



Students in Today's Schools

John Bailey, Director
Office of Educational Technology
U.S. Department of Education
November 2003



The following represents an overview of select research findings about child and youth attitudes, trends, and behaviors. Findings were compiled from a wide variety of sources, including both academic and market research, in an attempt to best understand who today's students are. Due to variations in study samples, timeframes, methods, and purpose, caution should be used in generalizing from any one source. Nonetheless, when taken as a whole, the research supports the view that today's students are different from past generations and that these differences provide both a challenge and an opportunity for the nation's schools.

If you are aware of any additional research on this topic, we invite you to share them with the National Education Technology Plan team at feedback@NationalEdTechPlan.org.



Who Are Today's Students?¹

The Millennial Generation:

- **The largest generation**, representing 36% of the total U.S. population. As of 2000, almost 100 million children and youth between 0-24 years old.
- **The most diverse generation:** 31% are minorities; more diverse than the adult population.
- **Growing up in challenging times:** 60% of 2002 teens feel that it is harder to be a young person today than in their parents' day, compared to 35% of 1966 teens feeling the same way.



Strong Ties to Family²

- 91% of students felt they have at least one family member they can confide in.
- If they could, 50% of students would spend more time with their family.
- 74% get along with their parents extremely or very well.
- When picking one person as a role model, 44% of students pick a family member.



Value Education/Achievement Oriented³

- 96% say doing well in school is important in their lives.
- 91% of students have a teacher/administrator who personally cares about their success.
- 60% of students report that standardized tests are a good measure of progress.



Already Have Substantial Influence On The Economy⁴

- In 2002, teens (ages 12-19) spent \$170 billion.
- Two out of three students report influencing their parents' buying decisions, small and large.
- 20% of teens own stock.



