

Bureau of the Census Statistical Brief for Congress

Black Children in America: 1993

The Black population in the United States numbered 32 million in March 1993, constituting 13 percent of the Nation's total. This Brief uses data collected by the March 1993 Current Population Survey (CPS) and other sources to examine the state of Black Americans. It includes a special emphasis on children.

Many analytical studies now compare the conditions of Blacks with those of Whites who are not of Hispanic origin — that is, non-Hispanic Whites. Where 1993 data are available for non-Hispanic Whites, this Brief compares data for Blacks to them; otherwise, Blacks are compared with all Whites as has been customary in previous Bureau of the Census reports and Briefs.¹

Population Growth

Between 1980 and 1993, the Black population increased an average of 1.4 percent per year, three times the annual growth rate of the non-Hispanic White population (0.4 percent). Most of this growth

¹ See Jorge del Pinal, "Exploring Alternative Race-Ethnic Comparison Groups in Current Population Surveys," Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of the Census, P23-182, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, December 1992.

The terms "White not Hispanic," "non-Hispanic White," and "White not of Hispanic origin" are used interchangeably in the report.

(84 percent) came from natural increase (births minus deaths); the remainder came from immigration.

Fertility

Black women continue to have a higher fertility rate than White women. The fertility rate is the number of live births per 1,000 women 15 to 44 years old. In 1990, Black women had a rate of 92; the rate for White women was 67.

The Black-White fertility gap has narrowed for unmarried teens (15-17 years). In 1970, the fertility rate for unmarried teens was 10 times higher for Blacks than Whites (78 versus 8); by 1990, it was just 4 times higher (81 compared with 20). Notably, the fertility rate for unmarried Black teens increased only slightly — from 78 to 81 — over the 20-year period between 1970 and 1990.

Children

There were 67 million children under age 18 in the United States in 1993, down 2 million from 1970. About

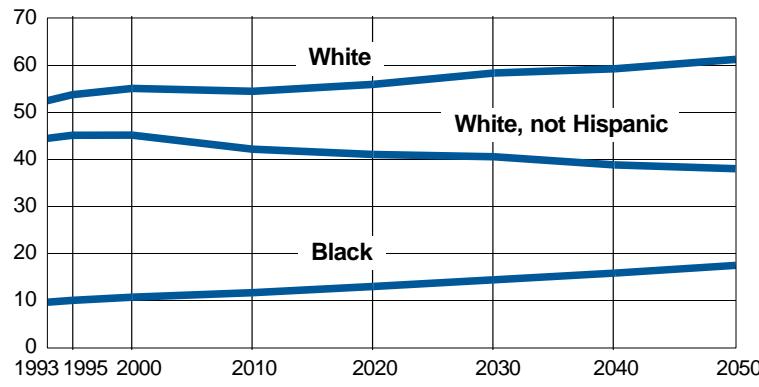
11 million of these children (16 percent) were Black. In 1993, children comprised 33 percent of the Black population and 24 percent of the non-Hispanic White population. By comparison, back in 1970, 43 percent of the Black and 34 percent of the White population was under age 18.

