

CHILDREN IN URBAN AND RURAL FAMILIES

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DETAILED information on the familial relationships of children under 16 years of age has not been available in the United States. Census data on families are not restricted to families in the bio-legal¹ sense but refer to all the members of a unit living together who are related to one another. The study of family composition in the United States has made available for the first time information on children in bio-legal families for a relatively large sample.

This information is significant both sociologically and administratively in considering means of providing more adequate security for the child population of the country. The data are also timely in that they indicate the size of the child population potentially eligible for assistance under the existing social security legislation and the group which will be affected by the recently enacted amendments to the Social Security Act.

Children as a group constitute the most needy segment of the population. In an earlier article in this series,² it was indicated that the economic status of families with children is distinctly less favorable than that of families without children. These reports showed that 71 percent of the urban child population lived in families reporting either relief or incomes of less than \$1,500 per year and thus had incomes which, by well-accepted American budgetary standards, were either inadequate or barely adequate to supply the minimum necessities for growing children.

Of the 931,269³ urban families included in the

*Bureau of Research and Statistics, Division of Health Studies. This article, the fourth in a series, is based on findings from the study of family composition in the United States, which utilizes data from schedules of the National Health Survey and is conducted as Work Projects Administration Project Nos. 365-31-3-5, 765-31-3-3, and 65-2-31-44 under the supervision of the Bureau of Research and Statistics. Data from the study are preliminary and subject to revision. For earlier articles, see the *Bulletin* for April, May, and September 1939.

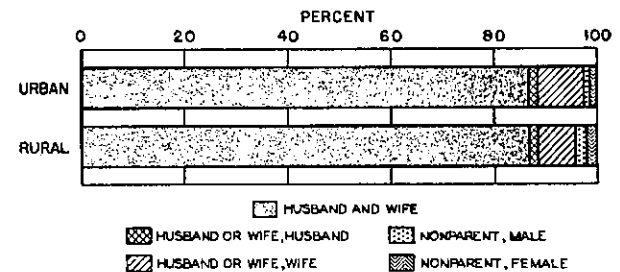
¹ A "bio-legal" family consists of: (a) one or both spouses and their unmarried children, if any, including adopted or foster children, living together as a family unit; or (b) unmarried sisters and/or brothers, including adopted or foster brothers and sisters, living together as a family unit; or (c) persons living in extra-familial groups or by themselves, who are considered as separate one-person families. Except when otherwise specified, "family" is used subsequently in this article within the meaning of this definition, and "child" is used to refer to a child under the age of 16.

² Falk, I. S., and Sanders, Barkev S., "The Economic Status of Urban Families and Children," *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 6 (May 1939), pp. 26-34.

³ Excludes 110 families with an unknown number of children.

family composition study, 336,646 reported one or more children under 16 years of age. In these families there were 647,420 children under 16. On this basis, families with children had an average of less than two children in each family, and for all families there was an average of about two children for every three families. Children constituted 26 percent of all individuals in the urban sample.

Chart I.—Percentage distribution of children under 16 years of age in urban and rural families, by type of family



Of the 47,174 rural families sampled, 20,698 had children, and there were 46,335 children. On the average, there were more than two children in each family with children, and for all rural families there was approximately one child per family. Children constituted 33 percent of all individuals in the rural sample.

Comparison with 1930 census data indicates that, broadly speaking, the urban data from the family composition study are sufficiently typical to warrant the extension of the findings to the entire urban population of the country. The rural sample is less representative; nevertheless, the findings described here are at least suggestive of the distribution of children in rural families.⁴

The present analysis shows the proportionate magnitude of the child population in urban and rural families and their distribution in bio-legal family units. It shows the percentages of children living in families in which both parents are present and those living in families from which one or both parents are missing. It shows the

⁴ See Sanders, Barkev S., "Family Composition in the United States," *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (April 1939), pp. 9-13.

presence and number of children in families of different types, classified according to the age of the head of the family.

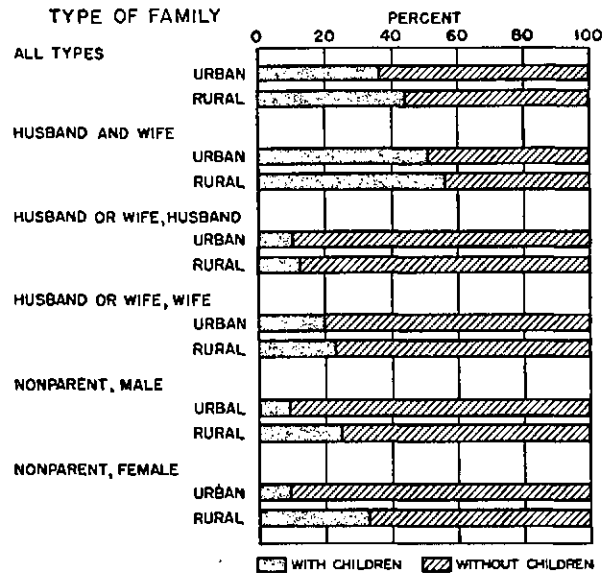
Children in Different Types of Families

The large majority of urban and rural children—87 percent—are found in husband-and-wife families⁵ (chart I and table 6). The family type which reports the second largest proportion of children is one-spouse families with the wife only. Families of this type include 9 percent of the urban and 7 percent of the rural children reported in the sample. About 4 percent of the urban and 6 percent of the rural children are in motherless families or in families where neither parent is present.

