



A Portrait of Latino Fathers: Strengths and Challenges

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Why research on low-income Hispanic children and families matters

Hispanic or Latino children currently make up roughly 1 in 4 of all children in the United States,^a and by 2050 are projected to make up 1 in 3, similar to the number of white children.^b Given this increase, how Hispanic children fare will have a profound impact on the social and economic well-being of the country as a whole. Notably, though, 5.7 million Hispanic children, or one third of all Hispanic children in the United States, are in poverty, more than in any other racial/ethnic group.^c Nearly two thirds of Hispanic children live in low-income families, defined as having incomes of less than two times the federal poverty level.^d Despite their high levels of economic need, Hispanics, particularly those in immigrant families, have lower rates of participation in many government support programs when compared with other racial/ethnic minority groups.^{e-g} High-quality, research-based information on the characteristics, experiences, and diversity of Hispanic children and families is needed to inform programs and policies supporting the sizable population of low-income Hispanic families and children.

^a Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2015). *America's children: Key national indicators of well-being, 2015*, Table POP3. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Retrieved from <http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables.asp>

^b Ibid.

^c DeNavas-Walt, C., & Proctor, B.D. (2015). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014*, Table B-2, Current Population Reports, P60-252. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf#TableB-2>

^d Lopez, M. H., & Velasco, G. (2011). Childhood poverty among Hispanics sets record, leads nation. Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Hispanic Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2011/09/28/childhood-poverty-among-hispanics-sets-record-leads-nation/>

^e Williams, S. (2013). Public assistance participation among U.S. children in poverty, 2010. Bowling Green, Ohio: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. Retrieved from <http://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/college-of-arts-and-sciences/NCFMR/documents/FP/FP-13-02.pdf>

^f Lichter, D., Sanders, S., & Johnson, K. (2015). *Behind at the starting line: Poverty among Hispanic infants*. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire, Carsey School of Public Policy. Retrieved from <http://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1250&context=carsey>

^g Child Trends Databank. (2014). Health care coverage. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=health-care-coverage>

Overview

Fathers play an important role in their children's lives.¹ However, the extent to which fathers are positively engaged in their children's lives is partly determined by whether they live with their children, their relationship status with their child's other parent, their employment, economic, and education status, and other family structure and socio-demographic factors.²⁻⁴ For example, fathers with more education are more likely to live with their children and have higher levels of engagement with them.⁵

How these factors vary by race/ethnicity is not well understood.⁶⁻⁸ Our understanding of U.S. Latino^a fathers is lacking, and especially important given the rapid growth of the Latino population. A small but growing body of research suggests the presence of distinct fatherhood and fathering experiences among Latino families. Describing who Hispanic fathers are is a first step to understanding their role in their families and in shaping their children's development.

In this brief, we contribute to this body of research by analyzing nationally representative data about Latino fathers. Using data from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), we examine a sample of Latino fathers ages 18 to 44^b with biological children ages zero to 18 years old. Given previous research that has shown that the family experiences of Hispanic children differ in many respects by whether their parents are immigrants or U.S.-born,⁹ we examine differences among immigrant and non-immigrant (i.e., U.S.-born) Latino fathers. By focusing on these differences rather than how Latino fathers compare to other ethnic groups, we aim to gain a better understanding of who Latino fathers are and the diversity among them. We present key socio-demographic information, such as fathers' educational attainment and residential, marital, and employment status, because these characteristics have been linked to father engagement and child well-being in previous studies.^{10,11}

^a Throughout this brief, we use the terms *Hispanic* and *Latino* interchangeably.

^b Because the NSFG focuses on describing the childbearing and family formation patterns of adults, its sample is limited to adults in their childbearing years.

Key findings

Our research on Latino fathers suggests they have strengths, but also face challenges likely linked to their own and their children's well-being. The majority of Hispanic fathers live with all their children and their romantic partner. Few have fathered children with more than one woman, and most are employed—characteristics that are associated with positive child and adult well-being. On the other hand, most Latino fathers are low-income and few have obtained more than a high school education—characteristics associated with poorer child outcomes and limited economic mobility. We also found divergent patterns of opportunity and risk (e.g., educational attainment, interactions with the criminal justice system) by immigration status, highlighting important variability among Latinos that researchers, practitioners, and policymakers should be aware of to better understand and serve Latino populations in the United States.

The majority of Latino fathers are immigrants. The immigrant experience is a key distinguishing feature of Latino fathers, with several stark differences found in the life experiences of Latino fathers who are immigrants versus those who were born in the United States.

- Most Hispanic fathers (64 percent) are immigrants, and half are Spanish-dominant speakers.^c
- Immigrant Hispanic fathers have lower rates of multiple-partner fertility and teen fatherhood, and fewer have ever been in prison, jail, or juvenile detention than their U.S.-born counterparts.
- Despite these differences, immigrant and U.S.-born Latino fathers share several important features. Hispanic fathers across groups tend to live with all of their kids and tend to be employed, for example.

