

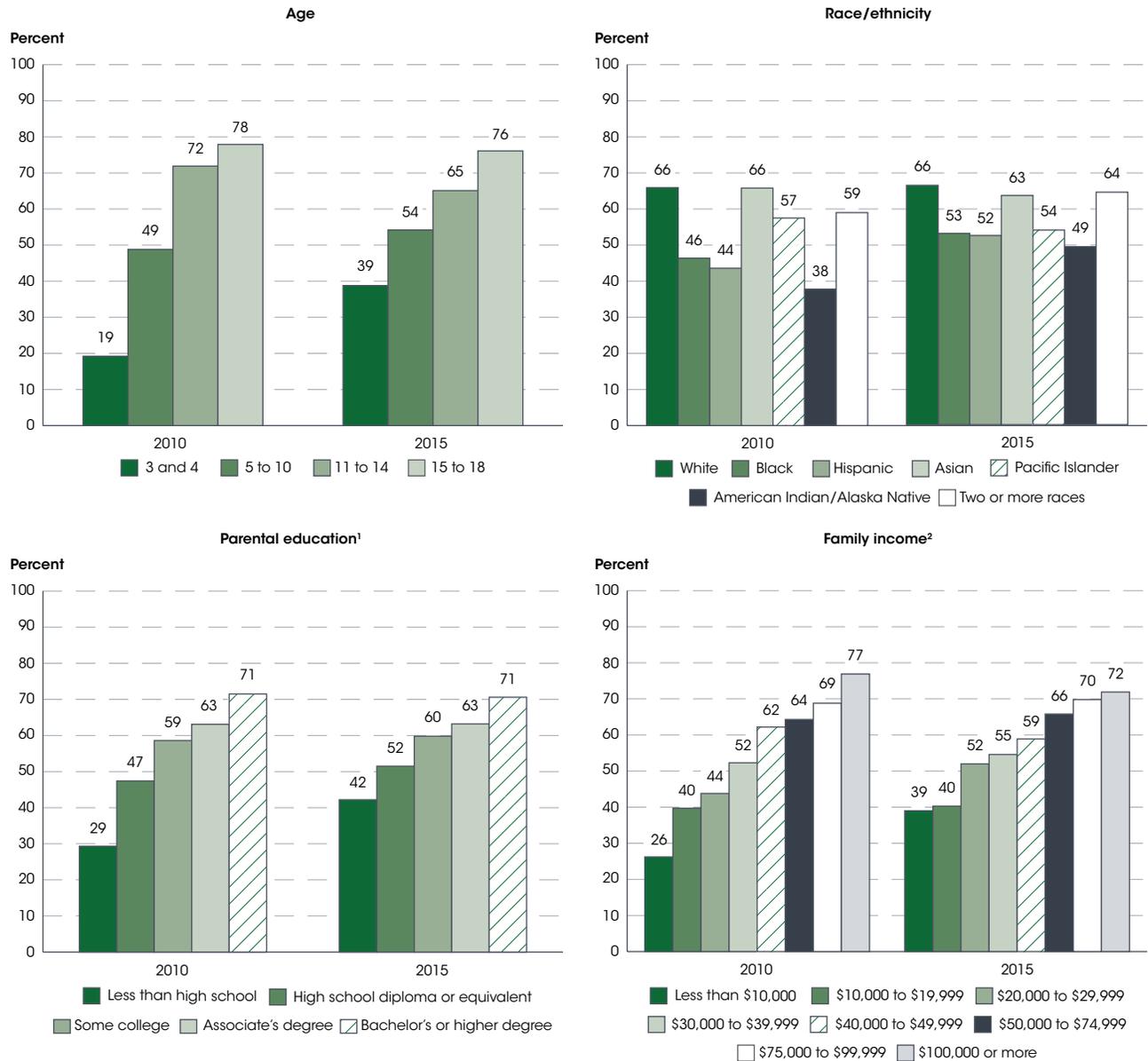
Children's Access to and Use of the Internet

In 2015, about 71 percent of children ages 3 to 18 used the Internet. Among these children, 86 percent used the Internet at home; 65 percent used it at school; 31 percent used it at someone else's home; 27 percent used it at a library, community center, or other public place; and 14 percent used it at a coffee shop or other business offering internet access. In addition, 27 percent of these children used the Internet while traveling between places.

