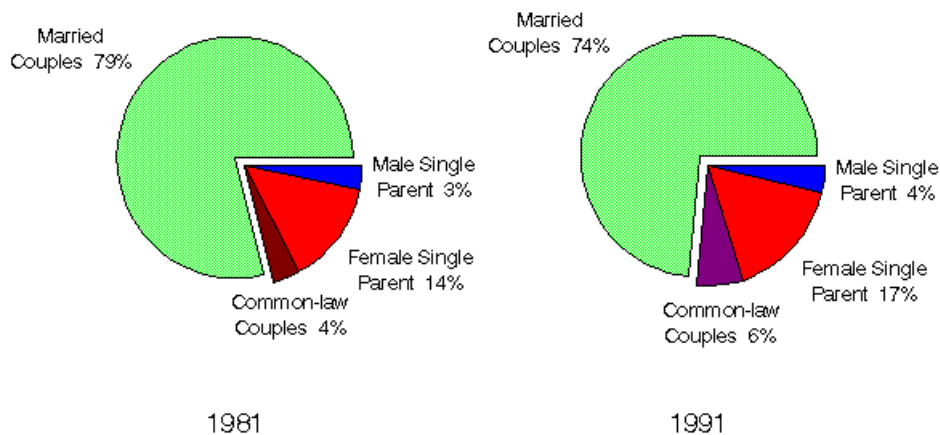


Issue 1: Family Structure

Produced by: Labour and Social Statistics Section

- A growing number of British Columbia's children live in non-traditional families headed by either a single parent or a common-law couple. In 1981, roughly one-fifth of all families in this province fit into one of these categories; by 1991, the proportion had risen to one in four.

In 1991, One in Four Families With Children Were Non-Traditional



Source: 1991 Census of Canada

- Sixty per cent of all families have children living at home.
- The average number of children per family has remained steady at about two since 1981.
- One in every five families with children at home was a lone parent family in 1991, up from one in six in 1981.
- Eighteen per cent of lone parent families are headed by a male, unchanged from ten years earlier.
- Husband-wife families, including common-law couples, make up almost nine-tenths of all families in British Columbia.
- Three out of eight common-law couples have children living at home. However, the statistics do not indicate whether children living in a common-law family are from the current relationship.
- Despite changing social mores, the majority--92 per cent--of couples with children living at home are legally married.

Family Structure in British Columbia

	1981	1986	1991
Husband-Wife Families	648,960	679,235	780,285
Percent of Total Families	89.2	87.5	87.9
With Children at Home	377,440	384,450	422,215
Percent of Total Families with Children	82.7	79.9	79.7
Average Number of Children	2	1.9	1.9
Percent with Children	58.2	56.6	54.1
Now Married Husband-Wife Families	597,930	621,590	694,655
Percent of Total Families	82.2	80.1	78.3
With Children at Home	359,780	363,275	390,455
Percent of Total Families with Children	78.9	75.5	73.7
Average Number of Children	2	1.9	1.9
Percent with Children	60.2	58.4	56.2
*Common-law Husband-Wife Families	51,030	57,645	85,630
Percent of Total Families	7	7.4	9.6
With Children at Home	17,655	21,170	31,760
Percent of Total Families with Children	3.9	4.4	6
Average Number of Children	1.8	1.7	1.7
Percent with Children	34.6	36.7	37.1
Single Parent Families	78,715	96,645	107,375
Percent of Total Families	10.8	12.5	12.1
Percent of Total Families with Children	17.3	20.1	20.3
Average Number of Children	1.7	1.6	1.6
Female Single Parents	64,565	79,145	88,245
Percent of Total Families	8.9	10.2	9.9
Percent of Total Families with Children	14.2	16.5	16.7
Average Number of Children	1.7	1.6	1.6
Male Single Parents	14,155	17,500	19,130
Percent of Total Families	1.9	2.3	2.2
Percent of Total Families with Children	3.1	3.6	3.6
Average Number of Children	1.6	1.5	1.5
Total Families	727,680	775,880	887,660
With Children at Home	456,155	481,095	529,590
Percent with Children	62.7	62	59.7
Average Number of Children	1.9	1.9	1.9

* Note: The 1991 data on common-law is not strictly comparable to previous years. In 1981 and 1986, the common-law numbers were derived, while in 1991, common-law status was asked directly.

Source: 1991 Census of Canada

Produced by **BC Stats**