Education
and Achievement

EA 1.1   Early Childhood Program Enrollment

Enrollment in an early childhood program is one indicator of readiness to learn in elementary school that may be especially relevant for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. One of the National Education Goals for the year 2000, adopted by Congress, is that "all children will have access to high-quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help prepare children for school."[1]

In 1998, 48 percent of children ages 3 to 4 who had not yet entered kindergarten attended a nursery school program (see Figure EA 1.1.A). This represents a substantial increase from the 30 percent who attended nursery school in 1980.

When a broader set of center-based programs is considered, the increase in early childhood program enrollment is even more substantial. Table EA 1.1 presents the percentage of children, ages 3 and 4, enrolled in day care centers, Head Start programs, preschools, prekindergartens, and other early childhood programs.[2] In 1999, 57 percent of all 3- to 4-year-old children were enrolled in a center-based program. This reflects a modest increase from 51 percent in 1991 and 1993 (see Table EA 1.1).

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.[3] There are notable differences in center-based early childhood program enrollment rates among racial and ethnic groups; for example, in 1999, only 43 percent of Hispanic children were enrolled in a center-based program, compared with 57 percent of whites and 70 percent of blacks. Throughout the 1990s, black 3- to 4-year-olds have had the highest enrollments in center-based programs, followed closely by whites, with much lower enrollments among Hispanics (see Figure EA 1.1.B).

Differences by Socioeconomic Status. There are substantial differences in center-based enrollment rates by socioeconomic status, including poverty status and maternal education (see Table EA 1.1).

- In 1999, enrollment rates were much higher among families that were at or above the poverty threshold (60 percent) than those who were below the poverty threshold (50 percent).

- Enrollment rates also differ by maternal education, with the highest enrollment (72 percent) among children whose mothers were college graduates and the lowest (38 percent) among children whose mothers lacked a high school diploma.

These differences by socioeconomic status were apparent for all years reported (see Table EA 1.1).

Differences by Mother's Employment Status. There are also differences in enrollment rates by maternal employment status (see Figure EA 1.1.C); for example, in 1999, children whose mothers were working either full-time (35 hours or more per week) or part-time (less than 35 hours per week) had substantially higher enrollment rates than children whose mothers were not in the labor force.

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[1] National Education Goals Panel. 1999. *The National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners, 1999* (Goal 1, p. xiv). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.
[2] Estimates are based on children who have yet to enter kindergarten.
[3] Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

Figure EA 1.1.A

Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds[a] in the United States enrolled in nursery school: 1980-1998
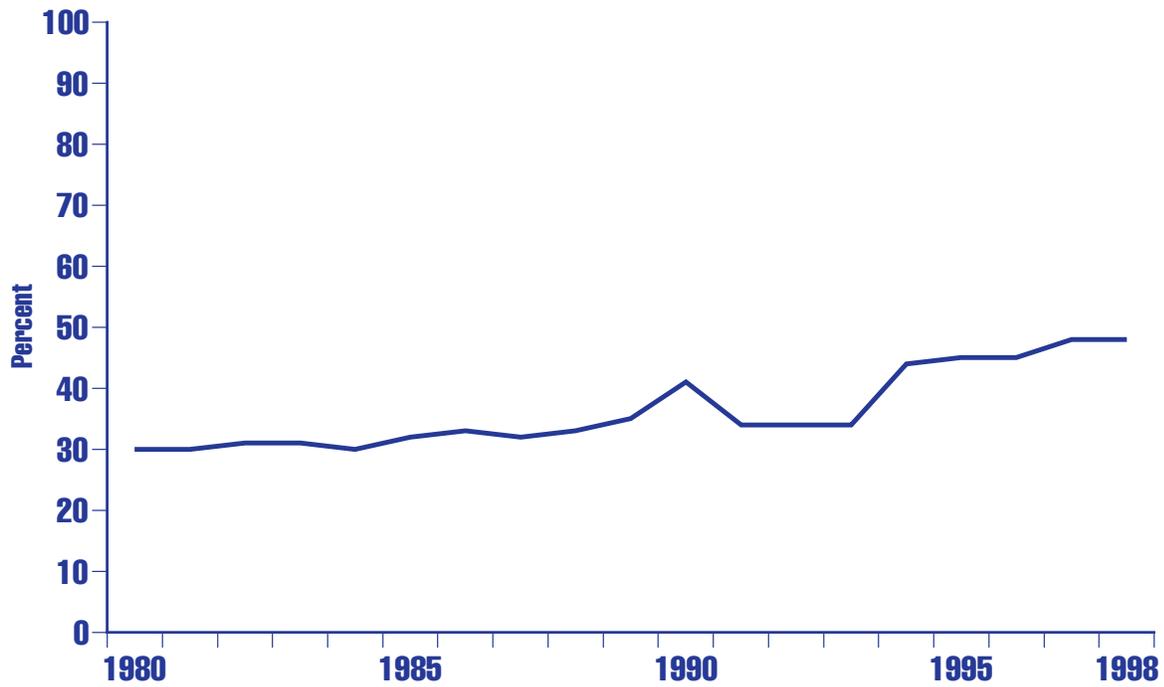
[a] Estimates are based on children who have not yet entered kindergarten.

Note: Data for 1990 and 1994-96 may not be comparable with other years because of changes in survey procedures.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys. Tabulated by the National Center for Education Statistics. As published in Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2000, Table ED2.A.

Table EA 1.1

Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds[a] in the United States enrolled in center-based programs,[b] by child and family characteristics: 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, and 1999

	1991	1993	1995	1996	1999
Total	51	51	53	53	57
Gender					
Male	51	50	52	52	58
Female	52	52	53	53	56
Race and Hispanic origin[c]					
White, non-Hispanic	53	52	55	54	57
Black, non-Hispanic	56	56	57	63	70
Hispanic	38	42	34	37	43
Poverty status					
At or above poverty	54	55	58	58	60
Below poverty	42	42	41	41	50
Family structure[d]					
Two parents	52	51	53	51	56
One or no parent	47	52	53	56	60
Mother's education[e]					
Less than high school	30	31	31	37	38
High school/GED	44	41	45	46	49
Vocational/technical or some college	59	58	55	55	61
College graduate	72	72	73	71	72
Mother's employment status[e]					
35 hours or more per week	58	59	58	62	63
Less than 35 hours per week	57	55	60	62	60
Not in labor force	43	43	43	41	50

[a] Estimates are based on children who have not yet entered kindergarten.

