

## Chapter 10. Time Use and Peers

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The peer group is very important for teens, as friends are a source of support and influence. As teens grow older, they tend to have to vary their time commitments ranging from school, friends, and extra-curricular activities.<sup>1</sup> As teens time commitments increase their unsupervised time increases. Due to this increase, there exists the potential rise in sexual and drug-related behaviors. Nine out of ten teenagers who have sex reported having sex either at their own home or at a friend's house.<sup>2</sup> Teens who participate and enjoy extra-curricular activities feel a sense of connectedness to their school are less likely to engage in risky behaviors and tend to be friends with peers that share the same interests.<sup>3</sup>

Even though friendships play a vital role in teenagers' life, research shows that teenagers want more guidance from their parents are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors. (Refer to Family Chapter for findings on the link between parental monitoring and teen's risky behaviors.) Parents who show interest and promote good grades provide self-esteem by showing they have confidence in their teen and that they care about their future.<sup>4</sup>

This chapters highlights the areas of teens' perception of their peers, what teens are doing and how they are spending their time:

- Are teens concerned about fitting in with their peers?
- Are they worried that more of their friends may be smoking or drinking?
- Do teens' parents know their friends?
- How do teens spend their time?

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<sup>1</sup> Being Busy—Is it Always a Good Thing? (2005). The St. Louis Children's Hospital.  
<http://www.stlouischildrens.org>

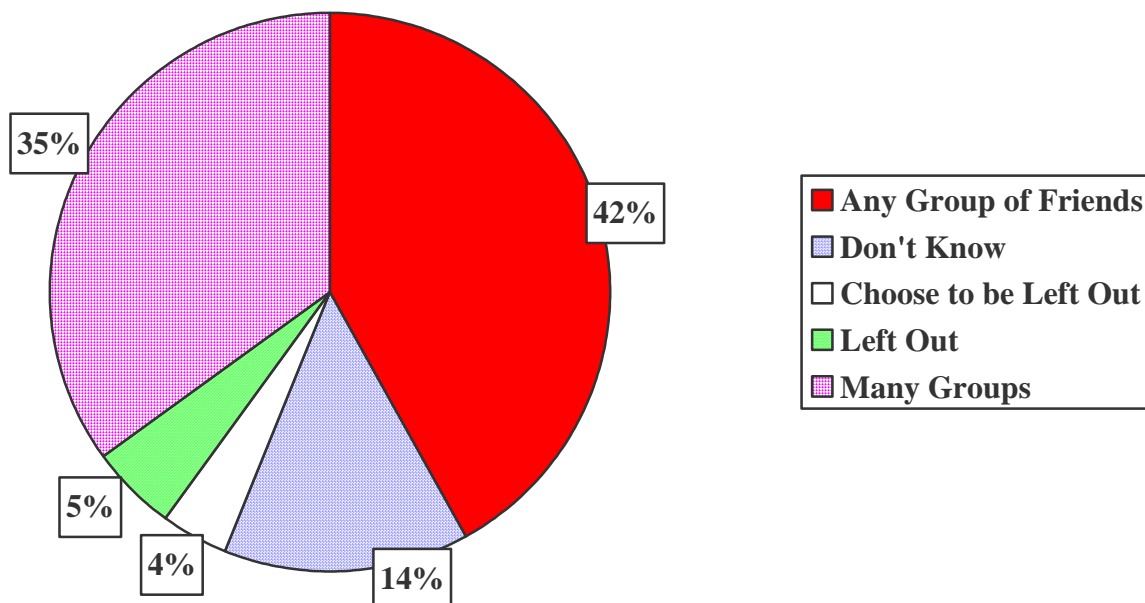
<sup>2</sup> Keeping Busy but Not that Busy. (2003) Parks & Recreation. 38(2) 83.

<sup>3</sup> Crosnoe R, B Needham (2004) Holism, Contextual Variability & the Study of Friendships in Adolescent Development. *Child Development* 75(1) 264-79.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, Shephard (2003) Building Protective Connections for Your Child.  
<http://www.youthdevelopment.org>

## TEEN PEER GROUPS

Student responses to the question: *“Where do you feel you fit in best?”*



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### Key Findings:

Forty-two percent (42%) of the teens say they feel comfortable with any group of friends. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the teens report they fit in with many groups.

Five percent (5%) of teens report they are left out and 4% say they choose to be alone. Fourteen percent (14%) of teens say they don't know where they fit in.

