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Spatial Distance Between Parents and Adult Children in the United States

Objective: This brief report presents contemporary national estimates of the spatial distance between residences of parents and adult children in the United States, including distance to one's nearest parent or adult child and whether one lives near all of their parents and adult children.

Background: The most recent national estimates of parent-child spatial proximity come from data for the early 1990s. Moreover, research has rarely assessed the spatial clustering of all parents and adult children.

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Key Words: disparities, families, geographic proximity, inter-generational relations, living arrangements, Panel Study of Income Dynamics.

Method: Data are from the 2013 Panel Study of Income Dynamics on residential locations of adults aged 25 years and older and each of their parents and adult children. The following two measures of spatial proximity were estimated: the share of adults who have their nearest parent or adult child at a given distance and the share of adults who have all parents and/or all adult children at a given distance. Sociodemographic and geographic differences were examined for both measures.

Results: Among the adults with at least one living parent or adult child, a significant majority (74.8%) had their nearest parent or adult child within 30 miles, and about one third (35.5%) had all parents and adult children living that close. Spatial proximity differed substantially among sociodemographic groups, with those who were disadvantaged more likely to have their parents or adult children nearby. In most cases, sociodemographic disparities were much higher when spatial proximity was measured by proximity to all parents and all adult children instead of to the nearest parent or nearest adult child.

Conclusion: Disparities in having all parents and/or adult children nearby may be a result of family solidarity and also may affect family solidarity. This report sets the stage for new

investigations of the spatial dimension of family cohesion.

Family members help each other in various ways, including caring for young children, coping with physical or cognitive limitations, providing emotional support, and completing routine tasks (Compton & Pollak, 2014; Houtven & Norton, 2004; McGarry & Schoeni, 1995; Sasso & Johnson, 2002; Sloan, Zhang, & Wang, 2002; Stone, Cafferata, & Sangl, 1987). Close proximity of family members is strongly positively associated with intergenerational support, including help provided to aging parents and relatives (Joseph & Hallman, 1998; Litwak & Kulis, 1987; Rossi & Rossi, 1990), assistance with household chores (Mulder & van der Meer, 2009), and the frequency of intergenerational contact (Grundy & Shelton, 2001; Hank, 2007; Kalmijn, 2006; Lawton, Silverstein, & Bengtson, 1994; Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Spitze & Logan, 1990). Proximity is also associated with health care utilization and labor market outcomes. Having an adult child living nearby reduces nursing home entry and the use of formal care following a decline in health (H. Choi, Schoeni, Langa, & Heisler, 2014), and having parents living nearby improves labor market outcomes for both men and women (Coate, 2013; Coate, Krolikowski, & Zabeck, 2017; Compton & Pollak, 2014). Finally, migration decisions are also influenced by the location of relatives (Dawkins, 2006; Longino, Bradley, Stoller, & Haas, 2008; Massey & Espinosa, 1997; Spilimbergo & Ubeda, 2004; Spring, Ackert, Crowder, & South, 2017; Zorlu, 2009).

This brief report contributes to the literature on family proximity in several ways. First, we update previous national estimates of family proximity in the United States. The most recent study that provides national estimates of family proximity is Compton and Pollak (2015), which used the National Survey of Families and Households from the 1990s. We provide contemporary estimates of the proximity to the nearest parent, nearest adult child, and nearest parent *or* adult child for adults of all ages using data from 2013. By examining adults of all ages, this approach contrasts with most previous research that examines proximity of older adults to their children or proximity of younger adults to their parents. Our approach also recognizes that many families have three generations of adults for whom

measures of kin proximity should consider relatives both up and down their family tree simultaneously.

Second, we also provide a more holistic view of family proximity by identifying adults who have all of their parents and/or adult children living nearby. Having all parents and/or adult children nearby may enhance solidarity or potential for family help, for instance, if children take turns helping aging parents or each adult child helps instead of one designated caregiver or if both own parents and in-laws provide child care. At the same time, when individuals live in the same geographic area as their parents and/or adult children, they share the vulnerabilities of local labor market declines, strained housing markets, and natural disasters. Our attention to the co-location of these family members addresses a major gap in past research (Agree, 2018).

Third, we report differences in spatial proximity by the following five key sociodemographic and geographic factors: education, race, marital status, metropolitan residence, and region. Prior research has found differences in distance to nearest parent or adult child by these factors. We determine whether similar differences exist when proximity to parents and/or children is measured by having *all* parents and/or adult children living nearby.

Taken together, this report on contemporary estimates of family proximity sets the stage for future work to examine the causes and effects of spatial proximity of families in the United States.

The next section of this report briefly summarizes past research on intergenerational proximity. After that, we describe the sample, measures of proximity, and methods. We then report estimates of spatial proximity and how proximity varies by key sociodemographic characteristics. The last section summarizes major findings, discusses limitations, and considers the implications of the study.

PRIOR STUDIES

Family scholars have a long-standing interest in the proximity of kin, which was motivated by debates about nuclear family isolation from extended kin and the effects of industrialization and urbanization on family cohesion (Litwak, 1960a, 1960b; Parsons, 1943). A large literature examines coresidence, mainly focusing on the coresidence of parents and adult children

(N. G. Choi, 2003; Costa, 1999; Wiemers, Slanchev, McGarry, & Hotz, 2017; Wolf & Soldo, 1988), with a much smaller body of evidence on spatial distance beyond shared housing. Studies in general differ in whether they adopt the point of view of a parent or an adult child, age restrictions (e.g., focusing on older or younger adults), and the marital and health status of the focal person.

Previous national estimates from the parent's perspective indicated that 60% to 75% of older parents lived with or close to (i.e., within 25 miles or 30 minutes of) their nearest child (Crimmins & Ingegneri, 1990; Hoyert, 1991; Shanas, 1984), and very few had their nearest child living more than several hundred miles away (Lin & Rogerson, 1995). Analyzing data from 1980 to 2013, Spring et al. (2017) showed that a quarter of adults aged in their 50s lived within a mile of at least one non-coresident child. Between the early 1960s and early 1980s, the percentages living near but not with a child rose, whereas coresidence declined (Shanas, 1982). A more recent study finds that coresidence has increased in the recent period (Kahn, Goldscheider, & Garcia-Mangano, 2013).