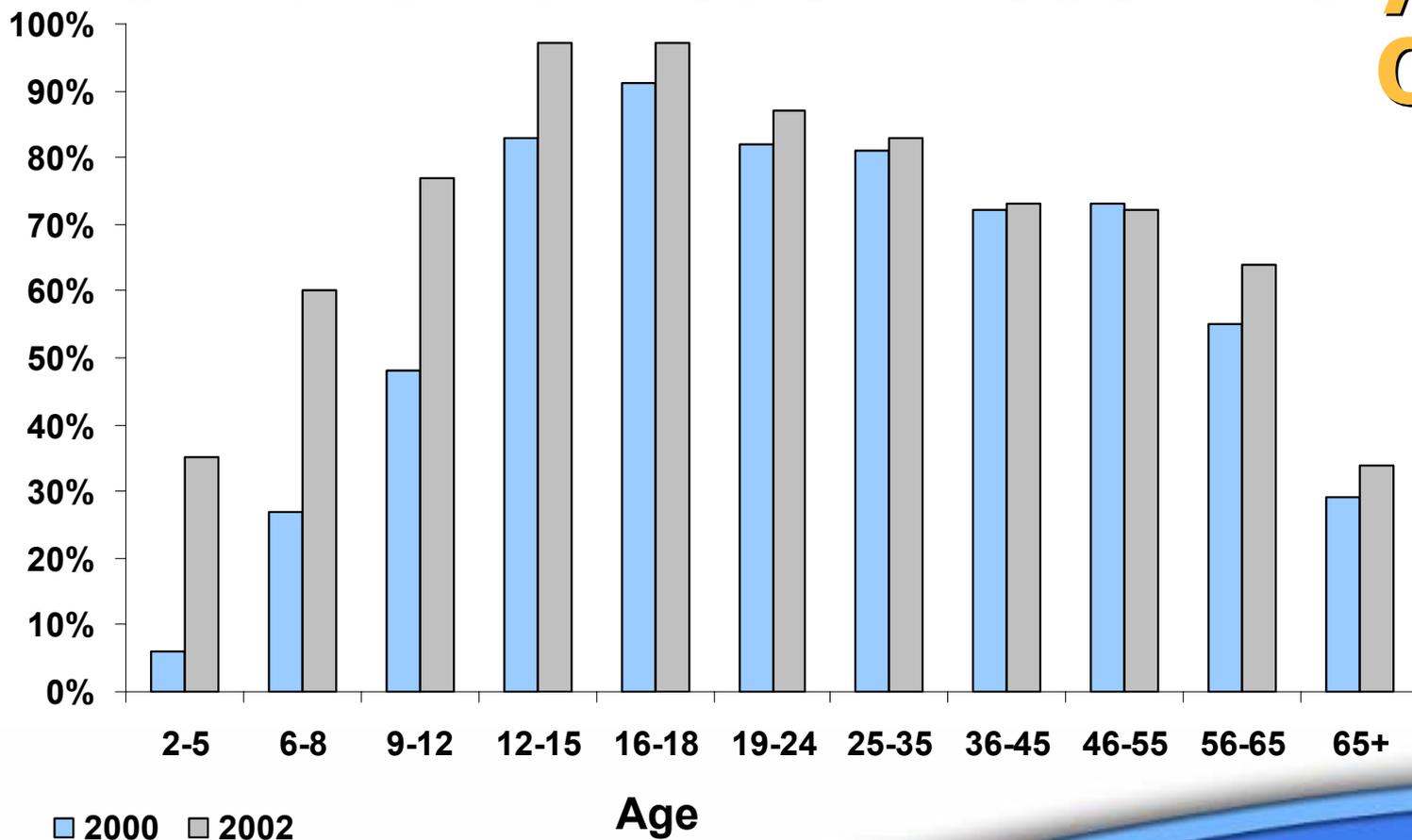
Grew Up With Technology

- Have come of age along with the Internet.
- Information has been universally available and free to them.
- Community is a digital place of common interest, not just a shared physical space.
- 64% of online teens say they know more about the Internet than their parents and 66% of parents agree.⁵



