A portrait of U.S. cohabiting families:
New data from the Current Population Survey

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In this paper, we will use an important new source of cohabitation data to provide a
current picture of the levels and characteristics of cohabiting households. In 2007, the
Current Population Survey (CPS) introduced a new measure that identifies all cohabiting
partners in a household, not simply the "unmarried partners" identified in the relationship
to household head question. The CPS now also now links children with all co-resident
parents and identifies the type of parental relationship (step, biological, adopted). These
new variables from CPS provide critical information on American families, and provide
an important baseline for studying future trends in cohabitation. In addition to providing a
snapshot of cohabiting families in 2008, we also analyze the impact of implementing the
direct measure of cohabitation, by examining the differences between unmarried
partnerships and cohabiting unions previously missed in the CPS.

Introduction

The rise of cohabitation has dramatically reshaped American family life. Nearly non-

existent in 1960, the number of unmarried partner households identified by the census increased

to 4.6 million by 2000 (Fitch, Goeken, and Ruggles 2005). As cohabitation has become a normal

part of adult union formation, it has also become a common feature of the family lives of

children. Children were present in about 40 percent of the estimated 6.3 million unmarried

couple households in the U.S in 2007 (Kreider 2008). While this represents just 6 percent of all

children under 18, a substantially larger proportion (perhaps as many as half) will live in a

cohabiting family during their childhood (Kennedy and Bumpass 2008; Kreider 2008).[1]

U.S. cohabitation has a variety of meanings, encompassing both emergent and re-

emergent families. Consensual unions can be an alternative to being single, a part of the marriage

process, or even as a temporary alternative to marriage (Brown and Booth 1996; Heuveline and

Timberlake 2004; Manning and Smock 2005; Smock 2000). As cohabitation is taking on an in-

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[1] During the late 1990s/early 2000's, nearly one-in-five children (or half of non-marital births) were born to cohabit-
ing parents (Kennedy and Bumpass 2008; Mincieli et al. 2007). During that same period, two-in-five children could
expect to live in a cohabiting parent family by age 12 (Kennedy and Bumpass 2008)--a number that has likely in-
creased further by 2008.

creasingly important role in children's family lives, both in "fragile families" (unmarried couples raising a joint biological child) and cohabiting stepfamilies, and both characterized by high levels of family instability (Manning, Smock, and Majumdar 2004; Raley and Wildsmith 2004). Because of the complexity of U.S. cohabitation, couples must negotiate not only the specific meaning of their relationship, but even the terms they call each other (Cherlin 2004; Manning and Smock 2005), and partners may not always agree on the meaning of the relationship (Knab and McLanahan 2007). Despite spreading widely, U.S. cohabitation remains a poorly defined family form and has consequently proved challenging to measure (Knab and McLanahan 2007; Pollard and Harris 2007).

Our paper makes use of newly developed measures of cohabitation and family relationship in the Current Population Survey (CPS). We have several goals. First, we use the new cohabitation measure to calculate the proportion of adults and children currently living in cohabiting family. For children, we will examine family structure in detail, using the detailed parent relationship variables. A second goal is to provide a comprehensive description of the demographic and economic conditions of U.S. cohabiting families, and cohabiting families with children in particular. Our final goal is to examine the impact of implementing the direct measure of cohabitation, by expanding our analysis of the differences between unmarried partnerships and the cohabiting unions previously missed in the CPS. Unmarried partners are the only the only identifiable cohabiting couples in the decennial census and the American Community Survey (ACS). The new direct question in the CPS will allow researchers to better understand the limitations of the "unmarried partners" as a proxy for cohabiting couples.

Measuring cohabitation

The data to study cohabitation have lagged behind shifts in family structure and living arrangements. The addition of an "unmarried partner" category to the relationship to head question on the 1990 Census and 1995 Current Population Survey (CPS) represented an important advance. Some types of cohabiting families, however, cannot be identified with this measure. Many cohabiting couples do not identify with the term "unmarried partner"--instead preferring other terms, like boyfriend and girlfriend (Manning and Smock 2005). Unions not involving the householder (e.g., cohabiting couples residing with parents or roommates) are not identified using the relationship to head information (Manning and Smock 2005). Researchers wanting to provide a complete picture of cohabitation had to rely on family surveys--valuable sources of information, but often with limited age ranges, smaller sample sizes, or irregular data collection.

In 2007, the CPS addressed these limitations by adding a direct question on cohabitation. In households with unrelated adults, the respondent was asked:

Do you have a boyfriend, girlfriend or partner in this household?

If they say yes, the respondent was then asked to identify the cohabiting partner from a list of adult household members (age 15 and older) and the interviewer recorded the partner's line number. The same question was posed about any other adults in the household. Data analysis can now identify cohabiting couples in two ways: through the relationship to head variable (unmarried partner) or the line number (pointer) of a co-resident boyfriend, girlfriend, or partner.[2] Estimates of the number of cohabiting couples increased by over 20% as a result of the new measure (Kreider 2008).

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[2] CPS defines households as "all individuals (related family members and all unrelated individuals) whose usual place of residence at the time of the interview is the sample unit."(U.S. Census Bureau 2006). A household includes temporarily absent members, but excludes visitors who maintain a separate residence.

For 2007 CPS, the Census Bureau also expanded the parent pointer (line number) to include both a mother and a father, allowing children of unmarried parents to be more easily identified (Kreider 2008). In addition, the new measures distinguish between type of parental relationship (biological, step, or adopted) (Kreider 2008)--differences that may have implications for child wellbeing. These new variables from CPS provide critical new information on American families and provide an important baseline for studying future trends in cohabitation.

Data and methods

In this paper, we use data from 2008 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) of the CPS, previously called the March Demographic Supplement. The ASEC collects detailed data on income, employment, non-cash benefits, and demographic characteristics and is the source for annual Census reports on Families and Living arrangements. In March 2008, 75,872 households were interviewed, with information collected on 206,404 individuals. Our analysis includes 4781 opposite-sex cohabiting couples and nearly 3000 children living with opposite-sex cohabiting parents.[3]

The goal of this paper is to describe the prevalence and characteristics of cohabiting unions and cohabiting families with children. Consequently, the methods used are descriptive in nature. We consider a broad array of demographic and socioeconomic correlates of cohabitation, including age, formal marital status, education, employment, income, race and ethnicity, and nativity. Because the CPS collects data on all members of the household and on families within the household, we are able to examine the living arrangements of cohabiting couples and household and family characteristics.

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[3] We focus on opposite-sex couples for two reasons. First, the CPS underestimates by about half the levels of same sex unions and cannot be used to produce reliable, nationally-representative estimates of the characteristics of sax sex unions (Kreider 2008). In addition, parent information is collected for only one mother and one father, so we cannot provide comparable analysis of children of same sex parents. Approximately one-third of same-sex cohabiting couples in the CPS are missed by the unmarried partner measure.

