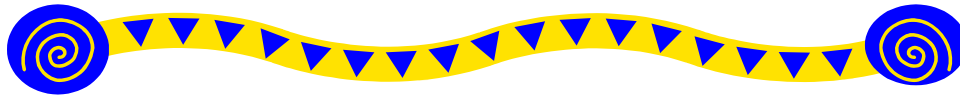


# *The Family Survey Study*

*Newsletter-Summer, 2004*



Dear Friends,

Hello again and welcome. We want to thank you again for your participation in the Family Survey Study. As you know, you have been helping us for a long time – since you were in the seventh grade – and believe us, all of your time has been worth it! This is one of the only studies in the world that has been able to obtain information from growing adolescents and young adults for so many years. The information that you have provided us continues to be an important influence for family and educational policy both within Prince George’s County and nationwide. We have presented the results at national and international conferences, in professional journals, and through other media venues such as newspapers and public radio.

Social scientists around the world believe that this study is one of the most important sources of adolescent and young adult development available. Thanks to your participation, we have unique information about development from middle school through young adulthood. We also

have rich information about the people and situations that influence your development, which will help us understand ways to promote positive, healthy development.

In this issue of our newsletter, we summarize some of our recent findings. We also provide some information that we hope will be helpful as you negotiate some of the challenges of your mid-and-late twenties, such as web addresses and phone numbers to help you access community resources, non-profit organizations, and health related information.

We hope that you enjoy this newsletter, and thanks again!

Sincerely,

Jacquelynne Eccles  
Arnold Sameroff  
Project Directors

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## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE...**

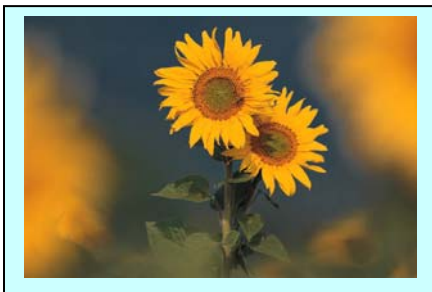
- Career development (p. 4)
- Fathers’ influence on dating relationships (p. 5)
- Identity development (pp. 5-6)
- Facts about study participants (p. 7)
- Effects of peer harassment (p. 8)
- Education (p. 9)
- Money (p. 10)
- Love and marriage (p. 10)
- Alcohol use (p. 11)
- Your children (p. 12)



## **Facts about the Family Study**

- Started in 1991 when you were in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade
- Information gathered from 1,482 adolescents at that time
- Most of you have now participated in 6 different surveys and interviews, at 6 different phases in your lives
- Over 60% of Family Study participants are African American, and 51% are female
- Your parents/guardians and older siblings also participated when you were in middle school and high school
- Your participation has been and will continue to help parents, teachers, counselors, and others better understand adolescent and young adult development

Thank you for your participation over the years!!



Check out our website!

<http://www.rcgd.isr.umich.edu/pgc/>

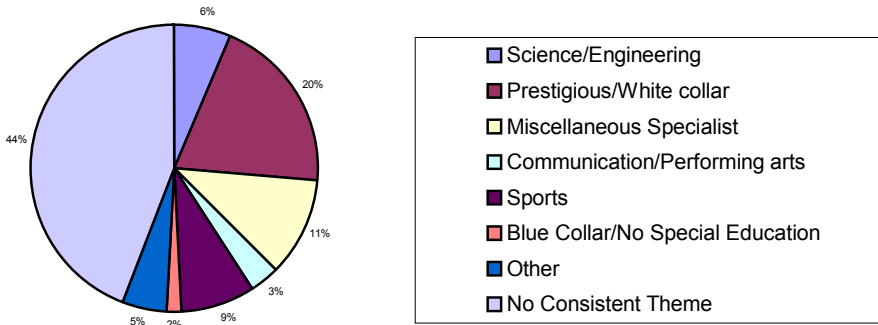
**MOVING?**

Please send us your new contact information:  
[familystudysurvey@umich.edu](mailto:familystudysurvey@umich.edu)

# What did you want to be when you grew up? Were you right?

In seventh grade, we asked what kind of job you wanted to have when you were “grown up.” Then, when you were 21, we asked you what kind of job you would most like to have when you are about age 30. The percentages of how many of you wanted certain categories of jobs are shown in the two graphs below. The popularity of some jobs remained consistent. For instance, at both time points about 6% of you wanted to enter science or engineering careers. The percentage that wanted prestigious or white collar jobs stayed about the same over those 8 years too; at age 21, 19% of you wanted to have jobs such as doctor, accountant, or lawyer.

