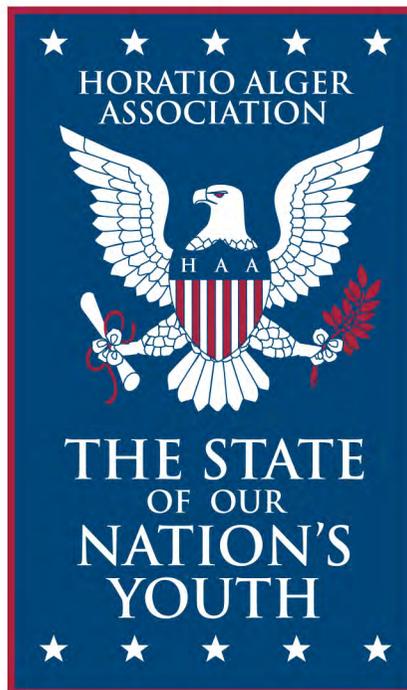


THE

# STATE OF OUR NATION'S YOUTH



2016-2017

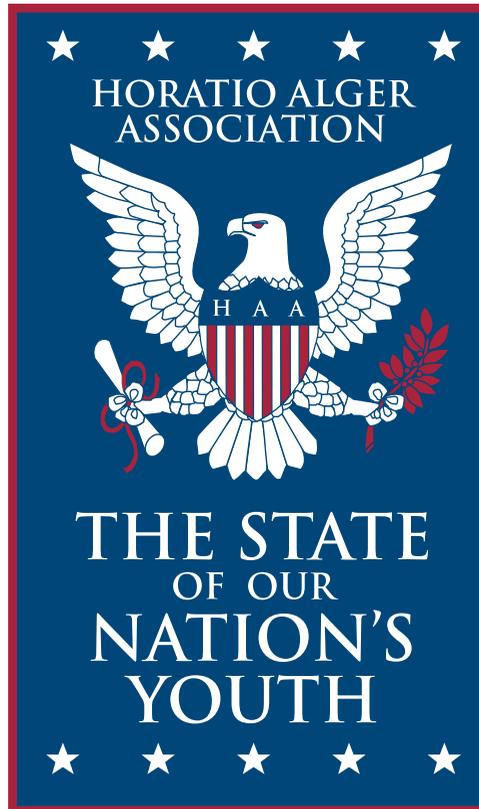


HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION  
OF DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS, INC.

THE

# STATE OF OUR NATION'S YOUTH

2016-2017



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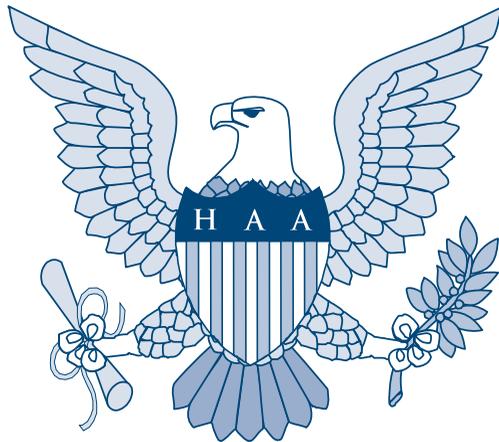
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* report is an effort by the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, in collaboration with Hart Research Associates and Dr. Gregory Wolniak from New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. The purpose of the report is to give voice to today's young people, whose perspectives on and concerns about important contemporary issues are too often eclipsed by the voices of public spokespersons, commentators, and policymakers. The report aims to inform the public, education stakeholders, media, and policymakers on the issues facing and shaping the next generation of future leaders for our country. We are deeply grateful to the Members of the Horatio Alger Association for their support of the Association's mission and for the vision and generosity of the following individuals:



**Paul Anthony Novelly**  
*Chairman*



**Matthew K. Rose**  
*Vice President*



**Bryon D. Trott**  
*President*



**Walter Scott, Jr.**  
*Chairman & President*  
*Horatio Alger Endowment Fund*

The source of data for the report is the 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey. Hart Research, led by Founder Peter D. Hart, Corrie Hunt, and Jay Campbell, administered the survey. Hart Research Associate's expertise, vision, and hard work appear in the richness of the data and wealth of information they contain on today's high school students and recent graduates.

This report was prepared by a team of researchers at New York University, led by Gregory Wolniak, Associate Professor of Higher Education and Director of the Center for Research on Higher Education Outcomes, and assisted by Dr. Laura Davis, Tiffani Williams, and Kristen Casano. Wolniak and his team analyzed and interpreted the data discussed in the report, and collaborated with Hart Research Associates in developing the survey.

Finally, we are indebted to the more than 1,500 young men and women who took the time to participate in the 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey.

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc. is honored to deliver the 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey and report. The 2016 edition marks the 12<sup>th</sup> in the series, dating back to 1997, and the first time data were collected through an online survey. Since 2004 the *State of Our Nation's Youth* has coincided with presidential elections, providing a unique and informative snapshot of youth attitudes and beliefs at a time when politicians and pundits dominate the media. In addition, since 2012, the *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey has included national samples of high school students and recent high school graduates. Prior years focused entirely on high school students. By capturing information from high school graduates, most of whom are enrolled in some form of postsecondary education, we are able to identify the ways in which the young people's attitudes change as they transition out of high school and into the world that awaits. The 2016 report is the first in the series to report on trends over time in both high school students' and high school graduates' attitudes and beliefs. The 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* provides data representing 1,010 high school students and 502 high school graduates between the ages of 14 and 23.

In 1947, Dr. Norman Vincent Peale and Dr. Kenneth Beebe founded the Horatio Alger Association to recognize and celebrate successful Americans who overcome adversity through hard work and determination. The Association continues that great work by presenting the Horatio Alger Award each year to outstanding individuals who have risen from humble beginnings to achieve success through the free-enterprise system and who serve as role models to young people. Through the generosity of the Association's membership, the Horatio Alger Association has awarded more than \$125 million since 1984 in need-based college scholarships to approximately 25,000 young people across the United States and Canada. These students, like the membership of the Horatio Alger Association, have overcome some of life's most difficult challenges. In 2016, the Association awarded more than \$12 million to more than 1,900 students.

The *State of Our Nation's Youth* report has been produced by the Association since 1997 to give voice and attention to the opinions, concerns, thoughts, and aspirations of the young people of the United States. The Association is pleased work with Hart Research Associates, Inc. and New York University's Center for Research on Higher Education Outcomes in issuing the 2016 survey and report. With their collaboration, the 2016 report incorporates the responses of young people across the country to clearly reflect the current political, social, economic, educational, and personal state of our nation's youth.

## Overview of Findings

The 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* report provides a valuable update to previous editions and reflects the realities of being young in today's society. By gathering information on individuals between the ages of 14-23, the report offers key insights into the attitudes and beliefs of young Americans on topics such as trust in government, determinants of success, the media, education, employment, and managing stress. Many survey items were asked of both high school students and high school graduates, such as those related to achieving success, political perspectives, parental involvement, and sources of stress, whereas hosts of other survey items were asked only of students or graduates, but not both. For example, the report identifies attitudes and behaviors among high school students related to the quality of their high school education, aspirations for a college education, and attitudes towards paying for college. Among items asked uniquely of graduates were those related to the timing of college entry, views on paying for college, and reasons why some elect to work rather than continue their education after high school. Previous editions of *State of Our Nation's Youth* reports provide data that span span 15 years, enabling the 2016 edition to uncover several trends by comparing data across years. As with previous editions, the present report provides a comprehensive and intriguing snapshot of young Americans. Results from 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* study support five main findings.

First, today's youth maintain a strong optimism towards the country's future. In an era when much of the information received from major media outlets emphasize a historically divisive political system and obstructionist tendencies among factions within our major political parties, it is easy to become cynical or lose hope in the direction the country is headed. However, since 2008, and following seven years of decline in young people's outlook, feelings of optimism have been on the rise among youth. Importantly, accompanying their optimistic views, today's young people express a noteworthy lack of trust and confidence in the federal government. It appears therefore that today's high school students and recent graduates bring a critical perspective that holds the political system accountable for its shortcomings, while ultimately staying optimistic about our country's future.

Second, the 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* study marks a point in time when the U.S. economy continues to recover from the Great Recession that began in 2007-2008 and amounted to the most severe economic crisis since the 1930s. The views of today's 14-23 year olds towards society and the economy may be shaped by the fact that much of their lives have occurred during recessionary times. Interestingly, against this backdrop, today's young people define success not only in terms of being well off financially, but also in terms of helping others in need and raising a family. What's more, equal treatment of all races and narrowing the economic gap between rich and poor are the issues today's high school students and graduates most often identify as needing change. Many young people also emphasize the importance of equal treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people. Together these findings point to the fact that, despite challenging social and economic circumstances, young people are steadfast in their concern for social equity and a more just society.

Third, the importance of technology, particularly mobile technologies, in the lives of today's youth is substantial and increasing. Social networking sites emerged in 2016 as the primary source of news among today's high school students and graduates. What's more, exposure to technology is viewed as important for skill development and a key area that high school students identify as contributing to the overall quality of their education. As social media and mobile technologies become ever more enmeshed in people's lives, the majority of respondents believe that technology has a positive effect on life generally and their ability to make new friends. Whether gaining experience through myriad resources accessible online or interfacing with advanced equipment at school, technology is and will remain central in the lives of young people. The positive attitudes of young people will enhance their capacity to harness the power and reach of ever more sophisticated technologies.

Fourth, young people today appear very aware of the fundamental role education plays in their own development, their eventual socioeconomic status, and quality of life. In fact, high school students care about their education to the point where academic concerns rank highest among sources of stress. Students largely report they are developing valuable skills in high school that will be important for their success later in life, though this view declines somewhat as students graduate and move beyond high school. In terms of the quality of education students receive,

there is simply no substitute for good teaching; students most often attribute the quality of their education to their teachers. Beyond high school, while nearly all students intend to pursue a college degree (and most often a four-year college degree), concerns over the high costs of postsecondary education weigh heavily in their minds. The large majority consider financial aid, particularly grants and scholarships, to be essential for covering the costs of college.

Last but not least, echoing the main findings from the 2012 *State of Our Nation's Youth*, today's high school students and graduates overwhelmingly consider their success to be the result of their own hard work rather than luck. Today's 14-23 year olds simply do not fit the narrative characterizing young people as entitled or lazy. Today's youth are optimistic about the future of the country, concerned about the equitable treatment of one another, inclined to hold our leaders in government and the political system accountable, informed and in touch with new technologies, and value hard work over luck. As social, political, and economic challenges become more complex over time, we should acknowledge and take comfort in the important findings contained in this report.

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## SELECTED KEY FINDINGS

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### Achieving success in life

- **Success is closely tied to financial attainment, helping others, and family.** Today's younger generation associate being very well off financially (75% of high school students and 76% of high school graduates), helping others who are in difficulty (69% of students and 68% of graduates), and raising a family (66% and 64%, respectively) with success in life. Each of these life goals was rated essential or very important when considering success.
- **Young people today place much more emphasis on actions and hard work than luck.** Nearly nine out of ten high school students and high school graduates attribute success in life to hard work rather than luck.
- **Religion and spirituality play an important but declining role.** Seventy-one percent of high school students and 63% of high school graduates cite religion as very important or somewhat important in their life. These percentages, while still substantial, are lower than in previous years, suggesting the possibility of a declining role of religion in the lives of youth.

## Cautious optimism towards the country's future

- **Hope and optimism about the country's future on the rise since 2008.** Between 2001 and 2008, students were increasingly pessimistic about the country's future. However, since 2008 there has been an uptick in optimism. Most recently, in 2016, nearly two-thirds of high school students (64%) reported feeling hopeful and optimistic towards the country's future.
- **Most believe the presidential election will make a large difference for the country.** Forty-five percent of high school students and 52% of graduates expect the election will make a very large difference for the country, with an additional 35% of both groups expecting it will make a fairly large difference.
- **Social equality is most important issue for change.** According to high school students and graduates, areas most often identified as needing change in America are equal treatment of all races (35 and 33%, respectively) and narrowing the economic gap between rich and poor (34 and 30%).
- **Despite optimism for the country's future, few trust the government.** Small shares of today's young people have faith in the government to do what is right. Fourteen percent of high school students and 9% of high school graduates *never* trust the government to do what is right.

## Feelings about American freedoms and institutions

- **Across institutions, confidence in the protective services is strongest.** Despite social unrest and numerous high-profile incidents of violence perpetuated by and against police, sizable shares of high school students and graduates voice confidence in the American military (71 and 61%, respectively, possess a great deal or quite a bit of confidence), and to a lesser but still considerable extent, the police (51 and 41%). Much smaller shares express confidence in the federal government, the media, or congress.
- **Freedom of speech is valued most young people.** When asked to identify the single most important freedom American's enjoy, youth most often named freedom of speech (chosen by 38% of high school students and 36% of high school graduates). Freedom of religion (13 and 14%, respectively) and freedom of the press (4 and 5%) received far less support.

## The changing landscape of media and technology

- **Social networking sites emerge as primary news source.** Today's youth engage multiple media sources for news, and increasingly turn to social networking sites. Forty percent of high school students and 44% of graduates identify online social networking sites as among their chief sources of news, roughly double the rates reported in 2012. This finding corroborates the steady decline of printed newspapers and radio as young people's news sources of choice.
- **Technology use drives skill development.** Our nation's youth generally feel that technology benefits their skill development. Roughly four out of five high school students and graduates feel using technology positively affects their ability to research and find information.

## Students face challenges and manage stress

- **Academic concerns rank highest among sources of stress.** Today's high school students attribute stress to academic concerns; pressure to do well in school, to do well on standardized tests, and to get into college (35%, 31%, and 28%, respectively).
- **The leading source of pressure among high school students is themselves.** When evaluating the leading sources of pressure, students most often name themselves; 65% of students who characterized pressure to get into college as a major problem in their lives indicated that this pressure was self-induced, and 58% credited their parents.
- **Coping with effects of stress.** Students indicated that stress has a major effect on their schoolwork (37%) and their relationships with their parents or guardians (29%). Despite feeling pressured, especially with respect to important life decisions, such as plans for college, most (61%) believe they are able to deal with stress very well or fairly well.

## Parent / guardian involvement and concern

- **High school students and graduates wish their parents were more, not less, concerned.** Large shares of high school students and graduates wish their parents were more (rather than less) interested in areas such as their career futures, financial matters, extracurricular activities, schoolwork, and friendships.

- **Concern for personal safety is largest source of concern among parents / guardians.** Nearly four out of five high school students and graduates report their parents either worry a lot or worry a fair amount about their safety. Nearly as many report their parents were concerned about their performance in school.

## Students find quality in high school education

- **Students credit their high school education with valuable skill development; graduates are not so sure.** Sixty-seven percent of high school students feel they are learning skills in high school needed to be successful in life; when asked to reflect on their past education, only about half (49%) of high school graduates felt high school prepared them with the skills to be successful in life.
- **Teachers top of the list of most important factors for a quality education.** Students rated their teachers (24%), the variety and quality of available courses (20%), and college preparation resources (20%) as the most important contributors to the quality of their education. An emerging area of importance is access to up-to-date technology.

## College aspirations and enrollment

- **The pursuit of a college degree remains a nearly universal aspiration among high school students.** Ninety percent of high school students intend to pursue a degree. However, this percentage has decreased from 97% in 2012, possibly indicating a minor shift in perceived value of higher education credentials.
- **The large majority aspire to at least a four-year degree.** Of the 90% of high school students who plan to complete a postsecondary degree or certificate, about 83% plan to complete at least a four-year degree. Roughly 16% of postsecondary aspirants intend to pursue a vocational, technical, or two-year degree or certificate.
- **Progressing to college immediately after high school remains the norm, though other factors play a decisive role.** Most students (91%) intend to enroll in college immediately after graduation. Of those that do not intend to enroll immediately, many cite the cost of going to college (59%), need to get a full-time job (47%), and lacking good enough grades (36%) as major factors in their decision.

## Concerns over college costs

- **College costs are cause for concern among the vast majority of high school students.** College costs continue to rise at alarming rates. It is no surprise then that students express a great deal of concern about their ability to finance their education. Forty-six percent acknowledge some concerns and 21% have major concerns.
- **Two-thirds of all high school students look to financial aid and grants as the keys to covering college costs.** Most students (66%) intend to use financial aid such as grants and scholarships to pay for their education, while 60% plan to utilize family resources. Students point to other forms of financial aid and use of their own resources as less likely options.
- **College costs often exceed the expectations of recent graduates.** Just under half of enrolled college students (46%) report their education costs about what they expected, while 32% feel it is less affordable than expected, and 22% say it is more affordable than expected.

## Trends in employment

- **Part-time employment is a reality for roughly one in five high school students.** Many high school students hold part-time jobs (21%); larger percentages are either not employed, but are looking for work (31%), or are not employed and are not looking for work (35%).
- **Roughly half of all high school graduates are employed, either full- or part-time.** Among high school graduates, about 22% state they are employed full-time and 28% state they are employed part-time.
- **Matching graduates to jobs is key for minimizing unemployment.** An important fact to note is that many of the unemployed high school graduates cite being simply unable to find a job (35%) as the primary reason. About half as many cite not having been able to find a desirable job (17%) or that family responsibilities prevent them from working (14%).

