

FAMILY SURVEY STUDY

Newsletter - Spring 1998

I n s i d e . . .

Why We Need You	1
Who Am I?	
Cigarettes, Alcohol, and Sex	2
What You Told Us Then...	3
What Do I Want To Be?	4
Racial Discrimination and You	5
Strong Connections	6
Support, Anyone?	7
All the Possibilities of Me	8
First Comes Love...	9

Why We Need You

Dear Friends,

We want to thank you again for your participation in our research program. The Family Survey Study continues to be very important and is influencing educational policy both within Prince George's County and nationwide. The results from the study have been presented at national and international conferences and highlighted on National Public Radio. Most recently, summaries of our findings have been used in efforts to maintain government support for parent involvement programs within the Prince George's County schools.

In this issue of our newsletter we want to highlight some of the things you told us when we surveyed you in the 12th Grade. These findings have made us very excited about learning what most of you are doing now that you have gotten out of high school. Our new survey this summer will give us that opportunity and we will certainly let you know as soon as possible what has stayed the same and what has changed in your lives. Once again we will be getting in touch with you to continue our study of the family life of adolescents in Prince George's County.

Most youth in the county have a positive perspective on the future. More than 90% of you expect to get further schooling after graduating from high school, with 63% expecting to end up in professional occupations. Your hopes for the future changed between the 9th and 12th grades. Whereas most adolescents in middle school were hoping for good friends and getting along socially, in high school most of you were thinking more about doing well academically, and being independent and responsible. Romance has even entered into the picture with over 90% of you expecting to get married and, of these, over 90% expecting to stay married.

We are, of course, concerned about those youth who have gone astray by society's standards; that is, those who are involved with minor substance abuse like cigarette smoking or moderate abuse like using alcohol, or social problems like high levels of early sexual behavior. Not many of you engaged in these behaviors but some did. You will read here that the best predictor of such problems is what youth expect from the future. Those who expect life will be bad in the future do more problematic things now.

Discrimination is another negative influence on youth's lives. Sixty-three percent of 12th graders in the county, both blacks and whites, have felt discriminated against because of their race and believe it has affected their school performance. But we have also found many things that protect adolescents against problems in school and in the community. These include good support from friends and family and a strong ethnic identity. An interesting change from the 7th and 9th grade is that 12th graders see support from their friends as more important than support from their families.

As project directors, we want to thank you again for continuing to help us. At a time when the national focus is on big problems with some young people, it is important to have information that most adolescents are doing quite well and are an important resource for their communities. Even though some of you may have some problems at times, most of you are happy, doing well in school, and have high hopes for the future. We also hope that the results of our study will point the way to improving the chances for all youth in future generations in Prince George's County.

Thank you again for all of your help,

Jacquelynne Eccles
Arnold Sameroff
Project Directors

Who Am I?

1

Spring 1998 / FAMILY SURVEY STUDY

As we get older we often seek to understand who we really are as individuals. By the time we reach 18 we have had a vast number of experiences and have been told by parents, teachers, family members, friends and society who we should be and what we should be like. However, who are we really? How do I define who I am? How have I come to be this way? How has who I am changed as I've gotten older? What are my short term and long term goals? Who has influenced who I am? What does it mean to me to be, for example, an African American young woman?

In the summer of 1996 we selected a small group (35) of teenagers who had participated in our larger study over the past few years, and we had a series of long conversations about these very issues. In addition, we asked each of them to keep an audio diary or journal to reflect on various aspects of their identity. We were especially interested in two types of identity: personal identity (how teenagers come to understand who they are, what their place is in the world and what goals they have) and social identity (their attitudes and feelings about both being male or female and African American or white). For example, we asked these teenagers how important their themselves, what they believed others' attitudes were towards their racial group.



This smaller study is particularly timely given the recent work of President Clinton's Race Initiative in which they are trying to improve race relations through a series of mechanisms including holding national conversations and town hall meetings, conducting race-related research studies, and creating policies which eliminate educational, employment and housing disparities based on race. In fact, several of the town hall meetings have stimulated a dialogue about individuals' attitudes towards their own racial group, as well as those attitudes towards people outside of his/her own racial group. Understanding these attitudes is critical in our increasingly diverse society.

The results of our study on identity will be given to the Executive Director of the President's Initiative on Race to add to their collection of research studies that are shaping policy. So, the continued participation of this smaller group of teenagers is really very important because these responses have the potential to impact national policy.

During the next year, we are planning to have another interview with this smaller group of teenagers. We want to understand which aspects of who they are and which of their attitudes have changed and which have remained the same after high school graduation. We have enjoyed our past conversations and look forward to continuing them. So many of these young people have gone on to do such diverse things as attend college, enter the military, obtain vocational training, get married and enter the workforce and we are intrigued with how these changes may have shaped their sense of who they are.

Cigarettes, Alcohol, and Sex...