[b] Center-based programs include day care centers, Head Start programs, preschools, prekindergartens, and other early childhood programs.

[c] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

[d] Parents include any combination of a biological, adoptive, step-, and foster mother and/or father. No parents in the household indicates that the child is living with non-parent guardians (e.g., grandparents).

[e] Children without mothers in the home are not included in estimates dealing with mother's education or mother's employment status. A mother is defined as a biological mother, adoptive mother, stepmother, foster mother, or female guardian (e.g., grandmother) who resides in the home with the child.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, and 1999 National Household Education Survey. As published in Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2000, Table ED2.B.

Figure EA 1.1.B

Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds[a] in the United States enrolled in center-based programs,[b] by race and Hispanic origin:[c] 1980-1999
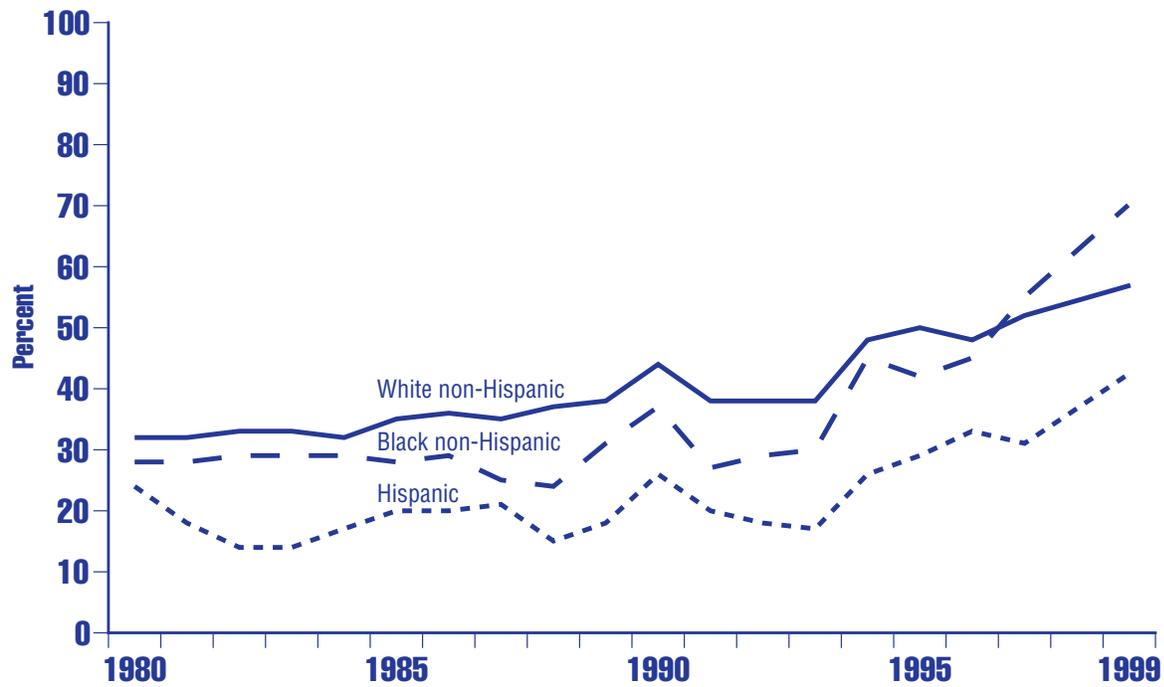
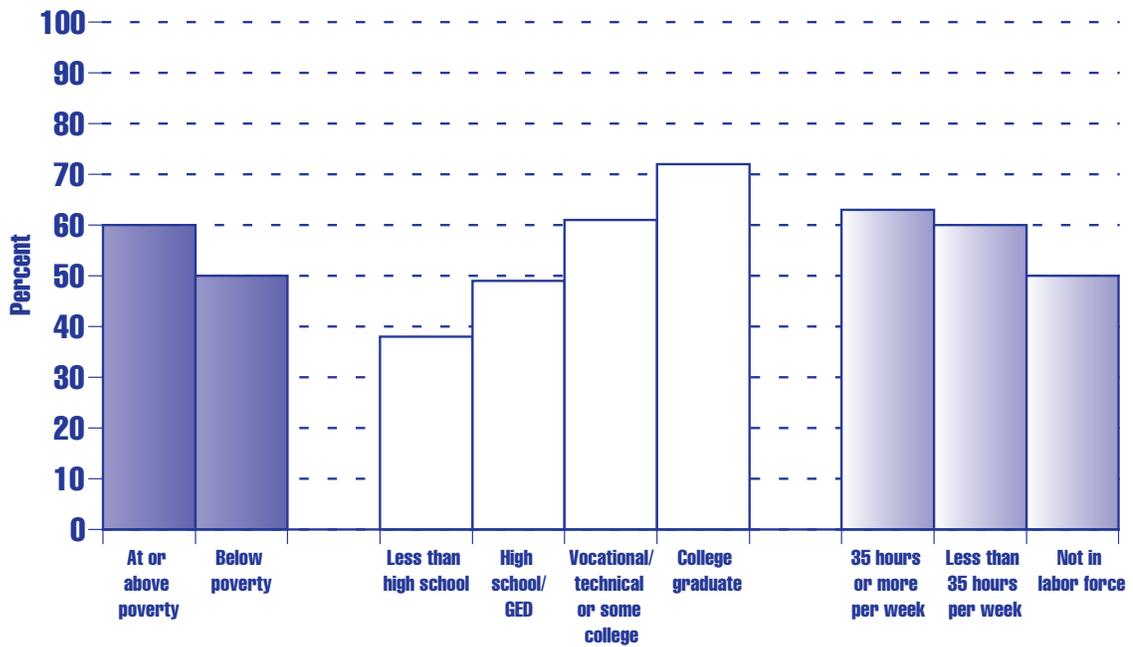[a] Estimates are based on children who have not yet entered kindergarten.