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## FINDINGS

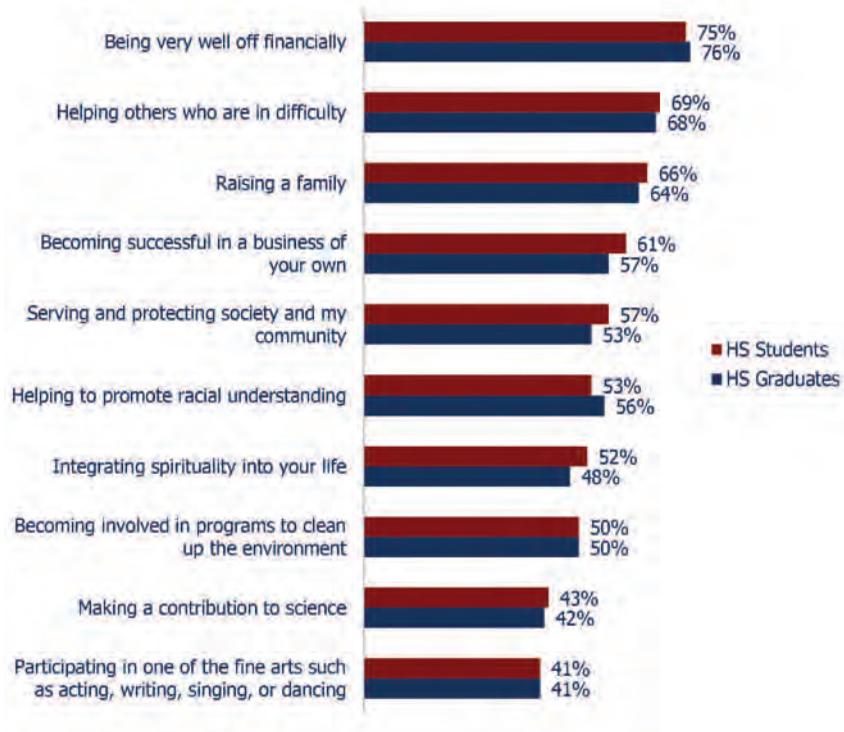
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### 1. FACTORS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LIFE

The high school students and graduates who participated in the 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey base many of their life goals on aspects of financial and professional success, helping others, and raising family. When asked to reflect on the factors important for achieving their educational, career, and life goals, roughly three out of four high school students and graduates (75 and 76%, respectively) rated being very well-off financially as essential or very important. Large majorities of both groups also rated as essential or very important goals of helping others who are in difficulty (69 and 68%, respectively), raising a family (66 and 64%, respectively), and becoming successful in business (61 and 57%, respectively). Over half of high school students and graduates also held important social issues in high regard with respect to their future goals, noting the importance of helping to promote racial understanding (53 and 56%, respectively), serving and protecting society and community (57 and 53%, respectively), and involvement in environmental programs (50% each). Just over one-half of high school students (52%) and just under one-half of high school graduates (48%) indicate it is essential or very important to integrate spirituality in their life. Smaller shares of both groups (roughly two in five) are concerned about contributing to science or participating in fine arts.

Relative to the high school students and graduates surveyed in 2012, being very well off financially and becoming successful in business have increased in importance among today's younger generation; those who report being very well off financially as essential or very important increased by more than ten percentage points from 2012 (up from 63 and 62%, respectively). Similar increases occurred among shares reporting succeeding in business as essential or very important (up from 50 and 45% in 2012).

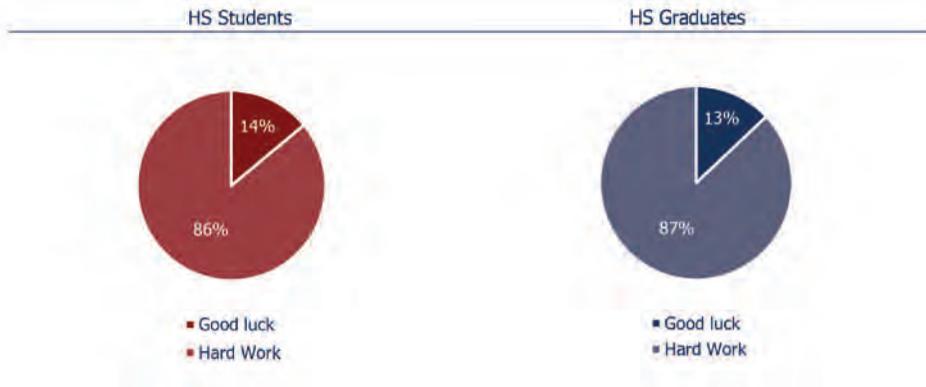
## Factors Essential or Very Important when Thinking about Education and Career Goals



### Hard work overshadows luck as key for achieving success

Today's younger generation express confidence in their own self-efficacy, embracing the notion that success is the result of their own hard work rather than luck. In other words, success stems from their actions. When asked simply to identify which they think is more important for success, close to nine out of ten high school students (86%) and high school graduates (87%) endorsed hard work over luck (which was credited by only 14 and 13%, respectively). The *State of Our Nation's Youth* participants subscribe to an ideology of hard work and personal responsibility that challenges popular narratives characterizing young people as entitled and lazy. According to Steven Rattner (*New York Times* op-ed contributor and former counselor to the Treasury secretary under the Obama administration), these beliefs are especially important in an era when a recovering economy, high unemployment and mounting student loan debt threaten American youth's ability to achieve success.

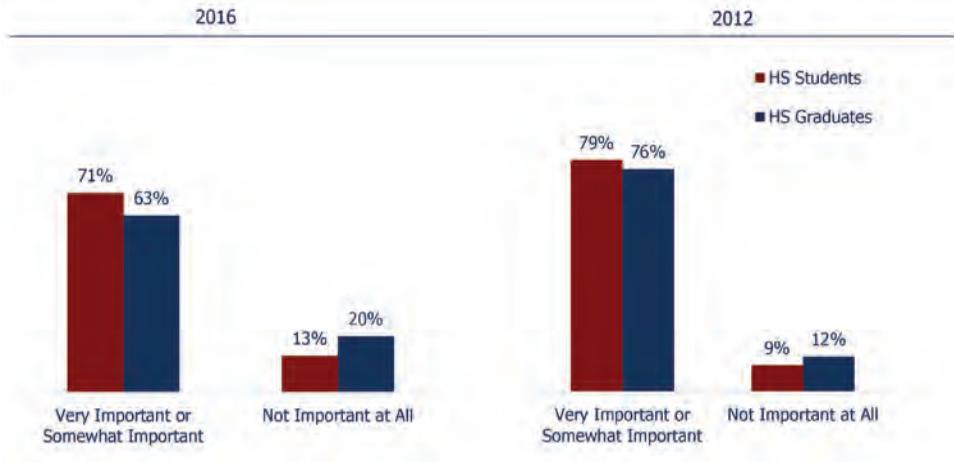
## Most Important Components for Success



### Religion and spirituality play an important but declining role

Data from the past two *State of Our Nation's Youth* surveys clearly indicate that religion and spirituality play an important role in the lives of young Americans. According to 2016 data, this is especially the case among high school students, 71% of whom report religion and spirituality to be either very important or somewhat important in their life (versus just 13% who indicate it is not important at all). Recent high school graduates respond similarly regarding the importance of religion and spirituality (63% consider it very or somewhat important, versus 20% who indicate it is not important). Although young people continue to identify religion and spirituality as important elements in their lives, there is a notable downward trend in this data, compared to responses from the 2012 *State of Our Nation's Youth*. These patterns are consistent with findings of the Pew Research Center's 2015 *U.S. Religious Landscape Study* showing that Americans are becoming less religious, overall, with fewer adults claiming religious affiliation and affirming a belief in God. Despite this trend, data from the present study clearly support that religion and spirituality have remained important in the lives of young Americans. Understanding religion and spirituality amongst young people is crucial, as a 2016 report on Emerging Interfaith Trends from the *Interfaith Diversity Experiences & Attitudes Longitudinal Survey (IDEALS)* shows that for young people, particularly college students, religious beliefs and faith are highly influential in their worldview.

## Importance of Religion and Spirituality



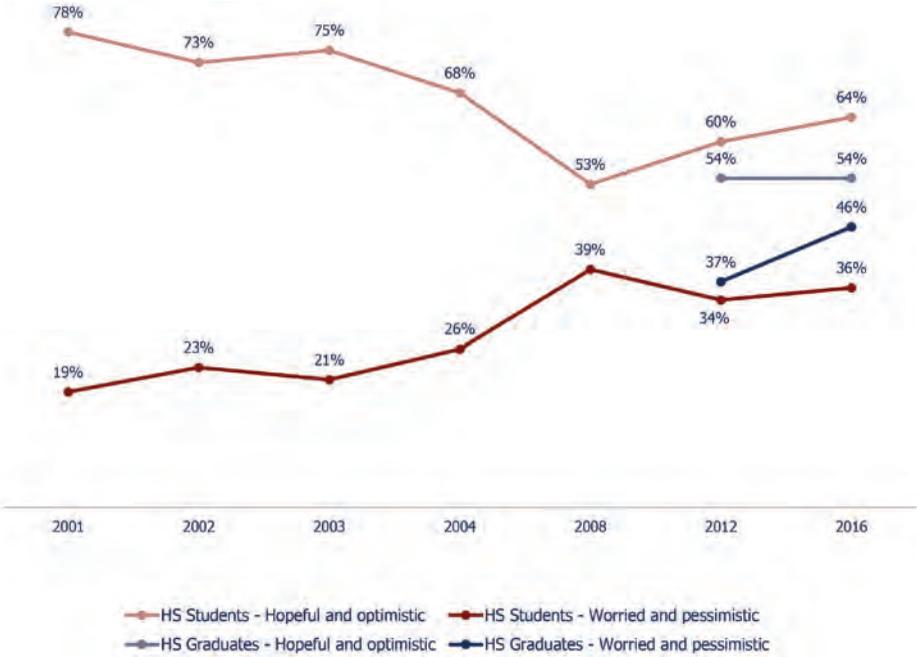
## 2. MAINTAINING OPTIMISM TOWARDS THE COUNTRY'S FUTURE

Amidst a political climate frequently characterized in divisive terms, the perceptions of young people – many of whom have yet to reach voting age – toward the country's future, emerge as meaningful indicators of the health of our democracy. The 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* measured young American's attitudes toward key political topics, surfacing notable trends in relation to earlier editions of this report.

Hope and optimism prevailed over worry and pessimism in the views expressed by young people towards the nation's future. In fact, while high school students reported *declining* optimism (and increasing pessimism) for nearly eight years, from 2001 to 2008, this trend has moved in the opposite direction since 2008. In 2016, nearly two out of every three high school students (64%) are hopeful and optimistic towards the country's future. Among high school graduates, a smaller but still majority percentage (54%) express a hopeful and optimistic outlook, which is consistent with the findings from the 2012 survey.

Despite lingering economic evidence of the Great Recession, flagging growth in employment rates, and a polarizing political climate, young people today are more positive about the direction of the country than they were eight years ago. In a recent report published by Gallup, researchers pointed to similarly upward trends in the political optimism of American adults (Jones, 2016). Their work found that in 2011, only 44% of Americans believed that young people would have a better life than their parents, a figure that rose to 54% in 2016. The report’s authors speculated that recent growth in the U.S. economy might be responsible for this shift in sentiment.

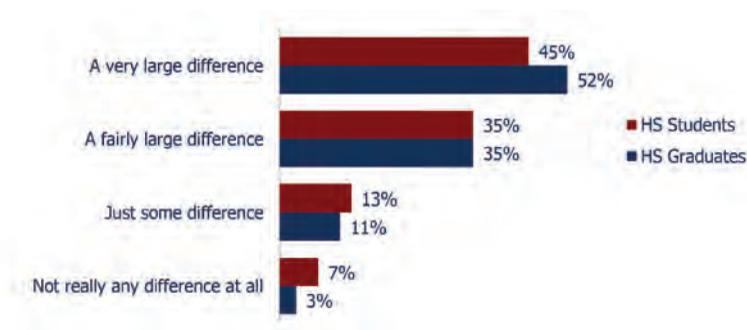
**Outlook toward the Future of the Country**



## Strong views the upcoming election will make a difference

Today's younger generation feels strongly that the 2016 presidential election will make a difference in the direction of the country with respect to important issues. The vast majority of high school students believe the upcoming election will make a very large or fairly large difference (45 and 35%, respectively) in the direction of the country, compared to less than one in five who say it will have only some (13%) or no (7%) effect. Recent graduates share similar views; 52% believe the election will make a very large difference, 35% a fairly large difference, 11% some difference and 3% not really any difference.

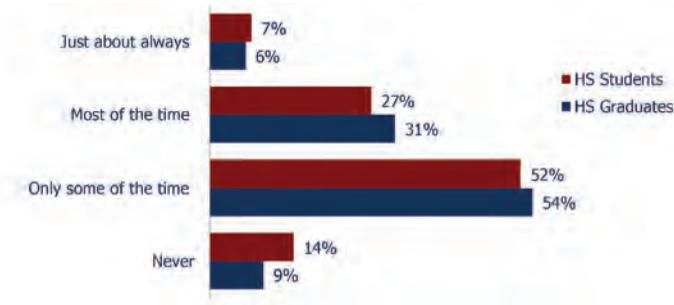
### Influence of Election Outcome on Direction of the Country



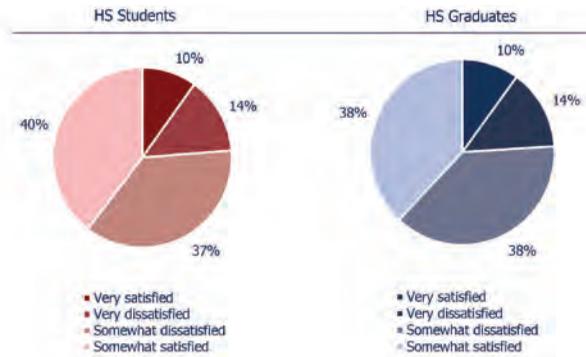
## Trust and satisfaction towards government

Young people's expectations with respect to changes stemming from the upcoming election may reflect a desire for larger political reform. Only a small minority of high school students (7%) and recent graduates (6%) reported consistently high levels of trust in the government to do what is right. As many, if not more, high school students and recent graduates indicated they *never* trusted the government (14 and 6%, respectively). Analogously, only one in ten high school students or graduates is very satisfied with our system of government and how it works. The large majority are either somewhat satisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with the government. It may be that expectations for the upcoming election to change the direction of the country reflect hope for a more trustworthy and satisfying government.

## Level of Trust that the Government in Washington Does What Is Right



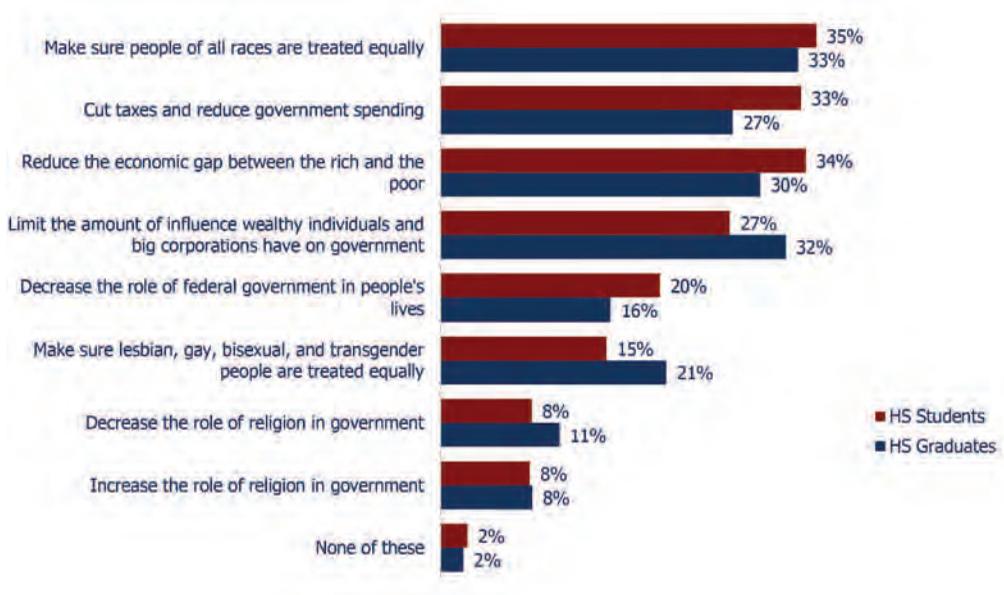
## Satisfaction with System of Government



## Desire that election will lead to a more equitable and tolerant society

Building on young people’s expectations that the upcoming election will have an important influence on the country are their perceptions of the issues and conditions most in need of change. Prominent among their views is a strong desire for a more equitable and tolerant society. For example, large shares of both high school students and graduates cited as most important needs for change the equal treatment of all races (35 and 33%, respectively), narrowing the economic gap between rich and poor (34 and 30%), and equal treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people (15 and 21%). More than a quarter of respondents (27% of high school students and 32% of recent graduates) prioritize needs to limit the influence of large corporations and the wealthy on government. In contrast to more socially liberal perspectives on income distribution and social justice, a sizable number of both high school students and recent graduates prioritize lowering taxes and reducing government spending (33% of students and 27% of graduates), as well as limiting the involvement of government in people’s lives (20% of students and 16% of graduates).

