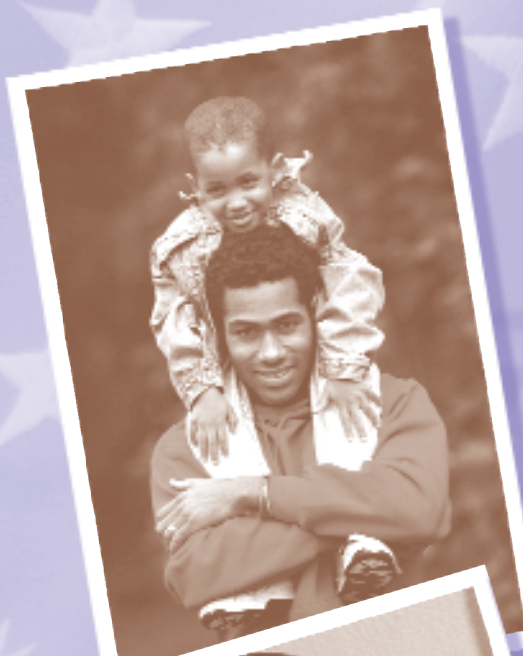


America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2004



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Introduction

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2004*. Since 1997, the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics has published *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being*, a report that includes detailed information on a set of key indicators of child well-being. To make better use of its resources, the Forum has decided to update all data annually on its enhanced website (<http://childstats.gov>), and to alternate publishing the more detailed report with a new condensed version—*America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being*—that highlights selected indicators. Thus, this July, the Forum is publishing the *Brief*; in July 2005 the Forum will publish the more detailed report, returning to the *Brief* in July 2006.

The indicators and background measures presented in this *Brief* are those that have been reported previously by the Forum. In the mid-1990s, careful consideration was given to selecting a small set of key indicators that describe children's well-being. The 25 key indicators were chosen because they are easy to understand; are based on substantial research connecting them to child well-being; vary across important areas of children's lives; are measured regularly so that they can be updated and show trends over time; and represent large segments of the population, rather than one particular group.

The first section of *America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2004* describes the context in which children live (such as changes in children's family settings and living arrangements). The four sections that follow—economic security, health, behavior and social environment, and education—highlight improvements in children's well-being as well as areas where there has been less progress. This year's report reveals that birth rates for adolescents have continued to decline, victimization rates for youths and violent crime offending rates by youths are down, and high school advanced coursetaking rates are at the highest levels of the past 20 years. However, the prevalence of overweight among U.S. children has increased sharply, and the percentage of children living in poverty rose slightly, while remaining below its recent peak. The *Brief* concludes with a summary list highlighting recent changes in all 25 key indicators. For information on longer-term trends, specific data tables can be accessed on the Forum's website, <http://childstats.gov>.

