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# Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood

*Financial independence is a work in progress; few young adults say their parents are too involved in their day-to-day lives*

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## How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this study to better understand the relationship between parents and their young adult children ages 18 to 34.

Most of the analysis in this report is based on two surveys conducted from Oct. 24 to Nov. 5, 2023. The first survey included 3,017 U.S. adults with at least one child age 18 to 34 who they have contact with (excluding any children currently enrolled in high school). The second survey included 1,495 adults ages 18 to 34 with at least one living parent who they have contact with (excluding any panelists currently enrolled in high school). The parents and young adults we surveyed were not part of the same family units.

Everyone who took part is a member of the Center's American Trends Panel (ATP), an online survey panel that is recruited through national, random sampling of residential addresses. Address-based sampling ensures that nearly all U.S. adults have a chance of selection. The survey is weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population by gender, race, ethnicity, partisan affiliation, education and other categories. Read more about the [ATP's methodology](#).

The report also includes an analysis comparing the experiences of young adults today and those of 30 years ago. College enrollment, college completion, labor force participation, wages, marriage, family and living arrangement estimates are derived from the 1993 and 2023 [Current Population Survey](#) (CPS). Mortgage and educational loan estimates use the 1992 and 2022 [Survey of Consumer Finances](#) (SCF) collected by the Federal Reserve Board.

Here are the question we asked [parents of young adults](#) and [young adults ages 18 to 34](#), along with responses, and the [report's methodology](#).

## Terminology

Throughout this report, references to **parents, mothers and fathers** include only those who have at least one adult child age 18 to 34 who they are in contact with (excluding any children currently enrolled in high school).

References to **young adults, sons and daughters** include only those who are ages 18 to 34 with at least one living parent they are in contact with (excluding any panelists currently enrolled in high school).

“Middle income” is defined here as two-thirds to double the median annual family income for panelists on the American Trends Panel. “Lower income” falls below that range; “upper income” falls above it. Refer to the [methodology](#) for more details.

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# Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood

*Financial independence is a work in progress; few young adults say their parents are too involved in their day-to-day lives*

As parents watch their young adult children navigate the transition to adulthood, they're feeling more proud and hopeful than disappointed or worried.

And they're highly invested in how life turns out for their kids. Most parents of young adults (71%) say their children's successes and failures reflect on the job they've done as parents. This is especially true of upper-income parents.

A pair of new surveys from Pew Research Center finds the lives of parents and their young adult children (ages 18 to 34) are closely knit together through emotional and financial ties.

**Parents are very involved in their young adult children's lives.** Majorities say they text (73%) or talk on the phone (54%) with a young adult child at least a few times a week. About six-in-ten (59%) say they've helped their children financially in the past year.

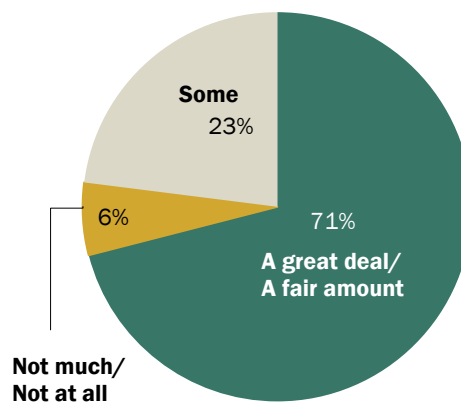
**Most young adults are fine with their parents' level of involvement in their lives:** 69% say their parents are about as involved in their day-to-day lives as they'd like them to be. About one-in-five (22%) say their parents aren't involved enough, while only 9% say their parents are *too* involved. Majorities of young adults say they turn to their parents for advice at least sometimes on their jobs, finances and even their physical health.

**In many cases, mothers stand out as particularly connected with their young adult children.** Moms are in more frequent contact with their young adult children than dads are. And

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## Most parents of young adults say their children's successes and failures reflect on their parenting

*% of parents of young adults saying their children's successes and failures reflect on the job they've done as a parent ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Share of respondents who did not offer an answer (<0.5%) is not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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mothers are more likely than fathers to say their kids turn to them for advice extremely or very often. In addition, young adults are more likely to say they can be their true selves all or most of the time with their moms than to say the same about their dads. Moms and daughters are especially closely connected, with many relying on each other for emotional support.

**Fewer than half of young adults ages 18 to 34 (45%) say they're completely financially independent from their parents**, though this differs widely by age. Among those who are not financially independent, most (75%) say they think they'll eventually get there. And parents are similarly optimistic about this.

**One-in-four parents (25%) say they track their young adult child's location with GPS apps, even if only rarely.** Most of the tracking is being done of 18- to 24-year-olds. Among parents answering about a child in this age range, 42% say they track their location. In addition, parents are more likely to say they track their daughters than their sons (31% vs. 21%).

This report explores the parent-child relationship and young adults' experiences in early adulthood from several different angles:

- [Key milestones for young adults today versus 30 years ago \(Chapter 1\)](#)
- [Financial help and independence in young adulthood \(Chapter 2\)](#)
- [How parents think their young adult children are doing \(Chapter 3\)](#)
- [Young adults' relationship with their parents \(Chapter 4\)](#)
- [Parents' relationship with their young adult children \(Chapter 5\)](#)

The findings in this report come primarily from two surveys using Pew Research Center's [American Trends Panel](#).<sup>1</sup> Both surveys were conducted from Oct. 24 to Nov. 5, 2023. The first included 3,017 adults with at least one child age 18 to 34. The second included 1,495 young adults ages 18 to 34 with at least one living parent. The two groups of respondents – the parents and young adult children – were not part of the same family units.<sup>2</sup> The findings on young adults reaching key milestones (now versus 30 years ago) are based on an analysis of government data.

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<sup>1</sup> Read the [Methodology](#) section for more detail.

<sup>2</sup> Young adults who indicated that they are not in contact with any of their living parents or did not provide a response to this question (2% of young adults who were asked about contact with their parents) were screened out of the survey. Similarly, parents who indicated that they are not in contact with any of their young adult children or did not provide a response to this question (2% of parents who were asked about contact with their children) were screened out.

## Relationships and emotional support

### What parents say

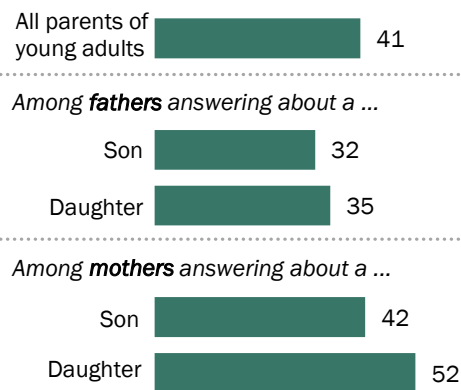
- 77% of parents say their relationship with their young adult children is excellent or very good. Moms rate the relationship more highly than dads, and upper- and middle-income parents give higher ratings than those with lower incomes.
- 41% of parents say their young adult children rely on them a great deal or a fair amount for emotional support. Moms are more likely than dads to say this. And moms are especially likely to say their daughters lean on them in this way (52% say this about their daughters vs. 42% about their sons).

### What young adults say

- 59% of young adults say their relationship with their parents is excellent or very good. Young adults give their relationship with their mother higher ratings than their relationship with their father (63% vs. 53%). And most young adults (69%) say they can be their true self with their parents all or most of the time.
- 26% of young adults say their parents rely on them for emotional support at least a fair amount. Again, gender is strongly linked to these dynamics: Far more say their mom relies heavily on them than say the same about their dad (35% vs. 12%). In fact, 61% say their dad doesn't rely on them for emotional support much or at all.

### Mothers are more likely than fathers to say their adult children rely on them for emotional support

% of parents of young adults saying that, in general, their child relies on them **a great deal or a fair amount** for emotional support



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about one randomly selected child.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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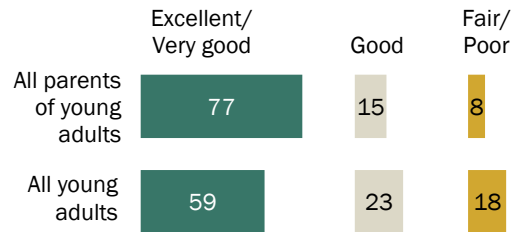
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Daughters (44%) are more likely than sons (25%) to say their mom relies on them in this way.

## Most parents and young adults give their relationship with each other high marks

*% of each group saying their relationship with their child/parent is ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For this question, parents with more than one adult child age 18 to 34 and young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about one randomly selected child/parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults and survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## Turning to parents for guidance

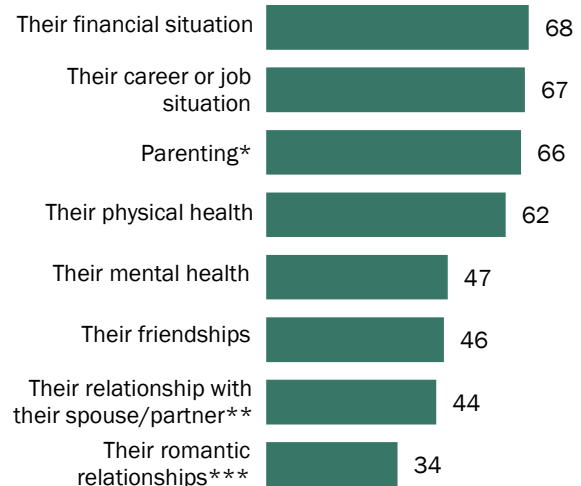
- Most young adults say they turn to their parents for advice on their jobs, finances and physical health at least sometimes. And a majority of young adults who are parents themselves say they seek parenting advice from their own moms and dads.

Smaller shares say they go to their parents for advice on their mental health, friendships or romantic relationships.

Adults ages 18 to 24 are the most likely to turn to their parents for advice at least sometimes about their job or career, physical health, and friendships.

### Many young adults say they turn to their parents for advice on a variety of topics

% of young adults saying they turn to their parents for advice on each of the following *extremely often, very often or sometimes*



\* Based on those who are parents.

\*\* Based on those who are married or living with a partner.

\*\*\* Based on those who are not married nor living with a partner.  
Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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The survey didn't go into detail with parents about their own experiences when they were young adults. But one finding provides some insight into how things may have changed.

- **45% of parents say that, when they were in their 20s and 30s, they turned to their parents for advice on finances, work or relationships at least sometimes.** By comparison, higher shares of today's young adults say they go to their parents for career or financial advice at least sometimes, but a lower share say they seek advice from their parents on their romantic relationships.

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### 51% of parents of young adults say they rarely or never went to their parents for advice when they were young adults

*% of parents of young adults saying that, when they were in their 20s and 30s, they turned to their parents for advice on finances, work or relationships ...*

■ Extremely/Very often ■ Sometimes ■ Rarely/Never



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Other response options included "Don't remember" and "Does not apply."

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## Becoming an independent adult

### What parents say

- **86% of parents of young adults say they did at least a fair amount to prepare their children to be independent adults**, with 47% saying they did a *great deal* to prepare them.

Upper-income parents (53%) are more likely than those with middle (46%) and lower incomes (45%) to say they prepared their children a great deal to be independent adults.

### What young adults say

- **66% of young adults say their parents did at least a fair amount to prepare them to be independent adults**, with 34% saying their parents did a great deal.

Among young adults, those with upper (85%) and middle incomes (73%) are more likely than those with lower incomes (53%) to say their parents did a great deal or a fair amount to prepare them to be independent adults.

### Parents and young adults have different views on how well parents prepared them for adulthood

*% of parents of young adults saying they prepared their children \_\_\_ to be an independent adult*

A great deal	A fair amount	Net
47	39	86

*% of young adults saying their parents prepared them \_\_\_ to be an independent adult*

A great deal	A fair amount	Net
34	32	66

Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Other response options included "Some," "Not much" and "Not at all."

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults and survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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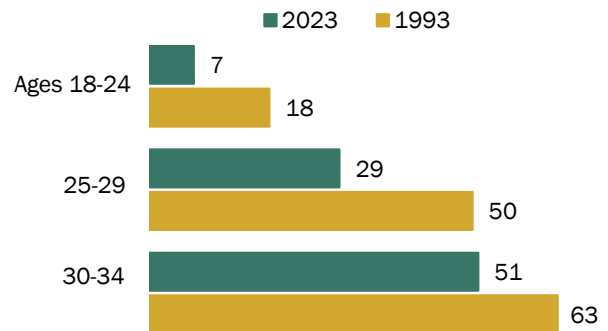
## Reaching the milestones of adulthood, then and now

Today's young adults are reaching key milestones later than young adults in their parents' generation did in the early 1990s. A new analysis of government data shows clear differences in college completion, debt, marriage and having children.

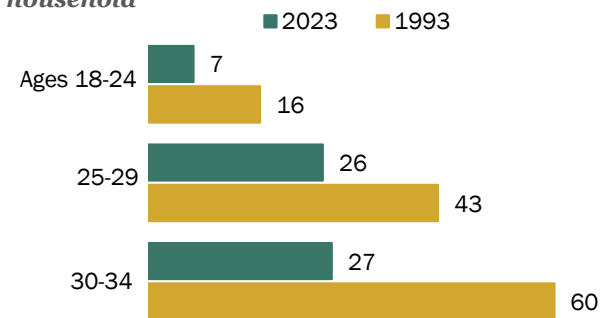
- **Young adults today are much more likely than their counterparts 30 years ago to be college graduates.** They're also more likely to have outstanding student loans.
- **Young adults are more likely to be employed full time now than young adults in 1993.** These increases have been driven by a larger share of women working full time (55% in 1993 vs. 67% today, among those ages 25 to 34).
- **Today's young adults are getting married much later than their parents' generation.** The gap in the share who are married is especially wide among young adults ages 25 to 29: 29% were married in 2023, compared with 50% in 1993.
- **Young adults are also delaying having children.** For example, 27% of adults ages 30 to 34 had a child in their household in 2023, compared with 60% in 1993.

