



# **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.”<sup>1</sup> Table EA 1.1 presents the percentage of children, ages 3 and 4, enrolled in center-based programs.<sup>2</sup> Center-based programs include day care centers, Head Start programs, preschools, prekindergartens, and other early childhood programs.

In 1996, over half (53 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.**<sup>3</sup> There are notable differences in early childhood program enrollment rates among racial and ethnic groups; for example, in 1996, only 37 percent of Hispanic children were enrolled in an early childhood program, compared with 54 percent of whites and 63 percent of blacks. Throughout the 1990s, black 3- to 4-year-olds have had the highest enrollments in early childhood programs, followed closely by whites, with much lower enrollments among Hispanics (see Figure EA 1.1.A).

**Differences by Socioeconomic Status.** There are substantial differences in center-based enrollments by socioeconomic status, including poverty status and maternal education (see Figure EA 1.1.B).

- In 1996, enrollments were much higher among families that were above the poverty threshold (58 percent) than those who were at or below the poverty threshold (41 percent).
- Enrollments also differ by maternal education, with the highest enrollment (71 percent) among children whose mothers were college graduates and the lowest (37 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 enrollments by maternal employment status (see Figure EA 1.1.B); for example, in 1996, 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 enrollments than children whose mothers were not in the labor force. These differences have been apparent since 1991.

<sup>1</sup>National Education Goals Panel. 1997. *The National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners, 1997* (Goal 1, p. xiv). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates are based on children who have yet to enter kindergarten.

<sup>3</sup>Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

Table EA 1.1

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

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

<sup>a</sup>Estimates are based on children who have not yet entered kindergarten.

<sup>b</sup>Center-based programs include day care centers, Head Start programs, preschools, prekindergartens, and other early childhood programs.

<sup>c</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

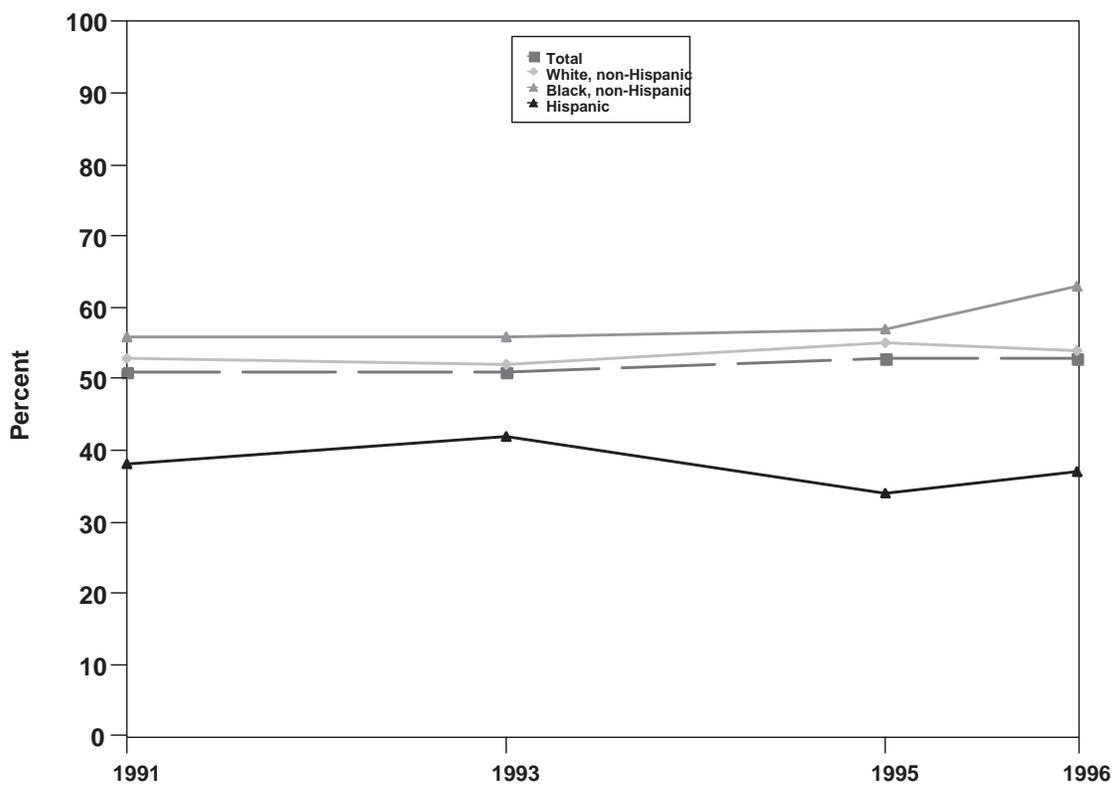
<sup>d</sup>Parents include any combination of a biological, adoptive, step, and foster mother and/or father. No parents in the household indicates that the child is living with non-parent guardians (e.g., grandparents).

