

**DIVERSE FAMILY LIVING SITUATIONS
AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:
A MULTILEVEL ANALYSIS COMPARING
LONGITUDINAL EVIDENCE FROM
BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES¹**

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1. H. Joshi, E.C. Cooksey, R.D. Wiggins, A. McCulloch, G. Verropoulou, and L. Clarke, "Diverse Family Living Situations and Child Development: a multi-level analysis comparing longitudinal evidence from Britain and the United States", *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, 1999, vol. 13, no. 3, p. 292-314. Reprint by permission of Oxford University Press. This work is funded by the ESRC, grant L129251027 in the Programme 'Children 5-16: Growing into the 21st Century'. We are grateful to CHRR at Ohio State University, for providing a revised set of NCDS child test scores. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Conferences of the British Society for Population Studies, and the Royal Statistical Society, September 1998.

Abstract

This study uses national data from both Great Britain and the United States to examine the relationship between children's family history and their educational and behavioral development. We use a multivariate, multi-level modeling strategy to estimate heterogeneity both within and between families. Our results show that associations between family living situations and children's wellbeing appear to be mediated by levels of human, financial and social capital available to children. Contrary to expectations, we found no evidence that children with non-traditional family living experiences are any more likely to be negatively impacted in Britain than across the Atlantic where diverse living arrangements are more widespread.