

Latino Youth in New York State

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**Latino Youth
in New York State:**

Closing the Population Gap

LATINO CHILDREN IN NEW YORK STATE CLOSING THE POPULATION GAP *

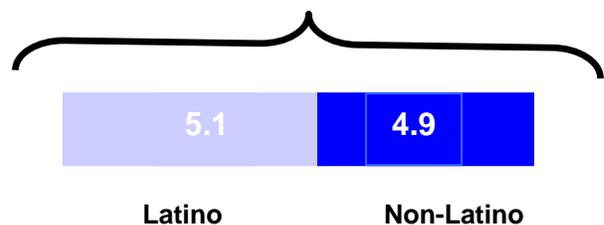
New York State's Child Population



Based on 2000 Census data, New York State saw a 10 percent change among its youngest residents between 1990 and 2000. Specifically, our child population grew by nearly 409,000 youngsters and Latino youth accounted for approximately half of this increase.

- Currently, about one in five of New York's children is Latino, which is a shift from 1990 when one in six was Latino. It is estimated that this will change to nearly one in four children by 2015.
- Latino children are about two times more likely to be immigrants than Non-Latino children (2.1)—this is somewhat lower from 1990 when they were 2.5 times more likely to be foreign-born.
- As children become more integrated, their likelihood of attending college increases with children born in the US more likely to attend.

Total Percent Change Among Children 1990 to 2000

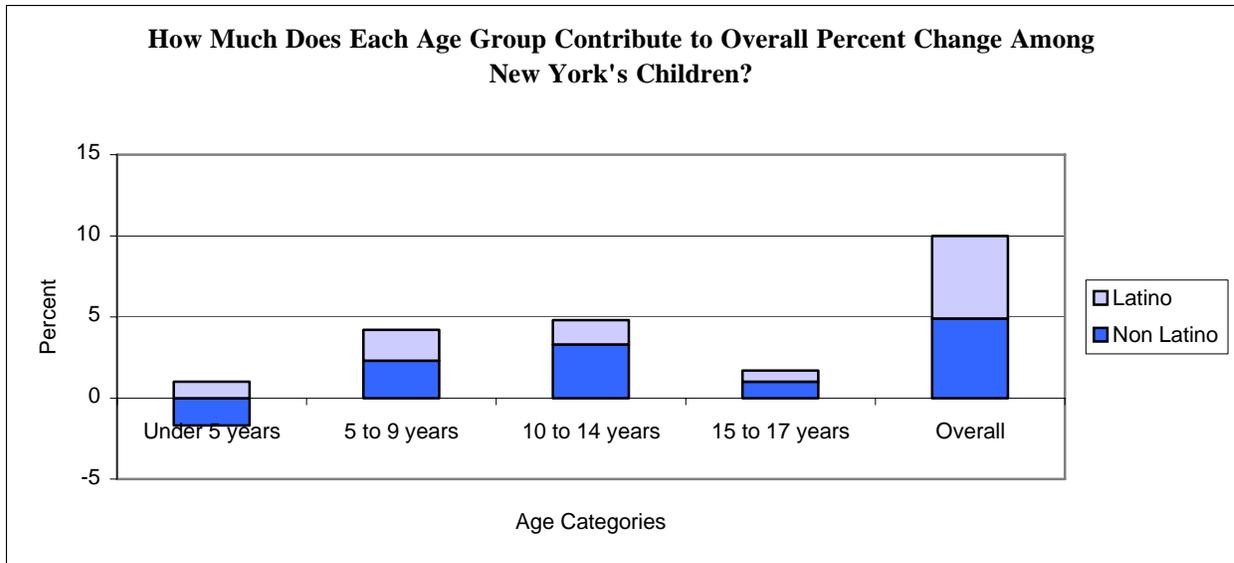


While the amount of growth seen among Latino children was similar to that among Non-Latino children (percent change of 5.1 and 4.9 respectively), the amount of growth differed for various age categories.

- For instance, we saw an *overall* decline among New York's youngest children, ages 0 to 4 years old. Yet a closer examination indicates the State decline was mitigated by the addition of approximately 49,000 Latino youth in this age group.
- Latino children, ages 0 to 4 years old, increased by 25 percent while Non-Latino children declined 7 percent.
- Latino children, ages 3 to 5, are slightly less likely than their Non-Latino peers to be enrolled in a school setting, such as a preschool, nursery school or kindergarten (62% and 71% respectively).

New York saw an increase in its school-aged population, those youngsters ages 5 through 17, with the increase attributed to both Latino and Non-Latino children.

- The amount of growth within the Latino age groups tended to be 2 to 4 times larger than the growth among Non-Latino children.
- In 1990 our school population included 5.4 Non-Latino school children for every Latino child— this changed to 4.4 in 2000.

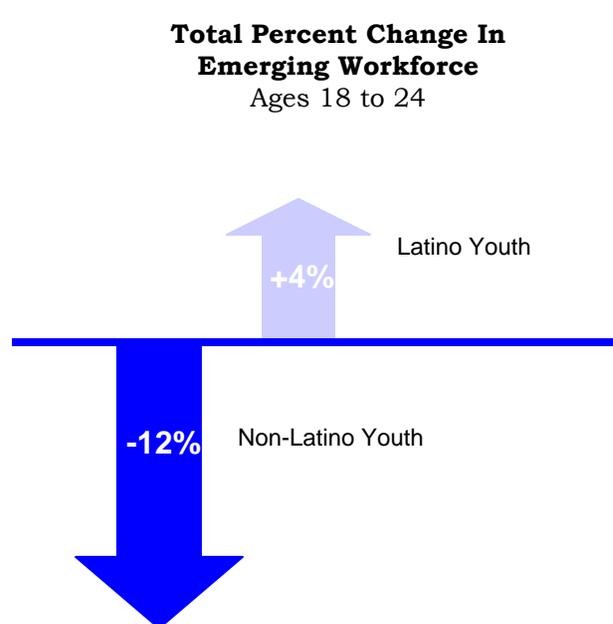


Currently, school districts with increasing numbers of immigrant students are grappling with a variety of issues—not limited to language acquisition. For example, schools and their professional staff (teachers, counselors) will be required to help newly arrived students adjust to different instructional methods, discrimination from peers and lack of support systems as well as academic success. Most school-based initiatives have focused primarily on the development of academic and language proficiency; however, it is increasingly evident that programs must place more emphasis on mental health and social concerns. It was noted that immigrant students' participation in support groups was a factor that influenced students' decision to remain in school, rather than leave prior to graduation (1).

New York State's Young Adults

A demographic change that is even more pronounced than those seen among our youngest population is the changing composition of individuals between the ages of 18 to 24, often referred to as the emerging workforce.

- New York State experienced an 8 percent drop among 18 to 24 year olds, decreasing the number of Non-Latino youth in this age group by approximately 235,000.



- The drop was moderated by an increase of approximately 78,000 Latino youth.
- These demographic changes basically translate to the increase of one Latino youth for the decrease of every three Non-Latino youth.

The greatest disparity between Latino and Non-Latino youth was seen in the 18 to 21 year old age category.

- Latino youth increased 32 percent while Non-Latino youth decreased 13 percent.
- Clearly, Latino youth represent an increasing portion of the future labor force, which will require an increase in educational achievement, as evidenced by school achievement scores, high school completion rates and participation in college.

Families of New York's Children

Economic Level

Family conditions are fundamental contributors of children's developmental well-being. Two factors that are particularly significant are family income level and parents' educational level since these factors influence the type and quality of developmental and educational opportunities families can provide.

- Overall, Latino families are 2.3 times more likely to live below the poverty level than their Non-Latino counterpart.
- A closer examination indicates the widest gap exists between native-born Latino families and Non-Latino families with native-born Latino families living below the poverty level 2.44 times more often than Non-Latino families.
- Foreign-born Latino families are about twice as likely (1.8) to live below poverty than other foreign born families.
- We know poverty experienced during one's preschool years tends to influence one's cognitive development more than if poverty is experienced in adolescence. Specifically, areas impacted are children's IQ scores, achievement test scores and school performance (2) and it is estimated that Latino children under five years of age are twice as likely to live below the poverty level as compared to their Non-Latino peers (35% and 18% respectively). This pattern also holds for school-age Latino children.

Families Below Poverty Level

Latino



Non-Latino



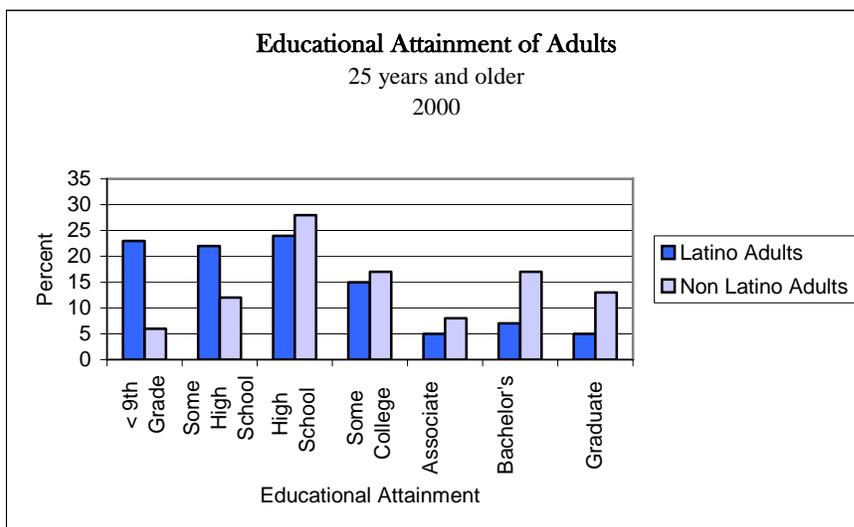
The disparities observed between Latino and Non-Latino families have significant implications for the future of one of New York's fastest growing segments since we have learned that children raised in poverty are more likely to experience physical, cognitive, language, and/or emotional delays in development—factors that can influence one's health as well as one's academic success. For example, health problems affecting children, such as underweight and obesity, asthma, lead poisoning, and iron deficiency anemia are more prevalent among the poor

(2). Additionally, adolescents raised in such circumstances are more likely to drop out of school, have children out-of-wedlock, and be unemployed (3, 4).

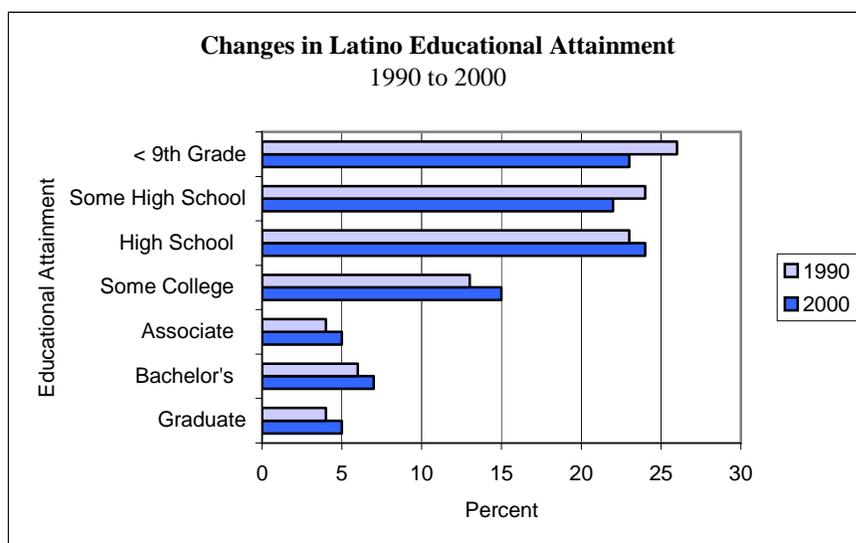
Educational Attainment

Parents' education has been noted as a key factor to predicting children's academic success, including preparation for college (5).

- A review of Census data indicates Latino adults,¹ those individuals 25 years or older, are almost four times more likely (3.8) to have only a ninth grade education.
- Non-Latino adults are 2.4 times as likely as Latinos to have a Bachelor's degree.
- Furthermore, when the educational attainment of foreign-born parents is examined, we learn that Latino foreign-born parents are twice as likely as their foreign-born counterparts to lack a high school diploma and about three times as likely to lack a college degree, placing Latino foreign-born parents in a less advantageous place for employment opportunities and a more vulnerable economic position.



- A review of Latino adults' educational attainment from 1990 to 2000 shows Latino adults are making changes in a positive direction—fewer have a grade school education and increasing numbers are earning postsecondary degrees.
- The changes we observe are moving slowly in the right direction, however level of educational attainment continues to be a concern since Latino youth remain behind, particularly in terms of high school completion, college-going and college



¹ These data represent *all* adults 25 years or older and are not limited to adults who have children between the ages of 0 and 17.

completion, while most jobs require some form of postsecondary education.