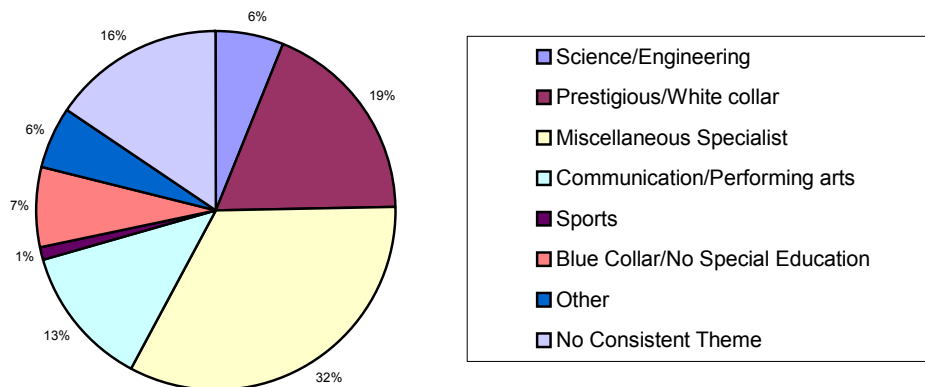
**Occupational Aspirations at Age 13**



Other categories of aspirations have declined over time. Although 9% wanted a sports career at age 13, only 1% of you are still hoping to be in an athletic job at age 30. Also, 44% of you had no consistent job aspiration (or ‘theme’) in seventh grade, perhaps because you had no idea what you wanted to be yet. But during our last survey, only 16% of you had no consistent job aspiration. Many of those 16% were considering careers in two different fields, and simply couldn’t be classified into one category.

Finally, some careers have become much more popular with you and your peers. Thirteen percent of you would like to have a job in communication or performing arts, like a journalist, painter, or TV broadcaster. More of you are also interested in blue-collar jobs, such as housekeeping and carpentry. Also, a full 32% of you are now hoping to be what we call a miscellaneous specialist when you are 30, in a position such as computer repairer, dental hygienist, or teacher.

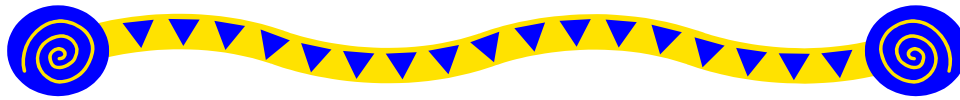
**Occupational Aspirations at Age 21**



Your answers to questions like these have helped us see how aspirations are related to education and well-being. We hope to continue this work to examine consistency and developmental change in your aspirations. Good luck in meeting your goals!

## Do Fathers Matter When It Comes to Romantic Relationships?

Fathers appear to play a key role in shaping boys' attitudes about romantic relationships over time. A recent analysis that we conducted suggests that fathers matter when it comes to boys' attitudes toward divorce in late adolescence. Boys who felt close to their fathers (biological custodial, biological noncustodial, and stepfathers) believed that they would be less likely to divorce in the future than boys who did not feel close to their fathers. These results suggest that sharing a close relationship with a father—regardless of biological or custodial status—may be protective for boys' attitudes about the stability of their future marriages.



## Finding yourself: Identity development during your teens

One of the things we study is identity development. The concept of identity covers a lot of different things that go on during development, but here is one way to look at one part of it. We started with the idea that different people often relate to their social environment in different ways. This idea was illustrated dramatically in the 1985 movie, “The Breakfast Club,” where each main character personified one of the popular “social” identities (e.g., the Princess, the Jock, and the Brain). As the movie unfolded, we saw how the characters were different because of their different social identities and how they were similar despite these different social identities. As part of our study, we wanted to get a better idea about the different kinds of identity groups that were out there. So, for example, we tried to answer questions like: How do different people put identity-related information together in similar and different ways? What are the consequences of organizing one’s identity around one theme (e.g., being a jock) versus some other theme (e.g., civic engagement)? We also wanted to learn more about how people with some of the