Most Hispanic fathers possess many characteristics that research suggests may promote child well-being.

- Roughly three quarters (73 percent) of Hispanic fathers live with all of their children.
- Most (82 percent) Hispanic fathers are currently married or cohabiting.
- And, most (85 percent) Hispanic fathers have children with only one partner.

Most Hispanic fathers are employed, but have low levels of formal education, with few having received more than a high school education.

- The vast majority of Hispanic fathers—89 percent—worked full-time or part-time in the last week, and 71 percent worked all 12 months of the last year.

- Roughly three quarters of Hispanic fathers have a high school education or less.

The majority of Hispanic fathers have low income.

- Sixty-three percent of Latino fathers have low income, defined as a household income at or below twice the federal poverty line (an annual income of \$42,400 for a family of four in 2008^d).
- With a few exceptions, we found no differences in the characteristics of Latino fathers by income group, perhaps in part because the majority of Latino fathers are low-income.^e Among the characteristics that did vary by income group were education and employment in the last week—all variables that are highly correlated with income.

Data source and methodology

The data for this brief come from the 2006 to 2010 wave of the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). This wave of the NSFG is sampled and weighted to be nationally representative of men ages 15 to 44 living in households in the United States at the midpoint of data collection (in 2008) ($n = 10,403$). The NSFG samples adults of childbearing age; thus, it provides national estimates of characteristics of resident and non-resident fathers. The study gathers information on family life, including marriage and divorce, and reproductive health, including pregnancy, births, contraceptive use, and infertility. Our analytical sample is limited to Hispanic men between the ages of 18-44 with at least one living biological child 18 years old or younger ($n = 1,102$).

We present data on the characteristics of all Hispanic fathers, as well as subgroup analyses comparing characteristics of U.S.-born ($n = 408$) to immigrant ($n = 694$) Hispanic fathers. We report on: nativity status, years in the United States, age at entry into fatherhood, number of children, resident versus non-resident fatherhood status, marital and residential relationship status, multiple-partner fertility, Spanish-language dominance, educational attainment, incarceration history (i.e., ever been in jail, prison or juvenile detention), low-income status, and labor force participation. These variables represent important characteristics linked both to fathers' involvement with children and to children's developmental outcomes and well-being.¹²⁻¹⁵ The findings for all Hispanic fathers are presented in Table 1, and the findings by nativity status are presented in Table 2. All analyses were conducted in Stata and were weighted to be nationally representative of U.S. Latino fathers. We conducted tests of difference between immigrant groups (U.S.-born versus immigrant fathers); significant group differences are noted in the figures and appendix.

^c We consider fathers who chose Spanish for the audio portion of the National Survey for Family Growth to be Spanish-language dominant.

^d Hispanic fathers in the sample are representative of Hispanic fathers with biological children in the United States in the year 2008.

^e Analyses available upon request.

Definitions

Fathers' **nativity status** was determined based on a self-reported question, "were you born outside of the United States?" Fathers who answered yes were coded as being foreign-born or an immigrant.

Fathers' **age at entry into fatherhood** and whether they were a **teen father** (became a father under age 20) is based on their reports of how old they were when their first child was born.

Fathers' **number of biological children** is based on self-reports of the number of biological children they have with current and past female partner(s), including marital and non-marital partners. Fathers also reported on the age of each of their biological children at the time of the interview (categorized in the interview as less than 5 years old, 5 to 18 years old, or 19 years old or older) and whether they currently lived with each child. Using these reports, we combined all reported biological children who were aged 18 or younger to estimate how many living children fathers have under age 19.

Using reports of living arrangements, we also categorized each father as a **resident father** if he lived with all his biological children, **non-residential** if he did not live with any of his biological children, and **mixed status** if he lived with at least one but not all of his biological children. We also used reports on biological children with current and former partners to determine fathers' **multiple-partner fertility**, which is defined as having at least two children with different mothers.

Fathers reported on whether they were currently married, not married but living with a partner of the opposite sex,^a widowed, divorced, separated, or never married. Using these categories, we define fathers' **marital and residential relationship status** as married, cohabiting, never married, or other.^b

The NSFG does not have a question or set of questions that assess language proficiency, so we used the only indicator of language preference available—whether fathers chose to hear the audio portion of the interview in Spanish or English. As such, we do not

have a direct indicator of fathers' English fluency. That is, fathers may be fluent in English and simply prefer Spanish. We consider fathers who chose Spanish for the audio portion of the survey to be **Spanish-language dominant**.