From the adult child's perspective, data from the early 1990s indicated that most lived fairly close to their parents. The median distance to the mother was just 8, 5, and 20 miles for unmarried women, unmarried men, and married couples, respectively (Compton & Pollak, 2015). At the same time, for unmarried women, unmarried men, and married couples, one quarter were more than 150, 67, and 300 miles from their mothers, respectively (Compton & Pollak, 2015). Among young adults younger than age 30, about one third lived within a mile of at least one non-coresident parent (Spring et al., 2017). Coresidence of young adults with their parents declined from 1930 to 1970, but has been increasing since then (Glick & Lin, 1986; Goldscheider & DaVanzo, 1985, 1989; Matsudaira, 2016), particularly for young adults aged in their 20s. By 2011, 22.7% of men and 18.3% of women age 28 were living with their parents (Matsudaira, 2016).

U.S. family scholars have paid little attention to the geographic dispersion of all members of a family since the 1960s. The influential study of *Kinship in an Urban Setting* by Adams (1968) examined the percentages of total kin (parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins) living nearby for White married couples in

Greensboro, NC. Klatzky (1972) used data from a 1965 national sample to describe the geographic distance of married men to other male kin and examined how the proximity of other kin was associated with contact with fathers or other family members. Although these early U.S. studies set the stage for recent research that examines the effects of the location of kin on residential mobility, few studies approached the question of the geographic dispersion of parents and adult children holistically focusing instead on a single parent or child or the nearest parent or child.

Some studies take a more holistic orientation but for a restricted number of family members or specific family sizes. For instance, Dykstra et al. (2006) described average distances between types of kin (a parent, sibling, offspring) for a sample of adults in the Netherlands, but they have information about only one parent (offspring). Konrad, Künemund, Lommerud, and Robledo (2002) used German data to describe the relative proximity to middle-aged and older parents of first- and second-born children in two-child families to examine whether older siblings strategically move farther away from parents to limit caregiving for parents in older age.

Within the United States, Compton and Pollak (2015) described the distance of married couples to both the husband's and wife's mother. Recently, Spring et al. (2017) examined proximity to a wide array of kin (parents, adult children, siblings, and other family members) to assess the impact of family proximity on choices about residential mobility within metropolitan areas. They used data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) during the period from 1980 to 2013, but considered only respondents who did not move across metropolitan areas between observations and proximity to family members who were themselves living in households interviewed by the PSID in the same year. As we describe later, the PSID included a module in 2013 that collected information, including location, for all parents, parents-in-law, and adult children, regardless of whether they lived in a household interviewed by PSID, to expand significantly the PSID's family coverage. We use the expanded coverage provided by the 2013 module to provide unique, contemporary information about the prevalence of co-location among individuals and their parents and/or adult children. The augmented PSID data now allow an assessment of how common it is to have parents and adult offspring nearby for a

representative sample of adults living in the United States.

Prior studies of the United States and other countries that examined proximity beyond coresidence found that adults with lower education were more likely to live close to their parents and other family members (Chan & Ermisch, 2015a, 2015b; H. Choi, Schoeni, Langa, & Heisler, 2015; Clark & Wolf, 1992; Compton & Pollak, 2015; Garasky, 2002; Kalmijn, 2006; Lauterbach & Pillemer, 2001; Leopold, Geissler, & Pink, 2012; Malmberg & Pettersson, 2008; Rogerson, Weng, & Lin, 1993; Spring et al., 2017). There also were differences in proximity to parents by race, with Blacks living closer to their parents than Whites (Bianchi, McGarry, & Seltzer, 2010; Compton & Pollak, 2015; Spring et al., 2017). Studies have found that married children were less likely to live with their mother when compared with unmarried (adult) children, but they were no less likely to live near their mother relative to living farther away (Bianchi et al., 2010; Chan & Ermisch, 2015b; Compton & Pollak, 2015). In general, compared to adults in urban areas, adults in less urban areas live closer to their parents and farther away from their adult children (Lee, Dwyer, & Coward, 1990; van der Pers & Mulder, 2013). U.S. parents and children live closest to one another in the Northeast (Lin & Rogerson, 1995; Rogerson et al., 1993).

DATA, MEASURES, AND METHODS

Data and Measures

We used the Rosters and Transfers Module (R & T) data as well as the main interview data of the 2013 PSID (<https://psidonline.isr.umich.edu/>). The 2013 R & T data provide, for a national sample of household heads and spouses, the locations of each biological or adopted adult child and each biological or adoptive parent (Schoeni, Bianchi, Hotz, Seltzer, & Wiemers, 2015). Because the locations of parents and adult children were collected for both the head and spouse, it included the locations for adult stepchildren, stepparents, and parents-in-law associated with current spouses. The inclusion of both parents and parents-in-law, who would not normally be observed in the PSID genealogical design, is an advantage of the 2013 R & T data for describing proximity of parents and children.

The unit of analysis is adults aged 25 years and older (i.e., PSID heads and spouses aged

25 years and older). We use the term *spouse* to refer to what PSID calls “wife,” where “wife” is a female cohabiting partner who has lived with the PSID head for at least 1 year. For each adult, we examined proximity to biological or adoptive parents and the spouse’s (if present) biological or adoptive parents (henceforth called “parents”) and to biological or adopted and stepchildren who are aged 25 years and older (henceforth called “adult children”). We included in our sample only adults who have a living relative of the given type (e.g., parent or adult child), which is determined from the 2013 rosters of parents and adult children.

Distance from the focal person to each parent and adult child was determined using the data from the R & T module and the PSID household roster in the main interview. The household roster was used to determine which parents and adult children live in the same household as the focal person. For the PSID R & T, city, town, or village and state of residence of each living parent and adult child in the United States were collected and used by PSID staff to code the “census place” each parent and adult child lived, which is the narrowest definition of location possible based on city and state. The census place of the focal person is based on their address. A census place is an administrative unit recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau. It can be a city, borough, town, or village that is a legally incorporated entity with a fixed set of boundaries. A census place also can be a community or concentration of population that is identifiable by name, but is not located within an incorporated area and may or may not have any government. The location of parents and adult children who live outside of the United States is coded by PSID staff as living abroad (i.e., U.S. territory or foreign country).

