

Population, Family, and Neighborhood



PF 3.1 Residential Stability: Percentage of Children Under Age 18¹⁰ Who Have Moved Within the Last Year

Research has demonstrated a strong relationship between residential stability and child well-being, with frequent moves associated with such negative outcomes as dropping out of high school, delinquency, depression, and nonmarital teen births. Some researchers theorize that these negative associations may result from a lack of attachment to a local community and its institutions on the part of frequent movers.

The United States has long been a highly mobile society. In 1960, 21 percent of children under the age of 18 had moved to a new residence during the previous year. The general trend since that time has been toward somewhat lower rates of mobility, with a rate of 18 percent in 1997.¹¹

Differences by Age. Young children were the most mobile of any child age group (see Table PF 3.1). In 1999, 23 percent of children between the ages of 1 and 4 had changed residences in the previous year, compared with 18 percent among children ages 5 through 9, 13 percent of ages 10 through 14, and 13 percent of youth ages 15 through 17.

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin. For all children under age 18 in 1999, white children were the least mobile, with 16 percent moving during the previous year compared with 23 percent of black and 19 percent of Hispanic children.

¹⁰ Estimates were based on children ages 1 and older at time of survey.

¹¹ Wood, D., Halfon, N., Scarlata, D., Newacheck, P., & Nessim, S. 1993. Impact of Family Relocation on Children's Growth, Development, School Function, and Behavior. *JAMA* 270: 1334-1338; Coleman, J. 1988. Social Capital and the Creation of Human Capital. *American Journal of Sociology* 94: s95-s120.

Table PF 3.1

Percentage of children in the United States under age 18^a who have moved within the last year, by age and by race and Hispanic origin:^b 1990-1999^c

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1996	1997	1998	1999
All children									
All ages	18	17	18	17	17	18	18	17	17
Ages 1-4	24	23	22	23	22	25	24	23	23
Ages 5-9	19	18	18	17	17	18	19	18	18
Ages 10-14	15	14	15	14	13	15	15	14	13
Ages 15-17	15	15	14	14	15	13	14	13	13
White^b children									
All ages	18	17	17	16	16	17	17	16	16
Ages 1-4	23	22	21	22	21	24	23	22	21
Ages 5-9	18	17	17	16	16	18	18	16	17
Ages 10-14	14	13	15	13	12	14	15	13	13
Ages 15-17	14	14	14	14	13	12	13	12	12
Black^b children									
All ages	21	21	21	20	20	22	23	22	23
Ages 1-4	26	26	27	26	25	29	29	28	32
Ages 5-9	22	22	22	20	22	22	26	24	27
Ages 10-14	19	17	18	17	16	18	18	20	17
Ages 15-17	18	16	16	14	18	14	17	16	15
Hispanic^b children									
All ages	25	21	24	23	21	23	23	21	19
Ages 1-4	32	27	27	28	26	31	28	26	24
Ages 5-9	28	20	25	24	20	23	21	21	19
Ages 10-14	18	19	21	19	15	18	22	16	14
Ages 15-17	21	19	19	20	21	19	17	17	16

^a Estimates are based on children ages 1 and older at time of survey.

^b Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Estimates for whites and blacks include persons of Hispanic origin.

^c Estimates for 1995 are not available.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1999. Geographical Mobility, and earlier reports; also previous issues of this annual report (Series P-20, no. 510, P-20, no. 497, no. 485, no. 481, no. 463, no. 456, Table 26 in all).

PF 3.2 Children in Poor and Very Poor Neighborhoods

Recent research has demonstrated a significant relationship between neighborhood quality and the well-being of the children and youth who live in them. Even after controlling for relevant personal and family background characteristics, residence in a low-income neighborhood has been shown to have negative effects on early childhood development, associated with higher rates of dropping out of high school, and with teen parenthood.¹² In 1997, 55.8 percent of children living below the poverty level lived in a very poor neighborhood—defined as a census tract in which 40 percent or more of the residents live in poor families¹³ (see Table PF 3.2).

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin. Hispanic children were the most likely to live in very poor neighborhoods, followed by white children and black children. Sixty-one percent of Hispanic children in poverty lived in more than 40 percent poor neighborhoods, compared to 56 percent of white children and 53 percent of black children (see Figure PF 3.2).

Differences by Family Structure. Children in single-parent families in poverty were much more likely to live in a very poor neighborhood than were children in two-parent families (70.8 percent versus 38.6 percent) (see Figure PF 3.2).

¹² Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G., Klebanov, P., & Sealand, N. 1994. Do Neighborhoods Influence Child and Adolescent Behavior? *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (2): 353-395. See also Crane, J. 1991. The Epidemic Theory of Ghettos and Neighborhood Effects on Dropping Out of High School and Teenage Childbearing. *American Journal of Sociology* 96 (5): 1126-1159.

