

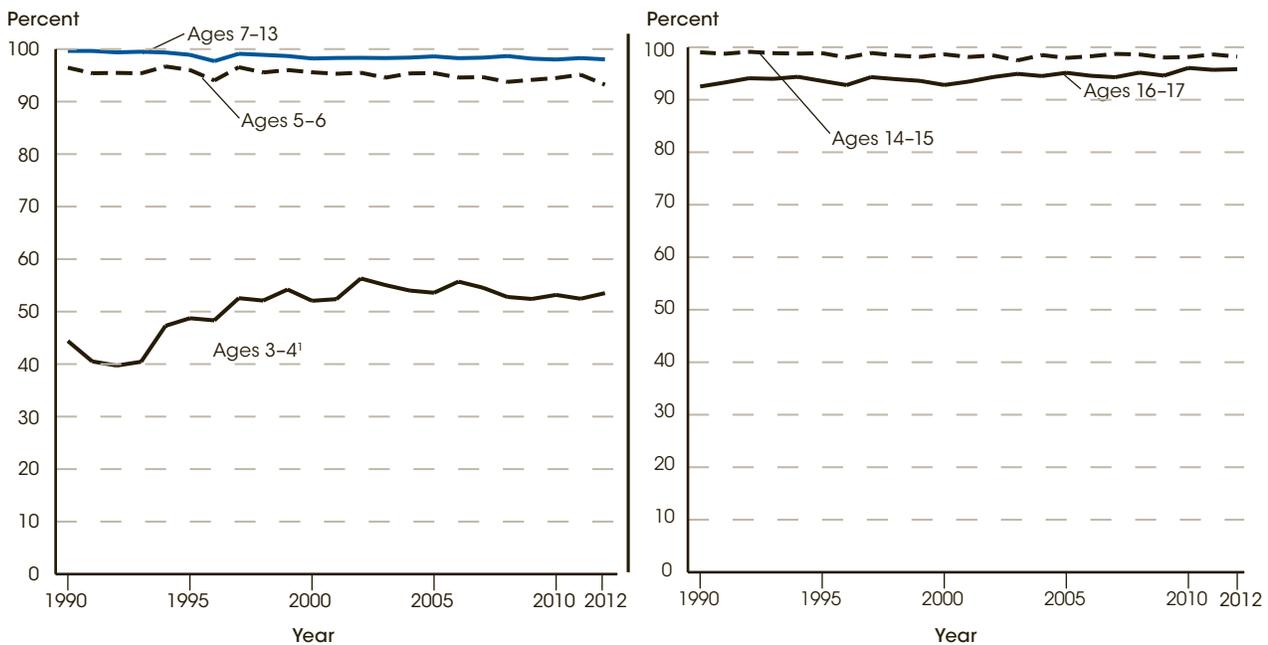
Enrollment Trends by Age

In 2012, some 93 percent of 5- to 6-year-olds and 98 percent of 7- to 13-year-olds were enrolled in elementary or secondary school. In that same year, 47 percent of 18- to 19-year-olds and 40 percent of 20- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in postsecondary education. For most age groups from 3 to 34, the total school enrollment rate did not change measurably between 2011 and 2012, except for children ages 5–6, whose enrollment rate was 2 percentage points lower in 2012 than in 2011.

Changes in the number of students enrolled in school can stem from fluctuations in population size or shifts in enrollment rates. Enrollment rates may vary in response to changes in state compulsory attendance requirements, changes in the prevalence of homeschooling, changes in perceptions regarding the value of education (particularly at the preschool and college levels), and changes in the amount of time it takes to complete a degree. In the past two decades, school enrollment rates increased for

children ages 3–4 and for each age group from 16 to 34; however, enrollment rates decreased for those ages 5–6, 7–13, and 14–15 during the same period. For most age groups from 3 to 34, total school enrollment rates did not change measurably between 2011 and 2012. The only exception was for children ages 5–6, whose enrollment rate was lower in 2012 (93 percent) than in 2011 (95 percent).

