

## Participation in School Music or Other Performing Arts

### Headline

Females in the eighth, tenth, and twelfth grades are more likely than their male peers to participate in school performing arts. ([Figure 1](#))

### Importance

Many researchers have found a positive association between arts participation and various academic and social outcomes such as school grades and a decrease in negative social behaviors.<sup>1</sup> Recent research has also shown that secondary school students who participate in the arts are more likely to continue to participate as young adults and to have higher levels of educational attainment.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the performing arts are considered by many to be intrinsically valuable, transmitting culture and providing pleasure for those who participate.

### Trends

Between 1991 and 2003, the percentage of eighth grade students participating in school performing arts declined somewhat from 55 percent to 48 percent among eighth graders. The percentage of tenth grade students participating in school performing arts increased modestly from 36 percent to 40 percent among tenth graders. Rates did not change significantly among twelfth graders, with 41 percent participating in performing arts programs in 2003. ([See Table 1](#)) Between 2002 and 2003, a similar pattern occurred where the percentage of eighth graders participating in school performing arts decreased, the percentage of tenth graders increased, and the percentage of twelfth graders remained the same.

### Differences by Gender

Females are much more likely than males to participate in school performing arts activities. The difference between males and females varies little by grade, ranging in 2003 from 13 to 17 percentage points. ([See Figure 1](#))

### Differences by Age

Eighth graders are the most likely to participate in school performing arts activities, with approximately 48 percent participating in 2003. Participation drops significantly for tenth and twelfth graders, with participation rates of 40 percent and 41 percent, respectively. ([See Figure 1](#))

## **Differences by Parental Education**

There is a strong relationship between parental education and youth participation in school arts activities. For example, in 2003, 33 percent of eighth grade students whose parents did not graduate from high school participated in school music and performing arts, compared with more than 65 percent of those with a parent who went to graduate school. ([See Figure 2](#))

## **Differences by College Plans**

Students who say that they plan to complete four years of college are more likely to participate in school performing arts activities than are youth who don't plan to complete four years of college. For example, in 2003, 42 percent of tenth graders who said they planned to complete four years of college participated in school music or performing arts, compared with 25 percent of tenth graders who did not plan to complete four years of college. ([See Figure 3](#))

## **State and Local Estimates**

None available

## **International Estimates**

None available

## **National Goals**

None

## **Definition**

Participation in school arts includes all students who reported participating to any degree in music or other performing arts in their school during the current school year.

## **Data Source**

Child Trends original analysis of Monitoring the Future survey data, 1991 to 2003.

## **Raw Data Source**

Bachman, Jerald G., Lloyd D. Johnston, and Patrick M. O'Malley. *Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth* (8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup>-Grade Surveys), 1976-2003 [Computer files]. Conducted by University of Michigan, Survey Research Center. ICPSR ed. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [producer and distributor].