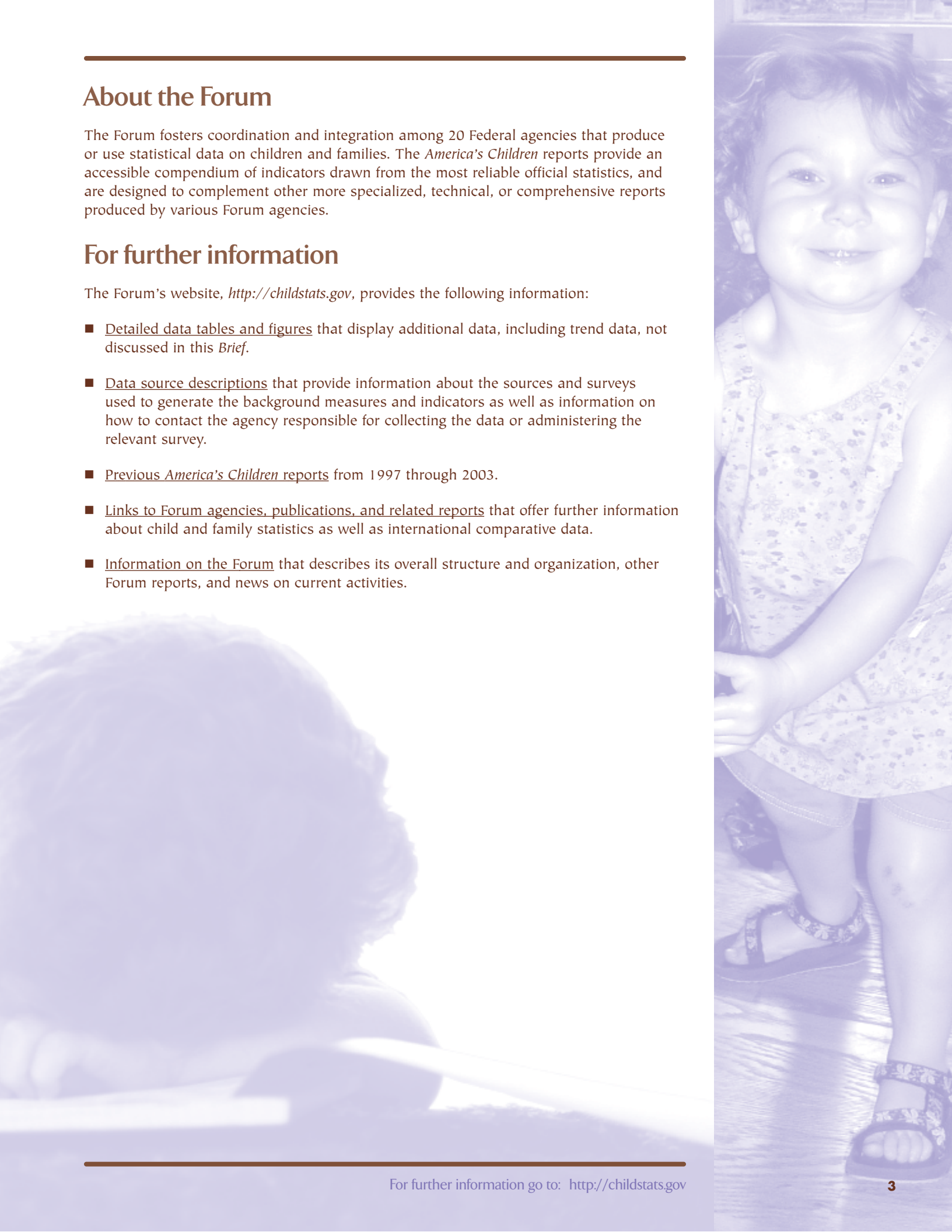
About the Forum

The Forum fosters coordination and integration among 20 Federal agencies that produce or use statistical data on children and families. The *America's Children* reports provide an accessible compendium of indicators drawn from the most reliable official statistics, and are designed to complement other more specialized, technical, or comprehensive reports produced by various Forum agencies.

For further information

The Forum's website, <http://childstats.gov>, provides the following information:

- [Detailed data tables and figures](#) that display additional data, including trend data, not discussed in this *Brief*.
- [Data source descriptions](#) that provide information about the sources and surveys used to generate the background measures and indicators as well as information on how to contact the agency responsible for collecting the data or administering the relevant survey.
- [Previous *America's Children* reports](#) from 1997 through 2003.
- [Links to Forum agencies, publications, and related reports](#) that offer further information about child and family statistics as well as international comparative data.
- [Information on the Forum](#) that describes its overall structure and organization, other Forum reports, and news on current activities.



Population and family characteristics

Background measures, such as family structure, the marital status of mothers, the nativity of children and their parents, and air quality, tell us about the context in which our Nation's children live.

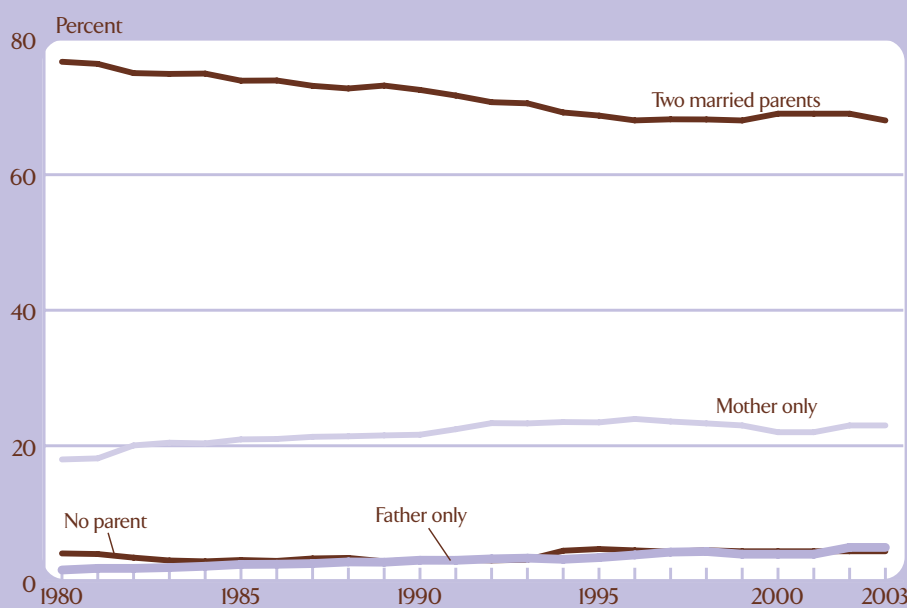
In 2002, 72.9 million children under age 18 lived in the United States and represented 25 percent of the population, down from a peak of 36 percent at the end of the baby boom in 1964. Children are projected to be 24 percent of the population in 2020.

Family structure is associated with the economic, parental, and community resources available to children, as well as their overall well-being. On average, living with two parents who are married to each other is associated with more favorable outcomes for children both through, and independent of, the higher income that characterizes these families.¹ In 2003, 68 percent of children under age 18 lived with two married parents,² down from 77 percent in 1980. However, the percentage has remained stable since 1995, ending a long-standing downward trend.

While the majority of children live with two married parents, 32 percent do not. In 2003, 23 percent of children lived with only their mothers, 5 percent lived with only their fathers, and 4 percent lived with neither of their parents (Figure 1).

Family structure is also affected by a mother's marital status at the time of birth. In 2002, just over one-third (34 percent) of all births in the United States were to unmarried women,

FIGURE 1 Percentage of children under age 18 by presence of married parents in the household, 1980-2003



NOTE: The category "two married parents" includes children who live with a biological, step, or adoptive parent who is married with his or her spouse present. If a second parent is present and not married to the first parent, then the child is identified as living with a single parent.