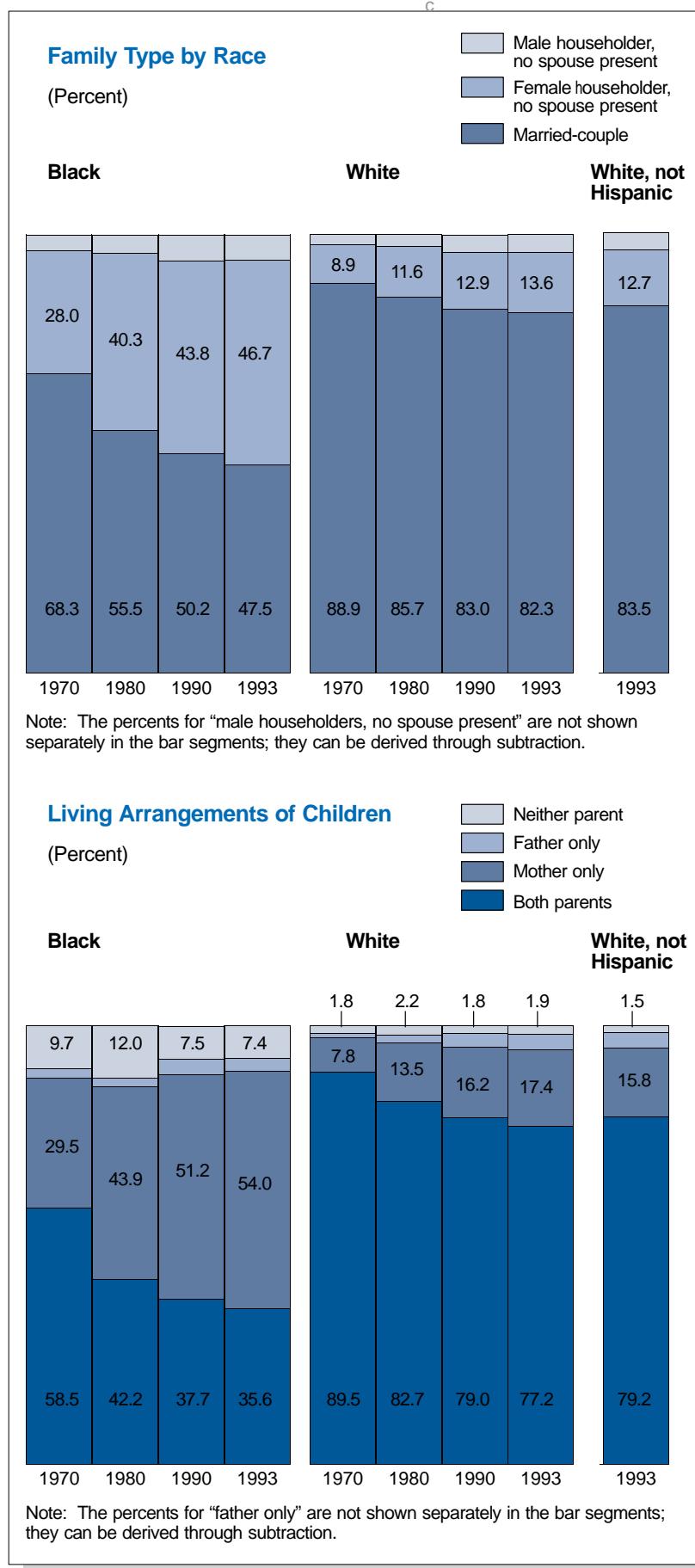
The number of children is expected to reach 72 million in the year 2000 and 92 million in 2050. It is projected that in 2050, 20 percent of all children will be Black. The non-Hispanic White population is expected to comprise 42 percent, down from 68 percent in 1993.² This is due primarily to the expected increase in the share of births to Blacks and racial and ethnic groups other than non-Hispanic Whites.

² Day, Jennifer Cheeseman, "Population Projections of the United States, by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1993 to 2050," U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P25-1104, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1993, November 1992.

Projections of Number of Children

(Numbers in millions)





Families

The Nation contained more than 68 million families in 1993; 12 percent were Black and 78 percent were non-Hispanic White. The composition of Black families has changed dramatically over the past quarter-century. Married-couple families declined from 68 percent of all Black families in 1970 to 48 percent in 1993. On the other hand, the percent maintained by either a female or male without a spouse present rose (from 28 to 47 percent for women and from 4 to 6 percent for men). High rates of marital separation and divorce, as well as a larger proportion of never-married women with children, were factors contributing to the shift in family composition.

Living Arrangements of Children

In 1993, Black families were more likely than non-Hispanic White families to include children (67 percent versus 48 percent). Because divorce and single parenthood have become more common, a smaller proportion of Black children are living with two parents. This proportion dropped from 59 percent in 1970 to 36 percent in 1993. In 1993, over half (54 percent) of all Black children lived with their mother only; 7 percent lived with neither parent. In contrast, 79 percent of non-Hispanic White children lived in two-parent families; 16 percent resided with their mother only, and 2 percent lived with neither parent. A similar proportion of both Black and non-Hispanic White children (3 percent) resided with their father only in 1993. Black children under age 6 were less likely (32 percent) than older Black children (38 percent) to live with both parents. A similar percentage of non-Hispanic White children under age 6 and between 6 and 17 years lived in two-parent families.