The predominance of children in husband-and-wife families is to be attributed not only to the fact that a higher proportion of these families have children but also that there are more multi-child

⁵ The families studied are classified by 5 major types, as follows, according to the relationship of the members to the head: (1) *Husband-and-wife families*. Families with both spouses, with or without unmarried children; (2) *Husband-or-wife families, husband*. Families with only the male spouse, with or without unmarried children; (3) *Husband-or-wife families, wife*. Families with only the female spouse, with or without unmarried children; (4) *Nonparent families, male*. Families without either spouse, with an unmarried male as the head, with or without unmarried sisters and/or brothers; (5) *Nonparent families, female*. Families without either spouse, with an unmarried female as the head, with or without unmarried sisters and/or brothers.

Chart II.—Percentage distribution of urban and rural families with and without children under 16 years of age, by type of family



families in this type of family. Chart II shows that while for all families, irrespective of type, 36 percent of the urban and 44 percent of the rural families reported children the corresponding percentages for husband-and-wife families are 51 and

Table 1.—Number of urban families of specified type with and without children under 16 years of age, and percentage distribution by age of head of family

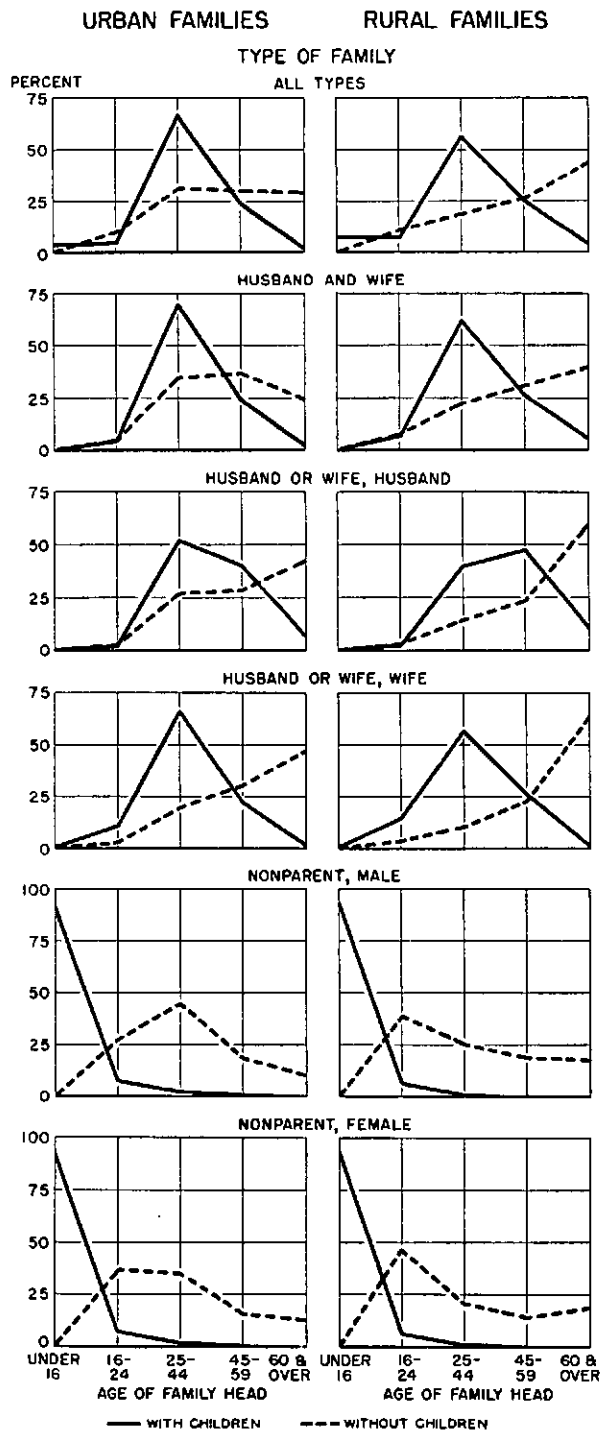
[Preliminary data subject to revision]

Type of family ¹	Number of urban families ²	Age group of head of family (years)						
		All ages	Under 16	16-24	25-44	45-59	60-64	65 and over
All types.....	929, 085	100.0	1.2	7.9	44.1	27.7	6.3	12.8
Husband and wife.....	563, 550	100.0	(3)	4.2	52.6	30.3	5.4	7.5
Husband or wife, husband.....	63, 463	100.0	(3)	2.4	29.8	29.4	9.3	29.6
Husband or wife, wife.....	176, 286	100.0	(3)	4.1	28.0	28.5	10.2	28.3
Nonparent, male.....	62, 561	100.0	8.2	25.4	40.8	16.7	3.5	5.4
Nonparent, female.....	73, 225	100.0	8.6	34.0	32.0	13.0	4.1	7.4
Families with children, total.....	336, 454	100.0	3.4	4.6	66.6	23.6	1.2	.6
Husband and wife.....	282, 634	100.0	(3)	3.8	69.9	24.4	1.3	.6
Husband or wife, husband.....	3, 369	100.0	(3)	1.7	51.6	40.1	4.1	2.5
Husband or wife, wife.....	34, 617	100.0	1	10.8	66.0	22.2	.6	.8
Nonparent, male.....	5, 650	100.0	99.8	7.5	1.0	.1	(3)	-----
Nonparent, female.....	6, 884	100.0	91.3	7.0	1.0	.1	(3)	-----
Families without children, total.....	592, 631	100.0	-----	9.7	31.3	30.0	9.3	19.7
Husband and wife.....	270, 916	100.0	-----	4.6	34.7	36.3	9.8	14.6
Husband or wife, husband.....	57, 094	100.0	-----	2.4	29.9	28.2	9.9	32.0
Husband or wife, wife.....	141, 369	100.0	-----	2.5	19.7	30.1	12.6	35.2
Nonparent, male.....	59, 811	100.0	-----	27.1	44.7	18.4	3.9	5.9
Nonparent, female.....	66, 341	100.0	-----	36.8	35.2	16.4	4.5	8.1

¹ For definitions of "family" and family types, see footnotes 1 and 5 in text.
² Excludes 2,294 families with unknown age of head and/or number of children.