### Today's young adults are far less likely than young adults in the early 1990s to be married or to have kids

*% of young adults who are married*



*% of young adults with at least one child in the household*



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the 1993 and 2023 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).

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Even as they delay marriage and parenthood, our survey finds that most young adults who have never been married (69%) say they want to get married someday.

A smaller share (51%) say they would like to have children someday (among those who don't currently have children). Young men are more likely than young women to say they want to have children (57% vs. 45%).

## About a third of young adults live with their parents

More young adults today live with their parents than in the past. Among those ages 18 to 24, 57% are living in a parent's home, compared with 53% in 1993.

### What parents say

- **Most parents say living with their young adult child has had a positive impact on their relationship:** 45% say the impact has been very positive, and 29% say it's been somewhat positive.

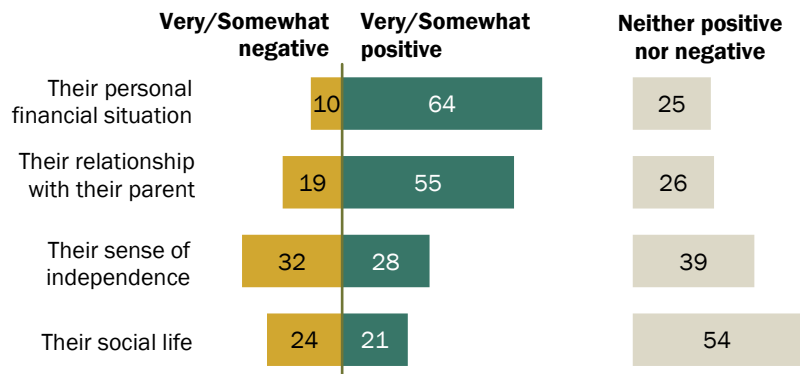
Parents' views are more mixed when it comes to the impact living with their young adult child has had on their own financial situation: 27% say the impact has been positive and 18% say it's been negative. Some 55% say this has had neither a positive nor negative impact on their finances.

### Young adults living with their parents are more likely to see positives for their finances and relationship with their parents than for their social life and independence

*% of young adults who live with a parent saying living with their parent as an adult has had a \_\_\_ impact on each of the following*

### What young adults say

- **A majority of young adults who live with a parent (64%) say this arrangement has had a positive impact on their personal financial situation.** Some 55% say the impact on their relationship with their parents has been positive.



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For this question, young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about one randomly selected parent who they indicated they live with. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults ages 18 to 34 with a living parent conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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Opinions are less positive on the impact living with their parents has on young adults' sense of independence and their social life.

- **72% of young adults who live with their parents say they contribute financially to the household in some way.** This includes 65% who say they pay for household expenses such as groceries or utility bills, and 46% who say they contribute to the rent or mortgage.

## 1. Key milestones for young adults today versus 30 years ago

Young adults today are coming of age in a different economic and social landscape than their parents did. To understand how things have changed, we used government data to analyze the shares of today's young adults reaching certain key milestones and how that compares with 30 years ago, when their parents were around the same age.

We looked at the following:

- College enrollment and completion
- Employment and wages
- Student loan and mortgage debt
- Marriage, kids and living arrangements

### College enrollment and completion

Young adults today are much more likely than their counterparts 30 years ago to be college graduates.

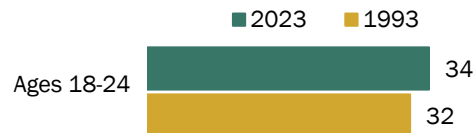
Among young adults ages 25 to 29 today, 40% have completed at least a bachelor's degree. This share is slightly higher among adults ages 30 to 34 (44%). By comparison, only 24% of young adults ages 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 had a four-year college degree or more education in 1993.

Young women have made greater gains in this area than young men. From 1993 to 2023, the share of young women ages 25 to 34 with at least a four-year college degree rose from 23% to 47%. Among young men, the increase was smaller (from 24% to 38%).

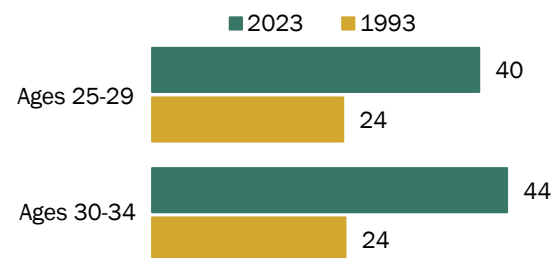
The college enrollment rate for adults ages 18 to 24 has changed less dramatically over the past three decades, rising from 32% to 34%. There are gender differences here as well: Enrollment has risen from 33% to 38% among young women, while for young men it remained virtually unchanged (from 31% to 30%).

### Today's young adults are much more likely to have a four-year college degree than their parents at the same age

*% of young adults enrolled in college part or full time*



*% of young adults with a bachelor's degree or higher*



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the 1993 and 2023 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).

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Over this period, [college enrollment also increased among young adults ages 25 and older](#), which helped contribute to the rising shares of young adults with a bachelor's degree.

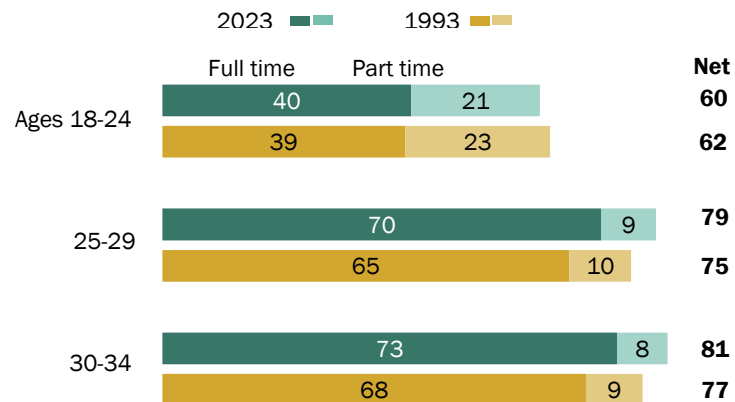
## Employment and wages

When it comes to the labor market, changes in employment among young adults have been less pronounced over the past 30 years.

Compared with their parent's generation, young adults today are more likely to work full time. These trends in employment can be connected to the fact that young adults in 1993 were coming out of a [mild recession](#), while [unemployment has been historically low](#) in recent years.

### Young adults are more likely to be employed full time today than young adults three decades ago

% of young adults employed ...



Note: Full-time work is defined as 35 hours a week or more.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the 1993 and 2023 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).

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While there has been little change among young adults ages 18 to 24, the share employed full time among young adults ages 25 to 29 increased from 65% in 1993 to 70% today. Similarly, among those ages 30 to 34, it rose from 68% to 73%.

These increases were driven by a larger share of women working full time (55% in 1993 vs. 67% today, among those ages 25 to 34). The share of young men ages 25 and older working full time remained unchanged over this period.

In addition, young adults today are enjoying higher wages than their counterparts in 1993 (figures are median annual earnings adjusted for inflation):

- **18 to 24:** \$15,462 in 1993 versus \$20,000 today
- **25 to 29:** \$34,790 versus \$43,000

- **30 to 34:** \$38,656 versus \$50,000

Wage gains can be partially explained by the higher education levels of today's young adults. Young women across all age brackets still earn less than young men, but because the share of women with a bachelor's degree has increased more than men's, their wages have also risen more overall.

## Student loan and mortgage debt

While today's young adults have higher wages than young adults in the early 1990s, they're also more likely to have outstanding debt. For this analysis, we used data from household heads from 1992 and 2022.

### Student loans

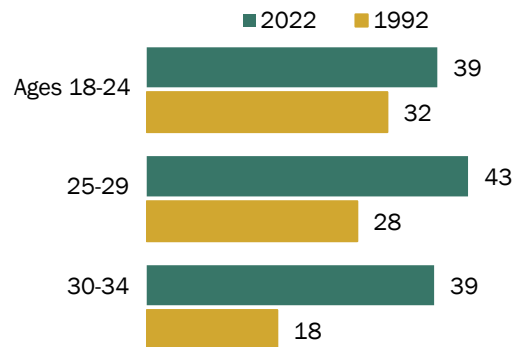
Today's young adults are much more likely than young adults in the early 1990s to have outstanding student loans.

Among those ages 25 to 29, the share with student loans rose from 28% in 1992 to 43% in 2022, and the increase was even greater for 30- to 34-year-olds (from 18% to 39%). The change from 32% to 39% among those ages 18 to 24 is not statistically significant.

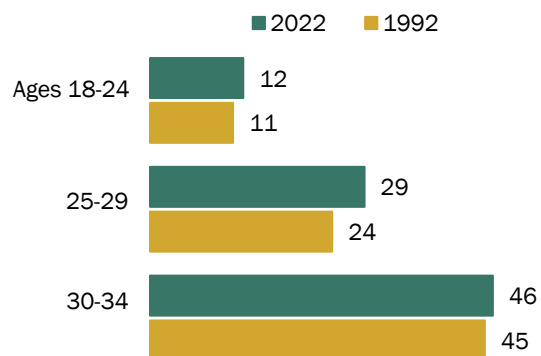
In addition to becoming more common, the value of student debt has soared – reflecting, in large part, the rising cost of a college education. While in 1992, the median amount owed on student loans (adjusted for inflation) ranged from \$6,000 to \$7,000 across age groups, these values increased considerably by 2022 among young adults ages 25 and older (to \$16,000 for those 25 to 29, and to \$20,000 among those 30 to 34).

## Young adults more likely than those of 30 years ago to have student debt

% of young adults with outstanding *student loans*



% of young adults with outstanding *mortgage loans*



Note: Estimates are only available for household heads.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the 1992 and 2022 Survey of Consumer Finances.

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## Mortgage loans

The share of young adults with outstanding mortgage debt hasn't changed significantly, but the median value of these loans has gone up.

Adjusted for inflation, young adults today have more mortgage debt compared with their counterparts in 1992:

- **18 to 24:** \$39,367 versus \$117,000 in 2022
- **25 to 29:** \$105,671 versus \$165,000
- **29 to 34:** \$120,174 versus \$190,000

## Marriage, kids and living arrangements

Today's young adults are [getting married and forming families much later in life](#) than young adults in previous generations.

The [median age of adults at the time of their first marriage has risen](#), and a smaller share of young adults are married today compared with the past.

Among adults ages 18 to 24, only 7% were married in 2023, compared with 18% three decades earlier.

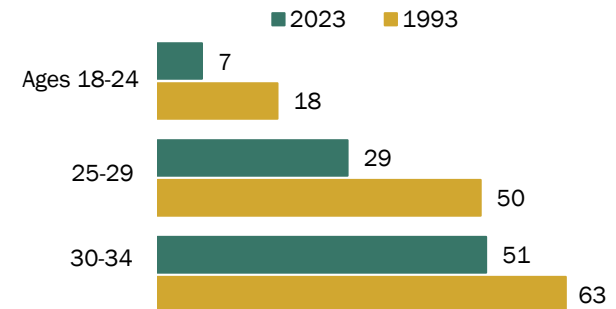
The falloff has been especially sharp among young adults ages 25 to 29: 29% were married in 2023, compared with 50% in 1993. The share married among those ages 30 to 34 dropped from 63% in 1993 to 51% today.

Young adults today are also less likely to have a child living in their household than their counterparts in 1993. These declines can be seen across all age groups (13 percentage points among those ages 30 to 34, 17 points for those ages 25 to 29, and 9 points among adults younger than 25).

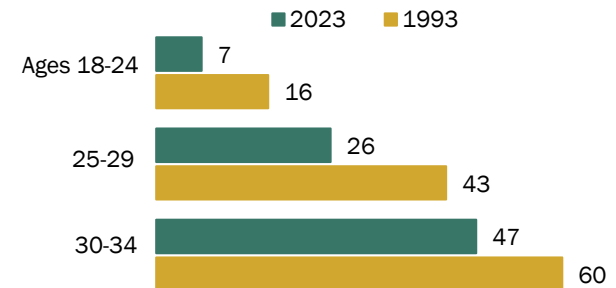
Meanwhile, living with parents has become somewhat more common for young adults. Among those ages 18 to 24, 57% are living with a parent today, compared with 53% in 1993. The shares have also increased among those 25 and older.

### Today's young adults are far less likely than young adults in the early 1990s to be married or to have kids

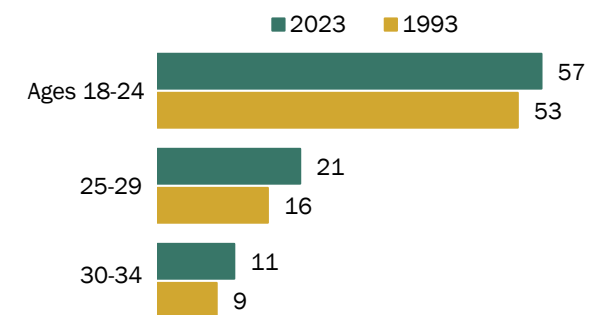
*% of young adults who are married*



*% of young adults with at least one child in the household*



*% of young adults living in a parent's home*



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the 1993 and 2023 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).  
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## 2. Financial help and independence in young adulthood

This chapter focuses on how much parents have prepared their young adult children (those ages 18 to 34) to be independent adults and the extent to which young adults with at least one living parent are financially independent.