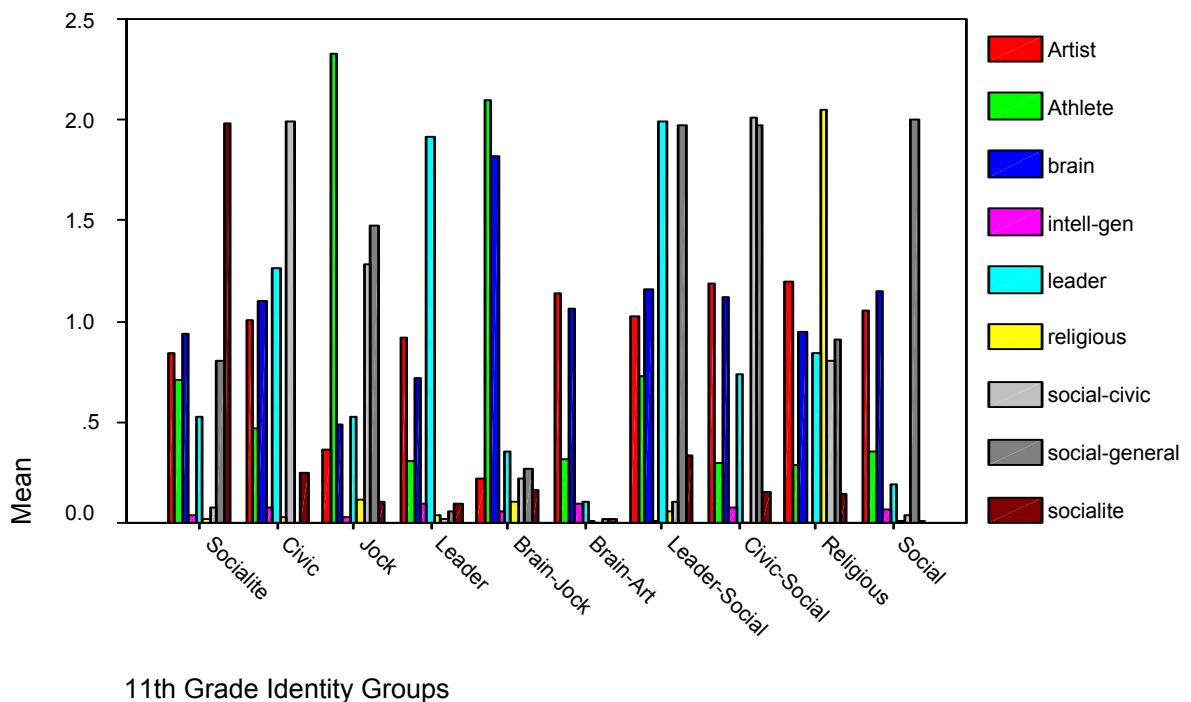
same identity characteristics can feel and act differently because of the unique ways in which they put these different elements together in their own lives. For example, a lot of people spend time playing sports, but not everyone thinks of themselves as a “jock.”

We didn’t ask directly about many social identities in our questionnaires and interviews, so we needed first to develop ways to measure the kinds and amounts of identity content that were specific to each individual. We started by looking at what people wrote in response to the many “open-ended” questions that we had asked. Here are a few examples of the 10 questions that we used for this: “What would you do with a million dollars?” “What do you admire most about [the person you named as a hero or admired adult]?” and “What kind of job would you like to have if you could have any job you wanted?” We then counted the number of times each person mentioned something related to one of several identity themes. For example, we counted the number of times, for all 10 questions, each person mentioned anything

related to sports, art, intellectual pursuits, family and friends, community involvement, religion, and social status. We then used this information about how often each person mentioned each kind of identity content to create identity profiles (like the one shown in the figure below). If you look carefully at each of the ten profiles (each one corresponds to a different group of people), you will see that each group is defined by a unique pattern of identity content. In addition, each pattern is marked by high levels of one or two types of identity content. Although over 95% of the participants were described by one of these patterns, there were some people who did not fit into any of these groups; because their patterns did not match any of these common patterns, we studied them separately.

We discovered a wide variety of interesting things related to these identity profiles. For

example, whereas some of these identity groups emerge across all the junior and senior high school years (e.g., the “pure jock” which, in the figure below, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> group from the left), other profiles exist during some periods but not others (like the “religious” profile group which wasn’t present in the data we collected during the summer after the 8<sup>th</sup> grade). We also found that although some people stay in the same or similar identity groups from 7<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> grade, the identity structure for many people changes substantially during this period. For example, being a jock is very popular during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades but, by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, many of the people who had organized their identity around sports were now organizing their identity around other social, academic, and civic concerns.