ICPSR: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu>

Monitoring the Future: <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/>

### **Approximate Date of Next Update**

November 2005

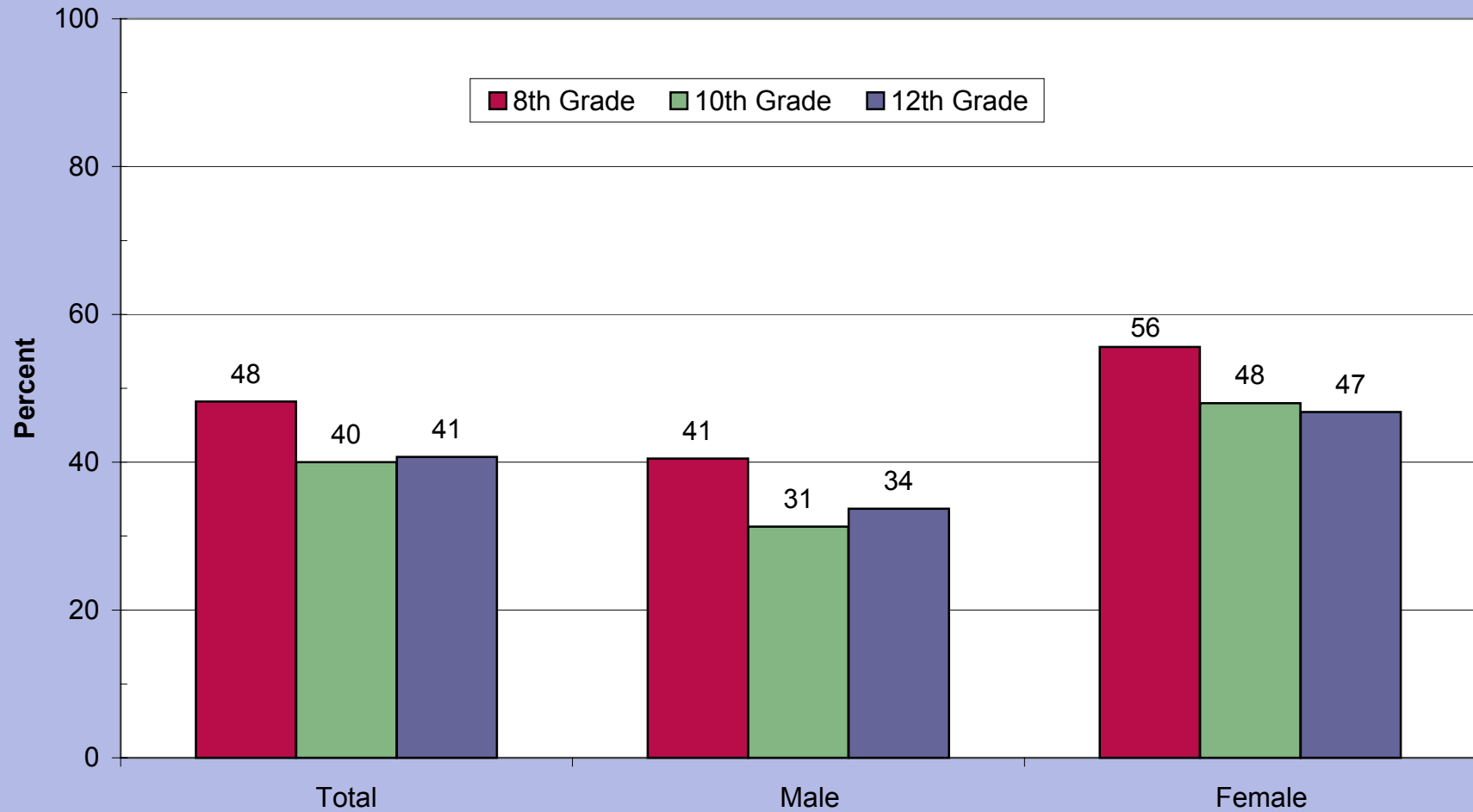
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<sup>1</sup> Winner, E. & Hetland, L. (Eds.) (2000). "Arts and Academic Improvement: What the Research Shows." *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 34 (3-4). Executive summary available on-line at: <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/Research/REAP.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Zaff, J. F., O'Neill, S. A., & Eccles, J. S. (2002). *What does arts participation in adolescence predict in early adulthood?* Washington, DC: Child Trends, unpublished paper.

