

Youth Neither Enrolled in School nor Working

Headline

Older youth are more likely than younger youth to be neither working nor enrolled in school. In 2005, 13 percent of youth ages 18 to 19 were neither working nor enrolled in school compared with 4 percent of youth ages 16 to 17. ([See Figure 3](#))

Importance

The transition for youth into independent adult society can be quite difficult.¹ Steady employment is one of the steps to becoming an independent adult.² There are various reasons that youth may not be working nor enrolled in school, such as an inability to find work or leaving the workforce to start a family.³ In addition, the exploration of different career paths and moving back and forth between school and work has become more common during early adulthood.⁴

Higher levels of education are increasingly necessary to obtain steady well-paying employment. Males who are neither enrolled in school nor working are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior or illegal activities to earn money.⁵ Females are more likely to become dependent on welfare.⁶ Young adults in the juvenile justice, foster care, and special education system tend to drop out of these systems at an early age, leaving them ineligible for system services meant to aid in the transition to adulthood.^{7,8} Even if these youth eventually do obtain jobs, they tend to earn less money.⁹

Trends

From 1986 to 2005, the percentage of youth who were neither enrolled in school nor working remained between 7 and 10 percent. ([See Figure 1](#))

Differences by Gender

In 2005, no significant difference was found by gender for youth aged 16 to 19 reporting that they were neither in school nor working. ([See Table 1](#))

Differences by Race and Ethnicity

Both Hispanic and non-Hispanic blacks are more likely than non-Hispanic white and Asian/Pacific Islander youth to be neither enrolled in school nor working. In 2005, 13 percent of Hispanic youth and 12 percent of non-Hispanic black youth were neither enrolled in school nor working, compared with 6 percent of non-Hispanic white youth, and 4 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander youth. ([See Figure 2](#))

Differences by Age

Older youth are more likely than younger youth to be neither working nor enrolled in school. For example, in 2005, 13 percent of youth ages 18 to 19 were neither working nor enrolled in school compared with 4 percent of youth ages 16 to 17. ([See Figure 3](#))

Differences by Citizenship

Youth who are non-U.S. citizens are more likely than citizens to be neither working nor enrolled in school. In 2005, 13 percent of non-U.S. citizens (living in the U.S.) ages 16 to 19 were neither working nor enrolled in school compared with 8 percent of U.S.-born citizens and 5 percent of naturalized U.S. citizens. ([See Table 1](#))

State and Local Estimates

For state estimates of the percent of teens ages 16 to 19 not enrolled in school and not working, see the KIDS COUNT Data Book, State Profiles of Child Well-Being 2006, available at: <http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld>

International Estimates

For international estimates of youth and older youth ages 15-19, 20-24, and 25-29 who are not in education and unemployed see the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) *Education at a Glance 2004* report at: http://www.oecd.org/document/11/0,2340,en_2649_34515_33712011_1_1_1_1,00.html (Table C4.3)

National Goals

None available

Definition

Youth ages 16 to 19 who were neither enrolled in school nor working

Data Source

Wirt, J., Choy, S., Rooney, P., Provasnik, S., Sen A., & Tobin, R. (2006). *The Condition of Education 2006* (NCES 2004-077). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Available at: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2006/pdf/21_2006.pdf

Raw Data Source

Current Population Survey, March Supplement

<http://www.bls.census.gov/cps/cpsmain.htm>

Next Update

Unknown

¹ Rosenbaum, James E. and Person, Ann E. (2003). "Beyond College for All: Policies and Practices to Improve Transitions into College and Jobs," *Professional School Counseling*, 6(4): 252-260.

² Brown, B., Moore, K., & Bzostek, S. (2003, October). *A Portrait of Well-Being in Early Adulthood: A Report to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation*. Washington, DC: Child Trends. Available at: <http://www.hewlett.org/NR/rdonlyres/B0DB0AF1-02A4-455A-849A-AD582B767AF3/0/FINALCOMPLETEPDF.pdf>

³ Wirt, J., Choy, S., Rooney, P., Provasnik, S., Sen, A., and Tobin, R. (2004). *The Condition of Education 2004* (NCES 2004-077). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Available at: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2004/pdf/13_2004.pdf

⁴ Settersten, Richard A., Furstenberg, F., and Rumbart, R. G. (2005). "On the Frontier of Adulthood: Emerging Themes and New Directions. Chapter 1" in *On the Frontier of Adulthood: Theory Research and Public Policy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Pp 3-25.

