

Differences in Living Arrangements across the Life Course and Rural and Urban Areas



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Research Questions

1. How have the living arrangements of U.S. children and adults changed over time across rural and urban areas?
2. Are rural children and adults currently more likely to live in socioeconomically disadvantaged living arrangements?
3. How do rural-urban differences change when further disaggregating by race and ethnicity?

Data and Measures

I utilize data from the 2005-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) (pooled into 2-year groups) to estimate children's (ages 0-17) and adult's (ages 18-49) living arrangements. The ACS is a yearly nationally-representative survey of 3.5 million households, and collects detailed information on individual's demographics, marital status, and relationship to other household members. Data was sourced from IPUMS-USA.^[1] Analysis consist of weighted trends by rural-urban residence and individual's race and ethnicity (Child N = 10.4 million, Adult N = 18.2 Million).

Rural-Urban Residence:

1. Urban Residence: Child or adult lives in a metropolitan county. Counties are considered metropolitan if they contain an urban core with a population of at least 50,000 or if they have significant commuting connections to said core.^[2]
2. Rural Residence: Child or adult lives in a nonmetropolitan county (i.e., does not meet the criteria for metropolitan).

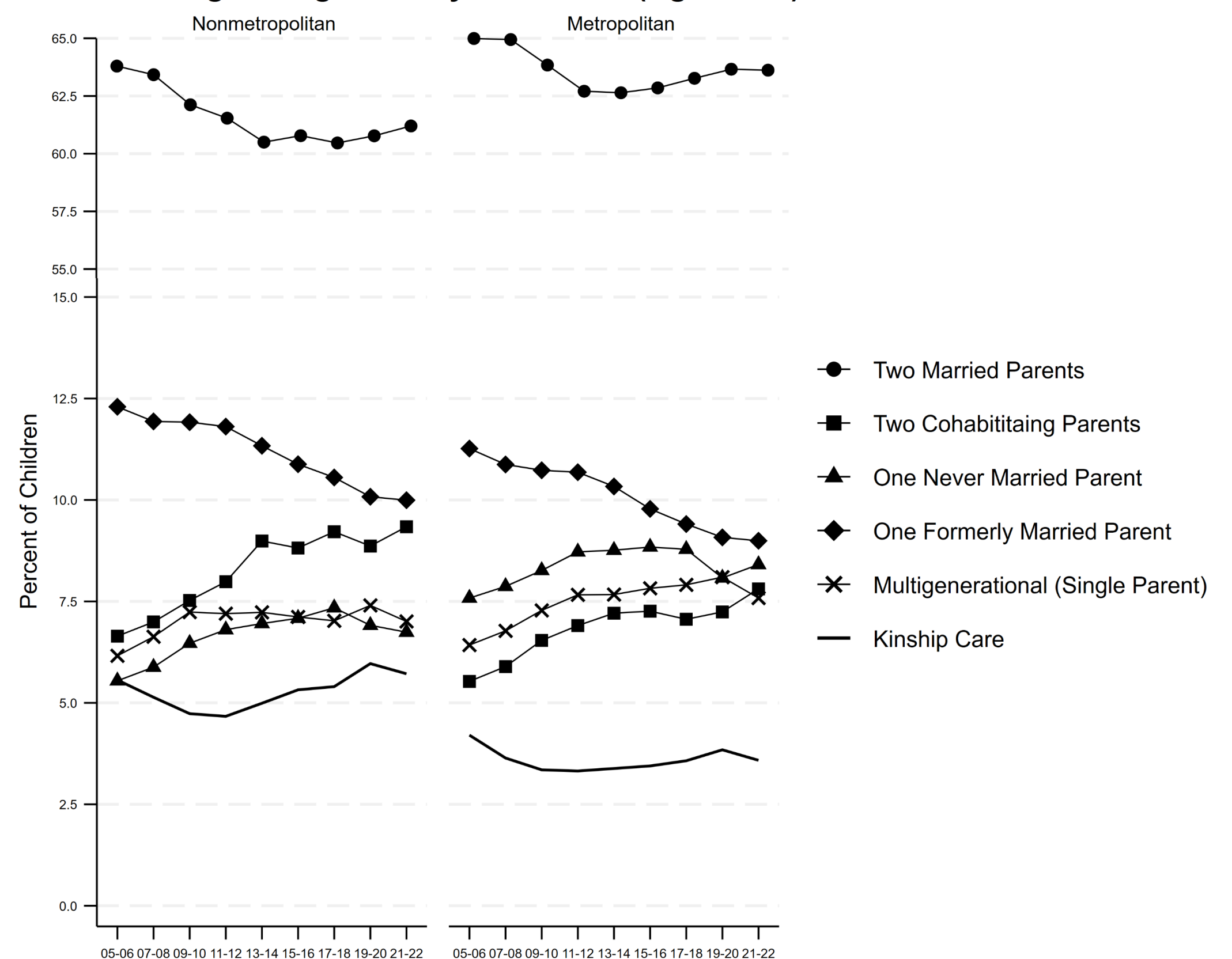
Children's Living Arrangements:

1. Two Married Parents: Child lives with two parents (either bio., adoptive, or step) who are married. No grandparents are present in the household.
2. Two Cohabiting Parents: Child lives with two parents who are not married. The second parent may just be the current cohabitating partner of the first parent.
3. One Formerly Married Parent: Child lives with just one parent who is either divorced, separated or widowed.
4. One Never Married Parent: Child lives with just one parent who has never married.
5. Multigenerational (Single Parent): Child lives with just one parent and at least one grandparent.
6. Kinship Care: Child lives with no parents and is instead cared for by either familial or non-familial relations (e.g., foster care).

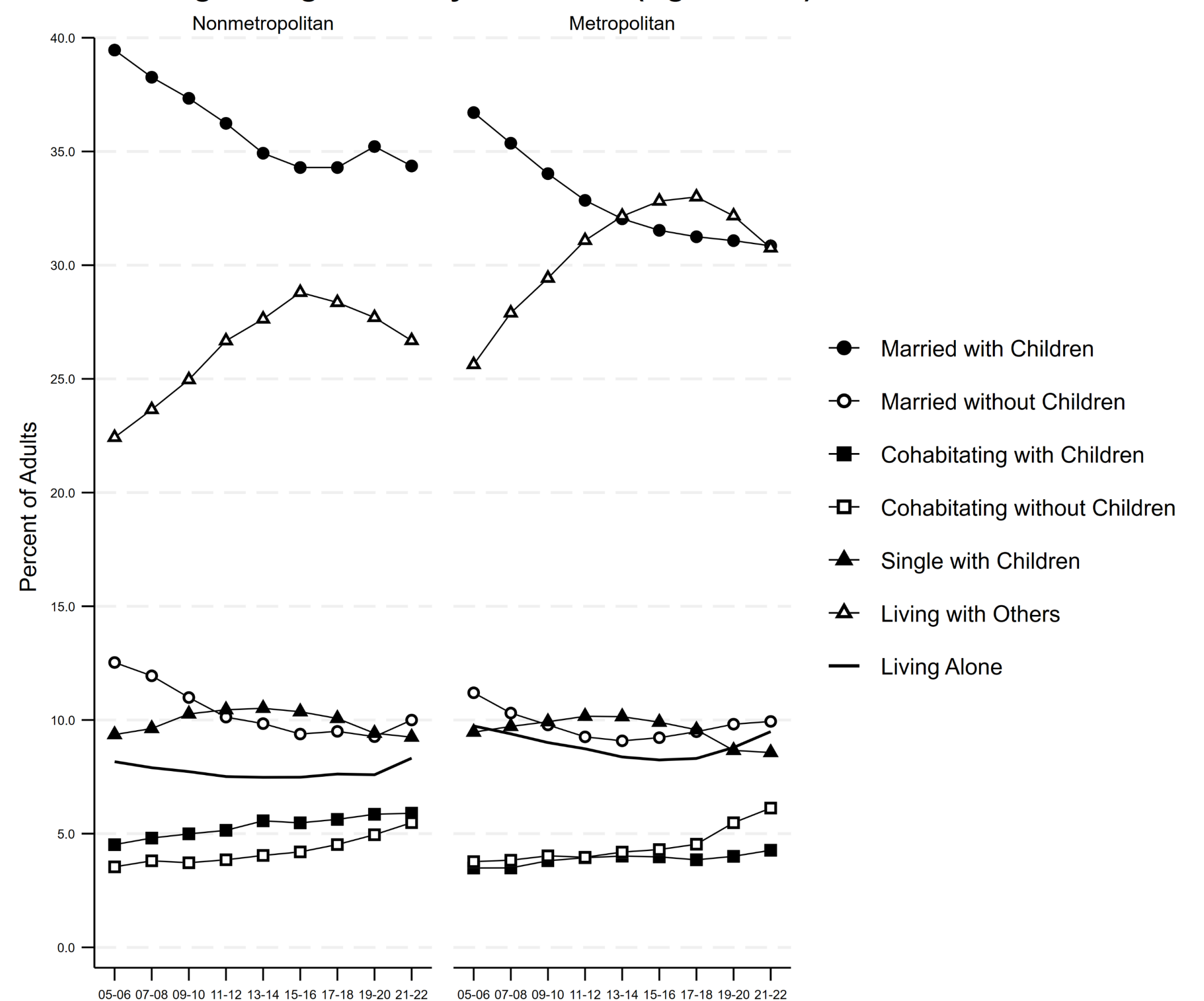
Adult Living Arrangements:

1. Married with Children: Adult is currently married and has at least one child (bio., adopted or step) in the household.
2. Cohabiting with Children: Adult has a cohabitating partner and has at least one child present in the household.
3. Married without Children: Adult is currently married and has no children in the household.
4. Cohabiting without Children: Adult has a cohabitating partner and has no children in the household.
5. Single with Children: Adult is either formerly married or never married and has at least one child in the household.
6. Living with Others: Adult is either formerly married or never married, has no children in the household, but lives with other individuals (either family or non-family).
7. Living Alone: Adult lives in a household of one.

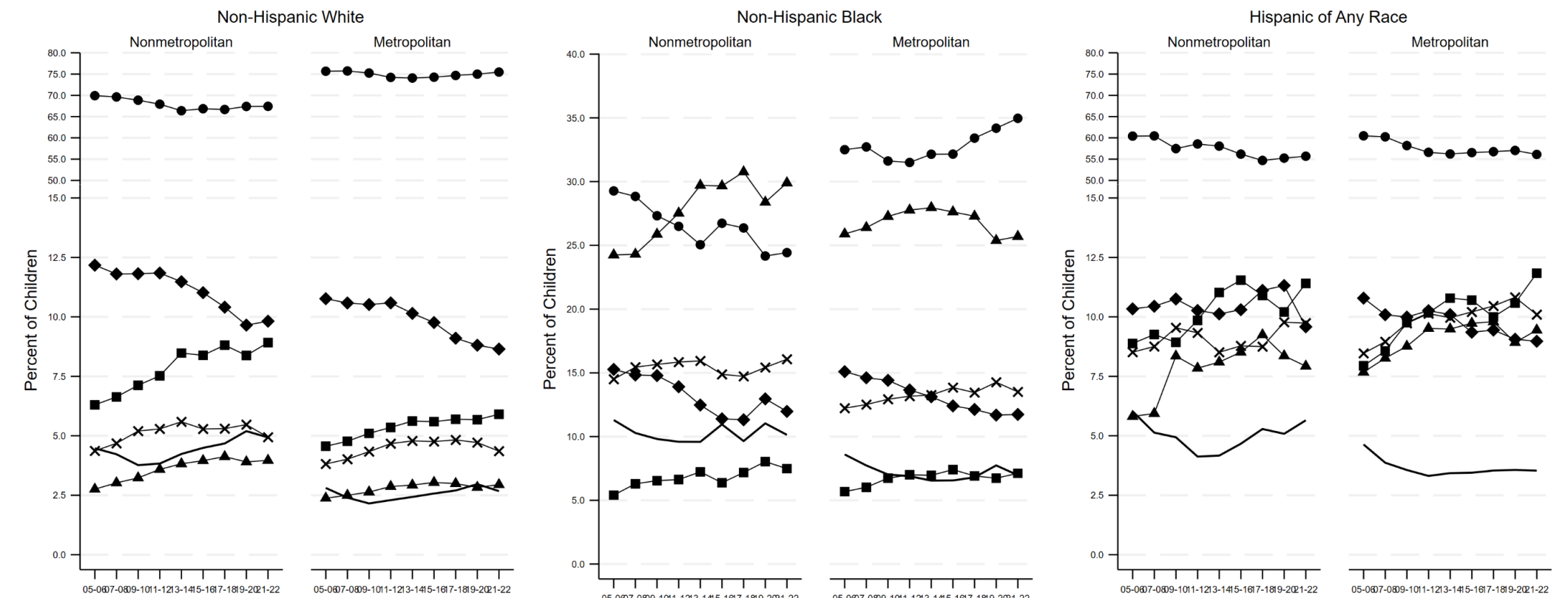
Child Living Arrangements by Residence (Ages 0-17)