[b] Center-based programs include day care centers, Head Start programs, preschools, nursery schools, prekindergartens, and other early childhood programs.

[c] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1991, 1993, 1995, and 1996 National Household Education Survey.

Figure EA 1.1.C

Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds[a] in the United States enrolled in center-based programs,[b] by poverty status, mother's education, [c] and mother's employment status:[c] 1999

[a] Estimates are based on children who have not yet entered kindergarten.

[b] Center-based programs include day care centers, Head Start programs, preschools, nursery schools, prekindergartens, and other early childhood programs.

[c] Children without mothers in the home are not included in estimates dealing with mother's education or mother's employment status.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1991, 1993, 1995, and 1996 National Household Education Survey.

EA 1.2   Grade Retention: Percentage of Current 2nd Graders Who Were Retained in Kindergarten and/or 1st Grade

Children's early primary school experiences are associated with their adjustment to school and their later school success. Grade retention (repeating a grade) at an early age may indicate that a child has started school without adequate preparation and may continue to experience school problems in subsequent years. It may also measure the degree to which schools are able to respond to children from a variety of backgrounds.[4]

Table EA 1.2 presents data on the percentage of 2nd grade students who were retained in kindergarten and/or 1st grade as reported by their parents. Estimates are presented for 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, and 1999.[5]

Trends in Grade Retention. Data in Table EA 1.2 indicate a decline in the proportion of 2nd graders retained in kindergarten and/or 1st grade, from 11 percent in 1991 to 8 percent in 1999 (see Figure EA 1.2).

Differences by Gender. A higher percentage of boys repeat kindergarten and/or 1st grade in 1991 and 1999 compared to girls (see Table EA 1.2). For example, in 1999, 10 percent of boys were retained, compared with 6 percent of girls.

Differences by Socioeconomic Status. Grade repetition differs by family poverty status and maternal education levels. In 1999, 16 percent of 2nd graders in poor families had repeated a grade, in comparison with 5 percent of 2nd graders living in nonpoor families (see Table EA 1.2). Grade repetition varies by maternal education, with the highest percentage of grade repetition in 1999 among children whose mothers did not complete high school (16 percent) and the lowest reported percentage among children whose mothers had attended some college or a vocational/technical school (6 percent) (see Table EA 1.2).

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[4] Alexander, K.L., Entwisle, D.R., & Dauber, S.L. 1994. *On the Success of Failure: A Reassessment of the Effects of Retention in the Primary Grades*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
[5] Estimates are not presented when based on less than 30 cases in a subgroup.

Table EA 1.2

Percentage of 2nd graders in the United States who were retained in kindergarten and/or 1st grade, by child and family characteristics: 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, and 1999

	1991	1993	1995	1996	1999
Total	11	8	8	7	8
Gender					
Male	13	10	11	8	10
Female	9	—	5	—	6
Race and Hispanic origin[a]					
White, non-Hispanic	9	7	7	6	8
Black, non-Hispanic	15	—	—	—	8
Hispanic	18	—	—	—	8
Poverty status[b]					
At or above poverty	9	8	7	5	5
Below poverty	18	—	10	—	16
Family structure[c]					
Two parents	10	7	8	5	7
One or no parent	14	11	9	—	10
Mother's education[d]					
Less than high school	21	—	—	—	16
High school/GED	12	9	9	—	8
Vocational/technical or some college	9	—	7	—	6
College graduate	—	—	—	—	6
Mother's employment status[d]					
35 hours or more per week	12	8	9	—	8
Less than 35 hours per week	8	—	—	—	8
Not in labor force	11	—	8	—	7

— = sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

[a] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

[b] The poverty threshold for 1995 and 1996 data was calculated using the total number of household members and estimates of household income to the nearest $1,000 either alone or in combination with *exact* income information. The 1995 and 1996 poverty calculations differ from calculations in other years (1991 and 1993), which were based on total number of household members and estimates of household income (in increments of $5,000 or $1,000) only. Calculations for all years do not account for the number of children in the household.

[c] Parents include any combination of a biological, adoptive, step-, and foster mothers and/or fathers. No parents in the household indicates that the child is living with non-parent guardians (e.g., grandparents).

[d] Children without mothers in the home are not included in estimates dealing with mother's education or mother's employment status. A mother is defined as a biological mother, adoptive mother, stepmother, foster mother, or female guardian (e.g., grandmother) who resides in the home with the child.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1991, 1993, 1995, and 1996 National Household Education Surveys. Tabulations of data performed by U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (unpublished).

