

State of the Family Across the States

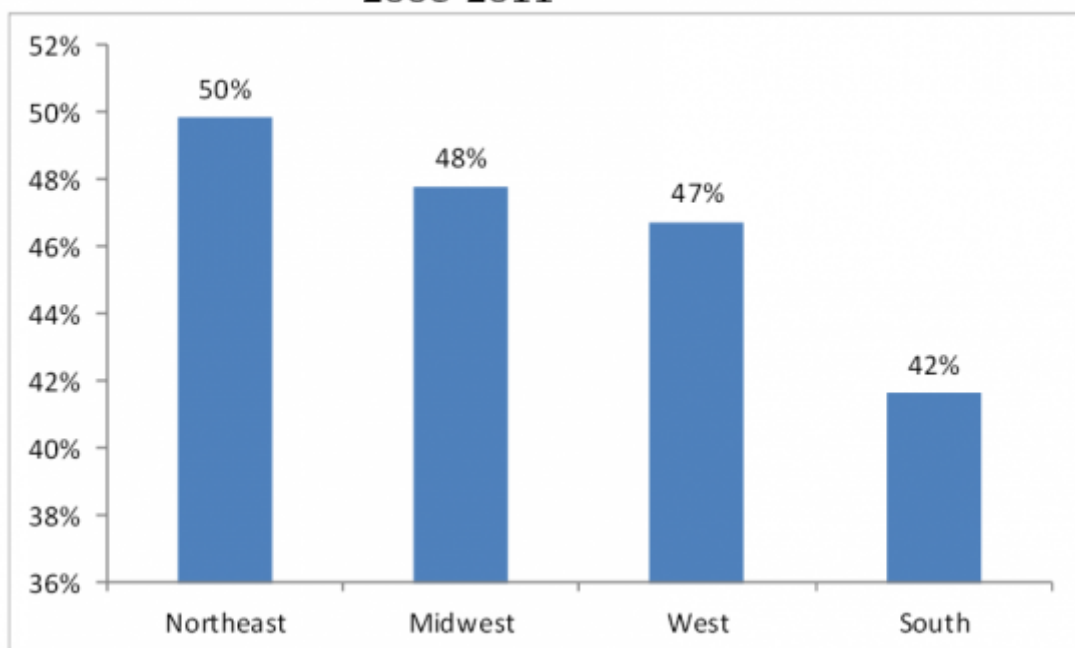
According to 2008-2012 data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, the United States Family Belonging Index is 46 percent with a corresponding Family Rejection Index of 54 percent.¹⁾ The action of parents determines the Family Belonging or Rejection Index within a nation, region, state, or racial or ethnic group—whether they marry and belong to each other, or whether they reject one another through divorce or other means. Rejection leaves children without married parents committed to one another and to their children.

The Index of Family Belonging is determined by the fraction of children aged 15 to 17 in a given area who live with both their biological parents, who have been married since before or around the time of their birth.

1. Regional Index

The Northeast has the highest Family Belonging Index (50 percent), followed by the Midwest (48 percent) and West (47 percent). The Family Belonging Index for the South is the lowest of the four Census regions at 42 percent.