<sup>e</sup>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 Survey.

Figure EA 1.1.A

Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds<sup>a</sup> in the United States enrolled in center-based programs,<sup>b</sup> by race and Hispanic origin:<sup>c</sup> 1991, 1993, 1995, and 1996



<sup>a</sup>Estimates are based on children who have not yet entered kindergarten.

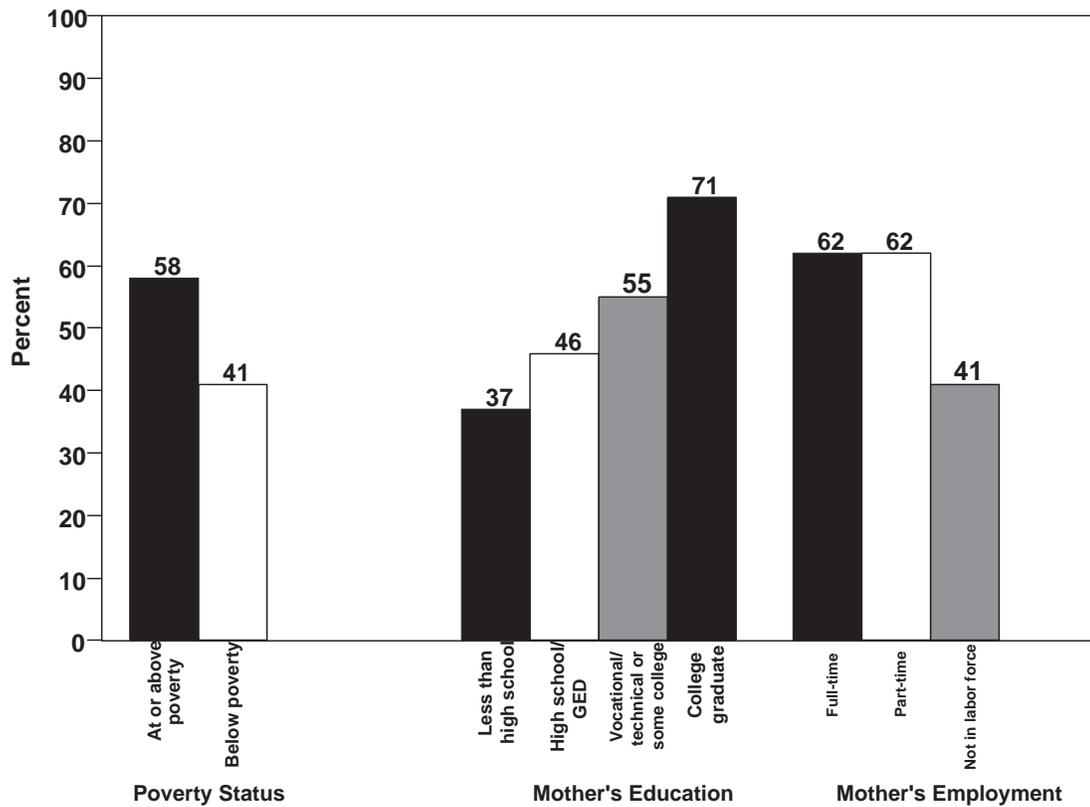
<sup>b</sup>Center-based programs include day care centers, Head Start programs, preschools, nursery schools, prekindergartens, and other early childhood programs.

<sup>c</sup>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.B

Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds<sup>a</sup> in the United States enrolled in center-based programs,<sup>b</sup> by poverty status, mother's education, and mother's employment status:<sup>c</sup> 1996



<sup>a</sup>Estimates are based on children who have not yet entered kindergarten.

<sup>b</sup>Center-based programs include day care centers, Head Start programs, preschools, nursery schools, prekindergartens, and other early childhood programs.

<sup>c</sup>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.<sup>4</sup>

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, and 1995. These data indicate that 11 percent of 2nd grade children in 1991 had repeated kindergarten and/or 1st grade and 8 percent in 1993 and 1995 had repeated either or both of these grades.

**Differences by Gender.** Males were more likely than females to have repeated kindergarten and/or 1st grade; for example, in 1995, 11 percent of male 2nd graders had repeated a grade, in comparison with only 5 percent of females (see Table EA 1.2).

**Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.**<sup>5</sup> In 1995, black 2nd graders were more likely than their white peers to have repeated kindergarten and/or 1st grade (see Table EA 1.2). Twelve percent of black children had repeated a grade, compared with 7 percent of white children. Ten percent of Hispanic children repeated kindergarten and/or first grade in 1995. Rates declined substantially for white and Hispanic 2nd graders between 1991 and 1995; for example, among Hispanic children rates dropped by almost half, from 18 percent to 10 percent.

