

New User? Register | Sign In | Help

Preview Mail w/ Toolbar

Yahoo! Mail



Web Search

Find a Home Finance and Mortgage Neighborhood Info Guides and Advice My Real Estate For Professionals

Search for Homes Foreclosures Home Values Find a REALTOR® Sell Your Home Post a Rental Listing

America's Best Places To Raise A Family 2010

Francesca Levy, Forbes.com
Jun 7th, 2010

ARTICLE TOOLS: [Email article](#) [Printable view](#) [IM article](#) [Save to del.icio.us](#) [Bookmark](#)

When Amelia Hamilton-Morris and her husband William were starting a family, they had to choose between living in [Iowa](#), where his family had settled three generations earlier, or in her native [Houston](#). They eventually decided to raise their children in Iowa's capital city, [Des Moines](#), because it boasted good schools, affordable housing and a strong sense of community. Two children and 17 years later, Hamilton-Morris is still enthusiastic about their decision.

"You feel safe all the time, and people are extremely friendly," says Hamilton-Morris, a spokeswoman for the City of [Des Moines](#). "The commute is not long; even if you live at the far end of the city, you're only talking about 12 to 15 minutes to downtown."



The perks that attracted Hamilton-Morris' family to [Des Moines](#) are among the reasons it tops our list of the best cities to raise a family. Its young population is more likely to graduate high school than in other cities, and life for most families is safe and affordable. Short average commute times save working parents precious minutes to spend with their families.

The top 10 cities for families aren't flashy. Most don't draw throngs of tourists or boast enviable night life. But then that's not what most families are looking for. Instead, our list has metros like [Ogden, Utah](#); [Syracuse, N.Y.](#); and [Knoxville, Tenn.](#)--places where crime is low, educational prospects are solid and most people can readily afford the daily essentials.

Behind the Numbers

To find the cities where families fare best, we ranked America's 100 largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas in seven categories. Using numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Sperling's Best Places and Moody's Economy.com, we looked at the cost of living, prevalence of home ownership, median household income, [housing costs](#), commute time, crime and the percentage of young adults that graduate high school.

Lots of East Coast Options for Families

The Northeast fares well on our list, claiming six of the top 10 spots. In densely packed [Rochester, N.Y.](#), commutes are short; a scant 3% of commuters spend an hour or more in traffic on their way to work. [Syracuse, N.Y.](#), offers significant educational benefits: 89% of young adults have high school degrees. And some former manufacturing hubs, like [Pittsburgh Pa.](#), are having a renaissance of sorts. Once a fallen steel giant, the city has diversified its economy and boasts low crime and high educational attainment. [Pittsburgh](#) also has the highest home ownership rate in our 10.

"People know that [Pittsburgh](#) is a really great place for families because of safety, schools and the arts." says Wendy Hermann, director of student services for master's programs at



Searching for a new home?
Preview local listings from the Yahoo! homepage.
[Add to YAHOO!](#)

Search Mortgage Rates in your Area

Location:

Loan Amount:

Loan Purpose:

Loan Type:

[Get Rates](#)

More at Y! Real Estate

- [Browse Homes For Sale](#)
- [Find Foreclosure Deals](#)
- [Search Rental Properties](#)
- [Buy vs. Rent Calculator](#)
- [Calculate how much home insurance you need](#)
- [Find the value of any home](#)

[more...](#)

What would my loan payments be?

Loan Information

Loan amount: \$

Annual interest rate: (0-30) %

Term of loan (months): (1-360)

Desired table display:

Carnegie Mellon University. "I see students wanting that whether they're married or not. They see staying in Pittsburgh as a way to say that's the kind of lifestyle they're looking forward to."

Family-Friendly and Fun

But a city being family-friendly doesn't automatically make it stand out. [Buffalo, N.Y.](#), makes our list in part thanks to short commutes and affordability, but there's also plenty to do there--its spectacular Niagara Falls is a huge tourist draw. [Provo, Utah](#), is a bustling college town, home to Brigham Young University, but it's not just a great place for students. Families flock there for its safety and [schools](#): It has the highest percentage of high-school graduates on our list and one of the lowest crime rates.

For families, offering their children a safe place to play and the best chance to learn takes precedence over the number of bars and restaurants. In places like Des Moines, that often means young people leave to explore the country when they reach college age, but eventually head back home, says Hamilton-Morris.

"When they're ready to raise children, we see a lot of young people come back for that family circle of support."