### Most Important Changes for the Country



### 3. VIEWS ON AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS AND FREEDOMS

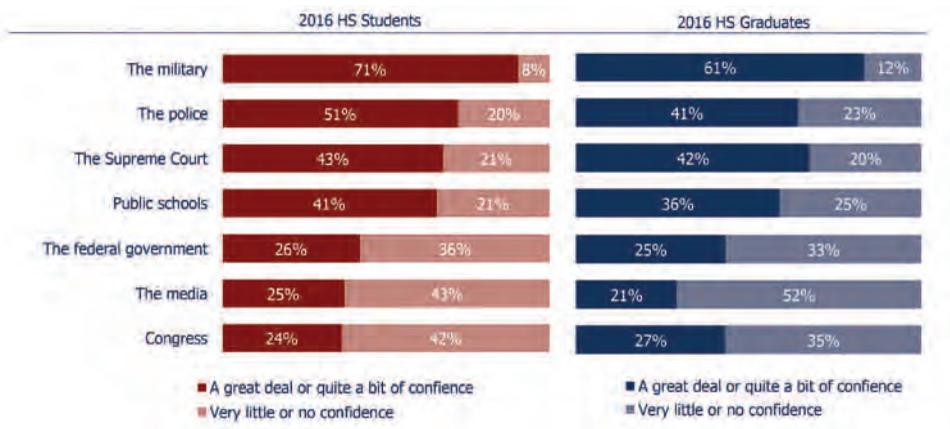
The 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey asked today's young people to express their views regarding key institutions that serve American society, the most important freedom American's enjoy, and the extent to which the U.S. government is doing a good job protecting those freedoms. Together, their responses offer a unique portrait of this generation's notions of civic engagement and democratic ideals.

## Confidence in American Institutions

When asked to rate their confidence in key American institutions, high school students and graduates both voice high levels of confidence in the protective services, including military and law enforcement. In particular, 71% of high school students and 61% of high school graduates voice a great deal or quite a bit of confidence in the military (versus only 8 and 12%, respectively, who expressed very little or no confidence). Despite a surge in social unrest and numerous high-profile incidents of violence perpetrated by and against police in areas such as Baltimore, MD, Ferguson, MO, and Chicago, IL, twice as many high school students (51%) and recent graduates (41%) report having a great deal or a lot of confidence in the police as those who indicated little or no confidence (20 and 23%, respectively). Considerably smaller shares of today’s young people voice confidence in the federal government as a whole, the media, or congress.

Reports often highlight racial differences in American’s attitudes towards the police. A 2014 Gallup poll found that, from a national sample of adults, 59% of Whites versus 37% of Blacks possessed a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the police (Newport, 2014). Data from this study reveal strikingly similar racial patterns among high school students: while 58% of White high school students report having at least some degree of confidence in the police, this is true for only 35% of Black students. Amongst high school graduates, the contrast is starker; through nearly half of White graduates report having some degree of confidence in police, this is true for only 15% of Black graduates.

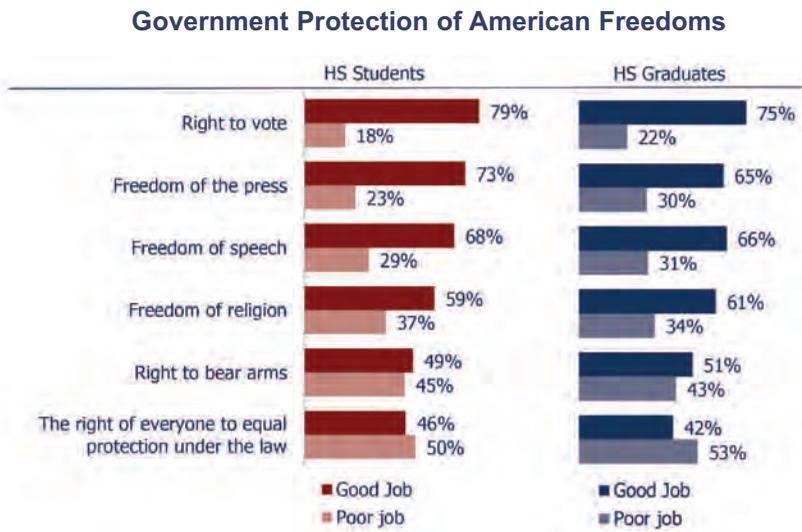
### Confidence in American Institutions



## Freedom of speech is the most important civil right to protect

When asked to select the single most important freedom that American’s enjoy, freedom of speech topped the list, garnering 38% of responses among high school students and 36% of responses among high school graduates. This finding corroborates a 2016 report by Gallup in collaboration with the Knight Foundation and Newseum Institute indicating that nearly three out of four college students is highly confident in the security of their freedom of speech, but that confidence wanes among older adults (Gallup, 2016). Young people’s second most-valued freedom is the right to equal protection under the law, accounting for 23% of responses among high school students and graduates alike. Cited less frequently as the most important freedom enjoyed by Americans were freedom of religion (13 and 14% of high school students and graduates, respectively) and the freedom of the press (4 and 5%, respectively).

When asked to rate how well the U.S. government is doing protecting those rights and freedoms, high school students and graduates generally expressed favorable opinions towards the government. The majority of high school students and graduates consider the government to be doing a good job protecting their rights. Young people rate the government least favorably in its preservation of individuals’ rights to equal protection, a concerning finding given that a sizable share of high school students and graduates consider this the most important freedom that Americans enjoy.



## 4. INTERACTING WITH MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

### **Social networking sites now the top sources of news and Media**

As members of the Millennial generation, the vast majority of students currently enrolled in high school are considered “digital natives,” a term Prensky (2001) and others use to refer to cohorts raised during the age of widespread digital technology. Though rates of internet use among young people, ages 13-17, have remained consistent in recent years, at approximately 95%, today’s teens report higher rates of access to mobile technologies, including smartphones and tablets. According to a Pew Research Center report published in 2015, twice as many teens now report owning web-enabled smartphones as did in 2012 (73% in 2015 compared to 37% in 2012). Rates of social media use by teens also increased during this period, from 83% in 2012 to 90% in 2015. Together, these trends have considerable implications for the ways in which young people go onto engage with media and various news sources.

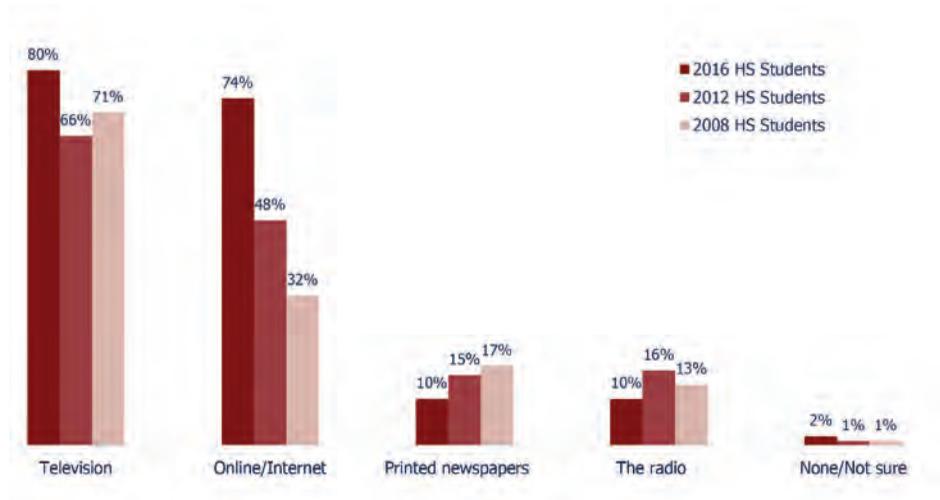
As in previous years, participants in the 2016 *State of Our Nation’s Youth* study were asked to identify the top news sources they looked to in gathering information about national events. In 2012, roughly one-fifth (21%) of high school students, and one-quarter of high school graduates (24%) named online social networking as among the two most important ways they gathered news. By 2016, these figures had jumped by nearly twenty percentage points for both high school students and high school graduates, to 40 and 44%, respectively. Social networking sites were ultimately rated the most popular sources for news across all categories, for students and graduates, alike. Based on this finding, it appears that while social media use rose only marginally over the past few years (based on the Pew report mentioned above), today’s youth are substantially more inclined to use social media for gathering news.

The increase in young people’s engagement with social media as a news source drove the upward trend for online news sources, more generally. As a category, online news sources were named by nearly half of students (48%) in 2012, a figure that rose to nearly three-quarters (74%) in 2016. In contrast to social media, news websites and blogs saw only modest upticks in their popularity, indicating that social media was responsible for the lion’s share of growth in this category.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the rapid expansion of mobile internet sources, printed newspapers and radio both suffered losses in status, with newspapers losing nearly five percentage points amongst high school students and graduates. In an unexpected turn, television news sources *rose* in popularity since the most recent 2012 report, gaining votes from 80% of high school students and 67% of high school graduates in 2016, compared with 66% of students and 60% of graduates in 2012. Local television news comprised the largest share of the increase in television sources, gaining eight percentage points amongst high school students. Comedy news shows, such as John Oliver’s *This Week Tonight* and the now-defunct *Daily Show with John Stewart*, declined in popularity with both high school students and graduates.

That individuals may, and often do, consult multiple news sources is important to the interpretation of these findings. Seventy-six percent of the young people surveyed identified more than one news source as important to them. This finding is fairly consistent with broader trends in news consumption by American adults; a 2010 study by Pew reported 92% of adults use multiple news platforms, and nearly half (46%) visit between four and six media platforms daily.

**Top Sources of News and Media about the Country among High School Students**



## Effects and Knowledge of Technology

Within the last decade, smart phones and mobile computing devices have dramatically transformed the ways Americans access and engage with technology. Ninety-two percent of teens access the internet on a daily basis, and 24% report being online “almost constantly” (Lenhart, 2015). Of the nine in ten teens who go online using a mobile device “at least occasionally,” the overwhelming majority (94%) are daily users (Lenhart, 2015). The convenience of mobile internet access via smartphones, combined with the recent explosion of web-based messaging and social media apps, point to a rapidly shifting technological landscape. To examine how teens and young adults understand and experience today’s digital ecology, the 2016 *State of Our Nation’s Youth* survey asked respondents to rate the effects of technology use on the lives of young people in general.

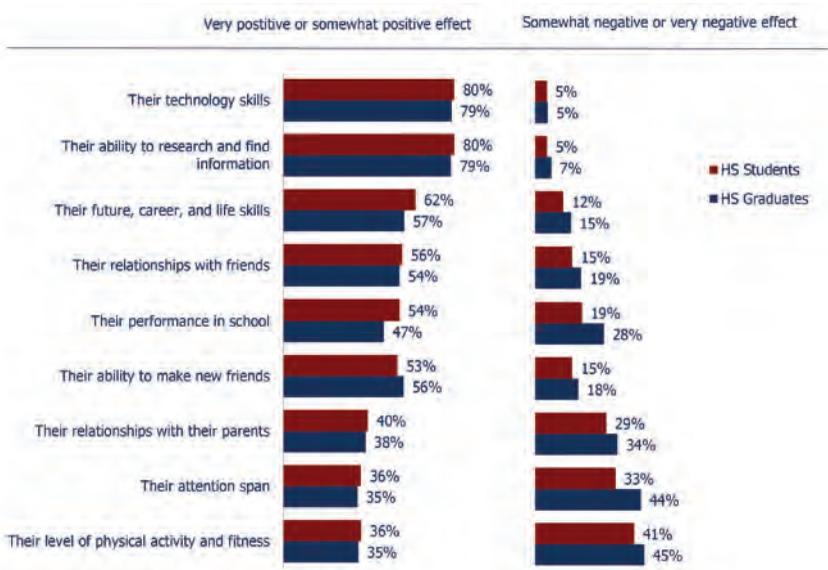
Overall, high school students and high school graduates felt that young people’s technology use contributes positively to a variety of skillsets, with 80% of high school students and 79% of high school graduates indicating “very positive” or “somewhat positive” effects on technology skills. Similarly, both groups were highly supportive of technology’s effects on their ability to research and find information (80 and 79%, respectively). Though nearly three out of five high school students and graduates associate technology with positive effects on young people’s “future, career, and life skills,” perceived effects on school performance were more mixed, with positive ratings from just 47% of high school graduates and 54% of high school students. Interestingly, 28% of high school graduates felt that technology use had a “somewhat negative” or “very negative” effect on young people’s school performance, compared with only 19% of currently enrolled high school students.

With respect to interpersonal relationships, the majority of respondents associated technology use with positive effects on young people’s friendships and their ability to make new friends. Fifty-six percent of high school students and 54% of high school graduates saw technology as positively impacting their friendships with peers. At the same time, however, roughly one third of respondents felt technology negatively affects young people’s relationships with their parents (29% of high school students and 34% of graduates).

Findings with respect to technology’s perceived effects on physical activity and attention span levels were more mixed. In their ratings for these two categories, 36% of high school students and 35% of graduates indicate that technology use had either a “very positive” or “somewhat positive” effect on levels of activity and attention span. A larger percentage of high school graduates associate technology use with negative effects in both areas (44% for attention span and 45% for physical activity). Similarly, 41% of high school students correlate technology use with negative effects on physical activity. Roughly one third (33%) report negative effects on attention span.

Findings from an online survey of teachers conducted by the Pew Research Institute (Purcell, et al., 2012) appear to corroborate several of these perceptions. Though 67% of the 2,462 teachers polled saw the internet and other technological tools as having a “mostly positive” effect on students’ research and study skills, a whopping 87% believed the same technologies contributed to “shorter attention spans” and greater distractibility in students.

### Effect of Technology on Young People



Despite frequent engagement with media and digital technology across multiple platforms, fewer than half (42%) of the high school students polled felt they knew more about technology than their parents and/or guardians. Sixty-three percent of high school graduates respond similarly. Approximately one-third of high school

students and one-quarter of graduates purport equal levels of knowledge with their parents/guardians. In both groups, a small minority (5% of high school students and 2% of graduates) report feeling their parents and/or guardians “know a lot more” about technology than them. These findings may come as a surprise to educators and parents alike, many of whom share assumptions about the enhanced digital fluency and technological capacities of young people (Purcell, et al., 2012).

## 5. FACING CHALLENGES AND MANAGING STRESS

### **Academic concerns chief among problems and issues faced**

Academic concerns ranked most highly among issues reported by high school students on this year’s *State of Our Nation’s Youth* survey. Roughly one third of students characterize “pressure to do well in school,” “pressure to do well on standardized tests,” and “pressure to get into college” as major problems in their lives (35, 31, and 28%, respectively). Pushed to evaluate the leading sources of pressure they associate with these concerns, students most often name themselves; 65% of students who characterized pressure to get into college as a major problem in their lives indicate that this pressure was self-induced, and 58% credit their parents. Of students who said they feel considerable pressure to do well in school, a marginally higher percentage reference their parents as a source of pressure than themselves (66 vs. 63%). Fewer than half as many (28%) report feeling similar pressure from their teachers. Of the 31% of high school students for whom pressure to do well on standardized tests pose a major problem, 62% cite themselves, 47% credit their parents, and 39% label teachers as key sources of pressure.

Compared to high school students, recent graduates report more problems with family relationships, health concerns, and financial issues. Personal financial concerns pose a “major problem” for 42% of high school graduates, compared with only 21% of high school students. Twenty-six percent of graduates cite pressure to help their parents financially as a source of considerable stress, whereas only 15% of students feel this way. Perhaps relatedly, 22% of graduates also struggle with “family problems, or not getting along with parents,” compared to just 16% of high school students. Twice as many recent graduates as students (28 and 14%, respectively) report major medical issues, which included problems linked to the availability and cost of health care. Sixty-nine percent of recent graduates characterize “feeling depressed” as either a “major” or “minor” problem, compared to just under half (47%) of high school students.