Figure 1. Percentage of the population ages 3–17 enrolled in school, by age group: October 1990–2012



¹ Beginning in 1994, preprimary enrollment data were collected using new procedures. As a result, pre-1994 data may not be comparable to data from 1994 or later.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1990–2012. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 103.20.

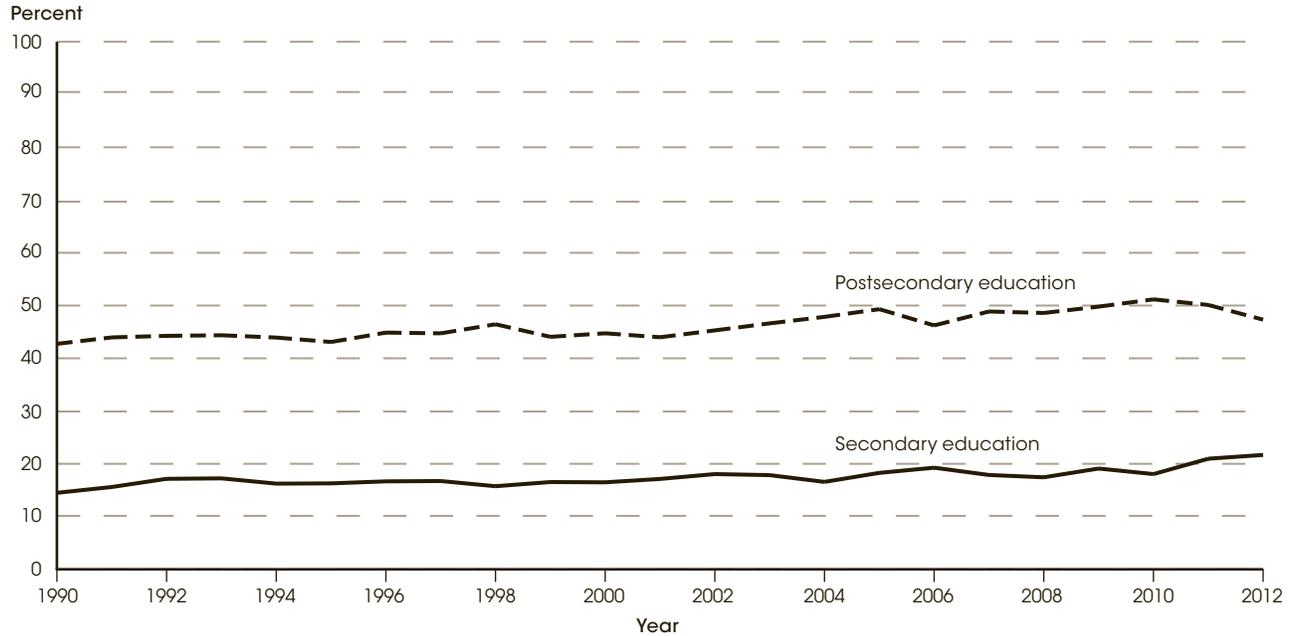
Between 1990 and 2012, the enrollment rate for children ages 3–4 (the ages at which children are typically enrolled in nursery or preschool) increased from 44 to 54 percent, with most of the growth occurring between 1990 and 2000. There was no measurable change in the enrollment rate for 3- to 4-year-olds between 2000 and

2012. For children ages 5–6, who are typically enrolled in kindergarten or first grade, the enrollment rate fluctuated between 94 and 97 percent in the 1990s, and then declined from 96 percent in 2000 to 93 percent in 2012. The enrollment rate for 5- to 6-year-olds in 2012 was 2 percentage points lower than in 2011.

The enrollment rates for 7- to 13-year-olds and 14- to 15-year-olds in 2012 were lower than their rates in 1990, but the overall enrollment rate for 16- to 17-year-olds increased from 93 percent in 1990 to 96 percent in 2012, with most of the increase occurring since 2000. The enrollment rate for 16- to 17-year-olds fluctuated between

93 and 94 percent from 1990 to 2000. Between 2000 and 2012, the enrollment rate for 16- to 17-year-olds increased from 93 to 96 percent, while the rates were not measurably different for either 7- to 13-year-olds or 14- to 15-year-olds.

