

Father's Day: June 19

The idea of Father's Day was conceived by Sonora Dodd of Spokane, Wash., while she listened to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Dodd wanted a special day to honor her father, William Smart, a widowed Civil War veteran who was left to raise his six children by himself on a rural farm. June was chosen for the first Father's Day celebration — proclaimed for June 19, 1910, by Spokane's mayor — because it was the month of William Smart's birth. The first presidential proclamation honoring fathers was issued in 1966 when President Lyndon Johnson designated the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. Father's Day has been celebrated annually since 1972 when President Richard Nixon signed the public law that made it permanent.

How Many Fathers?

66.3 million

Estimated number of fathers across the nation today. (From unpublished data.)

26.5 million

Number of [fathers who are part of married-couple families](#) with their own children under the age of 18.

Among these —

- 21 percent are raising three or more of their own children under 18 years old.
- 11 percent are under 30.
- 5 percent are 55 and older.
- 2 percent live in the home of a relative or a nonrelative.
- 65 percent have an annual family income of \$50,000 or more.



2.3 million

Number of [single fathers](#), up from 393,000 in 1970. Currently, among single parents living with their children, 18 percent are men.

Among these fathers —

- 10 percent are raising three or more of their own children under 18 years old.
- 42 percent are divorced; 38 percent have never married; 15 percent are separated; and 5 percent are widowed. (The percentages of those divorced and never married are not significantly different from one another.)
- 15 percent live in the home of a relative or a nonrelative.
- 21 percent have an annual family income of \$50,000 or more.

Remembering All Dads

Neckties lead the list of [Father's Day gifts](#). A good place to buy dad a tie or a shirt might be one of 10,416 men's clothing stores around the country.

Other items high on the list of [Father's Day gifts](#) include those you may find in dad's toolbox, such as hammers, wrenches and screwdrivers. You could buy some of these items for dad at one of the nation's 14,755 hardware stores or 5,280 home centers.

23,018

Number of [sporting goods stores](#). These stores are good places to purchase traditional gifts for dad such as fishing rods and golf clubs.

Nearly 69

million Americans have [participated in a barbecue in the last year](#) [PDF] — it's probably safe to assume many of these barbecues took place on Father's Day.

Nearly 95 million

Number of Father's Day cards expected to be given this year in the United States, making Father's Day the fourth-largest card-sending occasion.

(Source: Hallmark research)



Mr. Mom 98,000

Estimated number of “stay-at-home” dads. These are married fathers with children under 15 years old who have remained out of the labor force for more than one year primarily so they can care for the family while

their wives work outside the home. Among these stay-at-home dads:

- 29 percent had their own children under 3 years old living with them.
- 63 percent had two or more children.
- 40 percent had an annual family income of \$50,000 or more.

Fifty percent of all Father’s Day cards are purchased for dads. Nearly 20 percent are purchased for husbands, with the remaining bought for grandfathers, sons, brothers, uncles and “someone special,” among other categories. (Source: Hallmark research)

Child-Support

4.6 million

Number of fathers who provide child support. All in all, 84 percent of child-support providers are men, who provide median payments of \$3,600 annually.

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau **Facts for Features** series:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Jan. 17) & African-American History Month (February)
- Valentine’s Day (Feb. 14)
- Women’s History Month (March)
- Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick’s Day (March 17)
- Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (May)
- Older Americans Month (May)
- Mother’s Day (May 8)
- Father’s Day (June 19)
- The Fourth of July (July 4)
- Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)
- Back to School (August)
- Labor Day (Sept. 5)
- Grandparents Day (Sept. 11)
- Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
- Halloween (Oct. 31)
- American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
- Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
- Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 24)
- The Holiday Season (December)

Individual source links for each statement herein may be accessed on the Internet at http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/004706.html.

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Editor’s note: Some of the preceding data were collected in surveys and, therefore, are subject to sampling error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau’s Public Information Office at (301) 763-3030; fax (301) 457-3670; or e-mail pio@census.gov.