Figure EA 1.2

Percentage of 2nd graders in the United States who were retained in kindergarten and/or 1st grade: Selected years, 1991-1999
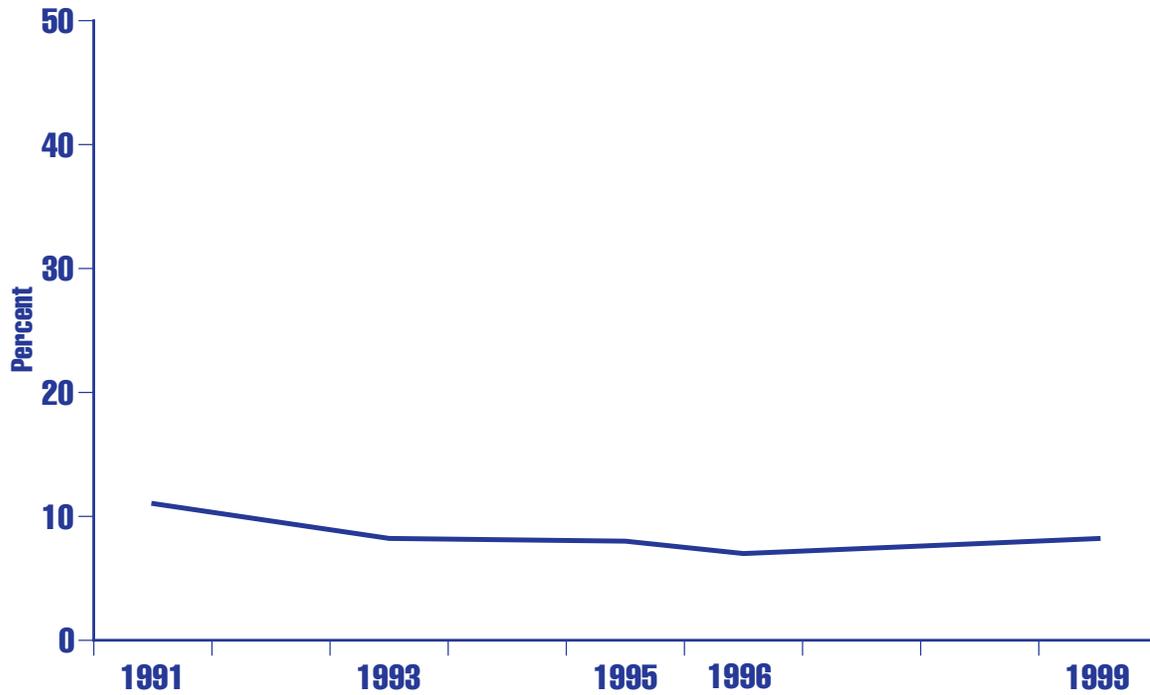
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, and 1999 National Household Education Surveys. Tabulations performed by National Center for Education Statistics.

EA 1.3   School Absenteeism

Student absenteeism is associated with poor achievement in school, among other outcomes; for example, absenteeism is one of five personal and family background factors that accounted for 91 percent of the variation in states' mathematics scores in a recent national report.[6]

Differences across Grade Levels. The percentage of 8th-grade students who were absent from school 3 or more days in the preceding month has remained relatively constant between 21 and 23 percent from 1990 to 1998 (see Table EA 1.3). During the same time period, a slightly larger percentage of 12th-grade students were absent from school for that length of time, with percentages ranging between 26 and 31 percent.

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.[7] Among 8th graders in 1998, American Indian/Alaska Native and Hispanic students, at 34 percent and 25 percent respectively, were the most likely to have been absent 3 or more days in the preceding month. White and Asian students had the lowest absentee rates at 21 and 17 percent, respectively, followed by black students at 23 percent. The patterns are similar for 12th-grade students, though the differences range from lows of 26 to 28 percent for white, Asian, and black students, to a high of 41 percent for American Indian/Alaska Native Students.

Differences by Parents' Education Level.[8] Absences from school were highest for students whose better-educated parent had less than a high school education (see Figure EA 1.3). In 1998, for example, 33 percent of 8th graders whose better-educated parent lacked a high school diploma were absent from school 3 or more days in the preceding month, compared with 17 percent of their peers who had at least one parent with a college degree. Similar differences were reported for 12th-grade students.

Differences by Type of School. Students who attended private or Catholic schools experienced fewer school absences than did students from public schools, across all grades and years (see Table EA 1.3).

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[6] National Education Goals Panel. 1994.

[7] Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

[8] Parents' education level refers to the highest level of education completed by either parent.

Table EA 1.3

Percentage of 8th- and 12th-grade students in the United States who were absent from school 3 or more days in the preceding month, by gender, race and Hispanic origin,[a] parents' education level,[b] and type of school: 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, and 1998

	8th Grade					12th Grade				
	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998
Total	23	22	22	23	21	31	26	28	26	26
Gender										
Male	21	21	22	22	21	29	24	27	25	26
Female	24	24	22	23	22	32	27	28	28	28
Race and Hispanic origin[a]										
White, non-Hispanic	22	21	20	21	21	31	24	26	26	26
Black, non-Hispanic	23	22	27	25	23	30	29	32	28	28
Hispanic	26	31	28	29	25	34	32	32	29	32
Asian/Pacific Islander	9	12	21	18	17	32	19	28	26	26
American Indian/ Alaska Native	37	38	39	29	34	—	—	53	30	41
Parents' education level[b]										
Less than high school	38	31	33	32	33	41	30	36	35	32
Graduated high school	27	23	26	26	25	34	28	30	30	30
Some education after high school	22	21	22	23	23	31	26	27	30	27
Graduated college	15	19	18	18	17	27	23	25	21	24
Type of school										
Public	23	23	23	23	22	31	27	28	28	28
Nonpublic	13	14	15	16	15	24	17	21	18	19

— = sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

[a] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

[b] Parents' education level refers to the highest level of education completed by either parent.

Note: The sample for this table is based on the 1990, 1992, 1996, and 1998 National Mathematics Assessments and the 1994 National Reading Assessment.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1990, 1992, 1994, and 1996 *Data Almanacs*. National Mathematics Assessment data may be found at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/tables96/index.html (Question #15, S004001). National Reading Assessment data (1994) are from unpublished data almanacs.

