



## Key Facts about Fathers

1. Roughly **six in ten** American men are fathers.<sup>1</sup> More than three in four (**76 percent**) American men have children by the age of 51.<sup>2</sup>
2. Men are becoming new fathers later in life—the average age of the father of a newborn rose from **27** in 1972 to **31** in 2015.<sup>3</sup> The percentage of fathers older than age 40 with newborns increased from **4 to almost 9 percent**.<sup>4</sup>
3. Over **34 million** fathers have a child under the age of 18.<sup>5</sup> Almost **87 percent** of these fathers are employed.<sup>6</sup>
4. Compared to a generation ago, fathers today are less likely to be their family’s sole breadwinner. The percentage of couples with children under 18 years old in which only the father works decreased from **47 percent** in 1970 to **27 percent** in 2016.<sup>7</sup>
5. **Seven percent** of fathers are stay-at-home parents—up from only four percent in 1989. Of all stay-at-home parents, women still outnumber men by **four to one**.<sup>8</sup>
6. Fathers are about as likely as mothers to see parenting as central to their identity (**57 compared to 58 percent**).<sup>9</sup> Roughly half (**48 percent**) of working fathers say “they would prefer to be home with their children but they have to work because they need the income.”<sup>10</sup>
7. Fathers are much more involved in child care and household chores than they have been in the past. Between 1965 and 2016, the average time they spent on child care more than tripled from **2.5 to 8 hours** per week, and the average time they spent on household chores more than doubled from **4 to 10 hours** per week. Mothers still spent substantially more time on both child care and household chores.<sup>11</sup>
8. Almost three in four (**74 percent**) men eat dinner with their children **five to seven nights** per week.<sup>12</sup>
9. According to a Pew survey, the median length of parental leave fathers took following the birth or adoption of a child was just **one week**—compared to 11 weeks for mothers. About seven in ten (**72 percent**) fathers returned to work within **two weeks**.<sup>13</sup>
10. Longer paternity leaves lead to **increased** father engagement and bonding and **improved** health and development outcomes for children. A study of working fathers showed that those who took at least **two weeks** of paternity leave were more likely to be actively involved in their child’s care nine months later.<sup>14</sup>

*\*All data listed are the most recent available.*

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- <sup>1</sup> Data include biological, step, and adoptive children for fathers aged 15 and over; Lindsay M. Monte and Brian Knop. “Men's Fertility & Fatherhood: 2014.” Report Number P70-162. U.S. Census Bureau. June 13, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2019/demo/P70-162.pdf>.
- <sup>2</sup> Data include only biological children; Lindsay M. Monte and Brian Knop. “Men's Fertility & Fatherhood: 2014.” Report Number P70-162. U.S. Census Bureau. June 13, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2019/demo/P70-162.pdf>.
- <sup>3</sup> Yash S. Khandwala, Chiyuan A. Zhang, Ying Lu, and Michael L. Eisenberg. “The age of fathers in the USA is rising: an analysis of 168 867 480 births from 1972 to 2015.” *Human Reproduction*, Volume 32, Issue 10. October 2017. Pages 2110–2116. <https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/dex267>.
- <sup>4</sup> Percentage of fathers reflects all annual births; Nicholas Bakalar. “New Fathers Are Older Than Ever.” *The New York Times*. August 30, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/30/health/fathers-united-states-age.html>.
- <sup>5</sup> Data include only biological children; Lindsay M. Monte and Brian Knop. “Men's Fertility & Fatherhood: 2014.” Report Number P70-162. U.S. Census Bureau. June 13, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2019/demo/P70-162.pdf>.
- <sup>6</sup> JEC Democratic staff calculations based on data from the Census Bureau. Data include fathers aged 16 to 64 and their biological children; Lindsay M. Monte and Brian Knop. “Men's Fertility & Fatherhood: 2014.” Report Number P70-162. U.S. Census Bureau. June 13, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2019/demo/P70-162.pdf>.
- <sup>7</sup> Kim Parker and Gretchen Livingston. “7 facts about American dads.” Pew Research Center. June 13, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/06/13/fathers-day-facts/>.
- <sup>8</sup> Gretchen Livingston. “Stay-at-home moms and dads account for about one-in-five U.S. parents.” Pew Research Center. September 24, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/09/24/stay-at-home-moms-and-dads-account-for-about-one-in-five-u-s-parents/>.
- <sup>9</sup> Kim Parker and Gretchen Livingston. “7 facts about American dads.” Pew Research Center. June 13, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/06/13/fathers-day-facts/>.
- <sup>10</sup> Pew Research Center. “Modern Parenthood, Chapter 2: Balancing Work and Family Life.” March 14, 2013. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/03/14/chapter-2-balancing-work-and-family-life/#working-vs-staying-home-with-the-kids>.
- <sup>11</sup> Kim Parker and Gretchen Livingston. “7 facts about American dads.” Pew Research Center. June 13, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/06/13/fathers-day-facts/>.
- <sup>12</sup> Data include men who live with their own and/or their spouse or partner’s biological and adopted children aged 0 to 17; Lindsay M. Monte and Brian Knop. “Men's Fertility & Fatherhood: 2014.” Report Number P70-162. U.S. Census Bureau. June 13, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2019/demo/P70-162.pdf>.
- <sup>13</sup> Juliana Menasce Horowitz, Kim Parker, Nikki Graf, and Gretchen Livingston. “Americans Widely Support Paid Family and Medical Leave, But Differ Over Specific Policies.” Pew Research Center. March 23, 2017. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2017/03/23/an-inside-look-at-family-and-medical-leave-in-america-the-experiences-of-those-who-took-leave-and-those-who-needed-or-wanted-to-but-couldnt/#fn-22608-5>.
- <sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Labor. “Paternity Leave: Why Parental Leave For Fathers Is So Important For Working Families.” <https://www.dol.gov/asp/policy-development/paternityBrief.pdf>.