Regions in Rank Order by Family Belonging Index, 2008-2011



2. Regional Index by Race

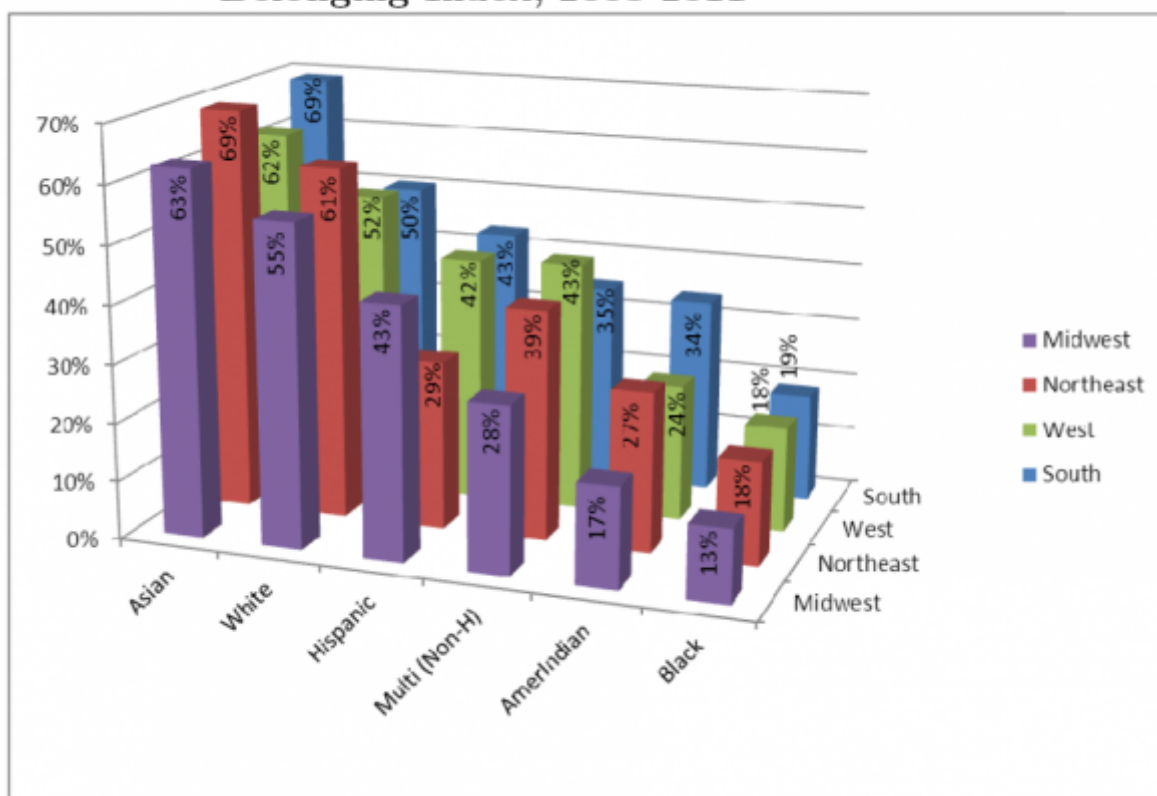
In the Midwest, Asians have a Family Belonging Index of 63 percent. Fifty-five percent of White teenagers, 43 percent of Hispanic teenagers, 28 percent of Multiracial (non-Hispanic) teenagers, 17 percent of American Indian teenagers, and 13 percent of Black teenagers in the Midwest grow up in intact married families.

In the Northeast, Asians have a Family Belonging Index of 69 percent. In the Northeast, the Family Belonging Index among White teenagers is 61 percent; among Hispanic teenagers, 29 percent; among Multiracial (non-Hispanic) teenagers, 39 percent; among American Indian teenagers, 27 percent; and among Black teenagers, 18 percent. In the West, the Family Belonging Index among Asian teenagers is 62 percent.

In the West, 52 percent of White teenagers, 42 percent of Hispanic teenagers, 43 percent of Multiracial (non-Hispanic) teenagers, 24 percent of American Indian teenagers, and 18 percent of Black teenagers grow up in intact married families.