2

Spring 1998 / FAMILY SURVEY STUDY

Reasons For Self-destructive Behavior

There are many reasons why some adolescents are more likely than others to engage in potentially self-destructive behavior (like smoking cigarettes, marijuana, or crack cocaine, drinking alcohol, engaging in sexual intercourse, or stealing cars). Among them are the emotional climate at home, the influences of friends and peers, and the atmosphere at school, along with a variety of personal characteristics. In the final analysis, every individual is unique, so it is difficult to know exactly which factors lead to problem behavior for any given person. But thanks to the participation of so many of you and your families, we have a much better understanding about what it takes to increase or decrease the chances that teenagers will engage in some of these behaviors. Yet just as every individual is composed of a complex set of personal characteristics, the picture that has emerged about the causes of adolescent problem behavior is also complicated.

What Predicts Problem Behavior

Out of the many different possible influences on why someone would engage in problem behavior (for example, the quality of the neighborhood, family discipline style), we found that there were only a few things that strongly predicted whether or not adolescents would likely smoke and drink, or worse, during the 7th grade. For all of the individuals in our study, regardless of sex or race, the single most important factor related to engaging in these kinds of behaviors is the extent to which the individual believes that bad things will happen to them in the future. For example, the kids who say that they are likely to (1) get themselves in trouble with police, (2) get involved with gang activity, and (3) skip school are most likely to actually get into trouble. This suggests that a person's negative attitude about the future can have a very powerful effect on their chances of actually getting into trouble.

The second most important influence on adolescent problem behavior relates to kids' friends and peers. Kids who view their friends and peers as having a lot of negative characteristics (for example, their friends skip school, do drugs, or otherwise use bad judgment) are the ones who are most likely to themselves engage in these types of problem behaviors.

Conclusions Are Not the Same For All

Remember, though, that these are general patterns that do not necessarily apply to any specific individual. So, for example, it is possible for a young teenager to have a negative attitude about the future and hang around negative peers and still be able to avoid engaging in problem behavior. But it is clear that adolescents with negative future expectations and negative peers should be considered “at-risk” for developing a tendency to engage in things like smoking or drinking or premature sexual activity. Finally, it is important to understand that these negative influences can affect kids’ behavior regardless of whether or not they come from homes (or communities) that are more or less wealthy, disciplined, or popular.

That’s the general simplified picture but we found a few differences for some of the subgroups in Prince Georges County.

Problem behaviors *decreased* for:

- white males who reported that the school was run by caring teachers and staff.
- black females who reported that they lived in a positive emotional climate.
- white females who viewed themselves as resilient and good problem solvers.

Problem behaviors *increased* for:

- females (black or white) who felt the emotional atmosphere in their home was negative.

Summary

So, negative expectations about the future and being around friends who you described as having negative characteristics puts you at risk for behaving in undesirable ways. This is true even if you’re well disciplined at home and consider your family environment a good place to be. But just because a particular person might find themselves believing that bad things might happen to them and hanging around with “bad” kids, this does not mean that he or she is doomed to engaging in problem behavior and the consequences that might follow. These influences are best understood as risk-factors; that is, the more true they are for a person, the more likely that problem behaviors will follow. But it is important to keep in mind that each person is unique and capable of refraining from negative acts *despite* the presence of risk factors.

What You Told Us Then About Where You Would Be Now

3

Spring 1998 / FAMILY SURVEY STUDY

Do you remember what you wanted to be when you were 12 years old? Were you thinking about how many years of school it would take to reach your dream-job? Some of you wanted to get far away from school as soon as you could, others wanted to stay in school -either for the intrinsic interest in education itself, or for the careers at the end of all those years of studying. Some of you would have liked to earn degrees after high school, but had doubts about whether that would be possible for you.

As you are reading this, you already know what has happened in your educational history. Some of you are now in college, some are working, some are contemplating returning to finish their high school degree. We will be coming back soon to ask you (yet again!) about what you are up to now. But, we thought you might be interested in remembering what you were thinking about education when we first met you, and how those ideas changed as you went through high school.

What did you expect and hope for in middle school?

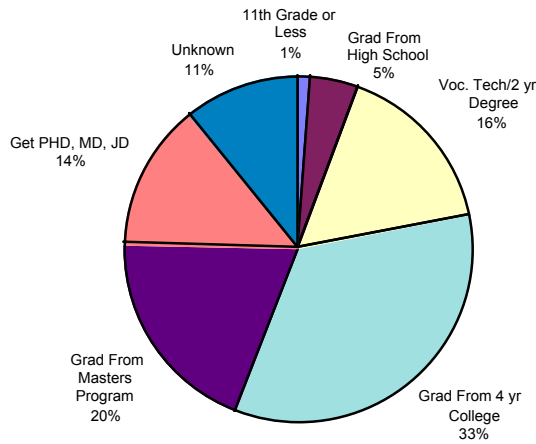
Overall, you were an ambitious group with dreams of being in school for a long time to come. We asked you and your parents two questions (1) How much education you would like to get and (2) How much education you realistically expect to get. While over 40 percent of you said that you’d like to get an advanced degree to become a doctor, a lawyer or a professor, 63 percent of your parents said they would like you to get that much training. But, your parents’ freedom to imagine your educational accomplishments probably didn’t translate into a lot of pressure on you to fulfill these dreams. With amazing consistency, you and your parents agreed about how far you would actually go in school. Eighteen percent of both parents and youth reported expectations for a Ph.D, M.D. or J.D. The agreement between you and your parents was striking no matter what level of education you expected to get: 12 percent expected to get a masters degree after college, 40 percent expected to graduate from a 4-year college; 20 percent expected to earn a 2 year degree after high school, or to graduate from a vocational or technical program, and 9 percent expected to end their education with a high school degree or less.