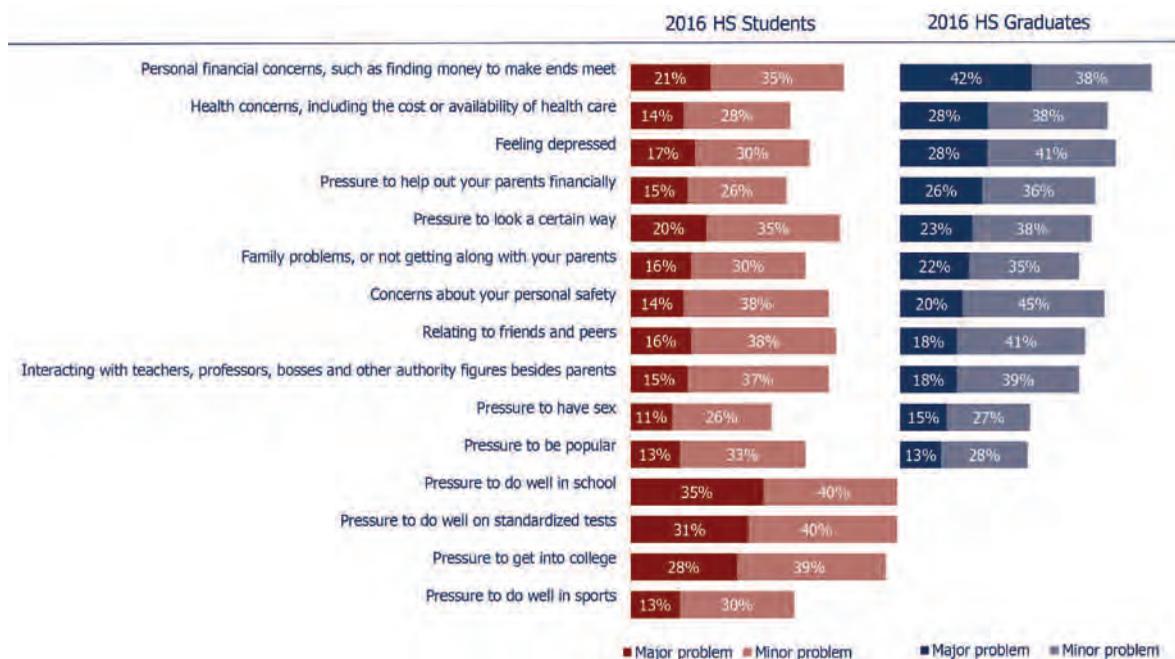
Differences between the two groups may be partially explained by differences in their living conditions and employment levels. Specifically, while the overwhelming majority of high school students (96%) report living in a household with at least one parent (or stepparent), only 55% of recent graduates enrolled in college report living with family members, including siblings. Twenty-four percent of high school graduates live with roommates, 13% with a spouse or significant other, and one in ten live alone, suggesting that these individuals likely carry a greater share of responsibility for financial burdens associated with independent living than did high school students. Among high school graduates not enrolled in college, a similar share live with parents or family members (58%), while one in four live with a spouse or significant other, and 13 and 11% live with roommates or live alone, respectively.

The 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey revealed marked increases in the rates of social problems reported by both high school students and recent graduates, compared to 2012 respondents. Importantly, the observed differences may be a result of the 2016 survey's online administered (versus phone administration in past years), which may have enabled survey participants to be less concerned with social desirability and thus feel more comfortable reporting problems. The percentage of respondents who characterize "relating to friends and peers" as a major problem more than doubled, from 8% in 2012 to 16% in 2016 amongst high school students, and from 8% to 18% amongst graduates. Interacting with teachers, professors, bosses, and other authority figures besides parents also poses a more substantial issue for 2016 respondents, with 15% of high school students and 18% of recent graduates calling it a major problem, compared with 7% of students and graduates in 2012. Twice as many respondents to this year's survey rated "pressure to look at certain way" as a serious concern for them. In 2012, this category included 11% of students and 10% of graduates, figures that swelled to 20% and 23% in 2016. Despite these challenges, the percentage of individuals who report serious problems dealing with pressure to be popular in 2016 was relatively low, accounting for only 13% of total respondents.

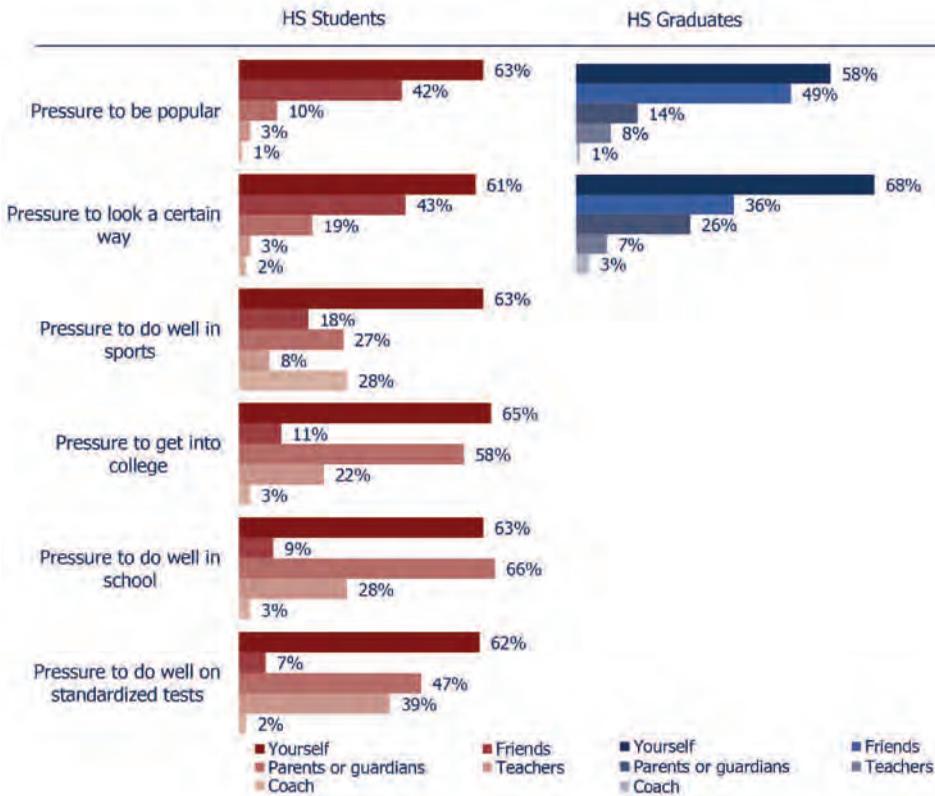
More young people report concerns over issues of personal safety in 2016 than in 2012. Four years ago, 34% of students and recent graduates regarded personal safety concerns as either "a major problem" or "a minor problem" for them. In 2016, these concerns were expressed by more than half of students (52%) and nearly three quarters of graduates (65%). Annual polls conducted by Gallup reveal

that although Americans’ perceptions of personal safety have remained fairly stable since 2009 (fewer than four in 10 adults in the U.S. indicate they would feel unsafe walking alone at night near their homes), the majority (approximately 63% in 2014) also believe crime rates have risen in previous years (McCarthy, 2014). (The latter contradicts actual crime statistics, which show rates of violent crime at some of the lowest levels since 1970.) Though only 37% of adults polled by Gallup in 2014 said they felt unsafe walking at night, this figure rose to 48% among young adults – aged 18 to 29 (Dugan, 2014). Authors speculated that young adults may experience a higher “relative sense of insecurity” due to differences in neighborhood context, as members of this group were more likely to reside in urban areas and/or low-income communities. This hypothesis may be useful in contextualizing the concerns for personal safety expressed by respondents to the *State of Our Nation’s Youth* survey, but does not explain why these concerns proliferated in 2016 compared to 2012. It is important to note that the 2016 results among high school students mirror those from the 2008 report, where 53% of students reported personal safety as problematic.

### Problems and Issues Faced



## Origin of Pressure

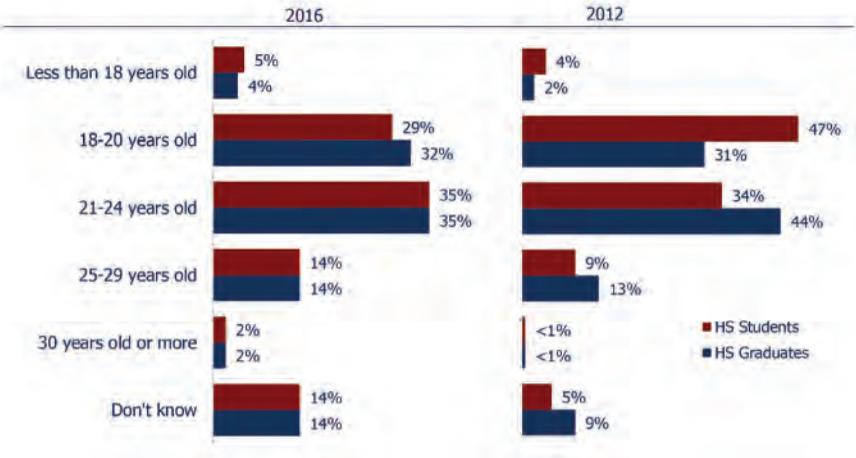


## Financial Independence

The majority of high school students and recent graduates (69 and 71%, respectively) feel that children should achieve financial independence from their parents by the age of 25. On average, the specific age proposed by both groups hovers just below 22. There were no marked discrepancies in the distributions of the two groups in 2016, indicating that roughly the same percentages of high school students as recent graduates supported financial independence at each interval. Echoing the conclusion from the 2012 report, it appears that both high school students and graduates are still underestimating the number of years it takes to become financially independent, given national figures that indicate most Americans don't achieve full financial independence from their parents until around age 26.

Compared to four years prior, in 2016, a higher percentage of high school students support achievement of financial independence between 25 and 29 years of age. Whereas in 2012, only 9% of high school students estimated ages for independence between 25 and 29, in 2016, this figure increased to 14%. In 2012, 44% of recent graduates estimated ages for independence between 21 and 24, in 2016, this figure decreased to 35%. The percentage of respondents who were unable to estimate a specific age for financial independence increased between 2012 and 2016, from 5 to 14% amongst high school students and from 9 to 14% amongst recent graduates.

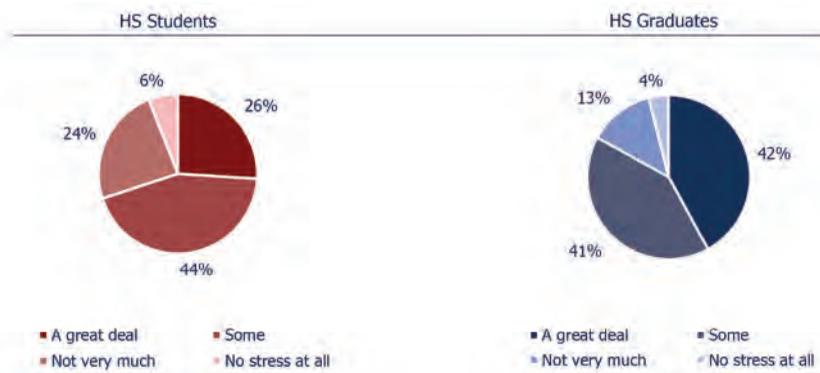
**Age when One Should Become Financially Independent of Parents**



**Stress and Coping**

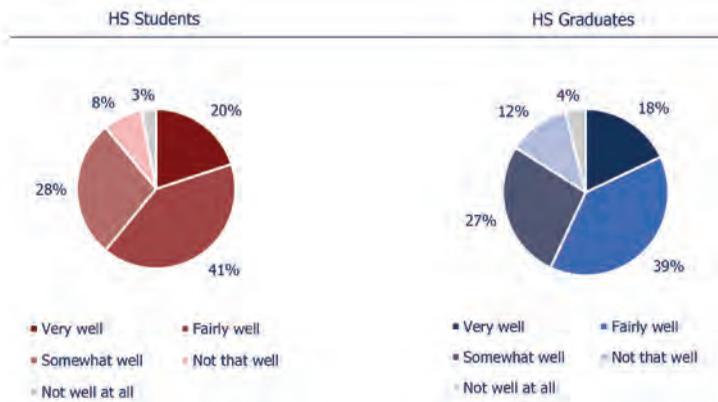
Forty-two percent of recent graduates in the 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* study report experiencing a great deal of stress, and an additional 41% report experiencing some stress. At 26%, the proportion of high school students experiencing great deal of stress is markedly lower than that of recent graduates. This comparatively higher level of stress among graduates may be explained by pressure associated with getting into a good college or deciding what to do after high school. In the American Psychological Association 2014 report, *Stress in America: Are Teens Adopting Adults' Stress Habits?*, 69% of teens reported these post-high school concerns as sources of stress (American Psychological Association, 2014).

## Stress Level among High School Students and Graduates



High school students and high school graduates are similar with respects to their reported ability to cope and manage stress. Of high school students, 61% believe they are able to cope and manage stress very well or fairly well, similar to the 57% of high school graduates who do so. These findings correspond with those presented by APA, indicating that 42% of teenagers are either are “not doing enough to manage their stress” or are “not sure if they are doing enough to manage it (American Psychological Association, 2014, p. 6).”

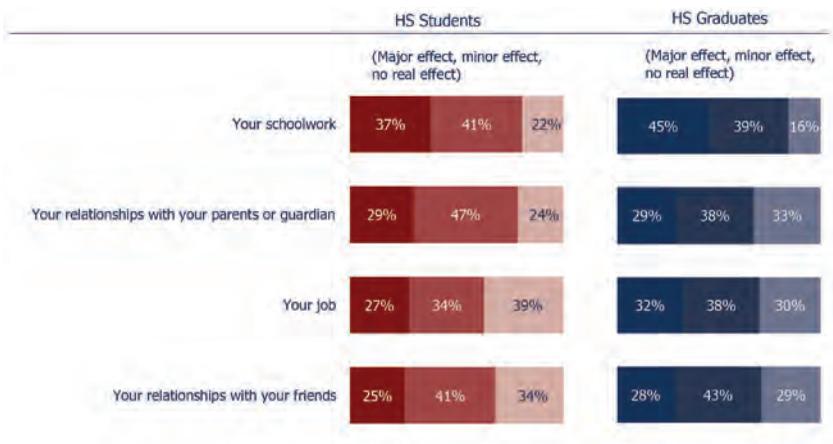
## Ability to Cope and Manage Stress among High School Students and Graduates



High school students and graduates in the 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* study report that stress affected their school work, relationships with their parents or guardians, relationships with friends, and their job performance. More than a third of students associated stress with major effects on their schoolwork (37%), while 29% noted considerable effects on their relationships with family. Roughly a quarter cited major effects of stress on job performance (27%) and peer relationships (25%). These percentages remained fairly consistent for high school graduates.

According to APA’s (2014) research, stress is associated with decreased academic performance in roughly 10% of students. Analogously, 21% of teens reported that stress contributed to neglect of school responsibilities. Moreover, 40% of teens indicated that stress contributed to neglect of responsibilities at home. With respect to social interactions, APA found that 17% of teens had canceled plans due to stress, and 26% reported being short or snapping at peers (classmates or teammates) due to stress. Stress also led 21% of teens to neglect work responsibilities. The *State of Our Nation’s Youth* data reinforce past research, pointing to the critical importance of understanding the sources of stress and its effects on young Americans in order to help combat pressures, and promote healthy coping skills.

**Effect of Stress**



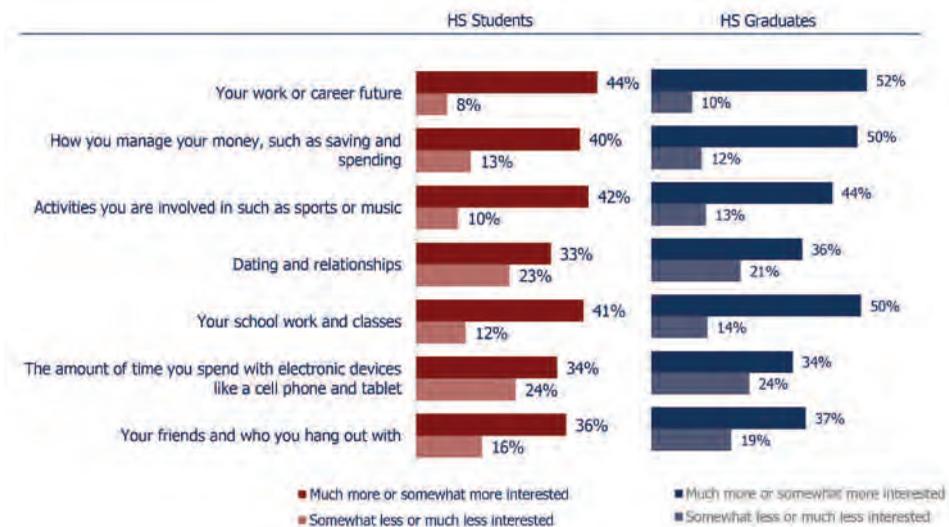
**6. PARENT AND GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT**

Today’s parents are more actively involved in the lives of their children than ever before. Generally speaking, parental involvement is considered an asset—as parents’ awareness of and connection to their children’s friends, activities, and school work are fundamental for sustaining a healthy family and productive household. Nonetheless, it is possible for parents to be *too* involved in their children’s lives. The notion of “helicopter parenting” has become associated with parents who are overprotective or excessively involved to the point where it may harm a child’s development. Psychologists Eli Finkel and Grainnee Fitzsimons discuss this social phenomenon in a 2013 *New York Times* piece, synthesizing findings from recent studies (Hamilton, 2013; Schiffrin, Liss, et al., 2013). Collectively, such studies point to ways that parents’ engagement can, in moderation, help children achieve their goals without hurting their levels of motivation or constraining individual accountability.