Variables

　　Dependent variables. Our analysis has three dependent variables: adult cohabitation type, parent's cohabitation type (for children living with cohabiting parents), and an indicator of step-family relationships (for children living with cohabiting parents). The adult and child measures of cohabitation type have three responses:

1. **Unmarried partnership:** the reference category, identifies unions between the household head and the unmarried partner of the head (identified through relationship to the head variable)
2. **Roommate partnership:** unions between the household head and a non-relative in the household who is not identified as an unmarried partner. The term "roommate" is chosen to reflect the most common relationship category used to describe the partner.
3. **Subfamily cohabitation:** unions between two people in the household, neither of whom is the household head. The term "subfamily" is chosen because most of these couples reside with family members.

Children living in cohabiting stepfamilies are compared to children living with two cohabiting biological parents.

　　Demographic characteristics of cohabiting partners. Our analysis includes a number of the demographic characteristics of cohabitors. We examine the ages of the cohabiting couple and the age-difference between partners. We include measures of education and school enrollment, as well as employment status. Also included is information on marital status, children in the household (and whether the children are biologically related to both partners, or only to one partner.) We construct a measure of residential history as a proxy for duration of union (both partners had resided in same household in previous year, both moved, or only one moved). The analysis also includes controls for race and ethnicity and geography. Most of the variables are used in both the analysis of adult cohabitation type and in the analysis of children's family structure.

Child characteristics. Additional variables included in the analysis of children's family structure include child age, child biological or step relationship to cohabiting parents, and age difference between child and parents. We construct measures identifying the presence of siblings in the household, distinguishing between children who are biologically related to both parents or to only one parent.

Poverty. We also examine the poverty levels of cohabiting couples and families. We base our estimates of poverty status on the 2008 federal poverty thresholds—estimates of the minimum income required to bring a out of poverty, estimated separately by family size and the number of related children under age 18 in the household (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). We calculate poverty in two ways:

1. **Couple-only poverty**: In this measure, we calculate total family income using only the cohabiting couple's income. In addition, only the couple and their children are used to determine family size. We, then, compare the couple's income to the poverty threshold for their family size, and the resulting ratio is our primary measure of family poverty.

2. **Total family poverty:** The second approach includes other related family members in calculations of family income and family size. Cohabiting couples who reside with a parent may have greater financial resources than a couple living on their own and the difference between this measure and couple-only poverty helps identify the extent to which couples are financially dependent on extended family.

We then categorize each poverty ratio into four categories: in poverty (incomes is less than 100% of poverty threshold), 100-199%, 200-299%, and 300% and more of the poverty threshold for family size. From the child's perspective, these categories represent approximate quartiles of the couple-only poverty ratio.

Our definition of poverty differs from the standard CPS approach to measuring poverty, which treats cohabiting partners as members of separate families. Previous research has demonstrated that including cohabiting partner incomes in family poverty measurements provides a more complete accounting of the economic resources available to cohabiting family

members and substantially reduces the overall poverty estimates in cohabiting families (Iceland 2007; Manning and Brown 2006).

Analytic approach

We begin with an analysis of cohabitation from the perspective of adults age 15 and older. We present weighted descriptive statistics on the proportion of adults who are in cohabiting unions, the type of cohabiting unions, and the characteristics of cohabitors and cohabiting households. We focus on differences between unmarried partnerships and the cohabiting unions newly identified with the direct question on cohabitation. We present similar descriptive statistics from the perspective of children age 0-14, focusing additionally on the differences between children raised by cohabiting biological parents and children living with a biological parent and his/her cohabiting partner.

In addition to the descriptive statistics, we estimate logistic and multinomial logistic models predicting cohabitation type. These models test for the significance of differences observed in the descriptive frequencies while controlling for other demographic and socioeconomic variables. These models are not meant to be causal, but rather to identify the characteristics of cohabiting couples and their families who were previously missed in the CPS and similar surveys, such as the ACS.

For adults, our regression analysis predicts the cohabitation type (unmarried partnership, roommate cohabitation, and subfamily cohabitation). We estimate a multinomial logistic model which simultaneously compares each of the newly identified cohabiting unions against the reference category (unmarried partnership). Multinomial logistic regression is similar to estimating two separate logistic models (one for each of the new cohabitation types), but the simultaneous estimation is more efficient.

We run a similar model for children, in which we compare the likelihood that a child's parents are in one of the two newly identified types of unions rather than in an unmarried partnership. The final regression model predicts the likelihood that a child will live with a cohabiting stepparent rather than with two cohabiting biological parents, and is estimated using logistic regression. All regression models employ survey weights and the child models control for the clustering of children in households.

Findings

We present first an analysis of adult cohabitation and of the characteristics of the cohabiting couples newly identified by the more complete measures of cohabitation in the CPS. Next, we consider the characteristics of children living in cohabiting families. The new parent pointers allow us to distinguish between cohabiting biological and stepparent relationships, and we conclude with an analysis of these two family types.

Adult cohabitation

Table 1 presents the proportion of U.S. adults who were living in a cohabiting union in March 2008.[4] Overall, six percent of U.S. adults (ages 15+) were cohabiting. Most cohabitors, 82 percent, were in an unmarried partnership (a relationship between the householder and an "unmarried partner"); 13 percent were in a union between the householder and a nonrelative (roommate partnership); and 5 percent were unions between two household members neither of whom was the householder (subfamily cohabitation). Teenage cohabitation is rare (2% of teens are currently cohabiting), but is the most likely to be missed by unmarried partner measures, as nearly one-third percent of cohabiting teenagers reside in the newly identified cohabitation types,

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[4] Cohabitation levels by sex only reveal the overall earlier union formation of women compared to men.

predominantly subfamily unions. Cohabitation peaks among adults in their twenties, at 13-14 percent of all individuals in the ages 20-29. At these peak ages, the unmarried partner measure misses a substantial percentage of cohabitors: more than 20 percent of the unions of adults ages 20-24 and nearly 18 percent of unions of those age 25-29. Even at ages 30-34, cohabitation levels remaining high (10 percent are currently cohabiting). At all ages, cohabitation measurement is substantially improved with the direct cohabitation question; the unmarried partner measure misses at least 15 percent of cohabiting couples at all age groups.

Who are these newly identified cohabiting couples? When one of the partners is the household reference person (*roommate cohabitors*), the other partner is most commonly identified as a housemate or roommate (65%). An additional 31 percent are identified a "non-relative of reference person", while the remaining partners (5%) are identified as roomers or boarders. Householder couples reside primarily in nuclear families—about half reside in couple-only households and just 11-14 percent of householder couples reside with someone other than their children. When unions occur between two individuals who are not the householder (*subfamily unions*), the couple typically resides with relatives. Nearly sixty percent are the child of the household head, another 25 percent of couples are related in another way to the household head, and the remaining couples are both identified as housemates/roommates (9%), non-relatives (5%), and boarders (3%) of the household head. Across cohabitation types, it is unusual for cohabiting couples to reside with unrelated roommates.

To place cohabitation levels in context, Table 1 also presents information on the proportion of adults who are currently married and cohabitation levels among never-married adults. At ages 20-24, nearly half of individuals who are in unions are cohabiting rather than married. At ages 25-29, when cohabitation peaks but marriage is more common, about one-quarter of unions are cohabitation. Among never-married individuals, cohabitation levels are also

strikingly high at older ages as well. One-fifth of never-married adults age 20-44 are currently cohabiting, including one-quarter of never-married adults age 25-34 demonstrating the important role cohabitation has assumed in the lives of unmarried Americans.