Language Spoken at Home

Many Latino children are fortunate to have a second language spoken at home, allowing them to be bilingual in English and Spanish. The fact that Spanish is spoken at home does not appear to impact their ability to communicate in English.

- Sixteen percent of children in New York have Spanish spoken at home. Of those children who have Spanish spoken at home, only 12 percent report being unable to speak English well. This could be attributable to the fact that many Latino children are second and third generation, enabling them to speak more than one language well. Furthermore, as one might expect, family literacy in a family's first language (i.e., amount of language input at home, exposure to reading and other literacy activities) is important for the development of a child's literacy of a second language (6). Therefore, young children may be more vulnerable than their older cohorts, particularly since Latino children are less likely to attend preschool.

A review of parents' ability to speak English well tends to differ considerably from their children—something that could influence parents' ability to seek employment or negotiate service systems, such as education and health, resulting in serious consequences for their children's well-being.

- Latino parents who are foreign born have an equal chance of speaking English well—50 percent report they are able to speak well while 50 percent report they do not speak English well.
- Non-Latino parents who are foreign born are more likely to report they speak well with about 8 in 10 reporting they are able to speak English well or very well.

Work to Be Done

The demographic trends presented here highlight the increasingly prominent role Latino children will have in the future of New York State and the need for programs and policies that recognize these trends. In an effort to better understand factors that will influence the quality of their role, briefings have been developed to examine Latino children's access to quality elementary and secondary education, their participation in higher education as well as health factors that may impact their well-being.

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**Latino Youth
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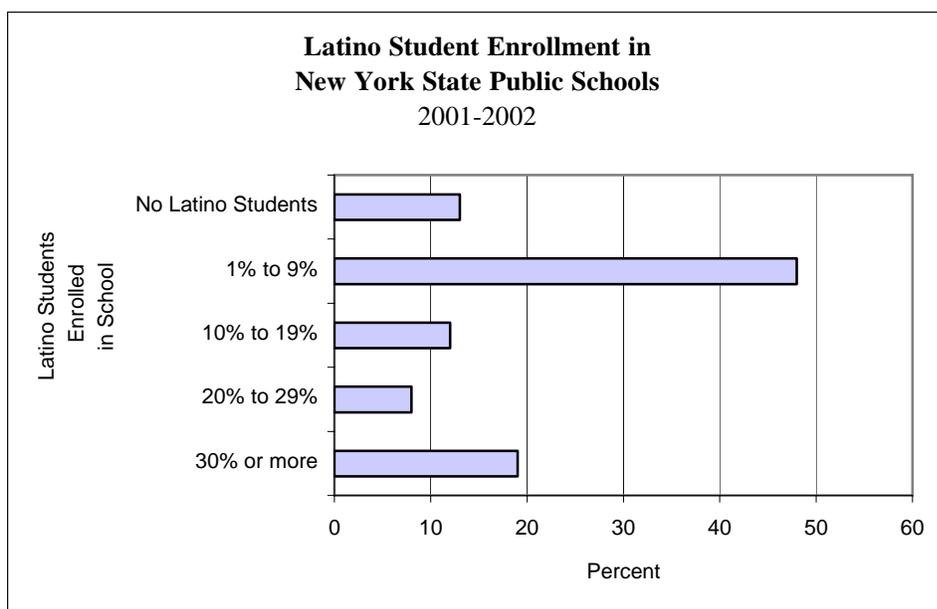
***The Quality of Schools for
Latino Youth***

QUALITY OF SCHOOLS FOR LATINO YOUTH IN NEW YORK STATE

The increased number of Latino youth represented in schools coupled with the achievement gap between these youth and Non-Latino youth raises concern regarding the quality of instruction available to Latino children. Since schools bear the primary responsibility for closing the achievement gap, we have examined factors pertinent to school quality with respect to the percent of Latino students enrolled in the schools.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT OF LATINO YOUTH

- Latino students are enrolled in most public schools in New York State, with approximately one in five schools (19%) having student populations where Latino students account for 30 percent or more of the school enrollment.
- About half of all schools (47%) have Latino student enrollments ranging from 1 to 9 percent.
- Approximately one in 8 public schools in New York State has no Latino students enrolled.
- Statewide, Latino students represented 19 percent of the students enrolled in public schools during the 2001-2002 school year.



Source: Data from the New York State Education Department Basic Educational Data System (BEDS), 2001-2002

INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY

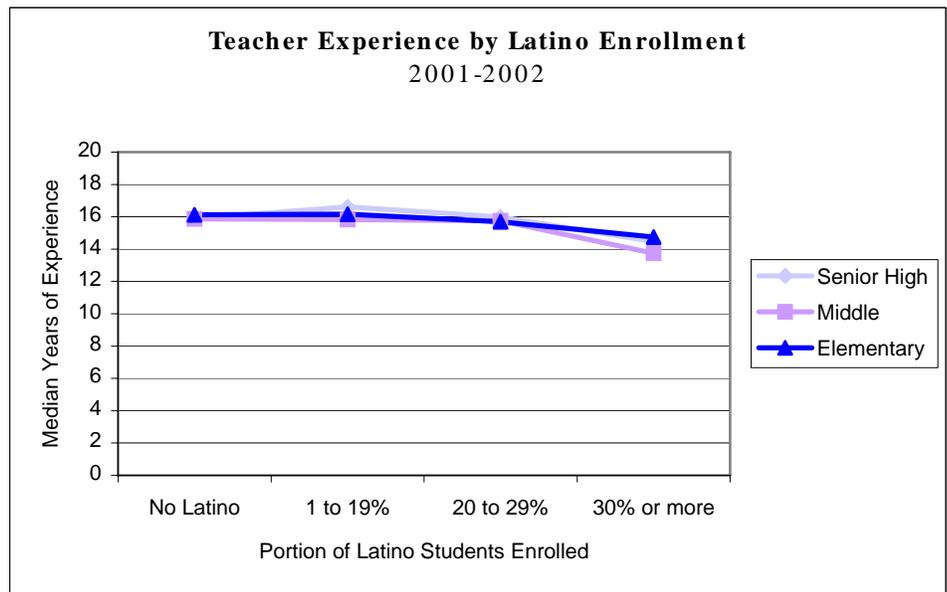
The educational experiences available to students can influence students' school outcomes. For example, it is well recognized that teacher quality is the most important *school-related* factor

“Students who get several effective teachers in a row will soar no matter what their family backgrounds, while students who have even two ineffective teachers in a row rarely recover.” (1)

influencing student achievement and three factors associated with teacher quality are (1) teachers' years of experience; (2) whether or not teachers are providing instruction within their area of expertise; and (3) the pupil-teacher ratio (2,3).

Teacher Experience:

- Typically, teachers in schools with high percentages of Latino students have similar years of experience as teachers in other schools, varying slightly by about 3 years—median years of experience range from 13.75 to 16.61 years.
- Teachers in middle/junior high schools with high enrollments of Latino students have fewer years of experience but still average more than 10 years in the classroom.

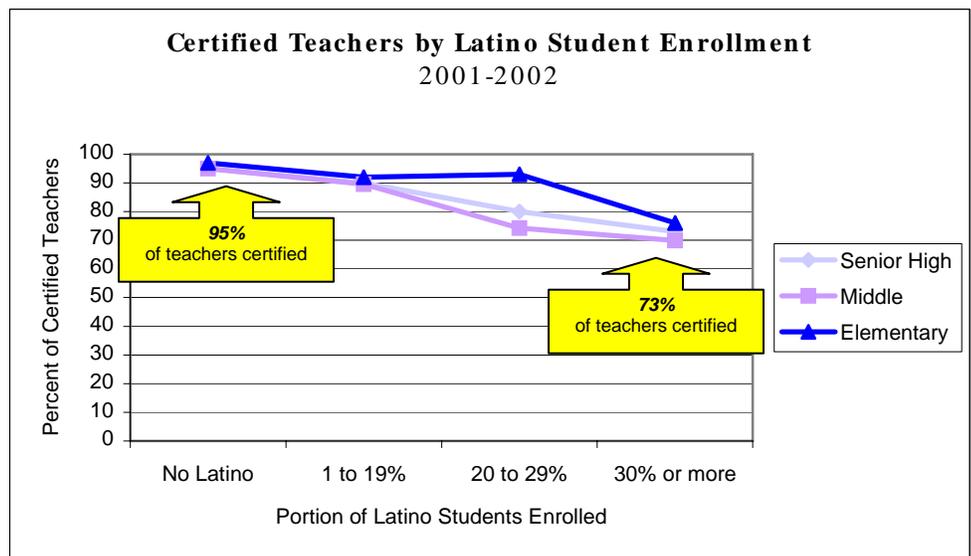


Source: Data from the New York State Education Department Basic Educational Data System (BEDS), 2001-2002

Teacher Expertise:

Teaching in one’s field of expertise, as measured by receipt of teacher certification, is another factor that can influence teacher effectiveness and we see considerable variation in quality across schools.

- There tends to be fewer certified teachers in schools with higher percentages of Latino youth.
- Across the state, almost 1 in 4 teachers are uncertified in those schools where 30 percent or more of the student enrollment is Latino.
- This ‘gap’ in quality is consistent whether we examine elementary, middle or high schools; however, middle schools show the greatest variation. For example, 95 percent of middle



Source: Data from the New York State Education Department Basic Educational Data System (BEDS), 2001-2002

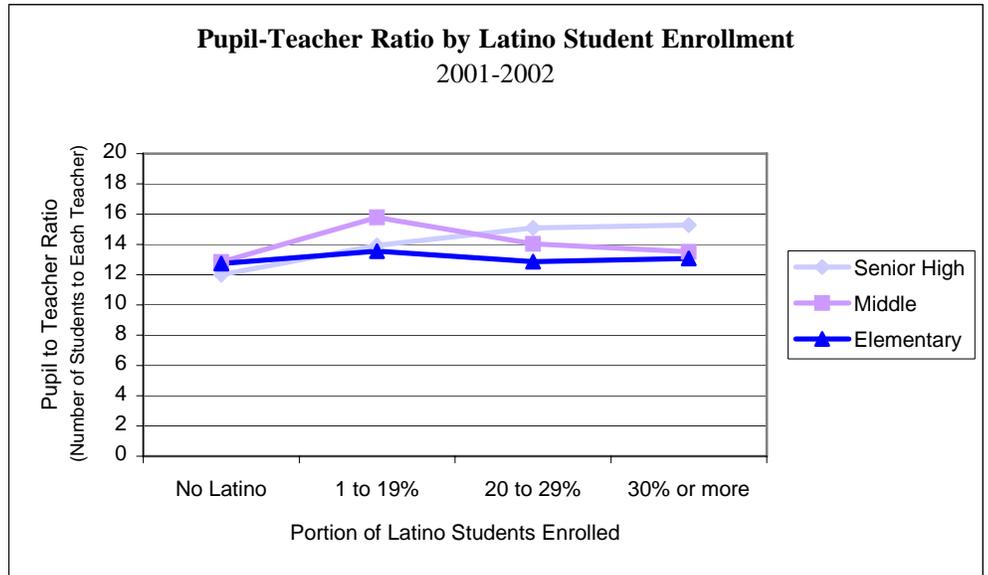
school teachers in schools without Latino students are certified as compared to 70 percent of the teachers in schools where 30 percent or more of the enrollment is Latino.

- When considered alone, Latino student enrollment in middle schools accounts for 48 percent of the variation in teacher certification and 36 percent of the variation statewide. This will differ somewhat when other factors are considered; however, the strong relationship between certified teachers and Latino enrollment is clear.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio:

The amount of time engaged in instruction is another factor that can influence instructional quality and it appears that schools at all levels tend to have similar pupil to teacher ratios regardless of the Latino enrollment within a school.

- Pupil-teacher ratios range from 12.00 to 15.78 students per teacher.²
- The ratio is particularly consistent at the elementary level; the ratio improves in the senior high schools.



Source: Data from the New York State Education Department Basic Educational Data System (BEDS), 2001-2002

STUDENT PLACEMENTS

From an intuitive perspective, one would expect that the proportion of Latino students enrolled in special programs, such as special education or gifted education, would be similar to the proportion of Latino students enrolled in the school. This assumption holds true only in certain types of student placements.

- Latino students represented 19 percent of the student population during the 2000 school year and similarly represented 20 percent of the students enrolled in special education. This may be due, in part, to the fact that students with English as a second language may be inadequately assessed and over referred to such programs.
- Only 10 percent of the students enrolled in gifted programs were Latino—*half* of the expected value.