Top 5 Places To Raise A Family

No. 1: [Des Moines-West Des Moines, Iowa](#)

Cost-of-Living Rank: 21
 Crime Rate Rank: 28
 Commuting Rank: 3
 Household Income Rank: 32
 Home Ownership Rank: 8
 Homeowner Costs Rank: 26
 Education Rank: 4

No. 2: [Harrisburg-Carlisle, Pa.](#)

Cost-of-Living Rank: 24
 Crime Rate Rank: 10
 Commuting Rank: 26
 Household Income Rank: 40
 Home Ownership Rank: 25
 Homeowner Costs Rank: 15
 Education Rank: 25

No. 3: [Rochester, N.Y.](#)

Cost-of-Living Rank: 6
 Crime Rate Rank: 18
 Commuting Rank: 6
 Household Income Rank: 57
 Home Ownership Rank: 28
 Homeowner Costs Rank: 40
 Education Rank: 20

No. 4: [Syracuse, N.Y.](#)

Cost-of-Living Rank: 11
 Crime Rate Rank: 13
 Commuting Rank: 9
 Household Income Rank: 72
 Home Ownership Rank: 47
 Homeowner Costs Rank: 20
 Education Rank: 6

No. 5: [Provo-Orem, Utah](#)

Cost-of-Living Rank: 34
 Crime Rate Rank: 6
 Commuting Rank: 44

Powered by CalcXML

Submit

» [See all calculators](#)

Reset

Top Rated Articles by the Experts

[Good Faith Estimate contains some 'quirks'](#)
 by [Dian Hymer](#) Wed, Jun 2, 2010

[Presale inspections for smoother sales](#)
 by [Dian Hymer](#) Mon, Apr 12, 2010

[Laser level handy for home projects](#)
 by [Paul Bianchina](#) Tue, Jun 1, 2010

[Sprucing up a wood deck](#)
 by [Paul Bianchina](#) Fri, May 14, 2010

» [See All Expert Advice](#)

Household Income Rank: 28
 Home Ownership Rank: 16
 Homeowner Costs Rank: 52
 Education Rank: 1

[Click here to see the full list of America's Best Places to Raise a Family](#)

Showing page 1 of 1

ARTICLE TOOLS: [Email article](#) [Printable view](#) [IM article](#) [Save to del.icio.us](#) [Bookmark](#)

Next step: Search for a home...

Search	Location	Listing Type (what's this?)	Search
	<input type="text"/> City & State or ZIP	Homes for Sale	
	Price	Beds	Baths
	<input type="text"/> to <input type="text"/>	Any	Any
			Hide Options

Sponsored Links

[Super Cheap Car Insurance](#)
 Get Discount Car Insurance Quotes Online - Rates from \$15 / Month.
[Low-Income-Car-Insurance.com](#)

[Mortgage Rates Hit 3.54% APR](#)
 Obama's Making Home Affordable Program Can Help You Take Advantage
[www.SeeRefinanceRates.com](#)

[1.40-1.70% Apply Online](#)
 From AA+ Rated GE Capital Corp. Not An Offer Of Securities For Sale.
[GEInterestPlus.com](#)

[Pre-Foreclosure Deal](#)
 Searching for Foreclosed Property? See 1000s of Houses On Sale Today!
[ForeclosedHouseSearch.com](#)

[Add Real Estate to Yahoo! Toolbar](#) [Browse by State or City](#)

[Homes for Sale](#) - [Apartments for Rent](#) - [Home Values](#) - [Mortgages](#) - [Real Estate Agents](#) - [Foreclosures](#) - [Refinance Mortgage](#) - [Home Equity Loans](#)

Top Cities:

[Atlanta real estate](#) | [Austin real estate](#) | [Chicago real estate](#) | [Denver real estate](#) | [Houston real estate](#) | [Las Vegas real estate](#) | [Myrtle Beach real estate](#)
[Orlando real estate](#) | [Phoenix real estate](#) | [San Antonio real estate](#) | [San Diego real estate](#) | [San Francisco real estate](#) | [Seattle real estate](#) | [Tucson real estate](#)

Top States:

[Arizona](#) | [California](#) | [Colorado](#) | [Florida](#) | [Georgia](#) | [Hawaii](#) | [Illinois](#) | [Indiana](#) | [Maryland](#) | [Massachusetts](#) | [Michigan](#) | [Minnesota](#) | [Missouri](#) | [Nevada](#)
[New Jersey](#) | [New York](#) | [North Carolina](#) | [Ohio](#) | [Oklahoma](#) | [Oregon](#) | [Pennsylvania](#) | [South Carolina](#) | [Texas](#) | [Tennessee](#) | [Utah](#) | [Virginia](#) | [Washington](#) | [Wisconsin](#)

Related Yahoo! Services:

[Jobs](#) - [Personal Financial Advice](#)

[Partner with Yahoo! Real Estate](#)

Some Yahoo! Real Estate information is provided by our trusted partners. However, Yahoo! does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of any third party content. A REALTOR® is a real estate professional who is a member of the National Association of REALTORS®

Copyright © 2010 Yahoo! Inc. All Rights Reserved.
[Privacy Policy](#) - [About Our Ads](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Copyright/IP Policy](#)