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of adults in unmarried partner households and in the newly identified cohabiting unions are shown in Tables 2-3. Individual characteristics are presented separately for male and female cohabitors in Table 2. Table 3 describes couple-level characteristics. The largest differences are found between the subfamily couples and householder unions more generally, while the differences between the different types of householder couples (unmarried partners and roommate couples) are smaller.

Subfamily couples are distinctive demographically. Age is, perhaps the most notable difference. Subfamily cohabitors are on average much younger than in other unions. Over half of women and forty percent of men in subfamily unions are under age 25 (including 17 and 9 percent who are teenagers). This compares to just one-quarter of women and 16 percent of men in householder cohabitation. Subfamily couples are much less likely to be ever-married (80 percent are never-married compared to roughly 60 percent in other cohabitation types).

The living arrangements of subfamily couples also differ substantially from householder couples. While fewer than five percent of householder couples reside with parents, 37 percent of subfamily couples live with the male partner's parents, and an additional 26 percent live with the female partner's parents. Despite the young age of individuals in subfamily cohabitation, 28 percent of couples have at least one child present, including 14 percent with a joint biological child. Although subfamily cohabitors are less likely to be parents than roommate cohabitors, they are more slightly more likely to have a joint child (14 percent compared to 11 percent).

Consistent with these demographic differences, the subfamily cohabitors have substantially lower socioeconomic status. They are substantially less likely to have ever attended

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college or even to have finished high school, and females in subfamily cohabiting unions are less likely to be employed full-time. They have substantially lower incomes (the median joint income of subfamily cohabitors is $30,000, or less than 60 percent of the income of unmarried partners.) Based on couple-only income, one-quarter of subfamily cohabitors would live below the poverty level and more than half have incomes less than twice the poverty threshold, compared to one-tenth and one-third respectively of householder couples[5]. However, because subfamily couples reside with other family members, actual family poverty levels are much lower, about 15 percent.[6] A clear benefit of the new CPS measure of cohabitation is the ability to identify these younger, poorer cohabitors.

In contrast, the differences between unmarried partners and roommate partners are quite small. Most notably, unmarried partners are more likely to have children present in the household, 41 percent versus 35 percent. Unmarried partners are nearly twice as likely to have joint biological children as roommate couples (21 percent vs. 11 percent); while they are similarly likely to have children of only one partner. Roommate couples are, on average, slightly older than unmarried partners, with 27 percent of men and 22 percent of women ages 50 and older. Their children are also older. In most other respects, unmarried partners and roommate couples appear remarkably similar, including income, education, and employment levels. Because of the similarities between the two largest types of cohabiting unions, analyses of unmarried partnerships appear to provide a generally good description of the characteristics of cohabitors. Nonetheless, unmarried partner measures appear to underestimate the overall level of

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[5] Cohabiting couple poverty is based on the total income of the couple, family size (the couple and their children) and the number of their children under age 18. This information is compared with the 2008 poverty guidelines to estimate ratio of couple income to the poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau 2008).
[6] Family poverty, as defined here, includes the income of all family members including cohabiting partners. The resulting estimate is substantially lower than the CPS-defined family poverty estimates that exclude the income of cohabiting partners.

cohabitation and overestimate the proportion of unions that include children (especially joint children).

Multivariate regression analysis provides general support for these conclusions. We present, in Table 4, results from a multinomial logistic model comparing each of the new types of cohabiting unions to unmarried partnerships. The first panel of Table 4 compares householder couples, and estimates the odds of being in roommate partnership compared to being in an unmarried partnership while the second panel estimates the likelihood of being in a union rather than an unmarried partnership. Only cohabitors are included in this model, and the couple is the unit of analysis.

Both female and male partners' ages are significantly associated with cohabitation type. Compared to women ages 20-29, teenagers are nearly twice as likely to be in subfamily unions instead of an unmarried partnership; specifically, the odds that a teenager is in a subfamily union instead of an unmarried partnership are 1.78 times the odds a woman in her twenties is in a subfamily union ($1.78 = e^{0.57}$). The chances that a man will be in a subfamily union also decline significantly with age: men at ages 30 and older are much less likely than men ages 20-29 to be in a subfamily union. We find no differences by age between unmarried partnerships and roommate partnerships in the model presented in Table 4. This finding likely reflects the strong correlation in partner age; when we estimated models with only female age or including female age and an indicator of the age difference between partners, we find that women ages 50 and older are significantly less likely to label their relationship an unmarried partnership.

These associations between age and cohabitation type are most likely a reflection of economic constraints at young ages. For younger women, these differences in union formation may reflect an effort to manage the economic uncertainty of young adulthood by residing with family. Likewise, of the significant decline in subfamily cohabitation among men age 30 and

older may reflect the increasing ability of older men to independently support a family. For older women, however, their decreased likelihood of reporting unmarried partnerships may result may suggest generational differences in associating with the term "unmarried partner" (results not shown).

The presence of children is also an important predictor of union type, controlling for other demographic and socioeconomic factors. Each additional joint biological child is associated with a 32% and 62% decrease, respectively, in the odds that a couple will reside in roommate cohabitation or a subfamily union compared to residing in an unmarried partnership. In contrast, the biological children of the mother only (stepchildren of the male partner) decrease the likelihood that a union involving the householder will be labeled an unmarried partnership. The mother's biological children also decrease the odds that a couple will reside in a subfamily cohabiting union compared to both types of householder cohabitation. These differences suggest that joint biological children impart a different meaning to cohabitation, one that this is reflected in the choice of the term unmarried partner.

Finally, Table 4 shows significant socioeconomic differences between unmarried partners and subfamily couples (there are none between householder couples). Males in subfamily unions are significantly less educated--less likely to have attended or graduated college--than men in unmarried partnerships. Although there are no differences by female education in model shown in Table 4, this appears to be the result of a strong correlation between male and female education levels.[7] We also examine the relationship between couple-only poverty status and cohabitation type. The poverty ratio is categorized into four categories (< 100% of poverty, 100-199, 200-299, and 300% and higher). Couples in poverty are four times more likely to reside in a subfamily union than in an unmarried partnership than are couples in the highest category;

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[7] Less-educated women are significantly more likely to reside in a non-household union in regression models that either exclude male education entirely, or include an indicator for difference from male education.

couples with incomes between 100-199 percent of the poverty threshold are also significantly more likely to live in subfamily unions. When couple-only poverty is replaced a measure of total family poverty, the association between poverty and cohabiting union type weakens substantially (results not shown). These results suggest that living with family, especially parents, is an important economic strategy to minimize cohabiting couple poverty.

Together, these results demonstrate the importance of the new direct cohabitation measure in fully capturing the diversity of cohabiting families, in addition to providing better measures of the levels of cohabitation.