Figure EA 1.3

Percentage of 8th- and 12th-grade students in the United States who were absent from school 3 or more days in the preceding month, by parents' education level:[a] 1998
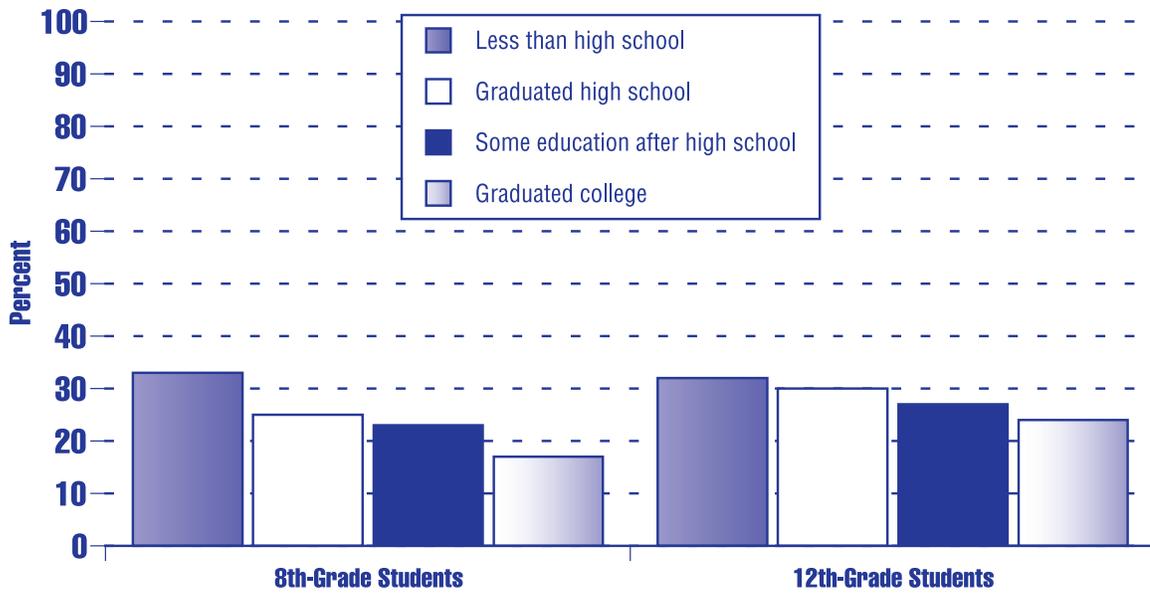
[a] Parents' education level refers to the highest level of education completed by either parent.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1990, 1992, 1994, and 1996 *Data Almanacs*. National Mathematics Assessment data may be found at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/tables96/index.html (Question #15, S004001). National Reading Assessment data (1994) are from unpublished data almanacs.

EA 1.4 High School Dropouts: Event Dropout Rate[9] for Grades 10 Through 12

High school dropouts have lower earnings, experience more unemployment, and are more likely to end up on welfare than their peers who complete high school or college.[10] Women who drop out of high school are more likely to become pregnant and give birth at a young age and are more likely to become single parents.[11]

Table EA 1.4 shows the event dropout rate (percentage) for students in grades 10 through 12, ages 15 through 24. Event dropout rates are measured by the proportion of students enrolled in grades 10 through 12 1 year earlier who were not enrolled and who had not completed high school in the year the data are reported. From 1975 to 1998, dropout rates fluctuated between 4 percent and 7 percent.[12]

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.[13] In 1998, Hispanics had a higher dropout rate (9 percent) than whites (4 percent) or blacks (5 percent) (see Figure EA 1.4).[14]

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9 *Event* dropout rates describe the proportion of students who leave school each year without completing a high school program. This is in contrast to *status* dropout rates, which provide cumulative data on dropouts among all young adults within a specified age range, and *cohort* dropout rates, which follow a particular cohort of students over time (McMillen and Kaufman, 1997).

10 U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 1998. *The Condition of Education: 1998.* NCES 98-013. Indicators 31, 32, and 34. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

11 Marin, M.M., Chan, N., & Raymond, J. 1987. Consequences of the Process of Transition to Adulthood for Adult Economic Well Being. In R.G. Corin (ed.) Research in the Sociology of Education and Socialization. Greenwich, CT: JAI; Manlove, J. 1998. "The Influence of High School Dropout and School Disengagement on the Risk of School-Age Pregnancy." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 8: 187-220.

12 The event dropout rate reached 7 percent in the years 1974, 1977, 1978, and 1979. Data for these years are not shown in Table EA 1.4.

13 Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

14 The finding that Hispanics are more at risk of dropping out of school than either blacks or whites has been confirmed in other national data sets, such as High School and Beyond and the National Education Longitudinal Study (Ekstron, R., Goertz, M., Pollack, J., & Rock, D. 1987. Who Drops out of High School and Why? Findings from a National Study. In G. Natriello (ed.), *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies* (pp. 52-69). New York: Teachers College Press; McMillen, M., & Kaufman, P. 1994. *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1994*. NCES 96-863. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics).

Table EA 1.4

Event dropout rate[a] (percentage) for youth in the United States in grades 10 through 12 (ages 15 through 24), by gender and by race and Hispanic origin:[b] Selected years, 1975-1998

	1975	1980	1985	1990[d]	1991[d]	1992[d,e]	1993[d,e]	1994[d,e,f]	1995[d,e,f]	1996[d,e,f]	1997[d,e,f]	1998
Total	6	6	5	4	4	4	5	5	6	5	5	5
Male	5	7	5	4	4	4	5	5	6	5	5	5
Female	6	6	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	5
White[b]												
Total	5	5	4	3	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	4
Male	5	6	5	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	—	—
Female	5	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	—	—
Black[b]												
Total	9	8	8	5	6	5	6	7	6	7	5	5
Male	8	8	8	4	5	3	6	7	8	5	—	—
Female	9	9	7	6	7	7	5	6	5	9	—	—
Hispanic[c]												
Total	11	12	10	8	7	8	7	10	12	9	10	9
Male	10	18	9	9	10	8	5	9	12	10	—	—
Female	12	7	10	7	5	9	8	11	13	8	—	—

[a] The event dropout rate is the proportion of students enrolled in grades 10 through 12 1 year earlier who were not enrolled and not graduated in the year for which the data are presented. It is calculated using the Current Population Survey data from October of a given year.

[b] Non-Hispanic.

[c] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

[d] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[e] Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the Current Population Survey.

[f] Numbers in this year may reflect changes in Current Population Survey due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercount.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, unpublished tabulations; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1996*, Table A19, and *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1997*, Table B3; *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1998*, Table 1.