Fathers reported on the number of years of education they completed, and the NSFG constructed a variable to indicate fathers' **educational attainment**, incorporating years of education with degrees obtained (e.g., high school degree). We categorized fathers' education attainment as less than a high school degree, a high school degree or GED, and post-secondary education.

Incarceration history indicates whether the father has ever spent time in prison, jail or in juvenile detention. The location was not specified, so fathers' answers could include incarceration at any point in their lives and in any country.

We include several indicators of **labor force participation**. Fathers reported on their labor force participation in the last week across several items, and the NSFG categorizes them as full-time employed (working 35 hours or more per week), part-time employed (working fewer than 35 hours per week), looking for work, or out of the labor market (e.g., in school, keeping house). We also provide indicators of the stability of fathers' labor force participation: whether fathers reported that they worked all 12 months of the last year, and whether they worked 3 or fewer months of the last year. Last, we include fathers' reports of how many jobs they worked in the last week (or in the last week they worked if they were currently unemployed).

Fathers' income status was categorized as **low-income** if they lived in households with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty line, defined as income below \$42,400 for a family of four in 2008—what many experts agree is the minimum needed for a family to make ends meet.^c We examined but do not report on differences in fathers' characteristics by income status (low-income fathers versus their non-low income peers), because there were few significant differences between income groups. That analysis is available upon request.

^a The NSFG did not ask whether men lived with a partner of the same sex.

^b These categories are mutually exclusive (i.e., respondents selected one category that best described their status). It is possible, however, that fathers could be legally married, but separated and living with a new partner; such cases would not be detected through the marital status question.

^c Dinan, K. A. (2009). *Budgeting for basic needs: A struggle for working families*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty.

Findings

Because the immigrant experience is so common among Latino fathers, and because our data suggest that in order to understand other characteristics of Latino fathers, it is important to know whether they are immigrants, we begin our description of Latino fathers with a look at their nativity status.

The immigrant experience is common among Latino fathers. The vast majority—64 percent—of Hispanic fathers are immigrants. Latino immigrant fathers have lived in the United States for nearly 14 years, on average, and half of all Hispanic fathers are Spanish-language dominant (50 percent).

64 percent of Latino fathers are immigrants.

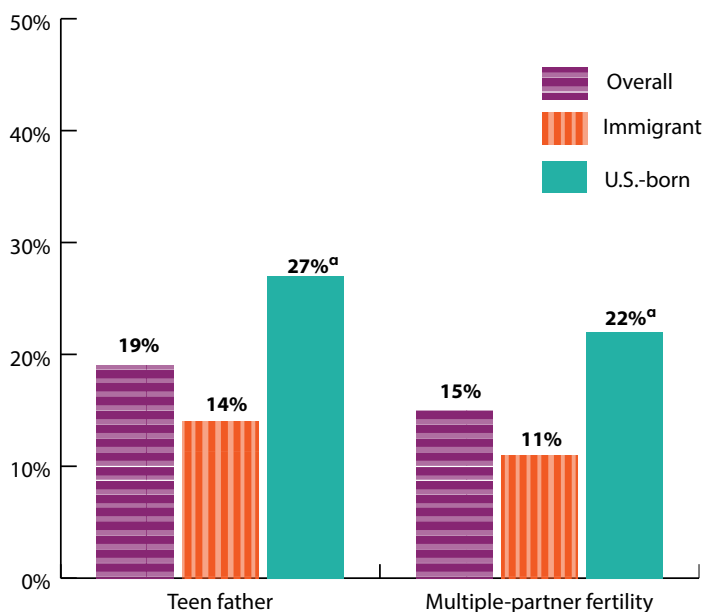
The average Hispanic father has 2.3 children and is nearly 24 years old when their first child is born (see Table 1). Immigrant

Hispanic fathers have slightly more children (2.4) than their U.S.-born counterparts (2.0; see Table 2). However, the average age at entry into fatherhood is roughly the same for immigrant (23.8) and U.S.-born Hispanic fathers (23.7 years old).

Latino fathers have an average of 2.3 kids.

Roughly 1 in 5 Hispanic fathers (19 percent) had a child as a teen. U.S.-born Hispanic fathers are almost twice as likely to have become a parent during their teen years (27 percent) as their immigrant counterparts (14 percent; Figure 1).

Figure 1. Teen fatherhood and multiple-partner fertility are more common among U.S.-born Latino fathers than their immigrant peers.