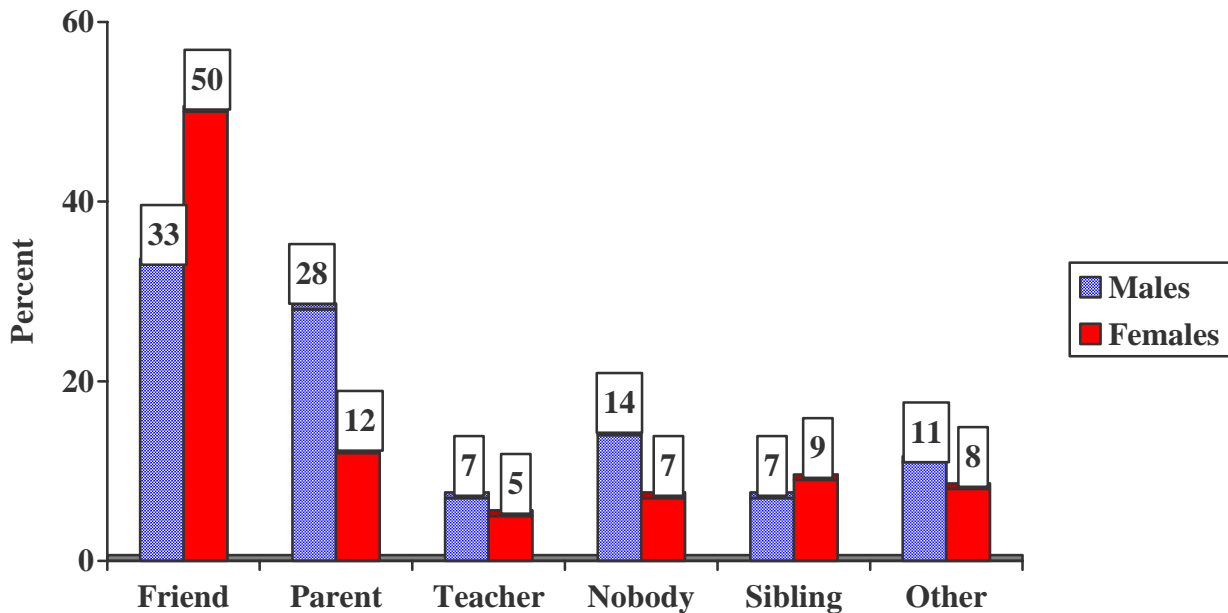
### Other Notable Findings:

Eighty-five percent (85%) of teens agree or strongly agree that they can stand up for their beliefs and resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. Of this 85%, almost all of them fit in with one or more group of friends.

One-half of the teens that choose to be alone or feel left out, strongly agree or agree that they sometimes feel their life has no purpose.

## TALKING TO FRIENDS

Student responses to the question, “If you were having a personal problem and needed someone to talk to, who would you most likely go to?”



### Key Findings:

Thirty-three percent (33%) of males and 50% of females would go to a friend to discuss a personal problem.

Parents are the second choice of people students would talk with when that student has personal problems. Fourteen percent (14%) of the males would not discuss a personal problem with anyone. Nine percent (9%) of the females would go to a brother or sister with a problem.

### Other Notable Findings:

More older teens, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders, would go to a friend with a personal problem, whereas more 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders report they are likely to go to a parent to discuss a personal problem. Interestingly, more males than females would go to their parents to discuss a problem.

