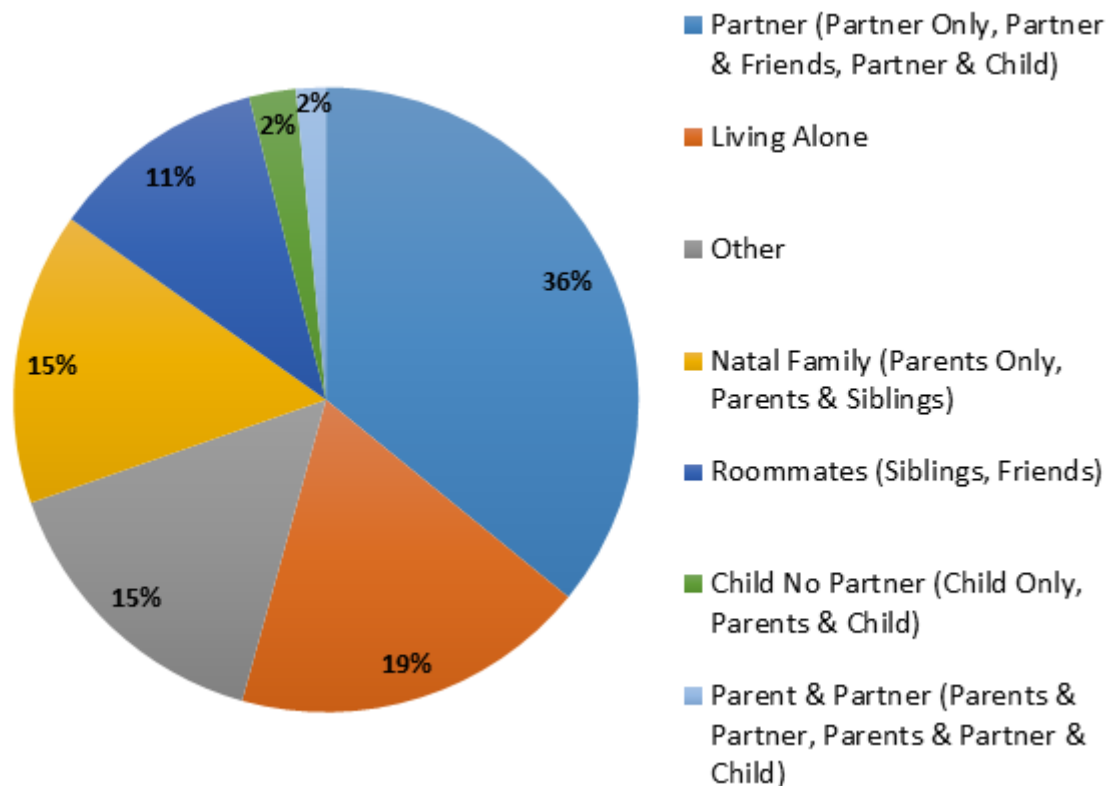


Who Are Asian American Millennials?: Young Adults' Living Arrangements Across Race & Ethnicity in the United States By Kennan Ceba

Researchers of the transition to adulthood argue that establishing an independent household is an important marker of adulthood (Settersten & Ray, 2010; Shanahan, 2000). While there has been an overall devaluing of many adult milestones, Americans still believe that financial transitions, such as living independently, are important markers of adulthood (Settersten & Ray, 2010) and youth are more likely to think of themselves as adults if they have established their own household (Benson & Furstenberg, 2006). While there has been much concern about young adults returning to their parents' home (Fry, 2016), American youth are more likely to live independently at age 25 in 2000 than they were in 1970 (Settersten & Ray, 2010). To further investigate today's young adults' living arrangements, I used the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002's (ELS:2002) most recent wave of data from 2012 when respondents were about 26 years old, paying particular attention to the Asian Americans in the sample (n=1,050).