Figure 1

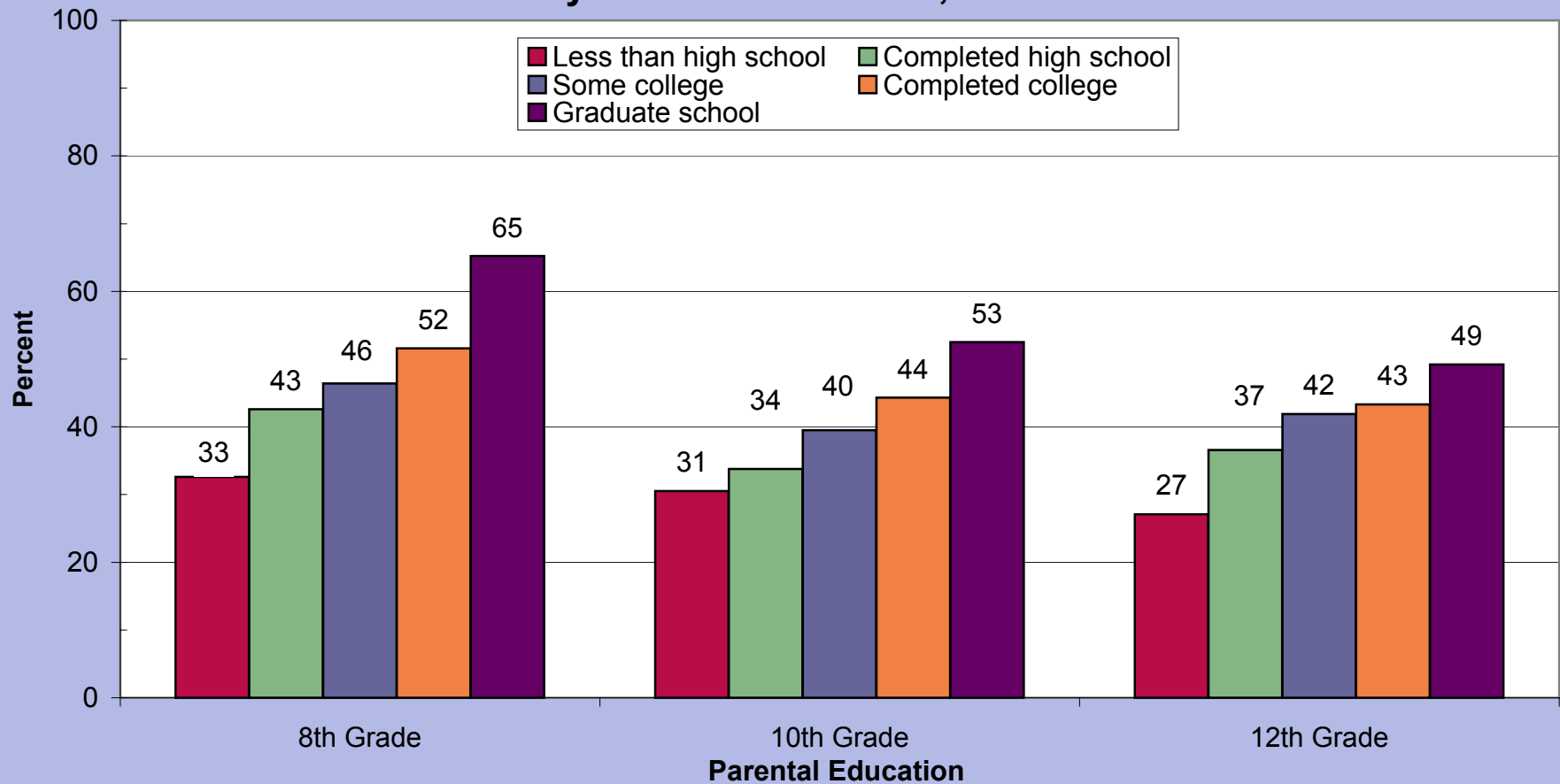
### Percentage of Students in Grades 8, 10, and 12 Who Participate in School Music or Performing Arts Programs, by Gender, 2003