² Pupil-teacher ratios are calculated by dividing the total number of full-time and part-time teachers by the number of students enrolled. While this may inflate the actual number of teachers, no grade levels varied by the proportion of part-time teachers.

Is the Proportion of Latino Students in Special Placements Consistent with The Proportion of Latino Students Enrolled in Schools?

Student Ethnicity	Percent Enrolled in Public K-12	Percent Enrolled in Gifted Programs	Percent Enrolled in Special Education
Latino	19	10	20
African American	20	10	26
Asian	6	10	2
White	55	69	52

Source: Education Trust, Inc., *Education Watch: New York*, Winter 2002-2003

- Similar to special placement data, Latino students are less likely to enroll in advanced placement courses.
- Latino students enrolled in these courses are less likely to score a passing grade, making them ineligible for college credit.

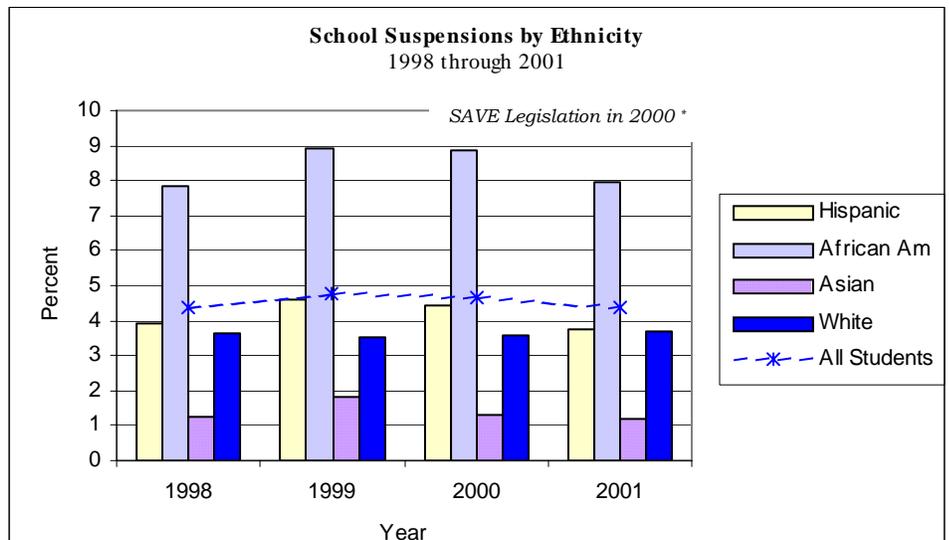
Are Latino Students Proportionally Represented in Advanced Courses?

Student Ethnicity	Percent Enrolled in Public K-12	Calculus AB %	English Language & Composition %	Biology %
Latino	19	5	6	7
African American	20	17	13	15
Asian	6	5	6	5
White	55	72	75	73

Source: Education Trust, Inc., *Education Watch: New York*, Winter 2002-2003

SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

Suspension often means missed opportunities in the sense that students with out-of-school suspensions miss out on instruction. This form of discipline, if applied unevenly, could reflect a form of bias toward subgroups of students. A review of suspension rates by



* The Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) Act was enacted to ensure for safer schools
 Source: Data from the New York State Education Department Basic Educational Data System (BEDS)

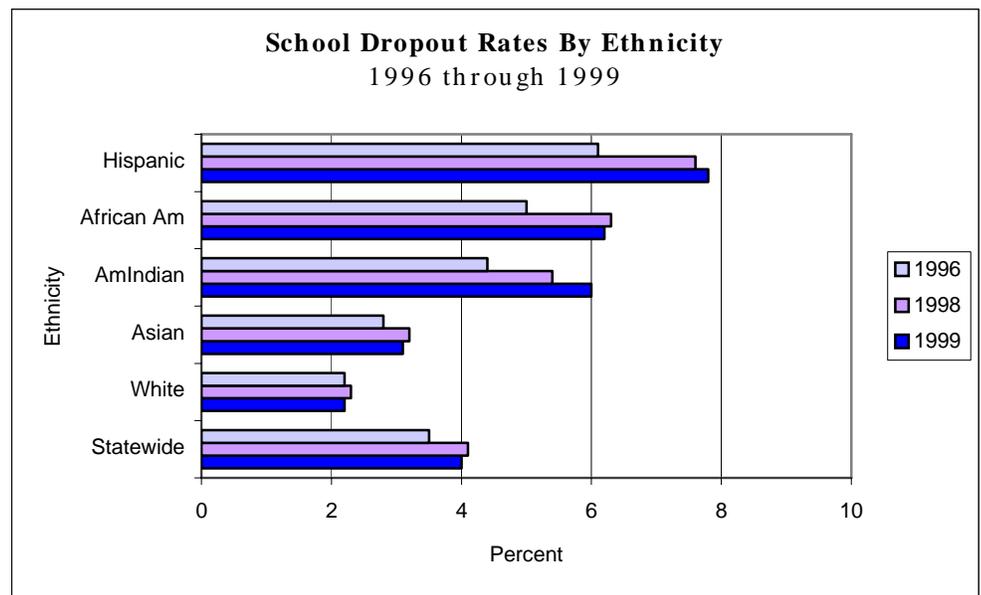
ethnicity indicates the overall rate has stayed relatively stable between 1998 and 2001 but the use of suspensions varies considerably by ethnic group.

- During the 2000-2001 school year, Latino youth tended to be suspended at similar rates as White students; however, African American students were twice as likely as Latino youth to be suspended from school.
- Suspension rates for Latino students tended to be lower than the overall suspension rates—this was consistent at the elementary, middle, and high schools.

DROPOUT RATES

Individuals who leave school before graduating are at a serious disadvantage in that they are four times more likely than high school graduates to be on welfare and twice as likely as their graduating peers to be unemployed.

- New York City has been identified as one of 35 cities in the country having the highest dropout rates.
- In New York State, Latino students lead all other ethnic groups in the percent of students who leave school before earning a high school diploma.
- The dropout rate for Latino students increased by 28 percent between 1996 and 1999.
- Although African American students have similar achievement scores and much higher suspension rates than their Latino counterparts, they are less likely to leave school before earning a diploma.



Source: A Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools. 2000, 2001, 2002

WORK TO BE DONE

The various aspects of school quality (i.e., teacher effectiveness, school climate and standards, opportunities to learn) are significant enough to warrant separate attention; yet, it may be more useful to understand how the achievement gap is compounded when these factors operate together. For example, it is well recognized that teacher effectiveness impacts student test scores and upon further study we have learned that the disproportionate representation in special education is also linked with teacher ineffectiveness (4,5). School resources, school location and the referral and assessment procedures used also influence students' placements

and their eventual educational opportunities (6,7). Given this information, it is clear that a broad and more integrated view will be required when considering ways to secure equitable educational opportunities for all children.

Programs that tend to achieve positive educational outcomes typically (9):

- Have clear goals, with emphasis on methods and materials linked to those goals, and constant assessment of student progress toward the goals;
- Have well defined components, materials and professional development procedures;
- Provide extensive professional development; and
- Emphasize quality implementation.

Useful professional development for teachers involves (10, 11):

- A long-term approach in order to allow teachers to be able to master new methods of classroom instruction (e.g., cooperative grouping);
- Integration of educational technology in the subject they teach;
- Translation of standards into instructional practice;
- Enhancement and expansion of a teacher's repertoire of instructional strategies rather than the radical alteration of them.

It has been noted that students learning a second language may exhibit the same behaviors as children with learning disabilities. Therefore, it is recommended that multidisciplinary assessment teams (12):

- Examine student ability in native as well as second language;
- Develop a student assessment portfolio that incorporates standardized and informal tests, language samples, observations, and interview; and
- Determine the students' stage of development.

Some students who have English as a second language are more likely to leave school before graduation due to their low comfort level in schools and their sense of being unable to "fit in." As a result, dropout rates among Latino students may be influenced by whether or not students within this group are foreign-born; however these data are not currently available. This information would be valuable in the future so we could better understand who is most at risk and how we might tailor programs to remedy the present circumstances. For example, 50 percent of foreign-born Latinos had a high school diploma as compared to 80 percent of native-born Latinos (13). Dropout prevention programs found to be effective tend to (6,14):

- Personalize the school experience, typically through the use of small groups and mentoring—school size is a fundamental aspect of this;
- Make college more tangible by allowing students to visit colleges, making college seem more real and attainable. This is also emphasized with counseling;
- Provide students with an opportunity to contribute to the school goals, e.g., through mentoring of younger students, placing students in high tracks then providing the support needed to maintain their position; and
- Engage families so the value of school completion and higher education are consistently reinforced at home and school.

A review of the 20 dropout prevention programs involved with the School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program indicates few programs made a difference in preventing

students from leaving school before graduation; however, the researchers noted the importance of personalized attention from adults instead of broad intervention programs as a means to reverse this trend (15).

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**Latino Youth
in New York State:**

***Student Achievement
Among Latino Youth***

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FOR LATINO YOUTH IN NEW YORK STATE

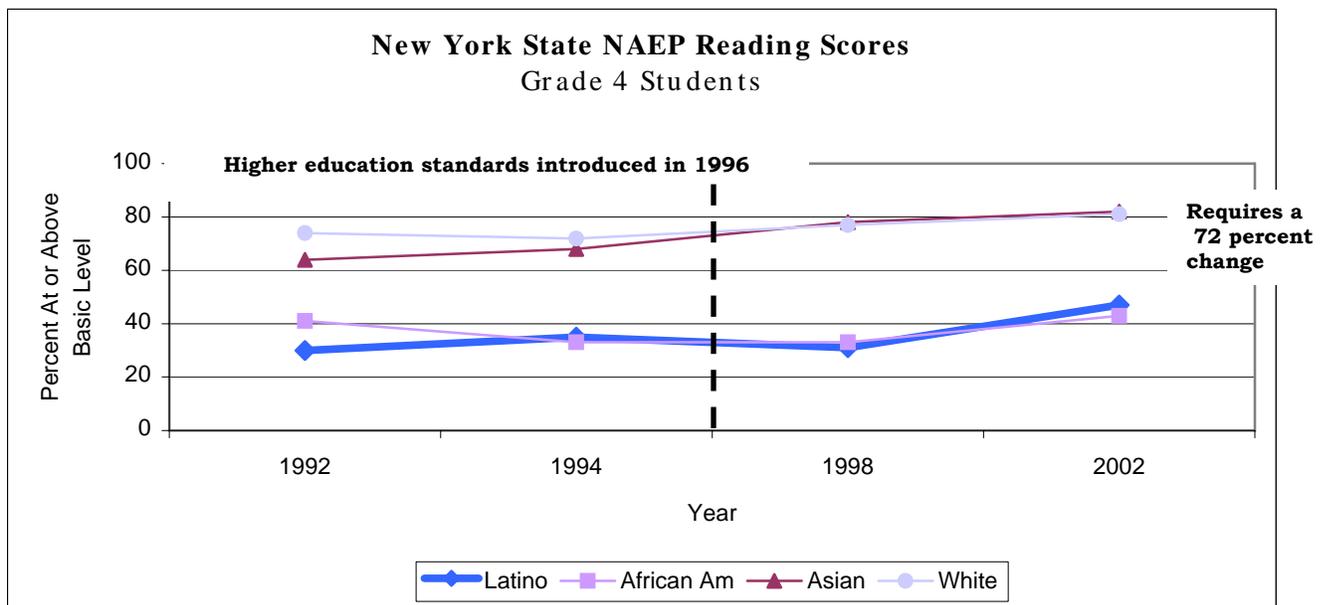
The increased number of Latino children in New York State has narrowed the *population* gap between Latino and Non-Latino youth. At the same time, the *achievement* gap between these two groups has also diminished, with Latino youth showing progress in reading and mathematics. While substantial progress is noted, the rate of improvement among Latino students has not enabled them to reach a level of equity with their Non-Latino peers.

IMPROVEMENTS IN READING ACHIEVEMENT

NAEP Progress in Reading Among Elementary School Students

A review of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)³ Reading scores indicates that between 1992 and 2002, fourth grade students in all ethnic groups showed improvements in reading achievement.

- The percent of Latino youth performing at or above the basic level increased considerably during this time period. Latino students assessed in 2002 improved by 57 percent when compared with their 1992 Latino counterparts.
- When compared with peers from other ethnic groups, Latino students tend to perform slightly better than African American students; however, there is a substantial difference between Latino youth and White or Asian students.
- Latino students would need to improve 72 percent beyond their current level of improvement in order to be comparable with their White peers.