Hispanic fathers who were teen parents or had a child with more than one woman (have multiple-partner fertility), by nativity status, 2006-2010

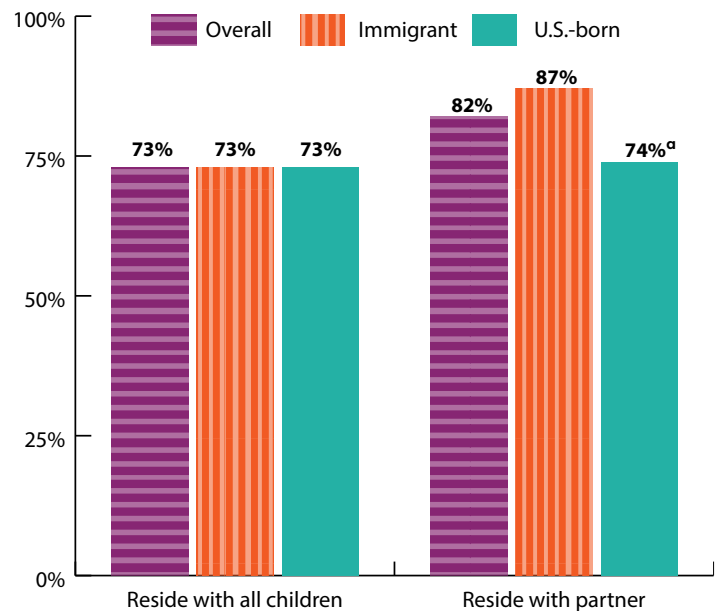
Source: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2006-2010

^a Indicates significant differences between immigrant and non-immigrant Hispanic fathers at the p=.01 level

The vast majority of Hispanic fathers live with all of their biological children and their partner. Overall, 73 percent of Hispanic fathers live with all their children (see Figure 2). Roughly 1 in 4 (24 percent) do not live with any of their children, and 3 percent live with some but not all of their children (see Table 1).

Fathers' residential status with their children differs by nativity status. Roughly equal proportions of immigrant and U.S.-born Hispanic fathers live with all of their children (73 percent of both immigrant and U.S.-born Latino fathers), or with none of their children (23 percent of immigrant fathers and 27 percent of U.S.-born fathers). However, immigrant Hispanic fathers were more likely (4 percent) to have a mix of resident and non-resident children than their U.S.-born peers (0.5 percent).^f

Figure 2. Most Hispanic fathers live with their children and partner.



Hispanic fathers' residential status with their children and partner by nativity status, 2006-2010

Source: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2006-2010

Note: "Reside with partner" includes fathers who are cohabiting or married.

^a Indicates significant differences between immigrant and non-immigrant Hispanic fathers at the p=.001 level

Among all Hispanic fathers, 58 percent are married and 24 percent are cohabiting; in total, over 80 percent of Hispanic fathers live with their partner (see Figure 2). Hispanic immigrant fathers were more likely to be married than their non-immigrant counterparts (see Table 2).

^f It is possible that immigrant Latino fathers are more likely to have a mix of resident and non-resident children in part because they had children in another country before coming to the United States, who did not emigrate with them. However, the NSFG does not provide sufficient data to examine this.

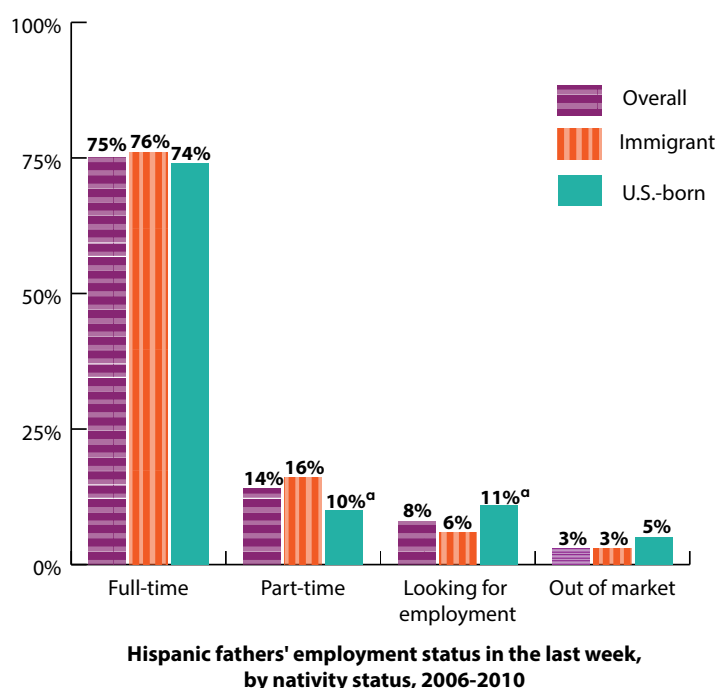
Few Hispanic fathers have children with more than one woman.

Fifteen percent of Latino fathers have children with more than one woman (see Table 1). U.S.-born Latino fathers were almost twice as likely to have children with more than one woman as their immigrant counterparts (22 percent vs. 11 percent; see Figure 1).

Latino fathers have strong engagement in the labor market.