Among the key findings:

- **45% of young adults say they are completely financially independent from their parents.** Among those in their early 30s, that share rises to 67%, compared with 44% of those ages 25 to 29 and 16% of those ages 18 to 24.
- **44% of young adults say they received financial help from their parents in the past year.** The top two areas in which they got help were household expenses and their cellphone bill or subscriptions to streaming services.
- **Among parents who say they helped their children financially in the past year, 36% say doing so has hurt their personal financial situation at least some.** This is especially the case among parents with lower incomes.
- **Most young adults who live with their parents say they contribute financially,** including 65% who say they pay for household expenses such as groceries or utility bills and 46% who say they contribute money toward the rent or mortgage.

## Preparing children to be independent adults

Most young adults (66%) say their parents did a great deal or a fair amount to prepare them to be an independent adult. Views are similar among those ages 18 to 24, 25 to 29 and 30 to 34.

Still, young adults are less likely than their parents to say this is the case. More than eight-in-ten parents of young adults (86%) say they did a great deal or a fair amount to prepare their children to be independent adults.

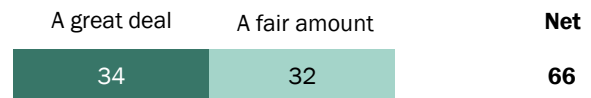
The shares of young adults saying their parents prepared them a great deal or a fair amount vary by income. Large majorities of those with upper or middle incomes say this (85% and 73%, respectively). A much smaller share of young adults with lower incomes (53%) say their parents did a great deal or a fair amount to prepare them to be independent adults.

There are also differences by income level among parents: 53% of upper-income parents say they've done *a great deal* to prepare their children to be independent adults, compared with 46% of parents with middle incomes and 45% of those with lower incomes.

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### Parents and young adults differ in views of how well parents prepared them for adulthood

*% of young adults saying their parents prepared them to be an independent adult ...*



*% of parents of young adults saying they prepared their children to be independent adults ...*



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Other response options included "Some," "Not much" and "Not at all." Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults and survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## Financial independence and giving financial help to young adult children

### What young adults say

About two-thirds of young adults (68%) say they are completely or mostly financially independent from their parents, with 45% saying they are *completely* financially independent.

Assessments vary considerably by age group. Two-thirds of those ages 30 to 34 say they are completely financially independent, compared with 44% of those ages 25 to 29 and just 16% of those ages 18 to 24.

Young women are more likely than young men to say they are at least mostly financially independent from their parents (74% vs. 62%). Similar shares of both groups say they are completely financially independent.

Three-quarters of young adults who say they're not completely financially independent say it's extremely or very likely that they will eventually be.

Those with a bachelor's degree or more education are the most confident that they will eventually become completely financially independent: 60% say this is *extremely likely*, compared with 46% of those with some college or less education. Majorities of 70% or more in both groups say this is at least very likely to happen.

### What parents say

For these questions, we asked parents with more than one child in the 18-to-34 age range to think of a specific child (who was randomly selected).<sup>3</sup> For the most part, their answers match those of the young adults surveyed: 65% of parents say their child is completely or mostly financially independent from them, with 44% saying their child is *completely* financially independent.

### Fewer than half of adults under 30 say that they are completely financially independent from their parents

% of young adults saying they consider themselves \_\_\_ financially independent from their parents

	Completely	Mostly	Net
All young adults	45	23	68
Men	44	18	62
Women	45	28	74
Ages 18-24	16	19	35
25-29	44	29	73
30-34	67	18	85

Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Other response options included "Somewhat," "A little" and "Not at all." Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding. Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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<sup>3</sup> Read the [Methodology](#) section for more detail.

Parents' answers vary based on the age of the child. Most (62%) of those answering about a child age 30 to 34 say their child is completely financially independent. This compares with 54% of parents answering about a child age 25 to 29 and just 23% of those answering about an adult child younger than 25.

Most parents who say their child is not completely financially independent (72%) think it is extremely or very likely they will eventually be.

### Who is most likely to be receiving financial help from parents, and for what purposes?

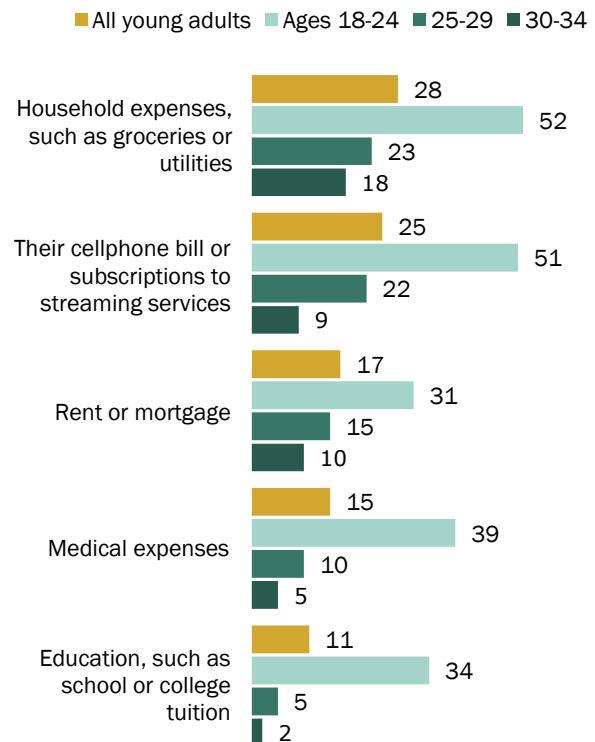
Overall, 44% of adults ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent say they received financial help from their parents in the past 12 months. This ranges from 30% among those ages 30 to 34 to 68% among adults younger than 25. Young men and women are equally likely to say they received financial help from their parents.

The top two areas in which young adults say they received financial help from their parents are:

- Household expenses (28% of all young adults say they received help for this)
- Their cellphone bill or subscriptions to streaming services (25%)

### About half of adults ages 18 to 24 say they get financial help with household expenses, cellphone and streaming bills

*% of young adults saying they received financial help from their parents related to each of the following in the past 12 months*



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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Smaller shares of adults ages 18 to 34 say they received financial help related to:

- Rent or mortgage (17%)
- Medical expenses (15%)
- Education (11%)

Young adults ages 18 to 24 are more likely than those ages 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 to say they've received financial help from their parents in each of these five areas in the past year.

**How helping adult children financially impacts parents' finances**

A majority of parents with children ages 18 to 34 (59%) say they gave financial help to a child in this age range in the past year. This is larger than the share of young adults who say they received help from their parents. This may be, at least in part, because some parents have more than one child in this age group and, for this question, they were asked to think about any of their children.

Parents with upper (65%) and middle incomes (61%) are more likely than those with lower incomes (52%) to say they gave financial help to their children.

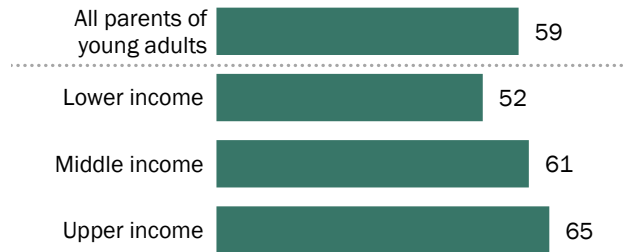
For the most part, parents say that helping young adult children financially doesn't have a negative impact on their own finances. More than six-in-ten of those who say they helped their children (64%) say doing so didn't hurt their personal financial situation much or at all.

There are differences by income, however.

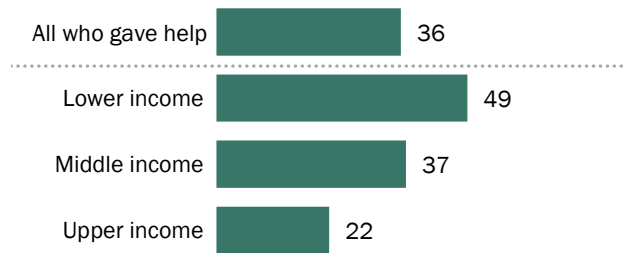
About half of parents with lower incomes who say they provided financial help to their young adult

**About half of lower-income parents who helped their adult children financially say this hurt their own finances**

*% of parents of young adults saying they gave financial help to their children ages 18 to 34 in the past 12 months*



*Among parents who say they gave financial help to their children ages 18 to 34, % saying that doing so hurt their personal financial situation at least some*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Figures for the bottom chart are based on parents who say they gave financial help to a child in this age group in the past 12 months. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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children in the past year (49%) say this hurt their own finances at least some. Smaller shares of those with middle (37%) and upper incomes (22%) say the same.

## Getting financial help *from* young adult children

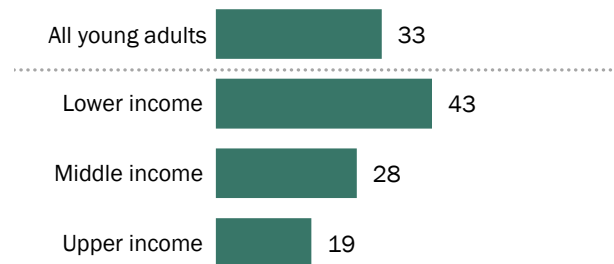
While it is more common for young adult children to *receive* financial help from their parents than it is for them to *give* help, 33% say they helped their parents financially in the past year. A smaller share of parents (14%) say they received financial help from their children ages 18 to 34.

Young adults with lower incomes (43%) are more likely than those with middle (28%) or upper incomes (19%) to say they helped their parents financially. Similarly, parents with lower incomes are the most likely to say they *received* financial help from their young adult children (29%, compared with 9% of those with middle incomes and 2% of parents with upper incomes).

Among parents who received financial help from their children, 38% say the help was for special circumstances, 31% say it was for recurring expenses and 30% say it was for both.

### A third of young adults say they helped their parents financially in the past year

*% of young adults saying they gave financial help to their parents in the past 12 months*



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings. Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## Young adults' financial contributions when they live with their parents

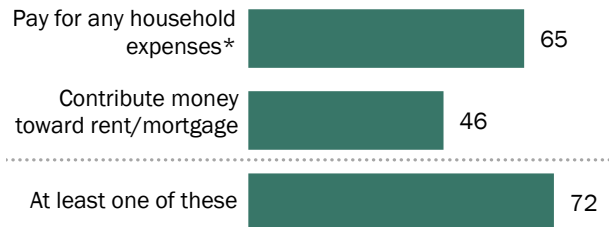
Today's young adults are more likely to be living with their parents than young adults in the early 1990s, when their parents were around the same age. (Read more in [Chapter 1](#) of this report.)

Most young adults who live with their parents say they contribute financially to the household in some way.

- 65% say they pay for household expenses such as groceries or utility bills.
- 46% say they contribute money toward the rent or mortgage.
- 72% contribute in at least one of these areas.

### Most young adults who live with parents report making financial contributions

Among young adults who live with at least one of their parents, % saying they ...



\* The full wording included "such as groceries or utility bills."

Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For this question, young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about one randomly selected parent who they indicated they live with.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## The impact of parents and young adult children living together

Young adults were asked about the impact of their living arrangement on various aspects of their life, including their personal finances and their relationship with their parent. Parents were only asked about the impact on their finances and their relationship with their child. For this question, we asked respondents to think of a specific parent or child they live with, chosen at random.

### Personal finances

Most young adults who live with a parent (64%) say their living arrangement has had a very or somewhat positive impact on their personal financial situation.

In turn, just 27% of parents who live with a young adult child say the same about the impact on their *own* finances (55% of these parents say the impact has been neither positive nor negative).

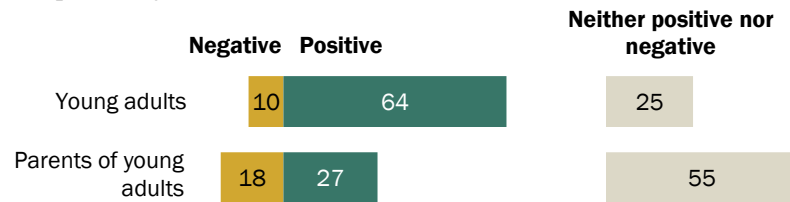
### Relationship with their child/parent

Most parents who live with a young adult child (74%) say this has had a positive impact on their relationship with their child. This is larger than the share of young adults (55%) who say living with their parent as an adult has been positive for their relationship.

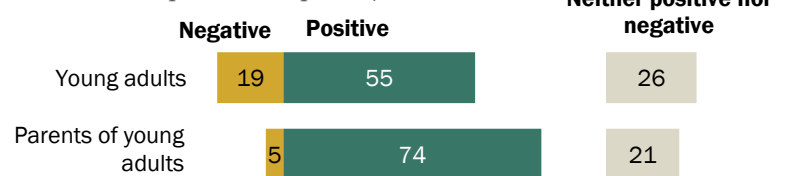
## Most young adults who live with a parent say this has had a positive impact on their personal finances

Among young adults who live with a parent and parents who live with a young adult child, % saying living with them has had a \_\_\_ impact on each of the following

### Their personal financial situation



### Their relationship with their parent/child



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, young adults with more than one living parent and parents with more than one adult child age 18 to 34 were asked to think about one randomly selected parent/child who they indicated they live with. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Figures include "Very/Somewhat negative" and "Very/Somewhat positive."

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults and survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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*Other aspects of young adults' lives*

We also asked young adults who are living with a parent about the impact this has had on their sense of independence and their social life.