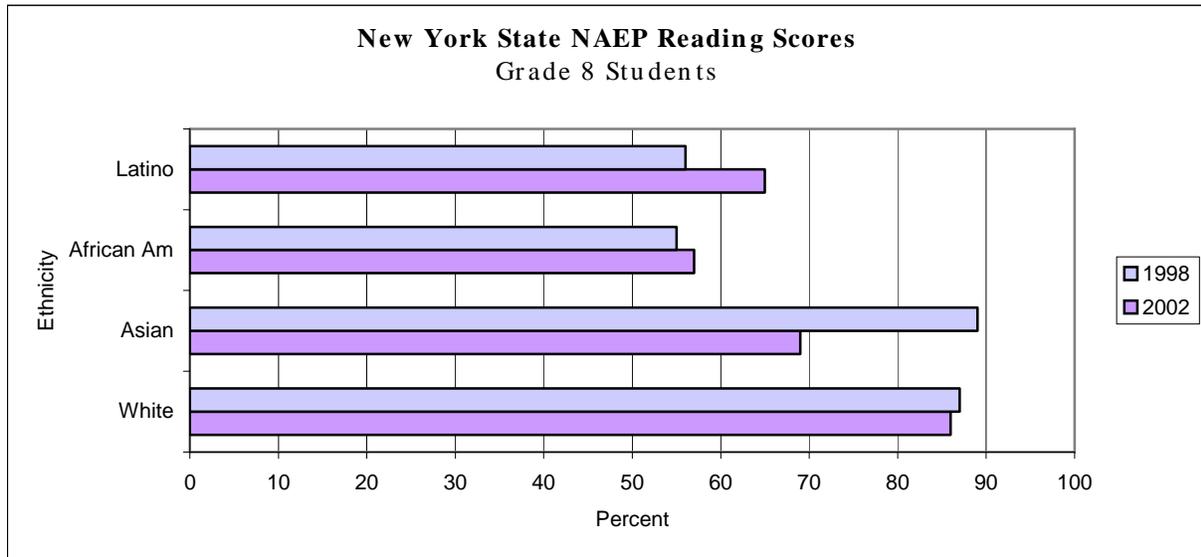


Source: National Center for Education Statistics: NAEP Data www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/getdata.asp

³ The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a set of standardized exams administered by the US Department of Education. Test results are used to represent student performance across time and across different racial and ethnic groups.

NAEP Progress in Reading Among Middle School Students

- The limited NAEP reading data that are available for eighth grade students indicate Latino students showed a 16 percent change upward from 1998 to 2002, narrowing the gap between Latino and White students.
- Previously, the gap required a 55 percent change among Latino students in order to close that gap—a 32 percent change is now required.

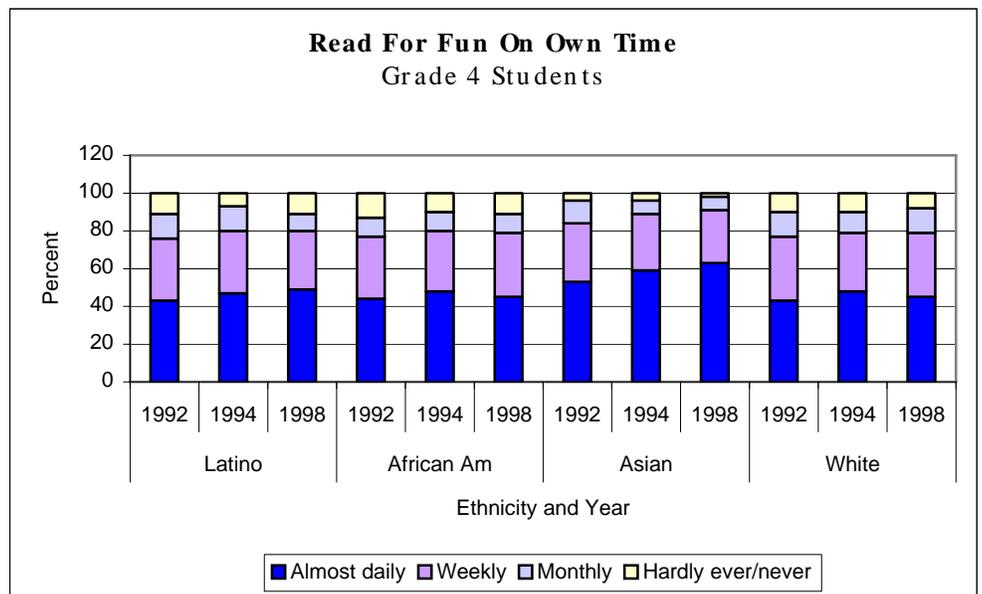


Source: National Center for Education Statistics: NAEP Data. www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/getdata.asp

Leisure Reading

An important factor that may contribute to the improved reading scores observed among fourth grade students is their willingness to read “for fun.”

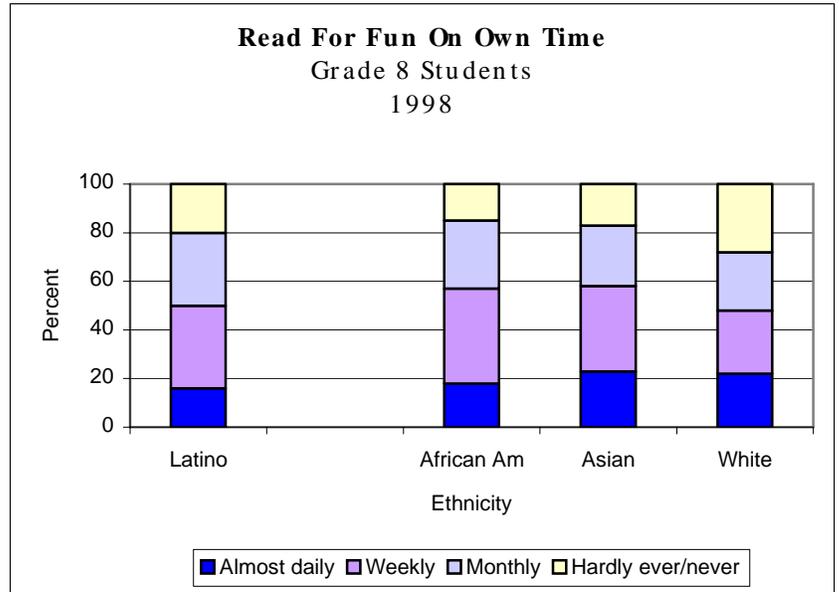
- The percentage of Latino students reporting daily leisure reading in 1992 was similar to students in most other ethnic groups.
- Over time, Latino



Source: National Center for Education Statistics: NAEP Data. www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/getdata.asp

students have met or exceeded their fourth grade White and African American counterparts in this area.

- Eighth grade students of all ethnic groups tend to read less often than their fourth grade counterparts. Approximately 5 in 10 Latino and White students reported reading daily or weekly while six in ten African American and Asian students read that frequently.

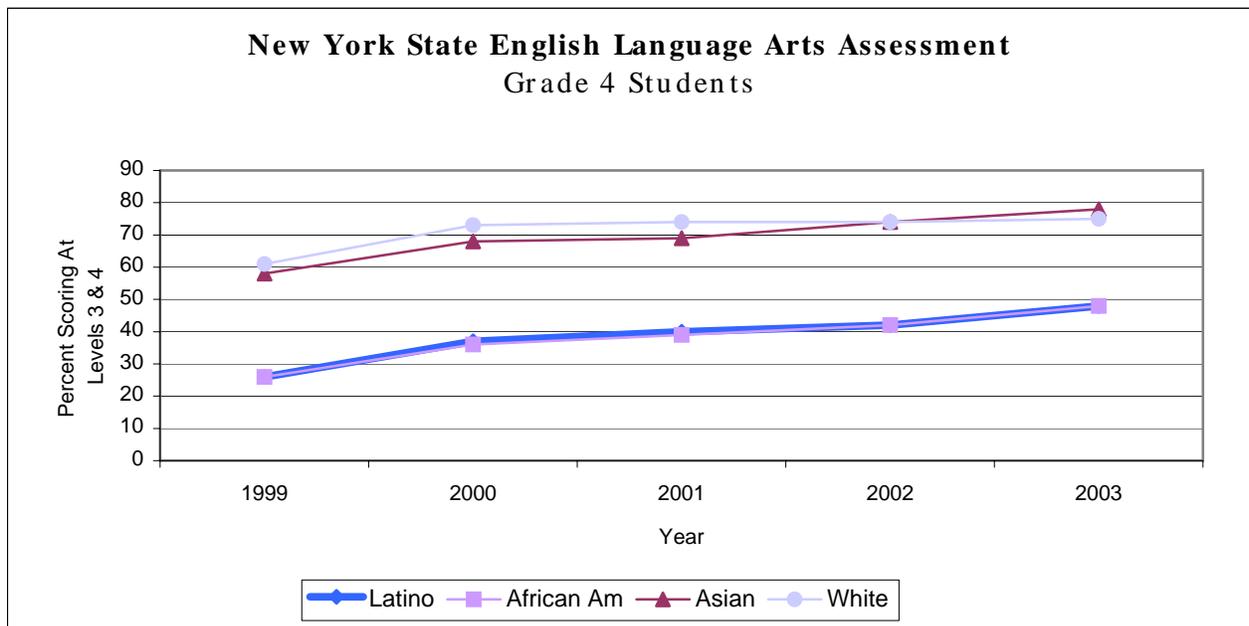


Source: National Center for Education Statistics: NAEP Data.
www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/getdata.asp

New York State Language Arts Assessment of Elementary School Students

The positive trends observed among fourth grade students' NAEP reading scores are consistent with fourth grade students' performance on the New York State English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment.

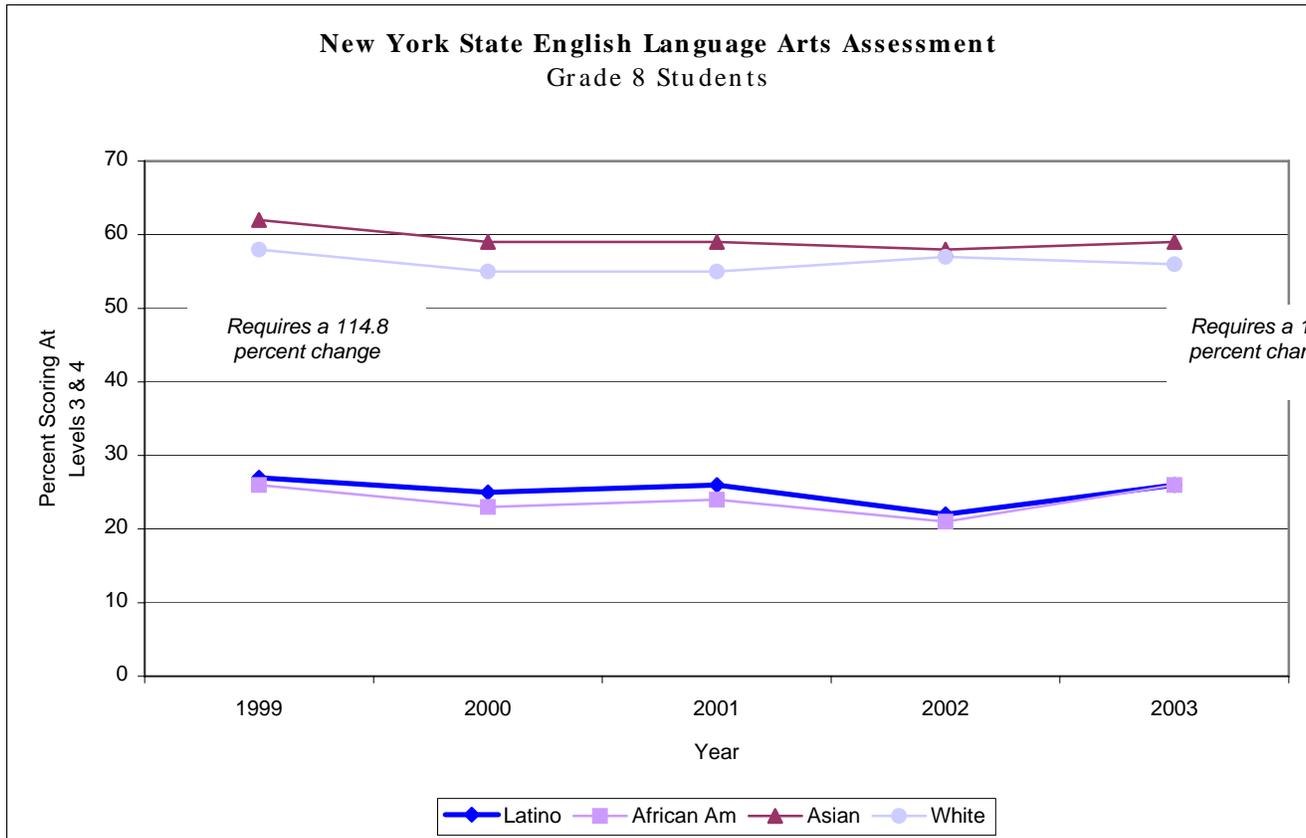
- Once again, Latino students have made considerable strides over time, showing an 85 percent change from 1999 to 2003.
- This would need to increase approximately 56 percent to reach parity with White students.
- African American students tend to progress in a similar fashion to Latino students.