In 1993, Black children were —

- Almost three times more likely than non-Hispanic White children to have an absent parent (64 versus 21 percent).

- Almost nine times more apt than non-Hispanic Whites to live with a parent who had never married (33 versus 4 percent).
- Four times more likely than non-Hispanic Whites to live with their grandparents (12 percent compared with 3 percent). Most of these Black children (53 percent) also lived with their mother (but not their father) and the percentage was even higher for Black children under age 6 (66 percent).

In addition, Black children living with two parents were more likely than those residing with only their mother to have a parent who had earned at least a bachelor's degree (15 versus 5 percent).

Child Care

With the increasing participation of women in the labor force, the demand for child care is divided among organized child care and care provided by family members. In 1991, most Black and White preschool-age children with working mothers received care in a home environment — either theirs or someone else's. Nearly 3 in 10 Black preschoolers received care in their own home while their mothers worked; the figure for Whites was slightly higher (37 percent). Among children getting in-home care, the father was the most common provider (46 percent for Black children and 58 percent for White children).

Many working mothers are turning to grandparents for help. In 1991, a similar proportion of Black and White preschoolers whose mothers worked were cared for by their grandparents in their grandparents' home (12 percent and 8 percent, respectively).

Health Insurance Coverage

In 1992, 59 million (88 percent) of the Nation's 67 million children had health insurance coverage. About 86 percent of Black and 88 percent of White children had either private or government health insurance coverage. Among the insured, Black chil-

dren (58 percent) were more likely than White children (23 percent) to have government health insurance.

School Enrollment

In 1993, about 7 million children were enrolled in nursery school and kindergarten. About 1 million of them were Black and 6 million were White. Of the 1 million Black children, 414,000 were in nursery school and another 687,000 in kindergarten. These totals are nearly twice those in nursery school and about one and one-half those in kindergarten in 1970. In both 1993 and 1970, a similar proportion of Black and White 3- and 4-year olds were enrolled in school (40 percent and 41 percent compared with 23 percent and 20 percent).

Since 1970, the proportion of Black preschoolers in public rather than private school has remained statistically unchanged. Black preschool children, however, were still twice as likely as White children to be enrolled in public schools (74 percent versus 34 percent).

Looking at older children, we see that the annual high school dropout rate for Blacks declined from 11 percent in 1970 to 5 percent in 1993. The dropout rate for Whites slipped from 5 to 4 percent. In 1993, there was no statistical difference in the annual high school dropout rate of Blacks and Whites.

Educational Attainment

The decline in high school dropout rates for Blacks is reflected in improved high school completion percentages. In 1993, 83 percent of Blacks aged 25 to 34 had completed high school, up from 75 percent in 1980. For Whites, the figure increased slightly over the period (87 to 88 percent). The proportion aged 25 to 34 who were college graduates remained unchanged between 1980 and 1993 for both Blacks (12 to 13 percent) and Whites (25 percent).