Cohabiting families with children

Children are common in cohabiting households. Two-fifths of cohabiting couples are raising children and about half of couples with children have a joint biological child. The new family relationship variables in the CPS improve our ability to study these families in two ways. First, as with adults, analyses are not limited to the children of unmarried partners. Secondly, the CPS now identifies both a mother and a father for each child (instead of just one parent) and describes their parental relationship (biological, step, or adopted). Consequently, differences in cohabiting biological families (two biological parents) and cohabiting step families (one biological parent and his/her partner) can be observed. We make one adjustment to the CPS family identification variables. The cohabiting partner of a child's biological parent is infrequently identified as the child's step parent; usually the child is reported as living with only one parent. In this study, we want to identify all children living in households with cohabiting parents. Therefore, we define cohabiting stepfamilies to include all cases when the child's biological parent is in a cohabiting relationship even though these partners are rarely identified as a "step parent."

Table 5 shows the distribution of children's family structures by child age in March 2008. Married biological/adopted parent families remain the norm, covering 63% of children ages 0-14 and 67% of children ages 0-4[8]. Over 20 percent of children live with a single parent, including 16 percent of children under age 1. Six percent of children reside with cohabiting parents (equally split between biological and step). Regardless of marital status, 72% of children under age 5 and 64 percent of all children reside with two biological parents.

Looking more closely at the cohabiting families, children under 1 year of age are the most likely to live with cohabiting parents (11%); at this age nearly all children in cohabiting families reside with two biological parents. While high, this is substantially lower than estimates of cohabiting childbearing from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Program sample of children born in 2001; Mincieli et al (2007) calculated that 18% of children were born to cohabiting couples. The discrepancy between 11 and 18% is most likely a reflection of the short duration of cohabiting unions--many parents either marry or separate in the first year. At older ages, the overall proportion of children living with cohabiting parents declines, as does the proportion of cohabiting families that involve two biological parents. By ages 10-14, just one percent of children live with two cohabiting biological parents, compared to three percent living with a biological parent and their cohabiting partner.

Most children (88%) living with cohabiting parents can be identified through unmarried partner measures (see Table 6). Overall, less than one percent of children's parents are either roommate couples (.6%) or subfamily couples (just 0.2%), representing respectively 9% and 3% of children in cohabiting families. Nearly all (91%) of children living with biological cohabiting parents and 86 percent of children living in a cohabiting step families are captured by the

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[8] Overall, 1.4% of children live with married adoptive parents; because there are insufficient cases to analyze these families separately, we pool them with married biological parent families.

unmarried partner measure. The new direct cohabitation measure, however, identifies a potentially important minority of children living with cohabiting parents.

Table 7 presents descriptive statistics on the characteristics of children's cohabiting families, based on the type of cohabiting relationship (unmarried partner, roommate cohabitation, and subfamily cohabitation). The subfamily cohabiting families are most strikingly distinguished by their residence with extended family. Two-thirds of children in these household reside with a grandparent, compared to just 2-4% of children in householder cohabiting families. The proportion of children who are the biological child of both parents varies considerably between cohabitation type: 48 percent of the children in unmarried partner households, 29 percent of children raised by roommate couples, and 47 percent of children in subfamily families. Combining full and half-siblings, children raised by other householder-couples reside with the most siblings (1.6), while the children in subfamily families have the least (1 sibling on average). The children of subfamily couples are substantial younger (one-quarter are under age 1) than children of other cohabiting couples, and the children of the other householder couples are slightly older than those of unmarried partners. There are similar results for parental age; children residing in subfamily couples were born to the youngest couples and those in roommate couples were born to slightly oldest parents than those of unmarried partners. Finally, roommate cohabiting parents are the most likely to be ever-married (about half are), subfamily cohabitors are the least likely to be ever-married (under twenty percent), and about a third of unmarried partners are ever-married.

There are also some socioeconomic differences between types of cohabitors. Unmarried partners appear to have slightly lower education levels and lower incomes compared to roommate couples. Across all cohabitation types, two-thirds of parents have no education beyond high school. The subfamily couples are particularly disadvantaged here: more than 30 percent

did not complete high school, and fully 80 percent have no post-secondary schooling. Poverty levels are also high across the board by both couple-only and total family poverty measures; two-fifths of children raised by householder couples were living in poverty in March 2008, as were one-third of the children of subfamily couples.[9] As with adult cohabitation, the differences between the unmarried partner and roommate cohabitation are minimal compared to differences between householder cohabitation broadly and subfamily cohabitation.

Table 8 presents results from a multinomial logistic regression estimating the type of parental cohabiting union. Like the adult models, there are very few significant differences between unmarried partner families and roommate cohabiting families. Compared to the biological child of both parents, a stepchild is more likely to live with roommate cohabitors. Similarly, if a child has a sibling who is biologically related to both parents, they are 40 percent less likely to reside in a roommate cohabiting family. Differences between children living with unmarried partner parents and children raised by parents in a subfamily cohabiting union are also quite small--only differences by region and race and ethnicity are significant (p<.05). Poverty—measured as the couples income only—is only marginally associated with living subfamily cohabitation, but suggests that these unions are more common among lower-income families (p<10). Although the new cohabitation measure provides a better estimate of the prevalence of cohabiting families and can identify children who live in extended families, families identified by the unmarried partnerships appear to be largely representative of cohabiting families more generally.

Children raised by cohabiting step and biological parent are compared in Table 9. Previous to 2007, only one parent could be directly identified in the CPS data and no information was collected on whether this parent was a biological, step, or adoptive parent. With the new

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[9] Note, the family poverty levels reported here always include the incomes of cohabiting partners and differ substantially from the official CPS poverty levels. Using the CPS definition of families and poverty variable (which excludes cohabiting partners), 43% of children across cohabitation types are estimated to live in poverty.

measures, pointers were collected for both a mother and a father, and we know the type of relationship (biological, step, or adopted) for all explicitly identified parents. This allows us to distinguish between children living with two biological parents and children living with one biological parent and their partner. As noted above, it is common for children in cohabiting families to receive only one parent pointer (to a biological parent, usually the mother). In these cases, we assign the biological parent's partner to be the child's step-parent. [10]

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of children living with cohabiting biological parents is their age--two-thirds are less than 5 years old, including 23 percent under age 1. In contrast, three-quarters of children living with a cohabiting step parent are age 5-14. The parents in step-cohabiting families are much more likely to be ever married (over one-half compared to one-fifth), and is a reminder that many of the children in these families were born into a marriage to a previous partner. Children raised by cohabiting biological parents have less educated parents--about 30 percent did not complete high school, compared to about 20 percent of cohabiting step parents. Family poverty levels are consistent with these differences: 24 percent of children raised by cohabiting biological parents were living in poverty in March 2008, compared to 18 percent of children living with a cohabiting step parent. (Results were similar for both couple-only poverty and total family poverty measures). Father's employment levels are similar, but mothers in cohabiting biological families are less likely to be employed--perhaps reflecting the young age of their children.

