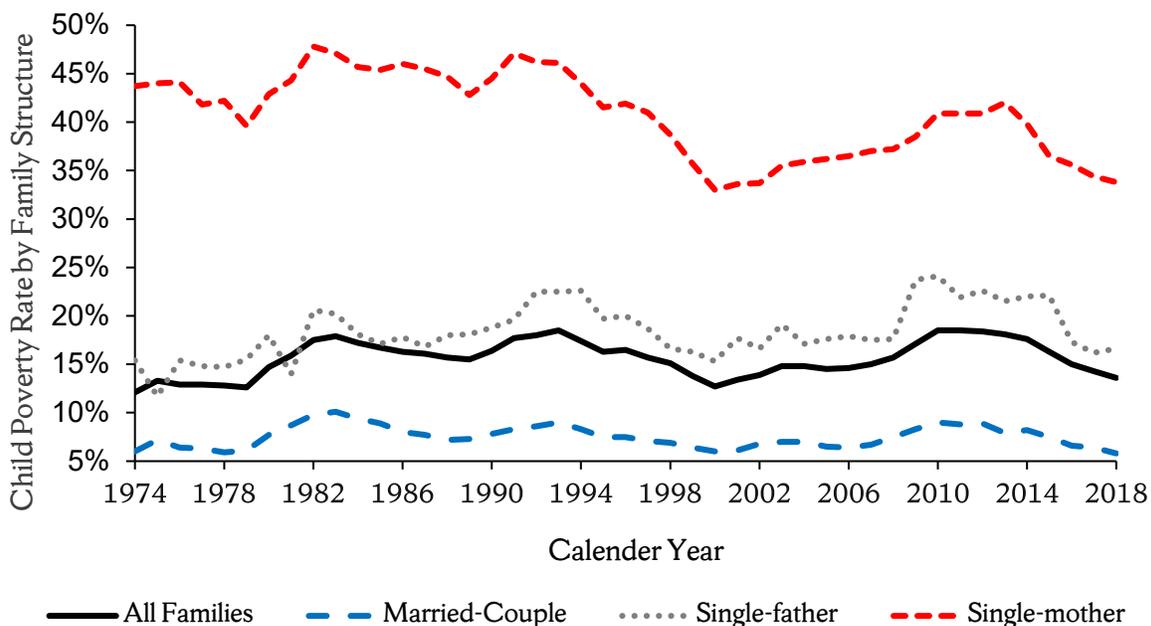


## Child Poverty Has Been Declining in Single-Mother Families, but the Gap Remains Large

Xiaoyan Zhang

It is well known that family environments impact children’s health. Family structure (whether a child lives in a married vs. single-parent family) is a strong predictor of child poverty, and child poverty is associated with poor health. The figure below illustrates child poverty trends for children living in different types of family structures from 1974 to 2018. Over the entire period, child poverty rates have consistently been highest for children living in single-mother families, while rates have been lowest for children living in married-couple families. Whereas child poverty rates in single-mother families were over 35% for most of the period, rates have consistently been under 25% for children in single-father families and consistently under 10% for children in married-couple families. Poverty rates among children in single-mother families were highest in the early 1980s and 1990s. Poverty rates in this group declined throughout the 1990s, rose throughout the 2000s and early 2010s, but have been in decline since 2014. Despite this recent decline, the continued high rate of poverty among children in single-mother families points to the urgent need for more investment in policies and programs to assist these families, including the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP).



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau. CPS Table Creator (online tool), available at: <https://www.census.gov/cps/data/cpstablecreator.html>.

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