We used this information, available to researchers in a restricted use data file, to determine whether the parent or adult child lived in the same census place as the focal person and, if not, the distance in miles between them based on the latitude and longitude of the centroid of the census place using the great-circle distance formula. We examined the following distance categories: living in the same household (“coresident”); in the United States and <30 miles or in the same place, but not in the same household (“close”); and ≥ 500 miles within the United States (“very far”). Less than 30 miles was chosen because a number of prior studies used this cut point (Compton & Pollak,

2015; Lin & Rogerson, 1995; Rogerson et al., 1993) and because in most locations 30 miles could be traveled easily for a part-day visit. Furthermore, few census places contain two locations where the distance between the locations is more than 30 miles. For example, in the census places for the locations in which the sample we analyzed lived, the 75th percentile of the distribution of square miles of the census place was 16.8. We chose the cut point for “very far” so that a meaningful share of the total sample, roughly 5% to 10%, was in that category. The results from the preliminary analyses including categories of intermediate distance and having a parent living abroad indicated that the three categories we use captured well most subgroup differences.

Methods

We describe the spatial distance between persons aged 25 years and older and their parents and between persons aged 25 years and older and their adult children based on two measures of proximity. First, we report the proportion of adults aged 25 years and older who have their nearest relative, that is, nearest parent, nearest adult child, and nearest parent or adult child, within a given distance. The second measure indicates the proportion of adults aged 25 years and older who have all of their parents, all of their adult children, or all parents and adult children living within a given distance.

When we estimated the proportion of adults who have their nearest parent or adult child within a given distance, we included all adults aged 25 years and older who have nonmissing location data for themselves and for at least one relative of the specified type (i.e., parents, adult children, or both). When we estimated the proportion of adults who have all parents and/or adult children living within a given distance, we included only those adults who have nonmissing location data for themselves and all relatives of the specified type (i.e., parents, adult children, or both). The less restrictive elimination of missing data for the measure of nearest parent or adult child implies slightly different sample sizes between the two measures for a given type of relative.

The rate of missing data on locations was low, ranging from 1.3% for adults with a parent or an adult child to 2.7% for adults with at least one parent and at least one child. Among

adults with a living parent or adult child, 7.9% had missing data for at least one parent or adult child. All analyses used the PSID cross-sectional individual sample weight for 2013 adjusted for immigration since 1997 (when PSID refreshed its sample for immigration) and for the elimination of a select set of families from the PSID in 1997 (Freedman & Schoeni, 2016).

We considered adults in their potential dual roles as children to their parents and as parents to their children by estimating spatial proximity to either one’s parents or adult children. Accordingly, all measures were provided from the perspective of adult children (i.e., where the focal person was an adult who had a living parent), the perspective of parents (i.e., where the focal person was a parent of an adult child), the perspective of adults who were either children or parents of adult children (i.e., where the focal person had a living parent or was the parent of an adult child), and the perspective of adults who were both children and parents to adult children (i.e., where the focal person had a living parent and was herself or himself the parent of an adult child).

The samples used in the tabulations vary based on whether we examined individuals’ proximity to a parent or an adult child or both parents and adult children and on whether we examined proximity to the nearest or to all such relatives. There were 12,608 individuals aged 25 years or older who were PSID heads or spouses in 2013 of which 9,844 had at least one living parent (biological, adoptive, or in-law); 9,709 had nonmissing information on the proximity to at least one parent, and 9,286 had nonmissing information on the proximity to all living parents. For analyses of individuals’ proximity to adult children, we began with a sample of the 4,956 individuals who had at least one adult child (biological, adopted, stepchild) who was aged 25 years or older. Of these, 4,867 had nonmissing information on the proximity to at least one adult child, and 4,536 had nonmissing proximity information on all living adult children. For the analyses of proximity to a parent or adult child, 12,153 adults had at least one living parent or adult child; 12,001 had nonmissing information on proximity to at least one parent or adult child; 11,197 had complete information on proximity to all parents and adult children. Proximity in three-generation families required that the sample be restricted to the 2,647 individuals who had both a living parent and an

adult child. Of these, 2,575 had nonmissing proximity information on at least one parent or adult child; 2,398 had complete proximity information for all parents and adult children.

We also considered how distance between family members varies by education, race, marital status, metropolitan status, and region. We distinguished among focal persons who had fewer than 16 years of schooling versus 16 or more years of schooling, non-Hispanic Black versus non-Hispanic White focal persons (other race/ethnic groups were not examined separately due to limited sample sizes but are included in all other analyses), and those who were partnered (i.e., married or cohabiting) versus unpartnered. We also examined proximity differences by whether the focal person lived in a metropolitan area and by region of the country. Metropolitan areas included all counties in metropolitan statistical areas, which were defined based on the U.S. Office of Management and Budget standards. We defined region as one of the following four census regions: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. All of these characteristics were obtained from the main PSID interview. Less than 1% (0.1%–0.7%) had missing data attributable to missing values in these sociodemographic or geographic variables.

To assess differences in proximity across sociodemographic groups, we performed *t*-tests using logistic regressions with a binary outcome for each proximity category. We adopted a standard approach to measuring disparities by comparing the absolute difference relative to a baseline proportion. For instance, we examined the difference in the proportion coresident or living close by among adults with <16 years of schooling and the proportion coresident or living close by among adults with ≥16 years, divided by the latter. We used this approach for each of the sociodemographic and geographic comparisons.

FAMILY SPATIAL PROXIMITY

Share of Adults Who Have the NEAREST Parent or Adult Child Within a Given Distance

Table 1 reports the percentage of adults who have the nearest parent or adult child within a given distance. Among adults with a living parent, 5.9% had a parent living with them and 59.8% had their nearest parent living close. Fewer than one in 10 (9.2%) had their nearest

parent very far away. Among persons with adult children, 19.1% had an adult child living with them, 57.1% had their nearest child living close to them, and 6.6% had their nearest child very far away.