Children & Youth Most Likely to Be Online⁶

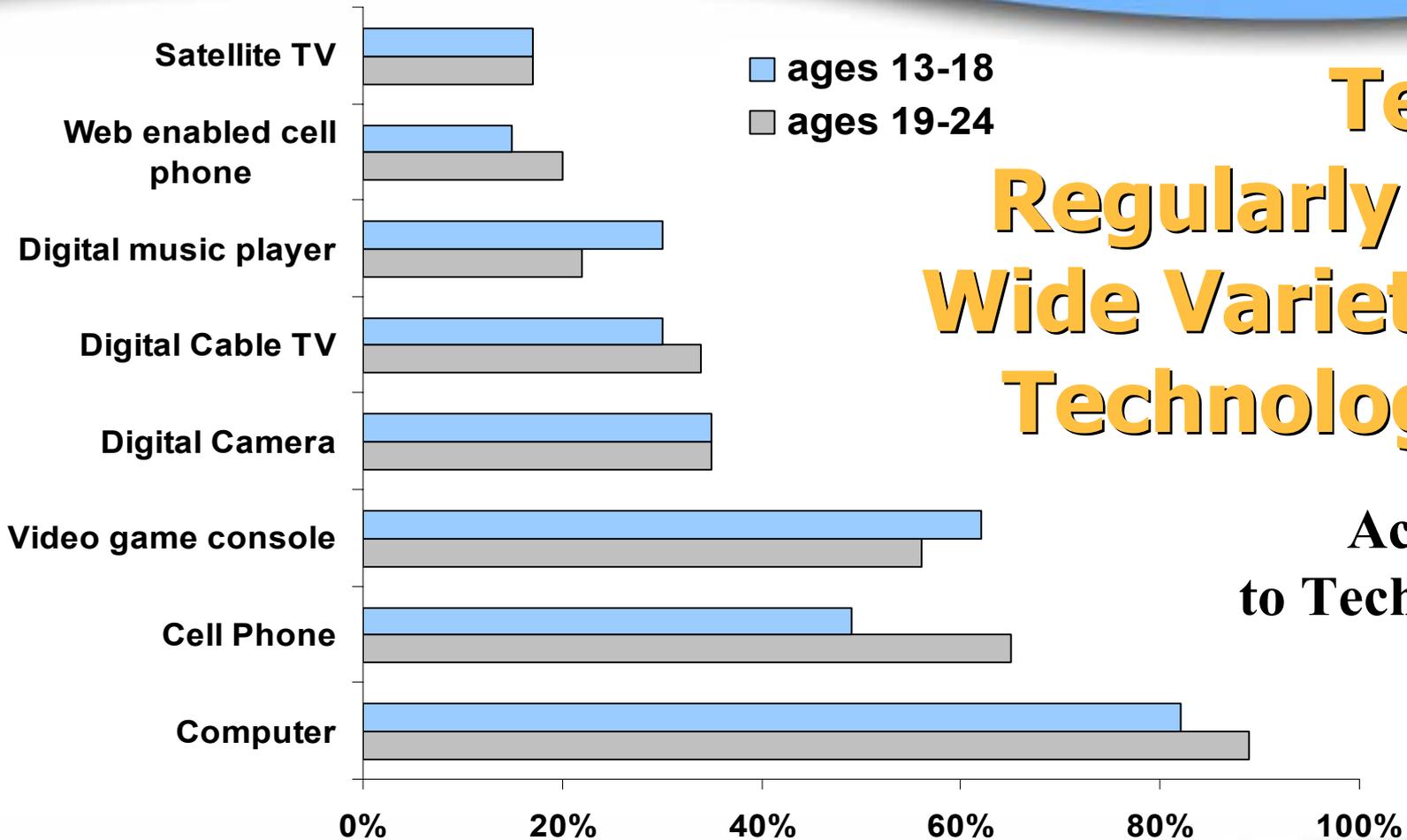
**Internet
Use by Age**





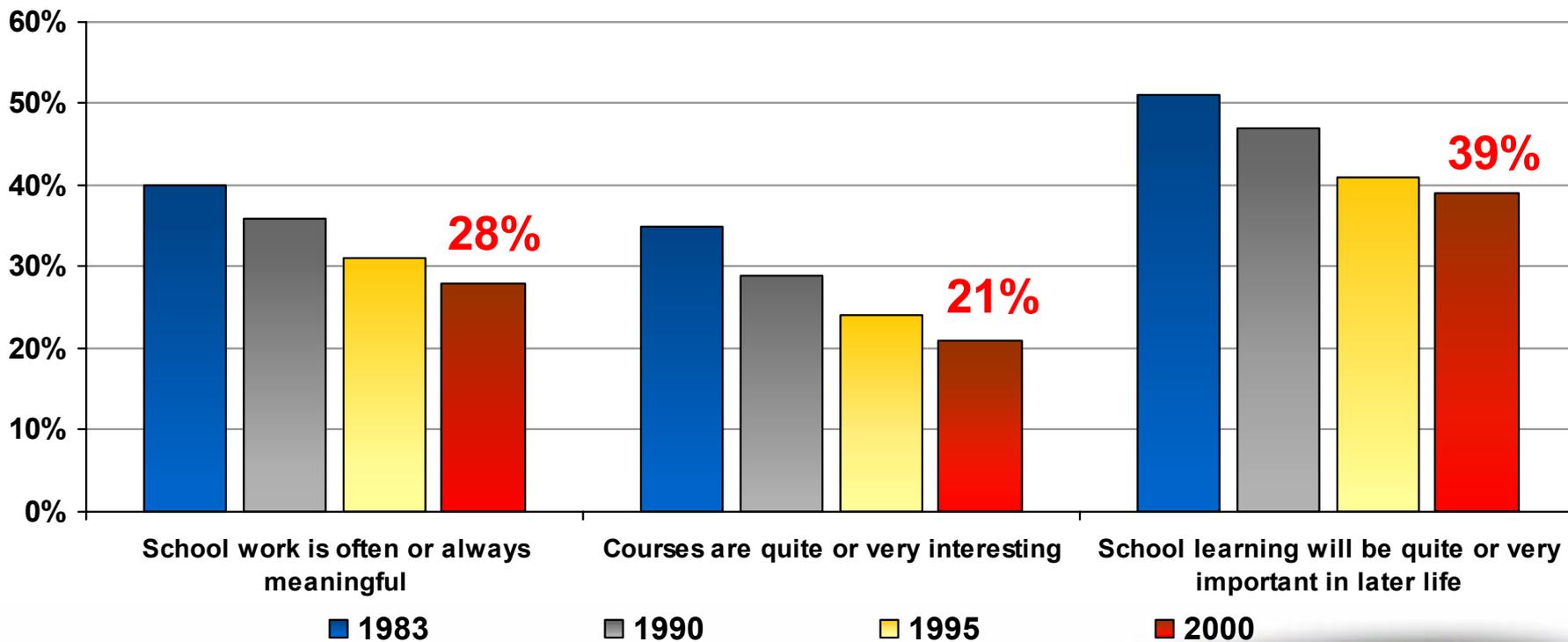
Teens Regularly Use Wide Variety of Technologies⁷