Figure EA 1.4

Event dropout rate[a] for youth in the United States in grades 10 through 12 (ages 15 through 24), by race and Hispanic origin:[b] Selected years, 1972-1998
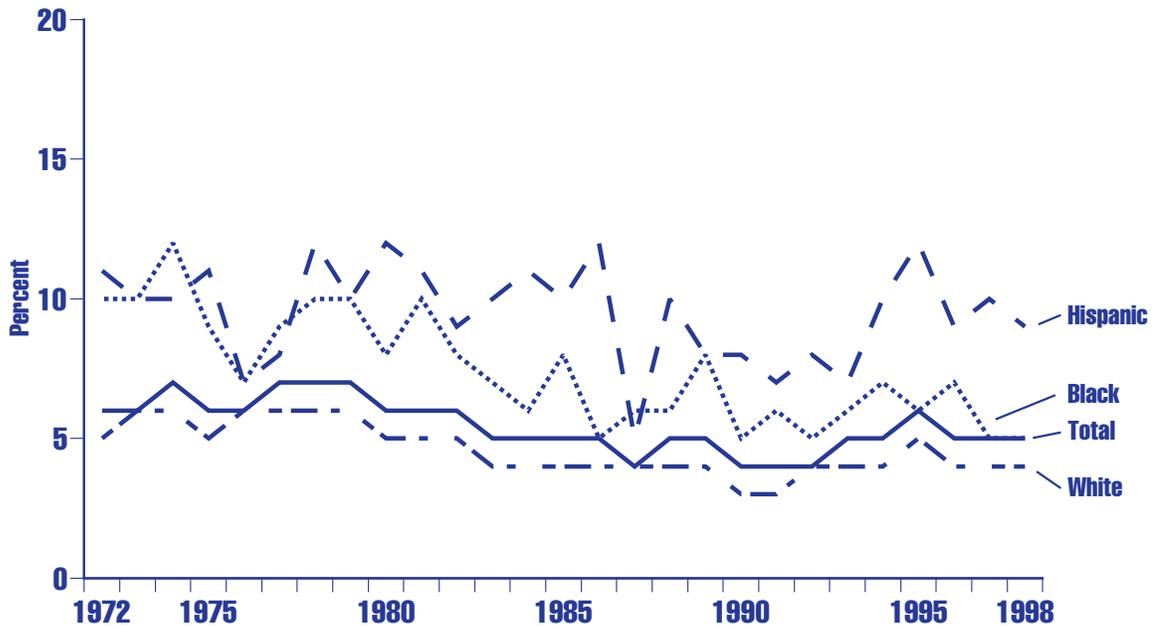
[a] The event dropout rate is the proportion of students enrolled in grades 10 through 12 1 year earlier who were not enrolled and not graduated in the year for which the data are presented. It is calculated using the Current Population Survey data from October of a given year.

[b] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished tabulations; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1997*, Table B3; *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1998*, Table 1.

EA 1.5   High School Completion Rates for 18- Through 24-Year-Olds

High school graduates earn substantially more than persons who leave high school without graduating.[15] Table EA 1.5 presents the high school completion rates for 18- through 24-year-olds who were not still enrolled in a high school program—i.e., the percentage in this age group who have received a high school diploma or its equivalent, such as passing the General Educational Development (GED) exam. In 1998, the high school completion rate was 85 percent. As can be seen in Table EA 1.5, most students receive a high school diploma rather than an equivalent credential (75 percent versus 10 percent, respectively), though the equivalency credential has become more common in recent years. Between 1972 and 1998, the completion rate has remained fairly stable at between 83 percent and 86 percent (see Table EA 1.5).

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.[16] As Figure EA 1.5 shows, completion rates vary dramatically by race and Hispanic origin. Hispanics have had much lower high school completion rates than blacks and whites since the early 1970s. The high school completion rate for Hispanics in 1998 was only 63 percent, compared with 81 percent for blacks and 90 percent for whites. This suggests that many Hispanic youth and young adults will be less prepared than other 18- through 24-year-olds to enter or progress in the labor force.

The completion rate for blacks rose from 72 percent in 1972 to 81 percent in 1985, and it has remained at about that level through 1998 (see Table EA 1.5). The completion rate for Hispanics rose from 56 percent in 1972 to 67 percent in 1985 and stands at 63 percent in 1998, as well. The completion rate has also increased among whites, but to a lesser extent (see Figure EA 1.5).

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15 U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1997. *Current Population Reports*, P60-197. *Money Income in the United States: 1996, With Separate Data on Valuation of Noncash Benefits*, Table 7. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 1996. *Condition of Education 1996* (Indicators 32 and 34). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

16 Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

Table EA 1.5

High school completion rates (percentage) and method of completion for 18- through 24-year-olds[a] in the United States, by race and Hispanic origin:[b] Selected years, 1972-1998

	1972	1975	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992[d]	1993[d]	1994[d,e]	1995[d,e]	1996[d,e]	1997[d,e]	1998
Total													
Completed	83	84	84	85	86	85	86	86	86	85	86	86	85
Diploma	—	—	—	—	81	81	81	81	79	78	76	77	75
Equivalent[f]	—	—	—	—	5	4	5	5	7	8	10	9	10
White[b]													
Completed	86	87	88	88	90	89	91	90	91	90	92	91	90
Diploma	—	—	—	—	85	85	86	86	84	83	81	81	80
Equivalent[f]	—	—	—	—	5	4	5	5	6	7	11	9	10
Black[b]													
Completed	72	70	75	81	83	83	82	82	83	85	83	82	81
Diploma	—	—	—	—	78	77	76	76	75	75	73	72	72
Equivalent[f]	—	—	—	—	5	5	6	6	8	9	10	10	10
Hispanic[c]													
Completed	56	62	57	67	59	57	62	64	62	63	62	67	63
Diploma	—	—	—	—	55	53	57	58	54	54	55	59	52
Equivalent[f]	—	—	—	—	4	3	6	6	8	9	7	8	11

[a] Refers to persons not currently enrolled in high school or below. It is calculated using the Current Population Survey data from October of a given year.

[b] Non-Hispanic .

[c] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

[d] Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the Current Population Survey.

[e] Numbers for these years may reflect changes in Current Population Survey due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercount.

[f] Diploma equivalents include passing the General Educational Development (GED) exam.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1996,* Tables 13 and A25, and *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1997 and 1998,* Table 4.

