

Young Children of Immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community

Prepared by David Dixon, Julia Gelatt, and Afshin Zilanawala,
Migration Policy Institute
for the
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

The San Jose Knight Community includes Santa Clara, Southern Alameda, and Southern San Mateo Counties in California (see map).



Data in this fact sheet based on tabulations of 2000 Census data, using IPUMS. Steven Ruggles, Matthew Sobek, Trent Alexander, Catherine A. Fitch, Ronald Goeken, Patricia Kelly Hall, Miriam King, and Chad Ronnander. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 3.0. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Population Center, 2004.

Growth (1990-2000)

- Children of immigrants were the fastest-growing component of the child population in the San Jose Knight Community. Children of immigrants include US- and foreign-born children under 18 with one or more foreign-born parent. While the number of children of natives decreased from 301,717 to 265,185 (12 percent) between 1990 and 2000, the number of children of immigrants increased from 201,551 to 310,024 (54 percent).
- During the decade, the number of young children of immigrants (under 9) grew by 51 percent, from 105,598 to 159,088, while the population of young children of natives decreased by 22 percent, from 160,821 to 126,281.

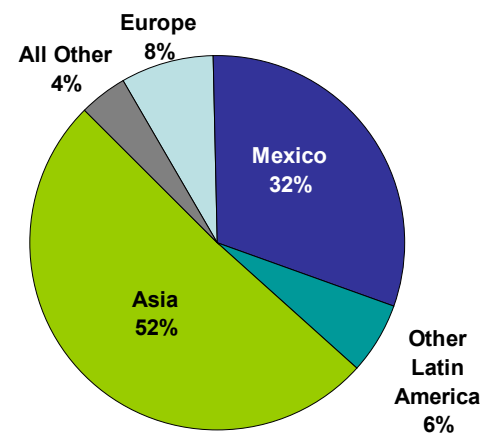
Demographic Characteristics

- Children of immigrants made up 56 percent of the 285,369 children under 9 in the San Jose Knight Community.
- Children of immigrants under 9 were more likely to be US born (and, thus citizens) than foreign born (88 versus 12 percent).
- Among young children with foreign-born parents, 32 percent had a parent born in Mexico, while 52 percent had a parent born in Asia (22 percent in Southeast Asia, 16 percent in East Asia, 14 percent in India/Southwest Asia, and 2 percent in the Middle East).
- Young children of immigrants were more likely to live in two-parent families than children of natives (88 versus 75 percent).

Citizenship and Legal Status¹

- Younger children of immigrants (under age 9) were more likely to be US citizens than older children (9 to 18) in the San Jose Knight Community. Only 11 percent of young children of immigrants were noncitizens, compared with 26 percent of older children.
- Among the younger children of immigrants, 88 percent were native born, 1 percent were naturalized citizens, 2 percent had LPR status, 3 percent were temporary immigrants, 1 percent were refugees, and 5 percent were unauthorized immigrants. Among their older counterparts, 68 percent were native born, 6 percent were naturalized citizens, 8 percent had LPR status, 3 percent were refugees, 2 percent were temporary immigrants, and 13 percent were unauthorized immigrants.
- While 31 percent of young children of immigrants under 9 had a naturalized-citizen parent, more than two-thirds of young children of immigrants had a noncitizen parent: 34 percent had an LPR parent, 4 percent had a refugee parent, 6 percent had a temporary immigrant parent, and 25 percent had an unauthorized immigrant parent. Among older children of immigrants, 45 percent had a naturalized-citizen parent and more than half had a noncitizen parent: 29

Figure 1. World Region of Birth among Parents of Young Children of Immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community



Note: Totals may add to greater than 100 percent as a single young child may have parents from two different countries or world regions.
Source: 5 percent IPUMS 2000.

1. Imputations of legal status by Jeffrey S. Passel, Jennifer Van Hook, and Frank D. Bean. Estimates of Legal and Unauthorized Foreign-Born Population for the United States and Selected States, Based on Census 2000. Report to the Census Bureau. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 2004. http://www.sabresys.com/i_whitepapers.asp.

percent had an LPR parent, 5 percent had a refugee parent, 2 percent had a temporary immigrant parent, and 20 percent had an unauthorized immigrant parent.