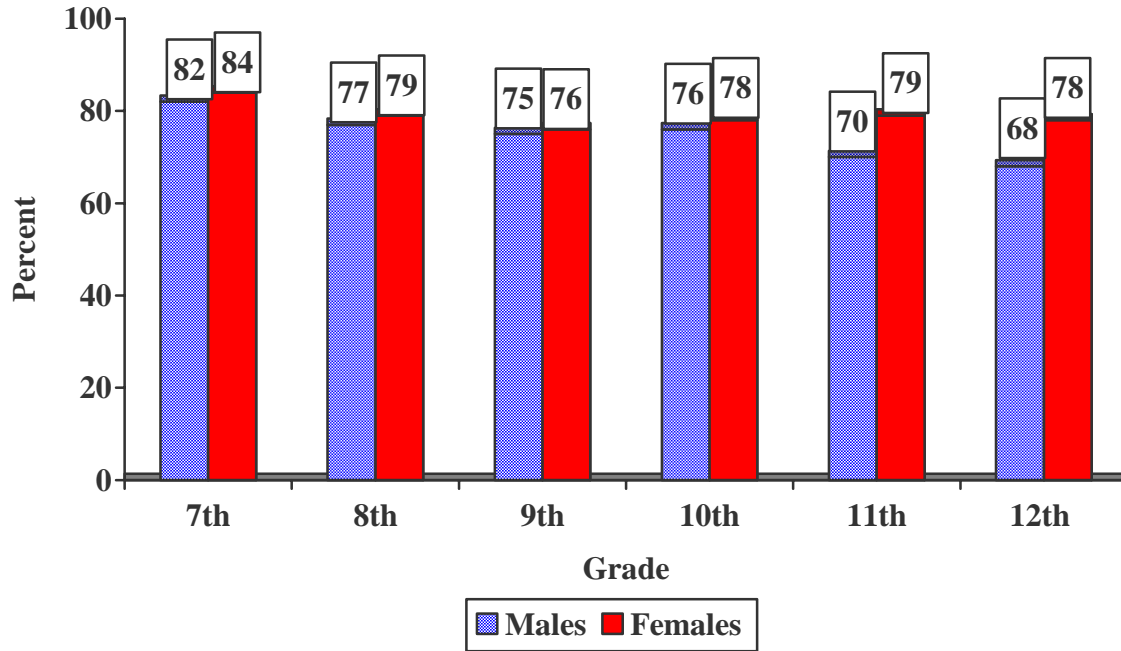
Twenty-four (24%) percent of teen who have thought about suicide in the last month said they would talk to nobody if they were having a personal problem.

Of those teens who have thought about suicide in the last month, 44% said they would talk to a friend if they were having a personal problem.

Ten percent (10%) of teens reported that they would not talk to anyone if they were having a personal problem. Of this 10%, one-half feel somewhat or significantly unattached to their community.

## PARENTS KNOW FRIENDS

Teens who respond “often” to the statement, “My parent(s) know who my friends are”:



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### Key Findings:

More females than males at all grades say their parents know their friends.

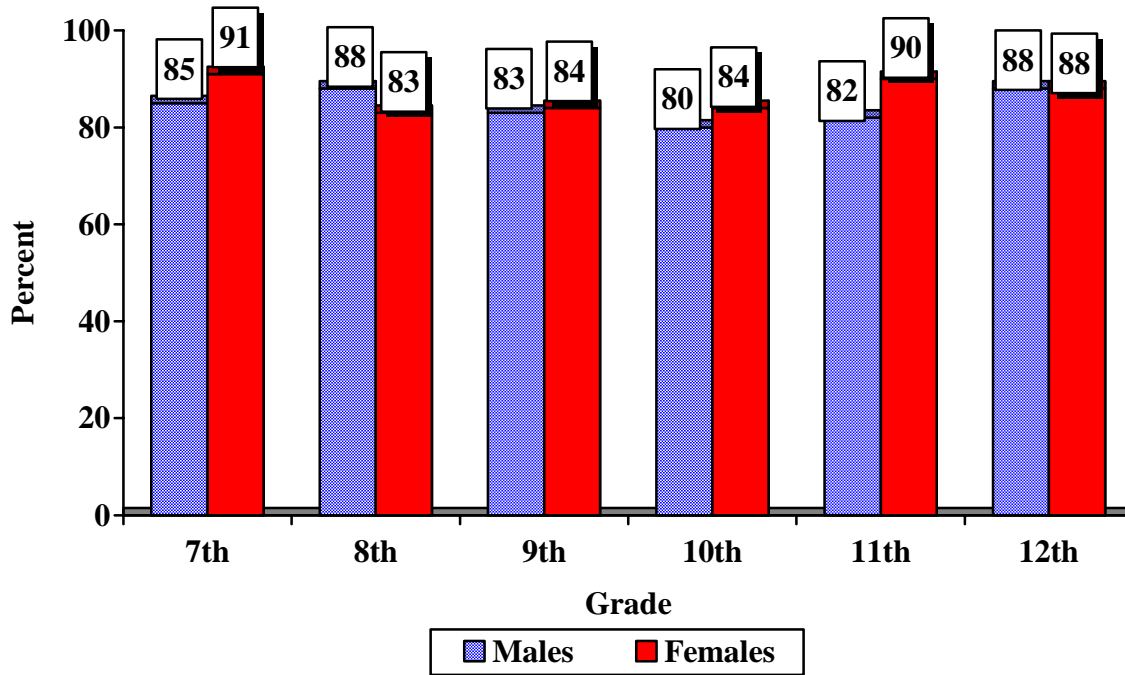
### Other Notable Finding:

Fifty-five percent (55%) of males and 60% of females say their parents “often” know the parents of their friends.