Figure EA 1.5

High school completion rates for 18- through 24-year-olds[a] in the United States, by race and Hispanic origin:[b] Selected years, 1980-1998
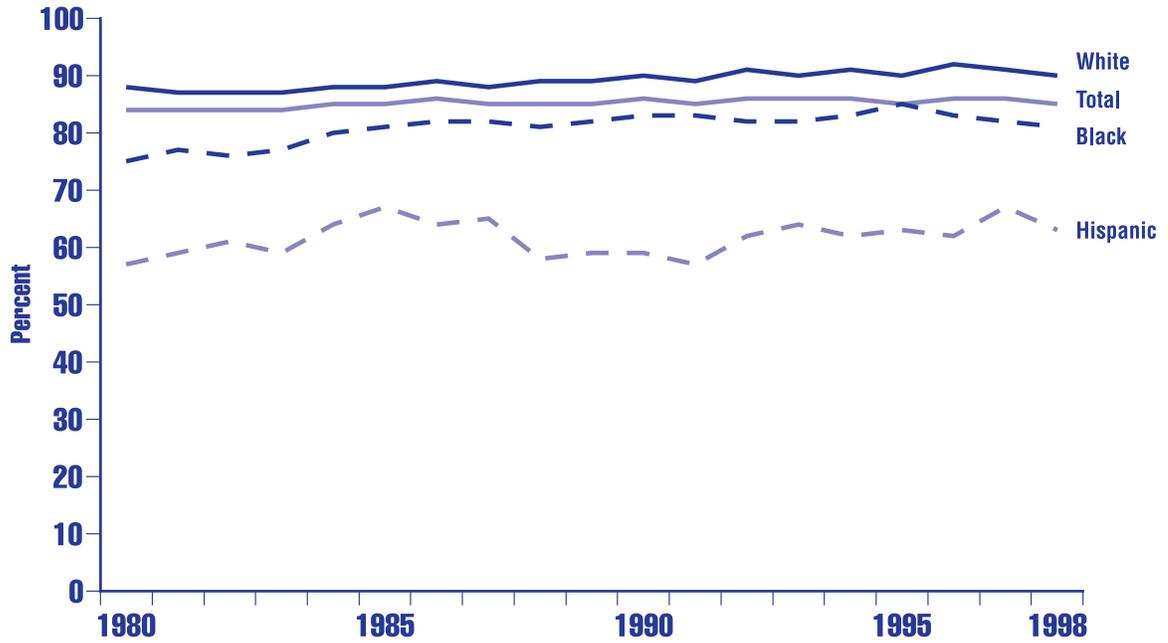
[a] Refers to persons not currently enrolled in high school or below. It is calculated using the Current Population Survey data from October of a given year.

[b] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 1996. Table A25, 1997, Table 4.

EA 1.6   College Attendance and Attainment

College attendance and receipt of a bachelor's degree increase employment opportunities and income potential. One of the National Education Goals for the year 2000, adopted by Congress, is for adult literacy and lifelong learning, with an objective of increasing the proportion of qualified students, especially minorities, who enter college, who complete at least 2 years, and who complete their degree programs.[17]

Table EA 1.6 presents the percentage of 25- through 29-year-old high school graduates who had completed at least some college and the percentage who had received a bachelor's degree or higher:[18]

- In 1999, 66 percent of high school graduates in this age group had completed at least some college, 10 percent had received an associate's degree, and 32 percent had received at least a bachelor's degree.[19]

- College attendance has increased since the early 1970s, with the most rapid increases occurring during the 1990s. The percentage of high school graduates completing at least some college rose from 44 percent in 1971 to 52 percent in 1990—and then to 66 percent in 1999 (see Figure EA 1.6.A).

- College completion, defined here as receipt of a bachelor's degree, increased more modestly, from 22 percent of 25- to 29-year-old high school graduates in 1971 to 32 percent of this group in 1999 (see Figure EA 1.6.B).

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.[20] In 1997, white high school graduates were far more likely (35 percent) than their black (16 percent) or Hispanic peers (18 percent) to have received a bachelor's degree or higher. Whites were also more likely to have attended college (68 percent) than blacks or Hispanics (54 percent each) in 1997. Whites have had far higher rates of attendance and completion than blacks or Hispanics since the early 1970s, and the gap between whites and the other two racial/ethnic groups in college attendance and completion has not decreased over time (see Figures EA 1.6.A and EA 1.6.B).

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[17] National Education Goals Panel. 1997. *The National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners*, 1997 (Goal 6, p. xvi). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

[18] Note that the measure of college attendance changed from "one or more years of college" in 1971-1991 to "some college or more" in 1992-1997. Similarly, the measure of college completion changed from "four or more years of college" in 1971-1991 to "bachelor's degree or higher" in 1992-1997.

[19] Based on analyses of the 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal study, it is estimated that about 10 percent of all persons with a bachelor's degree also hold an associate's degree. National Center for Education Statistics.

[20] Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

Table EA 1.6

Percentage of 25- through 29-year-old high school graduates[a] in the United States who have attended some college or who have received a bachelor's degree or higher, by race and Hispanic origin:[c] Selected years, 1971-1999

	1971	1975	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Some college or more[d]	44	50	52	51	52	53	57	59	61	62	65	65	66	66
White[b]	45	51	54	52	54	55	59	61	63	65	67	68	69	69
Black[b]	31	39	42	43	44	43	45	48	50	52	56	54	57	58
Hispanic[c]	31	41	40	44	40	42	47	49	52	50	51	54	52	51
Bachelor's degree or higher[e]	22	26	26	26	27	27	27	27	27	28	31	32	31	32
White[b]	23	28	28	27	30	30	30	30	30	31	34	35	35	36
Black[b]	12	15	15	14	16	13	14	16	16	18	17	16	18	17
Hispanic[c]	11	17	13	18	14	16	16	14	13	16	16	18	17	14
Associate's degree	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	9	10	10	10	9	10	10
White[b]	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	9	10	10	10	9	10	10
Black[b]	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	6	8	8	8	7	8	10
Hispanic[c]	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	8	9	7	8	9	9	9

[a] High school completion or high school graduate is defined as 12 years of school completed for 1971-1991 and high school diploma or equivalency certificate for 1992-1997. Beginning in 1992, the Current Population Survey changed the questions used to obtain educational attainment of respondents.

[b] Non-Hispanic .