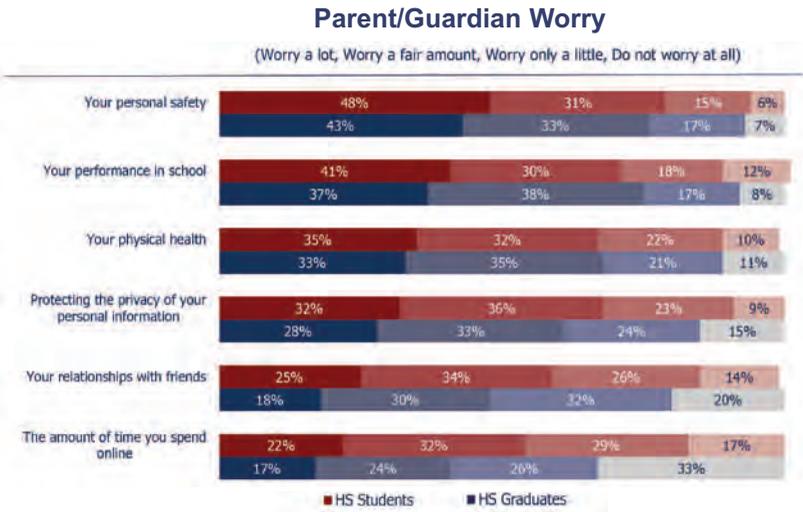
To capture evidence of this relatively recent trend in childrearing, the 2016 *State of Our Nation's Youth* asked today's high school students and graduates to reflect on their parents' involvement and levels of concern toward different aspects of their children's lives. These data provide important evidence of the role American parents play in their children's development.

Just under half (49%) of today's high school students indicate their parents are either very often or often involved in their academics (by way of talking to their child's teachers), and an even larger share (59%) report their parents pay a lot of attention to their school work and classes. Where this adds important nuance to the notion of helicopter parents is when young people report whether they wished their parents were more versus less involved in aspects of their lives. Here we see consistently that much larger shares of high school students and graduates wish their parents were *more* rather than *less* interested in areas such as their career futures, financial matters, extracurricular activities, schoolwork, and friendships. For example, 42 and 44% of high school students and graduates, respectively, desire more parental interest in their activities such as sports and music, compared to only 10 and 13% who wish their parents were less interested. Even in personal areas, such as the friends they hang out with or dating and relationships, today's young people wish their parents were more interested, not less. While it appears that today's young people often appreciate their parents' involvement, this does not necessarily indicate that their involvement is always good for child development.

### Desire for Parent/Guardian Interest among High School Students and Graduates



Related to parental involvement levels are the sources and degrees of concern among today’s parents and guardians, as perceived of by their children. Personal safety tops the list, with nearly four out of five high school students reporting their parents either worry a lot (48%) or worry a fair amount (31%) about their safety, followed closely by concerns about their children’s performance in school (41 and 30% report their parents worry a lot, or a fair amount, respectively). Physical health also elicits high levels of concern from parents, as does concerns about protecting their children’s privacy. Somewhat surprisingly, young people felt their parents were less concerned with their peer relationships and the amount of time they spent online. Percentages among high school graduates are comparable and follow a nearly identical pattern.



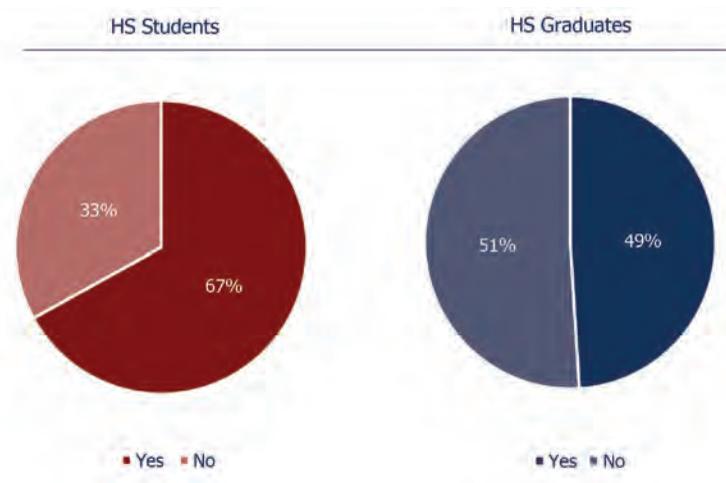
## 7. HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

### Aspects of High Schools Important to Quality of Education

The amount and type of education one attains are arguably the most important factors in determining long-term socioeconomic status and quality of life, and the quality of schooling young people receive is paramount to their future success. In fact, a 2014 working paper from researchers at the National Bureau of Economic Research claimed that high quality teachers substantially increase students’ potential lifetime earnings, years after leaving school (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014). The relationships between schooling and lifetime outcomes make it crucial to understand young people’s perspectives on which aspects of their high school education contribute to their success. A large majority (67%) of *State of Our*

*Nation's Youth* participants currently in high school purport they are learning skills needed to be successful in life. The strength of this assertion appears to wane in the years after high school, as only about half (49%) of high school graduates believe high school prepared them with the skills to be successful in life.

### Learning Skills Needed for Success in Life in High School



When asked to reflect on which aspect of their high school experience is most important to the quality of their education, high school students most often cite teachers (24%), the variety and quality of courses (20%), and college preparation (20%). Although these aspects were also important to students in 2012, notable changes emerge in a comparison of data from the two cohorts. Perhaps not surprisingly given their so-called digital nativism, today's high school students consider up-to-date technology to be more important to the quality of their education than did students in previous years; now, 10% of current high school students identify this as the most important factor, compared to just 4% four years ago.

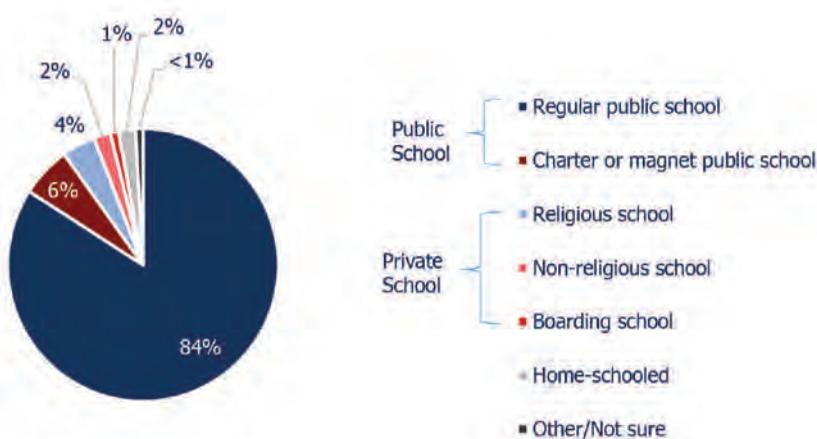
## Aspects of Current High School Important to Quality of Education



## Type of High School Attended

The *State of Our Nation's Youth* participants mirror the nation as a whole, with 84% of high school students reporting enrollment at a regular public school, and 6% at a charter or magnet public school. The remaining 10% of students attend religious schools, non-religious schools, boarding schools, are home-schooled or don't know/attend some other type of school. These statistics align with those of the U.S. Department of Education's *Projections of Education Statistics to 2023*, which reports that over 90% of all students in grades 9 through 12 are enrolled in public school, while private schools account for the remainder. Of private school students, national figures indicate that 80% attend schools that are religiously-affiliated.

## Type of High School Attended



## When Students Grade the Quality of their School

While most discussions of school performance highlight *students'* academic achievement, the *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey presents an interesting counterpoint, asking students to grade the quality of the schools in which they are currently enrolled, on a scale from A to F. Since this question first appeared in 2001, high school students' ratings of the quality of their school have consistently averaged just below a B grade, or a 2.8 (out of 4.0). While these data point to some level of consistency in students' views on the quality of their school over the past 15 years, this average masks subtler fluctuations in the grades students have assigned. For example, between 2012 and 2016, the percentage of students that gave their school an "A" decreased from 33 to 24%, while the percentage of students who gave their school a "D" increased from 4 to 7%. This may signal declining student perceptions of school quality, and represents a trend to be closely monitored in future surveys.

### High School Students' Ratings of the Quality of Current School

High School Students' Ratings of the Quality of Current School								
Grade	HS Students							
	2016 %	2012 %	2008 %	2005 %	2004 %	2003 %	2002 %	2001 %
A (4)	24	33	18	21	21	21	17	20
B (3)	44	42	46	51	52	56	51	48
C (2)	22	20	25	22	21	19	22	22
D (1)	7	4	7	4	4	2	6	6
F (0)	3	2	4	2	2	2	3	4
Average rating	2.8	3.0	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.7

*If you could give your current school a grade from A to F, what grade would you give it?*

## Grades Received

In addition to grading their current schools, student participants in the *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey were asked to summarize the grades they received on their last report card. A considerable share of high school students (41%) report having received a mix of A's and B's. Less than a third (28%) describe their grades as mostly A's, which has decreased notably since 2012, when 37% indicated they received mostly A's. Although these data suggest a slight shift in the grades students report receiving in school, the distribution across grades has remained relatively consistent since 2001.

## High School Students' Grades on Last Report Card

High School Students' Grades on Last Report Card								
	HS Students							
	2016 %	2012 %	2008 %	2005 %	2004 %	2003 %	2002 %	2001 %
Mostly A's	28	37	25	26	28	32	22	20
A mix of A's and B's	41	36	36	38	36	35	35	33
Mostly B's	10	7	6	7	6	7	8	8
A mix of B's and C's	15	13	22	20	21	19	23	26
Mostly C's	3	4	5	-	-	-	-	-
Mostly below C's	2	2	5	9	9	7	12	13
Not sure/can't remember	1	<1	1	-	-	-	-	-

*Which of these choices comes closest to describing the grades you received on your last report card?*

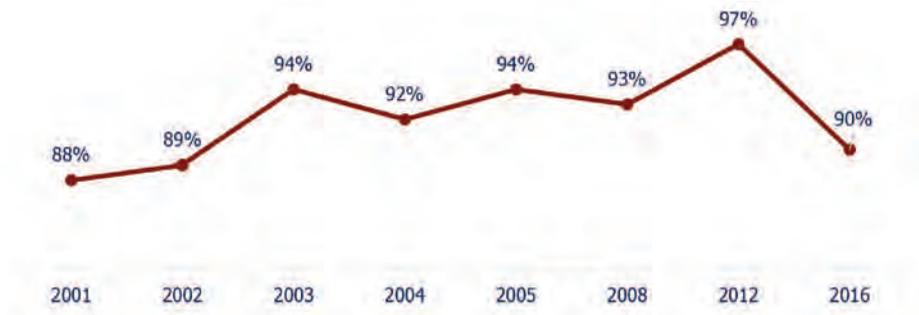
## 8. COLLEGE ASPIRATIONS, PREPARATION, AND ENROLLMENT

### Plans for a College Education

With respect to aspirations for higher education completion, the majority of *State of Our Nation's Youth* respondents report they plan to complete a college degree or certificate at some point in their lifetime. Of 2016 respondents, 9 out of 10 say they plan to earn a degree or certificate. While this clearly encompasses the majority of young people surveyed, this figure dropped from 97% in 2012. What's more, 7% of today's high school students indicate they do not intend to complete a degree or certificate, up from 2% in 2012. Thus, it would appear that high schools students' aspirations with respect to degree completion are in decline.

Among the 90% of high school students who plan to complete a degree or certificate, roughly 16% intend to pursue a vocational, technical, or two-year degree or certificate, about half (49%) aim to complete a four-year degree, and just over one in three (34%) have their sights on a graduate degree. College aspirations are often tied to students' perceptions of what they stand to gain from a degree, which are shaped by broader national conversations concerned with the economic and social returns on investment in higher education. Data from the Pew Research Center show that many Americans continue to believe that college students ultimately earn sizable returns on their investment in college, but only 5% feel that higher education provides excellent value for the money spent by students and their families. Forty-two percent of those surveyed rated higher education's value as "only fair," and 15% labeled its value as "poor" (Pew Research Center, 2011). While perceptions of the general public may contribute to the observed downward trend in college aspirations since 2012, rates of college enrollment and completion have remained strong in the U.S.

### Share of High School Students Who Plan to Complete a College Degree or Certificate



### Deciding to Enter College Immediately after High School Graduation

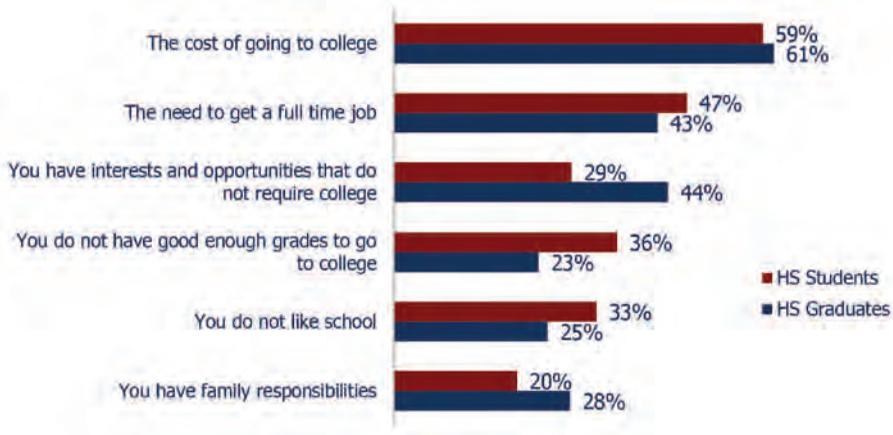
The *State of Our Nation's Youth* data indicate that among currently enrolled high school students who plan to complete a college degree or certificate, 91% intend to enroll in college immediately after graduation. This share has slightly increased from 86% in 2012.

Although it is clear that the majority of students surveyed intend to go straight to college after high school graduation, national trends in undergraduate enrollment point to a different reality. The U.S. Department of Education's most recent *Condition of Education* report reveals that among high school students who completed their diploma or GED in 2014, only 68% enrolled in college the following fall semester (Kena et al., 2016). Faced with major decisions about their immediate and long-term plans, recent graduates weigh a number of factors that may account for the discrepancy between those who intend to enroll and those who actually do.

According to Nina Hoe of *CNN*, more students are opting to delay college in favor of a gap year. For example, Malia Obama, among the most notable of 2016 college freshmen, made headlines recently based on her decision to defer enrollment at Harvard University for one year. Although still somewhat unconventional, the gap year is quickly becoming more commonplace among American youth. Hoe's (2016) article cited 2011-12 data from the National Center for Education Statistics showing that 34% of undergraduate students delayed entering college immediately after high school, citing plans for work and travel as determining factors.

When asked which factors will play or did play a major role in their decision not to enroll in college after graduation, the responses of *State of Our Nation's Youth* participants paint a more diverse portrait. High school students cite the cost of going to college (59%), needing to get a full time job (47%), and lacking good enough grades (36%) as top factors. Recent graduates voiced similar issues, pointing to high tuition costs (61%), employment demands (43%), and interests and opportunities that do not require college (44%). These findings suggest that concern over the financial burden of college, interest in pursuing alternatives such as a gap year, and unanticipated events and opportunities may motivate students to more critically consider their plans to enroll in college immediately.

**Major Factors in Decision Not to Enroll in College after Graduation**

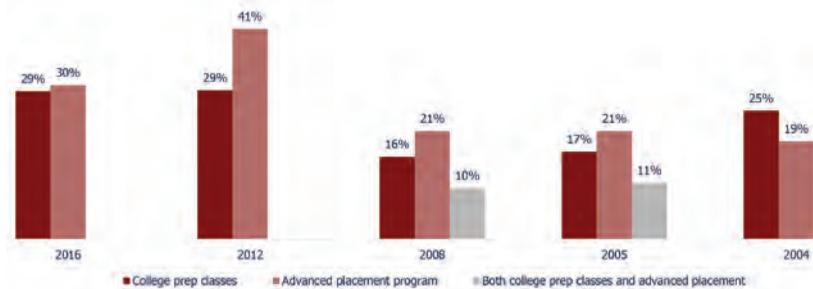


**College Preparation, Advanced Coursework, and Remediation**

Numerous reports on college and career readiness, including ACT's (2015) *The Condition of College & Career Readiness* and College Board's (2015a) *SAT Report on College and Career Readiness*, indicate that college preparation and advanced coursework can help to narrow the gap between high school and college, and facilitate student success in college and beyond. Many *State of Our Nation's Youth* participants report participating in classes and programs that prepare them for college. About one-third (30%) of high school students participate in an advanced placement program, and 29% report currently taking a college preparatory class. High school students report lower levels of participation in international baccalaureate programs and concurrent enrollment in college-level

coursework (3 and 10%, respectively). When viewed over time, the percentage of students who indicate being involved in advanced placement programs remained relatively stable, at about 20%, from 2004 to 2008, and increased sharply to 41% in 2012, before middling out at 30% in 2016. When asked to recall any college preparation or advanced coursework taken while in school, high school graduates reported similar levels of participation to high school students.

### High School Students' Participation in College Preparation or Advanced Coursework



While these data clearly illustrate the prevalence of college prep activities among today's high school students and recent graduates, many students are ill prepared for college-level work when they arrive on campus and are placed in remediation courses. Remediation courses sometimes become obstacles to students' progress towards graduation, can add stress to the financial burden of attendance, and increase their risk of dropping out, as noted in a 2016 report from Education Reform Now. To further understand the prevalence of developmental or remediation course taking, the *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey asked college enrollees to report whether they were required by their college to take any non-credit developmental or remedial courses. A sizable 32% of 2016 participants indicated they *had* taken developmental courses in college, up marginally from 28% in 2012. Though these figures suggest that more students were required to take remedial coursework compared to four years ago, it may also be the case that students were more confused as to which (if any) of their courses were considered remedial. A larger percentage reported being unsure about having enrolled in remedial courses (8% in 2016 versus less than 1% in 2012).