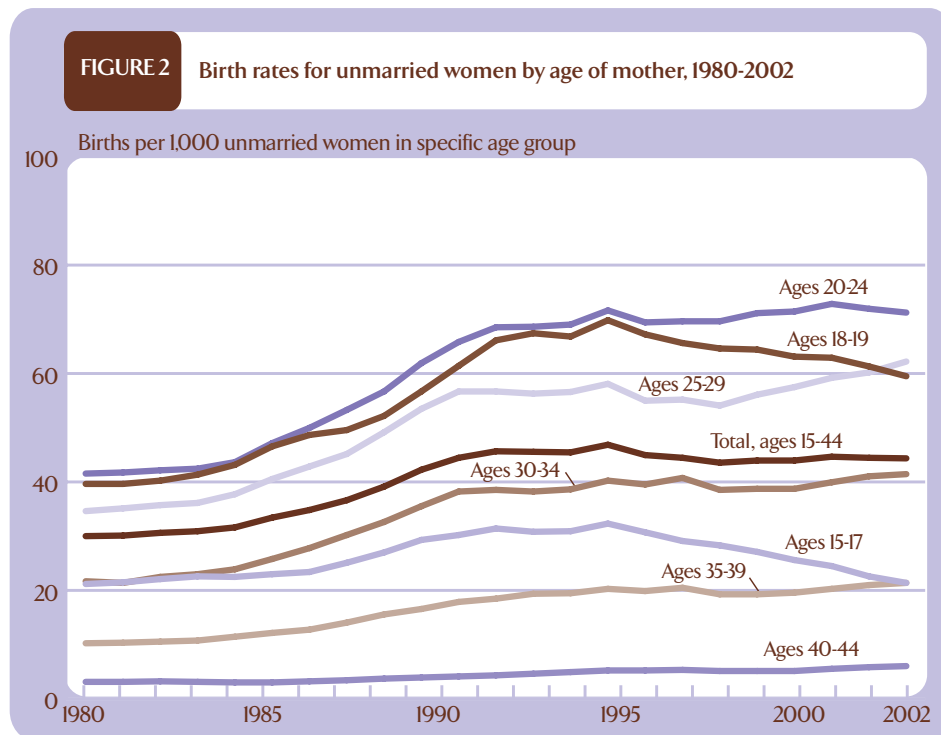
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau. Current Population Survey, March and Annual Social Economic Supplements.

¹ Biblarz, T.J. and Raferty, A.E. (1999). Family Structure, Educational Attainment, and Socioeconomic Success: Rethinking the Pathology of Matriarchy. *American Journal of Sociology*, 105 (2), 321-365.

² In these data, children in step-families are not differentiated from children in biological or adoptive two-parent families. Research indicates that children in step-families are more at risk than children in other married two-parent families. Coleman, M., Ganong, L., and Fine, M. (2000). Reinvestigating Remarriage: Another Decade of Progress. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62: 1288-1307.

up from 32 percent in 1995. In part, this recent increase mirrors the fact that there are more unmarried women ages 15-44 than ever before.

The birth rate among unmarried women reflects changes in childbearing within this group. In 2002, there were 44 births per 1,000 unmarried women ages 15 to 44 (Figure 2). While the overall birth rate among unmarried women has changed little since 1995, there are important differences by age. The birth rate for unmarried teenagers ages 15 to 19 has declined by more than one-fifth since 1994. Meanwhile, birth rates for unmarried women ages 20 and older continue to increase, though much less rapidly than in the 1980s and early 1990s.



SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System.

Children with foreign-born parents may need additional resources at school and at home as a result of language and cultural barriers confronting both the children themselves and their parents. The percentage of children with at least one foreign-born parent rose from 15 percent in 1994 to 20 percent in 2003.

Among all U.S. children, 15 percent have a parent who has not received a high school diploma. This percentage rises substantially among children who are foreign-born or have at least one foreign-born parent. In 2003, 43 percent of foreign-born children with at least one foreign-born parent and 34 percent of native children with at least one foreign-born parent had a parent with less than a high school diploma, compared with 10 percent of native children with native parents.

The environment in which children live, such as air quality, plays an important role in their health and development. In 2002, 34 percent of children under 18 lived in areas that did not meet one or more of the Primary National Ambient Air Quality Standards,³ up significantly from 19 percent in 2001. Over the past decade, this percentage has fluctuated between 16 percent and 34 percent.

³ The air quality standard for ground-level ozone is the standard exceeded most frequently in each year. Changing weather patterns (e.g., high summer temperatures) contribute to yearly differences in ozone concentrations.