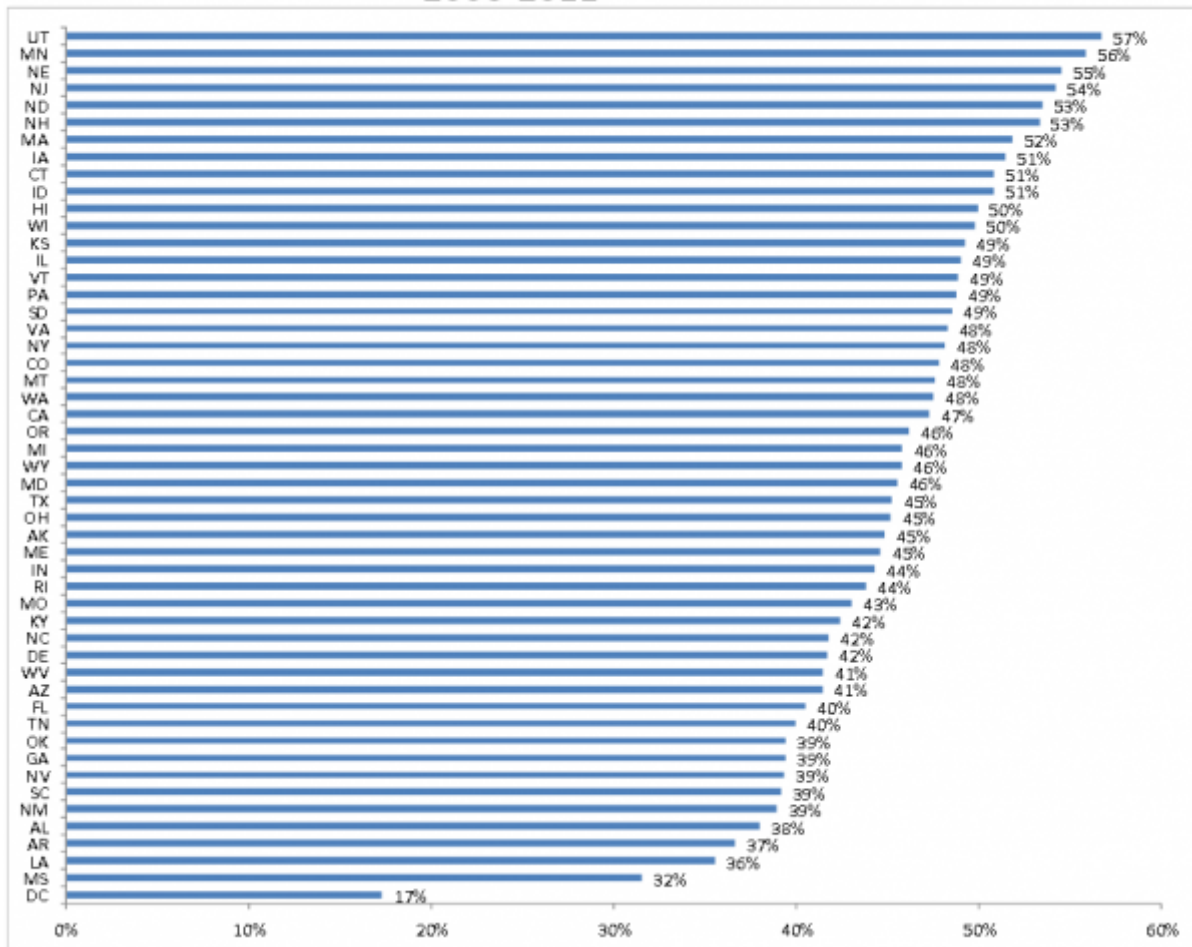
In the South, the Family Belonging Index among Asian teenagers is 69 percent. Fifty percent of White teenagers, 43 percent of Hispanic teenagers, 35 percent of Multiracial (non-Hispanic) teenagers, 34 percent of American Indian teenagers, and 19 percent of Black teenagers in the South grow up in intact married families.

Race/Ethnicity by Region in Rank Order by Family Belonging Index, 2008-2011



3. State Ranking

States in Rank Order by Family Belonging Index, 2008-2011



Utah, Minnesota, Nebraska rank highest in family belonging: In most states, less than half of 15- to 17-year-olds have grown up in intact married families. But in 10 states, a majority of teenagers have been raised by both parents. Utah leads the nation with a Family Belonging Index of 57 percent. Minnesota is second in the nation, with an Index of 56 percent, and Nebraska ranks third nationally, with an Index of 55 percent.

Other states with more than half of teenagers raised with both biological parents married are New Jersey (54 percent), North Dakota (53 percent), New Hampshire (53 percent), Massachusetts (52 percent), Iowa (51 percent), Connecticut (51 percent), and Idaho (51 percent).

No state in the South has a majority of teenagers living with both married parents. Virginia leads the South in family intactness, but even its Family Belonging Index (48 percent) is below half.

Washington, D.C., Mississippi, Louisiana rank lowest in family belonging: Washington, D.C., has the lowest Family Belonging Index in the nation, 17 percent. Mississippi ranks next-lowest, with an Index value of 32 percent. Only slightly higher are the Indices of the states of Louisiana (36 percent), Arkansas (37 percent), Alabama (38 percent), New Mexico (39 percent), South Carolina (39 percent), Nevada (39 percent), Georgia (39 percent), and Oklahoma (39 percent).

State	Family Belonging Index
AL	38
AK	45
AZ	41

State Family Belonging Index	
AR	37
CA	47
CO	48
CT	51
DE	42
DC	17
FL	41
GA	39
HI	50
ID	51
IL	49
IN	44
IA	51
KS	49
KY	42
LA	36
ME	45
MD	46
MA	52
MI	46
MN	56
MS	32
MO	43
MT	48
NE	55
NV	39
NH	53
NJ	54
NM	39
NY	48
NC	42
ND	53
OH	45
OK	39
OR	46
PA	49
RI	44
SC	39
SD	49
TN	40
TX	45
UT	57
VT	49
VA	48
WA	48

State	Family Belonging Index
WV	41
WI	50
WY	46

¹⁾ Steven Ruggles, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Schroeder, and Matthew Sobek, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010).

This entry draws heavily from [Fourth Annual Index of Family Belonging and Rejection](#).

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