About three-in-ten say their living situation has been positive for their sense of independence (28%) and a similar share say the impact has been negative (32%). About four-in-ten (39%) say it's had neither a positive nor a negative impact.

When it comes to their social life, 21% say living with their parent has had a positive impact and 24% say it's had a negative impact; 54% say the impact has been neither positive nor negative.

### 3. How parents think their young adult children are doing

This chapter looks at how parents view their role in their young adult children's successes and failures and how things are going in their children's lives. It also explores how young adults are thinking about marriage and parenthood.

Among the key findings:

- **Most parents say the successes and failures of their young adult children (those ages 18 to 34) reflect on the job they've done as parents.** This view is most common among dads and parents with higher incomes.
- **Parents have generally positive views of how things are going in their young adult children's lives.** Most say they feel proud (83%) and hopeful (75%) extremely or very often. Far smaller shares say they frequently feel worried (22%) or disappointed (4%).
- **69% of young adults who have never been married say they want to get married someday.** A smaller share of those who aren't parents (51%) say they want to have children someday. Most of those who aren't married or don't have children say they don't feel pressure from their parents to achieve these milestones.

## How parents see their role reflected in their children's successes, failures

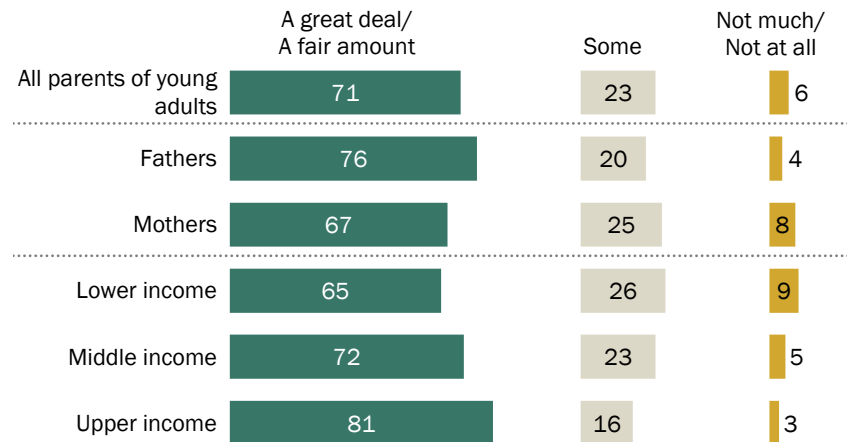
Most parents (71%) say the successes and failures of their young adult children reflect on the job they've done as parents at least a fair amount, with 35% saying they do so *a great deal*.

Fathers (76%) are more likely than mothers (67%) to say their young adult children's successes and failures reflect the job they've done as a parent a great deal or a fair amount. Still, majorities of both say this is the case.

These assessments also vary by income. About eight-in-ten parents with upper incomes (81%) say their young adult children's successes and failures reflect on them as parents at least a fair amount. This compares with 72% of parents with middle incomes and 65% of those with lower incomes.

### Fathers and upper-income parents are the most likely to say their children's successes and failures reflect on the job they've done as parents

*% of parents of young adults saying their children's successes and failures reflect on the job they have done as a parent ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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## How parents feel about how things are going in their children's lives

The survey asked parents how they feel things are going in the lives of their young adult children. For this question, parents with more than one child in the 18-to-34 age range were asked to think of a specific child (who was randomly selected) when answering these questions.<sup>4</sup>

Parents generally feel positive about how things are going in the lives of their young adult children. Most say they feel proud (83%) and hopeful (75%) extremely or very often.

Far smaller shares say they frequently feel worried (22%) or disappointed (4%). Still, 67% say they feel worried and about a quarter (26%) feel disappointed *at least sometimes*.

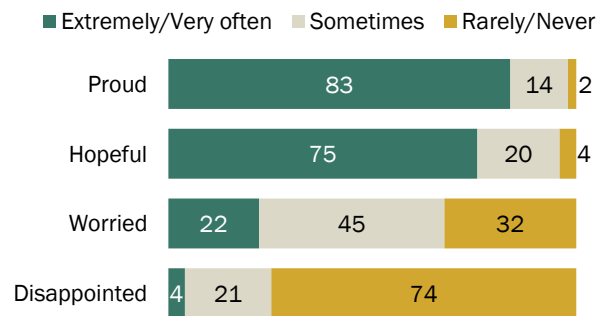
For the most part, mothers and fathers give similar answers to these questions. But mothers are more likely than fathers to say they feel worried at least sometimes (70% vs. 63%).

Those answering about a child age 18 to 24 are more likely than those answering about an older adult child to say they worry at least sometimes about how things are going in their child's life (75%, compared with 66% of those answering about a child 25 to 29 and 59% of those answering about a child 30 to 34).

The shares of parents who feel hopeful, proud and disappointed at least sometimes don't vary based on the child's age. Parents' views, including the extent to which they worry, also don't vary based on whether they were answering about a son or a daughter.

### Most parents say they frequently feel proud and hopeful about their young adult children's lives

*% of parents of young adults saying that, overall, they feel each of the following when thinking about how things are going in their child's life ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about one randomly selected child. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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<sup>4</sup> Read the [Methodology](#) section for more detail.



Parents’ feelings about how things are going in the lives of their young adult children vary by a difference of 6 to 18 percentage points based on whether their children have or have not achieved certain milestones.

For example, parents are more likely to say they frequently feel **proud** and **hopeful** if the child they are answering about:

- Is married
- Is employed
- Has a four-year college degree or is currently enrolled in a four-year college
- Is completely or mostly financially independent

In turn, parents are more likely to say they feel **worried** and **disappointed** at least some of the time when answering about a child who has *not* achieved the milestones above.

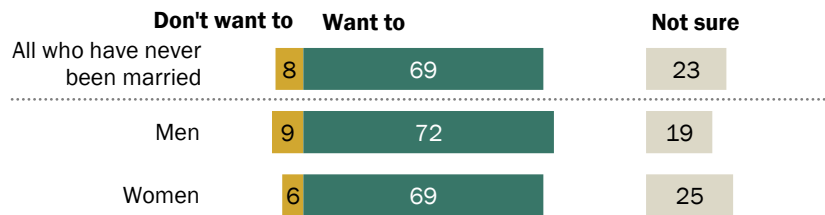
### How young adults feel about marriage and parenthood

The survey asked young adults ages 18 to 34 who have never been married and who don’t have children whether they would like to do these things in the future.

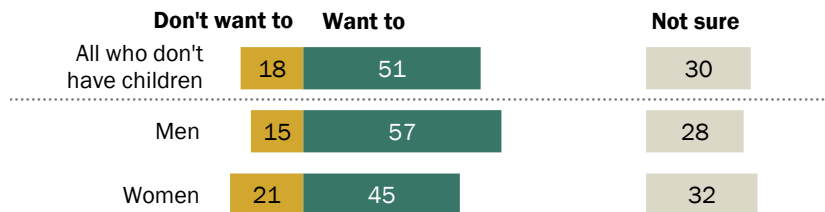
- 69% of young adults who have never been married say they want to get married someday.
- 51% of young adults who don’t have children say they want to have children someday.

### Most unmarried young adults say they’d like to marry someday; young men more likely than young women to say they want to have children

*Among young adults who have never been married, % saying they \_\_\_ get married someday*



*Among young adults who don't have children, % saying they \_\_\_ have children someday*



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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Among those who don't have children, young men (57%) are more likely than young women (45%) to say they want to have children in the future. There is no difference by gender in the shares of never-married young adults who say they would like to get married.

### **Do young adults feel pressured to get married or have children?**

For the most part, young adults who have a living parent don't feel much pressure or any pressure at all from their parents to get married or to have children.

- 73% of those who have never been married say they don't feel pressured to get married.
- 67% of those who aren't parents say they don't feel pressured to have kids.

Similar majorities of young men and women say they don't feel much pressure or any pressure at all from their parents to get married or have children. And answers don't vary across age groups.

## 4. Young adults' relationship with their parents

This chapter focuses on the relationship between young adults and their parents, from the young adults' perspectives. For many of the questions, young adults ages 18 to 34 were asked to think of a specific parent (if they have more than one living parent). This way, they were able to give more concrete answers rather than trying to generalize about parents with whom they might have different relationships.

Among the key findings:

- **A majority of young adults (59%) say their relationship with their parents is excellent or very good.** And most (69%) say they can be their true self around their parents – but these views differ significantly depending on whether they're answering about their mom or their dad.
- **31% of young adults say they rely heavily on their parents for emotional support.** While about a quarter of young adults (26%) say their parents rely on *them* heavily for emotional support, daughters are particularly likely to say this about their mothers.
- **Most young adults say they turn to their parents for advice at least sometimes** on a range of topics, from their career and finances to their physical health. Relatively small shares report frequent disagreements with their parents.
- **Young adults regularly keep in touch with their parents:** 61% say they text with their parents and 46% say they talk on the phone or video chat with them a few times a week or at least once a day.

## How young adults rate their relationship with their parents

Young adults are generally positive about their relationship with their parent: 32% describe it as excellent and another 28% say it is very good, 23% say it is good, and 18% say it is fair or poor.

Young adults are more likely to say their relationship with their mother is excellent or very good (63%) than to say this about their father (53%). Most of this is driven by young women, who are more likely to rate their relationship highly when answering about their mother than their father. There are no differences among young men in rating their relationship with their mom or dad.

### A majority of young adults rate their relationship with their parent highly, especially with their mom

*% of young adults saying their relationship with their parent is ...*



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For this question, young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about one randomly selected parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## Do young adults feel they can be their true self around their parents?

A majority of young adults (69%) say they can be their true self around their parent all or most of the time. About two-in-ten (19%) say they can do this some of the time, and 11% say they can rarely or never be their true self.

Young adults are more likely to say they can be their true self all or most of the time around their mom than to say this about dad (73% vs. 64%). Again, this is mostly driven by young women, who are significantly more likely to say they can be their true self when answering about their mom than when answering about their dad (74% vs. 61%). There is no significant difference on this question among young men.

Young adults across the ages of 18 to 34 are about equally likely to say they can be their true self all or most of the time with their parent. But there's a significant difference between the oldest and the youngest group when it comes to being their true self *all of the time*: 37% of 30- to 34-year-olds say this, compared with 26% of 18- to 24-year-olds. Some 32% of 25- to 29-year-olds say the same.

### A majority of young adults say they can be their true self around their parent, but more say this about mom than dad

*% of young adults saying they can be their true self around their parent ...*

	All/Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely/ Never
All young adults	69	19	11
<i>Among young men answering about their ...</i>			
Father	68	19	13
Mother	73	20	6
<i>Among young women answering about their ...</i>			
Father	61	22	17
Mother	74	15	10

Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For this question, young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about one randomly selected parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## How well do young adults feel they know their parents?

We also asked young adults how well they feel they know their parents beyond their role as a parent. About half of young adults (48%) say they think they know their parent extremely or very well. Another 37% say they know their parent somewhat well, and 15% say they don't know them too well or at all.

Young adults are more likely to say they know their parent extremely or very well when answering about their mother than when answering about their father (51% vs. 42%).

### About half of young adults say they know their parent extremely or very well

*% of young adults saying they know their parent \_\_\_\_\_ beyond their role as their parent*

	Extremely/ Very well	Somewhat well	Not too well/Not well at all
All young adults	48	37	15
<i>Among those answering about their ...</i>			
Father	42	39	18
Mother	51	37	12

Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For this question, young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about one randomly selected parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## Emotional support, according to young adults

When asked how much they rely on their parents for emotional support, 31% of young adults say they do this a great deal or a fair amount. A similar share (29%) say they rely on their parents some for emotional support, and 40% say they don't rely on them much or at all.

Young women are more likely than young men to say they rely on their parents for emotional support a great deal or a fair amount (35% vs. 27%).

There's no significant difference by age group on this question. Young adults in their 30s are as likely as those in their late teens and early 20s to say they rely on their parents for this type of support at least a fair amount.

### About a third of young women say they rely on parents for emotional support at least a fair amount

*% of young adults saying that, in general, they rely on their parents \_\_\_ for emotional support*

	A great deal/ A fair amount	Some	Not much/ Not at all
All young adults	31	29	40
Men	27	28	44
Women	35	30	34

Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## What young adults say about how much their parents rely on them for emotional support

When asked about a specific parent relying on them for emotional support, 26% of young adults say their parent relies on them a great deal or a fair amount, while 31% say they do this some. The remainder of young adults (43%) say their parent does not rely on them much or at all for emotional support.

Young adults are more likely to say their parent relies on them at least a fair amount when answering about a mother than a father. About a third (35%) of young adults say their mother relies on them a great deal or a fair amount, compared with 12% who say the same about their father.

Young women are much more likely than young men to say their parent relies on them a great deal or a fair amount for emotional support (34% vs. 18%). This is even more striking when looking at those answering about a mother: 44% of young women say their mother relies heavily on them for emotional support, while a quarter of young men say the same.