**Differences by Socioeconomic Status.** Grade repetition differs by family socioeconomic status, measured by poverty status and maternal education levels (see Figure EA 1.2). In 1995, 10 percent of children in poor families had repeated a grade, in comparison with 7 percent of 2nd graders living in nonpoor families. Grade repetition varies by maternal education, with the highest percentage of grade repetition in 1995 among children whose mothers did not complete high school (12 percent) and the lowest percentage among children whose mothers were college graduates (5 percent). Rates of grade repetition among children whose mothers did not complete high school declined substantially between 1991 and 1995, from 21 percent to 12 percent (see Table EA 1.2).

<sup>4</sup>Alexander, K.L., Entwisle, D.R., and 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.

<sup>5</sup>Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

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, and 1995

	1991	1993	1995
<b>Total</b>	11	8	8
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	13	10	11
Female	9	7	5
<b>Race and Hispanic origin<sup>a</sup></b>			
White non-Hispanic	9	7	7
Black non-Hispanic	15	12	12
Hispanic	18	11	10
<b>Poverty status</b>			
At or above poverty	9	8	7
Below poverty	18	10	10
<b>Family structure<sup>b</sup></b>			
Two parents	10	7	8
One or no parent	14	11	9
<b>Mother's education<sup>c</sup></b>			
Less than high school	21	15	12
High school/GED	12	9	9
Vocational/technical or some college	9	6	7
College graduate	4	5	5
<b>Mother's employment status<sup>c</sup></b>			
35 hours or more per week	12	8	9
Less than 35 hours per week	8	8	6
Not in labor force	11	9	8

<sup>a</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

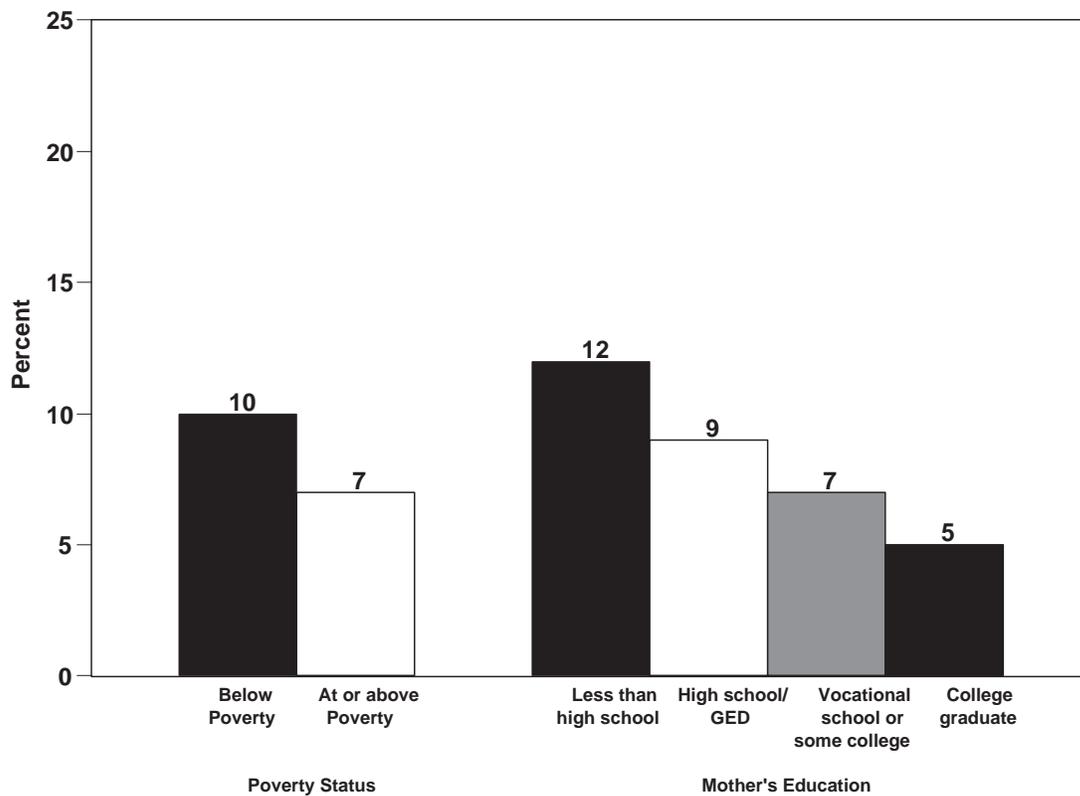
<sup>b</sup>Parents include any combination of a biological, adoptive, step, and foster mother and/or father. No parents in the household indicates that the child is living with non-parent guardians (e.g., grandparents).

<sup>c</sup>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, and 1995 National Household Education Survey.

Figure EA 1.2

Percentage of 2nd graders in the United States who were retained in kindergarten and/or 1st grade, by poverty status and mother's education:<sup>a</sup> 1995



<sup>a</sup>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, and 1995 National Household Education Survey.



