Family Structure Instability and Children’s Weight Gains and Losses from Childhood into Adolescence

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Families, Child Weight, and Mechanisms

Family Context
Family structure status
Family structure changes

Family-Based Mechanisms
Practical resources
Socioemotional resources

Behavioral Mechanisms
Diet, activity, sleep

Weight Changes
Gains
Losses

Developmental Time
Descriptive Picture of Family Change and BMI

• Almost one-third of children ever experienced family structure change
Multivariate Results: Family Structure Change

• Baseline: Any family structure change $\rightarrow$ +0.48 change in BMI

• Variation:
Multivariate Results: Family Structure Status

- Baseline: Stepparent (vs. married bio parents) $\rightarrow$ +0.77 change in BMI
- Variation:

![BMI Score Chart](chart.png)

- Early childhood: Married biological parents = 16.2, Single parent = 15.3
- Middle childhood: Married biological parents = 19.9, Single parent = 20.4
- Early adolescence: Married biological parents = 22.8, Single parent = 23.6