⁵ Ednam, P., Holzer, H.J., and Offner, P. (2006). "Improving Financial Incentives for Low-Wage Work. Chapter 5" in *Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men*. Washington D.C.: Urban Institute Press. Pp.11-36.

⁶ Leroy, Sylvia. "Welfare and Poverty: Family Matters." (2004). Fraser Forum. The Fraser Institute. <http://www.fraserinstitute.ca/admin/books/chapterfiles/Welfare%20and%20Poverty.%20Family%20Matters-Mar04ffleroy.pdf>

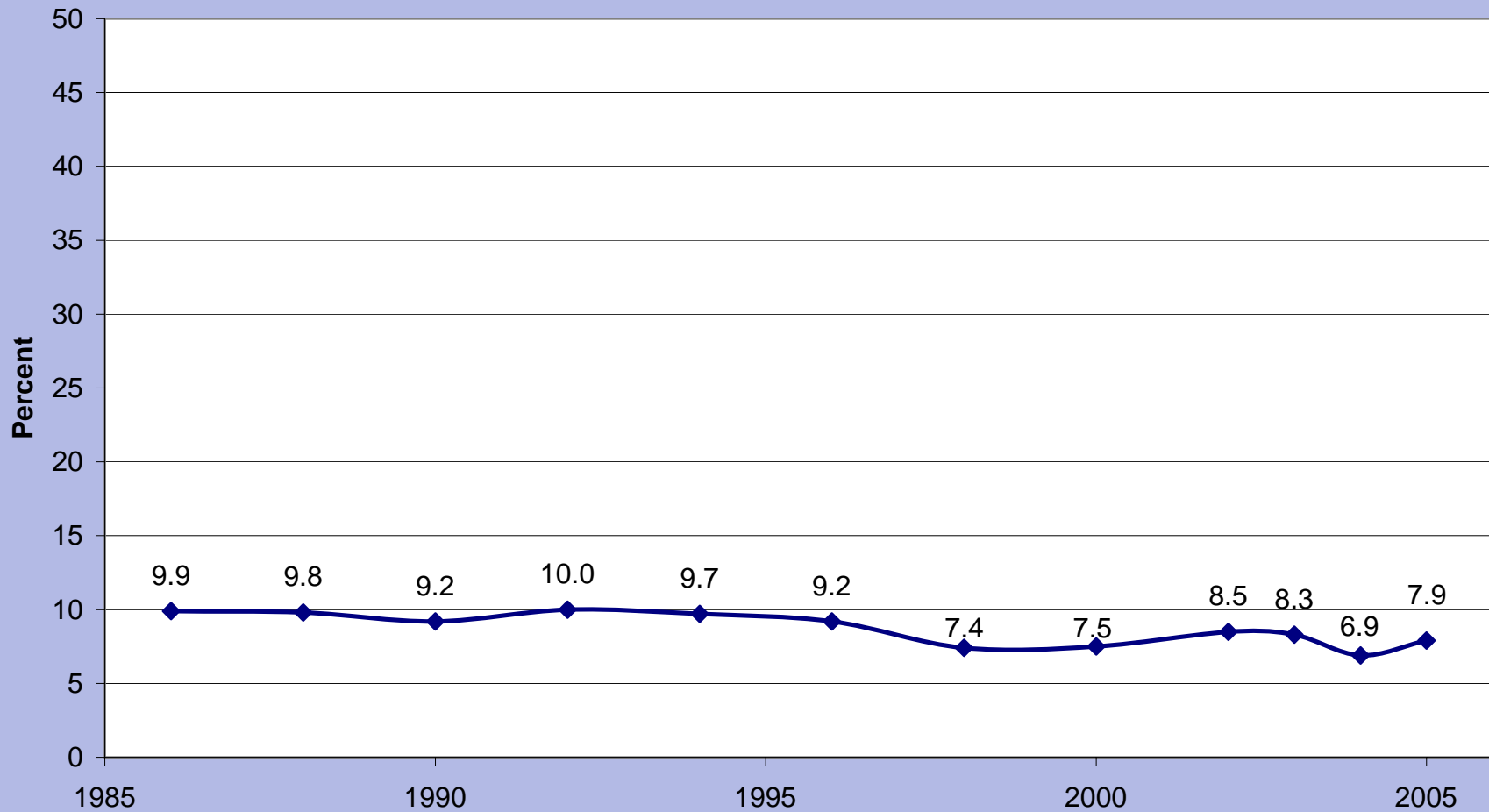
⁷ Settersten, Richard A., Furstenberg, F., and Rumbart, R. G. (2005).

