

## **Social Disadvantage and Child Health among China's Rural-Urban Migrant Households**



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This study uses migrant household survey data from 2008 and 2009 to examine how social disadvantage among rural-urban migrant households is associated with the nutritional status of children who migrate with

their parents and those who are left behind. Results indicate that China's *hukou* system of household registration – designed to limit domestic migration flows by denying public services in cities to residents with rural *hukou* – has a negative and statistically significant association with children's weight-for-age Z-scores, even after controlling for a full set of socioeconomic status indicators and household characteristics. The *hukou* system does not relate to children's height-for-age Z-scores (an indicator of longer-term nutritional status), suggesting that rural-urban households are resilient in the longer term. Tests for gender-based discrimination indicate that children in female-headed households do not appear to suffer from any nutritional penalty relative to children in households headed by men, while girl children do exhibit poorer nutritional status compared to boy children.

*Sponsored by the Confucius Institute of Rutgers University and the Rutgers Center for Chinese Studies. A light lunch will be served.*

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