What did you expect and hope for in high school?

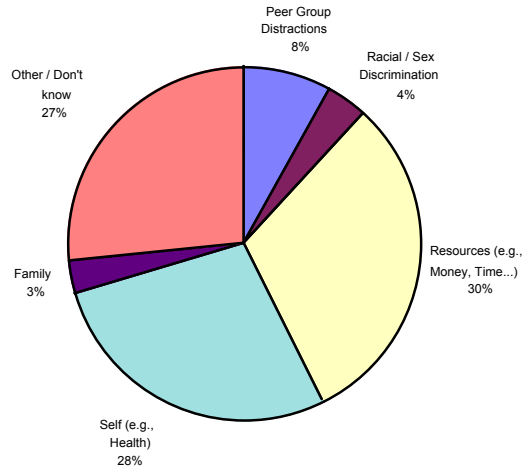
When we returned to find you again in high school, we asked you the same questions: How far would you like to go in school, and how far do you expect to go? Overall, your expectations and aspirations were a bit lower in high school than in middle

school. This does not mean that you became substantially less invested in education, however. In 7th grade, the average aspiration was to get a masters degree after college. In high school, the average aspiration was to finish a 4 year college degree. Similarly, your expectations for what would really happen dropped a bit, but on average you remained committed to earning a degree from a 4 year college.

What Gets in the Way of Education?



How Far You Expected To Go (When You Were in High School)



Many of you expected to earn 4 year college degrees (33 percent). Additionally, about 34 percent of you wanted to continue with school after college - for example, obtain a master or doctoral degree - and about 16 percent of you were ready to do something besides going to school after you finished with high school. In sum, over 80 percent of you wanted to do something beyond high school.

What gets in the way of education? Your ideas:

We also asked you about what you thought might limit your educational dreams. Here are your thoughts about this in 7th grade. Overall, you were concerned that limited resources (such as lack of money, time, or other responsibilities), or things about yourself (such as feeling low on self-confidence, effort, or maturity, or spending too much time on positive or negative extracurricular activities, or health problems) would stand in the way of your aspirations. A few of you cited friendships (positive or negative) as preventing education, and a few of you thought that racial or sexual discrimination would be a problem. This chart shows how commonly you endorsed each of these as interference to your education. Your answers were remarkably consistent when we asked you again in high school. Do you remember what you thought then? What would you say now?

Society's ideas:

People often have ideas about who will be more educated depending on whether they are male or female, black or white, or come from families that have experienced divorces or many changes. Your responses helped us to understand better whether these factors were influencing your ideas about future education. In general, girls said that they both wanted and expected to get slightly more education than boys. And, their parents agreed. Ethnic group membership did not have much impact on your answers. In middle school, African-American parents said that they wanted their children to go a little farther in school than did the European-American parents, but this difference disappeared in high school. In contrast, living in a family with two parents did affect how far you and your parents expected you to go in school, but it didn't affect how far you and they would like you to go. This difference is likely to be due to financial constraints that single parent families often experience, such that families may be more cautious about expecting that their children will really be able to continue with their education beyond high school-even if parents do wish this for their children. Finally, the number of kids in your home didn't affect your aspirations or expectations about education, but your parents' education did. Not surprisingly, their education level had more influence on what they wanted for you, than it did on what you wanted for yourself. That is, if your parents have more education, then tend to want you to go farther in school, too.

Overall, your ideas about education remained rather consistent from middle school to high school. Soon, we'd like to find out how good you were at predicting where you'd be now. How much truth is there to the idea that our dreams and expectations early in life shape our later choices and experiences?

One of the most important decisions teenagers face is determining who they want to be and what they want to do when they “grow up.” These goals change as we get older and learn new things about ourselves and the world around us. Here are some of the things you said when we interviewed you in seventh, ninth and twelfth grades. See if they match up with how you think about your future now.

Your Reported Careers in 7th Grade

As seventh graders, a large proportion of you (43%) had not made any commitment to future careers. Nonetheless, 37% of you saw yourselves in a professional career, such as a doctor, a lawyer, or an engineer; and 12% of you said that you were going to be an actress, a rock star, or a sports figure. The remaining 8% listed jobs in the trades or the military, or as a police officer or firefighter.