Overall, 74% of males and 78% of females report that their parents “often” know their friends. In 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 68% of males report their parents “often” know their friends.

## STAND UP FOR BELIEFS - RESIST PEER PRESSURE

Students who “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement, “I stand up for my beliefs and can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations”:



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### Key Finding:

Tenth grade males are the least likely to report they can stand up for their beliefs and resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.

Ninety-one percent (91%) of 7<sup>th</sup> grade females report they can stand up for their beliefs and resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.

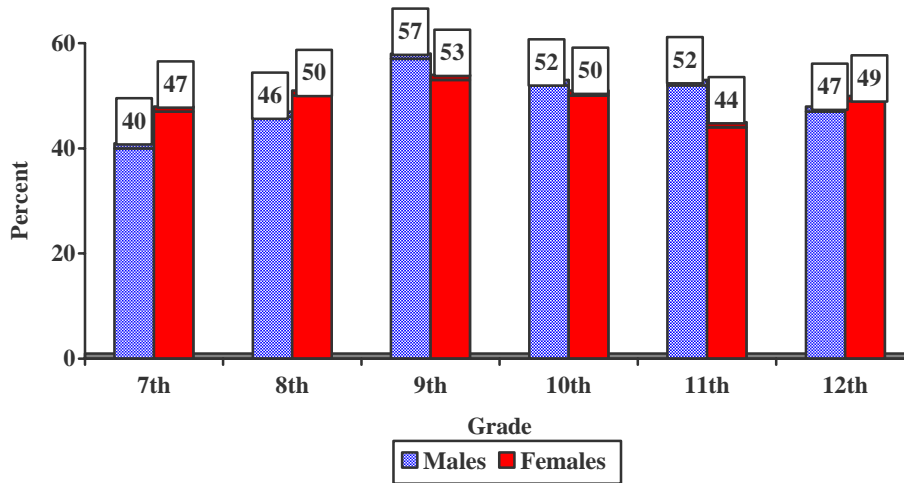
### Other Notable Findings:

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of students who “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement “My family loves me and gives me support when I need it” also “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement “I stand up for my beliefs and can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.”

Eighty-five percent (85%) of all teens report they “agree” or “strongly agree” that they can “stand up for my beliefs and can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations”.

## HOURS IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES - 3 OR MORE HOURS A WEEK

Teens who spend three or more hours per week in activities outside the classroom (sports, clubs, student government, 4-H clubs, scouts, etc.):



### Key Findings:

7<sup>th</sup> grades males are the least likely and 9<sup>th</sup> grade males are the most likely.

### Other Notable Findings:

Thirty percent (30%) of the teens “agree” or “strongly agree” that “the cost of participating in school activities keeps me from participating as much as I’d like to”. This is up from 21% from the 2001 SWYS data.

Of the students who spent 10 or more hours per week in outside activities, 66% got A or AB while 7% got C’s or below.

Compared to data from the 2001 SWYS, teens are spending considerably less time in activities outside the classroom.

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of those in activities outside the classroom 1 or more hours per week do not smoke and fifty-six (56%) do not drink.

