

Moravian Women's Association - Home & Overseas Paper - December/January 2018

Families Today

Christmas is a time when Christians think about the Holy Family, and when many families happily travel long distances, to get together and share a meal and exchange presents. Family means a lot to us.

What do we really know about families in the UK today?

This paper uses material from the Mothers' Union. The Families Today Quiz can be used as a quiz, or just to enable us to discover – and reflect on - some current statistics about family life in the UK.

Activity



Use the multiple choice quiz sheet for members to discover how much they know about family life in the UK.

There is an Information Sheet which gives the correct answers as well as some brief related information.

The answers to the quiz questions may provoke some discussion. You might also like to consider:

- Which of these statistics surprised you the most – and why?
- What makes you fearful for family life in the future?
- What makes you hopeful for family life in the future?

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Quiz Sheet

- 1 In 2017, most dependent children in the UK lived in a family headed by:
 - a. a married couple
 - b. a cohabiting couple
 - c. a lone parent

- 2 What is the fastest growing family type in the UK?
 - a. married couple families
 - b. cohabiting couple families
 - c. lone parent families

- 3 What percentage of families in the UK have 3 or more children?
 - a. 9%
 - b. 12%
 - c. 15%

- 4 In the UK in 2017, the percentage of lone parents with only one child was:
 - a. 13%
 - b. 33%
 - c. 54%

- 5 The average age of first time mother in England and Wales in 2016 was:
 - a. 24.3 years
 - b. 26.7 years
 - c. 28.9 years

- 6 The number of children born to mothers under the age of 20 in England and Wales in 2016 was:
 - a. 22,465
 - b. 44,189
 - c. 57,406

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Background Information

(All information taken from the UK Office for National Statistics, primarily: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages>)

1. In 2017, most dependent children in the UK lived in a family headed by a married couple (a)

A dependent child is a child under 16, or aged 16 – 18 in full time education.

In 2017:

- 62% of dependent children lived in a family headed by a married couple
- 16% lived in a family headed by a cohabiting couple
- 22% lived in a lone parent family.

2. The fastest growing family type in the UK is headed by a cohabiting couple (b)

In 1996, there were 1.5 million cohabiting couple families in the UK. By 2017, this had grown to 3.3 million.

These figures include cohabiting couple families with and without dependent children.

3. The percentage of families in the UK with three or more children is 15% (c)

In 2017:

- 45% of families had one dependent child
- 40% of families had two dependent children
- 15% of families had three or more dependent children.

4. The percentage of lone parents in the UK with only one child is 54% (c)

In 2017:

- 54% of lone parents had one child
- 33% of lone parents had two children
- 13% of lone parents had three or more children.

Lone parents includes those who are widowed and those who choose to sole parent, as well as families where parents have separated or divorced.

5. The average age of a first time mother in 2016 was 28.9 years (c)

In 1976, the average age for a first time mother was 24.3 years and in 1996, it was 26.7. Delaying motherhood may be due to a number of factors, such as the increased participation of women in higher education and the labour force as well as the rising costs of child rearing.

6. The number of children born to mothers under the age of 20 in England & Wales in 2017 was 22,465 (a)

There were 57,406 births to mothers under 20 in 1986; falling to 44,189 in 2001 to 29,136.