# Quick facts about Family Study Participants

## At the time of the last survey (when participants were about 21 years old)...

- You were generally **optimistic about your future**. 82.5% felt that it was highly likely that you would be able to find a stable job in the future, 80% felt that you would be able to find a job that you enjoyed, and 82.2% said that you would be able to own your own home. 83.7% believed that you would have a happy family life.
- 67% of you said that you sought **spiritual comfort** when confronted with difficulties in your lives
- **You most frequently socialized with your romantic partners, friends, and family members**. On average, you spent 4.52 hours a week with romantic partners, 4.62 with friends, and 4.12 with parents or other family members.
- **You watched 4.12 hours of TV** on average, and 11.3% watched 16 or more hours per week.
- **8.7% of you said that you had a STD** during the previous 2 years, and **2.1% said that they did not know** if they had an STD.
- The most **common places to live** were at your parent(s)' home (43.3%), in your college dorm (19.5%) or in your own apartment (19.3%).
- **Religion** was at least "a little" important to 94% of you, and was "very important" to 39.6% of you
- 28.5% described your **political beliefs** as liberal, very liberal, or radical. 19.1% of you said that you were moderate, and 7.8% described yourselves as conservative. 34.7% of you were not decided yet, and 10% said you fell into an "other" category.

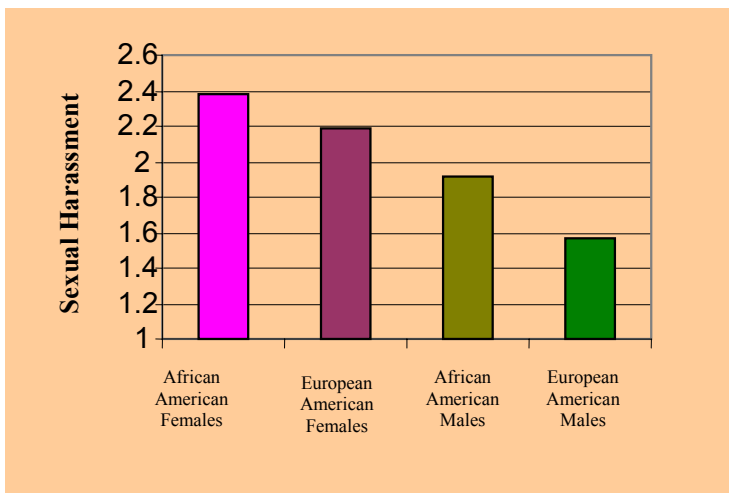


## Teasing and taunting during middle school: What implications did it have for you?

Remember back to those early teen years...what comes to mind? If you are like most, your friends and your classmates probably took up a good deal of your time and energy. But what do these interactions with peers mean in the long run? What happened to those of you who were having difficulty with peer relationships during your middle school years?

One of the analyses that we have recently conducted asked just this question – what type of impact did peer harassment and teasing have on you? We were particularly interested in how *sexual harassment* among peers impacted your development.

First, we wanted to know how pervasive of a problem sexual harassment was for you during middle school. In the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, when we asked you whether you had been sexually harassed by your friends or classmates, approximately 65% of you told us that you had been sexually harassed. The table below details how this breaks down by gender and racial background. As you can see, females reported higher amounts of sexual harassment than males, and African American females reported the most frequent sexual harassment.

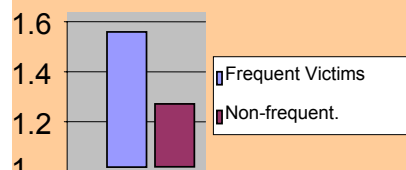


Next, we wanted to see sexual harassment related to your later outcomes. We also wanted to see how this might differ by gender and racial background. The results suggest that sexual harassment does have negative implications for development. Sexual harassment was related to increases in delinquent behavior for the females in the sample, such that those who were sexually harassed in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade were likely to engage in higher amounts of delinquent behavior in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade than their peers who had not been sexually harassed. Sexual harassment was also related to mental health outcomes. Among European American females, we found that 8<sup>th</sup> grade harassment was related to increases in depression by the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The table below shows that those females who were harassed more than a few times a month in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade reported higher levels of depressive symptoms in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

In addition to being related to depressive symptoms, sexual harassment predicted decreases in self-esteem for European American females. Frequent harassment in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade predicted decreases in self esteem by the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Females were not the only ones who experienced the negative long terms consequences of sexual harassment. For European American males, being harassed in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade was related to increases in depression by the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

Overall, then, being teased and harassed by your peers during early adolescence was related to negative outcomes during later adolescence. What does this mean for functioning during young adulthood? Currently, we are looking at the surveys that you completed more recently (1 year after high school and 3 years after high school) to answer this question. For now, though, the old saying, “Sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me” appears to be false!

