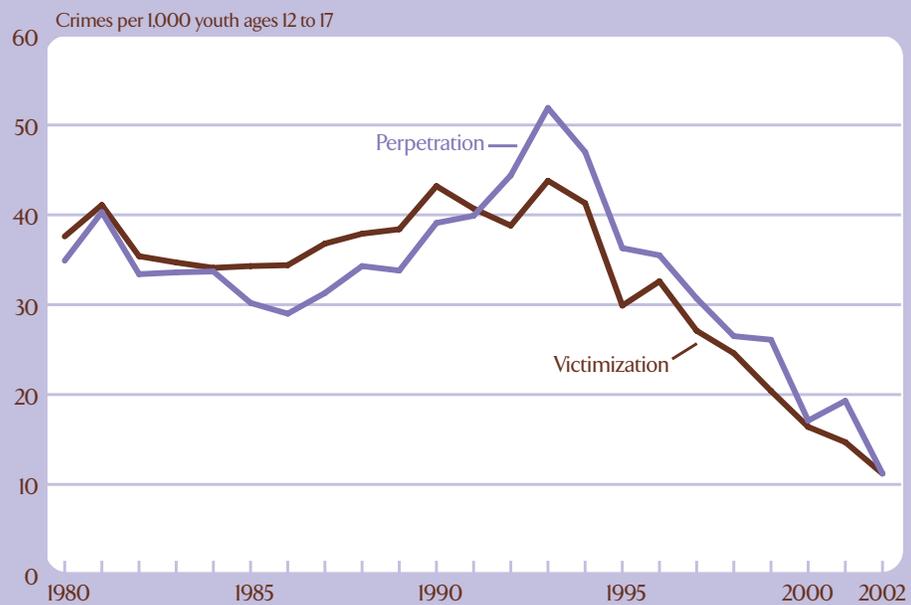


## Behavioral and social environment indicators

Young people's participation in illegal or high-risk behaviors, such as smoking, drinking alcohol, using illicit drugs, and engaging in violent crimes, has severe long-term consequences for our Nation's youth.

A striking decline in the level of violence affecting young people is one of the most favorable trends in recent years. Dramatic declines have been observed in both serious violent crime victimization of youth and offending (perpetration) by youth. After peaking in 1993, serious violent crime victimization rates dropped 74 percent: from 44 crimes per 1,000 youth ages 12 to 17 in 1993 to 11 crimes in 2002 (Figure 7). Likewise, since 1993, serious violent crime offending rates dropped 78 percent: from 52 crimes per 1,000 youth in 1993 to 11 crimes in 2002.

**FIGURE 7** Serious violent crime victimization and perpetration rates for youth ages 12 to 17, 1980-2002



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. National Crime Victimization Survey. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting Program, Supplementary Homicide Reports.

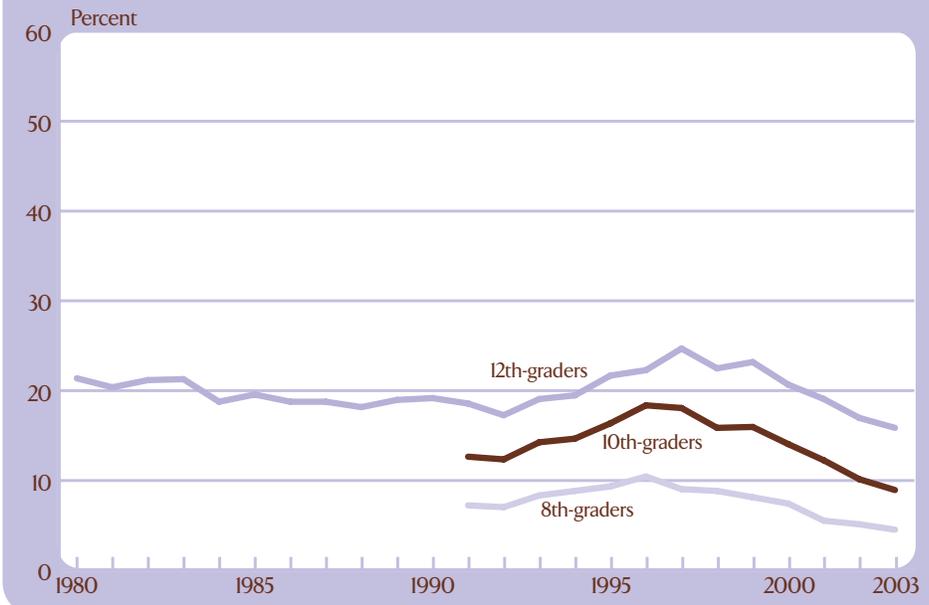
In 2002, the race of youth did not affect their likelihood of being victimized. This represents a change in victimization patterns since 1993, when Black youth were more likely to be the victims of serious violent crimes than were White youth. In 1993, the serious crime victimization rate for Black youth was 72 crimes per 1,000 compared to 40 crimes per 1,000 White youth. By 2002, Black youth were as likely to be the victims of serious violent crime as were White youth. The 2002 serious crime victimization rate for Black youth was 17 crimes per 1,000 versus 10 crimes per 1,000 White youth.