Your Reported Careers in 9th Grade

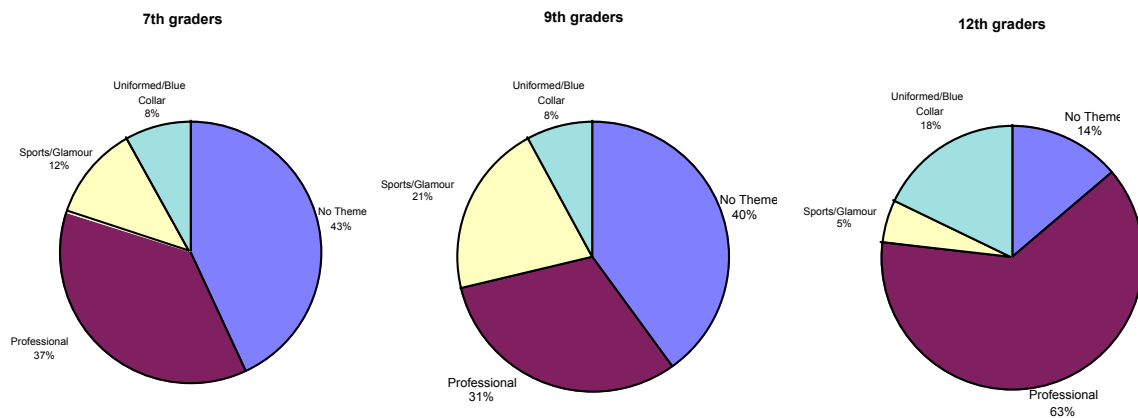
In the ninth grade, many of you still had no clear occupational goals. Similar proportions said that you wanted to pursue a professional career or a job in the military or trades or as a police officer. However, more of you aspired to careers in sports and/or entertainment (21% versus 12% as seventh graders).

Your Reported Careers in 12th Grade

Did these future career goals change as you moved into the twelfth grade? Yes, they certainly did. The biggest change was that the vast majority of you now had some concrete visions of yourself in future jobs, primarily as professionals (63%). Only 14% were still undecided about their occupational futures at this point.

Even today, teenage boys and girls have different ideas about what they want to become when they grow up. In Prince George’s County, girls in the seventh grade wanted to become doctors, lawyers and engineers more than boys did (49% vs. 25%), while boys

Who Do I Want To Be In the Future?



wanted to become rock stars or excel in sports more than girls did (16% vs. 6%). By the ninth grade, girls were still more interested than boys in professional careers (40% vs. 24%), and although the overall number of boys and girls who wanted to be an entertainer or sports figure increased from the seventh to the ninth grade, boys again outnumbered girls in this category by nearly four to one.

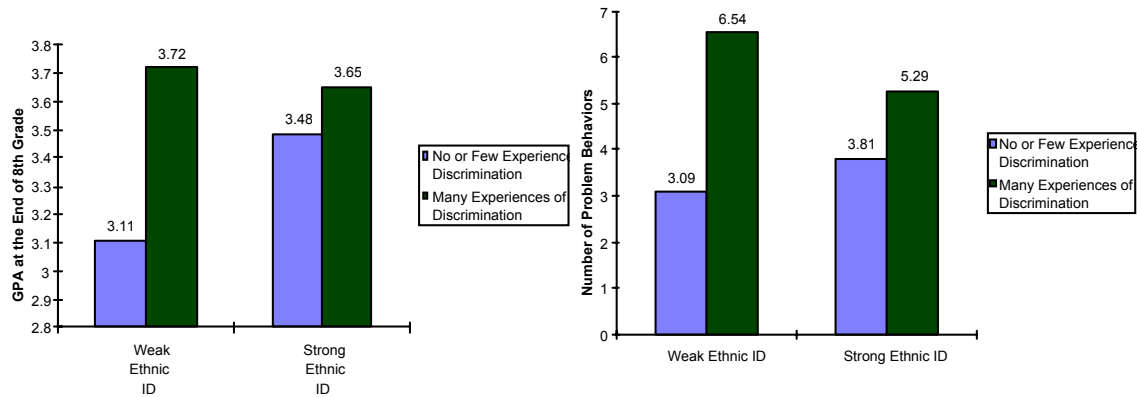
Did this change much by the time you were in high school? Not much. As twelfth graders, girls were even more likely to aspire to becoming doctors and lawyers and boys were more interested than they had been before, but still not as much as the girls were (71% to 55%). Wanting to go into sports or entertainment was clearly no longer as popular as they once were, even among the boys whose interest dropped from 32% as ninth graders to 8% in twelfth grade. More realistically perhaps, boys became more interested in uniformed job occupations such as policemen and firemen or serving in the armed forces (22% vs. 9% as ninth graders).