Source: New York State Education Department www.nysed.gov/irts/ela4-8-2003-4th-8th-englis-press-release-slide-show.ppt

The improvements observed for NAEP Reading scores among eighth grade students do not seem to carry over to the New York State English Language Assessment, which is a more comprehensive assessment tool. Data indicate the performance of all eighth grade students has remained relatively stable over time showing little or no improvement.

- In 2003, Latino youth need to show a percent change of about 115 percent if they are to gain parity with White eighth grade students—this was the same circumstance in 1999.
- African American students' performance mirrors that of Latino youth in this grade level.



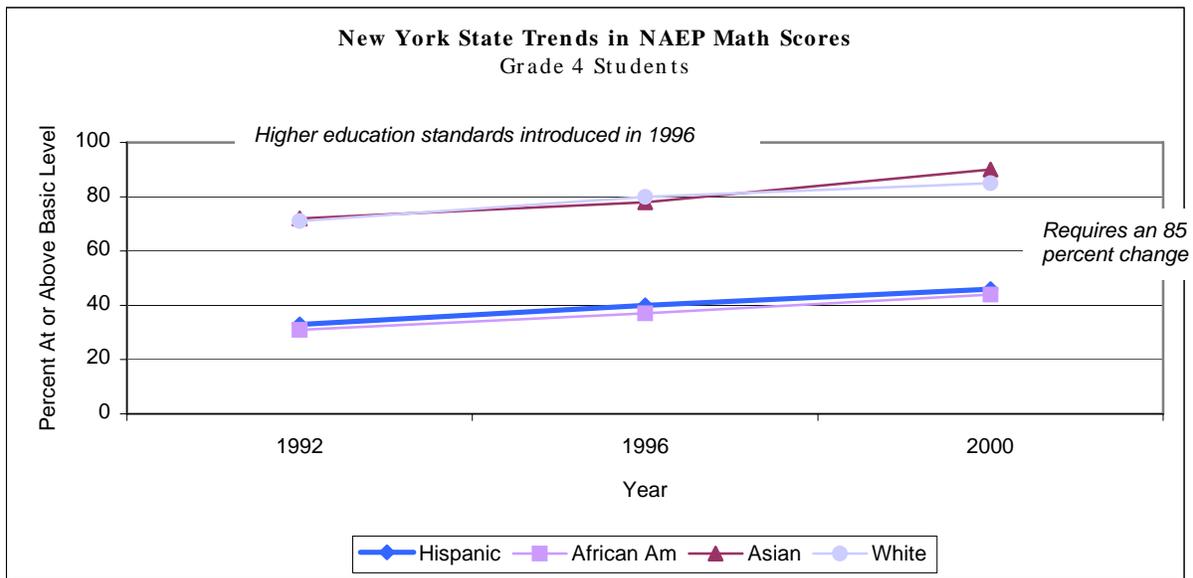
Source: New York State Education Department www.nysed.gov/irts/ela4-8-2003-4th-8th-english-press-release-slide-show.ppt

IMPROVEMENTS IN MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT

Progress in Math Among Elementary School Students

NAEP Math scores indicate that between 1992 and 2000, fourth grade students in all ethnic groups showed improvements in math achievement.

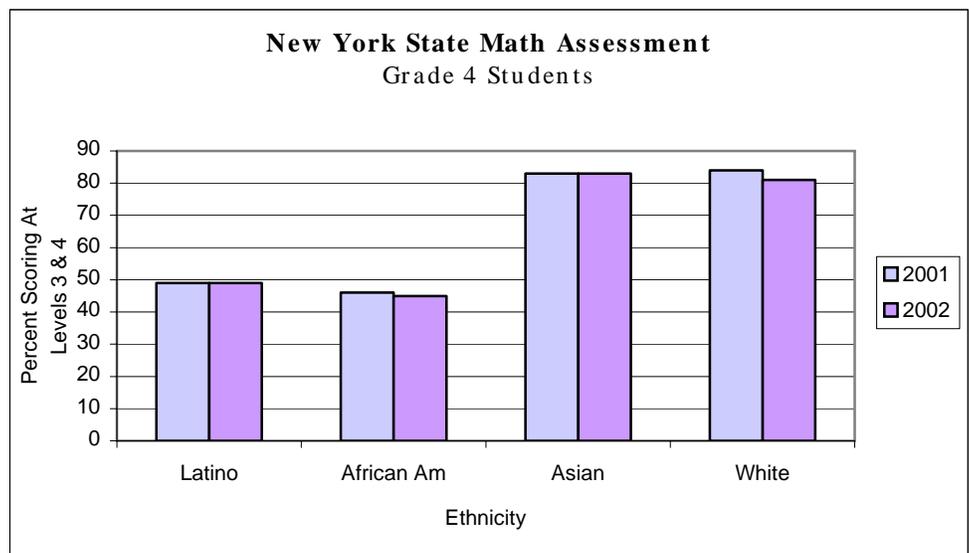
- In particular, Latino students' math scores reflect a 39 percent change during this time period.
- While these gains are significant, Latino fourth grade students would need to show an 85 percent change in order to reach parity with White students in 2000.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics: NAEP Data www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/getdata.asp

Unlike the gains observed in NAEP scores, student scores on the New York State Math Assessment show little change.

- Over the course of the last two years, Latino fourth grade students' scores have been consistent on the New York State Math Assessment in that approximately half of these students score at level 3 or 4.

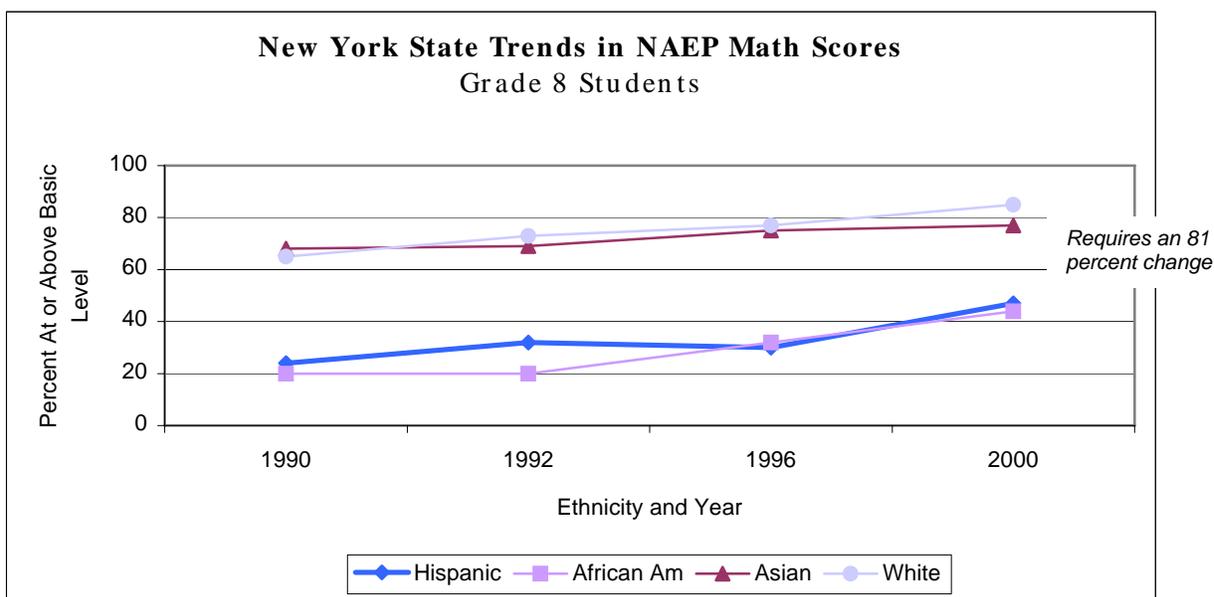


Source: New York State Department of Education www.nysed.gov/irts/reportcard/reportcard-presentation-april10-2003.SRC.ppt

- A 65 percent change is needed if Latino students are to reach parity with their White peers.

Progress in Math Among Middle School Students

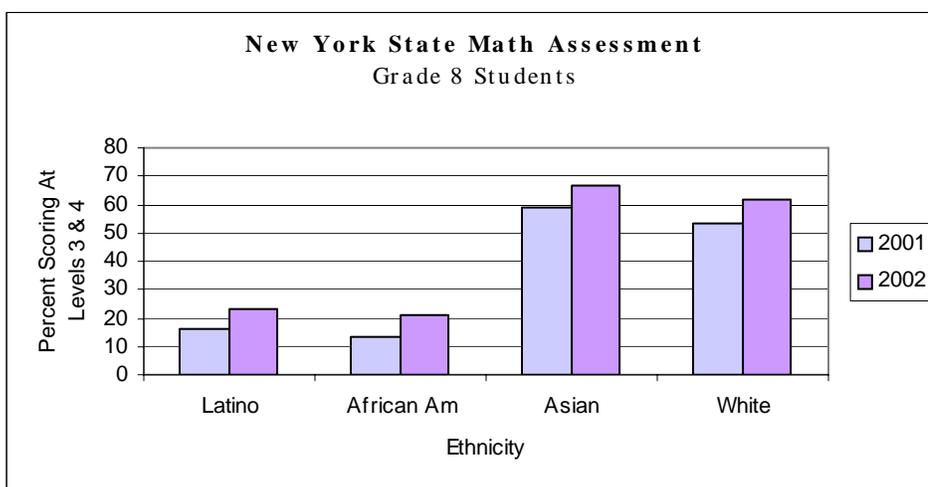
- The percent of Latino youth in grade 8 who met or exceeded the basic math level on the NAEP exam *almost doubled* between 1992 and 2000, showing an extraordinary 96 percent change.
- Latino youth would need to show an 81 percent change to meet peers in other ethnic groups who excel.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics: NAEP Data. www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/getdata.asp

During the last two years, approximately one in four Latino eighth grade students scored at levels 3 or 4 on the New York State Math Assessment (16% in 2001; 23% in 2002). This is similar to performance of African American students.

- Latino students would need to



Source: New York State Education Department www.nysed.gov/irts/reportcard/reportcard-presentation-april10-2003.SRC.ppt

show about a 170 percent change to match White eighth graders and about a 190 percent change for parity with Asian students.

We have learned that family factors influence NAEP math and reading achievement differently for White and minority students. Specifically, the academic gains realized by White students were accounted for entirely by family effects. However, family factors accounted for one-third of the gains made by minority students. Researchers of these findings have pointed to public policies that promote equal educational opportunities as one possible reason for this difference (1).

WORK TO BE DONE

There is no simple or singular solution to reaching academic parity but it is well recognized that the responsibility rests jointly with educators, families, community leaders, and policy makers (2, 3,4). Our collective motivation for improvement can be driven by the fact that higher levels of education are related to lower rates of crime, higher rates of physical and mental health, lower rates of unemployment, as well as the long-term benefits that accrue when each generation shares its knowledge and success with its children (5). New York State is a frontrunner with respect to the proportion of Latino residents within its state and the state's ability to be competitive nationally or globally will be influenced by its ability to increase the low educational attainment levels of one of its fastest growing sectors.

- Instructional and curricular strategies that support student achievement involve (6):
 - o Use of rigorous curricular standards and high expectations for all students;
 - o Access to advanced courses; and,
 - o Instructional coherence.
- Efforts found to be effective for involving poor Latino parents include (7):
 - o Conducting meetings or events in familiar settings, not necessarily the schools;
 - o Extending invitations personally instead of through informational fliers;
 - o Setting agendas based on the concerns of parents, as opposed to agendas controlled solely by schools; and,
 - o As applicable, providing parents with learning opportunities that allow them to improve their literacy levels.
- Several schools with high minority, high poverty school populations have been able to engage students in learning so that 3 in 4 students are able to exceed New York State standards for reading and math⁴. Clearly, these exemplary schools can serve as models for other schools in order to better understand factors that help all students succeed (9).