According to 2002 victims' reports, 17 percent of all serious violent crimes involved a juvenile offender. Victims' reports from 2002 also indicate that more than one offender was involved in 57 percent of all the serious violent crimes involving youth offenders.

Prevention of cigarette smoking among adolescents is a national public health priority. In 2003, 5 percent of 8th-graders, 9 percent of 10th-graders, and 16 percent of 12th-graders reported that they smoked cigarettes daily in the past 30 days (Figure 8). These are the lowest rates since the survey began (1975 for 12th-graders and 1991 for 8th- and 10th-graders). However, from 2002 to 2003, daily use of cigarettes did not decline significantly for students in any grade. As in the past, male and female students continue to have similar rates of daily smoking, and White students continue to smoke at a higher rate than either Black or Hispanic students.

**FIGURE 8**

Percentage of students who reported smoking cigarettes daily in the previous 30 days by school grade, 1980-2003



SOURCE: National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse. Monitoring the Future Survey.

Illicit drug use over the past 30 days did not decrease significantly from 2002 to 2003 for students in any grade. Nonetheless, in 2003, illicit drug use was at its lowest point since 1993 among 8th-graders (10 percent), since 1994 among 10th-graders (20 percent), and since 1995 among 12th-graders (24 percent).

From 2002 to 2003, heavy drinking remained steady across all age groups: 12 percent of 8th-graders, 22 percent of 10th-graders, and 28 percent of 12th-graders consumed 5 or more drinks in a row at least once in the past two weeks in 2003. The pattern of illicit drug use and heavy drinking by race and ethnicity is similar: both are much more prevalent among White and Hispanic secondary school students than among their Black counterparts.



## Education indicators

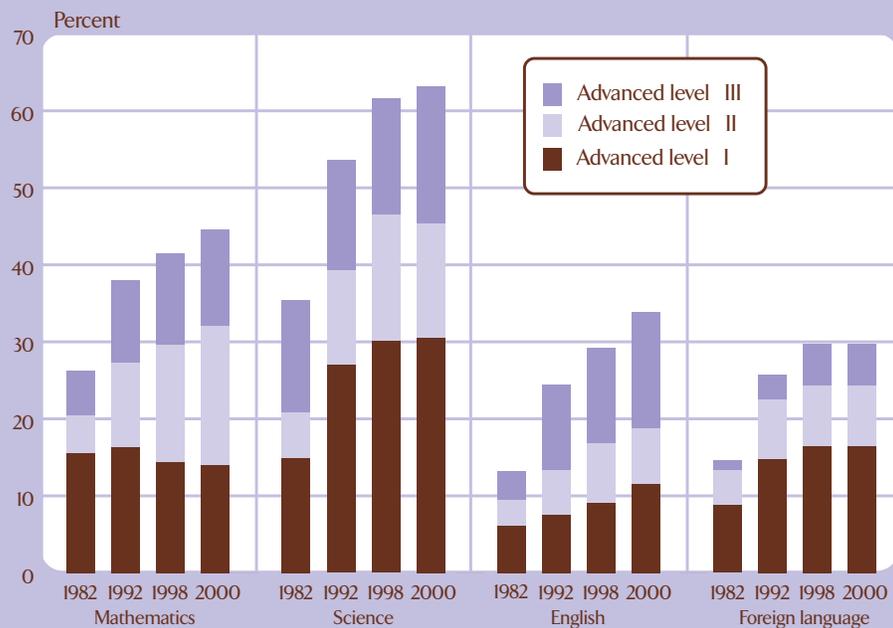
Education shapes the personal growth and life chances of children, as well as the economic and social progress of our Nation. Early educational experiences, such as reading to children, improve skills and academic success in school,<sup>11</sup> while later academic accomplishments, such as advanced coursetaking and high school completion, promote achievement in higher education and employment prospects.<sup>12,13</sup>