## 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.<sup>6</sup>

**Differences across Grade Levels.** The percentage of 8th-grade students who were absent from school three or more days in the preceding month has remained relatively constant at around 23 percent between 1990 and 1996 (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.**<sup>7</sup> Among 8th graders in 1996, American Indian and Hispanic students, at 29 percent, were the most likely to have been absent three or more days in the preceding month. White and Asian students had the lowest absentee rates at 21 and 18 percent, respectively, followed by black students at 25 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 30 percent for American Indians.

**Differences by Parents' Education Level.** Absentee rates among students also differ by parents' educational levels (see Figure EA 1.3) Absences from school were highest for students whose parents have less than a high school education. In 1996, for example, 32 percent of 8th graders whose parents lacked a high school diploma were absent from school three or more days in the preceding month, compared with 18 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).

<sup>6</sup>National Education Goals Panel. 1994. *The National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners, 1994*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>7</sup>Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

Table EA 1.3

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

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

— = not available; sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

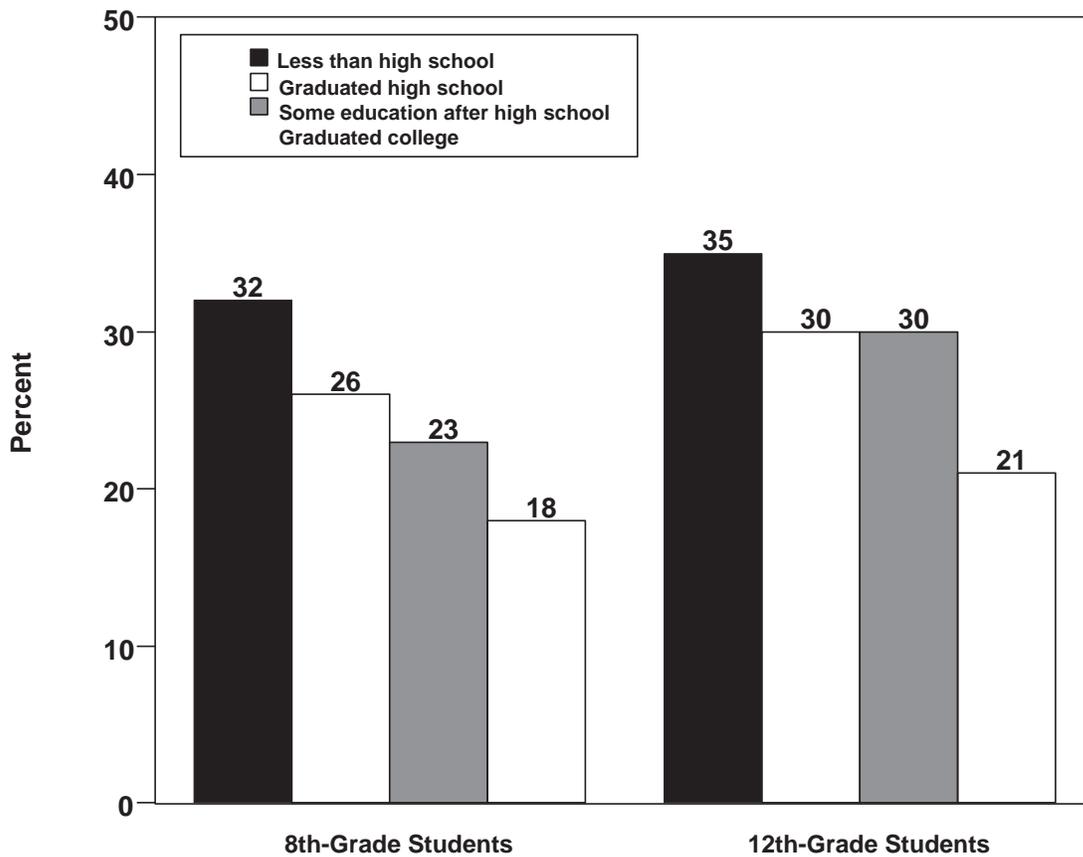
<sup>a</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Note: The sample for this table is based on the 1990, 1992, and 1996 National Mathematics Assessments, and 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 three or more days in the preceding month, by parents' education level: 1996



Note: The data for this figure come from the 1996 National Mathematics 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.



## EA 1.4

**HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS: EVENT DROPOUT RATE FOR GRADES 10 THROUGH 12**

High school dropouts have lower earnings, experience more unemployment, and are more likely to end up on welfare and in prison than their peers who complete high school or college.<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

Table EA 1.4 shows the event dropout rate (percentage) for students in grades 10 through 12, ages 15 through 24. Event dropout rates measure the proportion of students enrolled in grades 10 through 12 one year earlier, who were not enrolled and who had not completed high school in the year the data are reported. From 1975 to 1996, dropout rates have fluctuated between 4 percent and 7 percent.<sup>10</sup> While the event dropout rate appears higher in recent years, the observed differences may be due to changes in census methodology.

**Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.**<sup>11</sup> In 1996, Hispanics had a higher dropout rate (9 percent) than whites (4 percent). The event dropout rate for blacks (7 percent) fell in between these two groups (see Figure EA 1.4).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup>McMillen, M., and Kaufman, P. 1997. *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1996*. NCES 98-250. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

<sup>9</sup>McMillen, M., and 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; Manlove, J. Forthcoming. "The Influence of High School Dropout and School Disengagement on the Risk of School-age Pregnancy." *Journal of Research on Adolescence*.

<sup>10</sup>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.

<sup>11</sup>Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

<sup>12</sup>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. and 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<sup>a</sup> (percentage) for youth in the United States in grades 10 through 12 (ages 15 through 24), by gender and by race and Hispanic origin:<sup>b</sup> selected years, 1975-1996

	1975	1980	1985	1990 <sup>c</sup>	1991 <sup>c</sup>	1992 <sup>c,d</sup>	1993 <sup>c,d</sup>	1994 <sup>c,d,e</sup>	1995	1996
<b>Total</b>	6	6	5	4	4	4	5	5	6	5
<b>White, non-Hispanic</b>										
Total	5	5	4	3	3	4	4	4	5	4
Male	5	6	5	4	3	4	4	4	5	4
Female	5	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Black, non-Hispanic</b>										
Total	9	8	8	5	6	5	6	7	6	7
Male	8	8	8	4	5	3	6	7	8	5
Female	9	9	7	6	7	7	5	6	5	9
<b>Hispanic<sup>b</sup></b>										
Total	11	12	10	8	7	8	7	10	12	9
Male	10	18	9	9	10	8	5	9	12	10
Female	12	7	10	7	5	9	8	11	13	8

<sup>a</sup>The event dropout rate is the proportion of students enrolled in grades 10 through 12 one year earlier who were not enrolled and not graduated in the year for which the data are presented.

<sup>b</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

<sup>c</sup>Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

<sup>d</sup>Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the Current Population Survey (CPS).

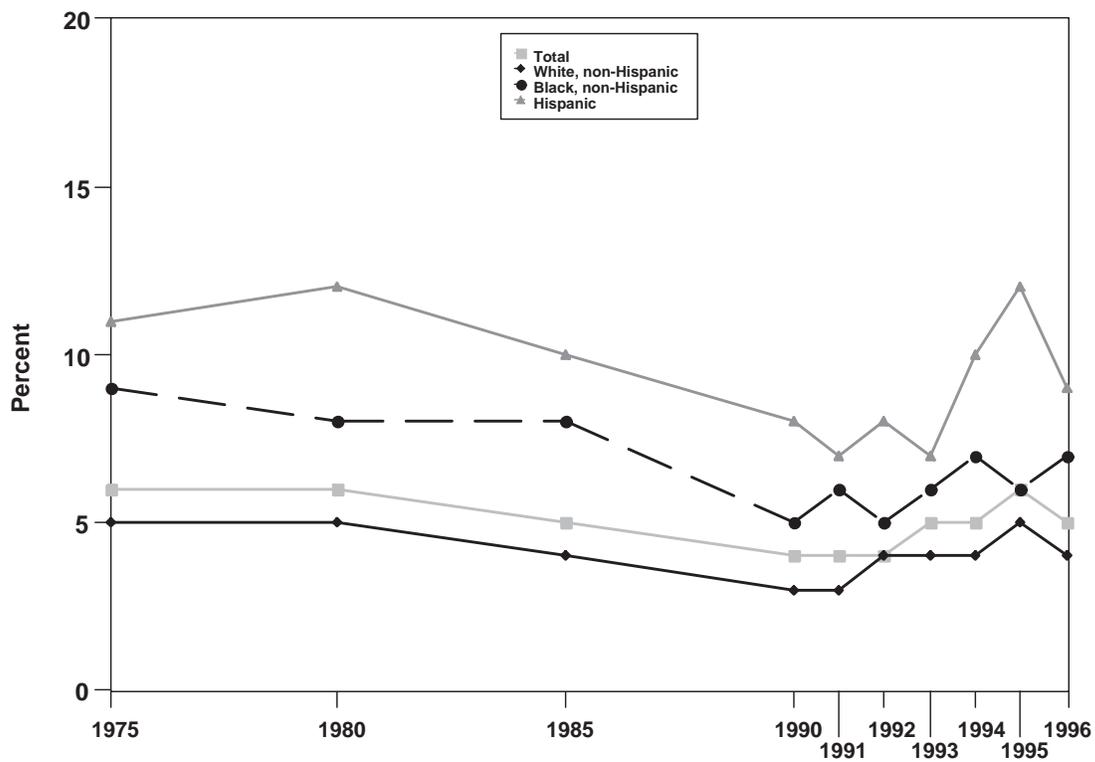
<sup>e</sup>Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercount.