⁸ Foster, E. Michael, Gifford, E. (2005). "The Transition to Adulthood for Youth Leaving Public Systems: Challenges to Policies and Research. Chapter 15" in *On the Frontier of Adulthood: Theory Research and Public Policy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Pp 501-533.

⁹ Ednam, P., Holzer, H.J., and Offner, P. (2006).

Figure 1

Percentage of Youth Ages 16 to 19 Neither Enrolled in School nor Working, Selected Years, 1986-2005

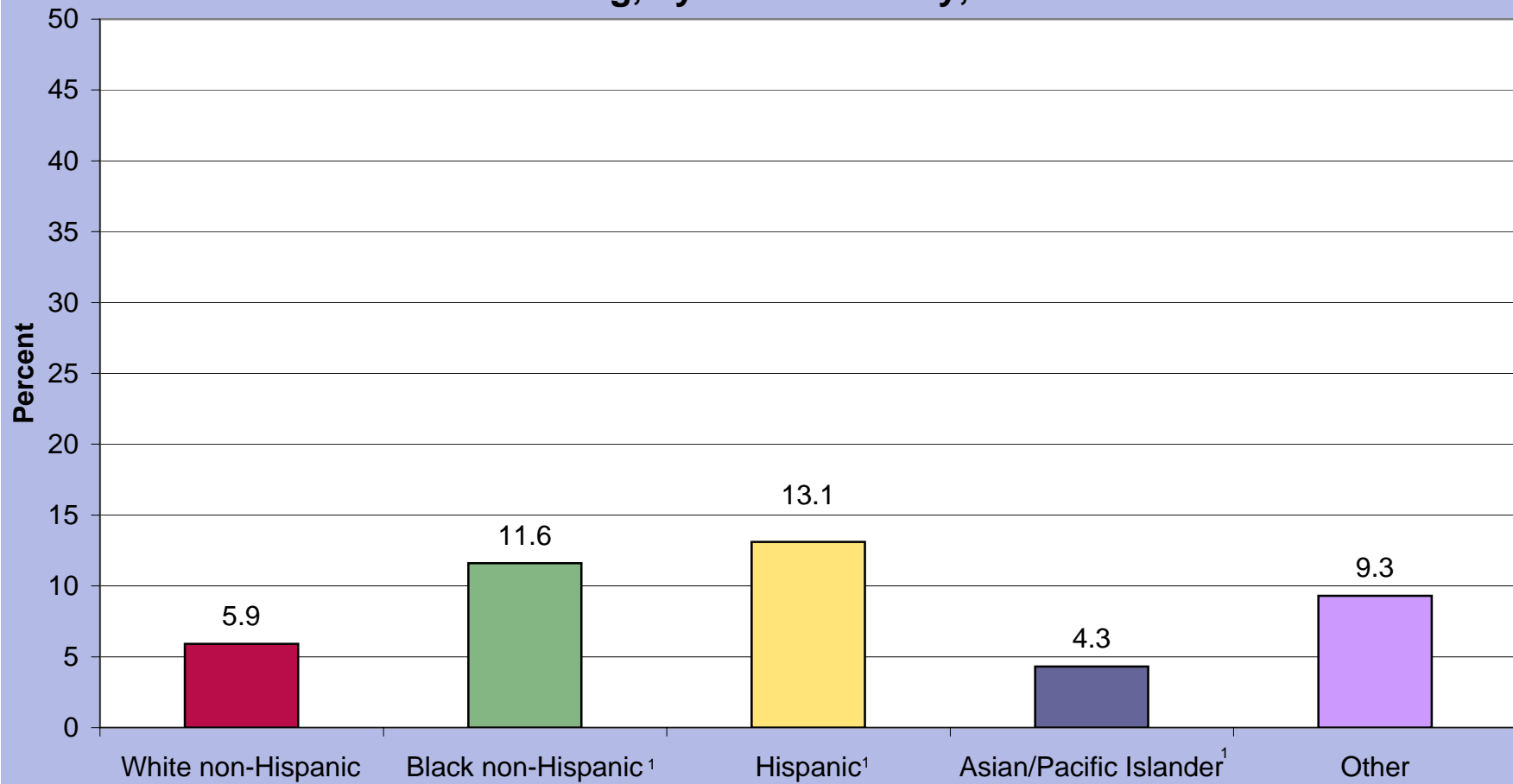


Source: Wirt, J., Choy, S., Rooney, P., Provasnik, S., Sen, A., and Tobin, R. (2006). *The Condition of Education 2006* (NCES 2006-071). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 21-1.



Figure 2

Percentage of Youth Ages 16 to 19 Neither Enrolled in School nor Working, by Race/Ethnicity,¹ 2005



¹ Black includes African American, Hispanic includes Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian. Youth of Hispanic origin are excluded. American Indian includes Alaska Native. Youth of Hispanic origin are excluded.

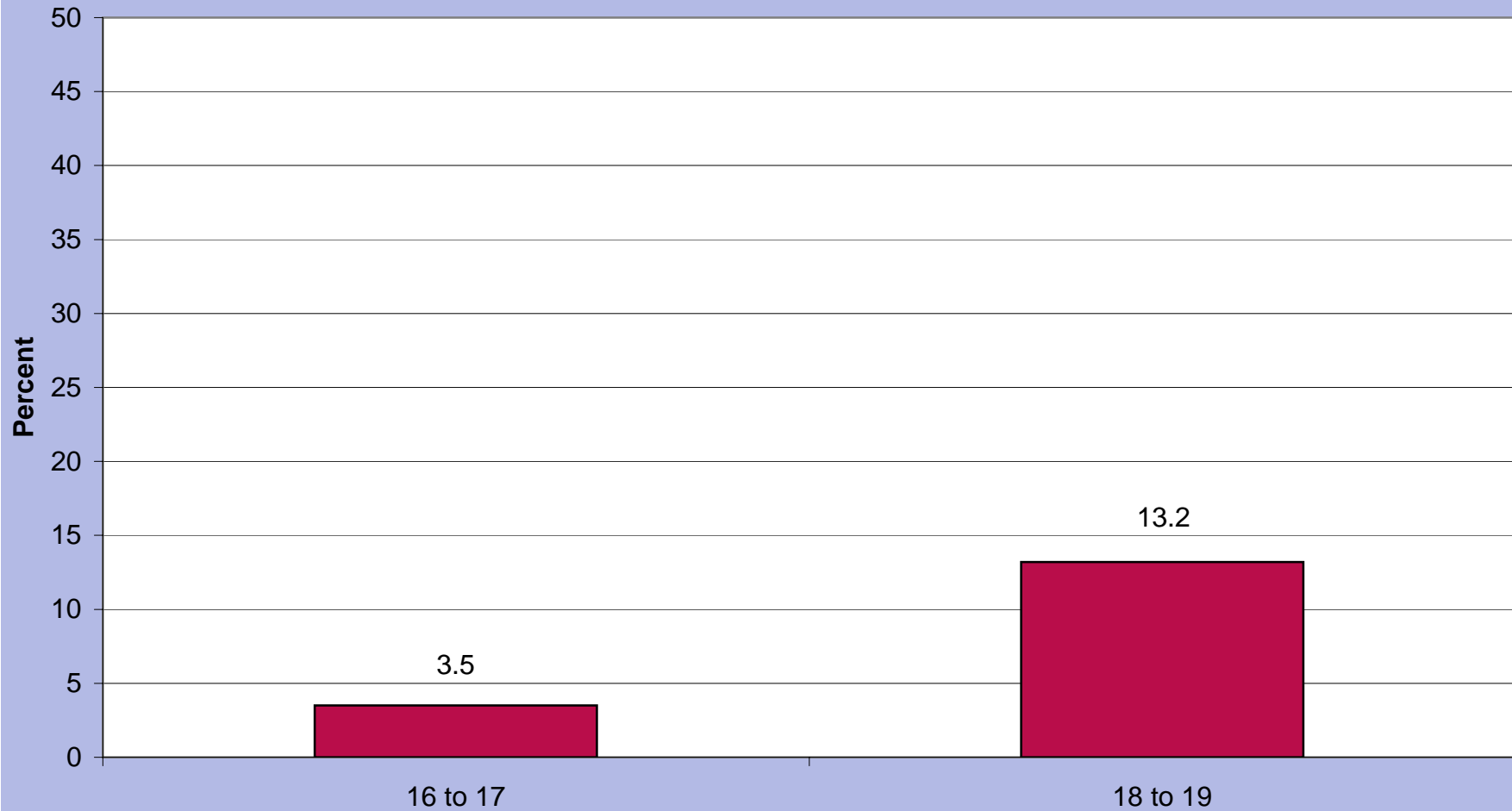
Source: Wirt, J., Choy, S., Rooney, P., Provasnik, S., Sen, A., and Tobin, R. (2006). *The Condition of Education 2006*