³ Less than 0.05 percent.

Chart III.—Percentage distribution of urban and rural families with and without children under 16 years of age for specified types of families, by age of family head¹



¹ The horizontal scale is not uniform. The purpose of the chart is to indicate differences in patterns for families with and without children, and also for various family types.

55, respectively.⁶ In contrast to these relatively high proportions, 10 percent or less of each of the three urban types—one-spouse families with a male head and nonparent families, male and female—reported children. The proportions for rural families of these three types are higher. They are, nevertheless, smaller than the proportion of husband-and-wife families with children. In families with the wife only, which account for 9 percent of the urban and 8 percent of the rural children, 20 percent of the urban and 23 percent of the rural families reported children.

In all family types the proportion of families with young children is greater in the rural sample, as is to be expected in view of the higher birth rate in rural areas. The excess is particularly striking in nonparent families, especially those headed by a woman, in which 33 percent of rural families have children as compared with 9 percent of the urban families. The corresponding percentages for nonparent-male families are 25 and 9. This excess cannot be attributed entirely to the differential birth rate but must be accounted for in terms of other demographic phenomena which differentiate rural areas from urban.

Comparison of the percentages of families of specified types in the urban and rural samples indicates that a larger relative proportion of rural families are husband-and-wife families, while there are relatively fewer families with the wife only and nonparent families headed by a woman.⁷ The smaller proportion of rural families with the wife only indicates in all probability the lesser frequency of divorce and separation among rural families. The smaller proportion of rural nonparent-female families suggests (1) early marriages;⁸ (2) the tendency for young unmarried rural women who leave the parental home to move

⁶ The remaining families in these groups are not necessarily childless; they merely represent families in which no child was living at the time of the canvass. A considerable fraction of families without children are families of aged persons, whose children have reached or passed age 16, and another fraction consists of recently established families which may subsequently have children.

⁷ The distribution of families by type is as follows:

	Urban	Rural
All types.....	100.0	100.0
Husband and wife.....	50.6	65.6
Husband or wife, husband.....	8.8	7.6
Husband or wife, wife.....	19.0	15.1
Nonparent, male.....	6.7	6.8
Nonparent, female.....	7.9	4.9

⁸ The 1930 census indicates that in the urban population 89 percent of females in ages 15-19 are single, 81 percent in ages 20-24, and 25 percent in ages 25-29. The corresponding percentages for the rural population are 84, 89, and 16.

to urban centers;⁹ and (3) a somewhat greater cohesiveness of rural families, in that adult children, especially females, less often leave parental homes prior to marriage. These three factors combined would probably account for the excessive proportion of nonparent-female families reporting children, and to a certain extent nonparent-male families, since in the rural areas these families are predominantly made up of orphans. On the other hand, a larger proportion of nonparent families in urban centers is composed of adult individuals who have left parental homes before marriage.

Proportion of Families With Children, by Family Type and Age of Family Head

The distribution of urban families with and without children, by family type and age of family head, is given in table 1.¹⁰ The distribution by age of the head of the family for the various types of families, regardless of the presence or absence of children, indicates, as would be expected, that

⁹ The 1930 census shows that, on the average, there are more than 98 males to every 100 females in the urban population; however, the ratio is 91.9 in ages 15-19, 89.4 in ages 20-24, and 84.5 in ages 25-29, indicating a definite excess of females in these age categories in cities. This excess would be even more marked in the large metropolitan centers.

¹⁰ The head of the family was determined as follows: In husband-and-wife families, the husband was always designated as the head; in one-spouse families, the spouse; and in nonparent families, the oldest person. In one-person families, of course, the person was counted as the head of the family.

the family heads in nonparent families are, in general, in the younger age groups; the family heads in the families with either the husband or wife are in the older age groups; and the heads of husband-and-wife families are in the intermediate age groups.

In the group with the head of the family aged 25-44 the proportion of families with children is twice as large as in the group without children. This situation is reversed in families headed by persons aged 60-64, where the proportion of families without children is about 8 times as large as that of families with children. The comparison of families headed by persons aged 65 and over is even more striking; the percentage of families without children is 33 times as large as that of families with children.

Comparison of the percentage distributions of families with and without children, taking into consideration both family type and the age of family head, shows that in husband-and-wife families with children the concentration is predominantly in ages 25-44, while for nonchild families there is a reasonably even distribution in ages 25-59. In motherless families with children the concentration is in ages 25-59, while in those without children the most marked concentration is in the ages 65 and over. In fatherless families with children the most marked concentration oc-

Table 2.—Number of rural families of specified type with and without children under 16 years of age, and percentage distribution by age of head of family

[Preliminary data subject to revision]