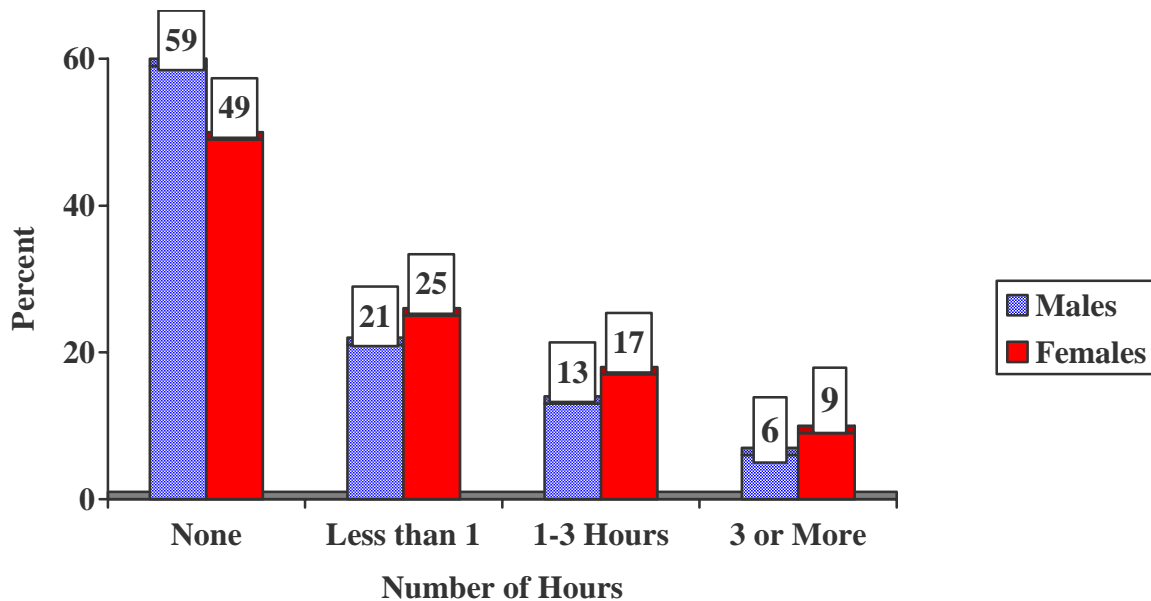
Eighty-eight percent (88%) of teens that spend one or more hours per week in activities outside of the classroom are satisfied with themselves and take a positive attitude toward themselves.

Eighty-three percent (83%) of teens that participate in activities outside the classroom are attached to their community. *Community attachment is based on student responses to questions on the survey that addressed community networks, community resources and neighborhoods. Students who are attached to their community report they see their community as a resource and as a support.*

Overall, 50% of males and 49% of females spend three or more hours per week in activities outside the classroom.

## HOURS IN VOLUNTEER WORK

Student responses to the question, “How many hours per week do you spend helping other people without getting paid (such as helping out at a hospital, nursing home, daycare center)?”



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### Key Findings:

Forty percent (40%) of males and 51% of females spend some time during the week doing volunteer work.

Twenty-three percent (23%) of teens spend 1 or more hours per week helping other people without getting paid.

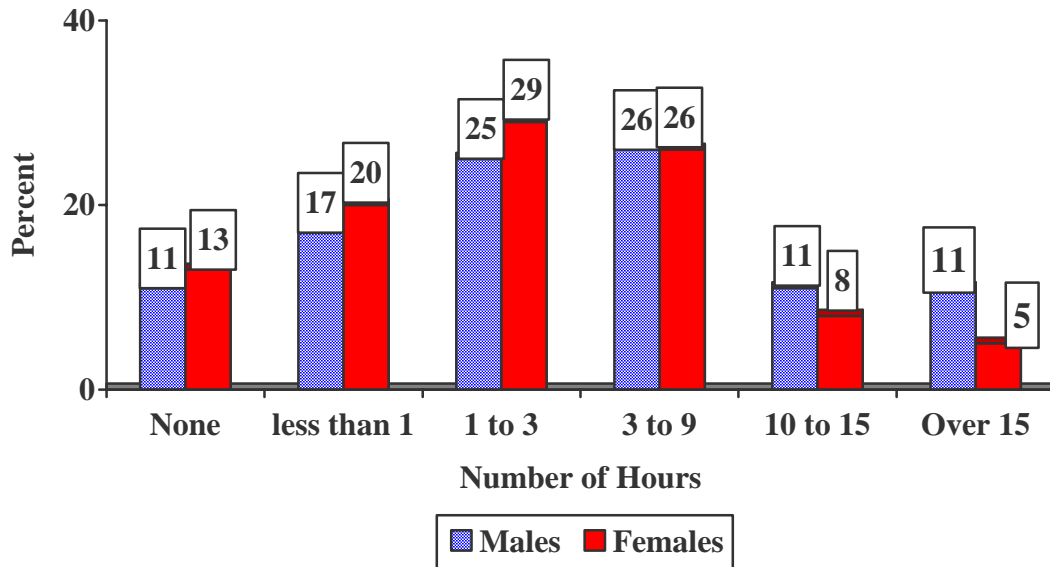
### Notable Findings:

Only 16% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade males spend an hour per week or more helping others while 24% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade females spend an hour per week or more helping others.

Thirty-three (33%) of 7<sup>th</sup> grade females spend an hour per week or more helping others.

