



Women in America: People, Families and Income

Women in America provides a statistical portrait showing how women's lives are changing in five critical areas: people, families and income; education; employment; health; and crime and violence. By bringing together data from across the Federal government, the report is one of the most comprehensive sources for information on women's lives today and greatly enhances our understanding both of how far American women have come and of the areas where there is still work to be done.

Women's lives have changed substantially in recent decades. As the report indicates in regards to people, families and income:

- Women are marrying later and have fewer children than in the past. A greater proportion of both women and men have never married, and women are giving birth to their first child at older ages.
- Although more adult women live in married-couple families than in any other living arrangement, an ever-growing number of women are raising children without a spouse.
- More women are remaining childless, although eight out of ten adult women have children.
- As the baby boom generation ages, a growing share of women – and men – are older. Because women live longer, women continue to outnumber men at older ages.
- Women are more likely to live in poverty than are adult men. Single-mother families face particularly high poverty rates, often because of the lower wages earned by women in these families.

The additional data referenced in the online compendium of Federal government data relating to women, accessible at <http://wh.gov/data-on-women>, further indicates:

- Among both men and women aged 15–44 who had ever cohabited and/or married, the largest proportion cohabited before their first marriage. In 2002, approximately 28% of men and women cohabited before their first marriage, whereas 23% of women and 18% of men married without ever cohabiting. About 15% of men and women had only

cohabited (without ever marrying), and less than 7% of men and women first cohabited after their first marriages ended.

- In 2002, the majority of men and women aged 25–44 were currently married or cohabiting. Among women aged 18–19, cohabitation was more common than marriage as a union form, with 11% of these women cohabiting and 5% married. For women aged 25–44, marriage was the dominant union type, with 62% currently married and 8% currently cohabiting. Among men aged 25–44, 59% were currently married while only 10% were currently cohabiting.
- Among women between 25 and 44 who have ever been married, Hispanic and white women have higher rates of marriage compared to their male counterparts, but the reverse is true for African American women.

Supporting Women and their Families

In his 2012 Budget, President Obama put forward a clear plan to help American families win the future.

Support for Child Care The Budget includes \$6.3 billion for the Child Care and Development Fund, an additional \$1.3 billion, to support 1.7 million children with child care subsidies. At the same time, the Budget invests in improved quality: proposing principles for child care reform that focus on improving quality, protecting health and safety, and strengthening early learning; and supporting proposed regulations to strengthen Head Start by requiring low-performing programs to compete for funding.

Child Support Reform. The Budget provides \$1 billion over ten years to encourage States to pass through child support payments to families rather than retaining those payments so that more of the non-custodial parent’s support reaches their children.

Preserve Affordable Rental Opportunities. The Budget requests \$19.2 billion for the Housing Choice Voucher program to help more than two million extremely low- to low-income families with rental assistance live in decent housing in neighborhoods of their choice. The Budget funds all existing mainstream vouchers and provides new vouchers targeted to homeless veterans, families, and the chronically homeless. The Administration remains committed to working with the Congress to improve the management and budgeting for the Housing Choice Voucher program, including reducing inefficiencies, and re-allocating Public Housing Authority reserves based on need and performance. The Budget also provides \$9.4 billion for Project-Based Rental Assistance to preserve approximately 1.3 million affordable units through increased funding for contracts with private owners of multifamily properties. This critical investment will help extremely low- to low-income households to obtain or retain decent, safe and sanitary housing.

Extend Expanded Tax Cuts for Lower-Income Families. The Budget permanently extends expansions of the Child Tax Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit that were passed in the Recovery Act and continued as part of the bipartisan Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act that the President negotiated and signed into law in

December. The expanded refundability of the Child Tax Credit provides a larger credit to 11.8 million families with 21.3 million children. The expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit is worth up to \$600 for families with three or more children, benefitting 5.8 million families with 12.5 million children.

Extend Supplemental Nutrition Support for Low-Income Families. As the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) continues to serve an unprecedented number of participants, the Budget proposes to restore the SNAP benefit cuts that were included in Child Nutrition reauthorization.

Prevent Hunger and Improve Nutrition. At a time of continuing need, the Budget provides \$7.9 billion for discretionary nutrition program support. Funding supports 9.6 million participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children (WIC) program, which is critical to the health of pregnant women, new mothers, and their infants. The Administration supports implementation of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, strengthening the child nutrition programs and increasing children's access to healthy meals and snacks. In order to combat food deserts, the Departments of Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and Treasury have partnered to make available approximately \$400 million in financing to community development financial institutions, other nonprofits, public agencies, and businesses with sound strategies for addressing the healthy food needs of communities

Improve Retirement Security. After a lifetime of employment, American workers deserve to know that their efforts have resulted in a secure retirement. The Administration is committed to giving Americans more and better choices to save for retirement while also strengthening the existing private pension system. The Budget proposes to expand and improve employment-based retirement security by establishing automatic workplace pensions and doubling the Small Employer Pension Plan Startup Credit from \$500 a year to \$1,000 per year.

More information on *Women in America* can be found at <http://wh.gov/data-on-women>.