Note: Event dropout rates are calculated using the Current Population Survey data from October of a given year.

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: 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996*.

Figure EA 1.4

Event dropout rate for youth in the United States in grades 10 through 12 (ages 15 through 24), by race and Hispanic origin:<sup>a</sup> selected years, 1975-1996



<sup>a</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Note: The event dropout rate is the proportion of students enrolled in grades 10 through 12 one year earlier who were not enrolled and not graduated in the year for which the data are presented.

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: 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996*.



## 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.<sup>13</sup> 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 1996, the high school completion rate was 86 percent. As can be seen in Table EA 1.5, most students receive a high school diploma rather than an equivalent credential (76 percent versus 10 percent, respectively). Between 1972 and 1996, the completion rate has varied between 83 percent and 86 percent (see Table EA 1.5).

**Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.**<sup>14</sup> 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 either blacks or whites since the early 1970s. The high school completion rate for Hispanics in 1996 was only 62 percent, compared with 83 percent for blacks and 92 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. While completion rates for Hispanics have remained fairly constant since the early 1970s, completion rates for blacks rose from 72 percent in 1972 to 83 percent in 1990, and have remained at that level through 1996. Completion rates have also increased among whites, but to a lesser extent, so that the gap between black and white completion rates has narrowed over time (see Figure EA 1.5).

<sup>13</sup>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.

<sup>14</sup>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,<sup>a</sup> in the United States, by race and Hispanic origin:<sup>b</sup> selected years, 1972-1996

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

<sup>a</sup>Refers to persons not currently enrolled in high school or below.

<sup>b</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

<sup>c</sup>Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the Current Population Survey (CPS).

<sup>d</sup>Numbers for these years may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used.

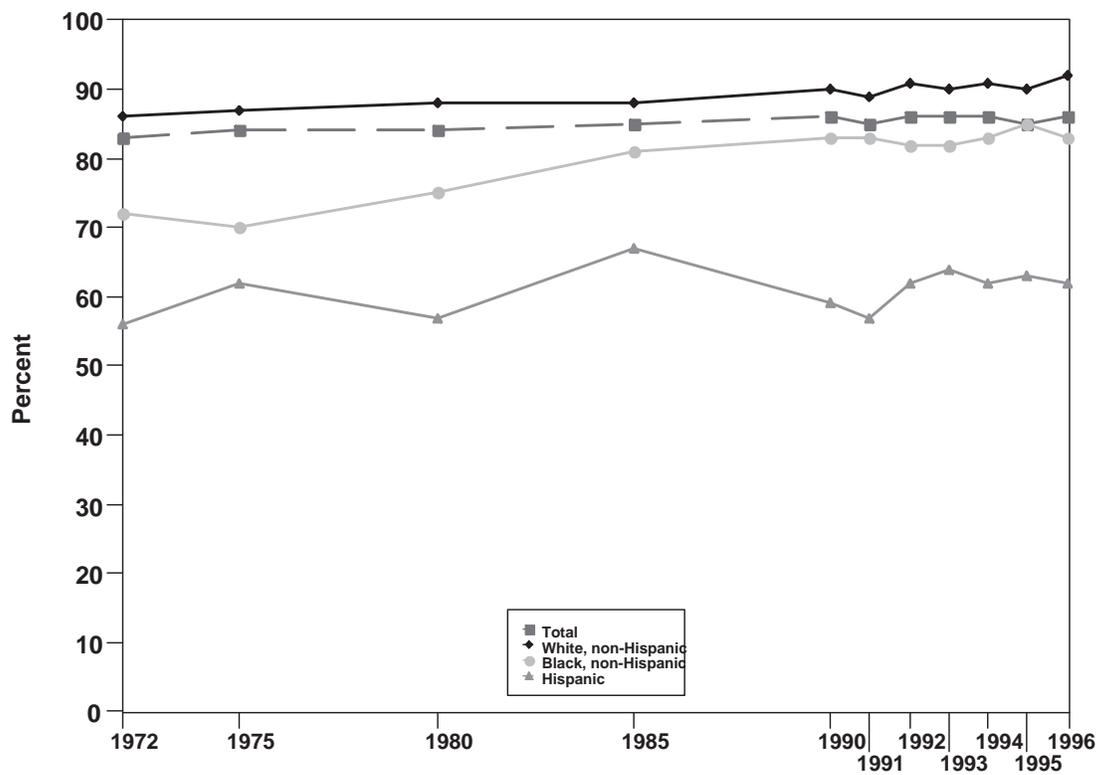
<sup>e</sup>Diploma equivalents include passing the General Educational Development (GED) exam.

Note: High school completion rates are calculated using the Current Population Survey data from October of a given year.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States*: 1994, 1995, 1996.

Figure EA 1.5

High school completion rates for 18- through 24-year-olds<sup>a</sup> in the United States, by race and Hispanic origin:<sup>b</sup> selected years, 1972-1996



<sup>a</sup>Refers to persons not currently enrolled in high school or below.