## HOURS PLAYING VIDEO/COMPUTER GAMES OR WATCHING TV

Student responses to the question, “How many hours per week do you spend playing video/computer games or watching TV?”



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### Key Findings:

More than 60% of males and 60% of females spend 3 or more hours playing video/computer games or watching TV.

Eleven percent (11%) of males and 13% of females report spending no hours playing video/computer games or watching TV.

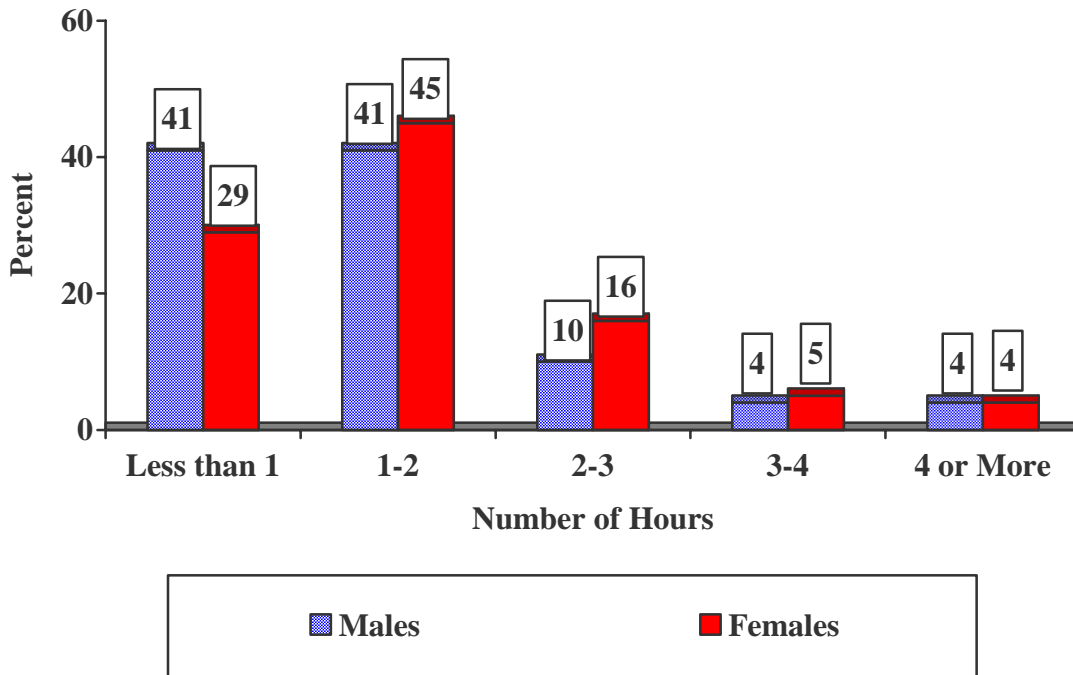
Eleven percent (11%) of males and 5% of females play video/computer games or watch TV over 15 hours per week.

### Notable Findings:

Eight (8%) of 12<sup>th</sup> grade males report spending 15 hours or more and four percent of 12<sup>th</sup> grade females report spending no time playing video or computer games.

## HOURS STUDYING

Student responses to the question, “On an average school day, how much time do you spend doing homework?”



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### Key Findings:

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of males and 70% of females spend one or more hours per day doing homework.

Females are more likely to report spending an hour or more per day doing homework.