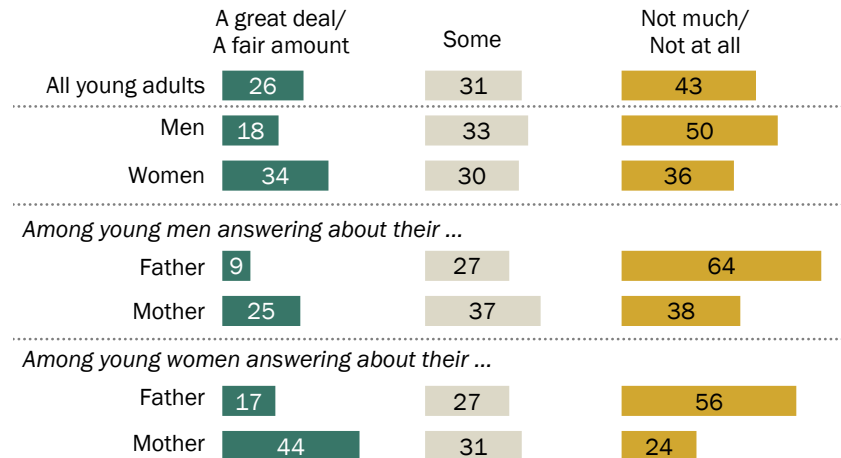
## Seeking advice from parents

As many young adults face new milestones in their lives, we asked them how often they turn to their parents for advice on a range of topics. Majorities of young adults say they go to their parents *at least sometimes* for advice on:

- Their financial situation (68%)
- Their career or job situation (67%)

### About 1 in 4 young adults say their parent relies heavily on them for emotional support

*% of young adults saying that, in general, their parent relies on them \_\_\_ for emotional support*



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For this question, young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about one randomly selected parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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- Parenting their own children (66%)
- Their physical health (62%)

Shares ranging from 26% to 35% say they go to their parents *extremely or very often* for advice on these topics.

On other topics we asked about, sizeable shares of young adults say they *rarely or never* go to their parents for advice:

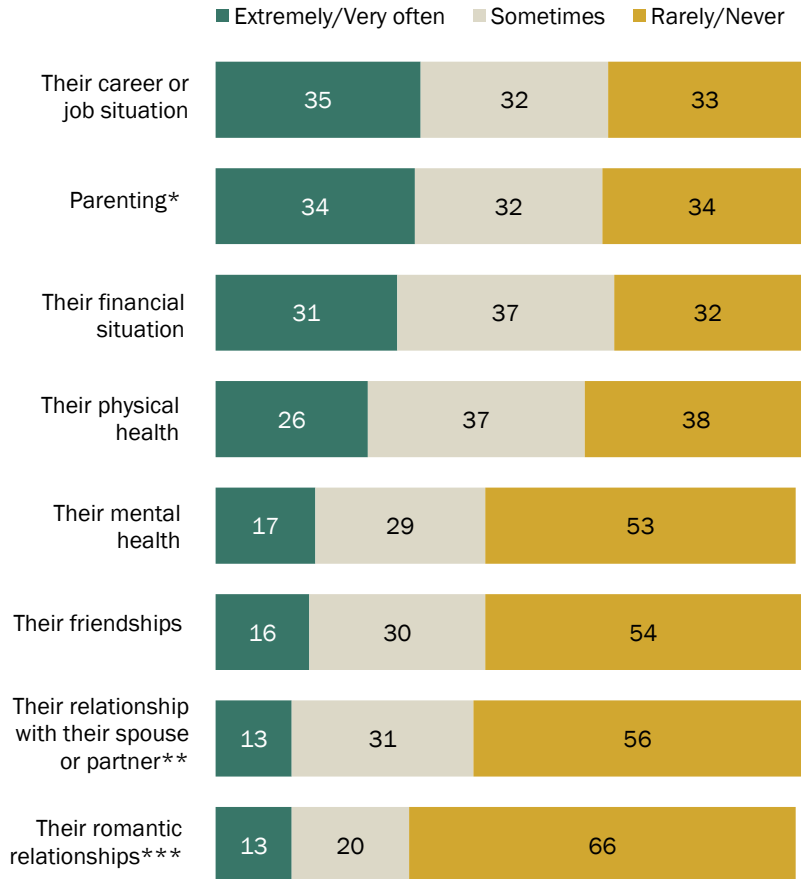
- Their romantic relationships (66%, among those who are neither married nor living with a partner)
- Their relationship with their spouse or partner (56%, among those who are married or living with a partner)
- Their friendships (54%)
- Their mental health (53%)

**Differences by age**

The youngest adults are the most likely to regularly turn to their parents for advice on their finances and careers, as well as on their physical health and friendships.

**Career, finances and parenting top the list of topics young adults go to their parents for advice about**

*% of young adults saying they turn to their parents \_\_\_ for advice on each of the following*

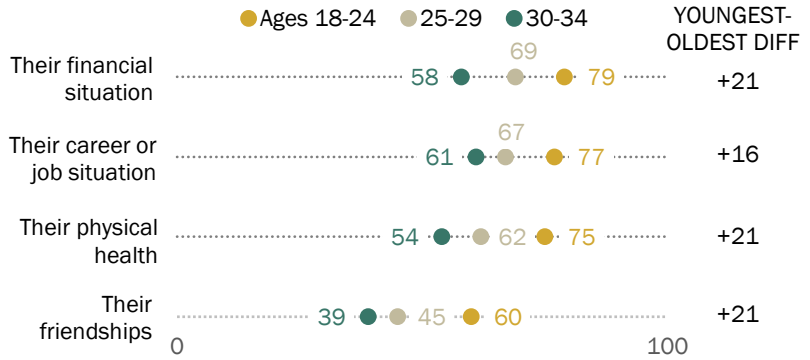


\* Based on those who are parents.  
 \*\* Based on those who are married or living with a partner.  
 \*\*\* Based on those who are not married nor living with a partner.  
 Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.  
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About three-quarters or more of young adults ages 18 to 24 say they turn to their parents at least sometimes for advice about their financial situation (79%), their career or job situation (77%), and their physical health (75%). Six-in-ten say the same about advice on their friendships. For most of these topics, smaller shares of 25- to 29-year-olds and 30- to 34-year-olds say they seek advice on these topics at least sometimes.

**Adults ages 18 to 24 are the most likely to regularly turn to their parents for advice on several topics**

*% of young adults saying they turn to their parents for advice on each of the following **at least sometimes***



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Response options included “Extremely often,” “Very often,” “Sometimes,” “Rarely” and “Never.”  
 Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.  
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## Young adults' disagreements with their parents

Relatively small shares of young adults say they and their parents disagree extremely or very often on a range of topics.

Still, shares of young adults ranging from a third to four-in-ten say they and their parents disagree *at least sometimes* about:

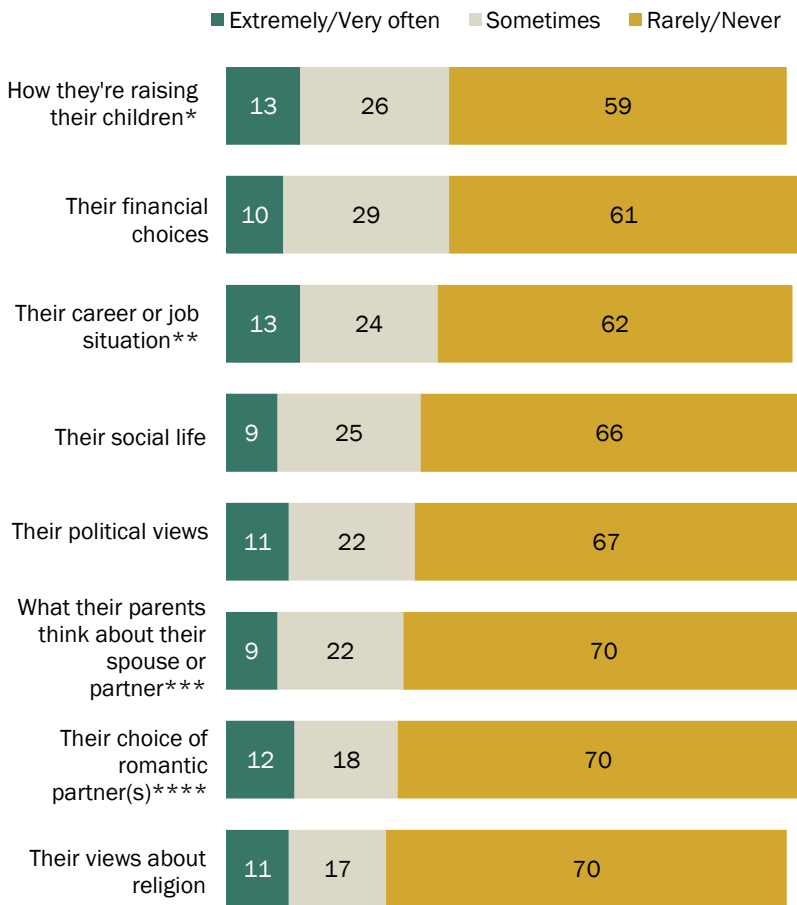
- How they're raising their children (40%, among those who are parents themselves)
- Their financial choices (39%)
- Their career or job situation (37%)
- Their social life (34%)
- Their political views (33%)

Three-in-ten or fewer young adults say they and their parents disagree at least sometimes about:

- What their parents think about their spouse or partner (30%, among those who are married or living with a partner)
- Their choice of romantic partners (30% among those who

### Majorities of young adults say they rarely or never disagree with their parents across a range of topics

*% of young adults saying they and their parents disagree \_\_\_\_ about each of the following*



\* Based on those who are parents.

\*\* Excludes those who said this doesn't apply to them.

\*\*\* Based on those who are married or living with a partner.

\*\*\*\* Based on those who are not married nor living with a partner, excluding those who said this doesn't apply to them.

Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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- are neither married nor living with a partner)
- Their views about religion (29%)

### Differences by gender

While young men and young women tend to have similar experiences when it comes to disagreements with their parents on a range of topics, young men are more likely than young women to say this occurs at least sometimes around their political views (37% vs. 29%).

And while 42% of young women who aren't married or living with a partner say they and their parents disagree at least sometimes about their choice of romantic partners, 21% of young men say the same.

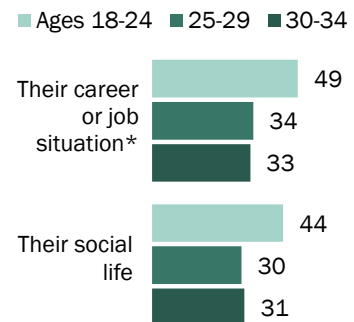
### Differences by age

Those in the youngest age group are particularly likely to say they and their parents disagree at least sometimes about their career or job situation and their social life. Some 49% of adults 18 to 24 say they disagree with their parents about their career or job situation this frequently. About a third of those ages 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 say the same.

Similarly, while 44% of 18- to 24-year-olds say they and their parents disagree at least sometimes about their social life, about three-in-ten of those age 25 and older say the same.

### Disagreements over jobs, social life differ by age

*% of young adults in each age group saying they disagree with their parents **at least sometimes** about each of the following*



\* Excludes those who said this doesn't apply to them.

Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Response options included "Extremely often," "Very often," "Sometimes," "Rarely" and "Never." Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

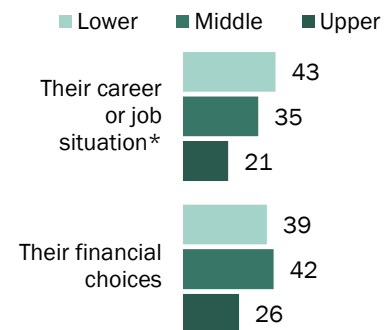
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## Differences by income

There are also differences by income when it comes to disagreements about finances and work. Young adults with lower and middle incomes are more likely than those with upper incomes to say they and their parents disagree at least sometimes about their financial choices and their career or job situation.

### Income differences in how often young adults and their parents disagree about jobs, finances

*% of young adults in each income group saying they disagree with their parents **at least sometimes** about each of the following*



\* Excludes those who said "Does not apply."

Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Response options included "Extremely often," "Very often," "Sometimes," "Rarely" and "Never."

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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## How often young adults are in touch with their parents

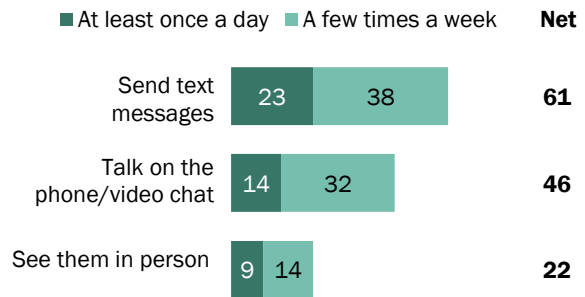
To understand how often and in what ways young adults communicate with their parents, we asked them to think about the parent they communicate with most often, excluding any they may live with.

Text messaging is the most common way young adults say they keep in touch with their parents. About six-in-ten (61%) say they text their parent at least a few times a week, including 23% who say they do this daily. A smaller but substantial share of young adults (46%) say they talk or video chat with their parent at least a few times a week, including 14% who do so at least once a day.

In-person contact is less frequent. About one-in-five young adults (22%) say they see their parent at least a few times a week. About a third (35%) say they see their parent in person a few times a month or once a month. Another 42% say they see their parent less than once a month, including 6% who say they never see their parent.

### About a quarter of young adults text their parent at least once a day

*% of young adults saying they do each of the following with their parent\**



\* This question was only asked of those who do not live with at least one parent. Young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about the parent they are in touch with most often, excluding any they live with.

Note: Response options also included "A few times a month," "Once a month," "Less than once a month" and "Never." Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.

Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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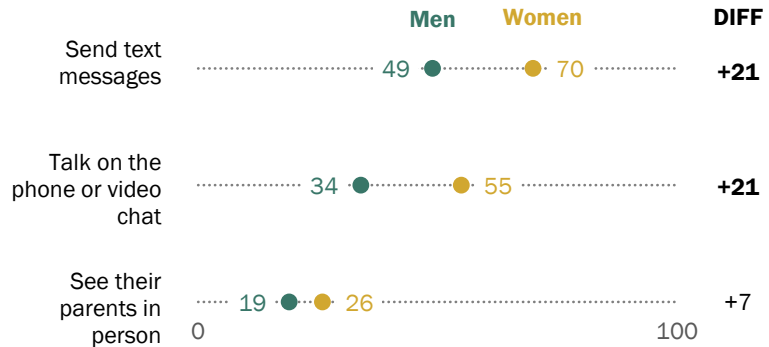
**Differences by gender**

Young women are much more likely than young men to say they text their parent frequently: 70% of young women say they do this at least a few times a week, compared with 49% of young men. In fact, about three-in-ten young women (28%) say they text their parent at least once a day, while 16% of young men say the same.

This pattern holds for talking on the phone, with 55% of young women saying they talk with a parent at least a few times a week, compared with 34% of young men. And young women are more likely than young men to say they talk on the phone with a parent at least once a day (19% vs. 7%).

**Young women text and talk with their parents more often than young men**

*% of young men and women saying they do each of the following with their parent\* at least once a day or a few times a week*



\* This question was only asked of those who do not live with at least one parent. Young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about the parent they are in touch with most often, excluding any they live with.  
 Note: Response options also included “A few times a month,” “Once a month,” “Less than once a month” and “Never.” Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. Statistically significant differences are shown in **bold**.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.  
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## What young adults think about their parents' level of communication and involvement in their lives

The survey asked young adults to reflect on their communication with their parents and their parents' level of involvement in their lives. For these questions, young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think of just one (randomly assigned and not necessarily the one they have the most contact with).

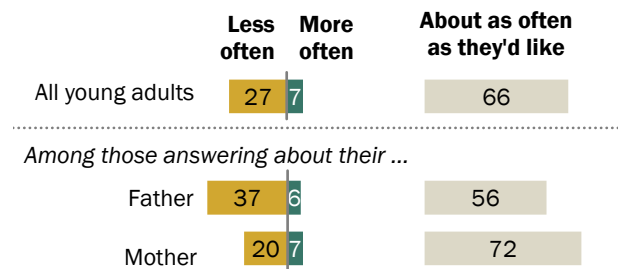
Majorities of young adults say they communicate with their parent as often as they'd like (66%). Still, about a quarter (27%) say they communicate *less often* with their parent than they'd like. Relatively few say they communicate *more often* than they'd like (7%).

These patterns are similar when it comes to their parent's level of involvement in their day-to-day life. About seven-in-ten young adults (69%) say their parent is as involved as they would like them to be. Among the remainder, young adults are more likely to say their parent is *less* involved (22%) than to say their parent is *more* involved (9%) than they'd like.

Young adults answering about their father are more likely than those answering about their mother to say they communicate less often than they'd like (37% vs. 20%) and that their father is less involved in their day-to-day life than they'd like (29% vs. 17%).

### A majority of young adults say they communicate with their parent as often as they'd like

% of young adults saying they communicate with their parent \_\_\_ than they'd like



Note: Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For this question, young adults with more than one living parent were asked to think about one randomly selected parent. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## 5. Parents' relationship with their young adult children

This chapter focuses on the relationship between parents and their young adult children, from the parents' perspective. For many of the questions, parents were asked to think of a specific child ages 18 to 34. This way they could give more concrete answers rather than trying to generalize about all of their children (if they have more than one child in that age group).

Among the key findings:

- **Most parents give their relationship with their adult children high ratings**, with 77% saying it's excellent or very good. A majority also say they think their adult children know them extremely or very well, beyond their role as a parent.
- **41% of parents say their children rely on them a great deal or a fair amount for emotional support.** Only 18% of parents say they rely as heavily on their children for emotional support. These patterns differ significantly by the gender of the parent and child.
- **Most parents say their young adult children come to them for advice at least sometimes** on a range of topics – from their career to their dating life. Relatively small shares report frequent disagreements with their children across a variety of topics.
- **Parents are in close contact with their young adult children:** 73% say they text with them and 54% say they talk on the phone or video chat at least a few times a week. Parents are largely satisfied with how often they communicate with their kids and with their overall level of involvement in their lives.

## How parents rate their relationship with their young adult children

Overall, parents rate their relationship with their young adult child positively: 41% describe it as excellent and another 36% say it's very good; 15% say it's good and only 8% say it's fair or poor.

Mothers are somewhat more likely than fathers to say their relationship with their adult child is excellent (44% vs. 36%). And upper-income parents are more likely to say this than parents with middle or lower incomes.

The ratings also vary to some degree by the child's circumstances. Nearly half

(46%) of parents who say their child is completely financially independent say their relationship with that child is excellent. Among parents who say their child is not this financially independent, the shares are lower.

### Most parents say they have an excellent or very good relationship with their young adult children

*% of parents of young adults saying their relationship with their child is ...*

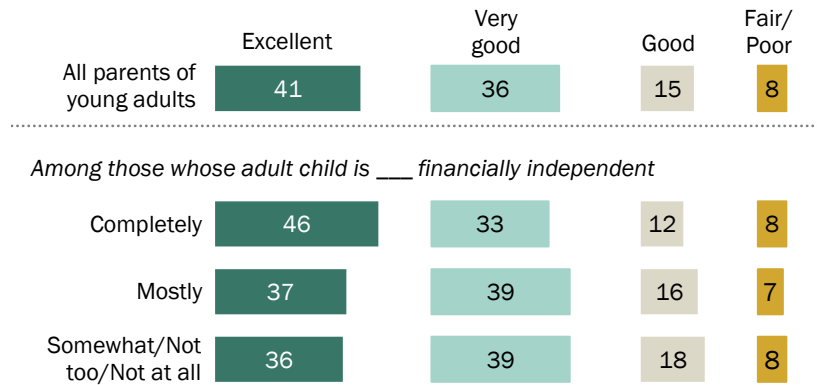
	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair/Poor
All parents of young adults	41	36	15	8
Fathers	36	37	17	9
Mothers	44	36	13	7
Lower income	37	36	16	11
Middle income	39	39	14	7
Upper income	49	32	13	5

Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about one randomly selected child. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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## Parents' ratings of their relationship with their adult children vary by child's level of financial independence

*% of parents of young adults saying their relationship with their child is ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about one randomly selected child. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.  
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## Do parents think their adult children truly know them?

We also asked parents how well they think their child truly knows them *beyond their role as a parent*.

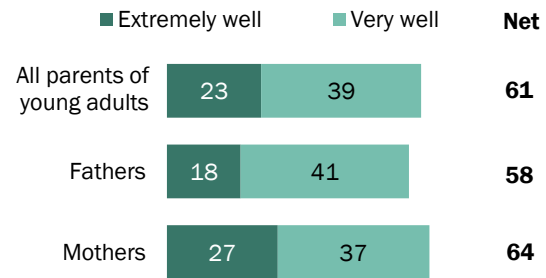
Most parents say their child knows them extremely (23%) or very well (39%). Some 30% say their child knows them somewhat well, and 9% say their child doesn't know them too well or at all.

Again, there are differences between mothers and fathers. While majorities of both groups say their child knows them at least very well, moms are more likely than dads to say their child knows them extremely well (27% vs. 18%).

Moms answering about a daughter are more likely to say their child knows them extremely well compared with moms answering about a son (31% vs. 23%). Dads' responses don't differ depending on the gender of the child.

## Most parents say their young adult children truly know them as a person

*% of parents of young adults saying their child truly knows them, beyond their role as a parent ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about one randomly selected child. Other response options included, "Somewhat well," "Not too well" and "Not well at all." Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## Emotional support, according to parents

Relatively few parents say they rely heavily on their adult children for emotional support. About one-in-five (18%) say they rely on any of their adult children for this type of support a great deal or a fair amount. About three-in-ten parents (29%) say they rely on their children some for emotional support, while about half (52%) say they don't rely on them much or at all.

Fathers are significantly more likely than mothers to say they don't rely on their adult children for emotional

support: 62% of dads say they don't rely on them much or not at all, compared with 45% of moms.

There are differences by income as well: 60% of upper-income parents say they don't rely on their adult children for this type of support, compared with 54% of parents with middle incomes and 44% of those with lower incomes.

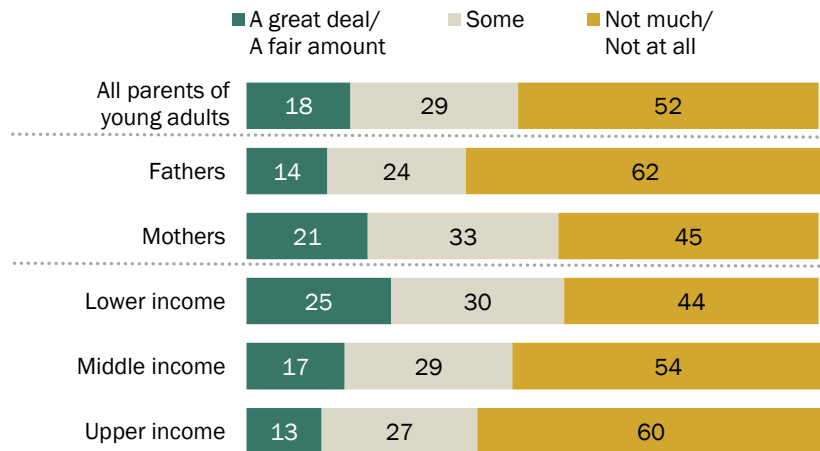
## What parents say about how much their adult children rely on them for emotional support

When asked about a specific child, about four-in-ten parents say that child relies on them a great deal (15%) or a fair amount (26%) for emotional support. An additional 36% say their child relies on them some, 18% say not much and 5% say not at all.

Moms are more likely than dads to say their child relies on them a great deal or a fair amount for emotional support (47% vs. 34%). Moms answering about a daughter (52%) are more likely than those answering about a son (42%) to say their child relies on them for emotional support. Among dads, the responses don't differ based on the gender of the child.

## Few parents report relying heavily on their young adult children for emotional support

*% of parents of young adults saying that, in general, they rely on their adult children for emotional support ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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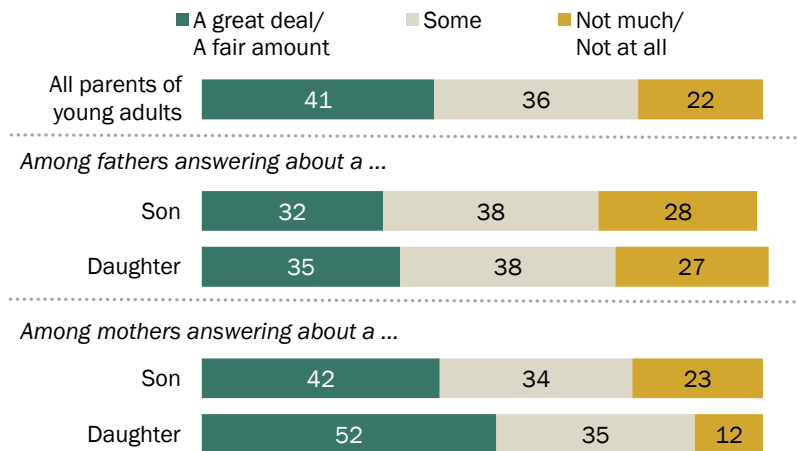
Parents who are answering about a child age 18 to 24 are more likely than those answering about a child in their early 30s to say their child relies heavily on them for this type of support (46% vs. 36%).

Not surprisingly, the nature of the relationship between a parent and an adult child is also linked with emotional reliance. Among parents who say their relationship with their child is excellent or very good, 47% also say their child relies on them at least a fair amount for emotional support.

By contrast, parents who give their relationship with their child a lower rating are less likely to report this: 22% among those who rate their relationship as good and 15% for those who say it's fair or poor.

## Moms of daughters report the highest levels of emotional dependence

*% of parents of young adults saying that, in general, their child relies on them for emotional support ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about one randomly selected child. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## Giving advice to young adult children

Beyond emotional support, we also asked parents how often any of their adult children come to them for advice on a variety of things.

Career guidance tops the list: 43% of parents say their adult children come to them for advice on their career or job situation extremely or very often, and another 39% say they do this sometimes.

Some 36% say their children often come to them for advice on their physical health, and a similar share say their kids often seek advice on their financial situation (33%).

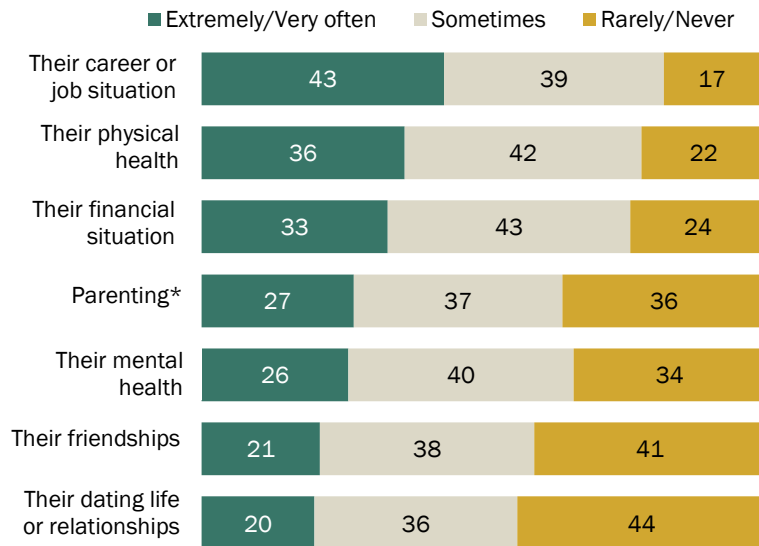
About one-in-four (27%) say their young adult children often come to them for advice on parenting (among those who have children who are parents themselves).