The most recently available data (2001) indicate that 58 percent of 3- to 5-year olds were read to daily by a family member. This percentage has fluctuated since 1993, ranging from 53 to 58 percent. Females (61 percent) were more likely to have been read to than males (55 percent).

Long-term increases in academic coursetaking are among the most noteworthy improvements in childhood education; between 1998 and 2000, however, the only significant increase in academic coursetaking was in English. The percentage of high school graduates who had taken honors-level English courses increased 2.5 times, from 13 percent in 1982 to 34 percent in 2000, with the largest increases occurring in the percentage of students taking 75 percent or more of their English courses at the honors level (Figure 9). Similarly, the percentage of high school graduates taking advanced

**FIGURE 9**

Percentage of high school graduates who completed high-level coursework in mathematics, science, English, and foreign language, 1982, 1992, 1998, and 2000



NOTE: Mathematics level I: algebra III and trigonometry; level II: precalculus; level III: calculus. Science level I: chemistry I or physics I; level II: chemistry I and physics I; level III: chemistry II or physics II or advanced biology. English level I: less than 50 percent of completed courses classified as honors (vs. low academic and regular courses); level II: 50-74 percent in honors; level III: 75 percent or more honors courses. Foreign language level I: 3 years of Spanish, French, Latin, or German; level II: 4 years; level III: advanced placement.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. High School and Beyond Survey, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, and National Assessment of Educational Progress Transcript Study.

<sup>11</sup> Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S., and Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

<sup>12</sup> Horn, L., Nunez, A.M., and Bobbitt, L. (2000). *Mapping the Road to College: First-Generation Students' Math Track, Planning Strategies, and Context for Support*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

<sup>13</sup> American Council on Education. (1994). *Higher Education Today: Facts in Brief*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education, Division of Policy Analysis and Research.

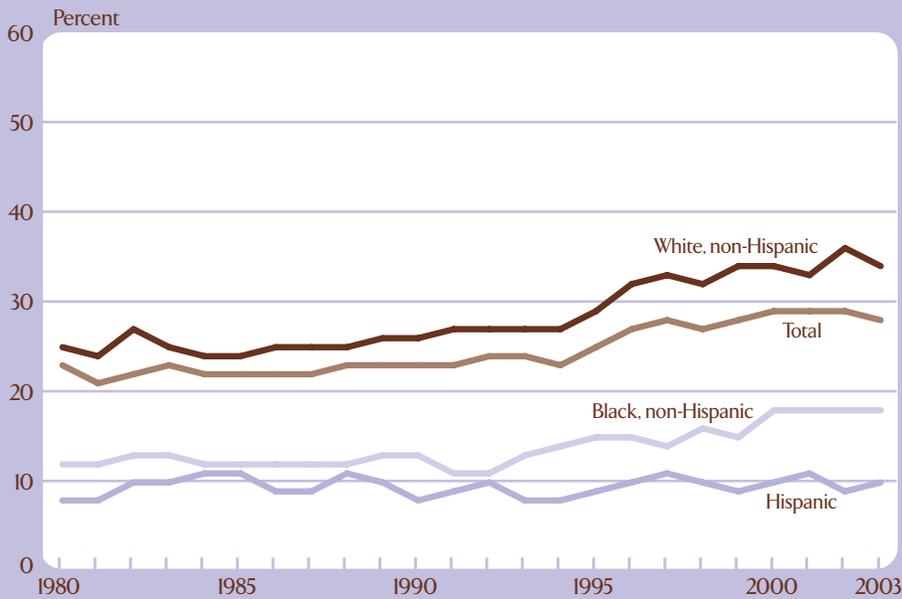
mathematics courses went up more than 1.5 times, from 26 percent in 1982 to 45 percent in 2000, and the percentage taking advanced foreign language doubled, from 15 percent in 1982 to 30 percent in 2000. In each subject, the largest increases occurred among students taking the highest-level courses. In 2000, 63 percent of high school graduates had taken an advanced science class (physics or chemistry), up from 54 percent in 1992 and 35 percent in 1982.