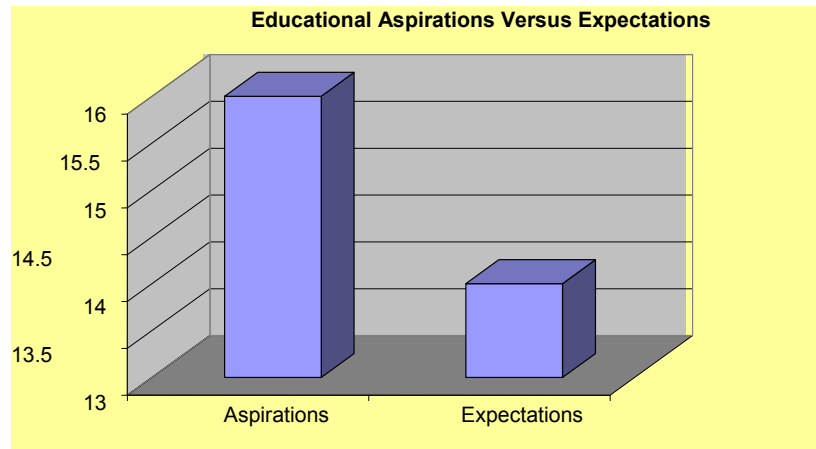
### Depressive Symptoms in Grade 11 as a function of Sexual Harassment in Grade 8 (European American Females)





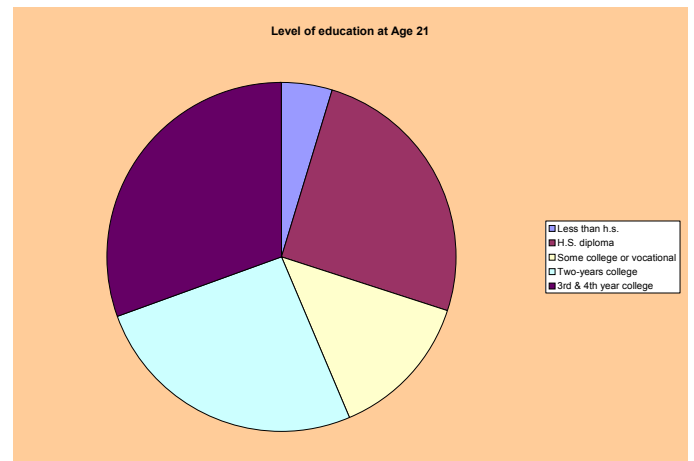
# What were your educational goals and expectations?

In 11<sup>th</sup> grade, the average student had higher aspirations than expectations for their education. Educational aspirations measured how far you would like to go in school. Educational expectations measured how far you think you will actually go in school. As shown in the bar chart below, the average student aspired to complete a four-year college degree or 16 years of completed education. However, most students expected not to achieve this goal. The average student expected to only complete a two-year at college or 14 years of completed schooling.



## Did you meet your expectations?

By the time you were in your early twenties, most of you (70%) had attended at least a year of college or some post-high school vocational training; 26% had finished two years of college and another 31% were in the process of finishing their third and fourth years. The places you chose to go were generally close to home but there were a multitude of colleges and universities represented among your choices with a diverse geographical spread. The University of Maryland was the most popular with College Park leading the pack (15.5%), followed by Baltimore County (4%) and Eastern Shore (3.6%). Other highly attended schools included Prince George's Community College (6.5%), Bowie State University (5%), Morgan State University (3.1%), Howard University (2.5%), Towson University (2.5%), and Frostburg State University (2.1%).



### Local educational institutions:

- \*Prince George's County Schools, Adult Educational Program  
\*301-408-7930  
\*<http://www.pgcps.pg.k12.md.us/~adult/indexframe.html>
- \*Literacy Council of Prince George's County, MD, Inc.  
\*301-699-9770  
\*<http://www.literacycouncil.org>
- \*Prince George's Community College  
\*301-336-6000  
\*<http://www.pgcc.edu/>

### University system of Maryland (11 colleges and universities):

- \*301-445-2740  
\*<http://www.usmd.edu/Institutions>

## Money concerns and your strategies for making ends meet...

The twenties are a time when many of you are just starting your careers and trying to get started on a good track financially. However, they are also a time when many of us are not making as much money as we would like, or as much money as we hope to make in the future. When we surveyed you three years after your high school graduation, 83.7% of you indicated that you have been at least a little upset at some point because you felt like you did not have enough money.

