

# How can parents help children navigate an increasingly diverse world?

August 23 2018

---



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Multicultural dynamics. Economic disparities. LGBTQ subtleties. Single-parent prevalence. Diversification of the American family is happening at an unprecedented rate, and while awareness of this increased diversity

risers, research for what impact it has on parenting adolescents has been limited.

A special edition of the *Journal of Research on Adolescence* — a journal of the Society for Research on Adolescence—recently published is devoted to engineering conversations that better equip parents to help their children navigate through the dynamics of an ever-changing world—identifying how parenting may or may not be shaped by increasing population diversity. A team of multidisciplinary researchers, initiated through the Center for Developmental Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, provided all nine articles included in the special edition.

"The work of our team incorporates what we know about the changing science of adolescence, demography of the United States, and the challenges and opportunities faced by today's youth," says Andrea Hussong, professor of [psychology](#) and neurosciences in the UNC College of Arts & Sciences and the project's co-organizer. "The result is a series of articles that provide novel insights for families wrestling with this question, and a path forward for scientists seeking to understand this core aspect of development for American youth and their counterparts around the globe."

The team found very little data available when they began examining whether traditional theories about parenting adolescents needed updating for the new millennium. What they did find was relevant ideas percolating within the fields of psychology, anthropology, sociology, [social work](#) and public policy. By integrating ideas across these fields, the team offers new ways of thinking about parenting and diversity in the U.S.

In addition to Hussong and co-lead Deborah Jones, professor of psychology and neuroscience, contributing authors from the research

team largely hail from UNC-Chapel Hill: Dan Baur and Patrick Curran, professors of quantitative psychology, Martha Cox, professor of developmental psychology, and Lisa Pearce, professor of sociology in the College of Arts & Sciences; Susan Ennett, public health researcher in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health; Melissa Lippold, associate professor in the School of Social Work; and Michaeline Jensen, former postdoctoral fellow of clinical psychology.

Additional team members who collaborated on the special edition include researchers from Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Arizona State University, and Vanderbilt University.

Of the nine articles published in the journal, three papers provide the contextual foundation for what parenting looks like today, four papers are devoted to discussing specific forms of diversity in the United States, and the final two papers identify common themes and future directions for research in the area. The goals of this special edition are to frame conversations that identify important parenting issues and provide resources to support ongoing discussions.

**More information:** Andrea Hussong et al. Synthesizing a Special Issue on Parenting Adolescents in an Increasingly Diverse World, *Journal of Research on Adolescence* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/jora.12397](https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12397)

Provided by University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Citation: How can parents help children navigate an increasingly diverse world? (2018, August 23) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-08-parents-children-increasingly-diverse-world.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.