(NCES 2006-071). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Table 21-1.

Figure 3

Percentage of Youth Ages 16 to 19 Neither Enrolled in School nor Working, by Age, 2005



Source: Wirt, J., Choy, S., Rooney, P., Provasnik, S., Sen, A., and Tobin, R. (2006). *The Condition of Education 2006* (NCES 2006-071). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 21-1.



Table 1

Percentage of Youth Ages 16 to 19 who are Neither Enrolled in School Nor Working, Selected Years, 1986-2005

| | 1986 | 1988 | 1990 | 1992 | 1994 | 1996 | 1998 | 2000 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Total | 9.9 | 9.8 | 9.2 | 10.0 | 9.7 | 9.2 | 7.4 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 8.3 | 6.9 | 7.9 |
| Sex | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 8.7 | 8.1! | 7.7! | 8.4! | 8.2! | 7.8! | 7.3! | 6.1! | 8.3 | 8.5 | 6.7 | 7.7 |
| Female | 11.1 | 11.4 | 10.7 | 11.6 | 11.3 | 10.6 | 7.6! | 8.9 | 8.8 | 8.1 | 7.2 | 8.1 |
| Age | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 to 17 | 5.1 | 4.5 | 4.6! | 4.8 | 5.0 | 4.5! | 3.4! | 3.6! | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.5 |
| 18 to 19 | 14.9 | 15.2 | 13.3 | 15.2 | 14.6 | 14.2 | 11.6 | 11.3 | 13.7 | 13.9 | 11.0 | 13.2 |
| Race/ethnicity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White non-Hispanic | 8.0 | 7.4 | 7.4 | 7.4 | 7.4 | 7.1 | 5.5! | 5.1! | 6.5 | 6.2 | 5.6 | 5.9 |
| Black non-Hispanic¹ | 14.5 | 15.1 | 12.0 | 17.0 | 13.7 | 13.8 | 9.5 | 12.1 | 14.1 | 13.8 | 9.1 | 11.6 |
| Hispanic² | 17.1 | 19.9 | 18.2 | 15.3 | 17.9 | 14.8 | 14.6 | 13.0 | 12.7 | 12.1 | 11.6 | 13.1 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander³ | - | 6.0 | 3.1! | 6.8 | 4.1! | 3.2! | 5.6! | 4.3! | 3.1 | 5.2 | 4.1 | 4.3 |
| Other | 10.1 | 21.8 | 12.3 | 14.1 | 8.5 | 21.8 | 12.4 | 18.6 | 19.3 | 11.3 | 8.3 | 9.3 |
| Citizenship | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| U.S. born | - | - | - | - | 9.0 | 8.9 | 6.8 | 7.1 | 8.2 | 7.9 | 6.6 | 7.6 |
| Naturalized U.S. citizen | - | - | - | - | 17.2 | 1.5! | 11.1 | 4.8! | 4.3 | 11.1 | 4.6 | 5.0 |
| Non-U.S. citizen | - | - | - | - | 18.3 | 14.3 | 15.9 | 12.7 | 13.1 | 13.2 | 12.1 | 13.3 |

Note: '!' indicates data are not available.

! Interpret data with caution.

¹ Black includes African American

² Hispanic includes Latino

³ Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian. Youth of Hispanic origin are excluded.

⁴ American Indian includes Alaska Native. Youth of Hispanic origin are excluded.

Source: Wirt, J., Choy, S., Rooney, P., Provasnik, S., Sen, A., and Tobin, R. (2006). *The Condition of Education 2006* (NCES 2006-071). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 21-1.