Source: Original analysis by Child Trends of Monitoring the Future data, 2003

Figure 2

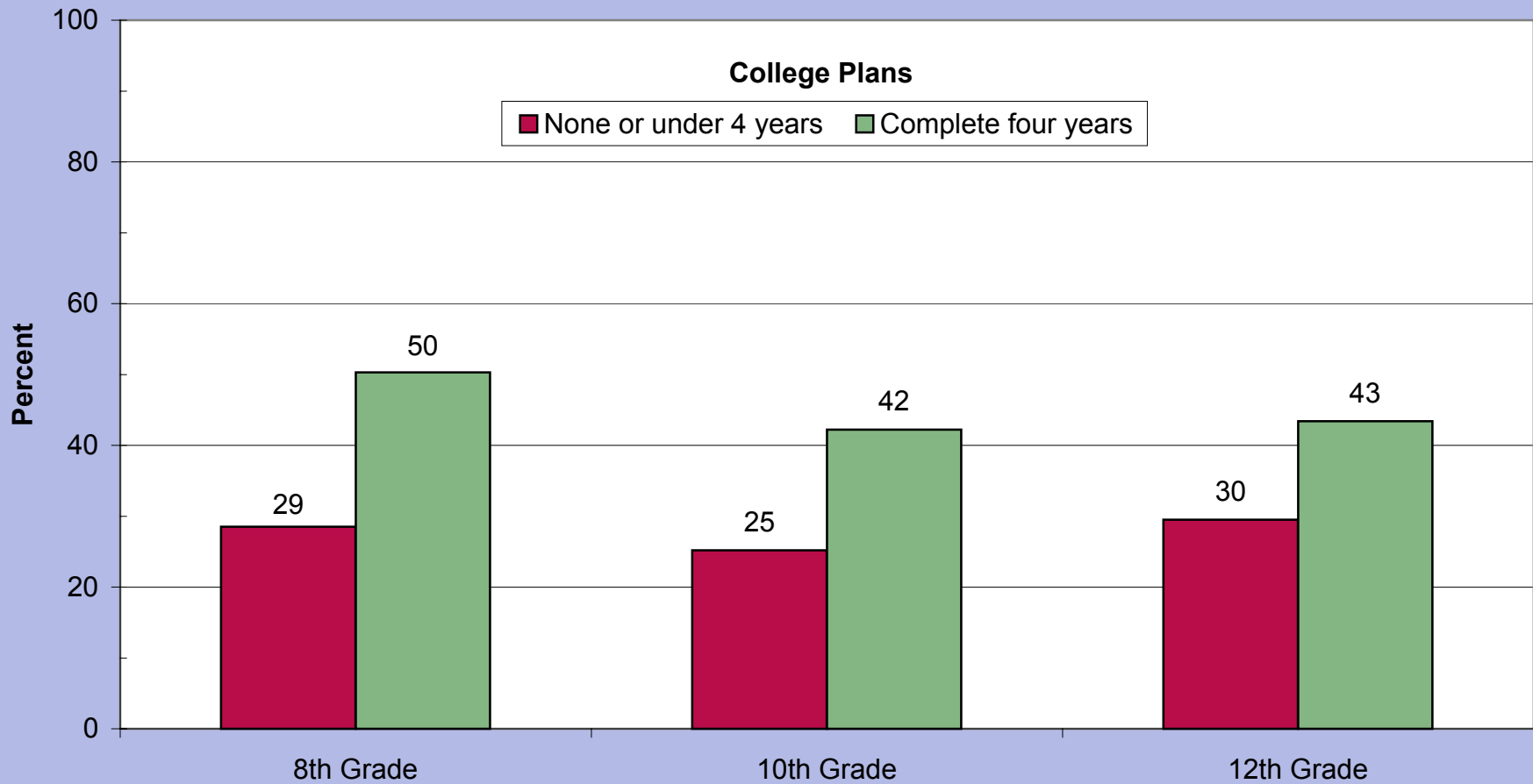
## Percentage of Students in Grades 8, 10, and 12 Who Participate in School Music or Performing Arts Programs, by Parental Education,<sup>1</sup> 2003



<sup>1</sup>Parental education is calculated by the Institute of Social Research as the average of the mother's and father's education. Child Trends has relabeled these results to reflect the education level of the most educated parent. In those circumstances where the gap between mothers' and fathers' education is more than one level, this results in an underestimate of the most educated parent's education level. Source: Original analysis by Child Trends of Monitoring the Future data, 2003

Figure 3

### Percentage of Students in Grades 8, 10, and 12 Who Participate in School Music or Performing Arts Programs, by College Plans, 2003