Beyond...

Have your life goals changed? Are you following through in doing the things necessary to make your occupational choices a reality? We’d like to come back and talk to you again to find out the rest of the story. Look for us to contact you again this summer to get the full scoop.

As you may know, most research in the U.S. has been conducted with white children, teens, and adults. There is little about people of color, even about the different kinds of situations that they face, and practically nothing on how racial discrimination affects their lives, their children's experiences of discrimination, and how they cope with it.

At the end of the eighth-grade, we asked you about whether you experienced negative racial treatment by other students or by your teachers at school. Many of you (37%) said that you had not experienced negative racial treatment at school but twenty-eight



percent reported that they had, both by their teachers and by other students. Thirty percent said that they felt discriminated by their teachers only, and 4 % felt that they were discriminated by other students only. This is consistent with other studies and informal polls conducted by newspapers: Approximately 60% of African American adults, college students, and high school students reported having experienced racial discrimination at their school or workplace, or in their communities.

Because of your help in responding to our questions, we now know a little more about how negative racial treatment affects junior high school students' lives. We found that adolescents who reported experiencing discrimination at school were more likely to report feelings of psychological distress which found its expression through greater feelings of alienation from school, feeling more depressed and angry, hanging out with friends who are dissatisfied with school, and engaging in more problem behaviors. It is important to note that these are all "normal" reactions to stressful conditions. People of all ages, ethnicity/race, economic background, and gender show similar psychological responses when they are treated badly by others in their environment.

Does this mean that everyone will be negatively affected by experiences of racial discrimination? NO! There are many ways that families and youths effectively cope with negative racial treatment. One way is by developing a strong and healthy African American identity. Teens who had a healthy identification with being African American were either less affected or not at all affected by racial discrimination.

There was basically no difference in grade point average (GPA) between adolescents who reported many experiences of discrimination and those who reported no or few experiences if they felt strongly connected to being African American. But there was a big difference in academic performance between teens who reported racial discrimination and those who didn't if they did not have a strong black identity.

Having a healthy African American identity also helps protect African American youth from becoming involved in problematic behaviors. If they felt strongly about being black and reported many experiences of discrimination, they were likely to engage in about one more problem behavior than those who reported no negative racial treatment. But if they reported weak identification with their ethnic group and frequent negative racial treatment, they were involved in over three more problem behaviors than their counterparts who reported no or very little discrimination.

In summary, your participation in this study has yielded three important findings about the lives of African American youths:

- First, African American youths, as young as those in junior high school, are experiencing negative racial treatment at school.
- Second, racial discrimination has a potential negative impact on teens' psychological well-being.
- Third, having a healthy and strong African American identity is an effective coping mechanism for dealing with racial discrimination.

Thanks for your help!

As you are aware, the Family Survey Study is being conducted with the help of youth and parents from all over Prince George's County. Although the study includes a large number of families, we thought you might want to know how the information you have given us compares with information from families in other parts of the country. That is, are the families in this study similar to the rest of the U.S. or are they unique?

In 1993, Congress asked the National Institutes of Health to conduct a nationwide study of the health and well-being of adolescents in our country. Over the last few years, more than 90,000 7th through 12th graders from 145 schools across the United States have taken part in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (or Add Health). Maybe you did too. In general, the findings are remarkably similar to what you have told us.

In contrast to what is often reported in newspapers and on television news programs, both studies find that most teenagers in the United States feel good about themselves, have generally good relationships with their families and friends, and perform well in school. In other words, most teens make

Of course, many teens do struggle with difficult circumstances and both the Add Health study and our research are trying to identify the development. One of the most important study is that the bonds teenagers feel to their families, friends, and schools are vital for young people. To quote the Add Health researchers:

"Independent of race, ethnicity, family structure and poverty status, adolescents who are connected to their parents, to their families, and to their school community are healthier than those who are not."

The charts below show the differences for those of you who told us that you had a reported weaker connections. In each case, a performance. We find very similar results for here).

Yet not everyone who feels a weak tie gets poor grades, or gets into trouble. One of understand how the links between a teenager's emotional health or academic performance and their connections to others differ for males and females, African-Americans and Whites, rich and poor and so on. This type of closer examination will tell us a great deal about important differences between specific types of adolescents and their families and will help us make recommendations for ways to strengthen these important bonds.