Studies have shown that differences in internet access exist among students with different demographic characteristics. For instance, households with members who are racial or ethnic minorities or have low levels of educational attainment or income have lower levels of computer use and internet access.^{1,2,3} Using data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), this indicator first

describes the percentages of children between the ages of 3 and 18 who used the Internet from home in 2015, as well as changes from the corresponding percentages in 2010.⁴ The indicator also describes, among children who used the Internet anywhere, the percentages of children who accessed the Internet in specific settings (e.g., home, school, library, etc.).

Figure 1. Percentage of children ages 3 to 18 who used the Internet from home, by selected child and family characteristics: 2010 and 2015



¹ Highest education level of any parent residing with the child (including an adoptive or stepparent). Includes only children who resided with at least one of their parents.

² In current dollars.

NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Data exclude children living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities). Data for 2015 were collected in the July supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), while data for 2010 were collected in the October supplement. The 2015 July supplement consisted solely of questions about computer and internet use. In contrast, the 2010 October supplement focused on school enrollment, although it also included questions about computer and internet use. Measurable differences in estimates across years could reflect actual changes in the population; however, differences could also reflect seasonal variations in data collection or differences between the content of the July and October supplements. Therefore, caution should be used when making year-to-year comparisons.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2010 and July 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 702.15.

In the years between 2010 and 2015,⁵ it was more common for older children than for younger children to use the Internet from home. In 2015, the percentage of all children using the Internet from home was highest among 15- to 18-year-olds (76 percent), followed by 11- to 14-year-olds (65 percent), 5- to 10-year-olds (54 percent), and 3- and 4-year-olds (39 percent). A higher percentage of children used the Internet at home in 2015 than in

2010 (61 vs. 58 percent). However, this pattern was not consistently observed for children from different age groups. During this period, the percentage of children using the Internet from home was higher in 2015 than in 2010 for children ages 3 and 4 (39 vs. 19 percent) and 5 to 10 (54 vs. 49 percent); in contrast, the percentage was lower in 2015 than in 2010 for children ages 11 to 14 (65 v. 72 percent) and 15 to 18 (76 vs. 78 percent).