<sup>b</sup>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); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1994, 1995, 1996*.



## 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 two years, and who complete their degree programs.<sup>15</sup>

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.<sup>16</sup>

- In 1997, 65 percent of high school graduates in this age group had completed some college, 9 percent of high school graduates received an associate's degree, and 32 percent had received at least a bachelor's degree.<sup>17</sup>
- College attendance has increased since the early 1970s. The percentage of high school graduates completing at least some college rose from 44 percent in 1971 to 65 percent in 1997 (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 1997 (see Figure EA 1.6.B).

**Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.**<sup>18</sup> 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) 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).

<sup>15</sup>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.

<sup>16</sup>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.

<sup>17</sup>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.

<sup>18</sup>Estimates for whites and blacks exclude Hispanics of those races.

Table EA 1.6

Percentage of 25- through 29-year-old high school graduates<sup>a</sup> in the United States who have attended some college or who have received a bachelor's degree or higher, by race and Hispanic origin:<sup>b</sup> selected years, 1971-1997

	1971	1975	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
<b>Some college or more<sup>c</sup></b>												
<b>Total</b>	44	50	52	51	52	53	57	59	61	62	65	65
<b>Race and Hispanic origin<sup>b</sup></b>												
White, non-Hispanic	45	51	54	52	54	55	59	61	63	65	67	68
Black, non-Hispanic	31	39	42	43	44	43	45	48	50	52	56	54
Hispanic	31	41	40	44	40	42	47	49	52	50	51	54
<b>Bachelor's degree or higher<sup>d</sup></b>												
<b>Total</b>	22	26	26	26	27	27	27	27	27	28	31	32
<b>Race and Hispanic origin<sup>b</sup></b>												
White, non-Hispanic	23	28	28	27	29	30	30	30	30	31	34	35
Black, non-Hispanic	12	15	15	14	16	13	14	16	16	18	17	16
Hispanic	11	17	13	18	14	16	16	14	13	16	16	18
<b>Associate's degree</b>												
<b>Total</b>	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	9	10	10	10	9
<b>Race and Hispanic origin<sup>b</sup></b>												
White, non-Hispanic	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	9	10	10	10	9
Black, non-Hispanic	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	6	8	8	8	7
Hispanic	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	8	9	7	8	9

— = not available

<sup>a</sup>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 (CPS) changed the questions used to obtain educational attainment of respondents.

<sup>b</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

<sup>c</sup>This was measured as "one or more years of college" for 1971-1991, and as "some college or more" for 1992-1997.

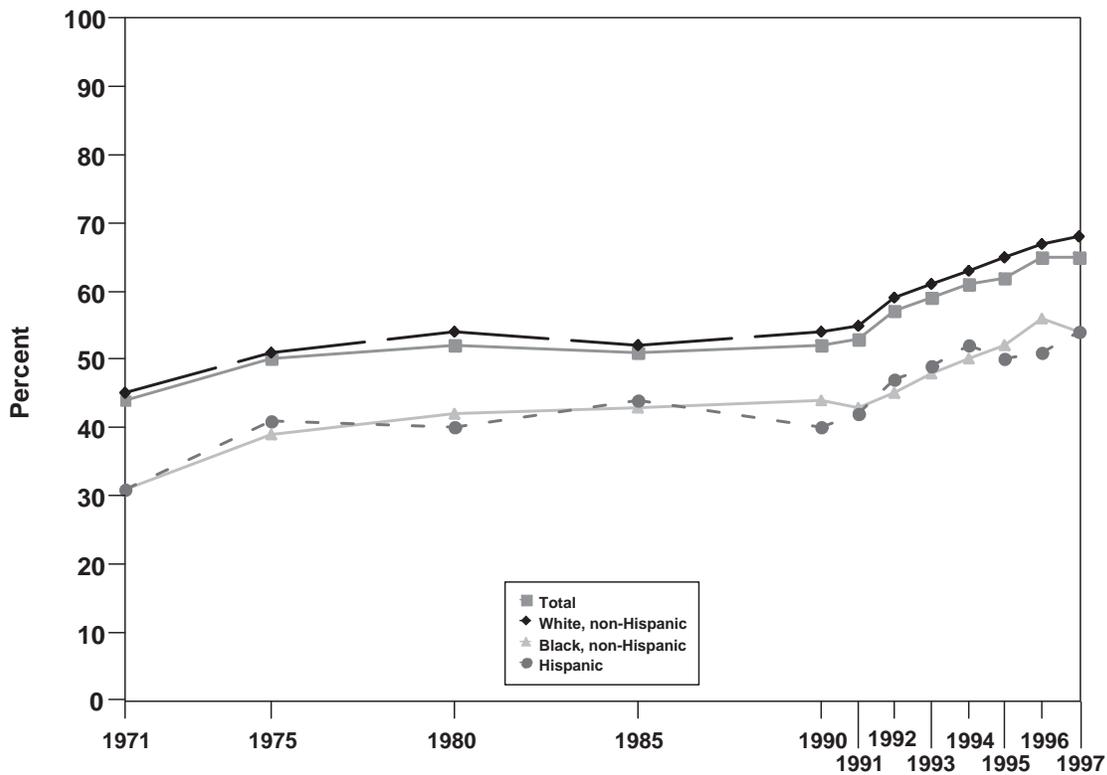
<sup>d</sup>This was measured as "four or more years of college" for 1971-1991, and as "bachelor's degree or higher" for 1992-1997.

