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A Journal of Demography
Volume 72, 2018 - [Issue 2](#)

3,021 | 93 | 105
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Extended family households among children in the United States: Differences by race/ethnicity and socio-economic status

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Pages 235-251 | Received 14 Jul 2017, Accepted 12 Mar 2018, Published online: 17 May 2018

Cite this article <https://doi.org/10.1080/00324728.2018.1468476>



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Abstract

This study uses nationally representative longitudinal data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, to examine the prevalence and predictors of extended family households among children in the United States and to explore variation by race/ethnicity and socio-economic status (SES). Findings suggest that extended family households are a common living arrangement for children, with 35 per cent of youth experiencing this family structure before age 18. Racial/ethnic and SES differences are substantial: 57 per cent of Black and 35 per cent of Hispanic children ever live in an extended family, compared with 20 per cent of White children. Further, 47 per cent of children whose parents did not finish high school spend time in an extended family, relative to 17 per cent of children whose parents earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

Models of predictors show that transitions into extended families are largely a response to social and economic needs.

Keywords:

extended family

family structure

co-residence

children

race/ethnicity

socio-economic status

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2 Material is based on work supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship under Grant No. DGE 1256260. The author thanks Jennifer Barber, Paula Fomby, and three anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful feedback on drafts of this paper; the author also thanks Barbara Anderson, Karyn Lacy, Fabian Pfeffer, Natasha Pilkauskas, and the Inequality, Demography, and Family workshop at the University of Michigan for very helpful comments and suggestions.

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