Type of family	Number of rural families ¹	Age group of head of family (years)						
		All ages	Under 16	16-24	25-44	45-59	60-64	65 and over
All types.....	47,007	100.0	3.1	9.3	35.5	25.6	8.0	18.5
Husband and wife.....	30,818	100.0	.....	6.8	44.2	28.4	7.8	12.8
Husband or wife, husband.....	3,559	100.0	.....	2.9	17.2	26.7	10.9	42.3
Husband or wife, wife.....	7,101	100.0	.....	2	5.9	21.3	23.5	10.2
Nonparent, male.....	3,213	100.0	23.2	30.4	19.0	14.1	4.8	8.7
Nonparent, female.....	2,318	100.0	30.7	33.1	14.3	9.5	4.0	8.4
Families with children, total.....	20,651	100.0	7.1	6.9	58.4	25.2	2.8	1.6
Husband and wife.....	17,000	100.0	.....	6.4	61.9	28.8	3.1	1.8
Husband or wife, husband.....	441	100.0	.....	2.0	39.5	47.8	5.7	5.0
Husband or wife, wife.....	1,047	100.0	.....	8	14.8	56.5	28.3	1.1
Nonparent, male.....	801	100.0	93.3	8.0	.....	.....	.....	.....
Nonparent, female.....	782	100.0	93.3	6.0	.....	.....	.....	.....
Families without children, total.....	26,356	100.0	.....	11.1	19.1	28.0	12.1	31.7
Husband and wife.....	13,816	100.0	.....	7.3	22.3	30.4	13.7	28.3
Husband or wife, husband.....	3,118	100.0	.....	3.1	14.1	23.6	11.6	47.6
Husband or wife, wife.....	5,454	100.0	.....	3.2	10.6	22.7	13.0	50.5
Nonparent, male.....	2,412	100.0	.....	38.4	25.1	18.8	6.1	11.6
Nonparent, female.....	1,558	100.0	.....	46.4	21.0	14.2	6.9	12.5

¹ Excludes 172 families with unknown age of head and/or number of children.

Table 3.—Number of urban families with specified age of head of family, percent with children, and percentage distribution by number of children under 16 years of age

[Preliminary data subject to revision]

Age group of head of family (years)	Number of urban families ¹	Percent with children	Percentage distribution of families with children by number of children per family					
			Total	1	2	3	4	5 or more
All ages.....	929,085	36.2	100.0	48.8	28.3	12.6	5.6	4.7
Under 15.....	10,010	100.0	100.0	86.5	10.8	2.1	.5	.1
15-19.....	18,557	10.6	100.0	83.9	12.1	2.9	.6	.5
20-24.....	55,756	24.9	100.0	75.1	19.7	4.3	.7	.2
25-29.....	82,005	45.0	100.0	58.4	28.3	9.2	2.0	1.1
30-34.....	98,908	57.6	100.0	44.8	32.5	13.5	5.5	3.7
35-39.....	110,823	59.8	100.0	37.1	32.6	16.2	7.6	6.5
40-44.....	108,036	56.0	100.0	39.1	30.3	15.6	7.8	7.3
45-49.....	100,679	42.8	100.0	46.4	26.6	13.7	6.6	6.4
50-54.....	83,400	28.5	100.0	55.2	24.2	11.3	5.1	4.2
55-59.....	67,837	16.3	100.0	62.1	22.1	9.1	3.6	3.1
60-64.....	59,117	6.0	100.0	66.6	20.0	7.4	3.4	2.6
65 and over.....	118,707	1.6	100.0	68.4	18.3	8.0	2.9	2.4

¹ Excludes 2,294 families with unknown age of head and/or number of children.

curs in ages 25-44, while in those without children the concentration occurs in ages 45 and over, and more especially in ages 60 and over. In nonparent families with children the vast majority are found in families where the head is under 16,¹¹ while the bulk of nonparent families without children have family heads in ages 16-44.

Table 2 shows the distribution of rural families with and without children, by family type and age of the family head. A comparison of the age distribution of rural families with the figures given in table 1 indicates that the rural sample has a larger proportion of families headed by younger persons and also a higher proportion of families headed by aged persons.

Rural families with and without children, in terms of age of head and family type, show a marked similarity to the corresponding distribution of urban families. For each type, families with children show a concentration in the same age groups as in urban families. The proportion of rural families with heads in the older age groups is somewhat higher than that in the urban sample for families with children and is much higher for nonchild families. Husband-and-wife families without children constitute a smaller percentage in the rural age group 25-44 and a particularly high proportion in ages 60 and over. The percentage distribution of urban and rural families with and without children is shown graphically in chart III.

¹¹ Nonparent families with heads under the age of 16 consist, almost exclusively, of children who are living in the homes of relatives.

Proportion of Families With Specified Number of Children by Age of Family Head

Economically and socially it is important to determine the number of children in the family, as well as the presence or absence of children, in relation to age of family head. Table 3 presents the percentage distribution of urban families classified according to the age of the head of the family and the number of children. Of all families reporting children, almost 50 percent had only one child, somewhat less than 30 percent had two children, and more than 20 percent had three or more.

When the age of the head of the family is taken into consideration, the proportion of one-child families decreases progressively through the group headed by persons aged 35-39. In this group more than one-third reported one child, nearly one-third reported two children, and slightly less than one-third reported three or more. Beginning with families headed by persons aged 40-44, the proportion of families with children who have only one child increases progressively. It is apparent, however, that a larger relative proportion of families headed by persons aged 40-54 reported three or more children.

The distribution of rural families headed by persons of specified age, according to number of children in the family, is given in table 4. More than 40 percent of the families with children have one child, 25 percent have two children, and somewhat less than 35 percent have three or more. It

is evident that a relatively higher proportion of rural than of urban families has more than one child per family.

For each specific age group the proportion of all rural families with children is larger than that of urban families, although the proportion of rural families with only one child is smaller, as is the proportion of two-child families headed by persons aged 30-54. However, for all other multi-child families the percentages in the rural sample are higher, and the excess is particularly marked in families with four or more children.

The proportion of families with one child decreases progressively as the age of the head of the family increases through ages 35-39. In this group only about 25 percent of the families with children have only one child, about 25 percent have 2 children, and almost 50 percent have three or more. From age 40 on, the percentage with only one child increases steadily.

A comparison of the proportions of urban and rural families with specified number of children is given in chart IV.