## Remediation/Developmental Coursework among College Enrollees

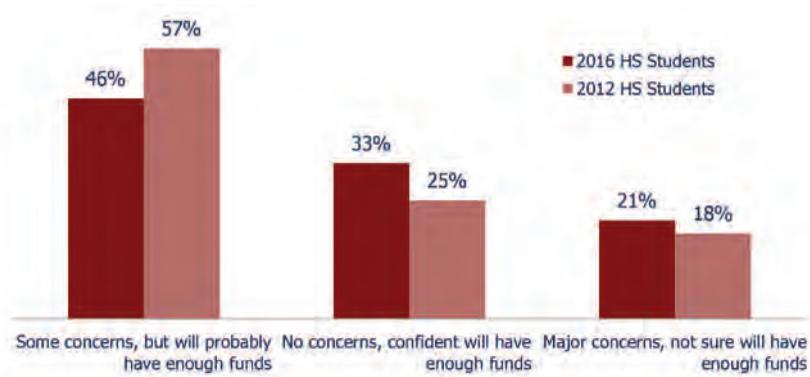


## 9. PAYING FOR COLLEGE

The College Board's 2015 *Trends in College Pricing* report paints a troubling picture of postsecondary tuition rates in the United States, in part by showing that the price of college has consistently increased at rates far outpacing both inflation and awarded financial aid (College Board, 2015b). Together, these trends limit the affordability of higher education and place greater burden on students and families. In light of the growing student loan debt crisis and increased scrutiny focused on the tuition practices of colleges and universities, the *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey set out to examine young people's perceptions of college costs.

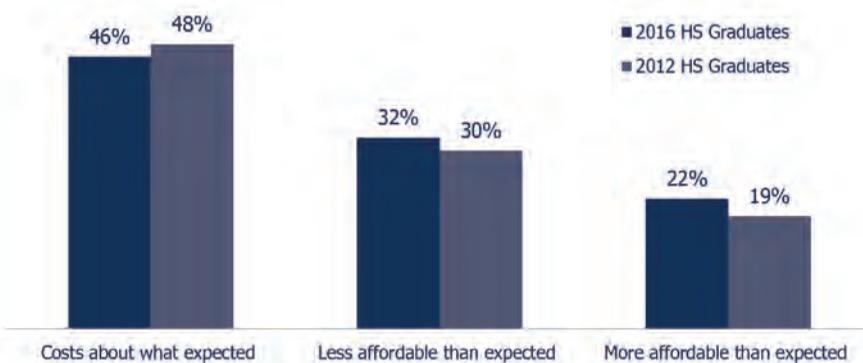
When asked to rate their level of concern about their families' ability to finance their college education, almost half of all high school students report having some concerns (46%), roughly one in five (21%) have major concerns and fear they may lack sufficient funds. However, most high school students (66%) expect to use subsidized forms of financial aid, such as grants and scholarships, which would not require repayment, though nearly as many students also plan to use family resources (60%). Fewer than half of high school students plan to use their own resources (44%), and about one out of three (34%) intend to rely on loans and other forms of financial aid that require repayment. These data reflect the figures reported by Big Future (2016), a college information resource developed by the College Board, indicating that in 2014-15 about two-thirds of full-time college students received some combination of grants and scholarships to help cover their costs, while one-third utilized federal loans.

## Concerns about Paying for College among High Schools Students Who Plan to Complete a Degree



A 2016 Sallie Mae publication, *How America Pays for College*, reported a majority of today’s families heavily consider cost and financial aid in making college decisions, particularly when narrowing the list of potential places to enroll. The report also suggests that although families express concern over their ability to pay, and are increasingly sensitive to factors that may increase college tuition, those with a plan are much more confident about what to expect. *The State of Our Nation’s Youth* contributes to our understanding of the expectations and realities of paying for college by asking recent high school graduates to reflect on the affordability of their college experience. Just under half (46%) report their education costs about what they expected, while 32% feel it is less affordable than expected, and 22% say it is more affordable than expected. So while the majority of families base their decisions on attendance costs, nearly one in three are surprised by costs that exceed expectation.

## Attitudes toward Paying for College among College Enrollees



## 10. EMPLOYMENT

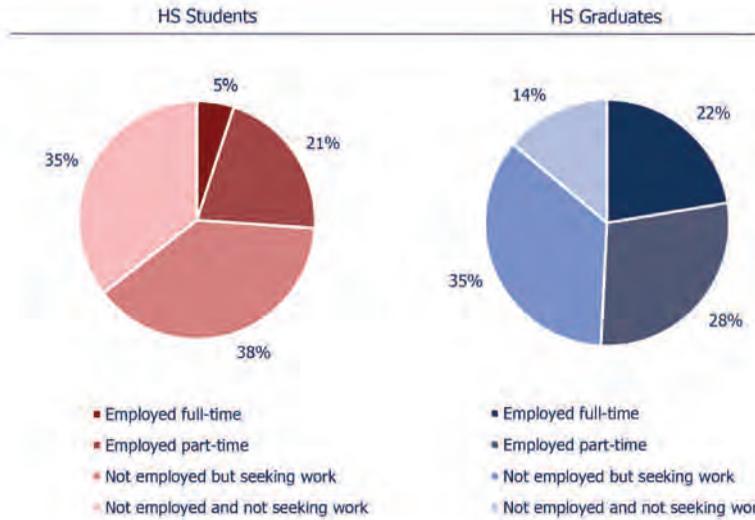
Despite commentary surrounding rates of unemployment and underemployment, particularly of unskilled workers, most recent graduates and a large percentage of current high school students report holding employment. Not surprisingly, only a small share (5%) of high school students are employed full-time. However, nearly one in five (21%) hold part-time jobs, and an even larger percentage (38%), though not presently employed, wish to find work and are actively seeking employment. Only about a third (35%) of today's high school students are neither working nor seeking a job.

Among high school graduates, full-time paid employment is more common. Twenty-two percent of high school graduates are employed full-time, whereas 28% are employed part-time. Much like their high school counterparts, 35% of high school graduates are unemployed but actively seeking work. Only 14% are unemployed and not looking for work. When compared to 2012 data, employment rates of recent graduates have declined, slightly – with overall employment shrinking from 56 to 51%. Rates of part-time work have declined more sharply than full-time, falling from 38% in 2012 to 28% in 2016.

Importantly, these overall percentages of employment among high school graduates mask differences between those who are enrolled in college and those who are not. Recent graduates who are *not* enrolled in college work full time at more than twice the rate of their enrolled counterparts (35 vs. 16%, respectively). On the other hand, college-enrolled graduates are more likely to hold part-time employment than non-enrolled peers (32 vs. 22%). Just over half (53%) of enrolled college students report not having employment, compared to 43% of those who are not enrolled. Nationally, similar trends are visible, as data from the U.S. Department of Education in 2016 show the employment rate for youth with some college was roughly 11% higher than those who had completed high school.

For high school graduates, especially those not enrolled in college, failure to find employment can have consequences for their overall quality of life, including their independence, financial security, and even health. Though various issues and circumstances may detract from individuals' ability to find work, for others, not working constitutes a deliberate choice.

## Employment among High School Students and Graduates



Recent high school graduates who are not employed were asked to select the primary reason for their employment status. The following garnered responses:

- Unable to find a job (35%);
- Haven't yet found a desired job (17%);
- Family responsibilities prevent working (14%);
- Do not need to work (11%);
- Prevented from working due to personal health reasons (7%);
- Volunteer instead of working (5%).

An additional 11% cited other reasons not listed on the survey. (Of note, these figures encompass recent graduates who were enrolled in college, as well as those who were not enrolled at the time of the survey.) Involuntary unemployment and inability to find work represents a particularly serious issue for high school graduates who do not attend college. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015) finds that the unemployment rate for adults with only a high school diploma is 5.4%, nearly three percentage points higher than that of adults with a bachelor's degree (2.7%). These statistics clearly indicate that the present labor market and knowledge-based economy pose unique challenges to the participation of adults lacking higher education credentials.

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## RESEARCH METHODS

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The 2016 Horatio Alger Association *State of Our Nation's Youth* survey was conducted as a collaborative effort between Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc., and New York University's Center for Research on Higher Education Outcomes. The report was prepared by a team of researchers at NYU led by Dr. Gregory Wolniak, on behalf of the Horatio Alger Association.

From April 21 to April 28, 2016, web-based surveys were administered to 1,512 current and former high school students, including 1,010 currently enrolled high school students and 502 recent high school graduates. To qualify as a high school student, respondents must be enrolled in high school during the 2015-2016 academic year and over the age of 13. To qualify as a recent high school graduate, respondents must be 23 or younger and have graduated from high school; 331 were currently enrolled in higher education at the time of the survey.

All surveys were completed online using an opt-in panel in which potential respondents received an email or mobile app invitation to answer basic questions and were then directed through to the survey if they qualified. Participants under age 18 were recruited through their parents, while high school students and graduates ages 18 and older were recruited directly. To achieve a representative sample, a nested-quota sampling frame was employed in which respondents are recruited to match demographic characteristics drawn from Census figures with multiple subgroupings.

Because this sample is an opt-in online sample, a credibility interval is used to index precision rather than a traditional margin of error. The credibility interval at the 95% confidence level for this survey is 3.3 percentage points for high school students and 4.7 percentage points for high school graduates. Credibility intervals for subgroups are larger, and sampling error is just one form of error or bias that

can affect survey results. Sampling weights were calculated to adjust for sample design aspects such as differential response rates across various demographic groups, including sex, race/ethnicity, education, and geography.

The weighted data, which reflects the U.S. Census characteristics for this population, were used for all analyses. When interpreting differences between groups at the 95% (or higher) level of statistical significance (meaning a 5% or less probability that the observed differences could be attributed to chance at 80% power), the following guidelines should be followed:

- When comparing high school students' ( $n=1,010$ ) versus high school graduates' ( $n=502$ ): If estimated response values are approximately 50% for a particular variable, a 7% difference is needed to achieve statistical significance. If response values are at or near 90%, a 4% difference is needed.
- When comparing high school graduates who are college enrollees ( $n=327$ ) versus not enrolled in college ( $n=175$ ): If estimated response values are approximately 50% for a particular variable, a 12% difference is needed to achieve statistical significance. If response values are at or near 90%, a 6% difference is needed.
- When comparing responses across years among high school students, such as 2016 ( $n=1,010$ ) versus 2012 ( $n=1,003$ ) responses: If estimated response values are approximately 50% for a particular variable, a 5% difference is needed to achieve statistical significance. If response values are at or near 90%, a 3% difference is needed.

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## RESEARCH PARTNERS

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### **New York University, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development**

Located in the heart of Greenwich Village, NYU's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development prepares students for careers in the arts, education, health, media, and psychology. Since its founding in 1890, the Steinhardt School's mission has been to expand human capacity through public service, global collaboration, research, scholarship, and practice. To learn more about NYU Steinhardt, visit [steinhardt.nyu.edu](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu). Within NYU Steinhardt, the Center for Research on Higher Education Outcomes (CRHEO) was founded in 2013 to bring together faculty, research staff, and students who strive to increase knowledge and understandings of the effects of postsecondary experiences and institutional conditions on a range of student outcomes, with particular focus on the ways students develop and conceive of their development in college, as well as conditions that contribute to student success.

### **Hart Research Associates, Inc.**

Founded in 1971, Hart Research Associates is one of the leading survey research firms in the United States and has been at the cutting edge of change in the field of public opinion for more than three decades. In that time, Hart Research has conducted well over 8,000 public opinion surveys and has administered and analyzed interviews among more than three million individuals. They have also undertaken more than 7,500 focus group sessions. Hart Research has also become well-known for helping diverse public interest groups – nonprofits, social cause organizations, political organizations, and labor unions – refine their approaches to membership cultivation, image development, strategic planning, and communications. Hart Research brings a great deal of creative thinking to designing research strategically and framing the results in ways that clients can use to solidify and expand their membership support.

## DATA TABLES

<b>Distribution of High School Students and Graduates by Age, Sex, Race/Ethnicity, and Living Area</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
<b>Age<sup>1</sup></b>		
14 years old	11	<1
15 years old	25	-
16 years old	26	-
17 years old	24	0
18 years old	12	12
19 years old	2	24
20 years old	-	24
21 years old	-	23
22 years old	-	12
23 years old	-	5
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	50	50
Female	50	50
<b>Race/Ethnicity<sup>2</sup></b>		
White	60	57
Black/African American	16	16
Asian	4	6
Hispanic	18	19
Other	2	1
<b>Living Area<sup>3</sup></b>		
Large city	23	23
Medium-to-small city	22	29
Suburb near a city	31	29
Small town not near a city	11	10
Rural or country area	13	8

<sup>1</sup>How old are you?

<sup>2</sup>Are you from a Hispanic or Spanish-speaking background? What is your race-white, black or African American, Asian, or something else?

<sup>3</sup>What is the best way to describe the area in which you live?

## Distribution of High School Students and Graduates, by Family Income and Education Levels

	2016	
	HS Students %	HS Graduates %
<b>Family Income Level (compared to other American families)<sup>1</sup></b>		
Far below average	10	13
Slightly below average	21	28
Just about average	44	38
Slightly above average	20	17
Far above average	5	4
<b>Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Education<sup>2</sup></b>		
Completed college degree	56	48
Attended college did not complete degree	14	14
Did not attend college	27	34
Not sure	3	4

<sup>1</sup>Compared with other American families, would you say that your family's income is...?

<sup>2</sup>Based on the combined responses to two questions: Did either of your parents or legal guardians attend college? Did either of your parents or legal guardians complete a two- or four-year college degree?

<b>Family Household Structure of High School Students</b>		
	<b>HS Students</b>	
	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>
<b>Two-Parent Household</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>78</b>
Mother and Father	58	76
Mother or Father and Stepparent	17	3
<b>Single-Parent Household</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>
Mother only	17	16
Father only	3	2
Stepparent only	1	N/A
<b>Non-Parent Household</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup>How would you describe your current living situation?

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<b>Living Situation after High School, by College Enrollment Status</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Graduates</b>	
	<b>Enrolled in College %</b>	<b>Not enrolled in college %</b>
Parents or member(s) of family	55	58
Foster family	3	2
Spouse or significant other	13	25
Roommate(s)	24	13
Live alone	9	11

How would you describe your current living situation?

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## Factors Essential or Very Important when Thinking about Education and Career Goals

	2016		2012	
	Essential or Very Important Total %	Not Important at All %	Essential or Very Important Total %	Not Important at All %
<b>Making a contribution to science</b>				
HS Students	43	9	34	14
HS Graduates	42	11	32	14
<b>Becoming successful in a business of your own</b>				
HS Students	61	5	50	11
HS Graduates	57	8	45	14
<b>Raising a family</b>				
HS Students	66	4	71	5
HS Graduates	64	8	71	5
<b>Being very well off financially</b>				
HS Students	75	1	63	3
HS Graduates	76	1	62	6
<b>Participating in one of the fine arts such as acting, writing, singing, or dancing</b>				
HS Students	41	18	30	30
HS Graduates	41	16	29	30
<b>Becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment</b>				
HS Students	50	5	45	6
HS Graduates	50	6	47	7
<b>Helping to promote racial understanding</b>				
HS Students	52	7	61	3
HS Graduates	56	6	65	6
<b>Serving and protecting society and my community</b>				
HS Students	57	4	58	3
HS Graduates	53	5	65	3
<b>Integrating spirituality into your life</b>				
HS Students	52	10	45	14
HS Graduates	48	14	46	15
<b>Helping others who are in difficulty</b>				
HS Students	69	2	76	<1
HS Graduates	68	2	77	1

*Thinking about your educational, career, and life goals, please rate how important each of the following is to you.*

<b>Importance of Religion and Spirituality</b>				
	<b>2016</b>		<b>2012</b>	
	<b>Very Important or Somewhat Important Total %</b>	<b>Not Important at All %</b>	<b>Very Important or Somewhat Important Total %</b>	<b>Not Important at All %</b>
HS Students	71	13	79	9
HS Graduates	63	20	76	12

*How important is religion or spirituality in your life? Is it...?*

<b>Luck, Hard Work, and the Ability to Achieve Success</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
Hard Work	86	87
Good luck	14	13

*Which do you think is more important for success?*

<b>Influence of Election Outcome on Direction of the Country</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
A very large difference	45	52
A fairly large difference	35	35
Just some difference	13	11
Not really any difference at all	7	3

*How much of a difference do you think the outcome of this election will make in terms of the direction of the country and important issues?*

### Level of Trust that the Government in Washington Does What Is Right

	2016	
	HS Students %	HS Graduates %
Just about always	7	6
Most of the time	27	31
Only some of the time	52	54
Never	14	9

*How much of the time do you think that you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?*

### Satisfaction with System of Government

	2016	
	HS Students %	HS Graduates %
Very satisfied	10	10
Somewhat satisfied	40	38
Somewhat dissatisfied	37	38
Very dissatisfied	14	14

*How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with our system of government and how well it works?*

<b>Most Important Changes for the Country</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
Limit the amount of influence wealthy individuals and big corporations have on government	27	32
Reduce the economic gap between the rich and the poor	34	30
Cut taxes and reduce government spending	33	27
Increase the role of religion in government	8	8
Decrease the role of religion in government	8	11
Decrease the role of federal government in people's lives	20	16
Make sure people of all races are treated equally	35	33
Make sure lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are treated equally	15	21
None of these	2	2

*Has the stress you experienced in the past few months had a major effect, a minor effect, or no effect either way on each of the following?*

<b>Confidence in American Institutions</b>					
	<b>2016</b>				
	<b>A great deal of confidence %</b>	<b>Quite a bit of confidence %</b>	<b>Some confidence %</b>	<b>Very little confidence %</b>	<b>No confidence at all %</b>
<b>The military</b>					
HS Students	36	36	21	5	2
HS Graduates	28	32	27	8	4
<b>The federal government</b>					
HS Students	9	17	38	25	10
HS Graduates	8	18	42	24	9
<b>Congress</b>					
HS Students	7	17	34	29	13
HS Graduates	8	19	38	26	9
<b>The media</b>					
HS Students	8	17	32	30	12
HS Graduates	9	13	26	35	17
<b>The Supreme Court</b>					
HS Students	15	28	36	15	5
HS Graduates	15	27	38	16	4
<b>Public schools</b>					
HS Students	14	27	38	17	4
HS Graduates	13	24	39	20	5
<b>The police</b>					
HS Students	20	32	29	14	5
HS Graduates	14	27	36	14	8

*Below are some institutions in American society. Using the scale below, please mark how much confidence you have in each one.*

Most Important and Protected American Freedoms						
	2016					
	HS Students			HS Graduates		
	Single Most Important Freedom <sup>1</sup> %	Total Good Job <sup>2</sup> %	Total Poor job <sup>2</sup> %	Single Most Important Freedom <sup>1</sup> %	Total Good Job <sup>2</sup> %	Total Poor job <sup>2</sup> %
Freedom of speech	38	68	29	36	66	31
Freedom of religion	13	59	37	14	61	34
Right to vote	12	79	18	10	75	22
Right to bear arms	11	49	45	11	51	43
Freedom of the press	4	73	23	5	65	30
The right of everyone to equal protection under the law	23	46	50	23	42	53

<sup>1</sup>What would you say is the single most important freedom that Americans enjoy?