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**Latino Youth
in New York State:**

***Opportunities for
Higher Education***

OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

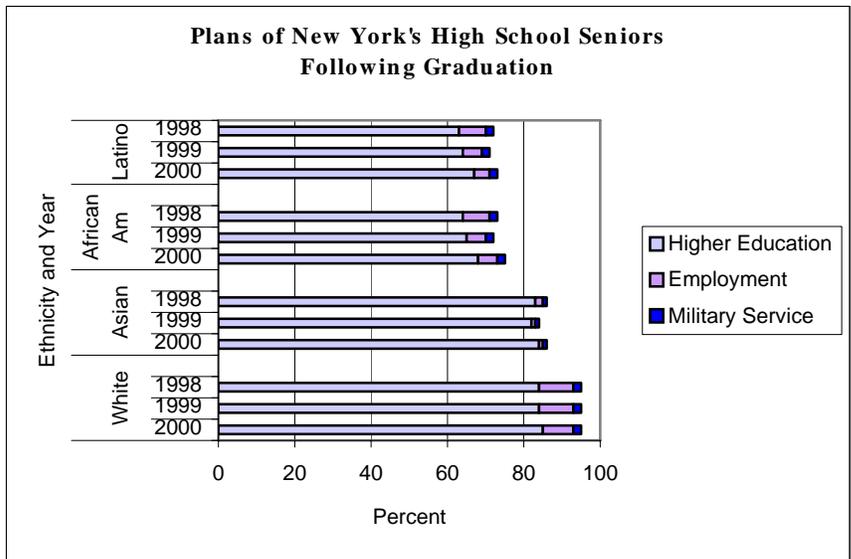
It has been estimated that a male Latino college graduate earns approximately \$500,000 more than his high school graduate counterpart while a college educated Latina female earns \$400,000 more than her high school counterpart. The reward for a Latino with a professional degree is estimated at about \$1.7 million (1). Furthermore, it is estimated that Latinos who earn a college degree pay twice as much in taxes when compared to high school graduates and this triples for Latinos with a professional degree (1). Unquestionably, the under-representation of Latinos in higher education signifies a substantial economic toll, individually and collectively.

In 2001, approximately 4 in ten Latino students enrolled in a baccalaureate program in New York State left before earning a degree

PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION AN INCREASING GOAL

When high school graduates in New York are asked about their plans following high school, the majority of students identify college as their goal—this is consistent among all ethnic groups with Latino youth being no exception.

- Between 1998 and 2000, the percent of Latino high school seniors who intended to continue their education with a postsecondary degree increased 6 percent—representing approximately 1,150 individuals.



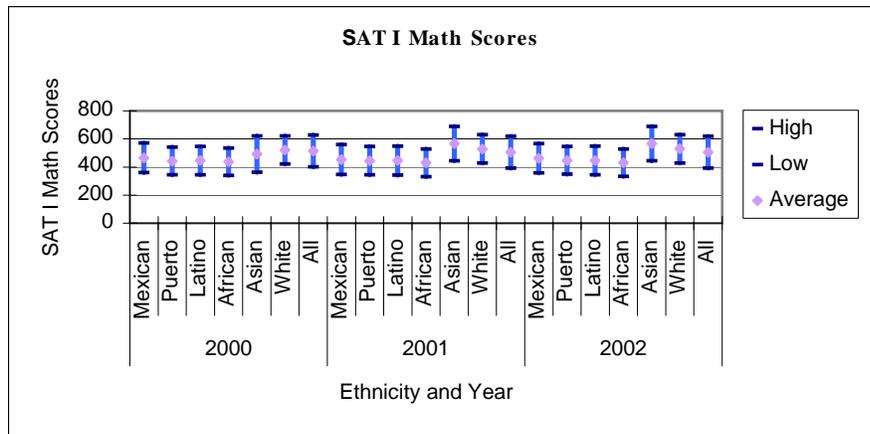
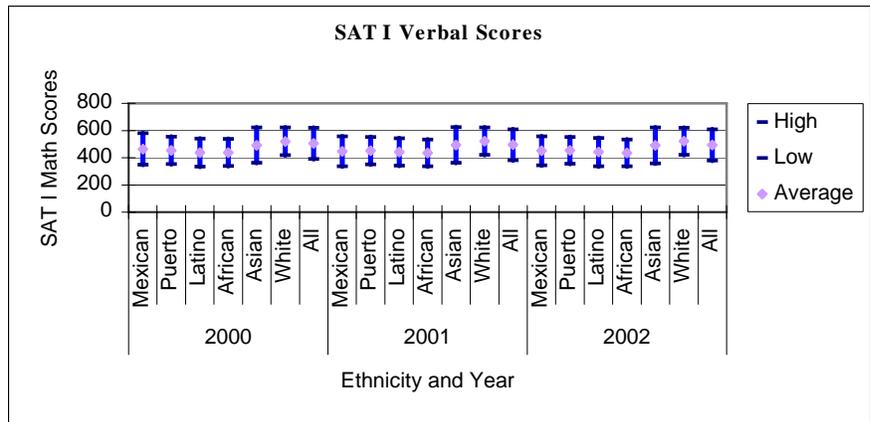
Source: Distribution of High School Graduates and College Going Rate; New York State Education Department, 1998 -2000

COLLEGE “POTENTIAL”

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores are used often as a measure of college potential— one’s scores on such exams are seen as predictors of future college performance since the tests are designed to assess many of the skills that are related to students’ success in college.

Although colleges base decisions regarding applicant selection on multiple factors, scores to standardized tests, such as the SATs, continue to be a major part of student selection, placing Latino college applicants in a less competitive position.

- Overall, students' performance on these exams has been relatively stable over time. That is, when one observes a particular ethnic group of students over time, the SAT scores for that group of students show little change from year to year.
- There is a distinct difference between minority and non-minority students in terms of verbal and Math scores with the greatest variability seen in Math scores.

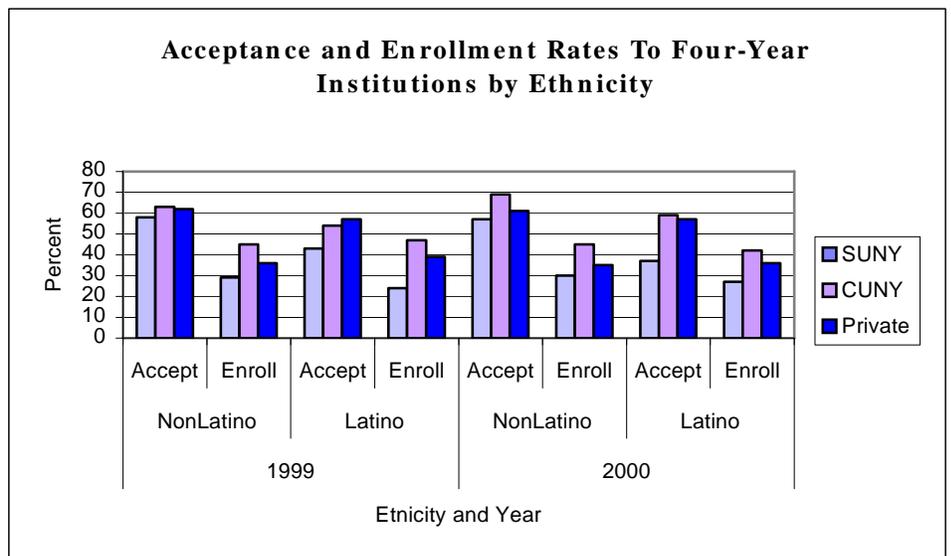


Source: The College Board SAT Summary Reporting Service (SRS) 2000-2002

WHO IS ACCEPTED TO COLLEGE AND WHO ATTENDS?

A comparison between Latino and Non-Latino youth indicates Latino youth are less likely to be accepted to college.

- SUNY institutions show the greatest disparity in acceptance rates between groups while private institutions show the least.
- When Latino youth apply and are accepted to a four-year institution, they



Source: New York State Education Department of Higher Education- Office of Research & Information Systems

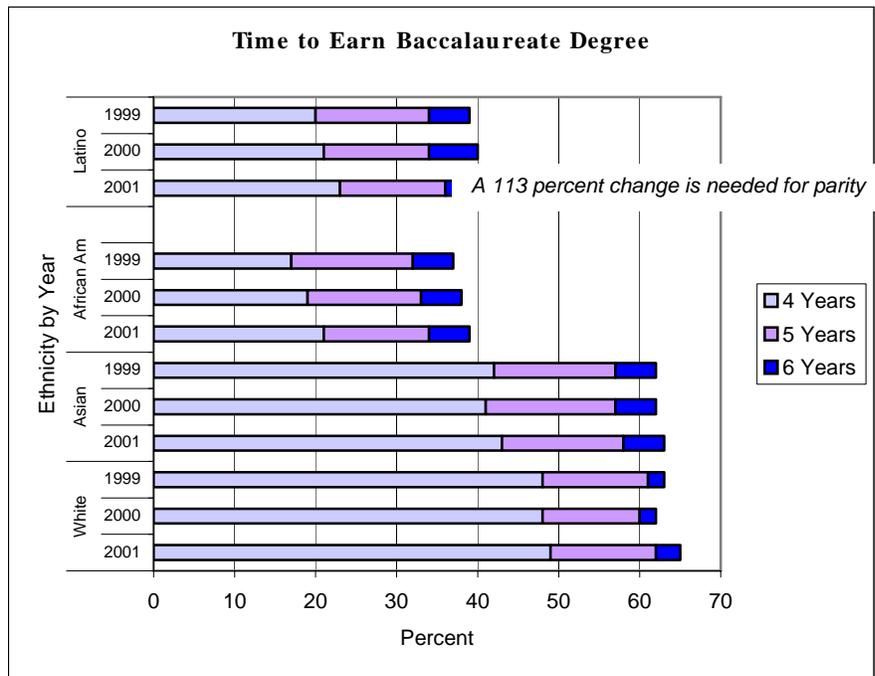
are more likely to enroll. This is particularly the case when applicants are accepted to private and CUNY institutions.

- The proportion of Latino youth who apply *and* enroll to private institutions is about identical to Non-Latino youth who apply to such institutions. This pattern does not hold for SUNY institutions. Specifically, the percent of Latino youth accepted to SUNY institutions is lower than the percent that enroll in these schools when compared to Non-Latino youth. One reason for this may be that the Latino students applying to SUNY are the same Latino students who apply to private institutions, and when given the choice, select private institutions.

TIME TO EARN A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE

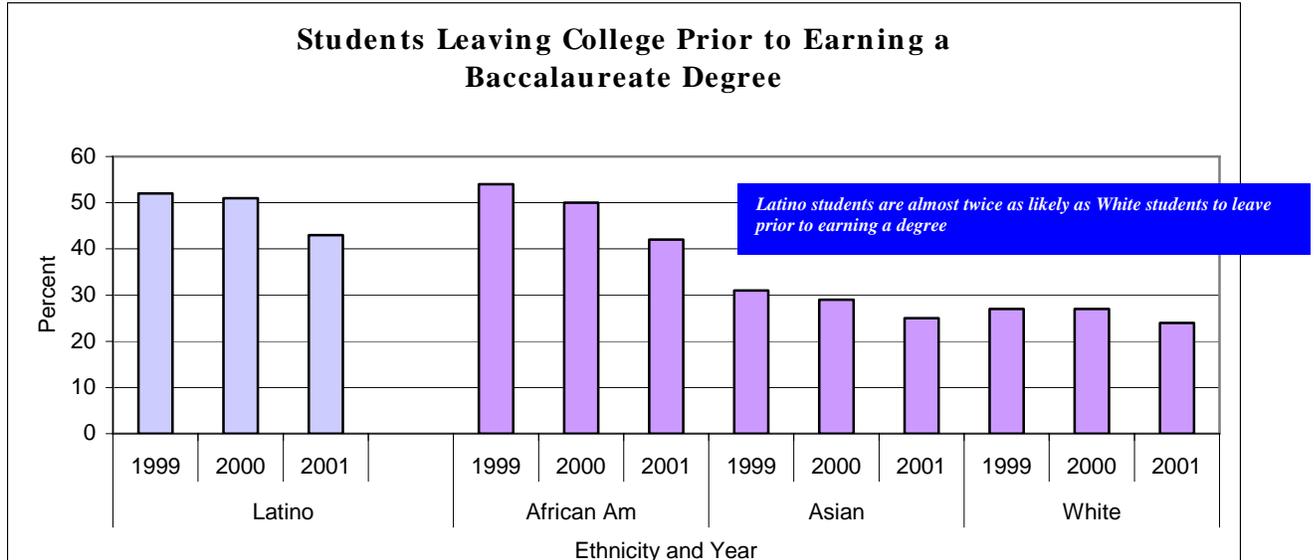
Although a college education is a desired goal of most high school graduates in New York, the time required to achieve such a goal differs for Latino students and their White counterparts. This difference has substantial implications for employers as well as students since the extended time earning a degree represents a delay into the workforce as well as a delay in personal earnings.