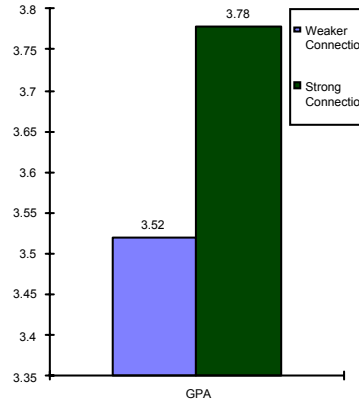
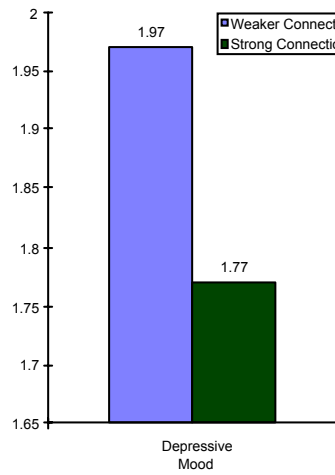
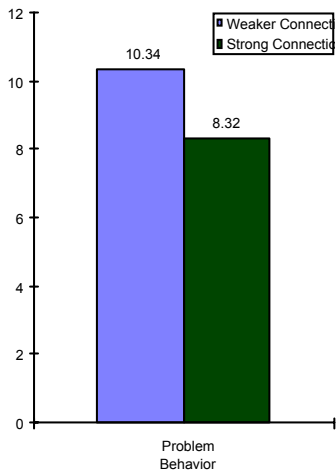
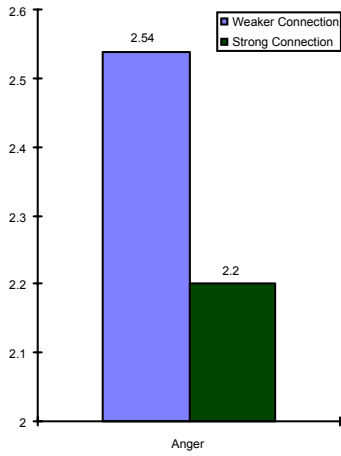
decisions that will benefit them in the long run. with difficult circumstances and both the Add Health findings from our study and from the Add Health families, friends, and schools are vital for young

structure and poverty status, adolescents who are families, and to their school community are healthier

in emotional health, problem behavior, and grades strong connection to your schools versus those who strong connection is related to more positive your connections with your parents (not pictured

to his or her school feels bad about himself/herself, the challenges for our research team is to better

understand how the links between a teenager's emotional health or academic performance and their connections to others differ for males and females, African-Americans and Whites, rich and poor and so on. This type of closer examination will tell us a great deal about important differences between specific types of adolescents and their families and will help us make recommendations for ways to strengthen these important bonds.



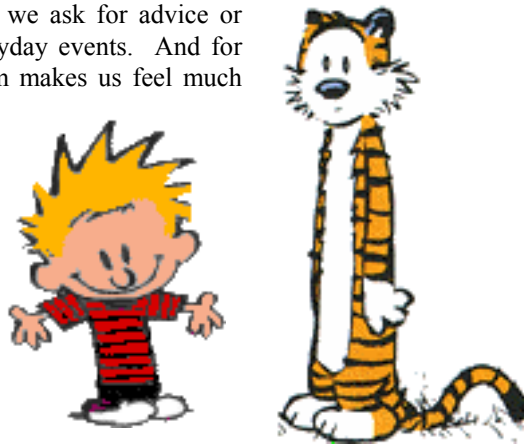
Support, Anyone?

Although some of us would rather not admit it, we all need help and support from others every now and then. We all have that special person or group of people that we ask for advice or school, to relationships, or just to everyday events. And for people are around when you need them makes us feel much

As you might guess from your different people for different reasons. point asked your mother for help with with an English paper. Perhaps advice about a boyfriend or girlfriend.

And the people we go to with For example, you may have gone to later you went to your teacher for help

During the ninth and twelfth were in your life that you depended on or social and personal problems. The



assistance with problems related to some of us, just knowing that those better.

own experiences, we can turn to For example, you may have at some a math problem, or your father for help you've asked a friend or a sibling for

certain problems can change over time. your mother for help with algebra, but with geometry or trigonometry.

grades, we asked you who the people for help with problems like schoolwork graphs summarize what you told us.

Schoolwork problems

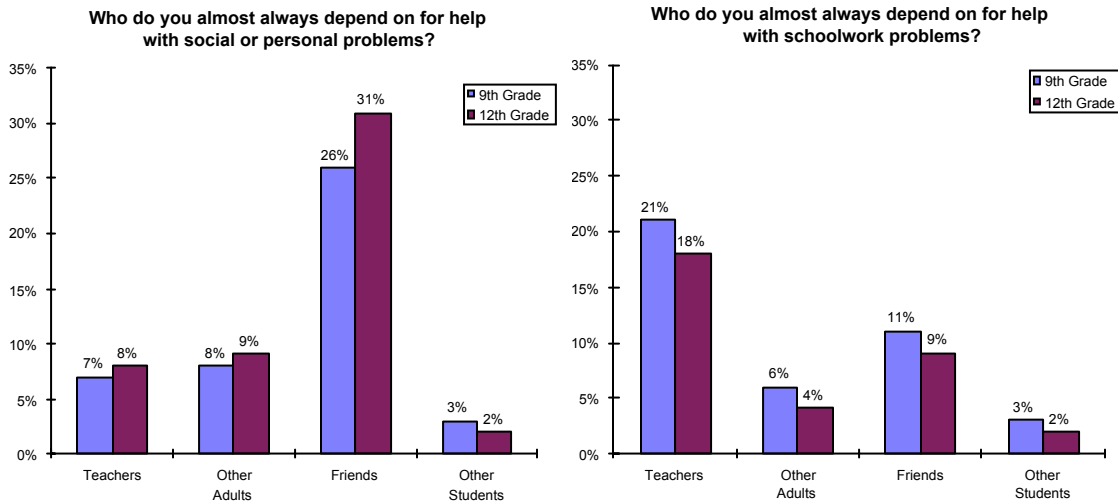
Quite a few of you reported that you almost always depended on teachers for help with problems related to schoolwork, whether in the ninth or twelfth grade. Friends ranked up there also in both grades. But by the twelfth grade, those of you reporting that you almost always depended on *anyone* for help with school dropped in all categories. It seems you were becoming more self-sufficient by this time and could do your schoolwork with less help.

