



U.S. Department of Health  
and Human Services  
Administration for Children  
and Families  
Office of Family Assistance

## NRFC Quick Statistics



[www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)

### Father Involvement

#### Frequency of Involvement in Activities with Children in the Last Four Weeks for Resident Fathers Ages 15-44 with Children Ages 5-18, by Activity, 2002

Activity	Number of Men (000s)	Not at all	Less than once a week – About once a week	Several times a week	Every day
Shared a meal with their children	18,251	1.9%	3.8%	22.8%	71.6%
Helped their children with homework or checked that they did homework	18,251	18.2%	24.3%	28.8%	28.7%
Talked to their children about things that happened during the day	18,251	2.5%	10.4%	23.6%	63.6%
Took their children to or from activities	18,251	19.4%	26.9%	34.9%	18.8%

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. *Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth*. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- The majority of resident fathers eat (71.6 percent) and talk (63.6 percent) with their children on a daily basis.
- Resident fathers are less likely to be involved in helping with homework or taking children to and from activities. In 2002, fewer than one in five resident fathers (18.8 percent) reported taking their children to and from activities on a daily basis and fewer than one in three (28.7 percent) reported helping with homework or checking that their children completed homework every day.

### Frequency of Involvement in Activities with Children in the Last Four Weeks for Resident Fathers Ages 15-44 with Children Under 5 Years Old, by Activity, 2002

Activity	Number of Men (000s)	Not at all	Less than once a week – About once a week	Several times a week	Every day
Shared a meal with or fed their children	13,995	1.9%	2.8%	21.5%	73.8%
Bathed, diapered or dressed their children	13,995	8.4%	9.3%	29.9%	52.5%
Played with their children	13,995	.9%	1.4%	16.6%	81.1%
Read to their children	13,995	17.2%	26.5%	31.0%	25.3%

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. *Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth*. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- The large majority of resident fathers with young children eat and play with their children daily. In 2002, resident fathers were more likely to report playing with their children on a daily basis (81.1 percent) than any other activity. Additionally, a large percentage of fathers reported sharing a meal with or feeding their children every day (73.8 percent).
- Fewer resident fathers read to their children every day. In 2002, only one in four resident fathers (25.3 percent) reported reading to their children on a daily basis and almost one in five (17.2 percent) reported that they had not read to their children at all in the past four weeks.

### Frequency with which Resident Fathers (Ages 15-44) Attended Religious Services with their Children (Ages 5-18) in the Last 12 Months, by Importance of Religion, 2002

Importance of Religion	Number of Men (000s)	Not at all	Less than once a month	Once a month or more
<b>All</b>	18,251	32.9%	25.0%	42.2%
<b>Very important</b>	8,309	13.4%	19.4%	67.2%
<b>Somewhat important</b>	5,853	34.8%	34.8%	30.4%
<b>Not important</b>	4,090	69.9%	22.1%	8.1%

Source: Martinez GM, Chandra A., Abma JC, Jones J, Mosher WD. *Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women From Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth*. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(26). 2006.

- In 2002, four in ten resident fathers (42.2 percent) reported attending religious services with their children once a month or more in the past 12 months. One third (32.9 percent) reported not attending religious services with their children at all in the past 12 months.
- Seven in ten resident fathers (69.9 percent) for whom religion was not important reported that they did not take their children to religious services in the past 12 months. By comparison, only 13.4 percent of fathers who thought religion was very important reported the same.

### Average Daily Time Children Under 13 Spend with their Mothers and Fathers in an Activity, by Family Structure, 1997

Family Structure	Mothers	Fathers
<b>Two parent</b>	2:21	1:16
<b>Single parent</b>	1:46	:25

Notes: 1) Data from Panel Study of Income Dynamics – Child Development Supplement, 1997. Activities in which parents are directly involved are broken down into six categories: household work, personal care, educational activities, social activities, sports and active leisure, and passive leisure.

2) Time spent with nonresident parent is also recorded for children living in single-parent families.

Source: Child Trends. (2002). "Charting Parenthood: A Statistical Portrait of Fathers and Mothers." Washington, D.C.: Child Trends.

- Children in two-parent families spend far more time in an activity (such as reading, playing a game or going to the store) with their parents than do children in single-parent families.
- The average time spent with fathers is four times greater for children in two-parent families than for those in single-parent families, which are often headed by mothers (1 hour and 46 minutes compared to 25 minutes).

**Percentage of Resident Mothers and Fathers with Children Under Age 13 who Provided Various Forms of Warmth and Affection Every Day During the Past Month, 1997**

	Fathers	Mothers
<b>Hugged or showed physical affection to their children</b>	72%	87%
<b>Told their child that they love him/her</b>	62%	85%
<b>Told their child that they appreciated something he or she did</b>	37%	55%

Note: Data from Panel Study of Income Dynamics – Child Development Supplement, 1997  
Source: Child Trends. (2002). "Charting Parenthood: A Statistical Portrait of Fathers and Mothers." Washington, D.C.: Child Trends.