Among all adults with a living parent or adult child, 13.2% lived with a parent or adult child, and an additional 61.6% had their nearest parent or adult child living close to them. A substantial minority did not have a parent or adult child nearby; the nearest such relative living in the United States was very far away for 6.8% of adults. For the 21% (estimate not shown in tables) of adults who had at least one living parent and at least one adult child (i.e., there were at least three living adult generations), almost one quarter of them (22.4%) had at least one coresident parent or adult child, another 63.6% had at least one parent or adult child in close proximity. Only 2.8% had their nearest parent or adult child living very far away. Table 1 highlights that having at least one relative within 30 miles (including coresident) was the norm.

Share of Adults Who Have ALL Parents and/or Adult Children Within a Given Distance

A substantial percentage of adults had all of their parents and adult children living nearby, as shown in Table 2. Among individuals who had at least one living parent, 41.8% had all parents either coresident or living close to them, and among individuals who had at least one adult child, 38.6% had all adult children coresident or close to them. Among those with a living parent or adult child, 35.5% had all parents and adult children within 30 miles, and among three-generation families, this fraction was 21.2%.

The contrast in estimates of proximity to the nearest parent or child (Table 1) versus all parents and children (Table 2) suggests a more nuanced pattern of spatial proximity than has been depicted in previous research based on proximity to the nearest kin. Although most adults lived with or close to a parent or adult child, a much smaller percentage had all of their parents or children nearby. The contrast between nearest parent or adult child and having all parents and adult children spatially concentrated was greatest for three-generation families; among adults who had both a parent and adult child alive, 86.0% had at least one parent or adult child living with them or close to

Table 1. Share (%) of Adults Who Have the Nearest Parent or Adult Child Within a Given Distance

	% of adults who have the nearest parent within a given distance among those who have a living parent	% of adults who have the nearest adult child within a given distance among those with an adult child	% of adults who have the nearest parent or adult child within a given distance among those who:	
			have a living parent or adult child	have a living parent and adult child
	n=9,709	n=4,867	n=12,001	n=2,575
Coresident, %	5.9	19.1	13.2	22.4
Close, %	59.8	57.1	61.6	63.6
Coresident or close, %	65.7	76.2	74.8	86.0
Very far, %	9.2	6.6	6.8	2.8

Notes. Percentage with nearest parent or adult child within a given distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. "Parents" include own and spouse's biological or adoptive parents. "Adult children" include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Very far = at least 500 miles and in the United States. Sample weights are applied for all estimates.

Table 2. Share (%) of Adults Who Have All Parents and/or Adult Children Within a Given Distance

	% of adults who have all parents within a given distance among those with a living parent	% of adults who have all adult children within a given distance among those with an adult child	% of adults who have all parents and/or adult children within a given distance among those who:	
			have a living parent or adult child	have a living parent and adult child
	n=9,286	n=4,536	n=11,197	n=2,398
Coresident, %	3.2	4.7	2.8	
Coresident or close, %	41.8	38.6	35.5	21.2
Very far, %	9.2	6.5	6.8	2.6

Notes. Percentage with all parents and/or adult children within a given distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics heads and spouses aged 25 years and older for whom all parents and/or all adult children of the given type have nonmissing distance values. "Parents" include own and spouse's biological or adoptive parents. "Adult children" include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Very far = at least 500 miles and in the United States. Sample weights are applied for all estimates. Shaded cell has a cell count less than 10 and cannot be reported.

them, and a smaller but still substantial 21.2% had all such relatives within this distance.

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC VARIATION IN PROXIMITY

Tables 3 and 4 report differences in proximity by years of schooling, race, and partnership status (whether married or cohabiting or not) of the focal person. Table 3 reports the share of adults with the nearest parent or child at a given distance, and Table 4 reports the share of adults with all parents and children living at a given

distance. Differences across sociodemographic subgroups that are statistically different from each other are denoted by asterisks.

Several broad themes emerge from the tabulations in Tables 3 and 4. There were large differences in family proximity by education. When compared with those with less education, adults with a college degree or more were significantly less likely to be close or coresident with at least one parent (54.7% vs. 71.5%) and less likely to be close or coresident with at least one adult child (66.0% vs. 79.4%). There was a

Table 3. Share (%) of Adults Who Have the Nearest Parent or Adult Child Within a Given Distance, by Sociodemographic Characteristics

	% of adults who have the nearest parent within a given distance among those with a living parent		% of adults who have the nearest adult child within a given distance among those with an adult child		% of adults who have the nearest parent or adult child within a given distance among those who:			
	<16 n=6,450	≥16 n=3,259	<16 n=3,697	≥16 n=1,170	have a living parent <i>or</i> adult child		have a living parent <i>and</i> adult child	
					<16 n=8,207	≥16 n=3,794	<16 n=1,940	≥16 n=635
By education								
Coresident, %	6.9	4.1***	20.6	14.3***	15.5	8.2***	24.0	17.5**
Close, %	64.6	50.6***	58.8	51.7***	65.1	54.3***	64.6	60.2
Coresident or close, %	71.5	54.7***	79.4	66.0***	80.6	62.5***	88.6	77.7***
Very far, %	6.1	15.1***	5.4	10.4***	4.5	11.7***	1.6	6.5***
By race	NH-Black n=2,924	NH-White n=5,593	NH-Black n=1,528	NH-White n=2,833	NH-Black n=3,658	NH-White n=6,928	NH-Black n=794	NH-White n=1,498
Coresident, %	8.4	4.8***	27.5	15.0***	19.2	10.8***	27.8	17.3***
Close, %	68.0	61.5***	55.5	58.7	62.3	63.7	63.7	67.6
Coresident or close, %	76.4	66.3***	83.0	73.7***	81.5	74.5***	91.5	84.9**
Very far, %	6.0	10.1**	4.0	7.1*	4.1	7.2**		2.4
By partnership status	Unpartnered n=2,591	Partnered n=7,118	Unpartnered n=1,368	Partnered n=3,499	Unpartnered n=3,501	Partnered n=8,500	Unpartnered n=458	Partnered n=2,117
Coresident, %	13.9	3.1***	22.3	17.8**	19.2	10.7***	31.2	20.7***
Close, %	50.9	62.9***	58.5	56.5	54.5	64.7***	58.4	64.5
Coresident or close, %	64.8	66.0	80.8	74.3***	73.7	75.4	89.6	85.2
Very far, %	11.7	8.4***	5.5	7.1	8.3	6.1**		2.9

Notes. Percentage with nearest parent or adult child within a given distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. "Parents" include own and spouse's biological or adoptive parents. "Adult children" include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident; Very far = at least 500 miles and in the United States. Sample weights are applied for all estimates. Shaded cells have a cell count less than 10 and cannot be reported. NH = non-Hispanic. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

correspondingly much higher prevalence of living more than 500 miles away from all parents (adult children) for college-educated adults.