- Most young children of immigrants under 9 in the San Jose Knight Community (roughly 59 percent) live in mixed-status families with one or more noncitizen parents. (A mixed-status family includes adults who are noncitizens and children who are US citizens.)

Parent Education and Language

- In the San Jose Knight Community, almost half (49 percent) of young children of immigrants (under 9) had a parent with at least a bachelor’s degree, a share that nearly equaled their counterparts in native families. Nationwide, only 27 percent of young children of immigrants had a parent with at least a bachelor’s degree. At the same time, 21 percent of young children of immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community had parents with less than a high-school education (versus only 6 percent of children of natives).
- Despite high parental education levels, 57 percent of children of immigrants under 9 had one or more limited English proficient (LEP) parent,² while 62 percent of their older counterparts (9 to 18) had a LEP parent. Over half of native-born and two-thirds of foreign-born young children of immigrants had at least one LEP parent. In contrast, a very small share (2 percent) of young children of natives lived in families in which either parent was LEP.
- Nearly one out of every three young children of immigrants lived in “linguistically isolated” households, where all persons age 14 and over were LEP. In contrast, one out of every five older children of immigrants lived in such households. Foreign-born children of immigrants were more likely to live in linguistically isolated households than were US-born children of immigrants (40 versus 29 percent). Less than 1 percent of children of natives lived in such households.

Work and Wage

- Forty-one percent of young children of immigrants (under 9) lived in families in which both parents were in the labor force, a level comparable to young children of natives. However, young foreign-born children of immigrants were less likely to have both parents in the labor force than US-born children of immigrants (26 versus 43 percent).
- The median hourly wage for native full-time year-round³ working parents of young children was about \$29 in 1999 for the San Jose Knight Community. For parents of young children of immigrants, the median hourly wage was \$24, \$10 more than the national average for parents of young children of immigrants.
- Young children of immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community were much more likely to have fathers who were active either in management, computer/mathematical, or architecture/engineering fields than young children of immigrants nationally (see Figure 2). However, both groups were likely to have fathers who worked in production

Figure 2. Top Five Occupations among Young Children of Immigrants’ Parents

United States		San Jose Knight Community	
Occupation	Percent of young children of immigrants	Occupation	Percent of young children of immigrants
Father’s Occupation		Father’s Occupation	
Production	14.2	Management	13.9
Construction trades	13.1	Computer and mathematical	13.6
Transportation and material moving	10.3	Production	12.3
Management	8.5	Architecture and engineering	12.3
Sales	7.6	Construction trades	8.4
Mother’s Occupation		Mother’s Occupation	
Office and administrative support	17.1	Office and administrative support	15.0
Production	13.3	Production	13.8
Sales	11	Sales	9.5
Grounds cleaning/maintenance	7.4	Computer and mathematical	7.5
Food preparation and serving	6.8	Management	7.2

Source: 5 percent IPUMS 2000.

2. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) is defined here as those who report speaking English “less than very well” on the census questionnaire.

3. Full-time year-round workers are those who work 35 or more hours a week, 50 or more weeks a year.

and construction-related occupations.

- While young children of immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community were more likely to have mothers who were employed in management and computer/mathematical fields than young children of immigrants nationally, both groups were likely to have mothers who worked in office and administrative support, production, and sales occupations.

Poverty and Income

- According to Figure 3, young children of immigrants (under 9) were twice as likely to live below the federal poverty line as children of natives (10 versus 5 percent).
- Twenty-five percent (38,912) of children of immigrants under 9 in the San Jose Knight Community lived in low-income families (with incomes less than twice the federal poverty level), compared to 13 percent of children of natives. Foreign-born young children of immigrants were more likely to live in low-income families than their US-born counterparts (30 versus 24 percent).

