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# **Family Ties Across Households**

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# Family Complexity and Complex Data

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## □ Increasingly complex families

- Parents and minor children who live apart
- Multi-partner fertility
- Step and quasi-step relationships
- Extended transition to adulthood

## □ Data improvements

- Federal surveys and researcher initiated
- Data Assessment: Bianchi et al., CCPR 2007-020

<http://papers.ccpr.ucla.edu/papers/PWP-CCPR-2007-020/PWP-CCPR-2007-020.pdf>

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# Taking Stock of the Questions

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- Who helps a family member who is not living with them?
- How is help associated with the well-being of those who give help and those who receive it?
- How do legal arrangements (custody, support) affect relationships between parents and children who live apart?

# Demographic Perspective

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- Identify the population
- Geography matters
- Determining who lives here
- Potential transfers: The missing piece
- Looking to the future

# Identify the Population

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## Kin Availability

- Need to know who helps *and* who does not  
Nonresident fathers; Elderly parents

## Children vs. Mothers vs. Fathers

- Birth cohort vs. cross-sectional samples
  - 1 parent, 1+ children
  - Parents older than age 44
  - Mother sample  $\neq$  father sample
  - Biological + social parents
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# Geography Matters

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- State laws, economic opportunities**
  - **CPS-CSS – same state Q**
- Proximity associated with care**
  - **Description vs. causation**
  - **Measurement**
    - Coordinates, travel time, miles apart**
  - **Evaluate reports vs. coordinates (HRS)**

# Determining Who Lives Here

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- Household rosters taken for granted**
    - **Rs' vs. researchers' residence rules**
    - **Ambiguous situations**
      - 2000 census – joint custody duplicates**
      - Youths transitioning from parents' household**
  - Getting residence right**
    - **Geographic location**
    - **Skip patterns**
    - **Need clear rules communicated clearly**
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# Potential Transfers: The Missing Piece

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## Family as safety net

- Theoretical importance extends beyond family in the household
- Who could get help? Who expects to give it?
- Data on kin availability, needs/resources, perceived obligation

## Behavior vs. attitudes

## Module – Add Health, NLSY97, PSID



# Looking to the Future

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- New technology for keeping in touch**
  - **Do new modes change cross-household ties?**
- Multi-partner fertility increases complexity of reporting tasks**
- More ambiguous living situations are challenge for HH rosters**
  - **Downstream effect on question sequences**  
**and...**

# Looking to the Future, Continued

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- Aging of cohorts with high family instability**
  - **Family provides most informal care. *AND* most elderly live independently**
    - Cross-hh data essential for policy**
  - **Yours, mine, our children**
    - Separate reports from spouses/partners**
    - Gender differences; bio vs. “step” vs. “former” step parents**
    - Respondent burden; Research need**