

Same-sex Couples in Idaho: A demographic summary



by Gary J. Gates
July 2014

Introduction

This research brief offers analyses of data from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) to describe the characteristics of same-sex couples and their families in Idaho compared to their different-sex married counterparts.

Same-sex couples are identified in the ACS when an adult in the household is identified as either the "husband/wife" or "unmarried partner" of the person who filled out the survey, referred to as the householder, and both partners or spouses are of the same sex. These analyses combine ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files from 2010, 2011, and 2012, yielding sample sizes of:

- 64 same-sex couples
- 28 children under age 18 being raised by same-sex couples
- 11,238 different-sex married couples
- 9,807 children under age 18 being raised by different-sex married couples

Same-sex couples

Tabulations from Census 2010 show that there are 2,042 same-sex couples living in Idaho. These couples were identified in the majority of Idaho's counties. The majority of same-sex couples are female (61%).¹

Age

The average age of individuals in same-sex couples in Idaho is more than four years younger than that of different-sex married couples—44.3 and 48.5 years old, respectively. Table 1 shows the percentages of adults in same-sex and different-sex married couples by age group. The lowest percentage of same-sex couples is in the 65 and over group (11%) while the lowest percentage of different-sex married couples is in the youngest age group of those under age 30 (13%).

Table 1. Individuals in couples, by age (2010-2012 ACS)

Age	Same-sex	Different-sex married
<30	25%	13%
30-49	42%	40%
50-64	22%	29%
65+	11%	18%

More than one tenth of individuals in same-sex and different-sex couples in Idaho are members of racial or ethnic minorities. Table 2 shows that 12% of individuals in same-sex couples and in different-sex married couples are racial or ethnic minorities.

Table 2. Individuals in couples, by race/ethnicity (2011-2012 ACS)

Race/ethnicity	Same-sex	Different-sex married
White	88.3%	88.1%
African-American	0%	0.3%
Latino/a	8.9%	8.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0%	1.6%
Am. Indian/AK Native	0.4%	0.7%
Other	2.4%	1.2%

Same-sex couples with children

More than one-quarter of same-sex couples in Idaho (27%) are raising children under age 18 in their homes. 550 same-sex-couple households in the state are raising 1,139 children.

More than half (59%) of children being raised by same-sex couples in Idaho are biological children and 29% are adopted. This implies that same-sex couples in the state are raising an estimated 676 biological children and 335 adopted children. Eleven percent of children being raised by same-sex couples in Idaho, or 128 children, are identified as grandchildren or stepchildren.

Among couples with children, same-sex couples in Idaho are more likely than their different-sex married counterparts to be raising an adopted child. An estimated 22.2% of same-sex couples with children have an adopted child, compared to 4.5% of different-sex married couples with children. Approximately 29% of the children of same-sex couples in Idaho are adopted, compared to 3% of the children of different-sex married couples.

While the most recent Census Bureau data do not identify any same-sex couples fostering children in Idaho, only 0.8% of different-sex married couples with children are doing so in the state.

¹ Gates, GJ, Cooke, A (2011). *Idaho Census Snapshot: 2010*. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Retrieved from: http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Census2010Snapshot_Idaho_v2.pdf.

Race/ethnicity

One in four individuals in same-sex couples who are members of racial or ethnic minorities (25%) are raising a child under age 18, compared to 24% of their White counterparts.

Income

The median annual household income of same-sex couples with children under age 18 in the home is 37% less than the median annual household income of comparable different-sex married couples (\$40,913 versus \$64,450).

This may in part be because, compared to different-sex married couples raising children, same-sex couples with children include a higher portion of female couples, who tend to have lower earnings than different-sex married couples.

About the author

Gary J. Gates, PhD is the Williams Distinguished Scholar and a national expert in the demographic, geographic, and economic characteristics of the LGBT population.

About the Institute

The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy at UCLA School of Law advances law and public policy through rigorous, independent research and scholarship, and disseminates its work through a variety of education programs and media to judges, legislators, lawyers, other policymakers and the public. These studies can be accessed at the Williams Institute website.

For more information

The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law
Box 951476
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1476
(310)267-4382
williamsinstitute@law.ucla.edu
www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute

Suggested citation

Gates, G.J. (2013). Same-sex Couples in Idaho: A demographic summary. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Retrieved from The Williams Institute website:
<http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/ID-same-sex-couples-demo-july-2014.pdf>.