

Stepfamilies Comprised Almost 15% of Couple Families with Children

For the first time, **stepfamilies** were counted in the 2011 Census. Stepfamilies are those in which at least one child is the biological or adopted child of only one married spouse or common-law partner and whose birth or adoption preceded the current relationship. Stepfamilies can be further classified as [simple or complex stepfamilies](#) based on the relationships between the children present in the home and the parents.

- Census families comprised of couples with children can be classified as either intact families or stepfamilies. Intact families are defined as couple families in which all children are the biological or adopted children of both parents. Stepfamilies are couple families where there is at least one child whose birth or adoption preceded the current spouse/partner relationship.
- Of the 76,375 couple families with children in the province in 2011, 85.3% were intact families and 14.7% were stepfamilies. Nationally, the proportions were 87.4% and 12.6% respectively.
- In 2011, 8.7% of New Brunswick couples with children were simple stepfamilies while 5.9% were complex stepfamilies.
- Compared to intact families, a smaller share of stepfamilies was comprised of married couples. In 2011, 48.6% of stepfamilies in New Brunswick were married couples compared to 51.4% that were common-law couples. For intact families, 85.5% were married couples and 14.5% were common-law couples.
- Complex stepfamilies in the province were more likely to be married couples (55.2%) whereas simple stepfamilies were more likely to be common-law couples (55.8%). Distributions were similar at the national level.

Distribution of couple families with children by stepfamily status, Canada and N.B., 2011				
Couple family with children¹	Canada		N.B.	
	Number	%	Number	%
All couple families with children	3,684,675	100.0	76,375	100.0
Intact families ²	3,220,340	87.4	65,170	85.3
Stepfamilies	464,335	12.6	11,205	14.7
Simple stepfamilies	271,930	7.4	6,665	8.7
Complex stepfamilies	192,410	5.2	4,540	5.9

¹ Refers to couples with at least one child aged 24 and under.

² Couple families with at least one child aged 24 and under for whom it cannot be determined if there are stepchildren present are considered intact families.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 census of population.