Access to Technologies





12th Graders Perceptions About School⁸





“Teens and young adults are searching for independence and control, and the Internet gives it to them like no other media can.

Millennials vividly expressed excitement, freedom, immediacy, and most of all control over their experience – where they go, what they learn, what they buy, whom they talk to, and how they live their lives.”

Yahoo: Born to Be Wired⁹



Our Challenge

Are our schools ready for this generation? What assumptions about education do we need to question?



National Ed Tech Plan

- Required by NCLB to be submitted to Congress
- Rapidly evolving needs and expectations from two areas:
 - students (shaped largely in part by their exposure and use of technology)
 - 21st century society requiring new skills to be competitive in today's economy
- These needs and expectations require new models of education.
- The tension between holding on to our traditional values of “public education” while modernizing our methods and means.
- Exploring the role technology can play in supporting such a system.



You can help!

- Submit comments
- Help us identify the most appropriate role for technology in education.
- Share examples / promising practices
- Metrics

National Education Technology Plan - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address <http://www.nationaledeplan.org/>

Skip Navigation

Official site for the development of the next National Education Technology Plan for the U.S. Department of Education.

National Education Technology Plan

Home | Why a Plan? | Background | Participate! | Resources | About Us | Contact Us

"By harnessing technology, we can expand access to learning and close the achievement gap in America."
US Secretary of Education Rod Paige

Participate in the Plan

The Department of Education is seeking participation from a broad audience to provide input into the development of the National Education Technology Plan. Be sure to sign up for email updates below. [get started here>>>](#)

Sign Up for Email Updates

Enter your email address:

What is the Plan?

The National Education Technology Plan for the U.S. Department of Education is being developed as part of a long-range national strategy and guide for using technology effectively to improve student academic achievement—either directly or through integration with other approaches to systemic reform.

What's New?

Click [here](#) for recent press coverage, featured events, and new resources!

Press: [Department Seeks Broad Input for New National Education Technology Plan](#) May 23, 2003

Event: [National Educational](#)