Figure 1 shows the percent differences between education subgroups for having the nearest parent or adult child and all parents and/or all adult children coresident or close. Education differences were much larger for distances to all parents and/or adult children than for nearest parent or adult child. For parents (adult children), less-educated adults were 31% (20%) more likely to live with or close to their nearest parent (adult child) and 54% (45%) more likely to live with or close to all of their parents (adult children). Estimates of educational disparities for individuals in families with three adult generations were especially sensitive

to measuring close proximity to the nearest parent or adult child versus all parents and adult children: 14.0% for nearest versus 133.0% for all parents and adult children coresident or close.

There were also large race differences in proximity to kin. Relative to non-Hispanic Whites, non-Hispanic Blacks were more likely to coreside (8.4% vs. 4.8%) and more likely to live close to a parent (68.0% vs. 61.5%). Non-Hispanic Blacks also were much more likely to live with adult children, but no more likely to live close (middle panel, Table 3). Table 4 shows that having all parents or all children coreside was rare for both non-Hispanic Blacks and non-Hispanic Whites, but 56.0% (54.5%) of non-Hispanic Blacks had all their parents (all their adult children) coresident or

Table 4. Share (%) of Adults Who Have All Parents and/or Adult Children Within a Given Distance, by Sociodemographic Characteristics

	% of adults who have all parents within a given distance among those with a living parent		% of adults who have all adult children within a given distance among those with an adult child		% of adults who have all parents and/or adult children within a given distance among those who:			
	<16 n	≥16 n	<16 n	≥16 n	<16 n	≥16 n	<16 n	≥16 n
By education								
	<16 n=6,125	≥16 n=3,161	<16 n=3,407	≥16 n=1,129	<16 n=7,545	≥16 n=3,652	<16 n=1,790	≥16 n=608
Coresident, %	3.8	2.0***	4.9	3.8	3.2	1.9**		
Coresident or close, %	47.5	30.9***	41.8	28.8***	39.9	26.5***	24.7	10.6***
Very far, %	6.1	15.0***	5.4	10.0***	4.4	11.6***	1.5	5.8***
By race	NH-Black n=2,798	NH-White n=5,364	NH-Black n=1,412	NH-White n=2,897	NH-Black n=3,385	NH-White n=6,533	NH-Black n=734	NH-White n=1,425
Coresident, %	5.2	2.8***	6.7	2.9***	5.1	2.1***		
Coresident or close, %	56.0	42.5***	54.5	33.7***	50.9	33.7***	42.8	18.9***
Very far, %	6.0	10.2**	4.3	6.9	4.1	7.2**		2.4
By partnership status	Unpartnered n=2,520	Partnered n=6,766	Unpartnered n=1,284	Partnered n=3,252	Unpartnered n=3,335	Partnered n=7,862	Unpartnered n=435	Partnered n=1,963
Coresident, %	10.6	0.6***	5.4	4.4	7.5	0.7***		
Coresident or close, %	57.0	36.3***	46.6	35.2***	49.8	29.3***	35.7	18.4***
Very far, %	11.7	8.4***	5.4	7.0	8.2	6.1**		2.7

Notes. Percentage with all parents and/or adult children within a given distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics heads and spouses for whom all parents and/or all adult children have nonmissing distance values. "Parents" include own and spouse's biological or adoptive parents. "Adult children" include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident; Very far = at least 500 miles and in the United States. Sample weights are applied for all estimates. Shaded cells have a cell count less than 10 and cannot be reported. NH = non-Hispanic. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

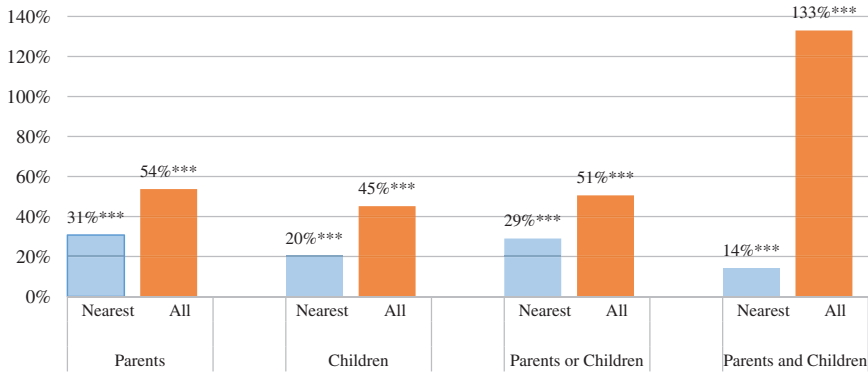
close. Disparities by race in coresident or close were much larger when comparing proximity to all versus nearest parent (adult child), as shown in Figure 2. For distance to adult children, the former was nearly five times greater: 61.7% versus 12.6%.

Relative to partnered adults, unpartnered adults were four times more likely to live with a parent (13.9% vs. 3.1%), but less likely to live close to (50.9% vs. 62.9%) and more likely to live very far away from their nearest parent (11.7% vs. 8.4%; bottom panel of Table 3). Unpartnered adults were much more likely than partnered adults to have all of their parents living nearby (57.0% vs. 36.3%; bottom panel of Table 4). This is consistent with married people having more parents (because they have in-laws) and having parents and parents-in-law

who may not live near each other. Figure 3 shows that differences in proximity estimates by partnership status were much larger for all parents and/or adult children versus nearest parent or adult child.