Social/Personal Problems

A fair amount of you also said that you almost always depended on your friends for help with social or personal problems. And your friends were even more important to you in the twelfth grade than they had been in the ninth. This is a normal progression during adolescence where teenagers begin to rely more and more on their friends than on adults for help with difficulties they may run across in their personal lives.

In sum

So what does all of this mean? Well, it suggests that as you grew older you became more independent in some respects, specifically schoolwork. It also reflects a shift from reliance on adults in general, both in schoolwork and in your personal lives, towards same-age friends who you perhaps feel understand these situations better and can help you sort them out. These are typical ways in which teenagers grow and learn new ways of dealing with their world and those around them.



All the Possibilities of Me

Everyone has ideas, however vague sometimes, about who they would like to be someday. This is especially true for teenagers who are at the stage in their lives where everything is a possibility: a dream career, the love of their life, a noble existence. What kinds of dreams and aspirations, what sorts of worries and concerns do today's teenagers have, we wondered. What kinds of hopes and fears do they have that may motivate them to pursue particular directions in their lives?

Your Hopes

Kids in ninth grade don't usually project too far into the future, so we asked you then what you most hoped would be true of you in high school.

Most of your responses in ninth grade could be classified as being about having good interpersonal relationships (31%) or about being academically competent (23%). Your greatest wishes were to be a good person (kind, nice, friendly) and a good friend (supportive, helpful, compassionate); to get thoughtful; and to have them like you (be loved, hope many of you had about high school was to be successful in high school, to get good grades, to

Further down the list were hopes about independent, hard-working, respected, "personal" outcomes (10%) as having an best. Thoughts about jobs (2%) were hardly on

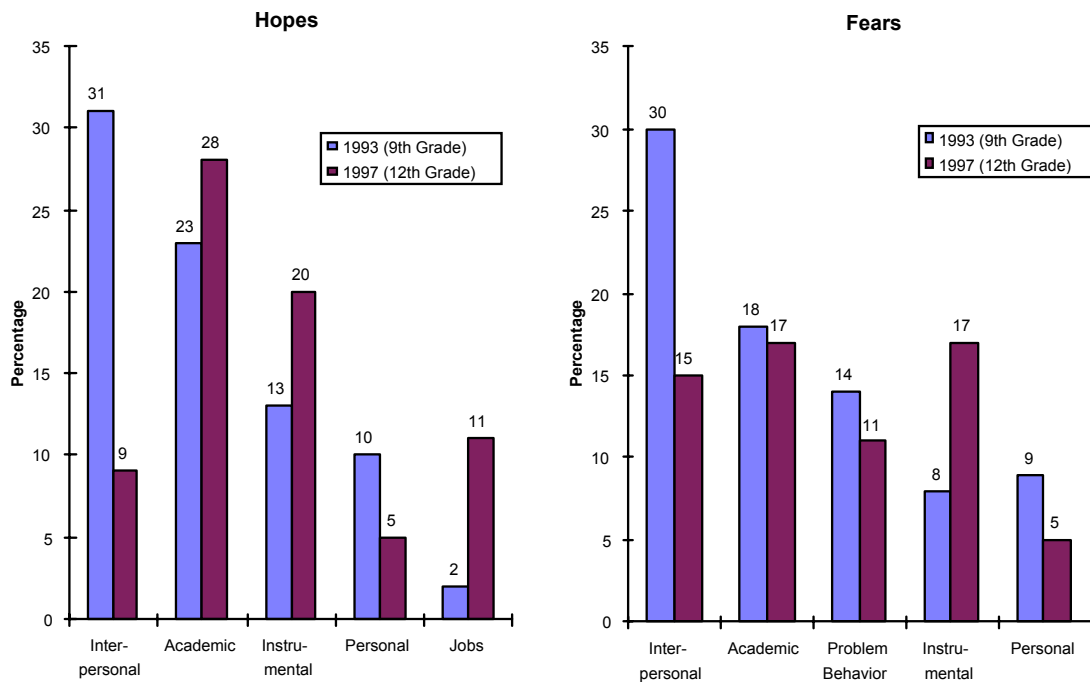
In the twelfth grade, we asked you what next year—which is just about now. Your about academic competence (28%) and instrumentality (20%) this time. While you were still interested in graduating from high school and getting good grades, or just being intelligent, now your hopes centered on being successful in an advanced education as well (being a college graduate, well-educated, taking advanced classes or being an award winner). You also wanted to be responsible adults (dependable, reliable, mature); just generally successful in terms of being talented; hard-working (ambitious, determined, disciplined); and basically independent (self-supporting, individualistic).