Proportion of Children by Family Type and Number of Children in Family

The analyses thus far have dealt primarily with families rather than children. Table 5 gives the distribution of children in urban and rural families, according to number of children per family. About 25 percent of all urban children are in families with one child, some 30 percent in two-child families, about 20 percent in three-child families, less than 12 percent in four-child families, and less than 14 percent in families with five or more children. In rural families less than 19 percent of the children are in families with one child, 22 percent in families with two children, nearly 20 percent in families with three children, and 15 percent in families with four children. Nearly 25 percent are in families of five or more children, indicating once again the higher proportion of multi-child families among the rural than among the urban groups.

Since the majority of both urban and rural children are in husband-and-wife families, the distribution for these families is approximately

Chart IV.—Percentage distribution of urban and rural families with one or more children under 16 years of age, by number of children, for each type of family

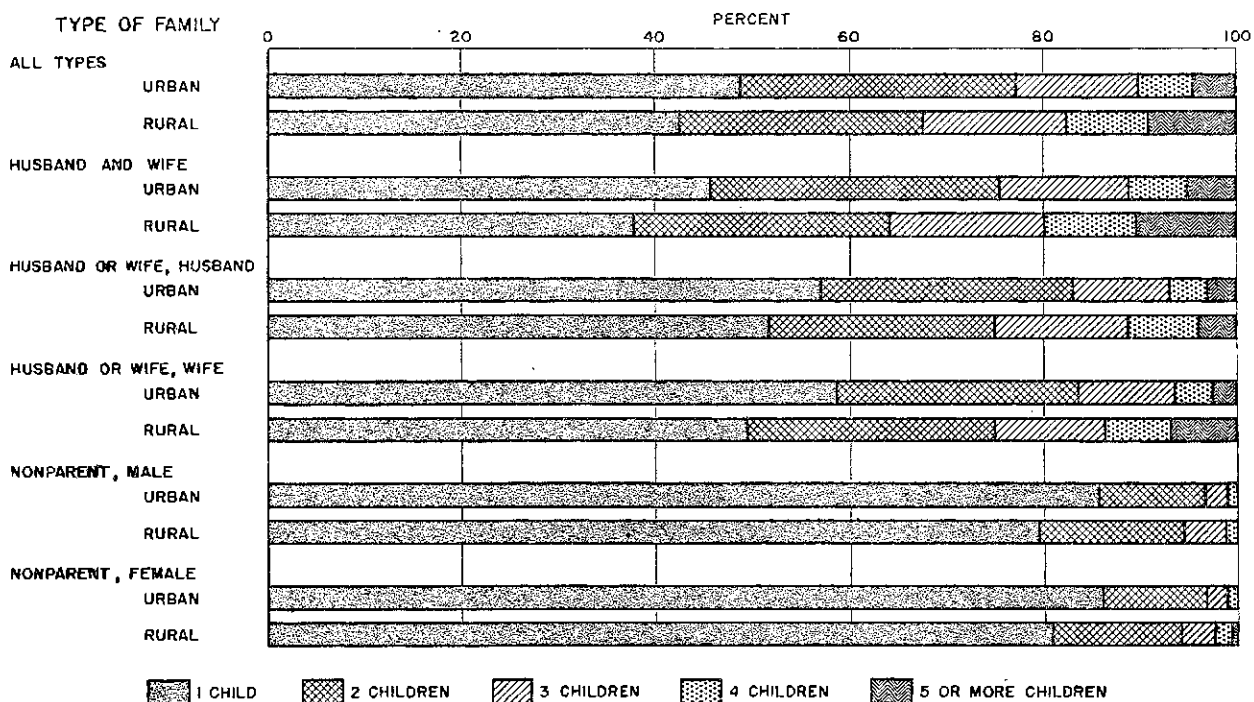


Table 4.—Number of rural families with specified age of head of family, percent with children, and percentage distribution by number of children under 16 years of age

[Preliminary data subject to revision]

Age group of head of family (years)	Number of rural families ¹	Percent with children	Percentage distribution of families with children by number of children per family					
			Total	1	2	3	4	5 or more
All ages.....	47,007	43.9	100.0	42.3	25.0	14.8	8.8	9.3
Under 15.....	1,299	100.0	100.0	80.6	14.8	3.6	1.0	.....
15-19.....	1,295	29.6	100.0	80.7	12.2	3.9	2.4	.8
20-24.....	3,241	87.7	100.0	87.7	24.1	6.1	1.3	.8
25-29.....	4,283	64.9	100.0	46.2	29.9	10.0	5.3	2.6
30-34.....	3,997	73.7	100.0	32.0	27.6	19.0	11.0	10.4
35-39.....	4,214	74.2	100.0	26.2	26.8	18.2	13.3	15.5
40-44.....	4,177	69.8	100.0	29.1	26.4	17.3	11.3	15.9
45-49.....	4,127	67.2	100.0	36.4	24.3	16.4	10.3	12.6
50-54.....	4,150	43.2	100.0	45.4	22.4	13.9	8.6	9.7
55-59.....	3,781	27.8	100.0	52.9	23.0	11.1	6.5	6.5
60-64.....	3,761	15.1	100.0	55.0	21.8	11.3	5.3	6.6
65 and over.....	8,682	3.8	100.0	55.3	23.7	10.5	7.9	2.

¹ Excludes 172 families with unknown age of head and/or number of children.

the same as for all family types; the proportions are somewhat smaller in families with few children and slightly higher in larger families. For the other family types, the reverse is true.

In urban families with the husband only, nearly one-third of the children are in families with one child, 30 percent with two children, 18 percent with three, 10 percent with four, and less than 10 percent in families with five or more children. The proportionate distribution of urban children in families with the wife only is essentially the same, with a slightly higher proportion of children in families with one child. The corresponding rural families show a relatively lower proportion of children in families of one or two children and, in general, a higher proportion in larger families.