The percentage of young adults ages 18 to 24 who had completed high school with a diploma or an alternative credential such as a General Education Development (GED) certificate increased only slightly, from 84 percent in 1980 to 87 percent in 2001. Racial and ethnic differences persist, with 91 percent of White, non-Hispanic young adults having completed high school, compared with 86 percent of Black, non-Hispanic young adults and 66 percent of Hispanic young adults.

The percentage of 25- to 29-year olds who completed a bachelor's or more advanced degree increased steadily from 1980 through 1996, but has remained relatively stable since, fluctuating between 27 and 29 percent (Figure 10). In 2003, 28 percent of adults ages 25 to 29 had attained a bachelor's degree or higher. White, non-Hispanics (34 percent) were more likely to attain higher education than Black, non-Hispanics (18 percent) and Hispanics (10 percent). Hispanic adults not only have the lowest rates of attaining higher education, but also have not experienced the recent significant increases evident among White, non-Hispanics and Black, non-Hispanics. Between 1980 and 2002, there was no significant change in higher education attainment among Hispanics, while attainment among White, non-Hispanics increased by nearly one-half and attainment among Black, non-Hispanics increased by one-half.

**FIGURE 10**

**Percentage of 25- to 29-year olds who have completed a bachelor's or more advanced degree by race and Hispanic origin, 1980-2003**



NOTE: Prior to 1992, this indicator was measured as completing four or more years of college rather than the actual attainment of a bachelor's degree. Beginning in 2003, the Current Population Survey asked respondents to choose one or more races. All race groups discussed in this figure from 2003 onward refer to people who indicated only one racial identity.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau. Current Population Survey, March and Annual Social Economic Supplements. Tabulated by the U.S. Department of Education.