<sup>2</sup>Below are some examples of rights and freedoms that are protected under American laws. For each one, please indicate whether you think the U.S. government is doing a good or a poor job protecting that right or freedom.

Concerns regarding U.S. Government Fighting Terrorism		
	2016	
	HS Students %	HS Graduates %
That the United States government will overstep its bounds and violate the privacy rights of average citizens	45	59
That the United States government will not go far enough to get information for fear of overstepping boundaries	37	29
Neither concerns me—I believe the United States government will strike the right balance	19	13

When it comes to steps the United States government could take to fight terrorism, which of the following worries you more?

Outlook toward the Future of the Country									
	HS Students							HS Graduates	
	2016 %	2012 %	2008 %	2004 %	2003 %	2002 %	2001 %	2016 %	2012 %
Hopeful and optimistic	64	60	53	68	75	73	78	54	54
Worried and pessimistic	36	34	39	26	21	23	19	46	37
Not sure	-	6	8	6	4	4	3	-	9

When you think about the future of the country, would you say that you are mainly hopeful and optimistic, or mainly worried and pessimistic?

<b>Age when One Should Become Financially Independent of Parents</b>				
	<b>HS Students</b>		<b>HS Graduates</b>	
	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>
Less than 18 years old	5	4	4	2
18-20 years old	29	47	32	31
21-24 years old	35	34	35	44
25-29 years old	14	9	14	13
30 years old or more	2	<1	2	<1
Don't know	14	5	14	9
Average expected age	21.9	20.5	21.8	21.4

*At what age do you think a child is grown and ready to be financially independent and a parent's responsibility to financially help a child ends? If you had a say, at what age would you realistically choose for when a parent's responsibility to financially help a child ends?*

<b>Participation in Various Activities</b>	
	<b>2016 HS Students %</b>
Played organized or competitive sports during the 2015-2016 school year	46
Participated in band, choir, or orchestra during the 2015-2016 school year	30

*Please indicate whether each of the following descriptions applies to you.*

<b>Top Sources of News and Media about the Country</b>					
	<b>HS Students</b>			<b>HS Graduates</b>	
	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>	<b>2008 %</b>	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>
<b>Television</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>60</b>
Local television news	36	28	33	24	27
Cable television news	25	23	26	21	20
Network news	14	11	12	15	12
Comedy news shows	5	9	7	7	9
<b>Online/Internet</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>56</b>
News Websites	26	23	20	32	27
Online social networking	40	21	N/A	44	24
Online blogs	8	6	13	10	10
<b>Printed newspapers</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>The radio</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>None of these/Not sure</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>&lt;1</b>

*Which one or two of the following would you say are important sources for you in getting news about what is going on in the country?*

<b>Problems and Issues Faced</b>					
	<b>HS Students</b>			<b>HS Graduates</b>	
	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>	<b>2008 %</b>	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>
<b>Family problems, or not getting along with your parents</b>					
Major problem	16	12	19	22	11
Minor problem	30	31	37	35	25
Not a problem	53	57	44	43	64
Not sure	-	-	-	-	<1
<b>Pressure to look a certain way</b>					
Major problem	20	11	15	23	10
Minor problem	35	33	35	38	28
Not a problem	45	55	49	40	63
Not sure	-	<1	1	-	-
<b>Pressure to help out your parents financially</b>					
Major problem	15	11	N/A	26	18
Minor problem	26	26	N/A	36	29
Not a problem	60	64	N/A	38	52
Not sure	-	<1	N/A	-	<1
<b>Concerns about your personal safety</b>					
Major problem	14	9	17	20	10
Minor problem	38	25	36	45	24
Not a problem	48	65	47	35	66
Not sure	-	<1	-	-	-
<b>Health concerns, including the cost or availability of health care</b>					
Major problem	14	10	18	28	23
Minor problem	28	27	31	38	27
Not a problem	58	63	50	34	50
Not sure	-	<1	1	-	<1
<b>Personal financial concerns, such as finding money to make ends meet</b>					
Major problem	21	15	23	42	28
Minor problem	35	31	33	38	35
Not a problem	45	54	43	20	38
Not sure	-	<1	1	-	-
<b>Relating to friends and peers</b>					
Major problem	16	8	N/A	18	8
Minor problem	38	29	N/A	41	24
Not a problem	46	63	N/A	41	67
Not sure	-	<1	N/A	-	<1
<b>Interacting with teachers, professors, bosses and other authority figures besides parents</b>					
Major problem	15	7	N/A	18	7
Minor problem	37	25	N/A	39	20
Not a problem	48	68	N/A	42	73
Not sure	-	<1	N/A	-	<1

## Problems and Issues Faced

Pressure to do well on standardized tests					
Major problem	31	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Minor problem	40	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not a problem	28	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not sure	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pressure to do well in school					
Major problem	35	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Minor problem	40	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not a problem	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not sure	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pressure to do well in sports					
Major problem	13	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Minor problem	30	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not a problem	58	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not sure	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pressure to get into college					
Major problem	28	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Minor problem	39	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not a problem	33	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not sure	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pressure to have sex					
Major problem	11	N/A	N/A	15	N/A
Minor problem	26	N/A	N/A	27	N/A
Not a problem	63	N/A	N/A	59	N/A
Not sure	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A
Pressure to be popular					
Major problem	13	N/A	N/A	13	N/A
Minor problem	33	N/A	N/A	28	N/A
Not a problem	53	N/A	N/A	59	N/A
Not sure	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A
Feeling depressed					
Major problem	17	N/A	N/A	28	N/A
Minor problem	30	N/A	N/A	41	N/A
Not a problem	53	N/A	N/A	31	N/A
Not sure	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A

*Below is a list of problems that some people your age face. For each one, please indicate whether it is a major problem for you, a minor problem for you, or not a problem for you.*

<b>Origin of Pressure</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Student %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
<b>Pressure to look a certain way</b>		
Yourself	61	68
Parents or guardians	19	26
Friends	43	36
Teachers	3	7
Coach	2	3
<b>Pressure to be popular</b>		
Yourself	63	58
Parents or guardians	10	14
Friends	42	49
Teachers	3	8
Coach	1	1
<b>Pressure to do well on standardized tests</b>		
Yourself	62	-
Parents or guardians	47	-
Friends	7	-
Teachers	39	-
Coach	2	-
<b>Pressure to do well in school</b>		
Yourself	63	-
Parents or guardians	66	-
Friends	9	-
Teachers	28	-
Coach	3	-
<b>Pressure to get into college</b>		
Yourself	65	-
Parents or guardians	58	-
Friends	11	-
Teachers	22	-
Coach	3	-
<b>Pressure to do well in sports</b>		
Yourself	63	-
Parents or guardians	27	-
Friends	18	-
Teachers	8	-
Coach	28	-

*You indicated that pressure in the areas below is a problem for you. In each of these areas please indicate who is putting this pressure on you.*

<b>Stress Level and Ability to Cope</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
<b>Level of stress<sup>1</sup></b>		
A great deal	26	42
Some	44	41
Not very much	24	13
No stress at all	6	4
<b>Ability to Cope and Manage Stress<sup>2</sup></b>		
Very well	20	18
Fairly well	41	39
Somewhat well	28	27
Not that well	8	12
Not well at all	3	4

<sup>1</sup>How much stress have you experienced in the past three months?

<sup>2</sup>How well do you feel you are able to cope with and manage stress?

<b>Effect of Stress</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
<b>Your school work</b>		
A major effect	37	45
A minor effect	41	39
No real effect	22	16
<b>Your relationships with your parents or guardian</b>		
A major effect	29	29
A minor effect	47	38
No real effect	24	33
<b>Your relationships with your friends</b>		
A major effect	25	28
A minor effect	41	43
No real effect	34	29
<b>Your job</b>		
A major effect	27	32
A minor effect	34	38
No real effect	39	30

Has the stress you experienced in the past few months had a major effect, a minor effect, or no effect either way on each of the following?

## Incidents with Mean or Hurtful Online Postings

	HS Students			HS Graduates	
	2016 %	2012 %	2008 %	2016 %	2012 %
No, no one has ever posted anything mean or hurtful	71	76	82	65	79
Yes, someone posted something mean or hurtful	29	24	16	35	20
Not sure	-	1	2	-	1

*Has anyone ever intentionally posted something mean or hurtful about you online, such as on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat, or has that not happened to you?*

## Type of High School Attended

	HS Students		HS Graduates
	2016 %	2012 %	2012 %
<b>Public school</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>89</b>
Regular public school	84	77	83
Charter or magnet public school	6	8	5
<b>Private school</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
Private religious school	4	8	7
Private non-religious school	2	2	<1
Boarding school	1	<1	<1
<b>Taught by parents/home schooled</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Other/Not sure</b>	<b>&lt;1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

*What type of high school did you attend?*

## High School Students' Ratings of the Quality of Current School

Grade	HS Students							
	2016 %	2012 %	2008 %	2005 %	2004 %	2003 %	2002 %	2001 %
A (4)	24	33	18	21	21	21	17	20
B (3)	44	42	46	51	52	56	51	48
C (2)	22	20	25	22	21	19	22	22
D (1)	7	4	7	4	4	2	6	6
F (0)	3	2	4	2	2	2	3	4
Average rating	2.8	3.0	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.7

*If you could give your current school a grade from A to F, what grade would you give it?*

<b>Aspects of Current High School Important to Quality of Education</b>		
	<b>HS Students</b>	
	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>
College preparation	20	25
Teachers	24	25
Variety and quality of courses	20	19
Music and arts programs	4	8
Athletic programs	4	6
Job training	10	6
Security and personal safety	5	5
Up-to-date technology	10	4
Counselors	3	2
Other/Not sure/None	1	1

*Which of the following aspects of your current school do you think are most important for the quality of education you are receiving?*

<b>Learning Skills Needed for Success in Life in High School</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students<sup>1</sup> %</b>	<b>HS Graduates<sup>2</sup> %</b>
Yes	67	49
No	33	51

<sup>1</sup>*Do you think that in school you are learning the skills you need to be successful in life?*

<sup>2</sup>*Looking back, do you think that in high school you learned the skills you need to be successful in life?*

### High School Students' Grades on Last Report Card

	HS Students							
	2016 %	2012 %	2008 %	2005 %	2004 %	2003 %	2002 %	2001 %
Mostly A's	28	37	25	26	28	32	22	20
A mix of A's and B's	41	36	36	38	36	35	35	33
Mostly B's	10	7	6	7	6	7	8	8
A mix of B's and C's	15	13	22	20	21	19	23	26
Mostly C's	3	4	5	-	-	-	-	-
Mostly below C's	2	2	5	9	9	7	12	13
Not sure/can't remember	1	<1	1	-	-	-	-	-

*Which of these choices comes closest to describing the grades you received on your last report card?*

### High School Graduates' Grades Received on Last Report Card, by College Enrollment Status

	HS Graduates Enrolled in College	
	2016 %	2012 %
Mostly A's	24	33
A mix of A's and B's	47	41
Mostly B's	14	10
A mix of B's and C's	13	14
Mostly C's	1	2
Mostly below C's	0	<1
Not sure/refused	1	0

*Which of these choices comes closest to describing the grades you received on your last report card?*

<b>Desire for Parent/Guardian Interest</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
<b>Your friends and who you hang out with</b>		
Much more interested	18	17
Somewhat more interested	18	20
Interested about the right amount already	48	44
Somewhat less interested	12	13
Much less interested	4	7
<b>The amount of time you spend with electronic devices like a cell phone and tablet</b>		
Much more interested	17	15
Somewhat more interested	17	19
Interested about the right amount already	42	42
Somewhat less interested	17	16
Much less interested	7	8
<b>Your school work and classes</b>		
Much more interested	20	23
Somewhat more interested	20	28
Interested about the right amount already	47	36
Somewhat less interested	10	12
Much less interested	3	2
<b>Dating and relationships</b>		
Much more interested	16	17
Somewhat more interested	16	20
Interested about the right amount already	45	42
Somewhat less interested	17	14
Much less interested	6	8
<b>Activities you are involved in such as sports or music</b>		
Much more interested	19	17
Somewhat more interested	23	26
Interested about the right amount already	48	43
Somewhat less interested	7	11
Much less interested	3	2
<b>How you manage your money, such as saving and spending</b>		
Much more interested	17	24
Somewhat more interested	23	26
Interested about the right amount already	47	38
Somewhat less interested	11	9
Much less interested	3	3
<b>Your work or career future</b>		
Much more interested	22	25
Somewhat more interested	22	27
Interested about the right amount already	49	38
Somewhat less interested	6	7
Much less interested	2	3

*When it comes to each of the following, do you wish your parents or guardians took more interest than they currently do, took less interest than they currently do, or do you think they take about the right amount of interest already?*

<b>Level of Parent/Guardian Worry</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
<b>Your personal safety</b>		
Worry a lot	48	43
Worry a fair amount	31	33
Worry only a little	15	17
Do not worry at all	6	7
<b>Protecting the privacy of your personal information</b>		
Worry a lot	32	28
Worry a fair amount	36	33
Worry only a little	23	24
Do not worry at all	9	15
<b>Your performance in school</b>		
Worry a lot	41	37
Worry a fair amount	30	38
Worry only a little	18	17
Do not worry at all	12	8
<b>Your relationships with friends</b>		
Worry a lot	25	18
Worry a fair amount	34	30
Worry only a little	26	32
Do not worry at all	14	20
<b>Your physical health</b>		
Worry a lot	35	33
Worry a fair amount	32	35
Worry only a little	22	21
Do not worry at all	10	11
<b>The amount of time you spend online</b>		
Worry a lot	22	17
Worry a fair amount	32	24
Worry only a little	29	26
Do not worry at all	17	33

*How much, if at all, would you say your parents or guardians worry about each of the following?*

<b>Effect of Technology on Young People</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	
	<b>HS Students %</b>	<b>HS Graduates %</b>
<b>Their technology skills</b>		
Very positive effect	47	46
Somewhat positive effect	33	33
No effect either way	15	16
Somewhat negative effect	4	4
Very negative effect	1	1
<b>Their ability to research and find information</b>		
Very positive effect	49	48
Somewhat positive effect	31	30
No effect either way	15	15
Somewhat negative effect	3	5
Very negative effect	2	1
<b>Their future, career, and life skills</b>		
Very positive effect	26	23
Somewhat positive effect	35	33
No effect either way	27	29
Somewhat negative effect	9	12
Very negative effect	3	2
<b>Their performance in school</b>		
Very positive effect	23	19
Somewhat positive effect	31	28
No effect either way	26	25
Somewhat negative effect	16	22
Very negative effect	4	6
<b>Their relationships with friends</b>		
Very positive effect	22	23
Somewhat positive effect	33	32
No effect either way	29	27
Somewhat negative effect	12	17
Very negative effect	3	2
<b>Their ability to make new friends</b>		
Very positive effect	23	24
Somewhat positive effect	31	32
No effect either way	31	26
Somewhat negative effect	12	14
Very negative effect	3	4
<b>Their relationships with their parents</b>		
Very positive effect	20	20
Somewhat positive effect	19	18
No effect either way	31	28
Somewhat negative effect	24	28
Very negative effect	5	6