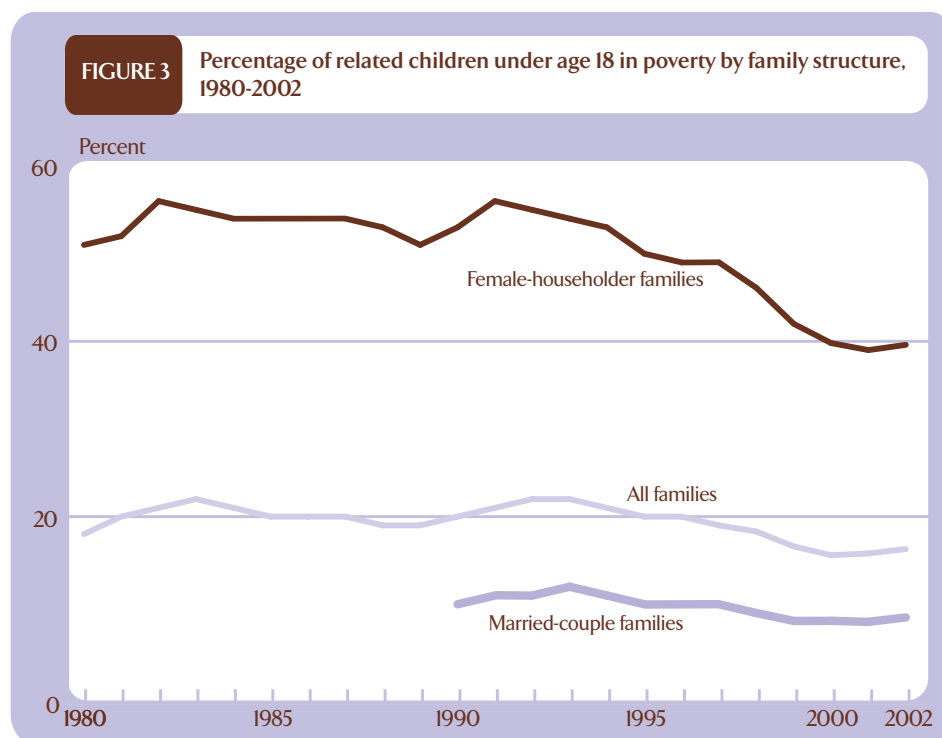




Economic security indicators

Economic indicators, such as poverty status, stable parental employment, and food security, offer some insight into the material well-being of children, and the extent to which they may have difficulty growing up and achieving their life goals because they lack economic resources.

The number of children living in families with income below their poverty threshold⁴ rose from 11.2 million in 2001 to 11.6 million in 2002. The poverty rate rose for these “related children” (children who were related to their householder), from 15.8 percent in 2001 to 16.3 percent in 2002 (Figure 3).⁵ Although this was the first statistically significant annual increase in the poverty rate for related children since 1991, this increase followed a period of decline from a recent peak of 22 percent in 1993. The drop in poverty from 1996 to the recent low point in 2000 was larger than the decline from 1993 to 1996.⁶



NOTE: Estimates refer to children under age 18 who are related to the householder. In 2002, the average poverty threshold for a family of four was \$18,392 in annual income.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau. Current Population Survey, March and Annual Social Economic Supplements.

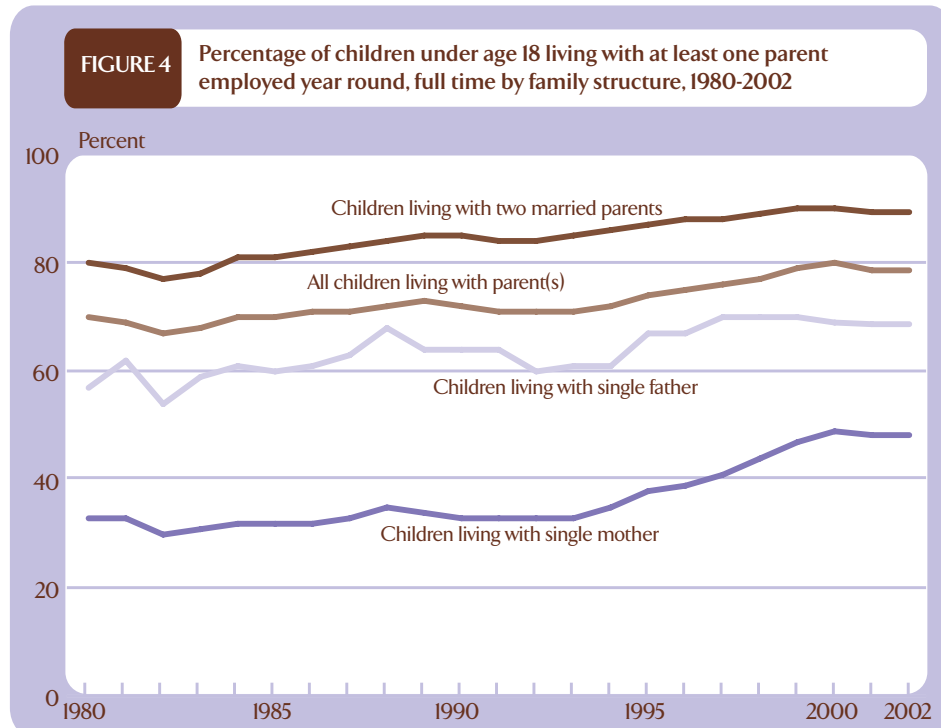
⁴ Poverty is measured by comparing family income to one of 48 dollar amounts called thresholds. The dollar amounts vary by the size of the family and the members' ages. The average threshold for a family of three was \$14,348 in 2002; for a family of four, \$18,392. For further detail see www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html.

