The Adolescent’s Family in a Changing Society

DIVERSITY
- Dual Career
- Stay-at-Home mom
- Number of Siblings
- Only Child
- Family Income
- Age of Parents

Lower divorce rate

Source: National Center for Health Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of families</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>20%</td>
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A Century of Changes:
% of families with 8 or more siblings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of families</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1%</td>
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Today

- 80% of all married women with adolescent children are employed;
- Nearly half of these women work full-time
- A sizable percentage of youngsters will spend time in a single-parent household from birth
- Over 25 percent of all adolescents grow up in poor families

The divorce rate rose dramatically between 1960 and 1980 but has more or less leveled off since then
Effects of divorce

- Quality of relationship not number of parents in household.
- Process of divorce not resulting family structure
- At first difficult, after 2-3 years most have adjusted

Reasons for difficulties

- Exposure to family conflict
- Disorganized or disrupted parenting
- Marked increase of stress often because of financial stress

Who will have difficulties with divorce?

- More common in boys
- Difficult temperament
- No supportive relationships with adults outside immediate family
- Parents divorce during childhood or preadolescence
Effects of divorce on the development of emotional problems: A long-term study of British individuals. (Cherlin et al, 1998)

Remarriage

- Adolescents growing up in stepfamilies—especially if the remarriage occurred during early adolescence rather than childhood—often have more problems than their peers.
- With remarriage, boys adjust better than girls.
- Adolescents in remarried households do better when the stepparent uses an authoritative parenting style.

Parents

- Cooperate after the divorce
- Don’t use the children as pawns
- Support each other’s parenting efforts when possible
- Both parents maintain a good relationship with their children

Other family and friends

- Provide social support
- Provide opportunities for communication

Other

- Their standard of living is not reduced too much
- A new stable family routine is created
Why does money matter?

- Parents under financial stress are
  - Harsher, more inconsistent, less involved
  - This leads to problems for the teens
- Adolescents in these conditions
  - Heightened risk for psychological difficulties
  - Heightened risk for problem behaviors

Parental Employment

- Maternal employment studies
  - Look at the impact of having both parents employed
- Maternal employment during adolescence
  - Positive effects on daughters
  - Mixed or negligible effects on sons, especially in school performance