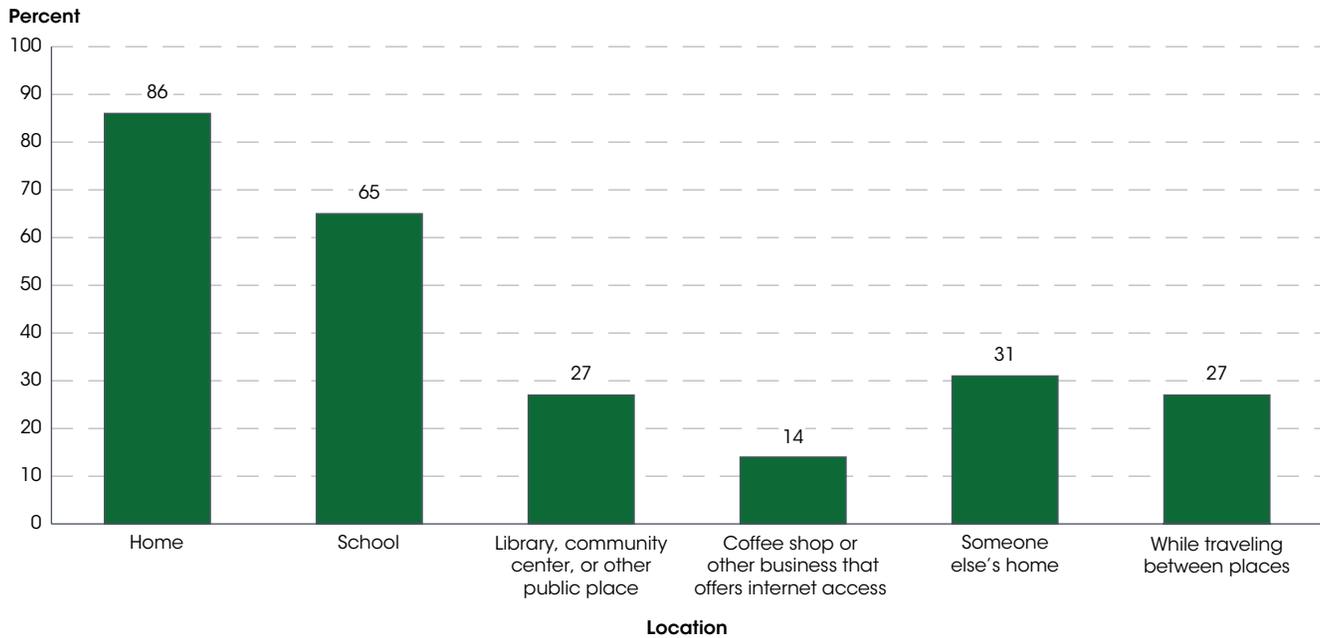
In the years between 2010 and 2015,⁵ the percentage of children ages 3 to 18 using the Internet from home was higher for children who were White, Asian, and of Two or more races than for those who were Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native. In 2015, higher percentages of children who were White (66 percent), of Two or more races (64 percent), and Asian (63 percent) used the Internet from home than did Black (53 percent), Hispanic (52 percent), and American Indian/Alaska Native children (49 percent). The percentage of Pacific Islander children (54 percent) was not measurably different from that of any other racial/ethnic group. The percentage of children using the Internet from home was higher in 2015 than in 2010 for Black (53 vs. 46 percent) and Hispanic children (52 vs. 44 percent), but was not measurably different for children from other racial/ethnic groups. As a result, the White-Black and White-Hispanic gaps in home internet use narrowed between 2010 and 2015. The White-Black gap narrowed from 19 percentage points in 2010 to 13 percentage points in 2015, and the White-Hispanic gap narrowed from 22 percentage points in 2010 to 14 percentage points in 2015.

In general, the percentage of children ages 3 to 18 using the Internet from home was higher for children whose parents had attained higher levels of education. For instance, 71 percent of children whose parents had attained a bachelor's or higher degree used the Internet from home in 2015, compared with 42 percent of children whose parents had not completed high school and 52 percent of children whose parents had completed high school only. The percentage of children using the

Internet from home was higher in 2015 than in 2010 for children whose parents had not completed high school (42 vs. 29 percent) and those who had completed high school only (52 vs. 47 percent), but was not measurably different for those whose parents had at least some college education. Consequently, from 2010 to 2015, the gap in home internet use between children whose parents had attained a bachelor's or higher degree and children whose parents had not completed high school narrowed from 42 to 28 percentage points, and the gap between children whose parents had a bachelor's or higher degree and children whose parents had completed high school narrowed from 24 to 19 percentage points.

The percentage of children ages 3 to 18 using the Internet from home was also generally higher for children with higher family income. In 2015, about 72 percent of children with a family income of \$100,000 or more and 70 percent of children with a family income between \$75,000 and \$99,999 used the Internet from home, compared with 39 percent of children with a family income of less than \$10,000 and 40 percent of children with a family income between \$10,000 and \$19,999. The percentage of children using the Internet from home was higher in 2015 than in 2010 for children with a family income of less than \$10,000 (39 vs. 26 percent), but it was lower in 2015 than in 2010 for children with a family income of \$100,000 or more (72 vs. 77 percent). As a result, the home internet use gap between children in these two groups narrowed from 51 percentage points in 2010 to 33 percentage points in 2015.