⁵ The poverty rate for all people under age 18—which includes some children who were not related to their householder, as well as householders and spouses under age 18—showed no statistical change between 2001 (16.3 percent) and 2002 (16.7 percent).

⁶ The child poverty rates for related children in 2000 and 2001 were not statistically different.

Poverty among children varies greatly by family structure. Children living in female householder families with no husband present continued to experience a higher poverty rate in 2002 than their counterparts in married-couple families: 40 percent compared with 9 percent. Disparities also persisted by race and ethnicity. Children who were Black (and no other race) had a poverty rate of 32 percent in 2002; Hispanic children (who could be of any race) had a poverty rate of 28 percent; single-race White, non-Hispanic children had a poverty rate of 9 percent. Because racial categories were redefined in 2002, no direct historical comparisons can be made for Black children. However, the poverty rate in the first half of the 1990s was above 40 percent for Black children and above 35 percent for Hispanic children.

The percentage of children who had at least one parent working year round, full time was 78 percent in 2002, not distinguishable statistically from 2001, but below its peak of 80 percent in 2000 (Figure 4). Children living in two-parent families were more likely to have a parent working year round, full time (89 percent) compared with children living with a single mother or a single father (49 percent and 70 percent, respectively). In 2002, children living in poverty were less likely to have a parent working year round, full time than children who were not in poverty (33 percent and 87 percent, respectively).



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Current Population Survey, March and Annual Social Economic Supplements.

In 2002, 18 percent of children lived in households classified as “food insecure” by the USDA. Just over half a million children (0.8 percent) lived in households further classified as “food insecure with child hunger,” statistically unchanged from 1999 and down from 1.3 percent in 1995.

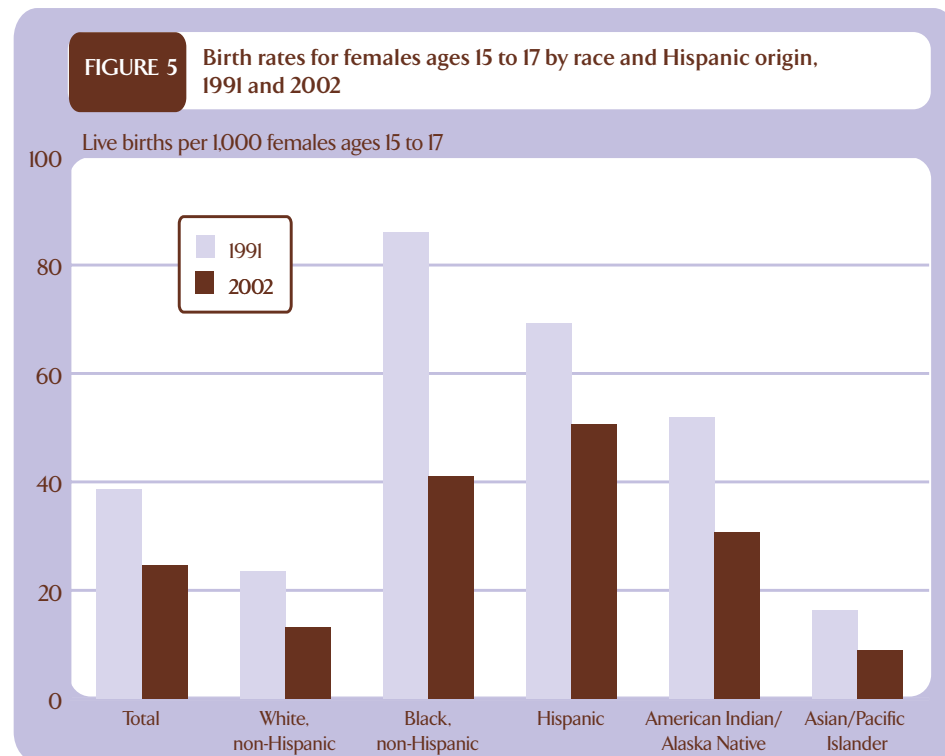




Health indicators

The health of the Nation's children continues to improve in many areas, such as lower birth rates for adolescents and expanded vaccine coverage. However, increases in overweight, infant mortality, and low birthweight represent major challenges.

Birth rates for adolescents have dropped steadily since 1991, reaching a record low of 23 births per 1,000 females ages 15 to 17 in 2002. The 2002 rate is two-fifths lower than the peak in 1991 (Figure 5). The steepest decline has been among Black, non-Hispanic adolescents who experienced a decline of more than half between 1991 and 2002 (from 86 to 41 per 1,000, respectively). Declining adolescent birth rates are a direct result of declining adolescent pregnancy rates as evidenced by decreases in not only live births, but in induced abortions and fetal losses as well.⁷



SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System.