Nearly all Hispanic fathers reported having worked (either part-time or full-time) in the last week (89 percent). Fathers' labor force participation in the last week differed by nativity status, with more immigrant Latino fathers having worked part-time in the last week (16 percent) than their U.S.-born peers (10 percent). Moreover, nearly twice as many U.S.-born Hispanic fathers were looking for work in the last week (11 percent) compared to their immigrant peers (6 percent; see Figure 3). Hispanic fathers worked, on average, one job in the last week (see Table 1); this did not differ across immigrant groups. Looking at Hispanic fathers' employment over the last year, most Hispanic fathers worked all 12 months of the last year (71 percent), with few (11 percent) working 3 months or fewer in the last year, suggesting stability in their employment (see Table 1).

Figure 3. Nearly all Hispanic fathers were employed in the past week.



Source: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2006-2010

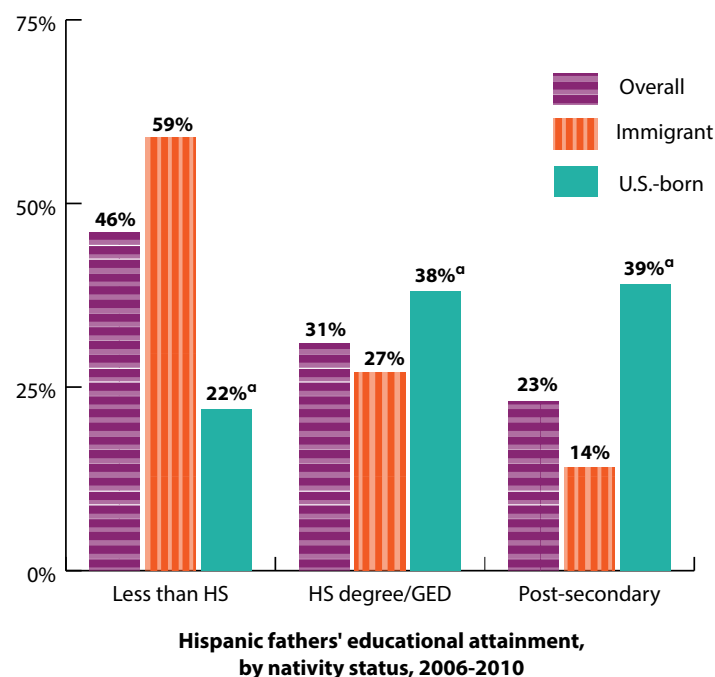
Note. The past week refers to the week preceding data collection

^a Indicates significant differences between immigrant and non-immigrant Hispanic fathers at the p=.10 level

Close to half of Hispanic fathers do not have a high school degree.

Forty-six percent of Hispanic fathers have completed less than a high school education, but educational attainment differs by immigrant status. More immigrant fathers have not completed a high school education (59 percent) than their U.S.-born peers (22 percent; see Figure 4). Fewer immigrant Hispanic fathers have earned a high school degree (27 percent) or completed some post-secondary education (14 percent) than their U.S.-born peers (38 and 39 percent, respectively).

Figure 4. Hispanic fathers—immigrants, in particular—have low levels of education.



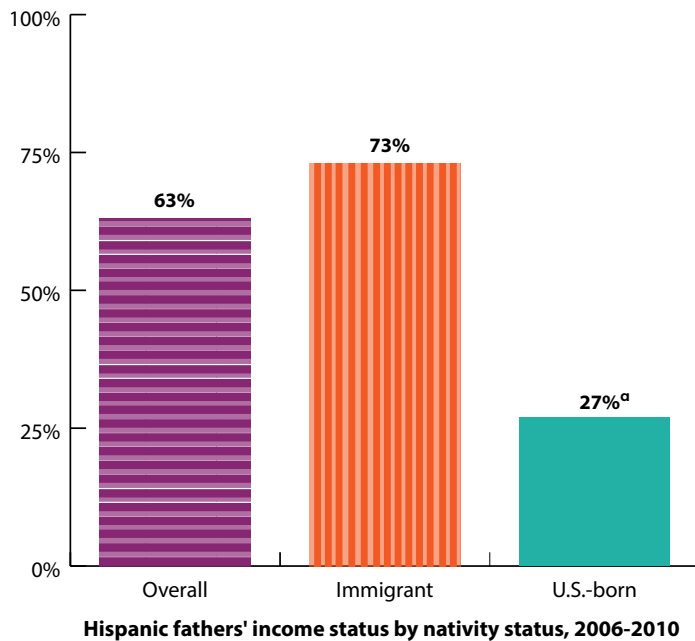
Source: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2006-2010

^a Indicates significant differences between immigrant and non-immigrant Hispanic fathers at the p=.05 level or below



Nearly two thirds (63 percent) of Hispanic fathers are low-income (live in households with income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty line). There are stark nativity differences in low-income status; nearly three fourths (73 percent) of immigrant Hispanic fathers are low-income, compared with roughly a quarter (27 percent) of U.S.-born Hispanic fathers (see Figure 5).