In nonparent urban families, more than 70 percent of the children are in families with one child only, nearly 20 percent with two children, 6 percent with three, and 3 percent are in families with four or more. Nonparent rural families show a relatively lower percentage in families of one child and a higher proportion in families of two or more children.

Table 5 indicates that a higher proportion of children in families of five or more children are found in husband-and-wife families than in other types. This differentiation is made clearer in table 6, which shows the percentage distribution of children in urban and rural families with specified number of children, according to type of family. Thus, while nearly 87 percent of all

Table 5.—Number of children under 16 years of age in urban and rural families of specified type, and percentage distribution by number of children per family

[Preliminary data subject to revision]

Number of children per family	Type of family											
	All types		Husband and wife		Husband or wife, husband		Husband or wife, wife		Nonparent, male		Nonparent, female	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Number.....	647,420	46,335	562,275	40,161	11,051	844	59,171	3,323	6,748	1,026	8,175	981
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 child.....	25.3	18.9	23.0	16.1	32.5	27.1	34.5	24.4	71.2	61.9	72.2	62.7
2 children.....	29.5	22.2	29.8	21.9	29.9	24.2	29.3	25.4	19.4	23.2	18.4	21.0
3 children.....	19.7	19.7	20.3	20.4	17.6	21.3	17.8	16.6	6.2	10.5	6.3	7.7
4 children.....	11.7	15.2	12.2	15.9	10.3	14.7	9.4	14.0	2.0	3.9	2.0	5.3
5 children.....	6.8	10.3	7.2	11.0	5.9	5.9	5.1	9.8	.8	.5	.7	2.0
6 children.....	3.9	7.3	4.1	7.8	2.1	5.0	2.4	6.5	.4	.....	.3	.6
7 children.....	1.9	4.0	2.0	4.3	1.0	.8	1.1	2.5	.....	.....	.1	.7
8 children.....	.8	1.7	.9	1.9	.5	1.0	.3	.5	.....	.....	.....	.....
9 children.....	.4	.7	.5	.7	.2	.....	.1	.3	.....	.....	.....	.....

urban children are in husband-and-wife families, less than 79 percent of those in one-child families are in husband-and-wife families, and the proportion increases with increasing number of children per family. In families with five children, over 91 percent are in husband-and-wife families, and in those with nine children, 97 percent. The relative contribution of the other family types is highest in families of one child and decreases with increasing number of children per family. The decrease is particularly sharp in nonparent families.

While 87 percent of all rural children are in husband-and-wife families, the proportion of children from this family type in one-child families is only 74 percent. This percentage rises with increasing family size; 92 percent of those in families of five children are in husband-and-wife families, and the proportion reaches 97 percent in families with eight or nine children. The relative proportion of children in rural fatherless families is less than in the urban sample, while the proportion of children in nonparent families is greater, as indicated earlier.

Proportion of Children by Family Type and Age of Family Head

Table 7 shows the percentage of children in families according to age of the head of the family. For all family types, less than 2 percent of urban children are in families headed by persons under 15 years of age. The highest proportion of children is found in families in which the head is aged 35-39; second in rank are families in which

the head is aged 40-44. The next largest proportion is found in families headed by persons aged 30-34. This relative ranking is the same for rural families, except that the percentages are smaller. In rural families, both the younger and older families contribute a higher proportion of the children than in urban families.

Among children in urban husband-and-wife families, 23 percent are in families in which the head is 35-39, 21 percent in families in which the head is 40-44, and 17 percent in families in which the head is 30-34. In rural husband-and-wife families these three groups rank in the same order; their percentage contributions, however, are consistently lower.

In urban families with the husband only, the highest percentage of children is in families in which the head is aged 40-44, followed by the age groups 45-49 and 35-39. The relative proportion of families headed by older persons is considerably higher in this family type than in husband-and-wife families. This disparity is even more marked in rural families with husband only, in which nearly 56 percent of the children are in families with heads aged 40-54.

In urban families with the wife only, the highest proportion of children is in families in which the head is 35-39, followed by the age groups 30-34 and 40-44. These three age groups contribute 57 percent of all the urban children in families of this type. They also contribute the largest proportion in rural families—about 52 percent.

As indicated, the majority of children from nonparent families are found in families in which the head of the family is under the age of 15.

Table 6.—Number of children under 16 years of age in urban and rural families with specified number of children, and percentage distribution by type of family

[Preliminary data subject to revision]

Number of children per family	Number of children in urban families	Type of urban family						Number of children in rural families	Type of rural family					
		All types	Husband and wife	Husband or wife		Nonparent			All types	Husband and wife	Husband or wife		Nonparent	
				Husband	Wife	Male	Female				Husband	Wife	Male	Female
All children.....	647,420	100.0	86.8	1.7	9.1	1.1	1.3	46,335	100.0	86.7	1.8	7.2	2.2	2.1
1 child.....	164,109	100.0	78.8	2.2	12.5	2.9	3.6	8,754	100.0	73.8	2.6	9.3	7.3	7.0
2 children.....	190,794	100.0	87.7	1.7	9.1	.7	.8	10,264	100.0	85.5	2.0	8.2	2.3	2.0
3 children.....	127,683	100.0	89.6	1.6	8.3	.3	.4	9,114	100.0	90.0	2.0	6.0	1.2	.8
4 children.....	76,672	100.0	90.8	1.6	7.3	.2	.2	7,052	100.0	90.3	1.8	6.6	.6	.7
5 children.....	43,860	100.0	91.4	1.5	6.9	.1	.1	4,895	100.0	91.7	1.0	6.8	.1	.4
6 children.....	24,972	100.0	93.3	.9	5.6	.1	.1	3,408	100.0	92.3	1.2	6.3	.....	.2
7 children.....	12,145	100.0	93.6	.9	5.4	.....	.1	1,841	100.0	94.7	.4	4.5	.....	.4
8 children.....	5,368	100.0	95.2	1.1	3.7	.....	.....	890	100.0	97.0	1.0	2.0	.....	.....
9 children.....	2,727	100.0	97.0	1.0	2.0	.....	.....	297	100.0	97.0	.....	3.0	.....	.....

