



Carsey: Rural Children Now Less Likely To Live In Married-Couple Families

Media Contact: [Amy Sterndale](#)
603-862-4650
Carsey Institute

[Beth Potier](#)
603-862-1566
UNH Media Relations

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Editors and reporters: Report author William O'Hare is available at bbohare@comcast.net or 443-472-7434. Allison Churilla is available at Allison.churilla@unh.edu.

DURHAM, N.H. - The percentage of rural children living in married-couple families dropped to 68 percent in 2008, one percentage point below that of children in metropolitan areas, a new fact sheet from the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire finds.

In 1990, the report finds, 76 percent of rural children and 72 percent of metropolitan-area (central city and suburban) children were living in married-couple families. But while marriage declined in both areas in the 1990s, urban rates bottomed out at 68 percent in 1998. The share of rural children living in married-couple families, however, plunged from 73 percent in 2000 to 68 percent in 2008.

"Numerous studies have shown that, in general, children growing up in a stable, married-couple family have more advantages and opportunities than those in a single-parent family," says Carsey Institute senior fellow William O'Hare, who co-authored the fact sheet with Allison Churilla, a policy fellow at the Carsey Institute and a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at UNH.

The authors note that the poverty rate for children in married-couple families is much lower than that of single-parent families; the decline in the share of rural children in married-couple families since 2000 may help explain the rise in child poverty in rural America between 2000 and 2006.

To download a copy of the fact sheet, go to <http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publications/FS-Rural-married-couple-families-08.pdf>.

The Carsey Institute conducts policy research on vulnerable children, youth, and families and on sustainable community development. We give policy makers and practitioners the timely, independent resources they need to effect change in their communities.

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