

Boomerang Kids Study Among American Adults and Parents

August 2013

Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC

How long is too long to live with your parents after college? Americans disagree.

(Base: 2,021 respondents)

On average, Americans say 4 years is too long for boomerang kids to live at home.

- Americans believe 4 years is too long for adults to live at home with their parents after graduating from college.
- One in five Americans (20%) feel it is okay for adult children to live at home as long as they want.
- Nearly one in seven Americans (13%) think adults should never live at home with their parents.

The younger you are, the longer you feel it's okay to stick around.

- Americans ages 55 and older feel it is acceptable for adults to live at home with their parents for up to 3 years after college.
- Millennials (ages 18-34) feel that any time over 5 years is too long for adults to live at home with their parents after college.

Parents may be driving the desire to return home after college.

- On average, parents feel it is okay for adult children to live at home for up to 5 years after college.
- Younger parents (ages 18-34) believe adult children can live with their parents for as long as 6 years after college, whereas older parents (ages 55 and older) feel adults should move out of their parents' home within 4 years of finishing college.
- Older adults (ages 55 and older) without children feel adult children should be out of their parents' home one year sooner (3 years) than older parents (4 years) in that same age range.
- Nearly one in four parents (24%) believe it is okay for adult children to live at home as long as they want.

Women are more tolerant of boomerang kids than men.

- Men (16%) are significantly more likely to believe that an adult should never live at home with his or her parents after college than women (11%).
- Men ages 55 and older feel that 2 years is too long for adults to live at home with their parents after college, which is significantly lower than the average number of years indicated by both men and women in all other age groups.

The Northeast is the most welcoming of boomerang kids.

- Northeasterners believe that 5 years is too long for adults to live at home with their parents after graduation, while adults in all other regions (Midwest, South and West) believe 4 years is too long.
- Adults in the Northeast are more accepting of having adults live at home with their parents after college than those in the South. Northeasterners (23%) believe that no amount of time is too long for adult children to live with their parents after college, compared to 17% of Southerners who indicated the same.
- Adults in the West (15%) are more likely to indicate that an adult should never live at home with their parents after graduating from college than those adults who live in the Northeast (9%).

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For adult children living at home, chores are a must.

(Base: 2,021 respondents)

- The vast majority of Americans (92%) believe adult children who live at home with their parents should do their own chores.
- Midwesterners (96%) are more likely to agree with this statement than those in the West (92%), Northeast (91%) or South (90%).
- Americans ages 35 and older (95%) are significantly more likely to agree with this than Americans ages 18 through 34 (84%).
- Women (95%) are more likely to agree with this than men (89%).

Adult children living with their parents should pay rent.

(Base: 2,021 respondents)

- Most (82%) Americans agree that adult children who live at home with their parents should pay rent.
- Midwesterners (88%) are more likely to agree with this statement than those in the West (84%), Northeast (80%) or South (79%).
- Americans ages 35 and older (88%) are significantly more likely to agree with this statement than Americans ages 18-34 (69%).
- Women (85%) are more likely to agree with this statement than men (80%).

It's okay for adults to live with their parents if they are saving money to buy their own home.

(Base: 2,021 respondents)

- Four in five (80%) Americans believe that it's okay for adult children to live with their parents if they are saving money to buy their own home.
- Women (84%) are more likely to agree with this statement than men (76%).

Boomerang kids should move out once they find a job.

(Base: 2,021 respondents)

- Close to two in three (65%) Americans feel that adult children who live at home with their parents after college should move out as soon as they find a job.
- Those who live in the West (68%), Midwest (68%) and South (67%) are significantly more likely to agree with this than those who live in the Northeast (57%).
- Americans ages 55 and older (74%) are more likely to agree with this than Americans of any other age group (18-34 [59%]; 35-44 [60%]; 45-54 [60%]).

Too many adult children living at home are avoiding responsibility.

(Base: 2,021 respondents)

- More than two in three (70%) Americans feel that too many adult children who are living at home with their parents are avoiding responsibility.
- Midwesterners (73%), Southerners (71%) and Westerners (71%) are more likely to agree with this statement than those who live in the Northeast (63%).

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- Americans ages 55 and older (76%) are more likely to agree with this than any other age group (18-34 [66%]; 35-44 [69%]; 45-54 [65%]).
- Women (74%) are more likely to agree with this statement than men (66%).

Too many boomerang kids are overstaying their welcome.

(Base: 2,021 respondents)

- Close to two in three (65%) Americans believe that too many adult children who return home with their parents after college are overstaying their welcome.
- Americans ages 55 and older (73%) are more likely to agree with this than Americans of any other age group (18-34 [58%]; 35-44 [58%]; 45-54 [64%]).

When adult children live with their parents after college, it prevents the parents from moving on with their lives.

(Base: 2,021 respondents)

- Over half (57%) of Americans feel that when children return home after college, it prevents their parents from moving on with their own lives.
- More than half (51%) of American parents believe that when children return home after college, it prevents their parents from moving on with their own lives.
- Americans ages 55 and older (64%) are more likely to agree with this than Americans of any other age group (18-34 [51%]; 35-44 [51%]; 45-54 [57%]).

Full Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States between June 13-17, 2013 among 2,021 adults (ages 18 and over) by Harris Interactive on behalf of Coldwell Banker Real Estate via its Quick Query omnibus product. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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Response base:

Total respondents: 2,021 American adults (ages 18 and older)

Demographic breakdown of respondents:

Age:

Ages 18-34: 598

Ages 35-44: 312

Ages 45-54: 309

Ages 55 and older: 802

Parental status:

Parents: 888

Parents ages 18-34: 207

Parents ages 35-44: 177

Parents ages 45-54: 164

Parents ages 55 and older: 340

Adults without children: 1,133

Adults, ages 18-34, without children: 391

Adults, ages 35-44, without children: 135

Adults, ages 45-44, without children: 145

Adults, ages 55 and older, without children: 462

Gender:

Men: 960

Men ages 18-34: 298

Men ages 35-44: 145

Men ages 45-54: 144

Men ages 55 and older: 373

Women: 1,061

Women ages 18-34: 300

Women ages 35-44: 167

Women ages 45-54: 165

Women ages 55 and older: 429

Geographic Region:

Northeast: 509

Midwest: 508

South: 586

West: 418

Definition of geographic regions:

For the purposes of this survey, the United States regions were defined as follows:

Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont; West Virginia

Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota; Wisconsin

South: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas; Virginia

West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington; Wyoming