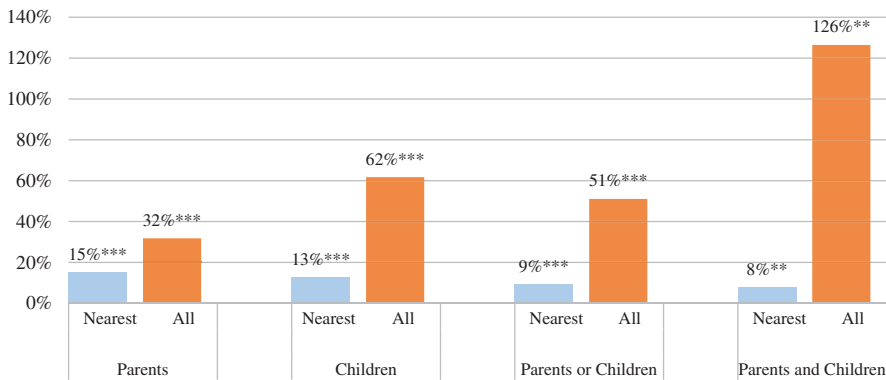
Tables 5 and 6 highlight a generational difference in proximity for individuals living in nonmetropolitan areas. Adults in nonmetropolitan areas were more likely to have their parents, but less likely to have their adult children, coresident or close (Tables 5 and 6). Only about one quarter (28.9%) of adults living in a nonmetropolitan area had all their adult children coresident or close, but more than 40% of those in a metropolitan area were this close to all of their children (Table 6). Figure 4 indicates that the contrast by metropolitan status also was larger for living near all parents or all

FIGURE 1. DIFFERENCE IN PREVALENCE OF CORESIDENT OR CLOSE, BY EDUCATION (<16 YEARS – ≥16 YEARS)/≥16 YEARS.



Notes: Nearest distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. Distance to all is based on the sample of PSID heads and spouses for whom all parents and/or all adult children of the given type have nonmissing distance values. “Parents” include own and spouse’s biological or adoptive parents. “Children” include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Asterisks indicate significance levels from testing proximity differences by education as in Tables 3 and 4 (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$).

FIGURE 2. DIFFERENCE IN PREVALENCE OF CORESIDENT OR CLOSE, BY RACE (NON-HISPANIC BLACK – NON-HISPANIC WHITE)/NON-HISPANIC WHITE.



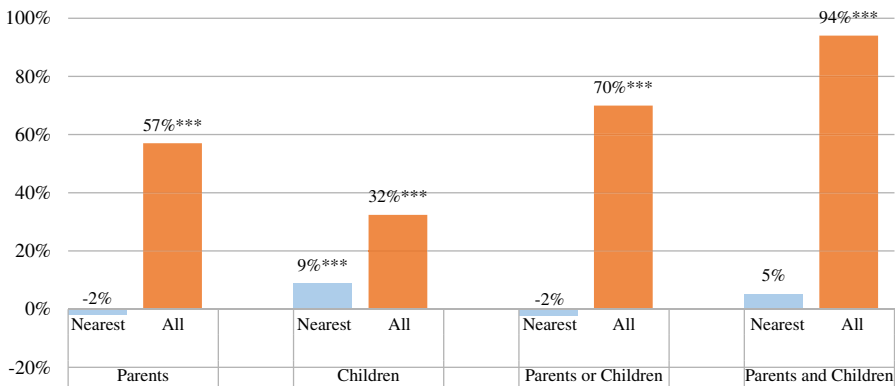
Notes: Nearest distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. Distance to all is based on the sample of PSID heads and spouses for whom all parents and/or all adult children have nonmissing distance values. “Parents” include own and spouse’s biological or adoptive parents. “Children” include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Asterisks indicate significance levels from testing proximity differences by race as in Tables 3 and 4 (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$).

adult children versus the nearest parent or adult child.

There were large differences in proximity by census region of residence. Tables 7 and 8 show that adults in the Northeast were more likely to have at least one parent or all parents living with or close to them when compared with

adults in the South and the West. The tests of statistical significance evaluated the contrast between Northeast and each of the other three regions. The closer proximity to parents among those in the Northeast also holds for having at least one adult child or all children coresident or living in close proximity. For example,

FIGURE 3. DIFFERENCE IN PREVALENCE OF CORESIDENT OR CLOSE, BY PARTNERSHIP STATUS (UNPARTNERED – PARTNERED)/PARTNERED.



Notes: Nearest distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. Distance to all is based on the sample of PSID heads and spouses for whom all parents and/or all adult children have nonmissing distance values. “Parents” include own and spouse’s biological or adoptive parents. “Children” include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Asterisks indicate significance levels from testing proximity differences by partnership status as in Tables 3 and 4 (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$).

Table 5. Share (%) of Adults Who Have the Nearest Parent or Adult Child Within a Given Distance, by Metropolitan Status

	% of adults who have the nearest parent within a given distance among those with a living parent		% of adults who have the nearest adult child within a given distance among those with an adult child		% of adults who have the nearest parent or adult child in a given distance among those who:			
	Metro n=7,340	Non-metro n=2,367	Metro n=3,433	Non-metro n=1,430	have a living parent or adult child		have a living parent and adult child	
By metropolitan status	Metro	Non-metro	Metro	Non-metro	Metro	Non-metro	Metro	Non-metro
Coresident, %	6.0	5.4	20.6	15.4***	13.4	12.4	24.4	18.1**
Close, %	57.9	65.9***	58.9	53.3**	61.1	63.5	61.4	68.2**
Coresident or close, %	63.9	71.3***	79.5	68.7***	74.5	75.9	85.8	86.3
Very far, %	10.3	5.9***	7.1	5.4	7.4	4.9	3.5	

Notes. Percentage with nearest parent or adult child within a given distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. “Parents” include own and spouse’s biological or adoptive parents. “Adult children” include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident; Very far = at least 500 miles and in the United States. Sample weights are applied for all estimates. Shaded cell has a cell count less than 10 and cannot be reported. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

52.1% of adults in the Northeast lived near all of their parents compared with only 34.0% in the West (Table 8). Similarly, 44.7% of adults in the Northeast lived near all of their adult children compared with only 36.8% in the South (Table 8). As presented in Figure 5, the difference in coresident or close proximity to parents or adult children between the Northeast and the West

