

Do intergeneration household structures reflect differences in American middle school students' school experiences and engagement in schoolwork?

A seminar by Peter Brandon

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American children grow up in a variety of household structures. Across these households, resources, parenting styles, household composition, and surrounding neighborhoods can vary. Studies suggest that the intermingling of these social, economic, and demographic factors affects children's well-being and later transitions into adulthood. Thus, households in which children find themselves are consequential and shape their future opportunities. Among the households in which American children grow up, two of the more significant types are three- and skipped-generation households. Our understanding of these particular households has expanded, but there is still much to learn, especially about the everyday experiences of children growing up in these two types of households. Among those everyday experiences worth investigating further are those related to schooling. Positive schooling experiences and a child's interest in learning are crucial to their development and identity. Preliminary findings from this study suggest schooling experiences and engagement in schoolwork, outside of the classroom, for children in intergenerational households may differ from their peers growing up in other households. The study speculates about interventions focused on the home environment or at the school that might ensure children in intergenerational households are not educationally disadvantaged.



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