- Most resident fathers hugged or showed physical affection to their children daily (72 percent) and told the child that they love him/her every day (62 percent).
- Mothers are more likely than fathers to report showing warmth across all three behaviors including hugging or showing physical affection to their children, telling their child that they love him/her, and telling their child that they appreciated something he/she did.

**Percentage of Resident Mothers and Fathers with Children Under Age 13 who Hugged their Child in Every Day in the Past Month, by Age of Child 1997**

	Fathers	Mothers
<b>0 to 2 years</b>	90%	98%
<b>3 to 5 years</b>	84%	93%
<b>6 to 9 years</b>	70%	87%
<b>10 to 12 years</b>	50%	74%

Note: Data from Panel Study of Income Dynamics – Child Development Supplement, 1997  
Source: Child Trends. (2002). "Charting Parenthood: A Statistical Portrait of Fathers and Mothers." Washington, D.C.: Child Trends.

- At all ages, fathers are less likely than mothers to hug their children daily, with the difference between fathers and mothers being the largest for children ages 10 to 12 years (50 percent of fathers compared with 74 percent of mothers).
- Over 90 percent of mothers and fathers report hugging their children under 3 on a daily basis, compared to 74 percent of mothers and 50 percent of fathers hugging children ages 10 to 12.

### Degree of Closeness Adolescents Feel Towards Their Parents, By Residence Status of Parent, 1996

	Resident Mother	Resident Father	Nonresident Mother	Nonresident Father
<b>Boys</b>	4.45	4.18	3.87	3.19
<b>Girls</b>	4.32	3.89	3.49	2.86

Note: Data from National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), Wave II, 1996  
Closeness is measure on a scale of 1 (not close at all) to 5 (extremely close)

Source: Child Trends. (2002). "Charting Parenthood: A Statistical Portrait of Fathers and Mothers." Washington, D.C.: Child Trends.

- Adolescents of both genders report feeling very close to both their resident parents and both also report being somewhat closer to their mothers than to their fathers. The same pattern holds true for feelings towards nonresident parents.

### Resident Fathers' Involvement in Prenatal Activities for Children Born in 2001, by Age

Age	Percent of Fathers					
	Discussed pregnancy	Saw ultrasound	Listened to baby's heartbeat	Felt the baby move	Attended birthing class	Bought things for the baby
<b>All</b>	92.8%	95.5%	93.3%	97.4%	41.5%	90.6%
<b>Less than 20</b>	88.4%	93.4%	93.3%	98.4%	28.1%	95.0%
<b>20-24</b>	90.0%	95.8%	95.8%	97.5%	35.4%	95.6%
<b>24-34</b>	93.4%	95.6%	94.0%	98.0%	43.5%	92.5%
<b>35+</b>	93.5%	95.3%	91.2%	96.3%	41.8%	85.5%

Source: Child Trends Analyses, 2001 Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), 9-month Resident Father Survey.

- With the exception of attending a child birth class, resident fathers of all ages were highly likely to be involved in prenatal activities with the mother of their child. Activities include discussing the pregnancy, seeing an ultrasound, listening to the baby's heart, feeling the baby move, and buying things for the baby.
- Teenage fathers were slightly less involved than older fathers in certain prenatal activities, specifically discussing the pregnancy (88.4 percent) and attending a birthing class (28.1 percent).
- Fathers ages 35 and older were slightly less likely than younger fathers to buy things for the baby (85.5 percent).

### Resident Fathers' Involvement in Prenatal Activities for Children Born in 2001, by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of Fathers					
	Discussed pregnancy	Saw ultrasound	Listened to baby's heartbeat	Felt the baby move	Attended birthing class	Bought things for the baby
All*	92.8%	95.5%	93.3%	97.4%	41.5%	90.6%
Hispanic	75.8%	90.1%	89.5%	96.7%	31.8%	93.6%
Non-Hispanic White	97.4%	97.5%	95.0%	97.9%	45.2%	90.0%
Non-Hispanic Black	93.6%	94.9%	91.0%	97.2%	32.9%	89.3%

\*All include Other race category, not shown separately.

Source: Child Trends Analyses, 2001 Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ECLSB), 9-month Resident Father Survey.

- With the exception of attending a child birth class, resident fathers of all race/ethnicities were highly likely to be involved in prenatal activities with the mother of their child.
- Hispanic fathers were slightly less involved than other fathers in discussing the pregnancy, 75.8 percent, compared with over 90 percent of non-Hispanic white and non-Hispanic black fathers.
- While less than half (45.2 percent) of non-Hispanic white fathers attended a child birth class, they were slightly more likely than Hispanic and non-Hispanic black fathers to do so (31.8 percent and 32.9 percent respectively).