Source: Original analysis by Child Trends of Monitoring the Future data, 2003

Table 1

## Participation in School Music or Performing Arts, 1991-2003

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Eighth Grade</b>	54.5	53.9	52.8	49.5	53.6	54.8	54.4	54.5	53.0	53.4	53.7	51.0	48.2
<b>Gender</b>													
Male	43.8	42.7	42.5	40.2	43.7	43.9	45.2	45.7	42.9	42.6	44.6	39.3	40.5
Female	64.9	64.0	61.9	58.8	62.4	64.9	62.9	63.0	62.5	63.3	62.0	62.0	55.6
<b>Race</b>													
White	56.2	56.5	54.6	52.1	53.9	56.3	56.4	56.5	54.3	56.3	56.1	53.7	50.5
Black	56.1	55.6	53.0	50.8	62.6	51.8	52.9	53.7	57.7	51.0	52.8	50.7	46.5
<b>Parental Education<sup>1</sup></b>													
Less than high school	44.5	43.9	42.4	40.0	38.7	50.7	48.5	45.5	41.2	38.7	42.0	41.0	32.6
Completed high school	47.7	47.5	49.3	46.1	49.6	53.0	50.7	47.0	44.6	47.1	44.7	47.2	42.6
Some college	55.6	54.7	51.2	50.8	54.4	53.4	52.9	53.8	52.3	56.4	52.8	49.5	46.4
Completed college	59.2	59.9	58.9	50.3	58.5	58.7	58.7	59.2	58.9	58.8	60.1	56.1	51.6
Graduate school	65.9	65.5	62.8	63.2	64.6	63.5	62.8	64.0	67.2	65.1	68.8	61.4	65.2
<b>College Plans</b>													
None or under 4 years	39.1	34.2	36.3	33.0	36.9	40.1	42.0	36.6	31.9	34.4	30.8	33.3	28.5
Complete four years	57.1	57.0	55.1	51.9	55.8	57.1	56.1	56.6	55.4	55.7	56.2	52.7	50.3
<b>Tenth Grade</b>	36.4	38.2	37.5	36.6	39.7	39.0	39.5	39.8	40.6	40.0	41.0	38.3	40.0
<b>Gender</b>													
Male	28.3	28.1	27.0	27.0	30.7	28.6	29.7	30.7	31.1	30.7	30.8	28.3	31.3
Female	43.9	47.2	46.9	45.5	48.5	48.7	48.9	47.2	49.1	48.4	49.9	48.1	48.0
<b>Race</b>													
White	37.5	39.0	38.6	36.9	39.6	39.6	39.9	40.3	42.5	41.5	42.1	39.2	40.7
Black	37.4	40.3	34.7	38.4	40.3	33.9	38.3	42.9	39.6	42.5	38.9	39.5	42.3
<b>Parental Education<sup>1</sup></b>													
Less than high school	28.2	26.6	26.1	25.9	30.0	30.9	34.9	31.3	34.7	31.4	37.9	28.7	30.5
Completed high school	32.5	34.3	33.0	33.1	34.2	33.0	32.0	36.0	35.9	34.6	35.3	31.4	33.8
Some college	35.7	35.1	38.6	35.5	38.2	39.7	40.6	39.9	39.2	38.6	38.4	38.8	39.5
Completed college	39.5	44.1	41.8	39.6	43.3	43.4	44.1	41.9	46.1	44.3	45.4	42.7	44.3
Graduate school	46.2	51.0	47.9	47.5	51.2	45.1	47.5	51.6	49.1	51.4	53.3	48.5	52.5
<b>College Plans</b>													
None or under 4 years	22.4	24.2	22.9	24.2	22.2	25.1	25.1	27.7	29.3	23.8	27.2	19.2	25.2
Complete four years	39.3	41.0	40.3	39.1	42.6	41.2	42.1	41.8	42.4	42.5	43.1	41.5	42.2
<b>Twelfth Grade</b>	40.0	39.8	40.6	38.8	40.2	40.4	39.1	38.8	40.5	41.3	42.2	40.3	40.7
<b>Gender</b>													
Male	32.1	32.6	33.1	31.5	32.6	33.4	32.0	30.8	34.5	33.3	33.3	31.5	33.7
Female	47.5	46.0	47.6	45.0	47.0	46.9	44.8	47.0	46.4	48.2	50.8	48.5	46.8
<b>Race</b>													
White	39.8	39.1	39.8	38.5	40.2	40.8	38.2	38.0	40.4	39.7	42.2	41.2	41.1
Black	40.4	47.7	40.8	40.6	39.4	41.9	39.6	42.9	39.8	46.0	44.2	36.0	43.4
<b>Parental Education<sup>1</sup></b>													
Less than high school	38.1	30.9	35.5	33.1	30.2	32.4	38.2	29.9	33.9	28.0	38.4	31.8	27.1
Completed high school	35.1	34.9	37.4	31.6	35.7	35.4	31.3	35.7	34.1	36.8	37.7	36.4	36.6
Some college	38.7	38.9	38.5	41.0	40.0	38.5	36.7	38.0	41.0	39.0	41.1	40.9	41.9
Completed college	44.6	45.1	45.8	43.2	43.0	46.0	43.6	43.0	41.6	46.3	46.8	43.6	43.3
Graduate school	50.5	51.9	48.9	43.9	49.4	46.9	48.5	45.8	52.2	51.8	48.5	47.2	49.2
<b>College Plans</b>													
None or under 4 years	30.0	28.2	32.2	25.7	28.5	29.2	27.4	27.8	29.9	31.3	31.8	29.6	29.5
Complete four years	43.7	43.8	43.7	42.5	43.6	43.3	42.4	41.8	43.5	43.7	45.2	43.0	43.4

<sup>1</sup> Parental education is calculated by the Institute of Social Research as the average of the mother's and father's education. Child Trends has relabeled these results to reflect the education level of the most educated parent. In those circumstances where the gap between mothers' and fathers' education is more than one level, this results in an underestimate of the most educated parent's education level.

Source: Original analysis by Child Trends of Monitoring the Future data, 1991-2003