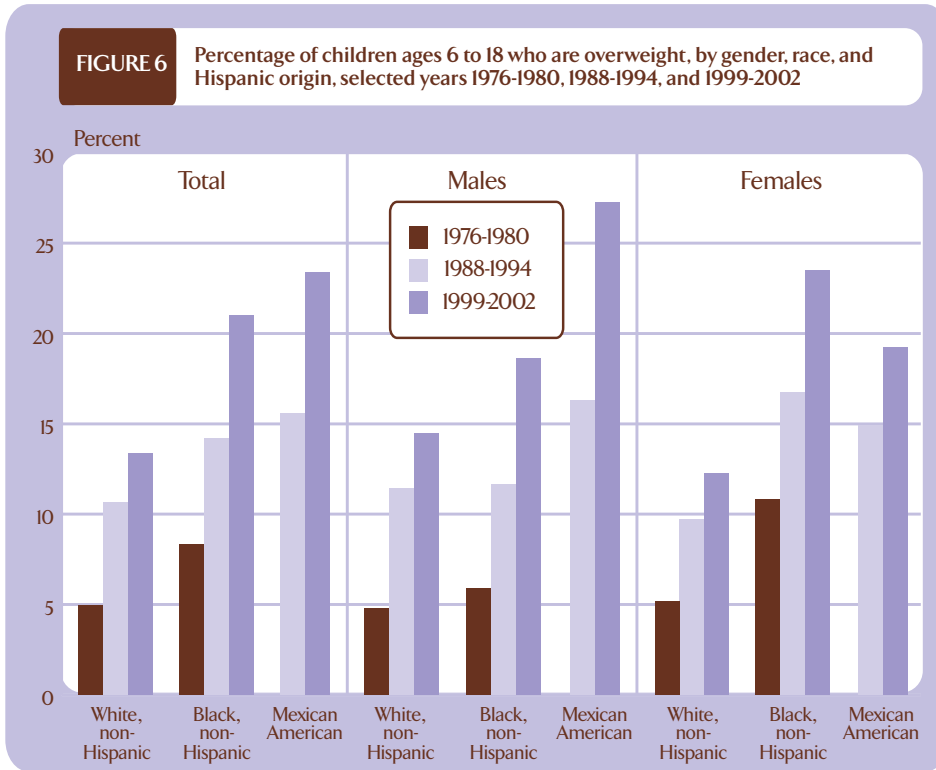
The introductions of two newly developed vaccines also mark improvements in the health of children ages 19 to 35 months. In the 1990s, the varicella (chicken pox) vaccine became available and throughout the decade its usage increased. In 2002, varicella vaccine coverage reached an all-time high of 81 percent. Coverage for the Hepatitis B vaccine, which became part of the recommended series for all infants in 1991, also increased through the 1990s and was at 90 percent in 2002. Coverage for the recommended combined series of four key vaccines was at 78 percent in 2002.⁸ Coverage for the combined series has varied between 76 percent and 78 percent since 1998, when it reached a high of 79 percent.

In contrast to these improvements, the prevalence of overweight among U.S. children has increased sharply. In 1976-1980, only 6 percent of children were overweight. By 1988-1994,

⁷ Ventura, S.J., Abma, J.C., Mosher, W.D., and Henshaw, S. (2003). Revised pregnancy rates, 1990-97, and new rates for 1998-99: United States. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 52 (7). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

⁸ Vaccinations included in the combined series are diphtheria, tetanus toxoids, and pertussis vaccine [DTP], polio, measles, and *Haemophilus influenzae type b* (Hib). The recommended immunization schedule for children is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule.pdf>.

this proportion had risen to 11 percent, and continued to rise to 16 percent in 1999-2002 (Figure 6). Black, non-Hispanic girls and Mexican American boys are at particularly high risk of being overweight. In 1999-2002, 23 percent of Black, non-Hispanic girls and 27 percent of Mexican American boys were overweight.



NOTE: Data for Mexican American children are not available from 1976-80 due to small sample sizes. Oversampling of Mexican Americans provided estimates for 1988-1994 and 1999-2002. Overweight is defined as body mass index (BMI) at or above the 95th percentile of the 2000 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention BMI-for-age growth charts. BMI is calculated as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

While still near its record low, infant mortality increased for the first time in decades in 2002. The 2002 preliminary infant mortality rate was 7.0 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, up from a rate of 6.8 in 2001. Preliminary analyses attribute the increase to deaths among neonates (infants less than 28 days old), particularly infants who died within the first week of life.⁹ Whereas the infant mortality rate increased in 2002, the perinatal mortality rate (late fetal deaths plus early neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births plus fetal deaths) remained stable. More detailed information will become available later in 2004, when linked birth and death records are analyzed.

One of the most important risk factors for infant mortality is low birthweight (about 5.5 lbs.). Low birthweight rose to 7.8 percent in 2002 compared with 7.7 percent in 2001 and 7.0 percent in 1990, continuing a slow, but steady two-decade increase.¹⁰ At 13.4 percent, the rate of low birthweight among Black, non-Hispanic infants continued to exceed the rate for any other racial or ethnic group. Growth in multiple births (largely due to increasing use of fertility treatments) partially explains the low birthweight increase, but low birthweight also increased among singleton infants.

⁹ Kochanek, K.D., Martin, J.A. (2004). Supplemental Analyses of Recent Trends in Infant Mortality. National Center for Health Statistics. Health E-stat. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/hestats/infantmort/infantmort.htm>.