Table 7.—Number of children under 16 years of age in urban and rural families of specified type, and percentage distribution by age of head of family

[Preliminary data subject to revision]

Age group of head of family (years)	Type of family											
	All types		Husband and wife		Husband or wife, husband		Husband or wife, wife		Nonparent, male		Nonparent, female	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Number of children.....	1 647, 059	1 46, 200	561, 982	40, 036	11, 038	844	69, 116	3, 313	6, 748	1, 026	8, 175	981
Percent of children.....	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0	100. 0
Under 15.....	1. 8	3. 5	.....	.....	.....	.....	(¹)	. 4	79. 1	82. 1	77. 8	78. 5
15-19.....	. 6	1. 1	. 1	. 2	(¹)	. 1	1. 5	3. 1	16. 0	15. 4	18. 2	16. 7
20-24.....	2. 8	3. 8	2. 4	3. 6	1. 1	1. 1	7. 1	7. 7	3. 2	1. 5	2. 3	4. 8
25-29.....	10. 3	10. 9	10. 2	11. 3	5. 0	5. 5	13. 9	13. 7	1. 2	. 9	1. 2	. 8
30-34.....	17. 0	15. 7	17. 4	16. 7	10. 4	6. 4	18. 8	16. 1	. 3	.....	. 3	. 1
35-39.....	22. 4	18. 8	23. 1	19. 9	18. 8	11. 8	21. 8	18. 3	. 2	.....	. 2	.....
40-44.....	20. 1	17. 2	21. 1	18. 0	20. 1	19. 6	16. 3	17. 2	(¹)	. 1	(¹)	. 1
45-49.....	13. 6	12. 7	14. 1	13. 3	19. 0	17. 2	11. 9	11. 9	(¹)	.....	(¹)	.....
50-54.....	7. 1	8. 6	7. 2	8. 9	14. 0	18. 8	6. 1	7. 8	.....	.....	(¹)	.....
55-59.....	2. 8	4. 5	2. 9	4. 7	6. 5	11. 8	2. 0	2. 7	.....	.....	.....	.....
60-64.....	1. 0	2. 4	1. 0	2. 6	3. 1	4. 0	. 4	. 7	(¹)	.....	(¹)	.....
65 and over.....	. 5	. 8	. 5	. 9	2. 0	3. 7	. 2	. 4	.....	.....	.....	.....

¹ Excludes 361 children from families with unknown age of family head.
² Excludes 135 children from families with unknown age of family head.

³ Less than 0.05 percent.

This is more true for the rural than for the urban families.

The variations in the proportions of children classified by age of the head of the family and family type are shown more clearly in table 8. In urban families almost all children in families in which the head is under 15 years of age are in nonparent families. Less than one-tenth of the children in families in which the head is 15-19 are in husband-and-wife families, while over two-thirds are in nonparent families and nearly one-fourth are in families with the wife only. Nearly three-fourths of the children from families headed by persons aged 20-24 are in husband-and-wife families, negligible percentages are in motherless families and nonparent families, and nearly one-fourth are in fatherless families.

As the age of the head of the family increases, the proportion of children in husband-and-wife families tends to rise, but this correlation is most marked in families with the husband only. For families with the wife only, the proportion decreases after age 19. In nonparent families the concentration of children is found in families headed by persons less than 20 years of age.

Aid to Children Under the Social Security Act

Recent amendments to the Social Security Act, designed to improve the economic security and welfare of the Nation's children, provide for an

increase in the Federal contribution to State programs for aid to dependent children. Under title IV of the act, the Federal Government, beginning in January 1940, will pay one-half, instead of one-third as formerly, of amounts paid by a State for aid to dependent children. This provision of the act originally authorized Federal payments to States for aid to dependent children below the age of 16. Under the revised act, State payments will be matched by Federal funds for aid to children under the age of 18 if they are regularly attending school.

The old-age insurance provisions (title II) of the Social Security Act have been expanded to provide for the extension of supplementary benefits to dependent children and monthly benefits to surviving children of qualified workers. It has been estimated that 145,000 dependent children will be in receipt of monthly benefits by the end of 1940 under the new old-age and survivors insurance provisions.

The provisions in title IV of the Social Security Act for aid to dependent children apply only to children deprived of parental support, and would provide for children in husband-and-wife families only if one or both parents were incapacitated.¹² The recent amendments to the Social Security

¹² About 20 percent of the children in families added to the rolls for aid to dependent children under the Social Security Act during the fiscal year 1937-38 were living in husband-and-wife families.

Act will make additional provision for some children in husband-and-wife families, in that supplementary benefits will be payable, under specified circumstances, to dependent children of persons who are aged 65 or more and are receiving monthly old-age benefits; however, the number of such children is found to be insignificant—less than one-half of 1 percent of the child population.

Children in fatherless families who are in need because they have been deprived of parental support by reason of death or absence of the father are eligible for assistance under the Federal-State program for aid to dependent children. Eventually, under the provisions of the amended act, many fatherless children, especially those in urban regions, will be entitled to survivors benefits under the Federal old-age and survivors insurance system. Likewise, many of the children in motherless families and families of near relatives, where neither parent is present, are eligible for aid to dependent children if they are in need, and many of them will be eligible for survivors benefits.