- Approximately two in ten Latino youth (23%) earn a baccalaureate degree within the traditional four years timeframe as compared to about five in ten White youth (49%). This was a consistent pattern over the three-year period examined.
- The percent of Latino youth completing a degree in four years would need to increase 113 percent in order to attain parity with White youth.



Source: New York State Education Department of Higher Education- Office of Research & Information Systems

PERSISTENCE TO DEGREE

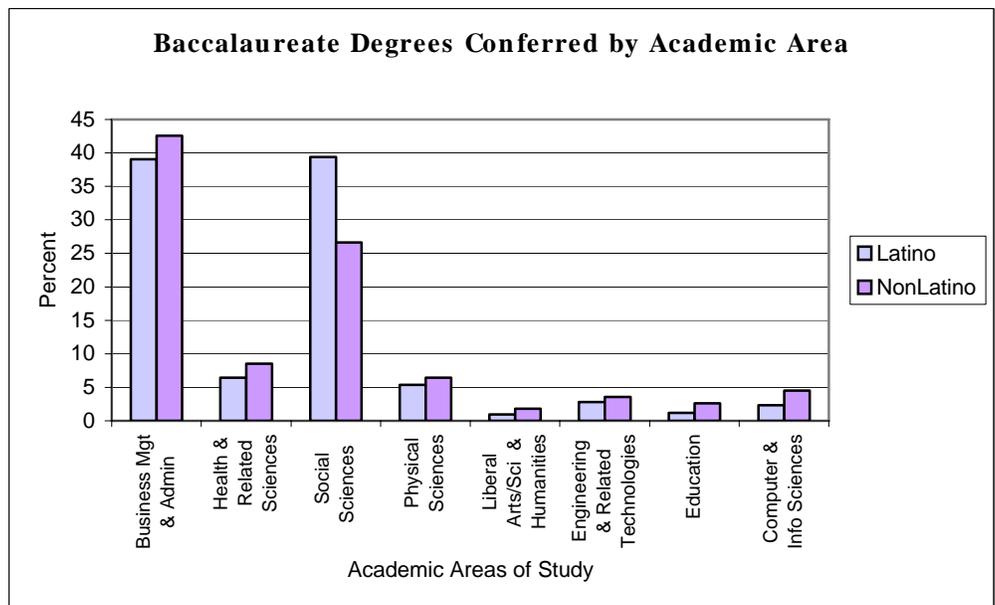


Source: New York State Education Department of Higher Education- Office of Research & Information Systems

- In 2001, about four out of ten Latino youth (43%) who enrolled in a baccalaureate program left prior to earning a degree—this reflects an improvement from 1998 when approximately half (52%) of those enrolled left before earning a degree. However, it also represents a considerable loss in terms of time and resources.

ACADEMIC AREAS OF STUDY

The field of study one selects is an important consideration for all graduates since this can influence the probability of one finding employment as well as the salary one is able to obtain as a result of education. It also influences the State's ability to have a competitive, productive workforce with the capacity to



Source: New York State Education Department of Higher Education- Office of Research & Information Systems

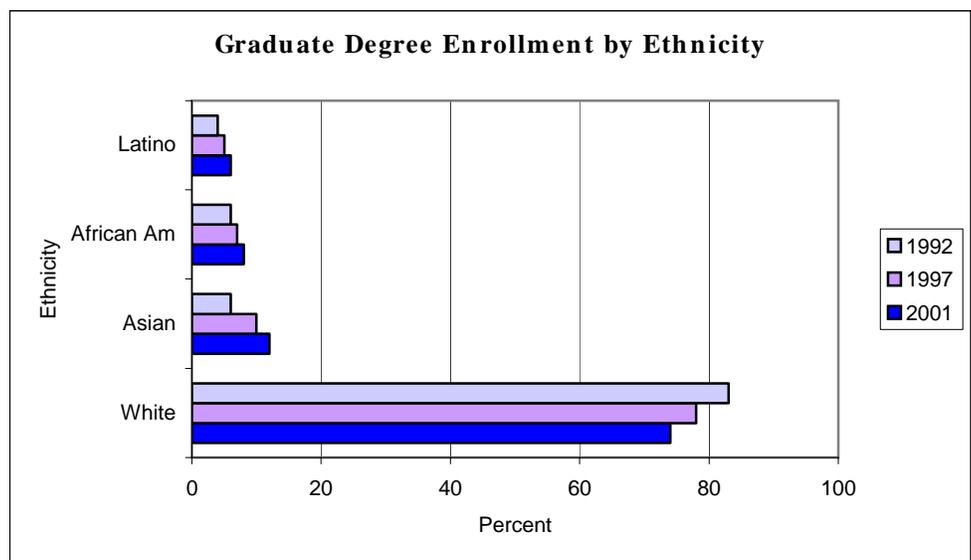
provide the services and goods needed for New York to be competitive both nationally and globally.

- During the 2000-2001 academic year, the most common degrees conferred to Latino graduates were in the areas of business management and social sciences (39% for each).
- A smaller percentage of Non-Latino graduates earned a degree in the social sciences; however, the pattern across other academic areas appeared to be similar for Latino and Non-Latino students.
- When one examines the percentage of Latinos earning a degree in a given area, Latino graduates tend to earn a higher proportion of the degrees awarded in Health and Related Sciences (17%) as compared to other areas of study.

POST GRADUATE DEGREES

Naturally, lack of a baccalaureate degree excludes youth from pursuing advanced degrees—a circumstance that is strikingly evident when one makes a comparison of Latino and White youth who are enrolled in graduate programs.

- Latino graduate students would need to increase more than 1000 percent in order to achieve parity with White graduate students.



Source: New York State Education Department of Higher Education- Office of Research & Information Systems

WORK TO BE DONE

The incentive to increase access to higher education is matched by the rewards realized when New York has a well-educated population. For example, a more highly educated population means increased tax revenues, reduced welfare rolls and lower child poverty rates (2).

Many programs are in place to facilitate Latino student involvement in higher education. As part of these programs, consideration needs to be given to the following aspects:

- The parental role in college choice is greater during the earlier years of high school than later, indicating it may be important for outreach programs to begin as early as possible, ideally in middle school (3).

- Successful outreach programs involve the identification of at-risk students who may include (4):
 - o students with low-income status;
 - o non-native English speakers;
 - o undecided students;
 - o poor high school performance as represented by SAT scores;
 - o students academically under prepared for English reading and mathematics; and
 - o first generation college students.

- Promising support programs that are college-based provide students with (4,5):
 - o support systems that foster positive relationships with peers and faculty;
 - o access to advising; and
 - o sufficient financial aid.

Much is written regarding the discrepancy in college attendance and persistence between Latino and Non-Latino youth yet another area of discrepancy that requires further examination is the difference in educational attainment between Latino immigrants and Latino native-born youth. Specifically, native-born Latino youth are about twice as likely to earn a bachelor's degree compared to their immigrant counterparts (5). These differences in educational attainment underscore the need to gather data that will allow for more accurate comparisons and the ability to examine which subgroups of Latino students may need additional supports instead of viewing Latino students as a homogeneous group.

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**Latino Youth
in New York State:**

***Health Issues and
Latino Youth***

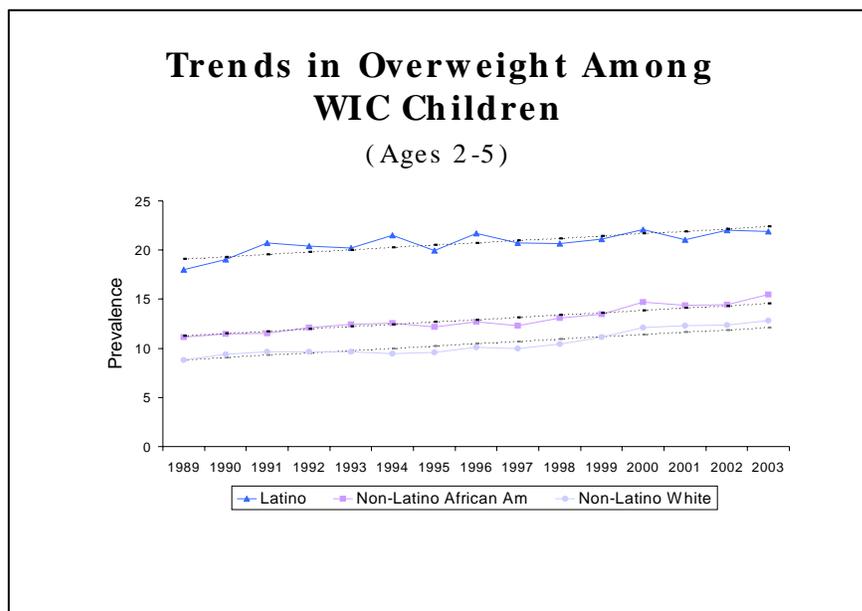
HEALTH RELATED ISSUES

A comparison of Latino and Non-Latino health attributes follows since many of the health-based decisions made for children by their parents or directly made by children early in their lives are related to children's successful outcomes. Not surprisingly, youth health risks are related with academic performance (1). For example, nutrition has been linked with academic success while health-compromising decisions to use alcohol and other substances or to become pregnant can impact both short- and long-term goals (2,3).

Child Obesity

The health related consequences of childhood obesity are clear-cut in that we understand the connections between obesity and diabetes, hypertension and heart disease. However, another aspect of childhood obesity that is not considered as often is the emotional toll on well-being since many youth who are overweight are vulnerable to weight-related teasing from their peers (4).

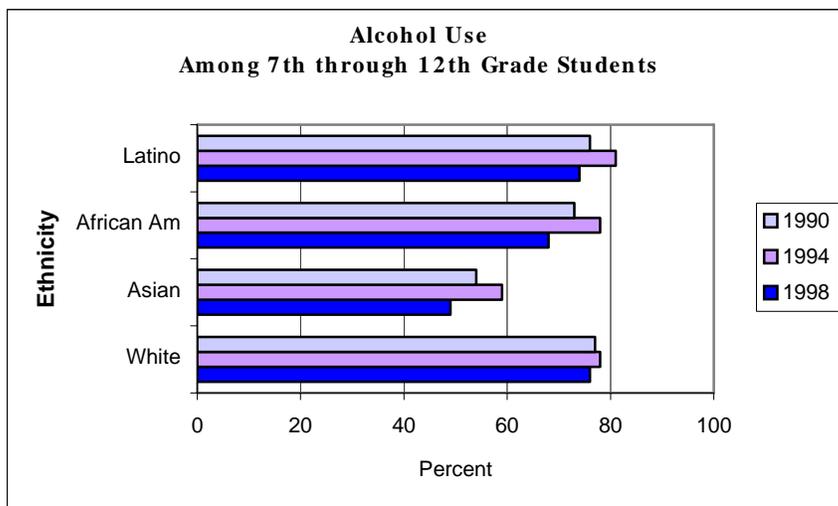
- The prevalence of child obesity is increasing at a similar rate among all ethnic groups with Latino youngsters having a significantly higher prevalence of obesity



Source: Department of Health, Division of Nutrition: Trends in Overweight among children enrolled in NYS WIC, 1989-2003

Alcohol Use

An unfortunate reality is that alcohol advertising is directed toward youth, individuals between the ages of 12 and 19, more frequently than other age groups within the population and Latino youth in particular receive more exposure than their peers (5). The strategic targeting of youth is of considerable concern since exposure to and liking of alcohol advertisements influences youth's

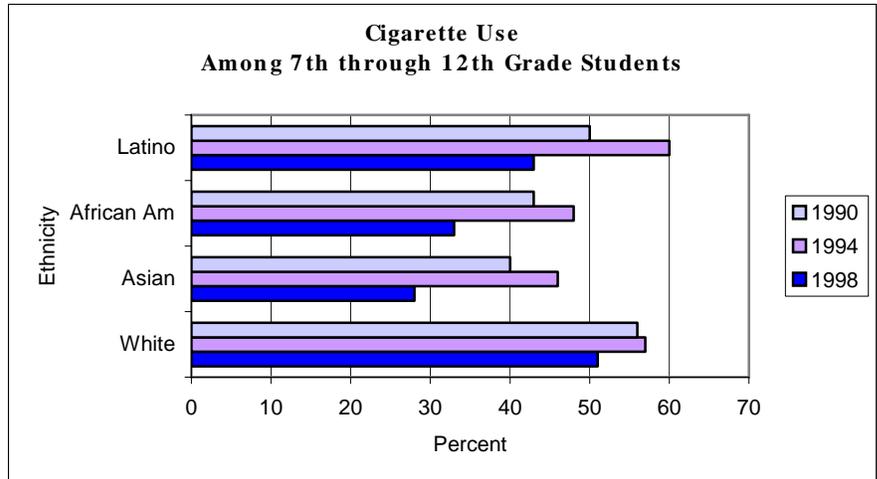


Source: Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services; The OASAS School Survey Statewide Findings, 1998.

perceptions regarding drinking, intentions to drink and actual drinking behavior. Based on these data, it appears that alcohol use peaked during 1994 then declined below the amount of use reported in 1990. This pattern held for all ethnic groups.