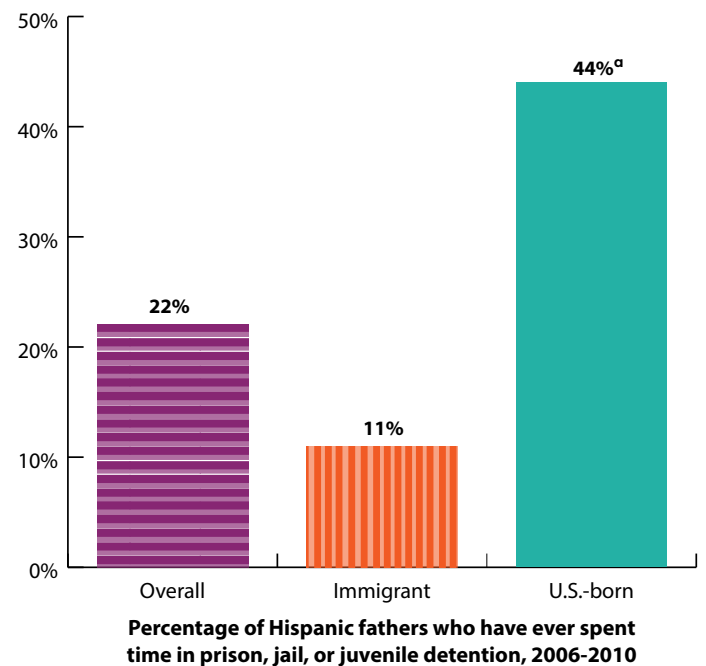
Figure 5. Two thirds of Hispanic fathers are in low-income households, and there are large differences in low-income status by nativity status.



Source: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2006-2010
^a Indicates significant differences between immigrant and non-immigrant Hispanic fathers at the p=.001 level

Less than a quarter (22 percent) of Hispanic fathers have ever been in prison, jail, or in juvenile detention. However, we see large differences by nativity status, with 4 times fewer immigrant Hispanic fathers (11 percent) having ever been incarcerated, jailed, or in juvenile detention compared to their U.S.-born peers (44 percent; see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Fewer than 1 in 4 Latino fathers have ever been in prison, jail, or juvenile detention, with immigrant Latino fathers having substantially lower rates than their U.S.-born counterparts.



Source: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2006-2010
^a Indicates significant differences between immigrant and non-immigrant Hispanic fathers at the p=.001 level



Discussion and implications

Our findings indicate that Hispanic fathers possess many characteristics that are associated with higher levels of father involvement and child well-being.^{10,11,15} Specifically, we found that Latino fathers have high levels of co-residence with their children, high levels of marriage and cohabitation with their female partners, and relatively low levels of multiple-partner fertility. And, although these patterns were found for both immigrant and U.S.-born Hispanic fathers, they are especially pronounced for immigrant fathers.

High and stable (i.e., employed 12 months in the previous year) levels of labor force participation among Latino fathers are additional strengths found in this national sample. Such high levels may provide economic security in terms of being able to predict timing and source of income, and may enable stability in family routines and schedules.¹⁶ However, fathers' labor force participation may come at the expense of their involvement with children. A report using the NSFG 2006-2010 (same data source used in this brief), for example, found that resident Latino fathers were significantly less likely than their resident black or white counterparts to engage in *daily* caretaking (e.g., eating meals with their infant; bathing, dressing, diapering their infant, or helping their child use the toilet) or cognitive activities (e.g., reading, helping the child with homework).⁵ Fathers' involvement in these caretaking and cognitive activities is linked with children's positive social and academic development.¹⁷⁻¹⁹ Thus, what shapes the quality and frequency of father-child engagement is important to understand. One reason Latino fathers may be less engaged in daily activities with their children may be that low-income Latino fathers work more hours, on average, than their white and black counterparts,²⁰ limiting their access to their children during key times of the day, like during meals. Alternatively, Latino low-income families, in particular immigrant families, may adhere to gender roles that emphasize the role of economic provider among men and caregiver among women.²¹ Future research is needed to better understand this dynamic in Latino households.