<http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/05-2003/05232003.html>

www.NationalEdTechPlan.org



<http://www.ed.gov>

<http://www.ed.gov/Technology>

<http://www.NationalEdTechPlan.org>

<http://www.nclb.gov>





Endnotes

1. Keeter, Scott, et al. "The Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait." The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE). 19 Sep. 2002. 7 Aug. 2003 <http://www.civicyouth.org/research/products/youth_index.htm>.
 - United States. Census Bureau. 2000 Census. "Total Population Sum, Ages 0-24." 2000. 11 Aug. 2003 <<http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t9/tab01.pdf>>.
 - United States. Census Bureau. 2000 Census. "Total Population Sum, Percent Comparison by Age." 2000. 11 Aug. 2003 <<http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t9/tab01.pdf>>.
 - United States. Census Bureau. 2000 Census. "Total Population Sum, Percent Non-White Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin." 2000. 11 Aug. 2003 <<http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t9/tab01.pdf>>.
 - Keeter, Scott, et al. "The Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait." The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE). 19 Sep. 2002. 7 Aug. 2003 <http://www.civicyouth.org/research/products/youth_index.htm>.
 - Keeter, Scott, et al. "The Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait." The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE). 19 Sep. 2002. 7 Aug. 2003 <http://www.civicyouth.org/research/products/youth_index.htm>.
 - Geraci, John and Larry Brown, ed. "Then (1966) and Now (2002): How Have Teenagers Changed?" Trends & Tudes 1.5 (Nov. 2002). 8 Aug. 2003 <http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_k12.asp>.
2. "The State of Our Nation's Youth." Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc. 2003. 7 Aug. 2003 <<https://www.horatioalger.com/pubmat/surpro.htm>>.



Endnotes continued

3. "The State of Our Nation's Youth." Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc. 2003. 7 Aug. 2003 <<https://www.horatioalger.com/pubmat/surpro.htm>>.
 - Just Kids Inc. 2001
4. "Teens Spent \$170 Billion in 2002." Teenage Research Unlimited. 17 Feb. 2003. 8 Aug. 2003 <http://www.teenresearch.com/PRview.cfm?edit_id=152>.
- "College Students Spend \$200 Billion Per Year." Harris Interactive. 29 July 2003. 8 Aug. 2003 <<http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/allnewsbydate.asp?NewsID=480>>.
- "Interprise Poll on Personal Finance 2002." Junior Achievement, Inc. 12 Apr. 2002. 11 Aug. 2003 <http://www.ja.org/about/about_newsitem.asp?StoryID=44>.
- "Interprise Poll on Personal Finance 2002." Junior Achievement, Inc. 12 Apr. 2002. 11 Aug. 2003 <http://www.ja.org/about/about_newsitem.asp?StoryID=44>.
5. Lenhart, Amanda, Lee Rainie, and Oliver Lewis. "Teenage Life Online." Pew Internet & American Life Project. 20 June 2001. 7 Aug. 2003 <<http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=36>>.



Endnotes continued

6. Graph data is compiled from three sources:

- Cole, Jeffrey I., et al. "UCLA Internet Report: Surveying the Digital Future, Year Three." UCLA Center for Communication Policy. Feb. 2003. 7 Aug. 2003 <<http://ccp.ucla.edu/pdf/UCLA-Internet-Report-Year-Three.pdf>>.
 - "Connected to the Future: A Report on Children's Internet Use." Corporation for Public Broadcasting. 2002. 7 Aug. 2003 <<http://www.cpb.org/ed/resources/connected/>>.
 - Horrigan, John, et al. "The Ever-Shifting Internet Population." Pew Internet & American Life Project. 16 Apr. 2003. 7 Aug. 2003 <<http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=88>>.
7. "Born to be Wired: The Role of New Media for a Digital Generation; A New Media Landscape Comes of Age: Executive Summary." Yahoo! and Carat Interactive. July 2003. 7 Aug. 2003 (press release) <http://biz.yahoo.com/bw/030724/245198_1.html>.
8. United States. Dept. of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. "The Condition of Education 2002." June 2002. 11 Aug. 2003 <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003067>>.
9. "Born to be Wired: The Role of New Media for a Digital Generation; A New Media Landscape Comes of Age: Executive Summary." Yahoo! and Carat Interactive. July 2003. 7 Aug. 2003 (press release) <http://biz.yahoo.com/bw/030724/245198_1.html>.