Many of you have developed ways to cope with this lack of funds. The most common way to save money was to cut back on social events. Fifty-seven percent of you indicated that you have done this. Another popular strategy to that you have used to save money is to change your eating habits. Almost 37% of you said that you have done this. Unfortunately, 15.6% of you have had to postpone medical care because of financial need, and 30.2% of you have put off paying a bill because of financial need. The good news is that 89.4% of you feel that you have somebody to turn to (e.g., parents, friends, romantic partners) for financial help.

We were happy to learn that most of you have been able to depend on your families and friends in times of need! We wish you the best of success in the future as you continue to begin and advance in your careers and continue to build your financial future.



## Love, romance, and marriage

Although many of you hope to get married someday, as of age 21 the majority of you (94.1%) were not married yet. However, many of you were involved in committed romantic relationships. 11.7% were living with their partner but were not married, and 36.7% were dating somebody exclusively but were not married. 12.8% were dating more than one person. Finally, a substantial portion of you (32.9%) were single at the time of the last survey.

Best wishes to you in your romantic endeavors! And, *congratulations* to those of you who have met your lifetime partners since the time of the last survey!



## Just having a good time? Alcohol use among study participants

The early twenties are a “peak” drinking period for many people. Were *you* drinking heavily during this time period, and were there any negative implications of this drinking?

One question that we asked you when you were 21 was whether you had gotten drunk in the past 6 months. Although 35.2% of you said no, the majority said yes. 24% said that you had been drunk 1 or 2 times during the last 6 months, 23.9% of you said that you had been drunk between 3 and 9 times, 7.5% were drunk between 10 and 19 times, and 9.7% of you reported that you had been drunk over 20 times in the past 6 months. 17.8% of you said that somebody had expressed concern to you about your drinking during the past 6 months.

Is drinking having a negative impact on you? One way to answer this question is to see whether you are putting your life, health, or relationships in danger from drinking. For example, 35.1% of you said that you had ridden with a drunk driver at least once in the past 6 months. 6.6% of you reported riding with a drunk driver 5 or more times during that same time period. 26% admitted to driving drunk themselves during the past 6 months, and 5.7 % did this more than 10 times during the same time period. Drinking was related to 12.4% of you getting into a fight with somebody. Additionally, 15.2% said that because of drinking you have had relationship problems. Finally, 22.1% of you admitted to having had to miss work at least once in the past 6 months due to drinking.

As you can see, some of you are experiencing difficulties already from drinking too much. Although heavy drinking during the early twenties does not always mean that you will continue on to have future problems with alcohol, some of you may be at risk. If you feel like you or a loved one is at risk, please consider seeking assistance. We have listed some numbers below that may be of help.

**Alcoholics Anonymous:** Prince George’s County: 301-498-0685, <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org/>

**National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence:** Maryland: 410-328-8444, Prince George’s County: 301-883-7853, <http://www.ncaddmaryland.org>

**Community Crisis Services, Inc. (Prince George’s County Hotline and Suicide Prevention Center):** Crisis Response: 301-927-4500, Homeless Hotline: 1-888-731-0999, Maryland Crisis Hotline: 1-800-422-0009, Suicide Hotline: 1-800-784-2433 (1-800-SUICIDE), <http://www.communitycrisis.org/>

# The Family Study Survey

University of Michigan  
204 South State Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

RETURN SURVICE REQUESTED

## And what about baby?

As you move into your mid and late twenties, more and more of you are becoming parents. As those of you who are parents already know, parenthood is one of the most challenging and rewarding jobs that one can have. When we surveyed you 3 years after your high school graduation, 16.7% of you already had become parents. Of those who had become parents by that time, 76.4% had one child, 17.4% had two children, 3.4% had three children, and 2% were the busy parents of four youngsters. Your children ranged in age from 1 month old through 9 years. Best wishes to you and your young ones, and congratulations to those who have become parents during the time since our last survey!



### Questions about family planning? Other sexual health related concerns?

\*Planned Parenthood: 1-800-230-PLAN

\*National AIDS and STD Hotline: 1-800-342-2437  
(English), 1-800-344-7432 (en español)

### Local Resource: Adelphi Langley Park Family Support Center, Judith P. Hoyer Family Learning Center

\*Provides family related health and educational related services  
\*301-431-6212