## Summary List of Measures and Indicators of Child Well-Being

	Previous Data Value (Year)	Most Recent Data Value (Year)	Change Between Years*
<b>Population and family characteristics</b>			
<b>Child population</b>			
Number of children (in millions) under age 18 in the United States	72.6 (2001)	72.9 (2002)	↑
<b>Children as a proportion of the population</b>			
Children under age 18 as a percentage of the U.S. population	26 (2001)	25 (2002)	↓
<b>Racial &amp; ethnic composition</b>			
Percentage of children under age 18 by race and ethnic group			
White alone	76.7 (2001)	76.6 (2002)	↓
Black alone	15.6 (2001)	15.6 (2002)	NS
Asian alone	3.7 (2001)	3.8 (2002)	↑
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.2 (2001)	0.2 (2002)	NS
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1.2 (2001)	1.2 (2002)	NS
Two or more races	2.6 (2001)	2.6 (2002)	NS
Hispanic (of any race)	17.6 (2001)	18.0 (2002)	↑
Non-Hispanic (of any race)	82.4 (2001)	82.0 (2002)	↓
White alone, non-Hispanic	60.7 (2001)	60.1 (2002)	↓
<b>Children of at least one foreign-born parent</b>			
Percentage of native children under age 18 with at least one foreign-born parent	16 (2002)	16 (2003)	NS
Percentage of foreign-born children under age 18 with at least one foreign-born parent	4 (2002)	4 (2003)	NS
<b>Non-English speaking home &amp; difficulty speaking English</b>			
Percentage of children ages 5 to 17 who speak a language other than English at home	14 (1995)	17 (1999)	NS
Percentage of children ages 5 to 17 who speak a language other than English at home and have difficulty speaking English	5 (1995)	5 (1999)	NS
<b>Family structure &amp; children's living arrangements</b>			
Percentage of children under age 18 living with two married parents	69 (2002)	68 (2003)	NS
<b>Births to unmarried women</b>			
Births per 1,000 unmarried women ages 15 to 44	44 (2001)	44 (2002)	NS
Percentage of all births that are to unmarried women	33.5 (2001)	34.0 (2002)	↑
<b>Child care</b>			
Percentage of children, birth through age 6, not yet in kindergarten, who received some form of nonparental child care on a regular basis	60 (1995)	61 (2001)	NS
Percentage of children under age 5, with employed mothers, who were cared for by a relative	48 (1997)	50 (1999)	NS
Percentage of children under age 5, with employed mothers, who were cared for by nonrelatives	44 (1997)	42 (1999)	NS

### Legend

NS - No significant change

↑ - Significant increase

↓ - Significant decrease

\*Refers to tests of statistical significance

## Summary List of Measures and Indicators of Child Well-Being

	Previous Data Value (Year)	Most Recent Data Value (Year)	Change Between Years*
<b>Population and family characteristics - continued</b>			
<b>Children's environments</b>			
Percentage of children under age 18 living in areas that do not meet one or more of the Primary National Ambient Air Quality Standards	19 (2001)	34 (2002)	↑
Percentage of children ages 4 to 11 with cotinine in their blood (a marker of recent exposure to secondhand smoke)	88 (1988-1994)	64 (1999-2000)	↓
Percentage of households with children under age 7 where someone smokes regularly	28 (1996)	19 (1999)	↓
<b>Economic security indicators</b>			
<b>Child poverty &amp; family income</b>			
Percentage of related children under age 18 in poverty	15.8 (2001)	16.3 (2002)	↑
<b>Secure parental employment</b>			
Percentage of children under age 18 living with parents, with at least one parent employed year round, full time	79 (2001)	78 (2002)	NS
<b>Housing problems</b>			
Percentage of households with children under age 18 reporting high shelter cost burden, crowding, and/or physically inadequate housing	35 (1999)	36 (2001)	NS
<b>Food security &amp; diet quality</b>			
Percentage of children under age 18 in households classified by USDA as "food insecure with child hunger"	0.6 (2001)	0.8 (2002)	NS
Percentage of children ages 2 to 6 with a good diet	20 (1994-1996)	20 (1999-2000)	NS
<b>Access to health care</b>			
Percentage of children under age 18 covered by health insurance	88 (2001)	88 (2002)	NS
Percentage of children under age 18 with no usual source of health care	6 (2001)	6 (2002)	NS
<b>Health indicators</b>			
<b>General health status</b>			
Percentage of children under age 18 in very good or excellent health	83 (2001)	83 (2002)	NS
<b>Activity limitation</b>			
Percentage of children ages 5 to 17 with any limitation in activity resulting from chronic conditions	8 (2001)	9 (2002)	NS
<b>Overweight</b>			
Percentage of children ages 6 to 18 who are overweight	11 (1988-1994)	16 (1999-2002)	↑

### Legend

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\*Refers to tests of statistical significance