### Effect of Technology on Young People

Their attention span		
Very positive effect	17	17
Somewhat positive effect	19	18
No effect either way	30	22
Somewhat negative effect	26	27
Very negative effect	7	16
Their level of physical activity and fitness		
Very positive effect	18	18
Somewhat positive effect	18	17
No effect either way	23	20
Somewhat negative effect	27	28
Very negative effect	14	17

*Thinking about young people your age in general, overall would you say that the use of technology, including using electronic devices, using social media, and being online, has a positive or negative effect on each of the following, or does it not have an effect either way?*

### Technology Knowledge Compared to Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

	2016	
	HS Students %	HS Graduates %
I know a little more	42	63
Parents/guardian and I know about the same amount	32	24
Parents/guardians know a little more	17	10
Parents/guardian know a lot more	5	2

*Do you think you know more or your parents know more about technology and online activities?*

### Educational Aspirations among High School Students Who Plan to Complete a College Degree

	HS Students Who Plan to Complete a Degree		HS Graduates Who Plan to Complete a Degree
	2016 %	2012 %	2016 %
Vocational/technical certificate or diploma	6	2	8
Two-year/community college degree	10	5	17
Four-year college degree	49	43	42
Graduate or professional degree	34	48	33
Other	1	2	1

*What is the highest degree you intend to earn in your lifetime?*

### Plan to Complete a College Degree or Certificate

	HS Students								HS Graduates	
	2016 %	2012 %	2008 %	2005 %	2004 %	2003 %	2002 %	2001 %	2016 %	2012 %
Yes	90	97	93	94	92	94	89	88	79.2	84
Yes-already completed	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.7	8
No	7	2	4	3	3	3	6	5	10.1	6
Not sure	-	1	3	3	5	3	5	3	-	2

*Do you plan to complete a two- or four-year college degree or certificate at some point in your life or have you already completed a two- or four-year college degree or certificate?*

### Factors in Decision Not to Enroll in College after Graduation

	2016	
	HS Students %	HS Graduates %
<b>The cost of going to college</b>		
Major factor	59	61
Minor factor	25	25
Not really a factor at all	16	14
<b>The need to get a full time job</b>		
Major factor	47	43
Minor factor	35	28
Not really a factor at all	18	30
<b>You have interests and opportunities that do not require college</b>		
Major factor	29	44
Minor factor	46	29
Not really a factor at all	26	27
<b>You do not have good enough grades to go to college</b>		
Major factor	36	23
Minor factor	34	30
Not really a factor at all	30	47
<b>You do not like school</b>		
Major factor	33	25
Minor factor	36	37
Not really a factor at all	31	39
<b>You have family responsibilities</b>		
Major factor	20	28
Minor factor	33	23
Not really a factor at all	47	49

*How much of a factor is each of the following in your decision to not go to college after graduation?*

<b>High School Students' Participation in College Preparation or Advanced Coursework</b>					
	<b>HS Students</b>				
	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2012 %</b>	<b>2008 %</b>	<b>2005 %</b>	<b>2004 %</b>
College prep classes	29	29	16	17	25
Advanced placement program	30	41	21	21	19
International baccalaureate program	3	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
College-level classes	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
None of the above/Not applicable	46	36	52	51	55
Not sure/refused	-	1	1	-	1

*Are you currently taking, or have you ever taken, any college prep classes, or participated in an advanced placement, international baccalaureate program, or taken a college-level class at a college or university?*

<b>High School Graduates' Participation in College Preparation or Advanced Coursework</b>						
	<b>HS Graduates</b>					
	<b>2016</b>			<b>2012</b>		
	<b>Total %</b>	<b>Enrolled in College %</b>	<b>Not Enrolled in College %</b>	<b>Total %</b>	<b>Enrolled in College %</b>	<b>Not Enrolled in College %</b>
College prep classes	28	32	21	28	30	22
Advanced placement program	37	44	24	39	47	21
International baccalaureate program	4	5	1	2	3	-
College-level classes	14	17	10	N/A	N/A	N/A
None of the above/Not applicable	35	28	49	39	30	59
Not sure/refused	4	1	9	<1	<1	<1

*While in high school, did you ever taken any college prep classes, or participate in an advanced placement, international baccalaureate program, or take a college-level class at a college or university?*

### Remediation/Developmental Coursework among College Enrollees

	HS Graduates Enrolled in College	
	2016 %	2012 %
Yes, took developmental/remedial courses	32	28
No, did not have to take any developmental/remedial courses	60	72
Not sure	8	<1

*National studies are finding that quite a lot of students are being asked to take non-credit courses in college in order to be placed in college-level math and English courses. In order to have a complete understanding of how often this happens, would you please tell me whether you were required to take any non-credit developmental or remedial courses by your college, in order to qualify for college-level course work in any particular subject?*

### Plans to Enter College Immediately after High School Graduation

	HS Students Who Plan to Complete a College Degree <sup>1</sup>	
	2016 %	2012 %
Plan to enter (entered) immediately after graduation	91	86
Do not plan to (did not) enter immediately after graduation	9	11
Not sure	-	3

<sup>1</sup>Do you plan to enter college in the school year immediately after you graduate from high school?

<sup>2</sup>Did you enter college the school year immediately after you graduated from high school?

### Concerns about Paying for College among High School Students Who Plan to Complete Degree

	HS Students Who Plan to Complete a College Degree	
	2016 %	2012 %
Major concerns, not sure will have enough funds	21	18
Some concerns, but will probably have enough funds	46	57
No concerns, confident will have enough funds	33	25
Not sure	-	<1

*How concerned are you about your or your family's ability to finance your college education? Do you...?*

### Attitudes Towards Paying for College among College Enrollees

	HS Graduates Enrolled in College	
	2016 %	2012 %
More affordable than expected	22	19
Costs about what expected	46	48
Less affordable than expected	32	30
Not sure	-	2

*Would you say that college is more affordable than you expected, costs about what you expected, or is less affordable than you expected?*

### Resources Used or Expected to Use to Pay for College

	HS Students Who Plan to Complete a College Degree	
	2016 %	2012 %
Family resources, including parents and relatives	60	48
Your own resources, such as money from work or work-study programs	44	25
Financial aid that you will not need to repay, such as grants and scholarships	66	57
Military service	6	10
Loans and other forms of financial aid that you will need to repay	34	23
Other	1	2

*Which of the following have you used, or do you expect to use, to pay for college?*

### Employment Status among High School Graduates by College Enrollment

	Total %		Enrolled in College %		Not Enrolled in College %	
	2016	2012	2016	2012	2016	2012
	<b>Employed</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>57</b>
Full-time	22	19	16	8	35	43
Part-time	28	38	32	45	22	21
<b>Not employed</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>35</b>
Looking for work	35	31	36	32	34	28
Not looking for work	14	12	17	15	9	7
Not sure/refused	-	<1	-	<1	-	1

*Are you currently employed or looking for work? IF NOT EMPLOYED: Are you currently looking for work? IF EMPLOYED: Are you employed full time or part time?*

### Main Reason for Not Working among High School Graduates

	HS Graduates Who Are Not Employed	
	2016 %	2012 %
I have not found a job I want yet	17	14
I have been unable to find a job	35	35
I do not need to work	11	14
I am volunteering instead of working	5	5
I have family responsibilities that prevent me from working	14	12
I have personal health reasons that prevent me from working	7	1
Other reason not listed above	11	4
Not sure	-	3

*Which of the following would you say is the main reason you are not currently working for pay?*

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# HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION



**THE HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION OF DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS,** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization, founded in 1947 by Kenneth J. Beebe with support from Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, to revitalize belief in the promise of the American Dream among young people. The Association is named after renowned author Horatio Alger, Jr., whose literary works of the late 19th century focus on overcoming adversity through unyielding perseverance and basic moral principles. The Horatio Alger Association is dedicated to the simple but powerful belief that hard work, honesty, and determination can conquer all obstacles.

## MISSION

- To induct as lifetime Members of the Association contemporary role models whose experiences exemplify that opportunities for a successful life are available to all individuals who are dedicated to the principles of integrity, hard work, perseverance, and compassion for others.
- To provide scholarship assistance to at-risk young people who have demonstrated integrity, determination in overcoming adversity, academic potential, and the personal aspiration to make a unique contribution to society.
- To mentor scholarship recipients and educate all youth about the limitless possibilities that are available through the American free-enterprise system, while underscoring the importance of service to others.

## MEMBERSHIP & AFFILIATES

**Horatio Alger Members:** The Horatio Alger Award and induction into the Association are conferred each year on ten Americans who have triumphed over adversity to achieve success in their respective fields. Members have made outstanding contributions in the fields of science, medicine, business, entertainment, athletics, government, industry, law, religion, education, and the arts. Members serve as role models to youth, inspiring them by example and encouraging them through educational opportunities.

**Life Partners:** The spouses of Members actively participate in the programs of the Association and provide meaningful support on behalf of the Association's educational mission.

**International Horatio Alger Award:** In 2003, the Horatio Alger Association began presenting an Award each year to a citizen of another country who serves as a role model and embodies the ideals promoted by the Association. At the present time, all recipients of the International Award have been citizens of Canada.

**Horatio Alger Association of Canada:** To facilitate the involvement of international Awardees, the Association established a nonprofit organization with the mission of providing need-based scholarships to Canadian students.

**Horatio Alger Friends of Distinction:** Friends are individuals, foundations, and corporations who are not Members of the Association, but who become formally affiliated with and recognized by the Horatio Alger Association for their support of its mission and educational programs.

**The Horatio Alger Endowment Fund:** The endowment fund was created to ensure that the Association provides scholarships to young people in perpetuity.

**The Horatio Alger Association Archives at Boston University:** The Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center at Boston University serves as the official repository of the historic and biographical archives of the Association, its Members, and its mission.

## **EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

To inspire and encourage American youth along the path to success, Horatio Alger Members sponsor the following programs:

**Horatio Alger National Scholarships:** Each year more than 100 students receive Horatio Alger National Scholarships valued at \$20,000 each. Recipients have exhibited integrity, academic promise, and perseverance in overcoming personal adversity. National Scholarship recipients attend the National Scholars Conference, held annually in Washington, D.C., to learn about the federal government and the American free-enterprise system through meetings with Association Members.

**Horatio Alger State Scholarship Programs:** In response to Members who wanted to do more to help students in their home states, the Association began awarding State Scholarships in 2000. Many Members and friends joined in this endeavor, which spread rapidly. In 2011 the Association began awarding State Scholarships in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. These scholarships are supported by individual Members, friends, and the Association itself. In addition to helping more students achieve a college education, conducting a nationwide scholarship program allows the Association to reach more people with its messages of hope and opportunity through the free-enterprise system.

**Dennis R. Washington Achievement Scholarship:** Dennis R. Washington provided a generous \$20 million grant for Horatio Alger National and State Scholars to pursue a graduate-level education. This graduate program awards grants valued up to \$30,000 annually to deserving Horatio Alger Scholar Alumni.

**Horatio Alger Collegiate Partners:** A premier network of colleges and universities from across the country works in partnership with the Association to provide special scholarship and financial aid opportunities for Horatio Alger Scholars who attend their schools.

**Horatio Alger Internship and Placement Service:** Horatio Alger Scholars are provided with opportunities to gain practical work experience while attending college, with the possibility of permanent placement following graduation.

**Horatio Alger Alumni Association:** The Alumni Association enables Horatio Alger scholarship recipients who have completed their studies to maintain contact with each other and to remain involved with the Association through Alumni conferences, a newsletter, mentoring programs, and a variety of other activities. The Association annually awards the Alumnus of the Year Award to recognize an Alumnus who has excelled academically, professionally, and in service to his or her community.

## **PUBLIC AWARENESS**

The Horatio Alger Association shares information about its educational activities and mission with millions of Americans through its web site, public service announcements, special events, and publications. The web site features information about the Association's mission, Members, and scholarship activities. Among the many options featured on the site, viewers may obtain biographical information about Association Members, and students may apply for Horatio Alger scholarships online ([www.horatioalger.org](http://www.horatioalger.org)).

## 2016 HORATIO ALGER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

The Horatio Alger Association is dedicated to enabling young people to pursue their dreams through higher education. Members and friends of the Association support its educational programs to provide deserving young Americans and Canadians with the opportunity to achieve personal and professional fulfillment. Horatio Alger Scholars are determined to further their education in spite of having faced various adversities, including financial need, abuse, illness, or family challenges. Since 1984, the Horatio Alger Association has awarded more than \$125 million to more than 22,000 students.

### UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS (1984-2016)

Total amount (1984–2016)	over \$125 million
# of scholarships (1984–2016)	20,608
# of National (1984–2016)	2,709
# of State & Specialized (2000–2016)	15,550
# of Military (2006–2008)	2,349
Horatio Alger Scholar college graduation rate	75%
National college graduation rate	62%
National college graduation rate for low income students	31%

### GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS (2008-2016)

Total amount	\$4,275,200
# of Dennis R. Washington Achievement Grants	75
Grant amount (average)	\$57,003

### CANADIAN SCHOLARSHIPS (2012-2016)

Total amount (2012–2016)	\$1,919,000
# of scholarships (2012–2016)	389
# of National Entrepreneurial (2016)	5
# of Canadian (2012–2016)	294
# of Fairfax Financial Holdings (2015–2016)	90

### 2016 UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARS PROFILE

#### UNITED STATES

Total amount	\$12 million
National Scholarship amount	\$22,000
State Scholarship amount (average)	\$7,000
# of scholarships	1,776
# of National	106
# of State & Specialized	970
# of Career & Technical	700
Average family income	\$18,506
Average family size	3
% Average high school GPA	3.68

#### CANADA

Total amount	\$649,500
National Entrepreneurial Scholarship amount	\$10,000
Canadian Scholarship amount (average)	\$5,000
# of scholarships	130
# of National Entrepreneurial	5
# of Canadian	80
# of Fairfax Financial Holdings	45
Average family income	\$20,043
Average family size	4
Average high school grade percentage	88%

## **PUBLICATIONS**

*Only in America Opportunity Still Knocks* annually announces the Horatio Alger Award recipients and National Scholarship recipients.

*Quotations: Success Secrets of Power Thinkers* is a collection of inspirational quotations and biographical information from the Members of the Horatio Alger Association.

*Ad Astra Per Aspera – To the Stars through Difficulties: A 60-Year History of the Horatio Alger Association* recounts the Association’s development from its formation in 1947 to contemporary times.

*Investing in People and Communities* explores aspects of good governance and effective management that contribute to the strength of America’s charitable sector. It also features insights from the Association’s current and past Presidents & CEOs about their approach to philanthropy.

*Horatio Alger: A Century of Covers and Illustrations* is a hardbound book featuring full-color and black-and-white illustrations that appeared in original books by the Association’s namesake, Horatio Alger, Jr.

*Horatio Alger, Jr. – A Biography* outlines the life and career of the writer Horatio Alger, Jr.

*Biennial Report* is the Association’s flagship document. It offers a comprehensive overview of the Association, with current information about its mission, Members, governance, sponsors, educational programs, and outreach to the American public.

*The Forum* is the Association’s semiannual magazine, which provides current information about Members, Association activities, and educational programs.

*Strive and Succeed* is the Association’s student newsletter, which provides current information about the National Scholars, Association activities, and educational programs.

*An Investment in America’s Future – Association Profile* provides a broad overview of the Association, including information about its Members, educational programs, alumni activities, development, and public outreach.

*The Investing in America’s Future series* are printed articles intended to inform Members and friends about current trends in education and to highlight the ongoing importance of helping young people achieve higher education.

*A Commitment to Our Scholars* documents ways the Association currently supports young people in addition to its scholarship programs, and it outlines plans to increase assistance in the immediate future to foster lifelong relationships with its Scholars.

*Legacy of Achievement* is a newsletter produced to acknowledge major gifts from donors and to convey the stories of young people whose lives have been changed by support from the Association. It also provides regular updates on the “Investing in America’s Future” Campaign for the Endowment Fund.

*Collegiate Partners Program* describes the Collegiate Partners Program and provides interested schools with a participation form.

*The Success Factors Study* reports the results of the Association’s multi-year research to determine the factors that enable Horatio Alger Scholars to succeed in spite of adversity.

***The Horatio Alger Association is wholly funded by private sector support.***

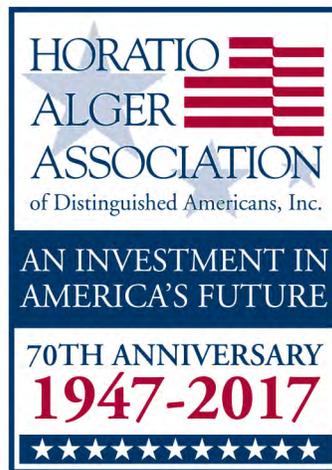
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