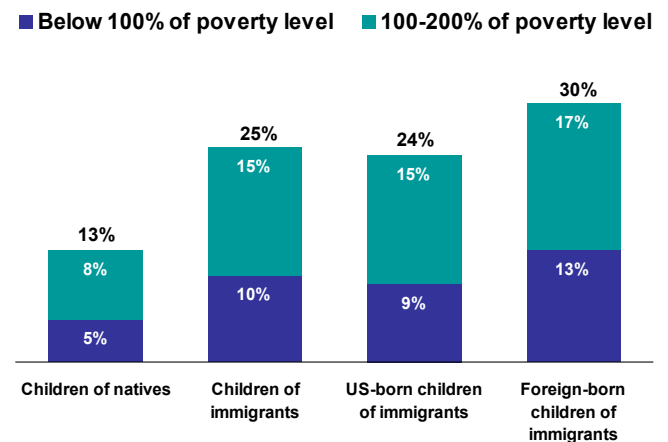
Hardship and Benefit Use

- Among low-income families, young children of immigrants (under 9) were less likely to live in families that received public benefits: 10 percent of children of immigrants under 9 in such families received public assistance (including TANF) from a state or local welfare office in 1999, compared to 15 percent of their counterparts in native families. US-born and foreign-born young children of immigrants had nearly similar public assistance receipt (10 versus 11 percent).
- In 1999, about 1.2 percent of young children who lived in low-income immigrant families received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) versus 2.3 percent of those in native families. Among young children in low-income immigrant families, 1.0 percent of those born in the United States and 1.9 percent of those born abroad lived in families that received SSI.

Conclusions

- More than half of all young children under 9 in the San Jose Knight Community were children of immigrants.
- In contrast to California as a whole, a much higher share of young children of immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community had a parent born in Asia than had a parent born in Mexico (52 versus 32 percent). At the state level, 60 percent of young children with a foreign-born parent had a parent born in Mexico and 23 percent had a parent born in Asia.
- While 89 percent of young children of immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community were citizens, more than two-thirds had a noncitizen parent. Consequently, mixed-status families were common among young children of immigrants, and thus legal and unauthorized noncitizen parents may have been reluctant to use public benefits for which their citizen children were eligible.
- Almost half of young children of immigrants had a parent with at least a bachelor's degree. At the same time, young children of immigrants were more likely to have a parent lacking a high-school degree than young children of natives. Young children with a parent born in East Asia were much more likely to have a parent with at least a bachelor's degree than young children with a parent from Southeast Asia or Mexico (88 percent versus 48 and 7 percent, respectively). Conversely, those with a parent born in Mexico were more likely to have parents without a high-school de-

Figure 3. Poverty among Young Children of Immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community



- gree than those with a parent born in Southeast Asia or East Asia (55 percent versus 14 and 5 percent, respectively).
- The split between high and low educational levels of parents of young children of immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community is also apparent in the top occupations of such parents. The top occupations of parents of young children of immigrants included high-skill occupations such as management, computer/mathematical, and architecture/engineering fields, as well as lower-skill occupations such as production, construction, and administrative support.
 - About 57 percent of young children of immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community had a LEP parent. Additionally, nearly one out of three young children of immigrants lived in linguistically isolated households. Limited English skills were particularly pronounced among young children with a parent born in Mexico, with 82 percent living with a LEP parent and 45 percent living in linguistically isolated households, versus those with a parent born in any part of Asia (49 and 26 percent respectively).
 - Young children of immigrants in the San Jose Knight Community were more likely to live in low-income families than young children of natives. However, incomes varied by parents' places of birth: Nearly half of young children with a parent born in Mexico lived in low-income families versus 8 percent of those with a parent born in East Asia and 28 percent of those with a parent born in Southeast Asia. Among young children of immigrants with a full-time year-round working parent, those with a parent born in East Asia had a higher median parental hourly wage than those with a parent from Southeast Asia or Mexico (\$38 versus \$24 and \$13, respectively).

The authors would like to thank Shirin Hakimzadeh for her invaluable assistance on this project and Michael Fix for his editorial guidance.