Note: 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.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *The Condition of Education* 1997, 1998. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office (based on March Current Population Surveys, U.S. Bureau of the Census).

Figure EA 1.6.A

Percentage of 25- through 29-year-old high school graduates<sup>a</sup> in the United States who have attended some college,<sup>b</sup> by race and Hispanic origin:<sup>c</sup> selected years, 1971-1997



<sup>a</sup>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 (CPS) changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents.

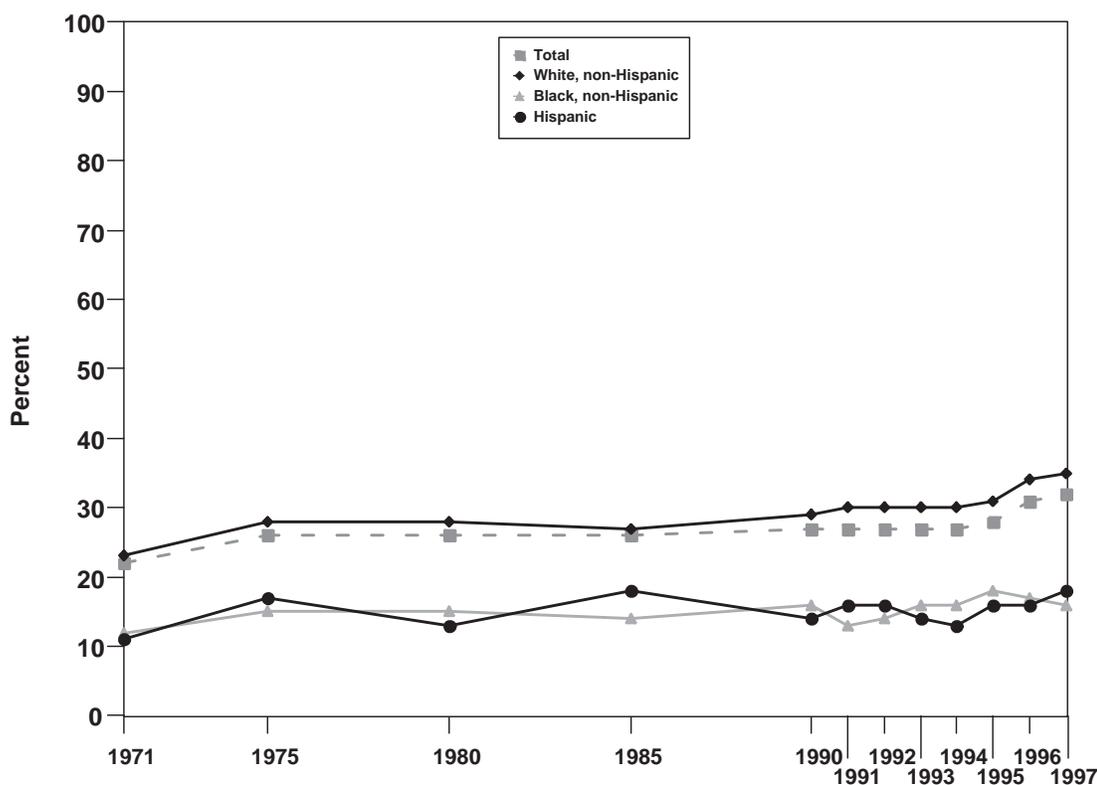
<sup>b</sup>This was measured as “one or more years of college” for 1971-1991, and as “some college or more” for 1992-1997.

<sup>c</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *The Condition of Education 1997, 1998*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office (based on March Current Population Surveys, U.S. Bureau of the Census).

Figure EA 1.6.B

Percentage of 25- through 29-year-old high school graduates<sup>a</sup> in the United States who have received a bachelor's degree,<sup>b</sup> by race and Hispanic origin:<sup>c</sup> selected years, 1971-1997



<sup>a</sup>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 (CPS) changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents.

<sup>b</sup>This was measured as “four or more years of college” for 1971-1991, and as “bachelor’s degree or higher” for 1992-1997.

<sup>c</sup>Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *The Condition of Education* 1997, 1998. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office (based on March Current Population Surveys, U.S. Bureau of the Census).