Future work should also continue to explore the features of Latino fathers' employment and how it shapes family life, including couple and father-child interactions. Our work indicates high and stable participation in the labor market among Latino fathers. Not only are Latino fathers likely to be employed, there are likely to have been working every month in the past year. Future work should explore how Latino fathers secure their families' economic stability—for example, through longer work hours, multiple jobs, stable employment, or other strategies. Notably, across both income groups and nativity status, the "average" Hispanic father does not appear to be working multiple jobs. Prior studies with small samples of largely low-income and undocumented Latinos have reported that mothers and fathers often work multiple jobs to make ends meet.²²

Latino fathers' high level of labor force participation is often coupled with a low level of education and high level of poverty, among immigrant Hispanic fathers in particular. This may present



significant obstacles to families' ability to move from and stay out of poverty, to individuals' future earnings, and for intergenerational poverty.²³ A vast body of research indicates that poverty is linked to poorer child outcomes. For example, it is associated with levels and quality of parental involvement, including less parental time and harsher interactions with children;²⁴ less access to high-quality schools;²⁵ fewer resources for cognitive growth (e.g., books and games); and dangerous neighborhood environments.²⁶ Improving Latino fathers' educational attainment and opportunities for mobility, through vocational training and apprenticeships, for example, may be a fruitful way of enhancing prospects for fathers and their children.^{17,27}

Notably, we found important differences in the characteristics and experiences of immigrant and non-immigrant Latino fathers. Roughly two thirds of all Latino fathers are immigrants. The family experiences of Latino immigrant fathers and their U.S.-born counterparts diverge to such a degree that in order to understand Latino fathers, it is important to know their nativity status. Specifically, U.S.-born Latino fathers are more likely to have fathered a child during their teen years and to have fathered children with multiple mothers than are their immigrant counterparts. However, fewer U.S.-born Latino fathers dropped out of high school or had low income, compared to their immigrant counterparts. Programs serving Hispanic fathers and families should consider these different experiences as they identify and implement strategies for recruiting, reaching, and engaging immigrant and non-immigrant Latino fathers. The fact that half of the fathers in the sample were Spanish-language dominant points, at a minimum, to the need for bilingual services. However, programs would benefit from further adaptations to provide tailored services for immigrant populations beyond offering their programs in Spanish.²⁸ For example, they may choose to focus on economic mobility and educational opportunities for immigrant participants.

When we look at Latino fathers overall, their incarceration histories are similar to those of their white peers, and lower than their black peers (analyses available upon request).⁹ However, a new and important story emerges when we look at nativity status differences. Immigrant Hispanic fathers are less likely than white, black and U.S.-born Latino fathers to have ever been incarcerated, jailed, or in juvenile detention. This finding is consistent with previous research, which has consistently found lower rates of crime and involvement in the criminal justice system among immigrants.^{29,30} In contrast, U.S.-born Latino fathers are as likely to have ever been incarcerated as their black peers (analyses available upon request), a group with consistently higher levels of incarceration than white men.^{31,32}

Research on racial differences in incarceration suggests a strong bias against black men in the justice system that accounts, in part, for their higher rates of incarceration compared with white men.³³ Our results may point to a similar bias against Latino men, particularly those born in the United States. We should be attuned to this potential bias against Latino men in our justice system, work to understand the reasons for Latino men's incarceration, and develop programs that focus on reentry of these men to help mitigate the stress and negative outcomes associated with incarceration.

There are other factors that may contribute to our findings. It is also possible that the patterns we observed here reflect sample bias due to the exclusion of immigrant fathers who have been deported for having committed crimes.^h Alternatively, immigrant fathers who are undocumented may be less likely to engage in behaviors that could lead to incarceration, because they fear deportation. It is also possible that through immigrant selection, immigrant Latino fathers—irrespective of their documentation status—are less prone to criminal activity.

The patterns of comparable rates of incarceration among U.S.-born Latino and black fathers that we find may also be due to underrepresentation of black men and fathers with prior criminal justice involvement in the NSFG due to higher rates of incarceration, longer prison sentences, and lower rates of reporting of fatherhood among blacks.³⁵⁻³⁷ The relatively high rates of incarceration among U.S.-born Latino fathers may also be due, in part, to fathers being overrepresented among U.S.-born Hispanic men with incarceration histories—meaning a higher proportion of Hispanic men who have incarceration histories either are or become fathers, compared with the proportion of other men with incarceration histories. Previous research has found that Latino fathers' incarceration histories are not related to Latino mothers' trust of them, whereas for white fathers previous incarceration is.³⁸

It is possible, therefore, that having a history of incarceration is less of a barrier to fatherhood for U.S.-born Hispanic men.ⁱ

Our findings, if replicated, speak to the importance of considering nativity when examining the life experiences of Latinos. Our analysis (not shown) demonstrates that simply comparing the experiences of Latino men as whole to their white and black counterparts may mask large and important differences. Our findings add to the story of a criminal justice system that impacts communities of color disproportionately.^{33,36} Given that the majority of Latino fathers are immigrants, this may also be an opportune time to build on the strengths that appear to be protective against involvement in the criminal justice system among immigrant groups.