Cigarette Use

The percent of youth that use cigarettes is another area of concern due to the health risks associated with such use. Additionally, early use of cigarettes is linked to other risk behaviors (e.g., poor grades, frequent absences from school, use alcohol) (6). Similar to alcohol use, there appears to have been an increase from 1990 to 1994 then a decline in 1998. Unlike alcohol use, the decline observed in 1998 was not deep enough to drop below the 1990 level of use.



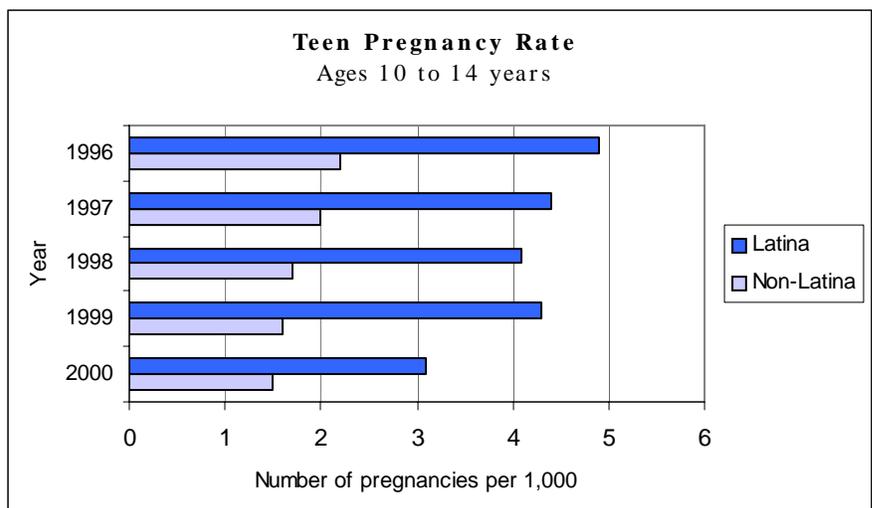
Source: Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services; The OASAS School Survey Statewide Findings, 1998.

Teen Pregnancy

It is well documented that teen pregnancy has negative consequences for both mother and child. From the young mother's perspective, teen pregnancy increases the probability she will leave school prior to graduation, rely on welfare for support and raise her children in poverty while her children will tend to have lower birthweights, suffer poorer health, and achieve lower levels of educational attainment (7).

The overall teen pregnancy rate for Non-Latinas between the ages of 10 and 14 years old showed a 32 percent change between 1996 and 2000. A 37 percent change was observed for the Latina population during the same time period.

A decrease in pregnancy rates was also observed among 15 to 17 year olds with Non-Latinas reflecting a 27 percent change and Latinas having a 30 percent change.



Source: Department of Health, Bureau of Biostatistics

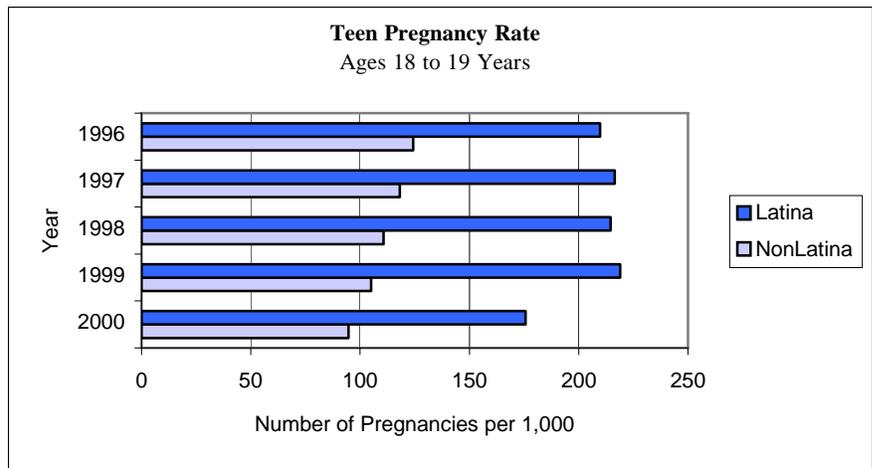
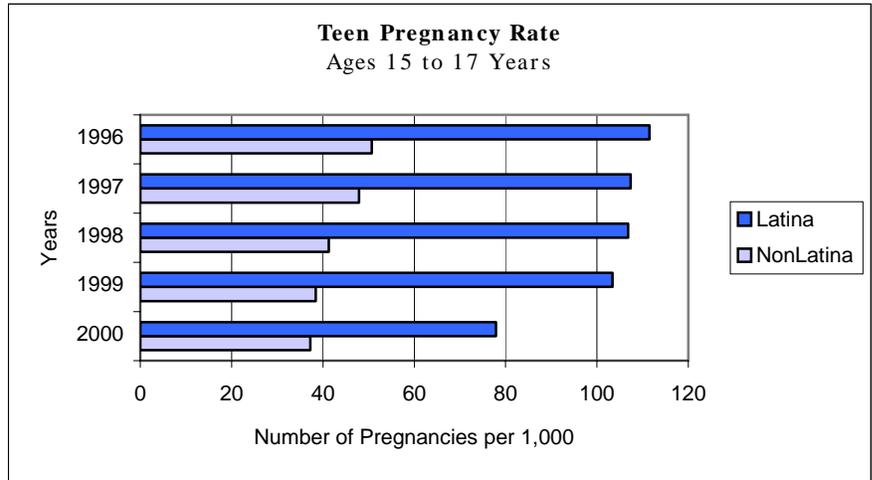
The pattern of decreased teen pregnancies holds for teens between the ages of 18 and 19 as well, however Latinas in this age category show a lower percent change than their Non-Latina peers—Latina teens in this age category showed a 16 percent change compared to a 24 percent change among their Non-Latina counterparts.

Despite declines in teen pregnancy rates among each age group, the Latina pregnancy rate is about twice that of Non-Latina teens, with the greatest discrepancy among 15 to 17 year olds.

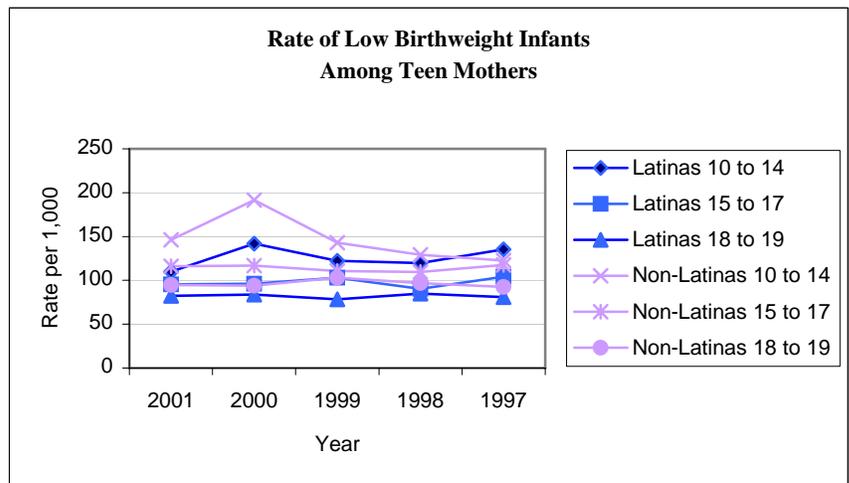
This gap reflects a substantial difference when placed in context of New York's changing demographics. Specifically, between 1990 and 2000, the overall percent change of the Non-Latina teen population was about 5 percent as compared to a 33 percent change among Latina teens—a six-fold increase compared to Non-Latina teens.

Infant Birthweight

Low Birthweight is a particular concern for teen pregnancies, particularly with younger mothers. This concern is due to the fact that infants with low birthweights are at greater risk for developmental and neurological problems and tend to have higher rates of illness. A review of birthweight data indicates younger mothers are more likely to have low



Source: Department of Health, Bureau of Biostatistics



Source: Department of Health, Bureau of Biostatistics

birthweight infants, however, Latina teen mothers are less likely to deliver low birthweight infants than their Non-Latina counterparts. This trend is consistent for all teen age groups.

Hospitalizations for Asthma

Asthma-related hospitalization rates are often examined since the rates can serve as a cautionary sign that children are not receiving adequate preventive health care. It also signifies days away from school. Therefore, we examined counties with high percentages of Latino children to see if they also had higher than average hospitalization rates; however, a consistent pattern between population and hospitalization rates was not evident. It is important to note that four of the ten counties with hospitalization rates above the state average (Bronx, New York, Queens and Kings) also have a high number of Latino children located within the counties.

Quality of Health Care

Almost 9 in ten children (85%) eligible for health insurance through the State Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) have such coverage. While these children can secure health care, the care they receive may be compromised if their parents and health providers are not able to communicate clearly with one another. Based on 2000 Census data, approximately 27 percent of Latino adults report they are not able to speak English well, yet professional medical interpreters are not the norm in most health care settings (8). This language barrier impacts the quality of the medical history taken as well as the description of symptoms shared between provider and patient. Furthermore, the inability to communicate clearly can compromise the quality of the diagnoses made and the treatment plans developed. In an effort to compensate for language difficulties, providers often order additional tests and more costly procedures for fear of missing a diagnosis, all resulting in higher health care costs but not necessarily better health care (9).

Work to Be Done

Regarding child obesity:

Being overweight predisposes children to chronic disease risk factors at an earlier age than we originally realized. In children as young as age two, being overweight can result in elevated blood pressure. Yet physicians report parents are more likely to express concern about their child's weight when it influences the child's self-image; otherwise, the issue is often not addressed. This may be due to the fact that parents want to avoid a reaction that may increase the likelihood that a child may acquire an eating disorder. In an effort to promote better dietary practices, the Department of Health's *Eat Well Play Hard* program is designed to prevent childhood obesity and reduce long-term chronic disease risks through promotion of physical activity and targeted dietary practices for children and families.

Regarding adolescent risk factors:

Programs with strongest success for delaying sexual activity among teens are: (10)

- Education programs addressing sex and HIV risks and
- Youth development programs that address other risk factors.

Strong parent-child relationships are key components for deterring youth involvement in health risk behaviors. Children are more likely to avoid risk behavior (e.g., substance abuse, teen pregnancy) when parents: (11)

- Clearly communicate values and expectations;
- Provide expressions of concern and love; and
- Ensure continual parental supervision

Regarding barriers to sound health care:

In a nationwide survey of insured adults, Spanish-speaking Latinos were significantly less likely than non-Latino whites to have had a physician visit, flu shot, or mammogram in the preceding year. There was no difference in health-seeking habits of non-Latino whites and English-speaking Latinos, results that underscore the barriers associated with language.

(12). Methods used to integrate non-English speaking individuals into the medical system are: (7)

- Some states are considering reducing the amount of time needed for foreign-trained medical professionals to receive a license. Georgia's Professional Licensing Boards is examining the possibility of having foreign-trained medical professionals receive a limited license and require them to work alongside licensed doctors and nurses while they learn English, undergo credential review and complete classes or tests required for licensing.
- An alternative to having bilingual staff located within the medical setting is the use of remote, third party interpreters. Medically trained, bilingual individuals sit in a remote location as they interpret for doctors and patients through wireless headsets. Patients and providers hear only their language, making this more like a conversation. An advantage of this method is that it reduces the tendency for patients and providers to relate to the interpreter, rather than to each other.
- Using family, friends and other patients as interpreters is strongly discouraged, especially using children as interpreters due to the potentially damaging effects this could have when translating sensitive matters for their elders.
- Some communities have enlisted the assistance of bilingual youth, individuals who were raised in the United States and have immigrant parents, to serve as greeters/navigation in health settings. Referred to as heritage speakers, these individuals are not involved with interpretations in clinical settings. Youth in this role are able to retain language skills while setting a more welcoming tone for people who may be reluctant to use healthcare settings.

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