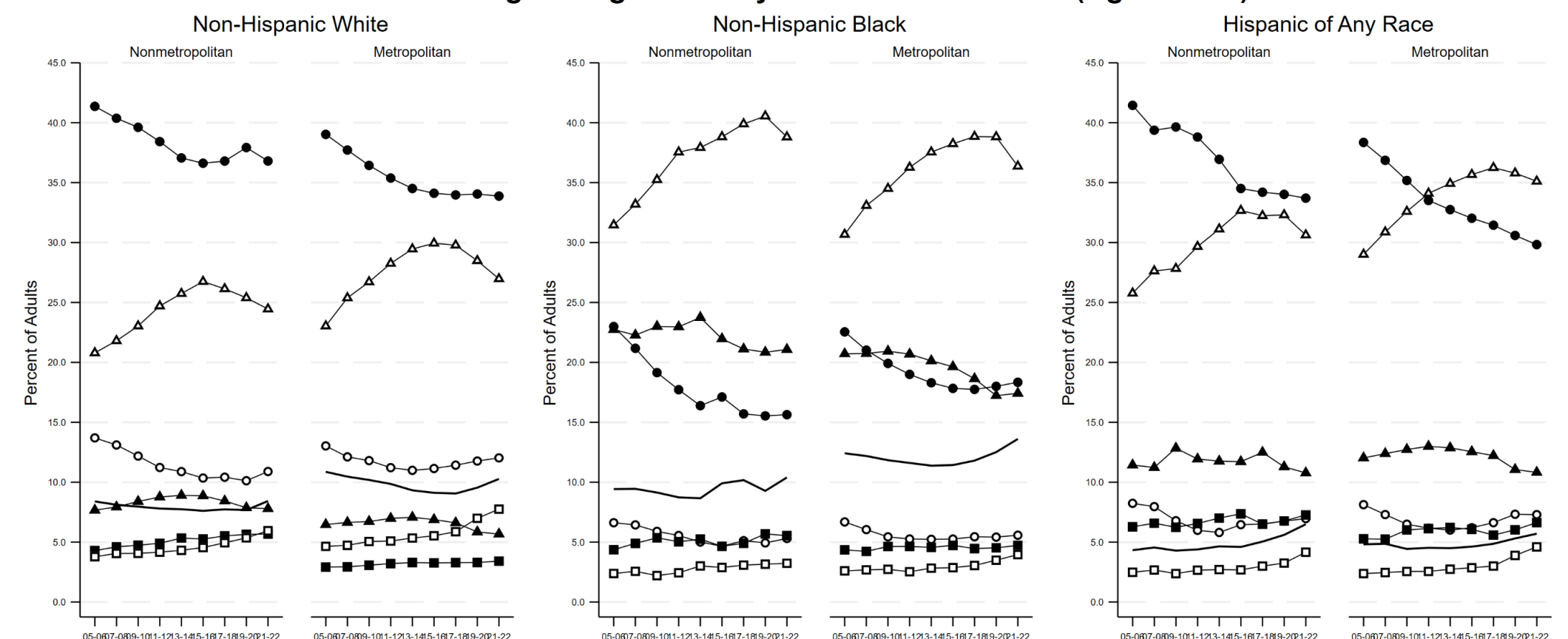
Adult Living Arrangements by Residence (Ages 18-49)



Child Living Arrangements by Race and Residence (Ages 0-17)



Adult Living Arrangements by Race and Residence (Ages 18-49)



^[1] Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Matthew Sobek, Daniel Backman, Annie Chen, Grace Cooper, Stephanie Richards, Renae Rodgers, and Megan Schouweiler. IPUMS USA: Version 15.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2024.

^[2] Office of Management and Budget. (2023). Revised Delineations of Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Micropolitan Statistical Areas, and Combined Statistical Areas, and Guidance on Uses of the Delineations of These Areas (No. OMB Bulletin No. 23-01). Washington, D.C.