

# Same-sex Couples in Kentucky: A demographic summary



by Gary J. Gates  
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## 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 Kentucky 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 2011 and 2012, yielding sample sizes of:

- 113 same-sex couples
- 33 children under age 18 being raised by same-sex couples
- 18,471 different-sex married couples
- 12,699 children under age 18 being raised by different-sex married couples

## Same-sex couples

Tabulations from Census 2010 show that there are 7,195 same-sex couples living in Kentucky. These couples were identified in all but one of Kentucky's counties. The majority of same-sex couples are female (55%).<sup>1</sup>

### Age

The average age of individuals in same-sex couples in Kentucky is more than seven years younger than that of different-sex married couples—43.6 and 50.7 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 (5%) while the lowest percentage of different-sex married couples is in the youngest age group of those under age 30 (8%).

**Table 1. Individuals in couples, by age (2011-2012 ACS)**

Age	Same-sex	Different-sex married
<30	19%	8%
30-49	47%	39%
50-64	29%	34%
65+	5%	19%

Nearly one tenth of individuals in same-sex couples in Kentucky are members of racial or ethnic minorities. Table 2 shows that approximately 8% of individuals in same-sex couples and in different-sex married couples are racial or ethnic minorities.

The portion of Latinas and Latinos is 3.2% among those in same-sex couples and 2% among those in different-sex married couples. The portion of African-Americans is 3.5% among those in same-sex couples and 4% among those in different-sex married couples. Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders comprise 0.4% of individuals in same-sex couples and 1.2% of those in different-sex married couples. American Indians and Alaskan Natives comprise 0.8% of individuals in same-sex couples and 0.1% of those in different-sex married couples.

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

Race/ethnicity	Same-sex	Different-sex married
White	91.8%	92.0%
African-American	3.5%	4.0%
Latino/a	3.2%	2.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.4%	1.2%
Am. Indian/AK Native	0.8%	0.1%
Other	0.3%	0.7%

## Same-sex couples with children

Nearly one in four same-sex couples in Kentucky (23%) are raising children under age 18 in their homes. 1,623 same-sex-couple households in the state are raising 2,270 children.

Nearly half (48.8%) of children being raised by same-sex couples in Kentucky are biological children and 7.3% are adopted. This implies that same-sex couples in the state are raising an estimated 1,107 biological children and 167 adopted children. Over forty percent (43.9%) of children being raised by same-sex couples in Kentucky, or 996 children, are identified as grandchildren, step, other relatives, or other children who are not relatives.

<sup>1</sup> Gates, GJ, Cooke, A (2011). *Kentucky Census Snapshot: 2010*. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Retrieved from: [http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Census2010Snapshot\\_Kentucky\\_v2.pdf](http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Census2010Snapshot_Kentucky_v2.pdf).

Among couples with children, same-sex couples in Kentucky are more likely than their different-sex married counterparts to be raising an adopted child. An estimated 5.9% of same-sex couples with children have an adopted child, compared to 4.0% of different-sex married couples. Approximately 7.3% of the children of same-sex couples in Kentucky are adopted, compared to 3.0% of the children of different-sex married couples.

While the most recent Census Bureau data do not identify any same-sex couples fostering children, only 0.7% of different-sex married couples are doing so in the state.

#### *Race/ethnicity*

More than one fifth of individuals in same-sex couples who are members of racial or ethnic minorities (21%) are raising a child under age 18, compared to 22% of their White counterparts.

#### *Income*

The median annual household income of same-sex couples with children under age 18 in the home is 13.8% higher than the median annual household income of comparable different-sex married couples (\$80,441 versus \$70,714).

#### **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**

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