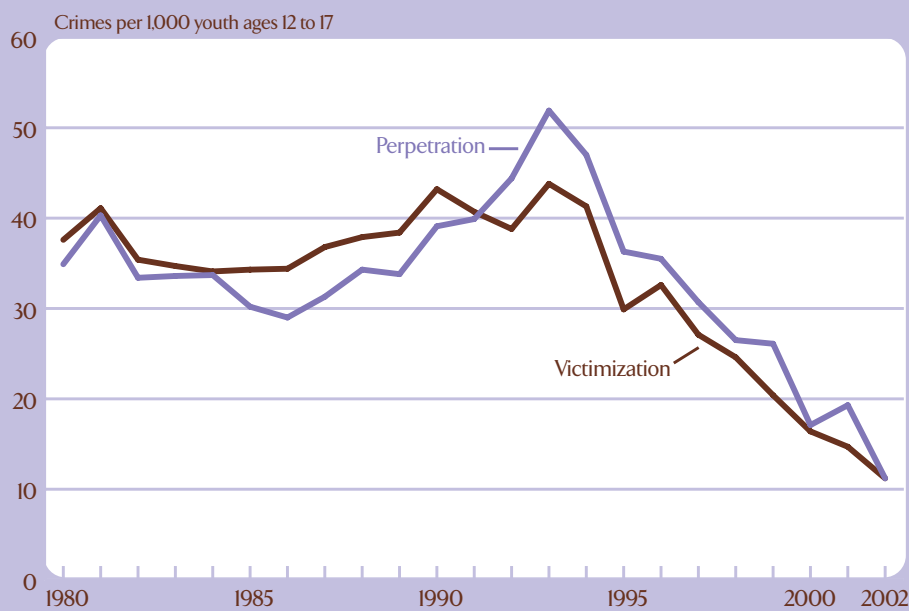
¹⁰ Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Sutton, P.D., Ventura, S.J., Menacker, F., and Munson, M.L. (2003). Births: Final Data for 2002. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 52 (10). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Behavioral and social environment indicators

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

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

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



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

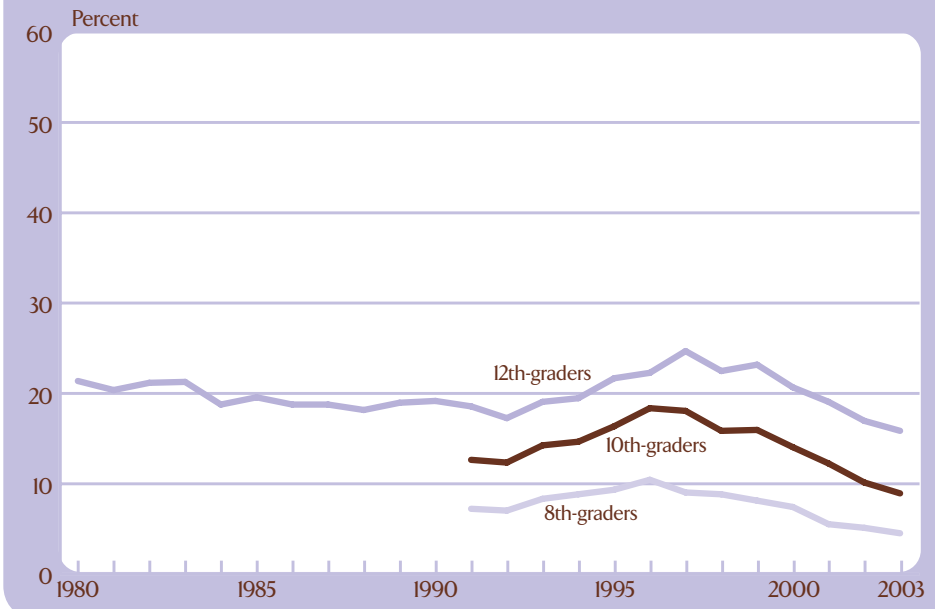
In 2002, the race of youth did not affect their likelihood of being victimized. This represents a change in victimization patterns since 1993, when Black youth were more likely to be the victims of serious violent crimes than were White youth. In 1993, the serious crime victimization rate for Black youth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

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

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

FIGURE 8

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



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

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

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



Education indicators

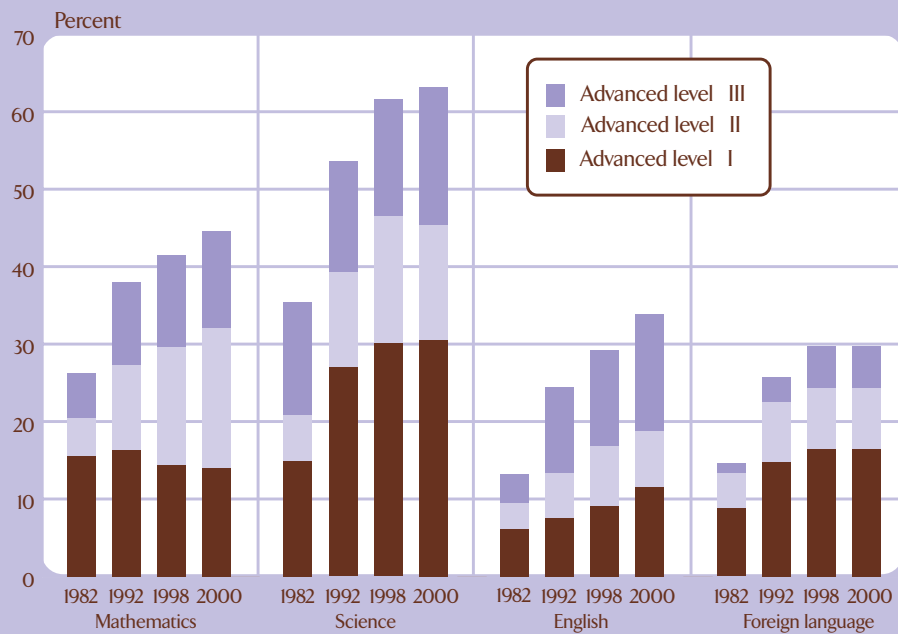
Education shapes the personal growth and life chances of children, as well as the economic and social progress of our Nation. Early educational experiences, such as reading to children, improve skills and academic success in school,¹¹ while later academic accomplishments, such as advanced coursetaking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