Figure 1. % in Each Living Arrangement

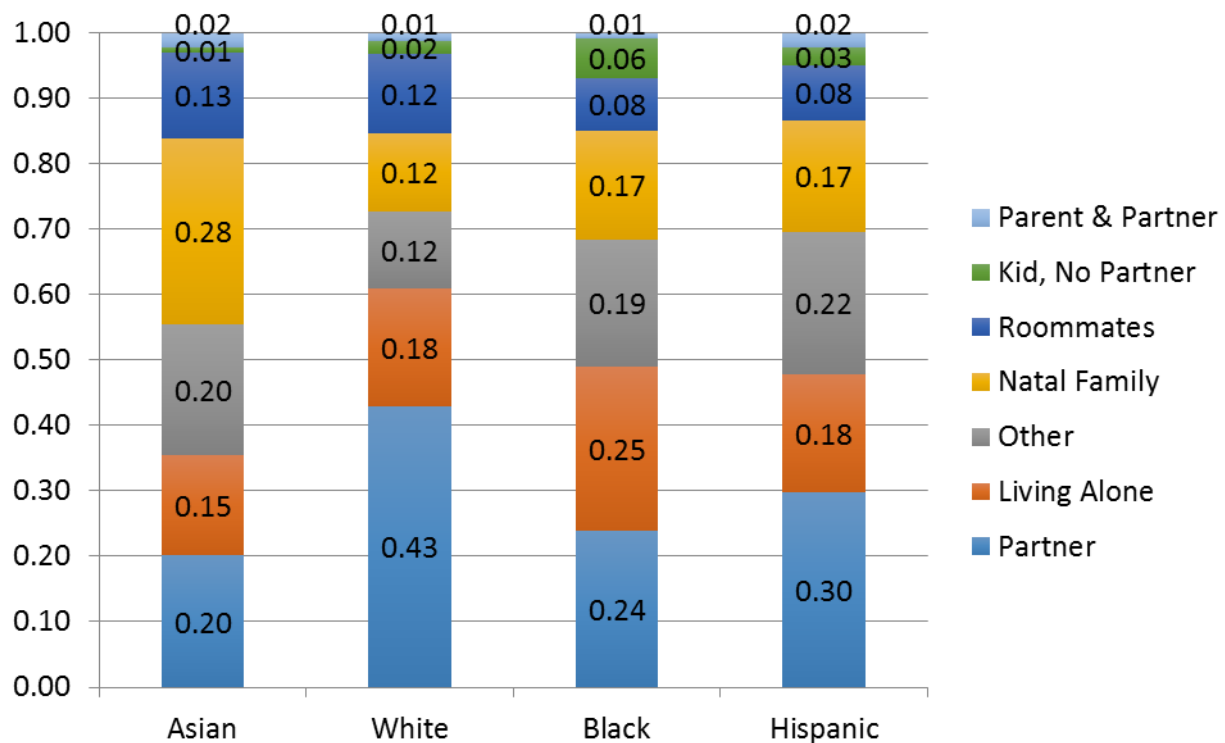


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ELS asked respondents if they lived alone or with others and who respondents lived with. Figure 1 shows the aggregated categories and how common each living arrangement is. According to ELS data, young Americans are most likely to be living with a partner (36%) and 19% live alone, compared to 15% of 26-year olds who live with their natal families. Even when adding the “Parent and Partner” and “Child, No Partner” categories to “Natal Family,” only 19% of young adults live with parents. (This may even be over-counting the proportion of young adults living with parents, since some of these respondents in the “Child, No Partner” category only live with their child.) This suggests that media reports of young adults “returning to the nest” may be overstated. Instead, young adults are more likely to live in a variety of different arrangements, and without parents.

Figure 2. Proportion in Each Living Arrangements by Race & Ethnicity



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Next, Figure 2 shows that living arrangements vary across race and ethnicity of young adults. Focusing on Asian American youths' living arrangements, they are most likely to live with their parents, but least likely to live alone or to be partnered. Examining these patterns more closely, in contrast to other racial/ethnic groups, Asian American youth are more than twice as likely to live with their natal family than whites and 1.6 times as likely as black and Hispanic youth. In contrast, Asian American youth are half as likely to live with partners than white 26-year olds (20% vs. 43%), two-thirds as likely as Hispanic young adults, and about as likely as African American youth. Similarly, Asian American youth are least likely to live alone, though their numbers are more comparable to white and Hispanic Americans'. Thus, compared to other racial/ethnic groups in the United States, Asian Americans exhibit different living arrangements in young adulthood.

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Page 3 of 3

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