Family Income

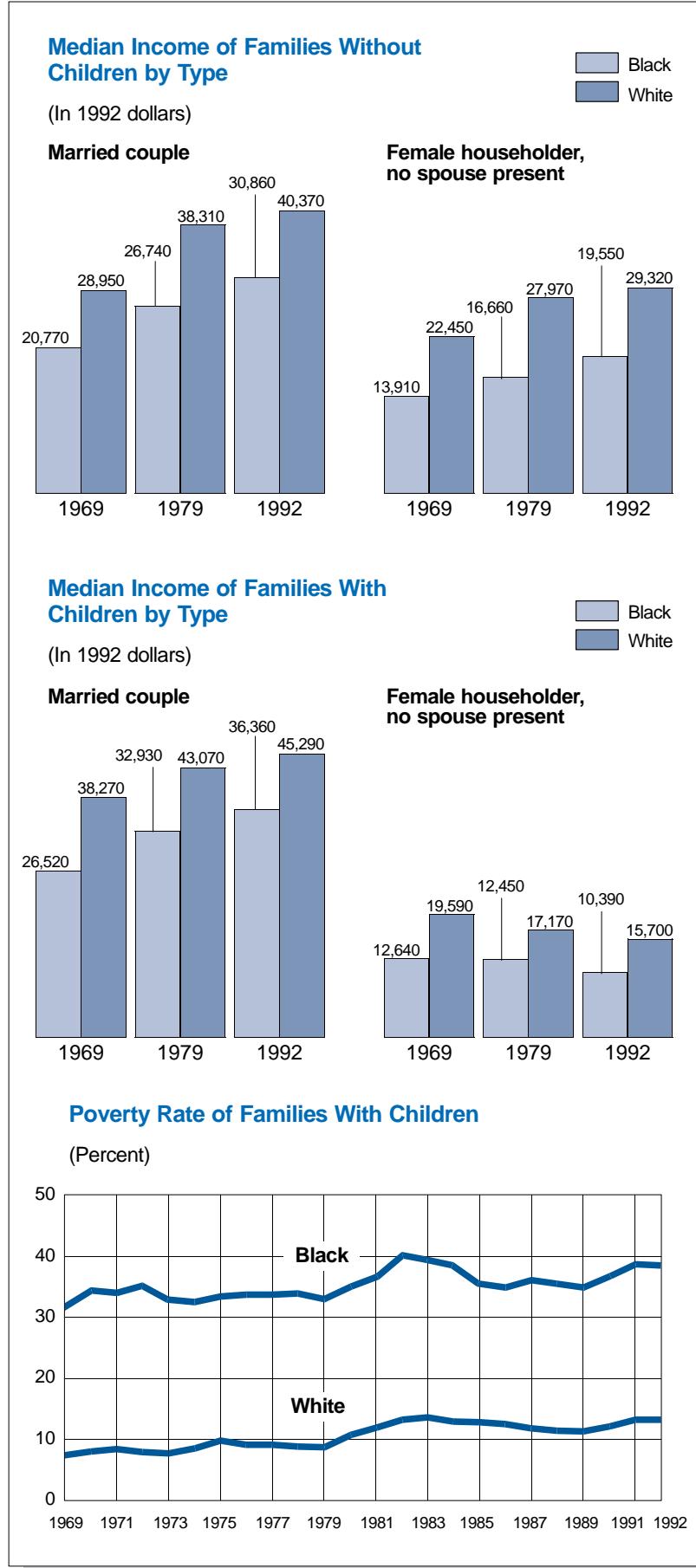
Median family income, in constant 1992 dollars, was unchanged in 1992 from its 1969 level. Black families lost ground to White families over the period. In 1969, Black median family income was 61 percent of Whites; by 1992, it had declined to 54 percent.

Family income did rise, however, for Black married-couple families. It climbed from \$26,100 in 1969 to \$34,200 in 1992 — a 31-percent increase. As a result, Black married-couple families closed the gap on their White counterparts, from 72 percent of White married-couple family income in 1969 to 80 percent in 1992.

Black married-couple families also had the highest median income (\$34,200) of any Black family type. When these couples had no children, their median income was 15 percent lower than those couples with children (\$30,860 compared with \$36,360). For White married-couple families, the corresponding differential was 11 percent. (There was no statistical difference in the 15 and 11 percent differential for Black and White married-couple families income.) Among all Black families, however, income was lower for those with children (\$18,560) than those without (\$26,350). For Whites, there was no statistical difference. The differential for Black families, in part, reflects the high proportion of Black families maintained by women with children. These families were at the bottom of the family income ladder. Their median income was \$10,390 — a mere 29 percent of Black married-couple families with children (\$36,360). The comparable percentage for Whites (35 percent) was somewhat higher.

Poverty

Over the last quarter-century, the poverty rate has risen dramatically for all children in families, regardless of race (from 14 percent in 1969 to 21 percent in 1992). In 1992, Black children were three times as likely as White children



to live in poverty (46 percent versus 16 percent). Black children had especially high poverty rates if they lived in a family maintained by a woman without a spouse present (67 percent); the corresponding figure for Whites was 45 percent.

In 1992, 31 percent of all Black families lived in poverty, up from the 28 percent poor in 1969. Of these poor families, 20 percent were maintained by married couples, 75 percent by women with no spouse present, and 5 percent by men with no spouse present. A higher percentage of poor White (51 percent) than of poor Black families (20 percent) were maintained by married couples.

More Information:

An upcoming report, *The Black Population in the United States: March 1993*, will expand on the data in this Brief. It will be available in late fall 1994. Contact Customer Services (301-763-4100) for ordering information.

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