## Summary List of Measures and Indicators of Child Well-Being

	Previous Data Value (Year)	Most Recent Data Value (Year)	Change Between Years*
<b>Health indicators - continued</b>			
<b>Childhood immunization</b>			
Percentage of children ages 19 to 35 months who received combined series immunization coverage	77 (2001)	78 (2002)	NS
<b>Low birthweight</b>			
Percentage of infants weighing less than 5 lbs. 8 oz. at birth	7.7 (2001)	7.8 (2002)	↑
<b>Infant mortality</b>			
Deaths before the first birthday per 1,000 live births	6.8 (2001)	7.0 (2002)	↑
<b>Child mortality</b>			
Deaths per 100,000 children ages 1 to 4	32 (2000)	33 (2001)	NS
Deaths per 100,000 children ages 5 to 14	18 (2000)	17 (2001)	↓
<b>Adolescent mortality</b>			
Deaths per 100,000 adolescents ages 15 to 19	67 (2000)	67 (2001)	NS
<b>Adolescent births</b>			
Births per 1,000 females ages 15 to 17	25 (2001)	23 (2002)	↓
<b>Behavior and social environment indicators</b>			
<b>Regular cigarette smoking</b>			
Percentage of students who reported smoking daily in the previous 30 days			
8th-graders	5.1 (2002)	4.5 (2003)	NS
10th-graders	10.1 (2002)	8.9 (2003)	NS
12th-graders	16.9 (2002)	15.8 (2003)	NS
<b>Alcohol use</b>			
Percentage of students who reported having five or more alcoholic beverages in a row in the last 2 weeks			
8th-graders	12.4 (2002)	11.9 (2003)	NS
10th-graders	22.4 (2002)	22.2 (2003)	NS
12th-graders	28.6 (2002)	27.9 (2003)	NS
<b>Illicit drug use</b>			
Percentage of students who have used illicit drugs in the previous 30 days			
8th-graders	10.4 (2002)	9.7 (2003)	NS
10th-graders	20.8 (2002)	19.5 (2003)	NS
12th-graders	25.4 (2002)	24.1 (2003)	NS

### Legend

NS - No significant change

↑ - Significant increase

↓ - Significant decrease

\*Refers to tests of statistical significance

## Summary List of Measures and Indicators of Child Well-Being

	Previous Data Value (Year)	Most Recent Data Value (Year)	Change Between Years*
<b>Behavior and social environment indicators - continued</b>			
<b>Youth victims &amp; perpetrators of serious violent crimes</b>			
Serious violent crime victimization rate per 1,000 youth ages 12 to 17	15 (2001)	11 (2002)	↓
Serious violent crime offending rate per 1,000 youth ages 12 to 17	19 (2001)	11 (2002)	↓
<b>Education indicators</b>			
<b>Family reading to young children</b>			
Percentage of children ages 3 to 5 who are read to every day by a family member	54 (1999)	58 (2001)	↑
<b>Early childhood care &amp; education</b>			
Percentage of children ages 3 to 5 who are enrolled in early childhood centers	60 (1999)	56 (2001)	↓
<b>Mathematics &amp; reading achievement (0-500 scale)</b>			
Average mathematics scale score of			
9-year olds	231 (1996)	232 (1999)	NS
13-year olds	274 (1996)	276 (1999)	NS
17-year olds	307 (1996)	308 (1999)	NS
Average reading scale score of			
9-year olds	213 (1996)	212 (1999)	NS
13-year olds	258 (1996)	259 (1999)	NS
17-year olds	288 (1996)	288 (1999)	NS
<b>High school academic coursetaking</b>			
Percentage of high school graduates who completed high-level coursework in			
Mathematics	41 (1998)	45 (2000)	NS
Science	61 (1998)	63 (2000)	NS
English	29 (1998)	34 (2000)	↑
Foreign language	30 (1998)	30 (2000)	NS
<b>High school completion</b>			
Percentage of young adults ages 18 to 24 who have completed high school	87 (2000)	87 (2001)	NS
<b>Youth neither enrolled in school nor working</b>			
Percentage of youth ages 16 to 19 who are neither in school nor working	9 (2002)	8 (2003)	NS
<b>Higher education</b>			
Percentage of high school graduates ages 25 to 29 who have completed a bachelor's degree or higher	29 (2002)	28 (2003)	NS

### Legend

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↑ - Significant increase

↓ - Significant decrease

\*Refers to tests of statistical significance