Interpersonal concerns had taken a back seat (9%) as had “personal” hopes (5%); but thoughts about jobs (having one, a specific one or a good one, or just making money) were on the rise (11%).

Your Fears

What were you most afraid might be true of you in the ninth grade? The heavy hitters were again interpersonal concerns (30%) and academic skills (18%), along with a third—problem behavior (14%). In the ninth grade, you were basically concerned that you might be overly self-focused (selfish, self-centered, conceited, a snob); that others wouldn’t like you (hated, no friends, social leper, bad reputation); or that you would not like others (uncaring, unconcerned, insensitive, unfriendly, nasty). You feared you might get bad grades or have to drop out of high school and end up uneducated. And you worried about becoming a



drug addict or an alcoholic; falling in with the wrong crowd; and, less so, about doing something criminal like stealing cars or becoming a crook or a hooker. Fears about instrumentality (being unsuccessful or irresponsible) were of some concern (8%), as were “personal” concerns (9%) such as not trying or doing your best and being a freeloader or jerk.

The twelfth grade brought some changes to the texture of your fears. Again, they became more diverse and dispersed among more different categories (not all shown) but primarily they were about the same things as your hopes in the twelfth grade: academic issues (17%) and instrumental concerns (17%). Interpersonal worries were still with you (15%)-but they had dropped considerably. Fears about different kinds of problem behaviors (11%) and “personal” concerns also remained but dropped a little in importance in the general picture.

What did we learn?

What stands out overall is the portrait of a wholesome group of adolescents who have a healthy sense of possibilities about who they are or might become. There is much to be admired about their longings and desires and little to be alarmed about in their worries and concerns. The progression in emphasis from interpersonal to academic domains makes good sense and suggests that most students are on the path to a good life.

We all have hopes and dreams about who we might become at some future time. We also have fears, concerns and worries, perhaps unspoken, about things we don’t want to happen to us. These are natural human responses that we don’t often talk about to people outside our immediate circle of family and friends, and sometimes not even to them. Because you opened up your thoughts to us, we now have a better idea about what young people in American value and aspire to, as well as what they most fear. This will go a long way toward helping social scientists understand America’s youth better and will affect the policy-making decisions of national, state and local authorities in years to come.

First Comes Love, Then Comes Marriage

Adolescence is usually the time when individuals start to give some thought to whether and when they might get married or have children. Some of you may be dating might not. Maybe you'll end up marrying from research is that more and more young because other considerations, like school or 1970's, most people got married at age 17? all young adults is 26 for males and 25 for

In the Prince George's County what age you wanted to get married and would like to get married and have kids at marry at 25 and have kids at 26, while boys kids at 27. This makes sense since women themselves.

We also wanted to know how a successful parent. Current statistics end in divorce. Some of you may have parents. Do you think this affects how you relationships? When we asked you to tell us the things you worried about most regarding future relationships, the top two things you mentioned were about "faithfulness" and "trust". On the other hand, a good many of you told us that you had no worries at all.

The majority of you said that it was likely you would get married – 60% of you said it was "very likely" and an additional 27% of you said it was "somewhat likely". Only 13% of you said it was unlikely that you would marry. Do you expect these marriages to be successful? It appears so. Of those who told us they plan to get married, 94% said that they expected the marriage to be happy and successful, and fewer than 10% thought they would be likely to get divorced. Among those who expected to have children, over 95% of you thought it was likely that you would be a successful parent who raised happy, well-adjusted children.



someone seriously right now, while others of you your high-school sweetheart! On thing we know people are postponing marriage and parenting work, are taking priority. Did you know that in the Currently, the average age for first marriages among females.

Family Survey Study, we asked you to tell us at have children. On average, you told us that you about age 26. Girls told us that they would like to told us that they would like to marry at 26 and have usually marry someone a year or two older than

optimistic you were about getting married and being indicate that about half of all marriages currently experienced the divorce or remarriage of your own view your own future regarding romantic

Prince George's County Family Study

5201 Institute for Social Research
P.O. Box 1248
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248

M o v i n g ?

Please Call us and tell us your new address and phone number.

1 - 800 - 644 - 0614

Be sure that you say you are calling to update the Family Survey Study.