Table 10 presents results from a logistic regression predicting the log-odds that a child will be living in a cohabiting step family instead of with two biological cohabiting parents. The results are largely consistent with the differences observed in Table 9. Young children are much more likely to be living with biological parents, as are children who have a sibling biologically

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[10] A preliminary analysis of the partners specifically identified as step-parents and those we have assigned to that category does not suggest any significant differences between the two groups.

related to both parents. Having a younger mother (measured by age difference between mother and child) increases the odds that a child will reside in a step-family, as does having siblings related only to the mother or the father, and having ever-married parents. The education differences noted in Table 9 are also evident in the regression. The odds that a child lives in a cohabiting step family are smallest when a mother has less than a high school education compared to a college degree. This likely reflects the disadvantages of parents who give birth in a cohabiting union, compared to those who enter a cohabiting union at older ages (often after a marital birth). It may also reflect the older age of women in cohabiting stepfamilies, and thus greater time to accumulate additional education. Although the descriptive results in Table 9 demonstrate that children living in poor families are more likely to live with two biological parents; this association is significant only in bivariate analysis and appears to be largely explained with the inclusion of child age. We suspect that the differences by poverty shown in Table 9 reflect the lower employment levels of mothers in two biological parent families, which in turn are probably the result of the young age of their children.

There are clear differences between children living with two biological parents and those living with one biological parent and his/her cohabiting partner. Distinguishing between these families is important because of the potential differences in investments (financial and emotional) between stepchildren and biological children, and because stepchildren may be particularly at risk haven been exposed to multiple family transitions (see Manning and Brown 2006 for a review). Because the CPS is collecting data on the type of parental relationship, we can now more precisely identify and study these different types of families.

Discussion

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This paper makes use of newly developed measures of cohabitation and family relationships to provide a more complete and up-to-date portrait of U.S. cohabitating families. Prior to 2007, the CPS could only identify cohabiting unions involving household heads and individuals who were reported in the relationship to household head as the householder's "unmarried partner". These measures were known to underestimate cohabitation levels and to miss entirely important subgroups of cohabitors: those residing with parents, family, or roommates (Manning and Smock 2005). Beginning in 2007, the CPS addressed these limitations by adding a direct question on cohabitation.

As of March 2008, we estimate that six percent of U.S. adults were cohabiting with a partner of the opposite sex, while six percent of children ages 0-14 were living in a cohabiting family. Most of the adult cohabiting unions (82%) are unmarried partnerships, and an even more children living in cohabiting unions reside with unmarried partners (90%). There is still a substantial minority of cohabiting families that are identified only because of the addition of a direct question on cohabitation. Many cohabiting couples still do not associate their relationship with the term unmarried partner and classify the partner as a non-relative or roommate (13 percent of all cohabiting couples). The new cohabitation measure also identifies unions between individuals who are not the householder (6 percent of cohabiting couples).

We then examined the characteristics of these three types of cohabiting unions: unmarried partnerships, roommate partnerships, and subfamily unions. The subfamily cohabitors were striking different--they were significantly younger, less educated, and had lower incomes than unmarried partners. Most resided with other family members, primarily parents—a living arrangement that substantially improved their standard of living. The new CPS measures, thus, allow us to identify this small but important subset of cohabiting couples.

Also striking, is our finding that unmarried partners seem to reasonably represent "householder" cohabitation more broadly. The newly identified roommate couples were slightly older and were less likely to have joint biological children than unmarried partners. In all other respects, across a variety of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, the couples who identify themselves as unmarried partners are remarkably similar to couples who do not associate their relationship with this term.

Similarly, all three types of cohabiting families with children appear to be well-represented by the unmarried partner measures. Importantly, these new measures allow researchers to identify children living in cohabiting subfamilies—typically young children, born to young parents with low incomes, and living in multigenerational households. Differences between step and biological children are also relatively small, but suggest different risk factors (less educated mothers among the biological children, compared to risks associated with the complexities and instability of stepfamily life). The new CPS parent measures, by allowing researchers to distinguish between these families, both emerging and re-emerging, represents an important advance in our ability to study the characteristics of cohabiting families with children.

Cohabitation in the United States encompasses family transitions throughout the life course: from young couples starting out, perhaps planning to get married, to new parents ("fragile families"), and finally to couples, with children from previous relationships, forming new families (stepfamilies with all their complexities). By capturing the diversity of cohabiting families, the new CPS measures allow us to more accurately estimate cohabitation levels and characteristics. Yet, we also find that unmarried partnerships are representative of most cohabiting unions (the 94% involving household heads) and of cohabiting families with children. The decennial census and the American Community Survey (ACS) identify cohabiting couples only through the unmarried partner category of the relationship to head question. Research on

cohabiting families would be improved by providing a direct measure of cohabitation on these surveys as well. Our analyses, however, have demonstrated that unmarried partners are a reasonably representative of independently cohabiting families.

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Table 1: Current cohabitation and marital status by age: US adults, March 2008

		% cohabiting by cohab type			% cohab never-married adults	% married
		All	Unmarried partners	Roommate partners	Subfamily partners	
adult age categories	15-19 yrs	1.9%	1.3%	.2%	.4%	1.9%	.9%
	20-24 yrs	13.3%	10.5%	1.6%	1.2%	15.6%	14.6%
	25-29 yrs	13.9%	11.4%	1.7%	.8%	23.9%	41.7%
	30-34 yrs	9.8%	8.2%	1.2%	.3%	23.7%	58.8%
	35-39 yrs	7.2%	6.2%	.8%	.2%	21.1%	66.6%
	40-44 yrs	6.6%	5.7%	.8%	.2%	19.2%	65.5%
	45-49 yrs	5.6%	4.7%	.8%	.1%	15.1%	65.8%
	50+	2.7%	2.2%	.5%	.0%	7.8%	62.3%
Total		6.0%	5.0%	.8%	.3%	13.1%	52.0%

Table 2. Characteristics of cohabitors: unmarried partners and newly identified cohabitors

	Female cohabitors			Male cohabitors		
	Unmarried partners	**Roommate partners**	**Subfamily cohabitors**	**Unmarried partners**	**Roommate partners**	**Subfamily cohabitors**
Age						
15-19 yrs	4%	4%	17%	1%	1%	9%
20-24 yrs	21%	21%	39%	15%	15%	32%
25-29 yrs	21%	17%	18%	21%	20%	31%
30-34 yrs	12%	11%	8%	15%	13%	10%
35-39 yrs	10%	8%	6%	11%	8%	6%
40-44 yrs	9%	9%	4%	10%	8%	6%
45-49 yrs	9%	9%	3%	8%	9%	3%
50+	15%	22%	3%	19%	27%	3%
Marital status						
Married	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Widowed	4%	8%	0%	2%	4%	1%
Divorced	30%	33%	14%	32%	33%	13%
Separated	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	2%
Never married	60%	54%	80%	61%	58%	83%
Education						
< HS	14%	12%	21%	15%	15%	26%
HS grad	34%	34%	45%	38%	36%	48%
Some coll	31%	29%	22%	28%	26%	19%
4 yr coll	21%	25%	13%	19%	22%	8%
Currently enrolled	7%	6%	11%	3%	5%	4%
Employment						
Full-time	57%	52%	44%	71%	68%	69%
Part-time	14%	17%	15%	8%	8%	7%
Unemployed	5%	4%	11%	7%	7%	10%
Not in labor force	24%	27%	29%	14%	18%	15%
Race/ethnicity						
Hispanic	14%	11%	17%	15%	10%	17%
White	70%	73%	69%	68%	73%	68%
Black	11%	11%	7%	13%	13%	7%
Native American	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%
Asian/Pacific Isl	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Multiple races	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%
Nativity						
1st gen	11%	8%	10%	11%	10%	11%
2nd gen	2%	4%	3%	2%	2%	1%
U.S.born, to U.S. parents	86%	87%	87%	87%	88%	88%
Unweighted n	3,667	454	254	3,667	454	254