A similar share (26%) say their children often come to them for advice on their mental health. Smaller shares say their kids often look to them for guidance on their friendships (21%) or their dating life or relationships (20%).

There are differences here between mothers and fathers, with mothers more likely to say their adult children come to them for advice on each topic. For example, 47% of moms and 38% of dads say their children often come to them for advice on their career or job situation. About a third of moms (34%) say their kids come to them for advice about their mental health, compared with 16% of dads.

### Many parents say their adult children often come to them for career advice

*% of parents of young adults saying any of their adult children come to them for advice on each of the following ...*



\* Responses for this item are based on parents who did not indicate that none of their children ages 18 to 34 are parents themselves.

Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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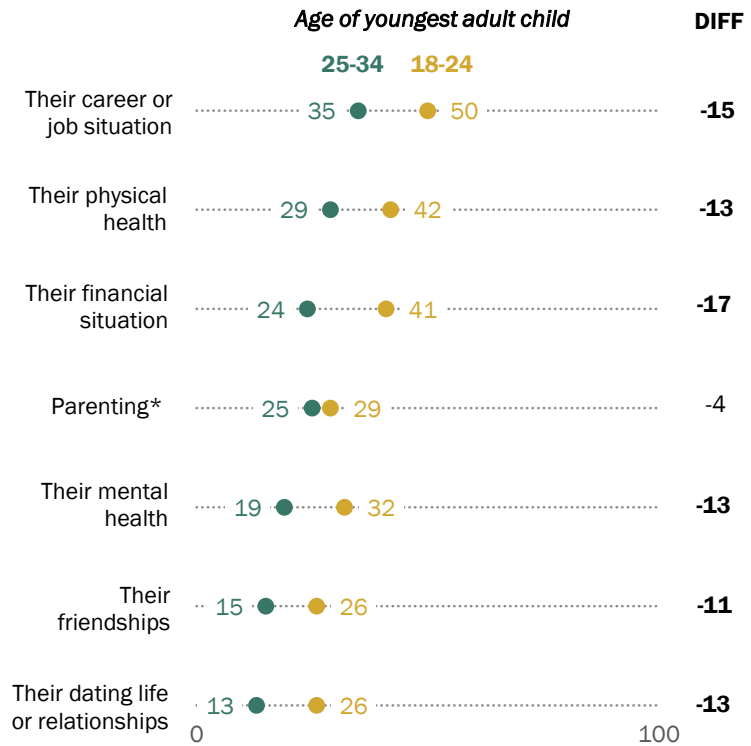
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Giving advice is much more common for parents with at least one adult child age 18 to 24. Among those whose youngest adult child is under 25, 50% say their children often ask them for job or career advice. This compares with 35% among parents whose youngest adult child is 25 or older.

Similarly, 42% of parents with a child age 18 to 24 say their children often ask them for advice on their physical health. Some 29% of parents whose youngest adult child is 25 or older say the same. The pattern is similar across all the items, with the exception of parenting (where the 4-percentage-point difference is not statistically significant).

### Parents whose youngest adult child is 18 to 24 give advice more often on a variety of topics

*% of parents of young adults saying any of their adult children come to them for advice on each of the following **extremely or very often***



\* Responses for this item are based on parents who did not indicate that none of their children ages 18 to 34 are parents themselves.

Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Statistically significant differences are shown in **bold**.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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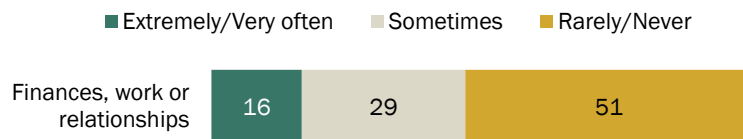
## Did today's parents rely on their own parents for advice when they were young?

The survey also asked parents about their own experiences when they were young adults. Although the questions weren't exactly the same, parents' responses suggest that they may have been less reliant on their parents for advice than their own children are on them.

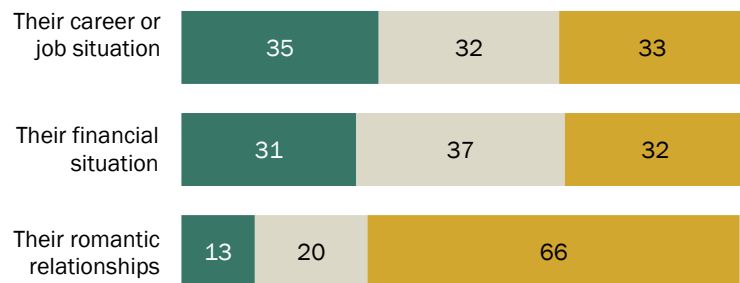
Only 16% of parents say that, when they were in their 20s and 30s, they turned to their parents for advice on finances, work or relationships extremely or very often. About three-in-ten (29%) say they sometimes did this. And 51% say they rarely or never asked their parents for advice on these types of things.

## About half of parents of young adults say they rarely or never went to their own parents for advice when they were young

*% of parents of young adults saying that, when they were in their 20s and 30s, they turned to their parents for advice on the following ...*



*% of young adults saying they turn to their parents for advice on the following ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Young adults include those ages 18 to 34 who have a living parent. For parents, "Don't remember" and "Does not apply" were response options, which are not shown. For both groups, shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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## Parents' disagreements with their young adult children

Relatively few parents report that they often clash with their adult children about various aspects of their lives, with just 14% or fewer saying this happens extremely or very often.

Half say they disagree with their children about their financial choices at least sometimes. And about four-in-ten (41%) say they disagree with their children about their career or job situation.

Smaller shares say they often or sometimes disagree with their children about their social life (37%), their political views (35%) or their views on religion (30%).

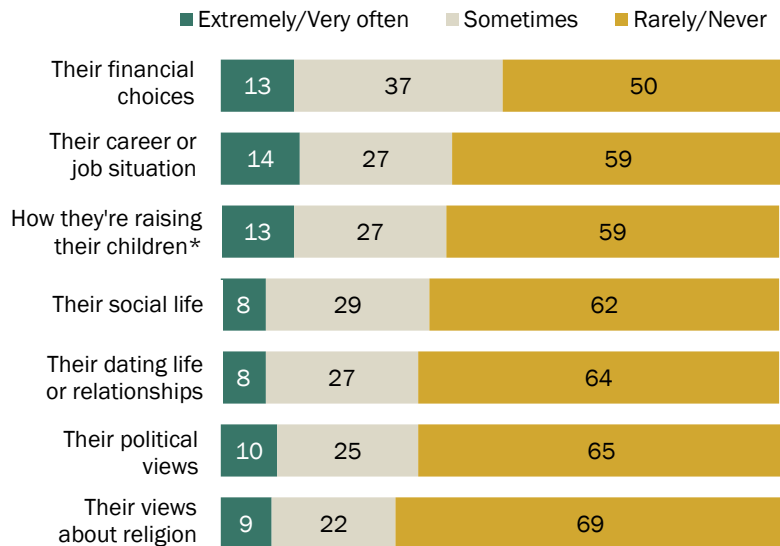
Among parents whose young adult children have kids of their own, 40% say they disagree with them at least sometimes about how they're raising their children.

Parents whose youngest adult child is 25 or older are more likely than those with a child age 18 to 24 to say they rarely or never disagree about their children's finances or social and dating lives.

One word of caution in interpreting these results: According to respondent feedback, some parents may have been thinking about outward disagreements only and not taking into account times where they may silently disagree with their adult children's choices.

## Very few parents say they often disagree with their adult children about major aspects of their lives

*% of parents of young adults saying they disagree about each of the following with their adult children ...*



\* Responses for this item are based on parents who did not indicate that none of their children ages 18 to 34 are parents themselves.

Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

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## How often parents are in touch with their young adult children

We asked parents a series of questions that touched on the nature and frequency of their communications with their adult children.

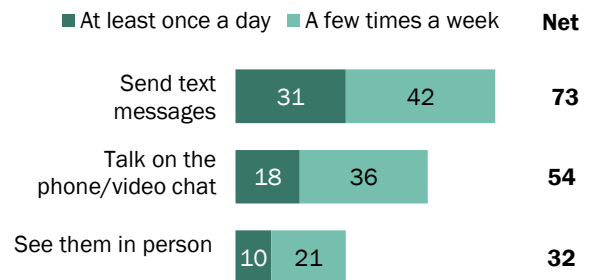
For these questions, we asked parents with more than one young adult child to think about the child they are in touch with most often. We also limited these questions to parents and children who don't live together.

We found that many parents are in frequent contact with their young adult children. About three-in-ten (31%) say they are in touch with them through text messages on a daily basis, and an additional 42% say they text with them a few times a week.

Parents see their adult children in person less frequently: 10% say they see them daily and 21% say it's a few times a week.

### About 3 in 10 parents say they text their young adult child daily

*% of parents of young adults saying they do each of the following with their adult child\* ...*



\* This question was only asked of those who do not live with at least one child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about the child they are in touch with most often, excluding any who may live with them. Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Other response options also included "A few times a month," "Once a month," "Less than once a month" and "Never." Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023.

"Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

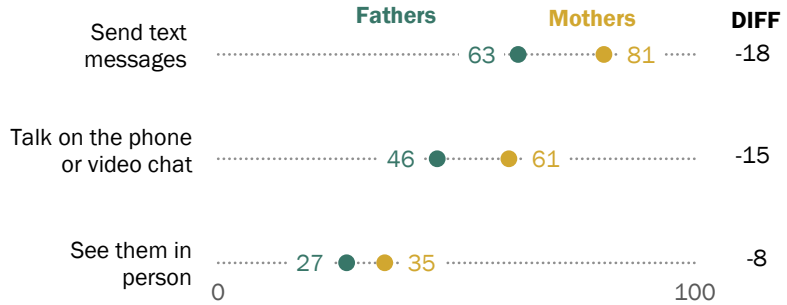
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There are large differences between mothers and fathers in how often they're in contact with their adult children. Moms are much more likely than dads to say they text with or talk on the phone with their child at least a few times a week.

Four-in-ten moms say they text with their adult child every day, compared with 19% of dads.

### Mothers are in touch with their young adult children more often than fathers are

*% of parents of young adults saying they do each of the following with their adult child at least a few times a week\**



\* This question was only asked of those who do not live with at least one child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about the child they are in touch with most often, excluding any who may live with them. Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. Response options also included "A few times a month," "Once a month," "Less than once a month" and "Never."

Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

## Tracking young adult children's location

When asked whether they ever track their adult child's location through GPS apps or software, most parents (74%) say they do not.

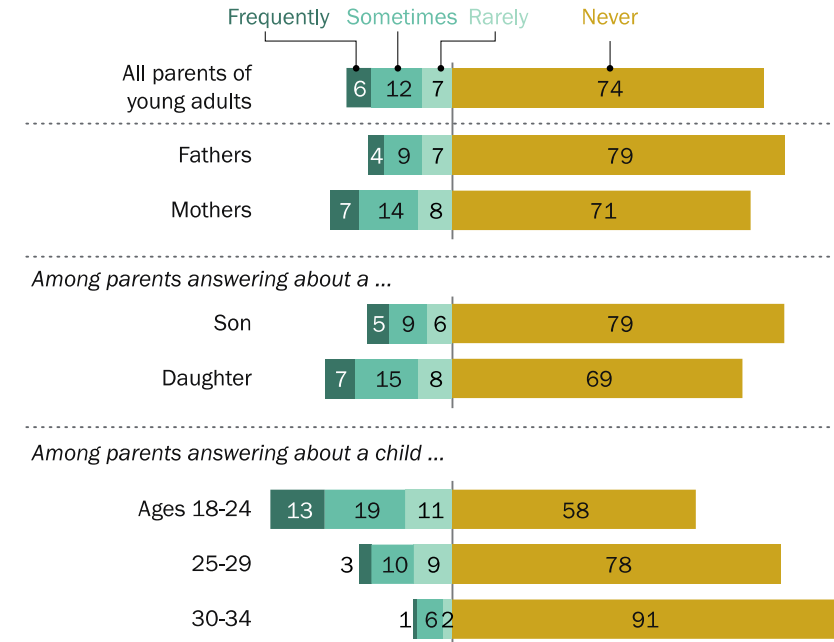
Still, one-in-four say they do – even if only rarely: 6% say they do this frequently, 12% say they sometimes do this, and 7% say they rarely do.

There are gender differences among parents and adult children. Mothers are more likely than fathers to say they ever do this kind of tracking (29% vs. 21%). And parents are more likely to say they track their daughters than their sons (31% vs. 21%).

There are also differences by the age of the adult child. Most of the tracking is being done of 18- to 24-year-olds. Among parents answering about a child age 18 to 24, 42% say they track their location. A smaller share (21%) of parents answering about a child age 25 to 29 say they do this. And the share is smaller still for parents answering about a child in their early 30s (9%).

### 1 in 4 parents say they track their young adult child's location with GPS apps or software

*% of parents of young adults saying they track their child's location through GPS apps or software ...*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about one randomly selected child. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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## What parents think about their level of communication and involvement in their adult children's lives

For the most part, parents are content with how often they're in touch with their adult children. When asked about a specific adult child, 59% say they communicate with that child about as often

as they'd like. Even so, a not insignificant share – 36% – say they communicate with their child *less often* than they'd like. Only 3% say they communicate with them more than they'd like.