[c] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

[d] This was measured as "one or more years of college" for 1971-1991 and as "some college or more" for 1992-1997.

[e] This was measured as "four or more years of college" for 1971-1991 and as "bachelor's degree or higher" for 1992-1997.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 1998. *The Condition of Education 1997*, Tables 22-2 and 22-3; Associate degree data published in Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1998, Table ED6.

Figure EA 1.6.A

Percentage of 25- through 29-year-old high school graduates[a] in the United States who have attended some college, by race and Hispanic origin:[b] Selected years, 1971-1999
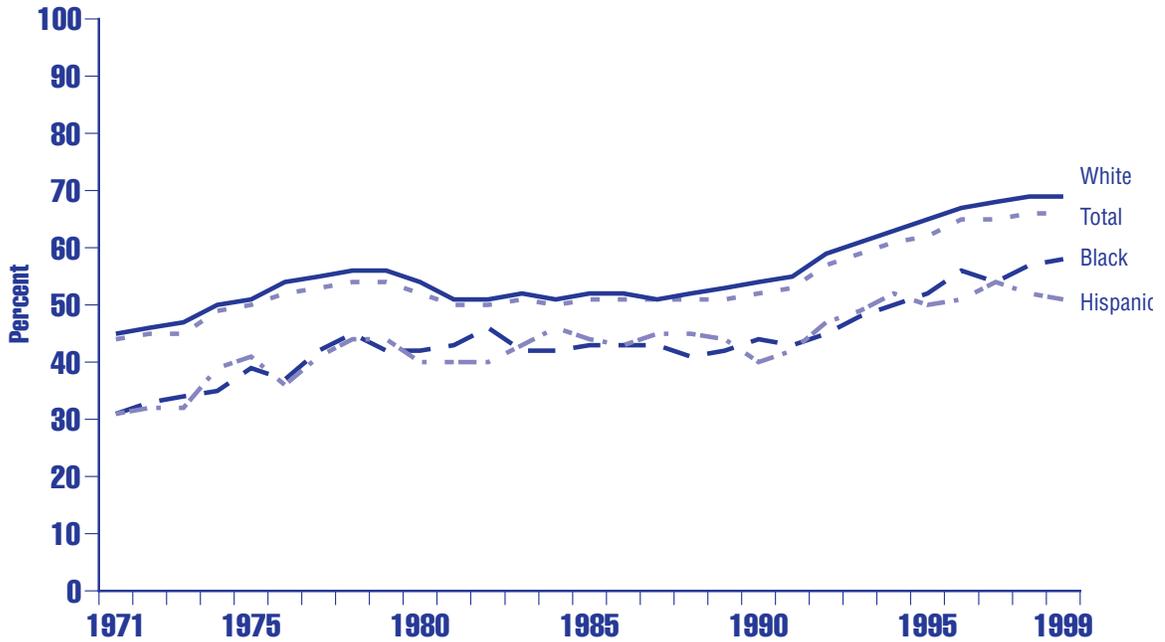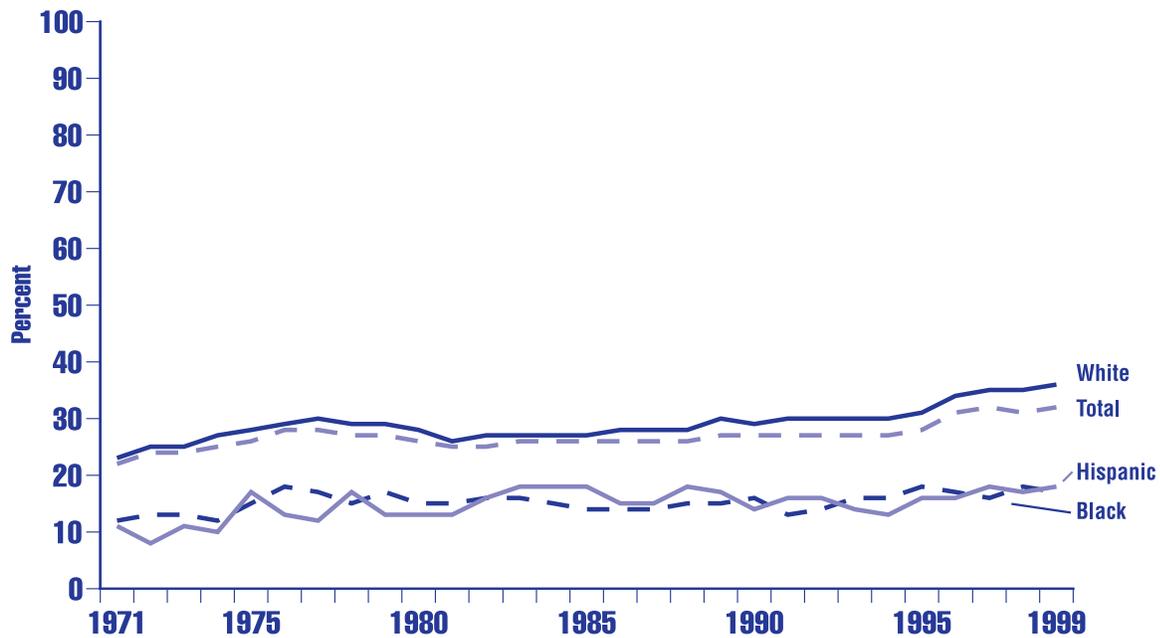

[a] High school completion or high school graduate is defined as 12 years of school completed for 1971-1991 and high school diploma or equivalency certificate for 1992-1997. Beginning in 1992, the Current Population Survey changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents.

[b] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2000.

Figure EA 1.6.B

Percentage of 25- through 29-year-old high school graduates[a] in the United States who have received a bachelor's degree,[b] by race and Hispanic origin:[c] Selected years, 1971-1999

[a] High school completion or high school graduate is defined as 12 years of school completed for 1971-1991 and high school diploma or equivalency certificate for 1992-1997. Beginning in 1992, the Current Population Survey changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents.

[b] This was measured as "four or more years of college" for 1971-1991 and as "bachelor's degree or higher" for 1992-1997.

[c] Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2000.