Table 3. Characteristics of cohabiting couples and households

	Unmarried partners	Roommate partners	Subfamily cohabitors
Living arrangements			
Couple-only	53%	56%	n/a
Any children	41%	35%	28%
Any child < 15	35%	25%	21%
Joint child	21%	11%	14%
Female's child	21%	23%	14%
Male's child	7%	5%	5%
Live w/her parents	1%	3%	26%
Live w/his parents	1%	1%	37%
Couple-only poverty ratio			
Below poverty	11%	12%	24%
100-199%	19%	18%	31%
200-299%	20%	18%	15%
>=300%	51%	52%	31%
Total family poverty ratio			
Below poverty	10%	11%	15%
100-199%	23%	21%	26%
200-299%	17%	17%	14%
>=300%	50%	50%	44%
Median couple income	$51,360	$49,000	$30,000
Residential moves, past year			
Both nonmovers	69%	64%	61%
Both movers	25%	28%	26%
Different history	6%	8%	13%
Geographic region			
Northeast	17%	17%	15%
Midwest	24%	25%	28%
South	33%	37%	25%
West	25%	21%	32%
Metro area	82%	85%	77%
Survey respondent			
Female partner	52%	52%	11%
Male partner	46%	45%	12%
Someone else	2%	3%	77%

Table 4: Multinomial Logistic Regression Predicting Couple Cohabitation Type

	Roommate Partnership vs. Unmarried Partnership				Subfamily cohabitation vs. Unmarried partnership			
	OR	B	SE	p	OR	B	SE	p
F age (ref = 20-29]								
15-19	1.13	0.12	0.35		1.78	0.57	0.29	*
30-39	1.04	0.04	0.20		0.83	-0.19	0.30	
40-49	1.13	0.12	0.25		0.81	-0.21	0.43	
50+	1.48	0.39	0.28		0.52	-0.65	0.60	
M age (ref = 20-29]								
15-19	0.64	-0.45	0.60		1.68	0.52	0.40	
30-39	0.85	-0.16	0.19		0.41	-0.89	0.26	***
40-49	0.92	-0.09	0.25		0.29	-1.24	0.44	**
50+	1.20	0.18	0.27		0.10	-2.29	0.56	***
Any children								
# joint bio	0.68	-0.39	0.12	**	0.38	-0.96	0.19	***
# F's only	1.17	0.16	0.07	*	0.61	-0.50	0.16	**
# M's only	0.84	-0.18	0.15		0.58	-0.55	0.31	
Marital status								
F ever married	1.10	0.09	0.17		1.01	0.01	0.28	
M ever married	0.95	-0.05	0.15		0.97	-0.03	0.28	
Female's educ								
[ref = Coll grad]								
< HS	0.66	-0.41	0.24		1.02	0.02	0.38	
HS grad	0.80	-0.22	0.17		1.49	0.40	0.34	
Some coll	0.77	-0.26	0.18		0.94	-0.06	0.36	
Male's educ								
[ref = Coll grad]								
< HS	1.06	0.06	0.23		2.66	0.98	0.42	*
HS grad	0.95	-0.06	0.18		2.23	0.80	0.38	*
Some coll	0.83	-0.18	0.19		1.32	0.28	0.43	
Enrollment status								
F in school	0.79	-0.24	0.30		0.66	-0.42	0.29	
M in school	2.23	0.80	0.33	*	0.55	-0.59	0.40	
Employment status								
F full-time	0.76	-0.27	0.13	*	0.89	-0.12	0.20	
M full-time	1.07	0.07	0.14		1.17	0.16	0.19	
Couple-only poverty								
[Ref = 300%+]								
< 100%		0.28	0.25		4.11	1.41	0.32	***
100-199		0.12	0.19		3.02	1.10	0.26	***
200-299		-0.06	0.17		1.03	0.03	0.26	
Residential moves								
[Ref= non-movers]								
Both movers	1.25	0.22	0.15		0.52	-0.66	0.23	**
Different history	1.52	0.42	0.23	*	1.96	0.67	0.26	*

Table 4: Multinomial Logistic Regression Predicting Couple Cohabitation Type

	Roommate Partnership vs. Unmarried Partnership				Subfamily cohabitation vs. Unmarried partnership			
	OR	B	SE	p	OR	B	SE	p
F's race/ethnicity								
[ref = non-Hisp white]								
Hispanic	0.93	-0.08	0.26		0.96	-0.04	0.29	
Black	0.81	-0.21	0.30		1.11	0.10	0.35	
Native American	2.56	0.94	0.48	*	3.81	1.34	0.56	*
Asian/PI	0.33	-1.10	0.49	*	0.75	-0.29	0.64	
Multiple	2.48	0.91	0.37	*	1.12	0.11	0.49	
M's race/ethnicity								
Hispanic	0.78	-0.25	0.27		0.93	-0.07	0.29	
Black	1.08	0.08	0.27		0.60	-0.51	0.34	
Native American	0.28	-1.28	0.75		1.03	0.03	0.66	
Asian/PI	2.84	1.04	0.45	*	1.92	0.65	0.74	
Multiple	0.24	-1.42	0.64	*	0.90	-0.11	0.64	
Nativity								
[ref = foreign born]								
2nd gen	2.22	0.80	0.38	*	1.20	0.18	0.49	
US born, US parents	1.00	0.00	0.28		0.75	-0.29	0.36	
Nativity								
2nd gen	0.81	-0.21	0.42		0.58	-0.54	0.66	
US born, US parents	1.00	0.00	0.29		1.55	0.44	0.35	
Region [ref = West]								
Northeast	1.10	0.10	0.18		1.01	0.01	0.27	
Midwest	1.15	0.14	0.18		0.62	-0.48	0.28	*
South	0.88	-0.13	0.20		1.43	0.36	0.26	
Metro area	1.38	0.32	0.15	*	1.03	0.03	0.20	
Constant		-2.12	0.43	***		-2.95	0.62	***

note: n=4395; *** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05

Table 5: Family structure of children ages 0-14

Family structure	Child age				
	<1 yr	1-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	Total
Married bio parents	68.7%	66.3%	63.7%	58.8%	63.1%
Married step family	.6%	1.4%	4.3%	7.6%	4.4%
Cohab bio parents	9.8%	4.6%	1.9%	1.0%	2.8%
Cohab step family	1.4%	2.9%	3.7%	3.3%	3.2%
Single parent family	16.2%	21.8%	22.7%	24.7%	22.7%
Other	3.3%	3.0%	3.8%	4.5%	3.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 6: Family cohabitation status by parent union type