Figure 2. Percentage of the population ages 18–19 enrolled in school, by education level: October 1990–2012

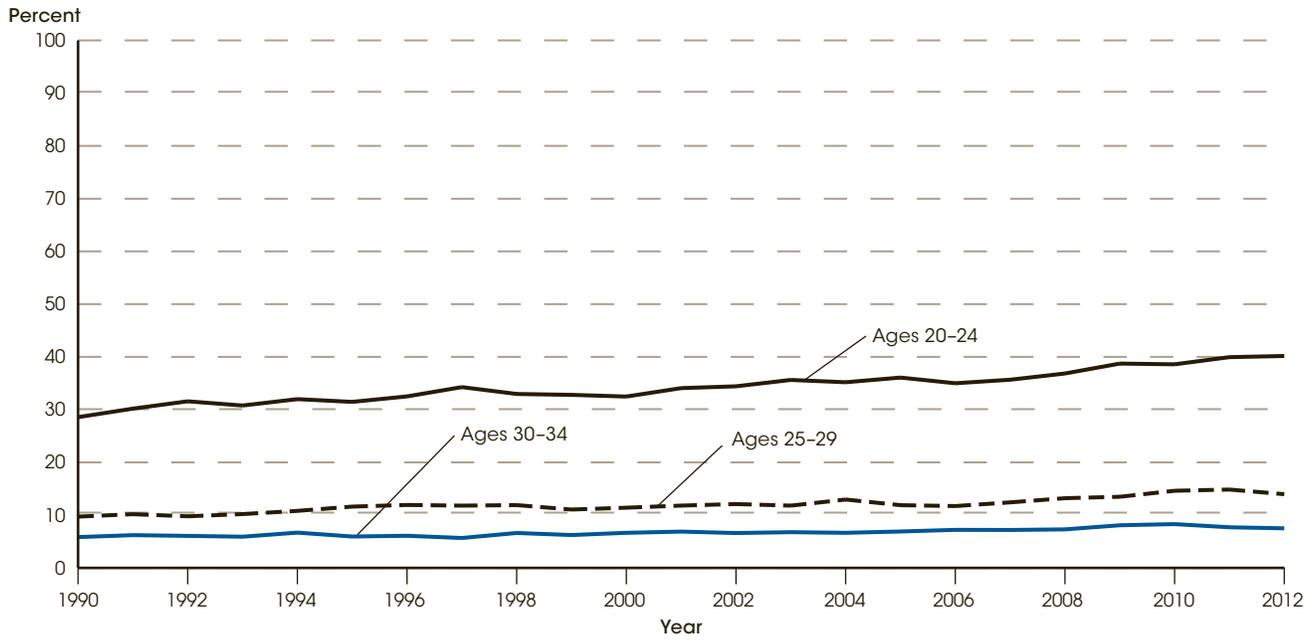


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1990–2012. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 103.20.

Young adults at ages 18–19 are typically transitioning into either college education or the workforce. Between 1990 and 2012, the overall enrollment rate (i.e., enrollment at both the secondary level and the college level) for young adults ages 18–19 increased from 57 to 69 percent. During this period, the enrollment rate for these young adults at the secondary level increased from 15 to 22

percent, while at the college level it increased from 43 to 47 percent. Between 2000 and 2012, the overall enrollment rate for those in this age range increased from 61 to 69 percent; the secondary and college enrollment rates increased from 16 to 22 percent and from 45 to 47 percent, respectively.

Figure 3. Percentage of the population ages 20–34 enrolled in school, by age group: October 1990–2012



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1990–2012. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 103.20.

Enrolled adults ages 20–34 are usually in college or graduate school. Between 1990 and 2012, the enrollment rate increased from 29 to 40 percent for adults ages 20–24, from 10 to 14 percent for adults ages 25–29, and from 6 to 7 percent for adults ages 30–34. Between 2000

and 2012, the enrollment rate for adults ages 20–24 increased from 32 to 40 percent; for adults ages 25–29, it increased from 11 to 14 percent; and for adults ages 30–34, it increased less than 1 percentage point.

Reference table: *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 103.20

Glossary: College, Secondary school