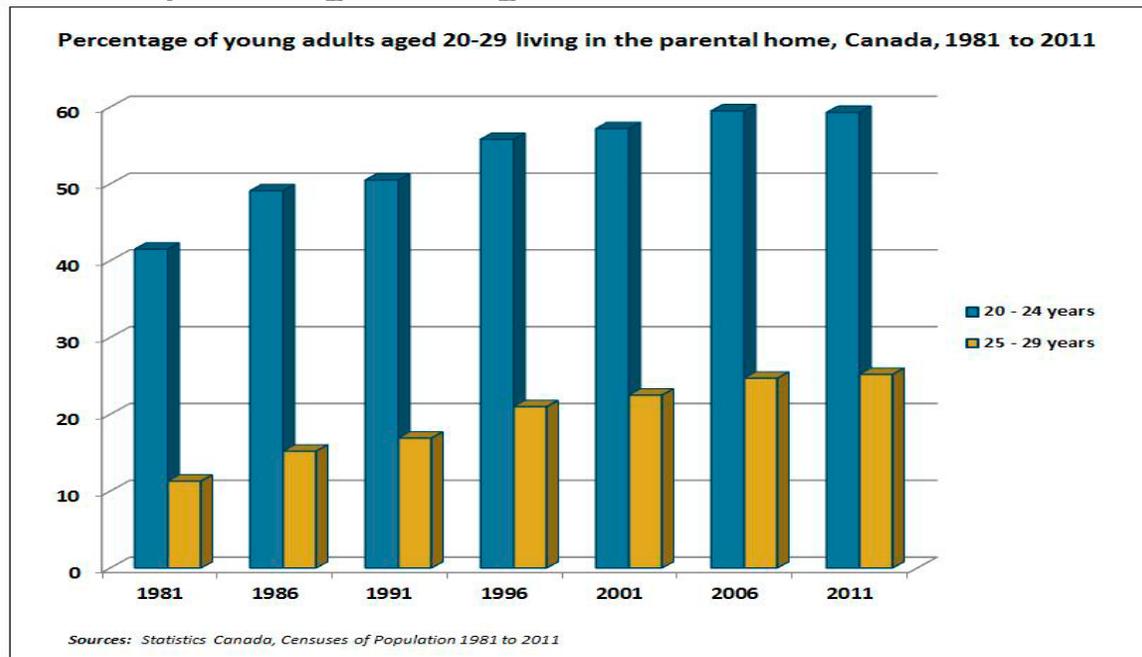


# FASCINATING Families

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## Family Living Arrangements: All under one roof



Living space is an essential and dynamic family resource. Family living arrangements are becoming increasingly multi-generational. Rising living costs, heavy educational debt loads, a tight labour market, more ‘friendships’ between young adults and their parents, increased cultural diversity and larger homes result in more young people choosing to or being compelled to live in the same household as their parents, well into their twenties.

Families use space in all sorts of different ways to meet evolving needs as family make-up shifts over time. In the past, the majority of parents experienced an “empty nest” soon after their children had completed their education and ventured out into the job market. Today, they are more likely to experience a “revolving door” as adult children move in and out several times before going out on their own permanently.

In Canada today, nearly half of all young adults in their 20s (42%) are living in the parental home,<sup>1</sup> either because they never left it or because they returned home after living elsewhere. Among those who return, 2.1% do so with a spouse or common-law partner.<sup>2</sup>

Young adults in their early twenties (20-24) are more than twice as likely to live at home than those 25-29 years old (59% vs. 25%, respectively).<sup>3</sup> Men in their twenties are also more likely to live at home than are women of the same age group (47% and 38%, respectively).<sup>4</sup> The rates vary, with as many as 79% of this age

group living in the parental home in the census subdivision of King (Toronto CMA).<sup>5</sup>

Cohabitation is common even for those not living in the parental home, with 12% of young adults living as roommates, lodgers and boarders and only 9% lived alone in 2011.<sup>6</sup>

### Family Lens

Families are highly resilient and adaptable networks of care demonstrating their resourcefulness in the ways they adapt space to support and balance the changing needs of members, young and old. Navigating issues of privacy, personal space and independence are now important issues for families to address, particularly when parents and their adult children work out what it means live together. Sharing space across generations can offer families a chance to strengthen ties, enhance relationships and increase understanding across and among generations.

<sup>1</sup>Statistics Canada. 2012. Living Arrangements of Young Adults Aged 20 to 29. Catalogue No. 98-312-X-2011003. Ottawa. [http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/as-sa/98-312-x/98-312-x2011003\\_3-eng.cfm](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/as-sa/98-312-x/98-312-x2011003_3-eng.cfm)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.