Parent union type	% of all children	% of children in cohabiting families				
		<1 yr	1-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	Total
Householder cohab						
Unmarried partners	5.3%	86.5%	90.2%	86.5%	88.2%	2618
Roommate partners	.6%	7.9%	6.8%	11.0%	10.9%	264
Subfamily cohab	.2%	5.6%	3.0%	2.6%	.9%	83
Unweighted n		327	952	924	762	2965

Table 7: Characteristics of children living with cohabiting parents by parent cohabitation type

| | Parent cohabitation type | | | |
| | Householder cohabitation | | | |
	Unmarried partner	Roommate partner	Subfamily cohab	Total
Relationship to parents				
Joint bio child	48.3%	29.2%	56.9%	46.8%
Step child	51.7%	70.8%	43.1%	53.2%
Child age				
<1 yr	11.8%	10.4%	25.1%	12.1%
1-4 yrs	33.3%	24.1%	36.6%	32.5%
5-9 yrs	30.6%	37.0%	30.3%	31.2%
10-14 yrs	24.2%	28.5%	8.0%	24.2%
Age difference, bio mother-child				
< 20 yrs	15.4%	15.0%	19.3%	15.5%
20-24 yrs	39.7%	34.8%	46.5%	39.4%
25-29	23.0%	25.0%	19.8%	23.1%
30-34	13.9%	13.8%	11.2%	13.8%
>=35 yrs	7.9%	11.5%	3.2%	8.1%
Age difference, bio father-child				
< 20 yrs	3.9%	6.2%	11.4%	4.3%
20-24 yrs	30.9%	30.4%	39.1%	31.1%
25-29	31.3%	18.9%	19.8%	30.1%
30-34	16.6%	21.8%	20.4%	17.0%
>=35 yrs	17.4%	22.7%	9.2%	17.5%
Parent's marital status				
Mom ever married	37.9%	59.7%	18.1%	39.4%
Dad ever married	35.9%	47.7%	15.0%	36.4%
Mother's education				
< HS	22.7%	22.2%	32.3%	22.9%
HS grad	38.8%	31.0%	49.6%	38.3%
Some coll	29.2%	36.4%	14.1%	29.5%
Col 4+	9.3%	10.4%	4.0%	9.3%
Father's education				
< HS	22.9%	19.2%	30.5%	22.8%
HS grad	44.5%	42.3%	51.1%	44.5%
Some coll	24.5%	29.5%	15.3%	24.7%
Col 4+	8.1%	9.0%	3.1%	8.0%
Couple-only poverty				
< 100%	21.1%	20.7%	36.2%	21.5%
100-199	32.0%	27.0%	43.9%	31.9%
200-299	23.2%	23.5%	9.5%	22.9%
300% +	23.6%	28.8%	10.4%	23.7%
Total family poverty				
< 100%	20.0%	20.7%	32.1%	20.4%
100-124	36.0%	30.7%	35.2%	35.5%
125-149	20.6%	21.2%	11.2%	20.4%
150% +	23.4%	27.5%	21.5%	23.7%

Table 7: Characteristics of children living with cohabiting parents by parent cohabitation type

	Parent cohabitation type			
	Householder cohabitation			
	Unmarried partner	Roommate partner	Subfamily cohab	Total
Mother's employment				
Not in labor force	37.4%	18.7%	46.7%	35.9%
Full-time	42.5%	53.5%	29.1%	43.1%
Part-time	15.1%	18.9%	9.5%	15.3%
Unemployed	5.0%	8.9%	14.7%	5.6%
Father's employment				
Not in labor force	7.7%	9.4%	4.0%	7.8%
Full-time	76.1%	72.7%	70.7%	75.6%
Part-time	6.8%	5.4%	16.0%	6.9%
Unemployed	9.4%	12.5%	9.3%	9.7%
Child race/ethnicity				
Hispanic	27.9%	22.8%	17.2%	27.2%
White	51.0%	61.2%	65.4%	52.3%
Black	13.0%	10.9%	1.9%	12.5%
Native Am	1.7%	1.6%	2.3%	1.7%
Asian/PI	1.4%	.7%	4.0%	1.4%
Multiple	4.9%	2.8%	9.2%	4.9%
Siblings present				
Any joint bio	38.0%	22.5%	28.0%	36.3%
Mom's bio child	40.4%	57.4%	35.6%	41.8%
Dad's bio child	14.7%	16.0%	12.2%	14.8%
Total siblings	1.38	1.59	99	1.39
Grandparent present	1.8%	4.0%	65.5%	3.7%

Table 8: Multinomial Logistic Model Predicting Parent's Cohabiting union type

| | Householder cohab | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Roommate vs. Unmarried partners | | | | Non-householder vs. Unmarried partners | | | | Subfamily vs. Roommate partner | | | |
Variable	OR	B	SE	p	OR	B	SE	p	OR	B	SE	p
Intercept		-3.44	0.76	***		-4.02	1.19	***		-0.58	1.38	
Relationship to parents												
[ref = bio child of both]												
Stepchild	1.57	0.45	0.21	*	1.02	0.01	0.35		0.65	-0.43	0.40	
Child age [ref = 10-14 yrs]												
< 1 yr	1.29	0.26	0.36		2.88	1.06	0.59	+	2.23	0.80	0.67	
1-4 yrs	0.96	-0.04	0.25		1.73	0.55	0.50		1.80	0.59	0.54	
5-9 yrs	1.19	0.18	0.20		2.12	0.75	0.48		1.78	0.57	0.51	
Age difference mom-kid [ref = 30+ yrs]												
15-19	1.01	0.01	0.36		1.18	0.17	0.48		1.17	0.16	0.57	
20-24	0.78	-0.26	0.29		0.96	-0.04	0.45		1.24	0.22	0.52	
25-29	0.91	-0.10	0.23		1.01	0.01	0.44		1.11	0.10	0.48	*
Parent marital status												
M ever married	1.64	0.49	0.26	+	0.47	-0.75	0.53		0.29	-1.24	0.57	
F ever married	1.18	0.16	0.25		0.42	-0.88	0.61		0.35	-1.04	0.64	
Siblings present												
Any joint bio	0.61	-0.49	0.24	*	0.49	-0.72	0.42	+	0.80	-0.22	0.47	
M's bio child	1.28	0.25	0.22		1.29	0.25	0.41		1.01	0.01	0.45	
F's bio child	0.88	-0.13	0.39		0.96	-0.04	0.63		1.08	0.08	0.73	
Mother's education [ref = College grad]												
< HS	1.67	0.51	0.48		1.73	0.55	1.19		1.04	0.04	1.26	
HS grad	0.95	-0.06	0.43		1.53	0.43	1.13		1.62	0.48	1.19	
Some col	1.42	0.35	0.39		0.74	-0.30	1.25		0.52	-0.65	1.29	
Father's education												
< HS	0.88	-0.13	0.48		1.70	0.53	1.25		1.93	0.66	1.31	
HS grad	0.88	-0.13	0.40		1.65	0.50	1.24		1.88	0.63	1.28	
Some col	1.01	0.01	0.43		1.24	0.22	1.40		1.23	0.21	1.44	
Parent employment												
M full-time	1.48	0.39	0.27		1.14	0.13	0.41		0.77	-0.26	0.48	
F full-time	0.84	-0.17	0.26		1.01	0.01	0.42		1.20	0.18	0.48	
Couple-only poverty												
[ref = 300%+]												
< 100%	1.41	0.34	0.43		3.22	1.17	0.72		2.28	0.83	0.82	
100-199	1.04	0.04	0.32		2.93	1.07	0.55	+	2.82	1.04	0.62	+
200-299	0.99	-0.01	0.40		0.73	-0.32	0.67		0.73	-0.31	0.77	
Race/ethnicity												
[ref = non-Hispanic white]												
Hispanic	0.90	-0.10	0.35		0.20	-1.61	0.49	***	0.22	-1.50	0.59	*
Black	0.73	-0.32	0.40		0.09	-2.43	1.18	*	0.12	-2.11	1.24	+
Native Am	0.80	-0.22	0.77		0.91	-0.09	0.86		1.14	0.13	1.07	
Asian/PI	0.60	-0.51	0.83		2.23	0.80	1.05		3.72	1.31	1.30	
Multiple	0.63	-0.46	0.48		1.07	0.06	0.57		1.69	0.52	0.72	
Region [ref = West]												
Northeast	1.77	0.57	0.44		0.33	-1.12	0.53	*	0.18	-1.69	0.67	*
Midwest	1.62	0.49	0.48		0.57	-0.56	0.43		0.35	-1.04	0.62	+
South	1.07	0.06	0.46		0.23	-1.48	0.48	**	0.21	-1.54	0.64	*
Metro area	1.37	0.31	0.29		1.26	0.23	0.44		0.92	-0.09	0.51	