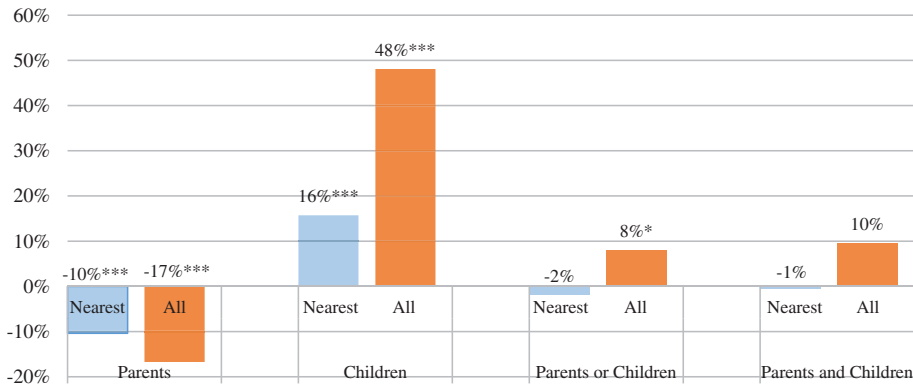
was larger for all parents and for all adult children versus nearest parent or adult child, especially among adults in families with three generations of adults (131.9% vs. 5.8%). In fact, the Northeast versus West difference in proximity to nearest parent or adult child was not statistically significant for three-generation families.

Table 6. Share (%) of Adults Who Have All Parents and/or Adult Children Within a Given Distance, by Metropolitan Status

	% of adults who have all parents within a given distance among those with a living parent		% of adults who have all adult children within a given distance among those with an adult child		% of adults who have all parents and/or adult children within a given distance among those who:			
	Metro n=7,024	Non-metro n=2,262	Metro n=3,223	Non-metro n=1,311	Metro n=8,407	Non-metro n=2,789	Metro n=1,683	Non-metro n=715
Coresident, %	3.3	3.0	5.6	2.3	3.0	2.0		
Coresident or close, %	39.8	47.8***	42.8	28.9***	36.2	33.5*	21.8	19.9
Very far, %	10.2	6.0***	7.2	5.1*	7.4	4.9***	3.2	

Notes. Percentage with all parents and/or adult children within a given distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics heads and spouses for whom all parents and/or all adult children have nonmissing distance values. “Parents” include own and spouse’s biological or adoptive parents. “Adult children” include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident; Very far = at least 500 miles and in the United States. Sample weights are applied for all estimates. Shaded cells have a cell count less than 10 and cannot be reported. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

FIGURE 4. DIFFERENCE IN PREVALENCE OF CORESIDENT OR CLOSE, BY METROPOLITAN STATUS (METRO – NON-METRO)/(NON-METRO).



Notes: Nearest distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. Distance to all is based on the sample of PSID heads and spouses for whom all parents and/or all adult children have nonmissing distance values. “Parents” include own and spouse’s biological or adoptive parents. “Children” include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Asterisks indicate significance levels from testing proximity differences by metropolitan status as in Tables 5 and 6 (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$).

CONCLUSION

The portrait of intergenerational spatial proximity that emerges defies simple characterization. On the one hand, three quarters of adults with a living parent or adult child had at least one such relative living within 30 miles. About one third of adults (35.5%) had all of their adult biological children, adult stepchildren, biological

or adoptive parents and parents-in-law living within 30 miles. On the other hand, a substantial minority of adults had no relatives nearby; 6.8% of adults had their nearest relative farther than 500 miles away in the United States.

There also were large sociodemographic differences in proximity to kin. Among adults who had a parent alive, the share living within 30 miles was much higher for those with less

Table 7. Share (%) of Adults Who Have the Nearest Parent or Adult Child Within a Given Distance, by Region

	% of adults who have the nearest parent within a given distance among those with a living parent						% of adults who have the nearest parent or adult child within a given distance among those who have a living parent and adult child																									
	Northeast		Midwest		South		West		Northeast		Midwest		South		West																	
	(ref.)	n	(ref.)	n	(ref.)	n	(ref.)	n	(ref.)	n	(ref.)	n	(ref.)	n	(ref.)	n																
By region	5.2	1,255	5.4	2,449	6.2	4,097	6.3	1,884	23.1	646	15.1**	1,197	17.9*	2,134	21.6	873	14.2	1,569	11.3*	2,997	13.1	5,133	14.0	2,268	27.5	332	18.6**	649	20.6*	1,098	25.8	489
Coresident, %	68.6		65.6		57.5***		52.5***		61.2		62.7		54.2**		54.1*		66.4		67.6		59.5***		56.7***		63.1		67.9		63.2		59.9	
Close, %	73.8		71.0		63.7***		58.8***		84.3		77.8**		72.1***		75.7***		80.6		78.9		72.6***		70.7***		90.6		86.5		83.8**		85.6	
Very far, %	5.1		5.1		11.0***		12.6***		4.4		6.3		7.3*		7.1*		4.1		3.9		7.8***		9.4***		2.2		2.2		3.5		3.1	

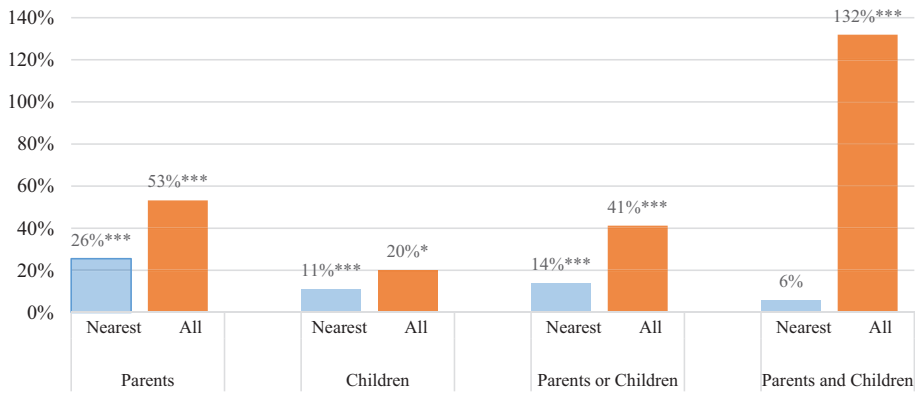
Notes: Northeast is the reference (ref.) category for tests of statistical significance. Percentage with nearest parent or adult child within a given distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. "Parents" include own and spouse's biological or adoptive parents. "Adult children" includes adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Very far = at least 500 miles and in the United States. Sample weights are applied for all estimates. Shaded cell has a cell count less than 10 and cannot be reported. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 8. Share (%) of Adults Who Have All Parents and/or Adult Children Within a Given Distance, by Region