Finally, it is important to note that many of the differences in Hispanic fathers' characteristics appear to be attributable to nativity status and not income status. In fact, we found no notable differences in the characteristics and experiences of Latino fathers by income. Future work should explore what is driving the differences by nativity status that we document in this brief. Among the possibilities warranting more study are education, linguistic isolation, and other forms of social capital. An equally important message from this brief is that there are similarities among Hispanic fathers across income and nativity status. For example, Hispanic fathers across groups tend to live with all of their kids and tend to be employed. Being aware of the strengths that all Hispanic fathers may bring to their families is important for practitioners and researchers to know as they explore areas for intervention among Hispanic Americans and target services to Hispanic families.



⁹ We found a similar pattern among all men, with the percent who have ever been incarcerated, jailed, or in juvenile detention among Latino men falling in between that of their white and black peers (analysis available upon request). We also examined whether higher rates of juvenile detention were resulting in the similar rates observed between U.S.-born Latinos and blacks by looking at rates of incarceration, jail, and juvenile detention among those aged 15 to 18 and 15 to 25. We found that rates of involvement in the criminal justice system were low for both black and U.S.-born Hispanic men of these age groups and that the rates among U.S.-born Hispanic men were comparable to those of black men.

^h The vast majority of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) interior deportations (which excludes people apprehended at the border) between 2008 and 2015 were of people convicted of a crime in the United States (91 percent).³⁴

ⁱ Additional analyses reveal much lower lifetime rates of incarceration for U.S.-born Hispanic *men* compared to U.S.-born Hispanic *fathers*, suggesting that most of the Latino men with incarceration histories are fathers (analyses available upon request).

Appendix

Table 1. Characteristics of Hispanic fathers (with children 18 years old and younger) in the United States, 2006-2010

	Full analytic sample	
	%	M (SE) ⁱ
Age at entry into fatherhood		23.80 (.28)
Teenage fatherhood	18.7	
Number of children		2.25 (.05)
Residential status with children		
Resident	73.1	
Non-resident	24.2	
Mixed	2.7	
Marital status		
Married	58.0	
Cohabiting	24.0	
Never married	10.6	
Other	7.4	
Multiple partner fertility	15.1	
Immigrant	63.6	
Years in U.S.		13.78 (.60)
Spanish dominant	50.3	
Labor force participation in last week		
Full time	75.1	
Part time	13.8	
Looking for work	7.7	
Out of the labor market	3.4	
Worked every month of the last year	70.6	
Worked 3 months or fewer of the last year	10.6	
Number of jobs		1.10 (.01)
Level of education		
Less than HS	45.8	
HS degree/GED	30.9	
Post-secondary	23.3	
Low-income status¹	63.2	
Incarceration history	22.4	
N		1,102
ⁱ Linearized standard error		
¹ Living at or below 200% of the federal poverty line		
Source: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2006-2010		

Table 2. Characteristics of U.S. Hispanic fathers (with children 18 years old and younger), by nativity status, 2006-2010

	U.S.-born		Immigrant	
	%	M (SE) ⁱ	%	M (SE) ⁱ
Age at entry into fatherhood		23.74 (0.51)		23.83 (0.28)
Teenage fatherhood**	26.6		14.2	
Number of children**		2.04 (0.09)		2.38 (0.06)
Residential status				
Resident	72.5		73.4	
Non-resident	27.1		22.5	
Mixed ***	.5		4.0	
Marital status				
Married *	52.3		61.2	
Cohabiting	21.2		25.6	
Never married *	14.7		8.3	
Other **	11.8		4.8	
Multiple partner fertility**	21.5		11.4	
Spanish dominant***	2.1		78.0	
Labor force participation in last week				
Full time	73.7		75.8	
Part time †	10.3		15.9	
Looking for work †	11.1		5.8	
Out of the labor market	4.9		2.6	
Worked every month of the last year	67.6		72.3	
Worked 3 months or fewer of the last year†	14.5		8.3	
Number of jobs		1.12 (0.03)		1.13 (0.04)
Level of education				
Less than HS ***	22.4		59.2	
HS degree/GED *	38.4		26.6	
Post-secondary ***	39.2		14.2	
Low-income status***	27.3		72.7	
Incarceration history***	43.7		11.1	
N	408		694	
†p<0.1, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001				
ⁱ Linearized standard error				
Source: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2006-2010				

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About the Center

The National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families is a hub of research to help programs and policy better serve low-income Hispanics across three priority areas—poverty reduction and economic self-sufficiency, healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood, and early care and education. The Center was established in 2013 by a five-year cooperative agreement from the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to Child Trends in partnership with Abt Associates and New York University, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and University of Maryland, College Park. This publication was made possible by Grant Number 90PH0025 from OPRE. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of OPRE, ACF, or HHS.

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