In August 1939, 721,000 children received assistance under the Federal-State program for aid to dependent children. This number constitutes approximately 2 percent of the estimated population of the United States under the age of 16. Since the law limits assistance to children who are deprived of the support of one or both parents, the majority of these children are mem-

bers of one-spouse families or nonparent families. The data from the family composition study indicate that almost 5 million of the Nation's children are in broken families, from which one or both parents are missing. About 12 percent of the children in broken families and about one-third of 1 percent of those in husband-and-wife families are now benefiting under the provisions of the Social Security Act for assistance to dependent children.¹³

Ultimately, perhaps 50 percent or more of these children in broken homes will benefit from the provisions of the amended Social Security Act for aid to children, but the vast majority of the child population, more than 90 percent, is not and will not be affected by the act, even though children are economically the least secure segment of our population and are in need of special consideration.

Summary and Conclusion

The analysis of the data on children in urban and rural families indicates that:

(1) Nearly nine-tenths of all children are in husband-and-wife families; a greater proportion

¹³ The estimated number of aged persons included in old-age assistance grants under Federal-State programs for the month of August 1939 was 1.9 million, or 24 percent of the estimated population 65 years of age and over, as compared with the 2 percent of the estimated child population receiving aid to dependent children. In terms of family units, 209,000 families received aid for dependent children, as contrasted with 1.6 million families receiving aid to the aged. These figures may be compared with an estimated 17 million families with children and 7 million families with persons aged 65 and over.

Table 8.—Number of children under 16 years of age in urban and rural families with specified age of head of family, and percentage distribution by type of family

[Preliminary data subject to revision]

Age group of head of family (years)	Number of children in urban families ¹	Type of urban family						Number of children in rural families ²	Type of rural family					
		All types	Husband and wife	Husband or wife		Nonparent			All types	Husband and wife	Husband or wife		Nonparent	
				Husband	Wife	Male	Female				Husband	Wife	Male	Female
All ages.....	647,059	100.0	86.8	1.7	9.1	1.1	1.3	46,200	100.0	86.7	1.8	7.2	2.2	2.1
Under 15.....	11,713	100.0	.....	.....	.1	45.6	54.3	1,624	100.0	.....	.....	.7	51.9	47.4
15-19.....	5,728	100.0	7.6	.1	23.5	28.9	39.9	1,500	100.0	14.8	.2	20.6	31.6	32.8
20-24.....	18,222	100.0	74.2	.7	22.9	1.2	1.0	1,751	100.0	81.5	.5	14.7	.9	2.4
25-29.....	65,458	100.0	83.5	.8	12.4	.1	.2	5,028	100.0	89.8	.9	9.0	.2	.1
30-34.....	109,789	100.0	88.8	1.1	10.1	(³)	(³)	7,272	100.0	91.9	.8	7.3	.....	(³)
35-39.....	144,903	100.0	89.7	1.4	8.9	(³)	(³)	8,688	100.0	91.9	1.1	7.0	.....	.....
40-44.....	130,362	100.0	90.9	1.7	7.4	(³)	(³)	7,987	100.0	90.7	2.1	7.2	(³)	(³)
45-49.....	88,212	100.0	89.7	2.4	7.9	(³)	(³)	5,881	100.0	80.8	2.5	6.7	.....	.....
50-54.....	45,885	100.0	88.8	3.4	7.8	.....	(³)	3,987	100.0	80.5	4.0	6.5	.....	.....
55-59.....	18,346	100.0	89.7	3.9	6.4	.....	.....	2,061	100.0	90.7	4.9	4.4	.....	.....
60-64.....	6,445	100.0	90.6	5.4	4.0	(³)	(³)	1,087	100.0	94.0	3.1	2.0	.....	.....
65 and over.....	2,930	100.0	88.2	7.5	4.3	.....	.....	374	100.0	88.5	8.3	3.2	.....	.....

¹ Excludes 361 children from families with unknown age of head.

² Excludes 135 children from families with unknown age of head.

³ Less than 0.05 percent.

of these families have children, and there are more children per family in this type of family.

(2) Somewhat more than one-tenth of the Nation's children are in one-spouse families or in families where neither parent is present; the majority of these children are in one-spouse families with the wife only.

(3) A larger proportion of rural than of urban families have children, and in rural families there are a greater number of children per family in each family type.

(4) In rural families there are higher proportions of families headed by persons in the younger and older age groups and smaller proportions in the intermediate ages than is the case in urban families.

(5) In families with children, only six-tenths of 1 percent in the urban sample and 1.6 percent in the rural sample are headed by persons aged 65 and over.

(6) The concentration of one-child families is greatest in families headed by persons in the younger and older ages.

(7) Families headed by persons in the intermediate age groups have the largest proportion of children.

(8) The great majority of children in the families headed by persons under the age of 20 are in nonparent families. The majority of

children in families headed by persons in the intermediate and older age groups are in husband-and-wife families.

There is a definite correlation between the age of the head of the family and the number of children in the family. Approximately 2 percent of the Nation's child population is now benefited by the Social Security Act, and this proportion is not high even for children in broken families, about 12 percent of whom are receiving aid. In this respect it is fortunate that the changes recently adopted will ultimately increase the proportion of the children in broken families who will receive benefits under the provisions of the act. The effect of these changes will be felt more by urban families, which account for less than 50 percent of the child population. The bulk of the Nation's children, i. e., the 87 percent who are in husband-and-wife families, are scarcely affected even by the liberalization of the provisions for aid to dependent children; the proportion of those who will receive benefits as dependents of old-age annuitants is also negligible. The major contribution of the recent amendments to the Social Security Act is that in the event these children lose their parents there is a greater probability now of their being benefited by the act, but the problem of general economic insecurity of the Nation's child population is still a serious one.