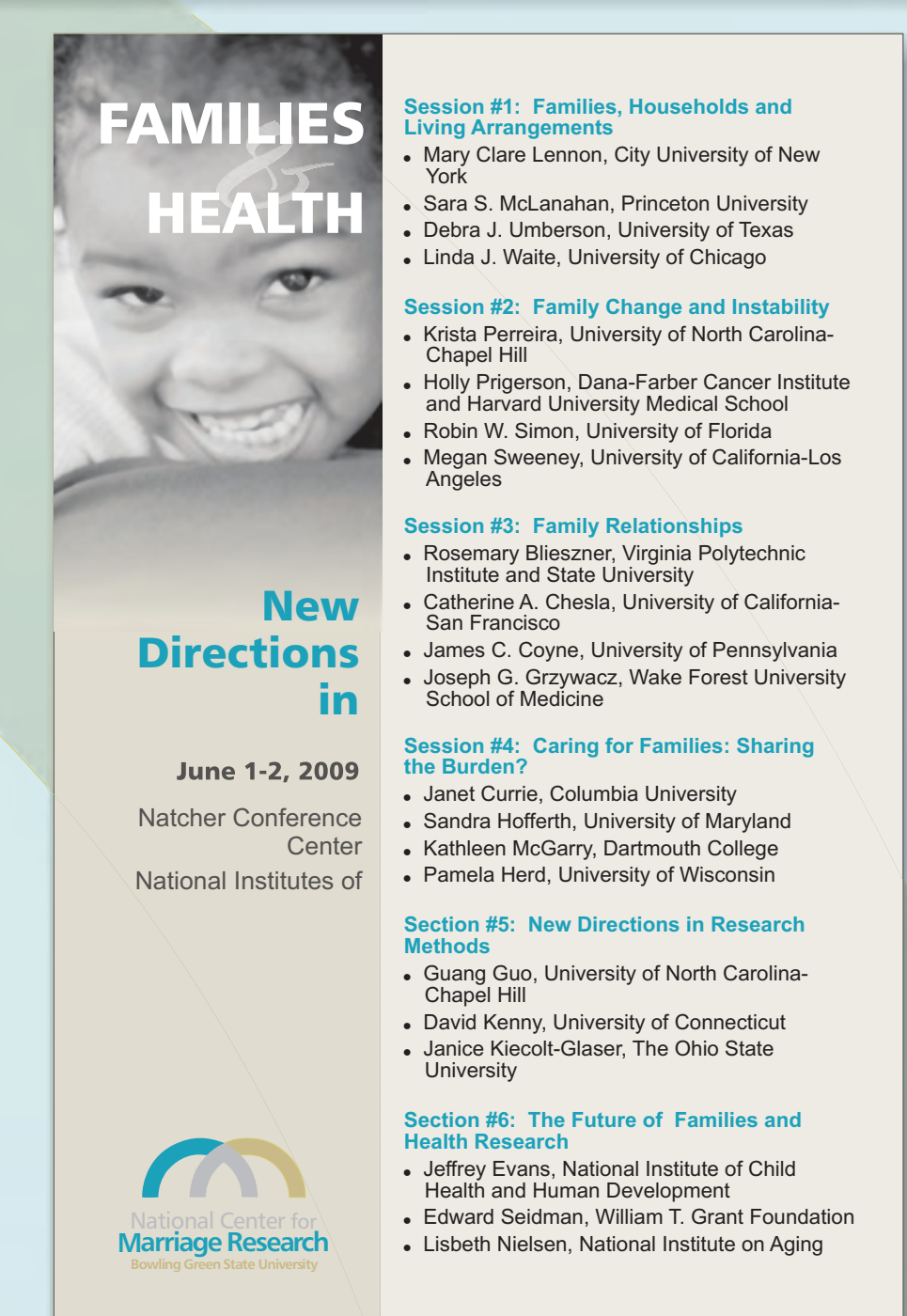
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Events

- Families and Health: New Directions in Research and Theory - June 1-2, 2009, NIH
- Dyadic Data Analysis: Models and Methods for the Study of Couples - June 15-17, 2009, U-M
- Using Secondary Data for Analysis of Marriage and Family - June 18-19, 2009, U-M



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• Patricia Hest, University of Wisconsin

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• Daniel Arvey, University of Connecticut
• James Floyd-Glasser, The Ohio State University

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• Edward Steinman, William T. Grant Foundation
• Lisebeth Neeson, National Institute on Aging

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New Directions in
June 15-17, 2009, U-M

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Marriage Research

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has established the first-ever National Center for Marriage Research (NCMR) through a cooperative agreement with Bowling Green State University.