

the condition of education 2004



INDICATOR 16

Event Dropout Rates by Family Income, 1972–2001

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2004*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2004* visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004077>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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Elementary/Secondary Persistence and Progress

Event Dropout Rates by Family Income, 1972–2001

During the 1970s and 1980s, event dropout rates declined, but rates remained unchanged for all income groups during the 1990s.

Event dropout rates represent the percentage of students who drop out of high school each year. “Dropouts” are those who were enrolled in high school in October but 1 year later had not completed high school and were not enrolled in school. According to this definition, “not completing high school” means they had not earned a diploma or received an alternative credential.¹ In October 2001, 5 percent of students ages 15–24 had dropped out of school since the previous October.

Income is one of a number of factors that may be related to a student’s decision to drop out. Other factors that might be related include a number of individual, family, and school factors such as the student’s academic performance, family mobility, and the types of individuals that attend the student’s school (NCES 2004–057). For this indicator, family income is divided into three groups: the lowest 20 percent of all family incomes, the middle 60 percent, and the highest 20 percent.

During the 12 months ending in October 2001, high school students living in low-income fami-

lies dropped out of school at six times the rate of their peers from high-income families (see supplemental table 16-1). About 11 percent of students from low-income families (the lowest 20 percent) dropped out of high school; by comparison, 5 percent of middle-income students and 2 percent of students from high-income families did so.

Dropout rates on average and for each of these three income groups declined in the 1970s and 1980s. Since 1990, event dropout rates for all income groups have stabilized, with event dropout rates for low-income youth varying between 10 and 13 percent. Event dropout rates for students in middle- and high-income families have also shown no upward or downward trend since 1990, with rates fluctuating between 4 and 6 percent, and 1 and 3 percent, respectively.

Another dropout measure is the status dropout rate.² Since 1972, status dropout rates for Whites and Blacks ages 16–24 have declined, while rates for Hispanics have not decreased and remain higher than those for other racial/ethnic groups (NCES 2003–067, *indicator 17*).

¹Such as one earned by passing the General Educational Development (GED) examination.

²The status dropout rate represents the percentage of an age group that is not enrolled in school and has not earned a high school diploma or equivalent (such as a GED).

NOTE: The numerator of the event dropout rate for 2001 is the number of people ages 15–24 surveyed in 2001 who were enrolled in high school in October 2000, were not enrolled in October 2001, and had not completed high school by October 2001. The denominator of the event rate is the sum of the dropouts (i.e., the numerator) plus the number of all people ages 15–24 who attended grades 10–12 in 2000 and were still enrolled in 2001 or had graduated or earned a high school credential. See *supplemental note 2* for a more detailed definition of family income. Data on family income are missing for 1974.

SOURCE: Kaufman, P., and Chapman, C. (forthcoming). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2004–057), table A-1. Data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2001.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Note 2
Supplemental Table 16-1

EVENT DROPOUTS: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972–2001



Event Dropout Rates by Family Income, 1972–2001

Table 16-1. Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972–2001

Year	Event dropout rate (percent)	Family income		
		Low income	Middle income	High income
1972	6.1	14.1	6.7	2.5
1973	6.3	17.3	7.0	1.8
1974	6.7	—	—	—
1975	5.8	15.7	6.0	2.6
1976	5.9	15.4	6.8	2.1
1977	6.5	15.5	7.6	2.2
1978	6.7	17.4	7.3	3.0
1979	6.7	17.1	6.9	3.6
1980	6.1	15.8	6.4	2.5
1981	5.9	14.4	6.2	2.8
1982	5.5	15.2	5.6	1.8
1983	5.2	10.4	6.0	2.2
1984	5.1	13.9	5.1	1.8
1985	5.2	14.2	5.2	2.1
1986	4.7	10.9	5.1	1.6
1987	4.1	10.3	4.7	1.0
1988	4.8	13.7	4.7	1.3
1989	4.5	10.0	5.0	1.1
1990	4.0	9.5	4.3	1.1
1991	4.1	10.6	4.0	1.0
1992	4.4	10.9	4.4	1.3
1993	4.5	12.3	4.3	1.3
1994	5.3	13.0	5.2	2.1
1995	5.7	13.3	5.7	2.0
1996	5.0	11.1	5.1	2.1
1997	4.6	12.3	4.1	1.8
1998	4.8	12.7	3.8	2.7
1999	5.0	11.0	5.0	2.1
2000	4.8	10.0	5.2	1.6
2001	5.0	10.7	5.4	1.7

—Not available.

NOTE: "Low income" is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for the year; "middle income" is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and "high income" is the top 20 percent of all family incomes. See *supplemental note 2* for a more detailed definition of family income. Data on family income are missing for 1974.

SOURCE: Kaufman, P., and Chapman, C. (forthcoming). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2004–057), table A-1. Data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2001.

Event Dropout Rates by Family Income, 1972–2001

Table S16. Standard errors for the event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972–2001

Year	Event dropout rate (percent)	Family income		
		Low income	Middle income	High income
1972	0.33	1.55	0.45	0.39
1973	0.33	1.65	0.46	0.32
1974	0.34	—	—	—
1975	0.32	1.57	0.43	0.38
1976	0.32	1.61	0.46	0.34
1977	0.34	1.57	0.48	0.35
1978	0.34	1.69	0.48	0.40
1979	0.34	1.62	0.47	0.44
1980	0.33	1.51	0.46	0.38
1981	0.33	1.50	0.45	0.41
1982	0.34	1.52	0.46	0.36
1983	0.33	1.35	0.48	0.39
1984	0.33	1.49	0.45	0.37
1985	0.34	1.53	0.47	0.39
1986	0.32	1.33	0.45	0.34
1987	0.30	1.29	0.45	0.27
1988	0.36	1.59	0.48	0.35
1989	0.36	1.43	0.50	0.33
1990	0.34	1.39	0.45	0.33
1991	0.34	1.43	0.44	0.31
1992	0.35	1.42	0.46	0.36
1993	0.36	1.57	0.46	0.35
1994	0.34	1.44	0.44	0.41
1995	0.35	1.36	0.47	0.39
1996	0.34	1.34	0.46	0.41
1997	0.32	1.36	0.41	0.37
1998	0.33	1.34	0.39	0.46
1999	0.33	1.26	0.44	0.40
2000	0.33	1.23	0.45	0.35
2001	0.33	1.36	0.45	0.37

—Not available.

SOURCE: Kaufman, P., and Chapman, C. (forthcoming). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2004–057), table B-1. Data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2001.

Event Dropout Rates by Family Income, 1972–2001

Table S16-1. Standard errors for the event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972–2001

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