¹³ While trend data for children are not available, trends for the entire population show that between 1970 and 1990, the percent of all persons living in very poor neighborhoods increased from 3 percent to 4.5 percent, and the numbers nearly doubled from 4.1 million to 8 million. See Jargowsky, P.A. 1996. *Poverty and Place: Ghettos, Barrios, and the American City*, Table 2.1. New York: Russell Sage.

Table PF 3.2

Percentage of related children^a in the United States below the poverty level^b by the poverty level of their neighborhood, by age, family structure, and race and Hispanic origin^c : 1997

	All Areas	Neighborhood Poverty Level			
	Poor	Non-Poor	Poor	30+ Percent Poor	40+ Percent Poor
Total	19.2	13.2	41.5	51.0	55.8
Age of child					
Under 6 years	21.6	15.2	45.4	54.8	57.6
6 - 17 years	18.0	12.2	39.6	49.0	54.9
Family structure					
Married couple families					
Under 6 years	10.6	7.7	26.9	38.0	38.2
6 - 17 years	8.8	6.0	23.7	33.1	38.8
Single parent families (female)					
Under 6 years	59.1	51.0	70.3	72.3	78.5
6 - 17 years	44.7	35.8	60.3	64.0	67.6
Race and Hispanic origin^c					
White ^c	15.4	11.2	38.3	51.9	56.0
Black ^c	36.8	28.6	45.5	48.5	53.0
Hispanic ^c	36.4	25.9	52.2	58.6	61.1

^a Under 18 years of age.

^b Poverty rate of neighborhood in 1979, poverty status of persons in 1997.

^c Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Estimates for whites and blacks include persons of Hispanic origin.

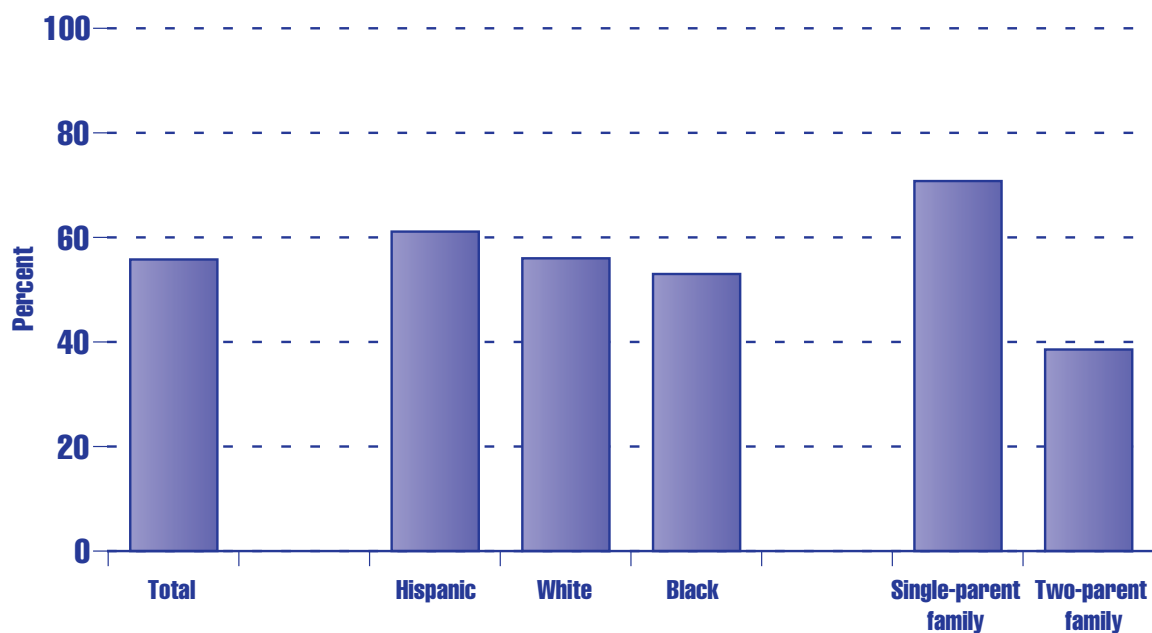
Estimates for whites also include all other persons not white, black, or Hispanic.

Note: Neighborhoods are defined as census tracts and block-numbering areas. Both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas are included. The poverty rate is the percentage of all persons in the neighborhood living in families below the federal poverty line in 1990.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey: March Supplement. Available online at http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/031998/pov/5_001.htm.

Figure PF 3.2

Percentage of children below the poverty level in the United States who live in very poor (40+ percent poverty) neighborhoods, by race and family structure, 1997



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey: March Supplement. Available online at http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/031998/pov/5_001.htm.