Figure 2. Among those who used the Internet anywhere, percentage of children ages 3 to 18 using it in various locations: 2015

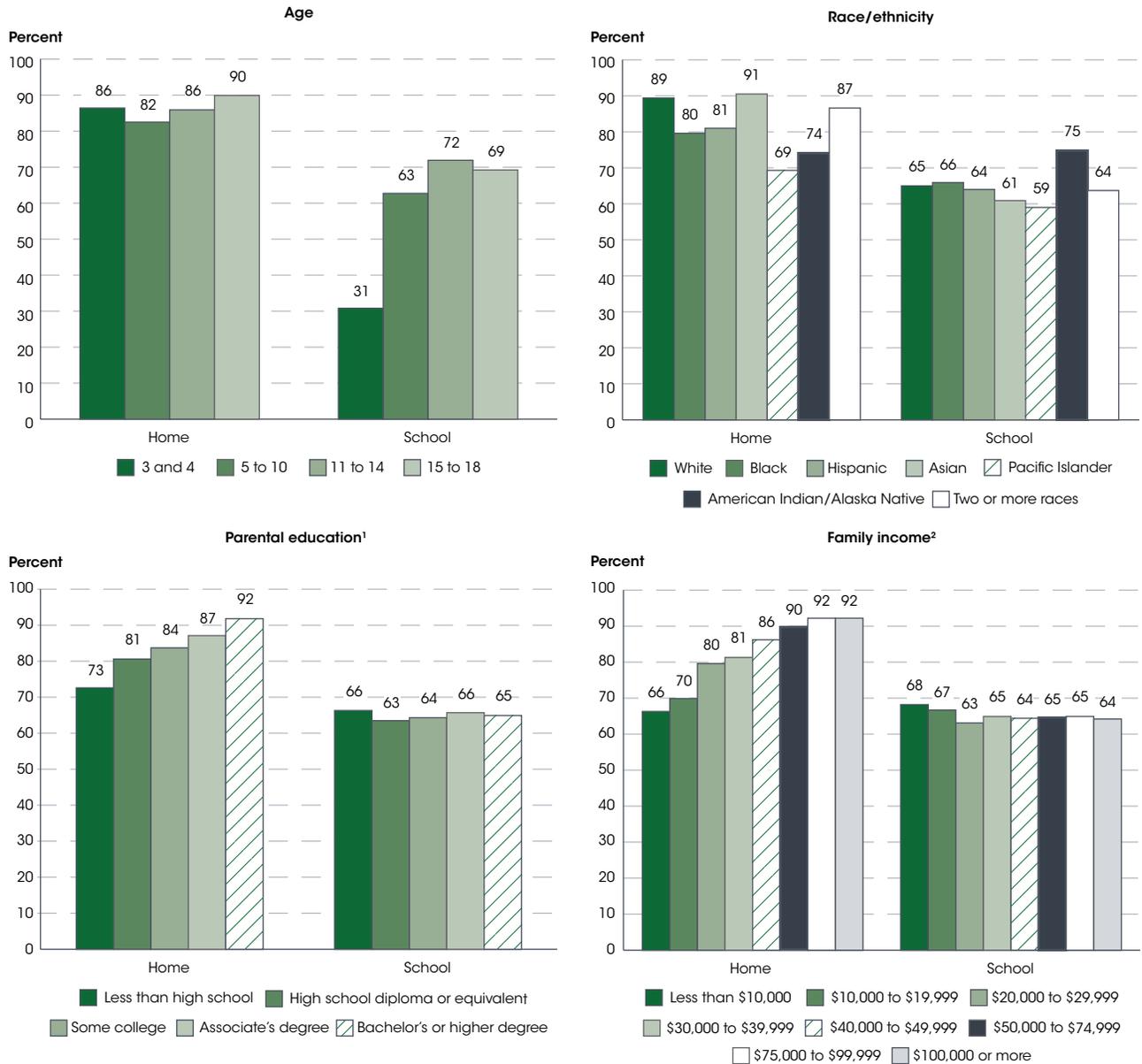


NOTE: Data exclude children living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities). Percentages sum to more than 100 because a child could have used the Internet in more than one location.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), July 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 702.20.

Children access the Internet from a wide range of settings. In 2015, about 71 percent of children ages 3 to 18 used the Internet anywhere. Among these children, 86 percent used the Internet at home; 65 percent used it at school; 31 percent used it at someone else’s home; 27 percent used

it at a library, community center, or other public place; and 14 percent used it at a coffee shop or other business offering internet access. In addition, 27 percent of these children used the Internet while traveling between places.