By region	% of adults who have all parents within a given distance among those with a living parent				% of adults who have all adult children within a given distance among those with an adult child				% of adults who have all parents and/or adult children within a given distance among those who have a living parent <i>or</i> adult child				% of adults who have all parents and/or adult children within a given distance among those who have a living parent <i>and</i> adult child			
	Northeast (ref.)	Midwest	South	West	Northeast (ref.)	Midwest	South	West	Northeast (ref.)	Midwest	South	West	Northeast (ref.)	Midwest	South	West
Coresident, %	n=1,203 3.3	n=2,346 3.2	n=3,909 3.4	n=1,808 2.8	n=607 6.6	n=1,129 2.6***	n=1,975 5.2	n=810 3.9*	n=1,471 3.0	n=2,821 2.2	n=4,760 3.1	n=2,118 2.4	n=316 32.7	n=622 22.3**	n=1,001 20.1***	n=452 14.1***
Coresident or close, %	52.1	46.8*	39.4***	34.0***	44.7	38.2*	36.8**	37.2*	44.2	37.8***	32.9***	31.3***	32.7	22.3**	20.1***	14.1***
Very far, %	5.0	5.1	11.1***	12.4***	4.0	6.6*	7.1*	7.2*	3.9	3.9	7.9***	9.2*	2.3	3.0	2.9	

Notes: Northeast is the reference (ref.) category for tests of statistical significance. Percentage with all parents and/or adult children within a given distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics heads and spouses for whom all parents and/or all adult children have nonmissing distance values. "Parents" include own and spouse's biological or adoptive parents. "Adult children" includes adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Very far = at least 500 miles and in the United States. Sample weights are applied for all estimates. Shaded cells have a cell count less than 10 and cannot be reported. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$. **** $p < .001$.

FIGURE 5. DIFFERENCE IN PREVALENCE OF CORESIDENT OR CLOSE, BY REGION (NORTHEAST – WEST)/(WEST).



Note: Nearest distance is based on the sample of Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) heads and spouses aged 25 years and older who have at least one parent or adult child with nonmissing distance values. Distance to all is based on the sample of PSID heads and spouses for whom all parents and/or all adult children have nonmissing distance values. “Parents” include own and spouse’s biological or adoptive parents. “Children” include adult biological or adopted and step children. Close = in the United States and less than 30 miles, but not coresident. Asterisks indicate significance levels from testing proximity differences by region as in Tables 7 and 8 (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$).

than 16 years of schooling than those with 16 or more years, and for non-Hispanic Blacks than non-Hispanic Whites. That share was also higher for those living in the Northeast and Midwest than the South or West, which in part may be due to the fact that the latter regions are common destinations for international and long-distance internal migrants. Differences by partnership status and metropolitan status are more nuanced. Unpartnered adults were much more likely than partnered adults to live with a parent but also more likely to live very far away. Adults living in metropolitan areas were more likely than adults in nonmetropolitan areas to live within 30 miles of an adult child, less likely to live near a parent, and equally likely to live near either an adult child or parent.

Sociodemographic differences in spatial proximity were almost always many times larger when measured by having all relatives of a given type living close by than when measured by proximity to one’s nearest relative. The higher rates of having all parents and/or adult children nearby among non-Hispanic Blacks, those with less than 16 years of schooling, and those in the Northeast can be an important asset, with a greater share of one’s network more readily available to support each other because of close proximity. At the same time, geographic clustering may limit family members’ abilities

to help each other when dealing with hardships caused by local economic or environmental shocks because they all experience them.

Future studies can build on this brief report in several dimensions. First, although parents and adult children are typically the relatives with the most active networks in the United States (Kahn, McGill, & Bianchi, 2011; Schoeni, 1997), other family members, such as siblings, grandparents, and step relationships from prior marriages, may also be important. Other family members may be more important for those with less education or for non-Whites who are more likely to rely on kin for practical assistance with household tasks and transportation (Sarkisian & Gerstel, 2004). Location data are not available for all of these relatives in the PSID but should be considered for future data collection in the PSID and other surveys. Second, the 2013 PSID sample does not fully represent the roughly 7% of the adult U.S. population in 2013 that immigrated to the United States after 1997, when the PSID added a sample of immigrants who arrived after the PSID began in 1968 (Flood, King, Rodgers, Ruggles, & Warren, 2018). The PSID added in 2017 a sample of immigrants who arrived after 1997, and collecting information on the location of relatives for this sample would allow a more complete description of family networks than is currently possible. Third, collecting city

and state locations of each relative instead of distance or travel time, which is what most other surveys have done, has the advantage of supporting estimates of having all parents and/or adult children nearby because respondents can readily report city and state. However, residential location at the level of city and state is not as precise for large cities as for smaller geographic units and does not support investigations of differences in proximity less than 30 miles. These differences in close proximity may matter, especially for providing hands-on care (Litwak & Kulis, 1987). Fourth, many adults do not have certain types of relatives (28% without a living parent and 56% without an adult child), and this varies substantially by socioeconomic status. Incorporating information about the existence of certain types of relatives into studies of spatial proximity of kin will provide a more complete picture of disparity in family availability.

Finally, the unique data described in this report lay the groundwork for investigations of how proximity to family members in several adult generations both reflects and contributes to family solidarity and material exchanges among family members. Family scholars know little about how having all offspring nearby affects the division of responsibility for caring for aging parents or how parents allocate help among their offspring, including help with child care. These questions are particularly relevant for the growing number of adults, the “sandwich generation,” who have both aging parents and adult children who require care or financial support. Moreover, although there is a long-standing literature examining the support that family members give to each other in times of financial need, there is still little research on how family members who are all in close proximity cope with common experiences, such as the same poor labor or housing markets. The latter is particularly salient, as we have shown that sociodemographic and geographic differences in family proximity are especially large when measured by having all relatives of a given type nearby. Future research should determine the causes and consequences of living near all relatives.

NOTE

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