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

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

FIGURE 9

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



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

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

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

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

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

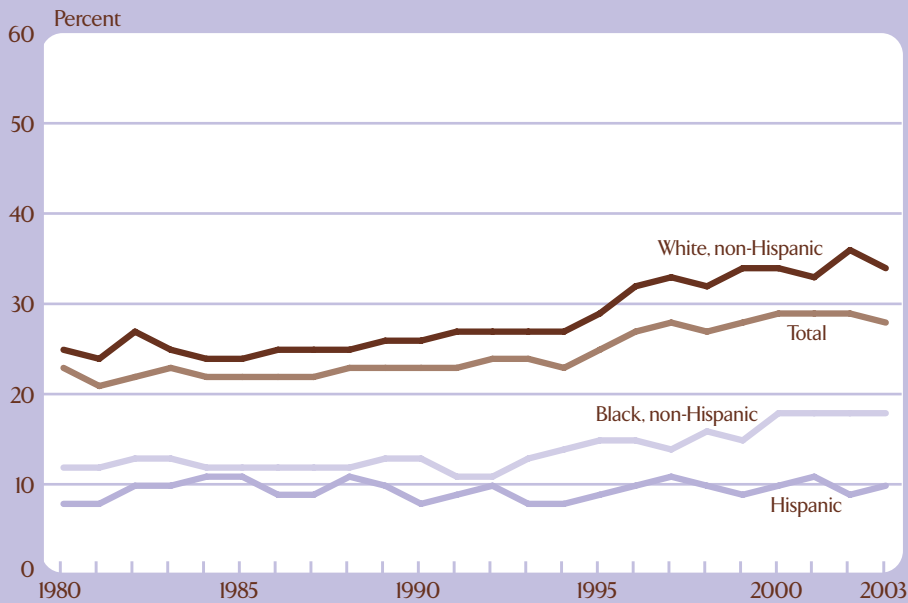
mathematics courses went up more than 1.5 times, from 26 percent in 1982 to 45 percent in 2000, and the percentage taking advanced foreign language doubled, from 15 percent in 1982 to 30 percent in 2000. In each subject, the largest increases occurred among students taking the highest-level courses.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

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

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

FIGURE 10

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



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

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

Summary List of Measures and Indicators of Child Well-Being

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

Legend

NS - No significant change

↑ - Significant increase

↓ - Significant decrease

*Refers to tests of statistical significance

Summary List of Measures and Indicators of Child Well-Being

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

Legend

NS - No significant change

↑ - Significant increase

↓ - Significant decrease

*Refers to tests of statistical significance

Summary List of Measures and Indicators of Child Well-Being

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

Legend

NS - No significant change

↑ - Significant increase

↓ - Significant decrease

*Refers to tests of statistical significance

Summary List of Measures and Indicators of Child Well-Being

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

Legend

NS - No significant change

↑ - Significant increase

↓ - Significant decrease

*Refers to tests of statistical significance

Recommended citation:
Federal Interagency
Forum on Child and
Family Statistics.
*America's Children in Brief:
Key National Indicators of
Well-Being, 2004.*
Federal Interagency
Forum on Child and
Family Statistics,
Washington, DC:
U.S. Government
Printing Office.

This report was printed
by the U.S. Government
Printing Office in
cooperation with the
National Center for
Health Statistics,
July 2004.

Single copies are
available through the
Health Resources and
Services Administration
Information Center while
supplies last:
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Suite 450,
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The report is also
available on the
World Wide Web:
<http://childstats.gov>.

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics

The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics was founded in 1994. Executive Order No. 13045 formally established the Forum in April 1997 to foster coordination and collaboration in the collection and reporting of Federal data on children and families. Agencies that make up the Forum as of Spring 2004 are listed below.

Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau

Department of Defense
Defense Manpower Data Center

Department of Education
Institute of Education Sciences
National Center for Education Statistics

Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Maternal and Child Health Bureau
National Center for Health Statistics

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Policy Development and Research

Department of Justice
Bureau of Justice Statistics

National Institute of Justice
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Statistics

Women's Bureau

Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Environmental Information

National Science Foundation
Division of Science Resources Statistics

Office of Management and Budget