Figure 3. Among those who used the Internet anywhere, percentage of children ages 3 to 18 who used the Internet at home and at school, by selected child and family characteristics: 2015



¹ Highest education level of any parent residing with the child (including an adoptive or stepparent). Includes only children who resided with at least one of their parents.

² In current dollars.

NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Data exclude children living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), July 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 702.20.

Among children ages 3 to 18 who used the Internet anywhere, there were differences in children’s internet access at home across various child and family characteristics. For instance, among children who used the Internet anywhere in 2015, the percentage using it at home was higher for children who were Asian (91 percent), White (89 percent), and of Two or more

racess (87 percent) than for those who were Hispanic (81 percent), Black (80 percent), and American Indian/Alaska Native (74 percent). The percentage of children who used the Internet at home was also generally higher for older children, children whose parents had higher levels of educational attainment, and children with higher family incomes.

Compared to children's internet use at home, fewer differences by child and family characteristics were observed for children's internet use at school. In 2015, among children ages 3 to 18 who used the Internet anywhere, a higher percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native children (75 percent) used it at school than did children who were White (65 percent), Hispanic (64 percent), of Two or more races (64 percent), and Asian (61 percent); additionally, the percentage for White children was higher than for Asian children. There was no measurable difference in internet use at school among children who were White, Black, Hispanic, and of Two or more races. The percentage of children who used the Internet at school was generally higher for older children than for younger children. The only exception was that a higher percentage of children ages 11 to 14 than children ages 15 to 18 (72 vs. 69 percent) used the Internet at school. There were no measurable differences in the percentages of children using the Internet at school by family income or by highest level of education attained by either parent.

Children's internet use at libraries, community centers, or other public places⁶ also varied by child and family characteristics. For instance, among children ages 3 to 18 who used the Internet anywhere in 2015, the percentage using it at a library, community center, or other public

place was higher for children who were Pacific Islander (46 percent), Black (34 percent), of Two or more races (34 percent), Asian (32 percent), and Hispanic (29 percent) than for White children (23 percent); additionally, it was higher for Black children than for Hispanic children and higher for Pacific Islander children than for American Indian/Alaska Native children (25 percent).

Furthermore, the percentage of children ages 3 to 18 who used the Internet at a library, community center, or other public place was lower for children whose parents had completed high school only (24 percent) than for those whose parents had not completed high school (30 percent), had some college education (28 percent), and had attained a bachelor's or higher degree (27 percent). The percentage of children who used the Internet at a library, community center, or other public place was higher for children with family incomes of less than \$20,000 than for children with family incomes of \$40,000 or higher. For example, among children who used the Internet anywhere, 32 percent of children with a family income of less than \$10,000 and 33 percent of children with a family income between \$10,000 and \$19,999 used the Internet at a library, community center, or other public place, while 25 percent of children with a family income between \$75,000 and \$99,999 and 26 percent of children with a family income of \$100,000 or more did so.

Endnotes:

¹ DeBell, M., and Chapman, C. (2006). *Computer and Internet Use by Students in 2003* (NCES 2006-065). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved February 17, 2017, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006065.pdf>.

² File, T., and Ryan, C. (2014). *Computer and Internet Use in the United States: 2013* (ACS-28). U.S. Department of Commerce. Washington, DC: Census Bureau. Retrieved February 17, 2017, from <https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/2013computeruse.pdf>.

³ Horrigan, J.B., and Duggan, M. (2015). *Home Broadband 2015*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Retrieved February 17, 2017, from <http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/12/Broadband-adoption-full.pdf>.

⁴ Data for 2015 were collected in the July supplement to the CPS, while data for 2010 were collected in the October supplement. Measurable differences in estimates across years could reflect actual changes in the population; however, differences could also reflect seasonal variations in data collection or differences between the content of the July and October supplements. Therefore, caution should be used when making year-to-year comparisons.

⁵ Includes 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2015. Data for 2014 were unavailable.

⁶ Excludes coffee shops and other businesses that offer internet access.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, tables 702.15 and 702.20

Related indicators and resources: [Technology and Engineering Literacy](#)

Glossary: Bachelor's degree, College, Educational attainment (Current Population Survey), Gap, High school completer, Racial/ethnic group