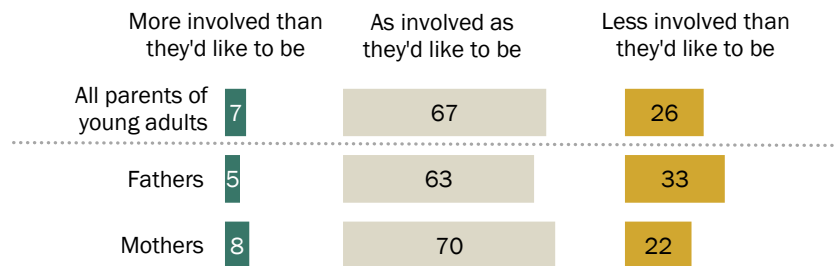
Mothers express higher levels of satisfaction than fathers do: 65% of moms, compared with 52% of dads, say they communicate with their adult child about as often as they'd like. For their part, dads are more likely than moms to say they communicate less than they'd like (44% vs. 30%).

Thinking more broadly about their overall involvement in their adult children's day-to-day lives, most parents (67%) say they're about as involved as they like to be. About one-in-four (26%) say they're less involved than they'd like to be, and 7% say they're more involved than they'd like.

The gender patterns are similar here, with mothers more likely than fathers to say they're as involved as they'd like to be (70% vs. 63%) and fathers more likely than mothers to say they're less involved than they'd like to be (33% vs. 22%).

### A third of fathers say they're less involved in their young adult child's life than they'd like to be

*% of parents of young adults saying they are \_\_\_ in their child's day-to-day life*



Note: Parents of young adults are those with at least one adult child age 18 to 34. For this question, parents with more than one child in this age range were asked to think about one randomly selected child. Shares of respondents who didn't offer an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. parents of young adults conducted Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2023. "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood"

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# Methodology

## Overview

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn from ATP Wave 137, conducted from Oct. 24 to Nov. 5, 2023 among a sample of U.S. adults who are either a parent of at least one 18- to 34-year-old or who are themselves age 18 to 34 and have at least one living parent. A total of 4,512 panelists responded out of 5,118 who were sampled, for a response rate of 95% (AAPOR RR3). The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 3%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is less than 1%. The margin of sampling error for the sample of 3,017 respondents who are a parent of at least one 18- to 34-year-old is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. The margin of sampling error for the sample of 1,495 respondents ages 18 to 34 who have at least one living parent is plus or minus 4.3 percentage points.<sup>5</sup>

## Panel recruitment

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 9,942 (50%) agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based sampling (ABS) recruitment. A study cover letter and a pre-incentive are mailed to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. This Postal Service file has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.<sup>6</sup> Within each sampled household, the adult with the next

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<sup>5</sup> Respondents who were themselves ages 18 to 34 and had *both* an 18- to 34-year-old child and at least one living parent were randomly allocated to one of the two samples. The weights for these respondents were adjusted accordingly as described in the [Weighting](#) section.

<sup>6</sup> AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. ["AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling."](#)



birthday is asked to participate. Other details of the ABS recruitment protocol have changed over time but are available upon request.<sup>7</sup>

We have recruited a national sample of U.S. adults to the ATP approximately once per year since 2014. In some years, the recruitment has included additional efforts (known as an “oversample”) to boost sample size with underrepresented groups. For example, Hispanic adults, Black adults and Asian adults were oversampled in 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Across the six address-based recruitments, a total of 23,862 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 20,917 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 30,859 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 11,936 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

### Sample design

This survey was designed to cover two distinct subpopulations within the universe of noninstitutionalized persons ages 18 and older living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii: 1) parents of at least one adult child ages 18 to 34 with whom they are in contact (excluding children who are currently enrolled in high school); and 2) adults ages 18 to 34 who have at least one living parent with whom they are in contact (excluding panelists who are currently enrolled in high school). All active panel members who reported belonging to either of these groups in ATP W133

### American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	1,393
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	832
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	405
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS	9,396	8,778	3,851
Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019	ABS	5,900	4,720	1,388
June 1 to July 19, 2020; Feb. 10 to March 31, 2021	ABS	3,197	2,812	1,441
May 29 to July 7, 2021; Sept. 16 to Nov. 1, 2021	ABS	1,329	1,162	731
May 24 to Sept. 29, 2022	ABS	3,354	2,869	1,460
April 17 to May 30, 2023	ABS	686	576	435
	<b>Total</b>	<b>43,580</b>	<b>30,859</b>	<b>11,936</b>

Note: RDD is random-digit dial; ABS is address-based sampling. Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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<sup>7</sup> Email [pewsurveys@pewresearch.org](mailto:pewsurveys@pewresearch.org).

(fielded in August 2023) were invited to participate in this wave. Prior to fielding, all eligible panelists were divided into separate groups depending on whether they were the parent of an 18- to 34-year-old or were 18 to 34 years old and had a living parent. Panelists who were eligible for inclusion in both groups were randomly assigned to one or the other with equal probability and their sampling weights were adjusted accordingly. At the beginning of the survey, respondents were asked to enumerate either their 18-to 34-year-old children or their living parents depending on their sample group. Respondents who did not enumerate any eligible children or parents were screened out as ineligible.

### **Questionnaire development and testing**

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with Ipsos. The web program was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the Ipsos project management team and Pew Research Center researchers. The Ipsos project management team also populated test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

#### *Random selection*

For some questions, panelists with more than one enumerated adult child ages 18 to 34 (in the survey of parents) or more than one living parent (in the survey of young adults) were asked to think about a specific child/parent. This child/parent was randomly selected from the enumerated list at the beginning of each survey.

### **Incentives**

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or a gift code to Amazon.com or could choose to decline the incentive. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$15 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

### **Data collection protocol**

The data collection field period for this survey was Oct. 24 to Nov. 5, 2023. Postcard notifications were mailed to all ATP panelists with a known residential address on Oct. 24.

Invitations were sent out in separate launches: soft launch and full launch. Sixty panelists were included in the first soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on Oct. 24. A

precautionary second soft launch was carried out to confirm that a correction made on the backend of the survey program after the first soft launch. The second soft launch did not affect the survey in any way. One hundred panelists were included in the second soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on Oct. 26. The second soft launch confirmed that the program was working as it should and that the correction had no impact on data or survey results. The ATP panelists chosen for both soft launches were known responders who had completed previous ATP surveys within one day of receiving their invitation. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Oct. 27.

All panelists with an email address received an email invitation and up to three email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. All ATP panelists who consented to SMS messages received an SMS invitation and up to three SMS reminders.

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### Invitation and reminder dates, ATP Wave 137

	Soft launch 1	Soft launch 2	Full launch
Initial invitation	October 24, 2023	October 26, 2023	October 27, 2023
First reminder	October 29, 2023	October 29, 2023	October 29, 2023
Second reminder	November 1, 2023	November 1, 2023	November 1, 2023
Final reminder	November 4, 2023	November 4, 2023	November 4, 2023

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### Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, the Center’s researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing clear patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for whether respondents left questions blank at very high rates or always selected the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, three ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis. Thirteen other ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset after providing feedback that they were not actually eligible for the survey.

### Weighting

This survey was weighted in a multistep process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of selection for their initial recruitment survey. These weights are then rescaled and adjusted to account for changes in the design of ATP recruitment surveys from year to year.

To correct for nonresponse and panel attrition, the base weights for all panelists who responded to the 2023 Annual Profile Survey (ATP Wave 133) were calibrated to align with the population benchmarks in the accompanying table to create a *full-panel weight*.

Among respondents to this wave, the full-panel weight was then used as the basis for separate sets of weights for each of the two sample groups. In each sample group, the weights for respondents who were eligible for inclusion in both groups were multiplied by two to account for the probability that they were assigned to that group.

### American Trends Panel weighting dimensions for full-panel weight

Variable	Benchmark source	
Age (detailed)	2021 American Community Survey (ACS)	
Age x Gender		
Education x Gender		
Education x Age		
Race/Ethnicity x Education		
Black (alone or in combination) x Hispanic		
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans		
Years lived in the U.S.		
Census region x Metro/Non-metro		2021 CPS March Supplement
Volunteerism		2021 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement
Voter registration	2018 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement	
Party affiliation x Race/Ethnicity	2023 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)	
Frequency of internet use		
Religious affiliation		

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on noninstitutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population.

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Next, the weights for respondents in each group were calibrated to align with a set of weighting parameters calculated on the full set of eligible respondents from Wave 133 using the full-panel weight. For both sample groups, these included gender, education, race/ethnicity, years lived in the U.S., census region, metropolitan status, frequency of internet use, religion, party affiliation, voter registration and volunteerism. For the sample group of parents with children ages 18 to 34, the weighting included an additional parameter for age. Finally, both sets of weights were trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey.

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**Sample sizes and margins of error, ATP Wave 137**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Parents of 18-34-year-olds	3,017	2.5 percentage points
Adults ages 18-34 who have living parents	1,495	4.0 percentage points

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Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

## Dispositions and response rates

### Final dispositions, ATP Wave 137

	AAPOR code	Total
Completed interview	1.1	4,512
Logged on to survey; broke off	2.12	8
Logged on to survey; did not complete any items	2.1121	45
Never logged on (implicit refusal)	2.11	227
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	0
Completed interview but was removed for data quality		3
Completed interview but was removed for ineligibility		13
Screened out		310
<b>Total panelists sampled for the survey</b>		<b>5,118</b>
Completed interviews	I	4,512
Partial interviews	P	0
Refusals	R	8
Non-contact	NC	0
Other	O	3
Unknown household	UH	0
Unknown other	UO	272
Not eligible	NE	13
Screen out	SO	310
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,118</b>
Est. eligibility rate among unscreened: $e = (I+R)/(I+R+SO)$		<b>94%</b>
AAPOR RR1 = $I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)$		94%
AAPOR RR3 = $I / (I+R+[e*UO])$		95%

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### Cumulative response rate as of ATP Wave 137

	Total
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	11%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	71%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 137	46%
Response rate to Wave 137 survey	95%
<b>Cumulative response rate</b>	<b>3%</b>

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## How family income tiers are calculated

Family income data reported in this study is adjusted for household size and cost-of-living differences by geography. Panelists then are assigned to income tiers that are based on the median adjusted family income of all American Trends Panel members. The process uses the following steps:

1. First, panelists are assigned to the midpoint of the income range they selected in a family income question that was measured on either the most recent annual profile survey or, for newly recruited panelists, their recruitment survey. This provides an approximate income value that can be used in calculations for the adjustment.
2. Next, these income values are adjusted for the cost of living in the geographic area where the panelist lives. This is calculated using price indexes published by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. These indexes, known as [Regional Price Parities \(RPP\)](#), compare the prices of goods and services across all U.S. metropolitan statistical areas as well as non-metro areas with the national average prices for the same goods and services. The most recent available data at the time of the annual profile survey is from 2021. Those who fall outside of metropolitan statistical areas are assigned the overall RPP for their state's non-metropolitan area.
3. Family incomes are further adjusted for the number of people in a household using the methodology from Pew Research Center's previous work on [the American middle class](#). This is done because a four-person household with an income of say, \$50,000, faces a tighter budget constraint than a two-person household with the same income.
4. Panelists are then assigned an income tier. "Middle-income" adults are in families with adjusted family incomes that are between two-thirds and double the median adjusted family income for the full ATP at the time of the most recent annual profile survey. The median adjusted family income for the panel is roughly \$71,800. Using this median income, the middle-income range is about \$47,900 to \$143,600. Lower-income families have adjusted incomes less than \$47,900 and upper-income families have adjusted incomes greater than \$143,600 (all figures expressed in 2022 dollars and scaled to a household size of three). If a panelist did not provide their income and/or their household size, they are assigned "no answer" in the income tier variable.

Two examples of how a given area's cost-of-living adjustment was calculated are as follows: the Anniston-Oxford metropolitan area in Alabama is a relatively inexpensive area, with a price level that is 16.2% less than the national average. The San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley metropolitan

area in California is one of the most expensive areas, with a price level that is 19.8% higher than the national average. Income in the sample is adjusted to make up for this difference. As a result, a family with an income of \$41,900 in the Anniston-Oxford area is as well off financially as a family of the same size with an income of \$59,900 in San Francisco.

## **Secondary data**

### *Current Population Survey*

Part of the analysis contrasting young adults today and 30 years ago is derived from the [Annual Social and Economic Supplement](#) (ASEC), which is conducted in March of every year as part of the [Current Population Survey](#) (CPS). Administered jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the CPS is a monthly survey of approximately 60,000 occupied households that typically interviews about 50,000 households. It is the source of the nation's official statistics on unemployment and is explicitly designed to survey the labor force. It is representative of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The ASEC survey in March typically features an expanded sample of more than 75,000 households with about 70,000 interviews. The ASEC collected in 2023 had about 57,000 households.

The CPS microdata used in this report is the [Integrated Public Use Microdata Series](#) (IPUMS), provided by the University of Minnesota. The IPUMS assigns uniform codes, to the extent possible, to data collected in the CPS over the years. [Read more about the IPUMS-CPS](#), including variable definition and sampling error.

### *Survey of Consumer Finances*

The [Survey of Consumer Finances](#) (SCF) is a triennial cross-sectional survey of U.S. families and 2022 is the most recent survey year available.

The survey data include information on families' balance sheets, pensions, income, and demographic characteristics. Information is also included from related surveys of pension providers and the earlier such surveys conducted by the Federal Reserve Board. To ensure the representativeness of the study, respondents are selected randomly. A strong attempt is made to select families from all economic strata. Outstanding mortgages and student loans are adjusted for inflation.

The study is sponsored by the Federal Reserve Board in cooperation with the Department of the Treasury.

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