n=2965; +=<.10, * =< .05, ** = <.01, *** = <.001

Table 9: Characteristics of children living with biological and step cohabiting parents

	Biological vs. step		
	Cohab bio parents	Cohab step family	Total
Child age			
<1 yr	22.5%	2.9%	12.1%
1-4 yrs	43.0%	23.3%	32.5%
5-9 yrs	22.6%	38.7%	31.2%
10-14 yrs	11.8%	35.1%	24.2%
Age difference, bio mother-child			
< 20 yrs	14.2%	17.0%	15.5%
20-24 yrs	37.1%	42.1%	39.4%
25-29	23.6%	22.5%	23.1%
30-34	15.4%	12.0%	13.8%
>=35 yrs	9.7%	6.3%	8.1%
Age difference, bio father-child			
< 20 yrs	3.9%	5.7%	4.3%
20-24 yrs	31.4%	29.9%	31.1%
25-29	29.3%	33.4%	30.1%
30-34	17.3%	15.8%	17.0%
>=35 yrs	18.0%	15.2%	17.5%
Parent's marital status			
Mom ever married	20.8%	59.9%	39.4%
Dad ever married	23.1%	51.6%	36.4%
Mother's education			
< HS	29.1%	17.5%	22.9%
HS grad	35.3%	41.1%	38.3%
Some coll	27.3%	31.4%	29.5%
Col 4+	8.4%	10.1%	9.3%
Father's education			
< HS	28.1%	18.2%	22.8%
HS grad	41.2%	47.4%	44.5%
Some coll	22.7%	26.5%	24.7%
Col 4+	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
Couple-only poverty			
< 100%	25.4%	18.0%	21.5%
100-124	35.5%	28.8%	31.9%
125-149	19.0%	26.3%	22.9%
150% +	20.0%	27.0%	23.7%
Total family poverty			
< 100%	23.5%	17.7%	20.4%
100-199	38.2%	33.0%	35.5%
200-299	17.7%	22.8%	20.4%
300% +	20.5%	26.5%	23.7%
150% +	20.0%	27.0%	23.7%

Table 9: Characteristics of children living with biological and step cohabiting parents

	Biological vs. step		
	Cohab bio parents	Cohab step family	Total
Mother's employment			
Not in labor force	44.3%	28.6%	35.9%
Full-time	37.9%	47.7%	43.1%
Part-time	12.8%	17.5%	15.3%
Unemployed	5.0%	6.2%	5.6%
Father's employ-ment			
Not in labor force	6.5%	8.9%	7.8%
Full-time	75.4%	75.8%	75.6%
Part-time	7.4%	6.5%	6.9%
Unemployed	10.7%	8.8%	9.7%
Child race/ethnicity			
Hispanic	35.3%	20.0%	27.2%
White	45.1%	58.6%	52.3%
Black	11.0%	13.9%	12.5%
Native Am	.8%	2.5%	1.7%
Asian/PI	1.5%	1.3%	1.4%
Multiple	6.2%	3.6%	4.9%
Siblings present			
Any joint bio	54.0%	20.8%	36.3%
Mom's bio child	21.0%	60.1%	41.8%
Dad's bio child	5.7%	22.7%	14.8%
Total siblings	1.20	1.55	1.39
Grandparent present	3.6%	3.9%	3.7%

Table 10: Logistic regression model predicting the likelihood that a child resides in a cohabiting stepfamily instead of with two cohabiting biological parents

Variable	Step vs. biological family			
	OR	B	SE	p
Intercept		0.36	0.39	
Child age [ref = 10-14 yrs]				
< 1 yr	0.04	-3.24	0.27	***
1-4 yrs	0.21	-1.59	0.17	***
5-9 yrs	0.67	-0.40	0.16	*
Age difference mom-kid				
[ref = 30+ yrs]				
15-19	6.29	1.84	0.20	***
20-24	3.67	1.30	0.16	***
25-29	1.76	0.56	0.17	**
Parent marital status				
M ever married	2.71	1.00	0.13	***
F ever married	1.26	0.23	0.13	+
Siblings present				
Any joint bio	0.21	-1.58	0.16	***
M's bio child	3.97	1.38	0.15	***
F's bio child	3.47	1.24	0.21	***
Mother's education				
[ref = College grad]				
< HS	0.51	-0.68	0.27	*
HS grad	0.69	-0.38	0.24	
Some col	0.69	-0.37	0.24	
Father's education				
< HS	1.36	0.31	0.27	
HS grad	1.29	0.26	0.24	
Some col	1.36	0.31	0.25	
Parent employment				
M full-time	1.01	0.01	0.12	
F full-time	0.88	-0.13	0.13	
Couple-only poverty				
[ref = 300%+]				
< 100%	0.94	-0.06	0.21	
100-199	0.88	-0.13	0.17	
200-299	1.26	0.23	0.17	
Race/ethnicity				
[ref = non-Hispanic white]				
Hispanic	0.69	-0.37	0.15	*
Black	1.08	0.08	0.18	
Native Am	1.29	0.26	0.38	
Asian/PI	0.64	-0.45	0.40	
Multiple	0.65	-0.43	0.28	
Region [ref = West]				
Northeast	1.01	0.00	0.18	
Midwest	0.85	-0.16	0.16	
South	0.81	-0.21	0.15	
Metro area	0.78	-0.25	0.13	+

n=2965; +=<.10, * =< .05, ** = <.01, *** = <.001