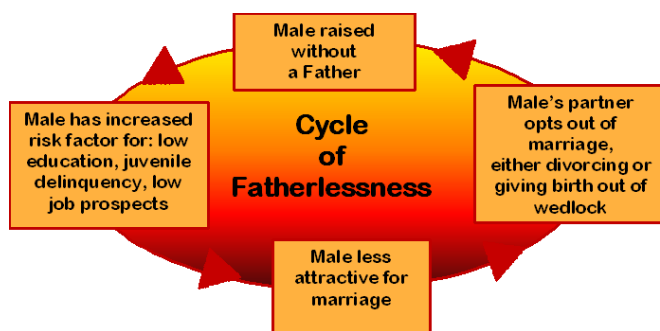


## Effects of the Breakdown of the Black Family

**Issue:** Children from broken families suffer from a number of negative outcomes, regardless of race or ethnicity. Because black families are the least intact,<sup>1</sup> they tend to experience these consequences more than any other race.

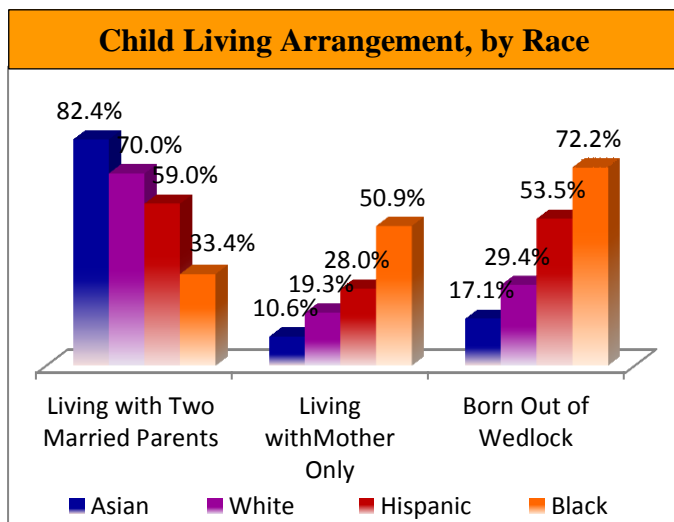
### Effects of Single Parenthood

- *Crime.* Boys who grow up without a father are twice as likely to end up in jail than those who come from two-parent families.<sup>2</sup>
- *Behavior.* 85 percent of all children that exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes.<sup>3</sup>
- *Education.* 71 percent of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes.<sup>4</sup>
- *Poverty.* In 2011, 12 percent of children in married-couple families were living in poverty, compared to 44 percent of children in mother-only families.<sup>5</sup>



### State of the Black Family

- Between 1960 and 2012, the share of black adults ages 25 and older who have never been married quadrupled (from 9 percent in 1960 to 36 percent in 2012).<sup>6</sup>
- In 2012, 72.1 percent of African American children were born out of wedlock.<sup>7</sup>
- Only 17 percent of black 15-17 year olds are living with their married biological parents, while 83 percent have lived in non-intact families.<sup>8</sup>



### Negative Outcomes for Black Children

- A study by the Progressive Policy Institute found, "After controlling for single motherhood, the difference between black and white crime rates disappeared."<sup>9</sup>
- A longitudinal study of black urban youth revealed when parents were married, adolescents demonstrated significantly higher grades, mediated through paternal involvement.<sup>10</sup>
- The poverty rate for black married-couple families is five times lower than for black non-married families.<sup>11</sup>

**Conclusion:** The breakdown of the black family has created a multigenerational crisis within the black community. This crisis has not only exacerbated racial disparities, but also has profoundly wounded our nation, especially black children in the next generation.

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick F. Fagan, "The Fourth Annual Index of Family Belonging and Rejection" MARRI Research, February 2014 available at <http://downloads.frc.org/EF/EF14B32.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>This figure controls for factors such as income, parent education, race, and urban residence.

Cynthia Harper and Sara S. McLanahan, "Father Absence and Youth Incarceration." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 14 (September 2004): 369-397 accessible at <http://www.gwu.edu/~pad/202/father.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Justice and the Executive Office for Weed and Seed, "What Can the Federal Government Do To Decrease Crime and Revitalize Communities?" National Institute of Justice Research Forum (1998) accessible at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/172210.pdf>. Accessed 3 October 2014.

<sup>4</sup> National Institute of Justice and the Executive Office for Weed and Seed, "What Can the Federal Government Do To Decrease Crime and Revitalize Communities?" National Institute of Justice Research Forum (1998). Available at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/172210.pdf>. Accessed 3 October 2014.

<sup>5</sup> *U.S. Census Bureau, Children's Living Arrangements and Characteristics*: March 2011, Table C8. Washington D.C.: 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Wendy Wang and Kim Parker, "Record Share of Americans Have Never Married: As Values, Economics and Gender Patterns Change," *Pew Research Center*, September 2014, available at

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/09/24/record-share-of-americans-have-never-married/>

<sup>7</sup> Martin J. A., Hamilton B. E., Osterman, M. J. K., Curtin, S. C., & Mathews T. J. (2013). Births: Final data for 2012. National Vital Statistics Reports, 62(9). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. Available at [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr62/nvsr62\\_09.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr62/nvsr62_09.pdf) As cited by "Births to Unmarried Women: Indicators on Children and Youth" Child Trends Data Bank. July 2014 [http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/75\\_Births\\_to\\_Unmarried\\_Women.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/75_Births_to_Unmarried_Women.pdf). Accessed 3 October 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Patrick F. Fagan, "The Fourth Annual Index of Family Belonging and Rejection" MARRI Research, February 2014 available at <http://downloads.frc.org/EF/EF14B32.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Progressive Policy Institute, 1990, As cited by David Blankenhorn, "Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem," New York, Harper Perennial, 1996, p.31 <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/2779588?uid=3739936&uid=2129&uid=2&uid=70&uid=4&uid=3739256&sid=21104268888111>

<sup>10</sup> Cheryl L. Somers, et al, "Family disruption and academic functioning in urban, black youth," *Psychology in the Schools* 48: 4 (2011): 357-370. Accessed 3 October 2014.  
Doi: 10.1002/pits.20559

<sup>11</sup> United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau. "POV02. People in Families by Family Structure, Age, and Sex, Iterated by Income-to-Poverty Ratio and Race." *Current Population Survey, 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement*. Washington: US Census Bureau, 2011. Web. 30 Jul. 2014.  
[http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032011/pov/POV02\\_100.htm](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032011/pov/POV02_100.htm).