### Other Notable Findings:

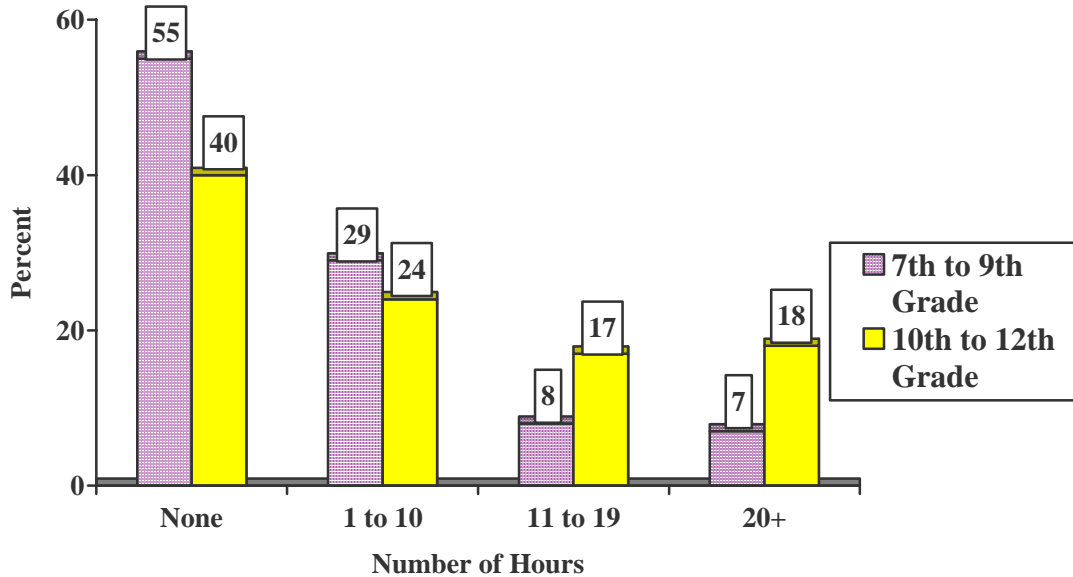
Sixty-five percent (65%) of all teens report they spend more than one hour per day doing homework.

Sixty-eight percent (68%) of those that get A's and A/B's report spending one or more hours per day doing homework.

Seventy-two (72%) of teens that get C's or below spend less than one hour per day doing homework.

## HOURS ON JOB/WORK

Student responses to the question, “If you have one or more jobs during the school year, approximately how many hours per week do you work (include number of hours worked on family farm)?”



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### Key Findings:

Fifty-five percent (55%) of 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> graders and 40% of 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders spend no hours on a job or at work.

Fifteen percent (15%) of 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> graders and 35% of 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders spend over ten hours per week at work or on a job.

### Other Notable Findings:

Twenty-seven percent (27%) of 12<sup>th</sup> graders report working 20 or more hours per week.

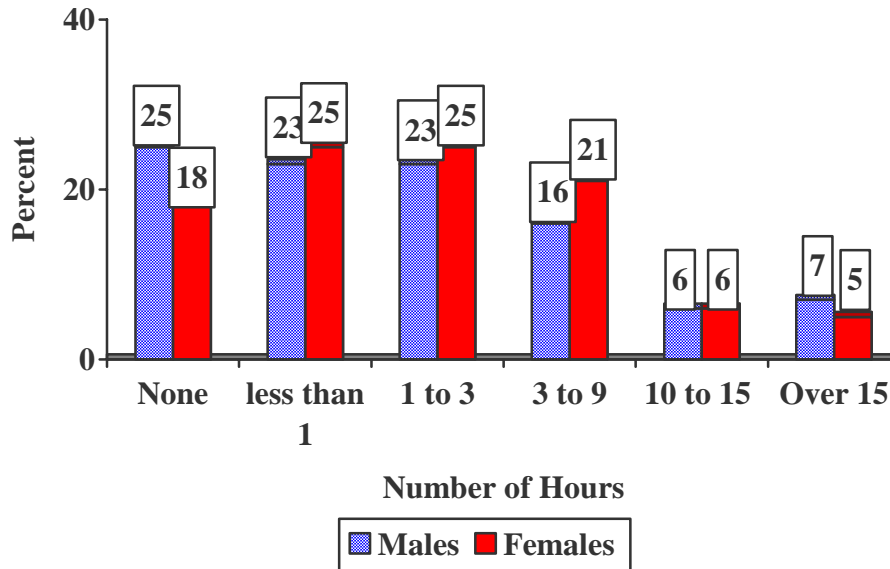
Forty-seven percent (47%) of males and 55% of females spend 1-9 hours per week doing chores at home.

Twenty-seven (27%) of teens spend more than three hours per week doing chores at home.

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of those who work ten hours or less get As and A/Bs. Only 11% of those who work over 20 hours per week get As and A/Bs.

## HOURS ON INTERNET

Student responses to the question, “How many hours per week do you spend on the Internet?” (surfing, instant messaging, chat rooms, email)




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### Key Findings:

Twenty-three percent (23%) of males and 25% of females are on the Internet up to one hour per week.

Forty-nine percent (49%) of males and 54% of females spend over three hours per week on the Internet and 7% of males and 5% of females report spending over 15 hours per week on the Internet.

### Other Notable Findings:

Twenty-one percent (21%) of 7<sup>th</sup> grade students spend three or more hours per week on the Internet, compared to 25% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

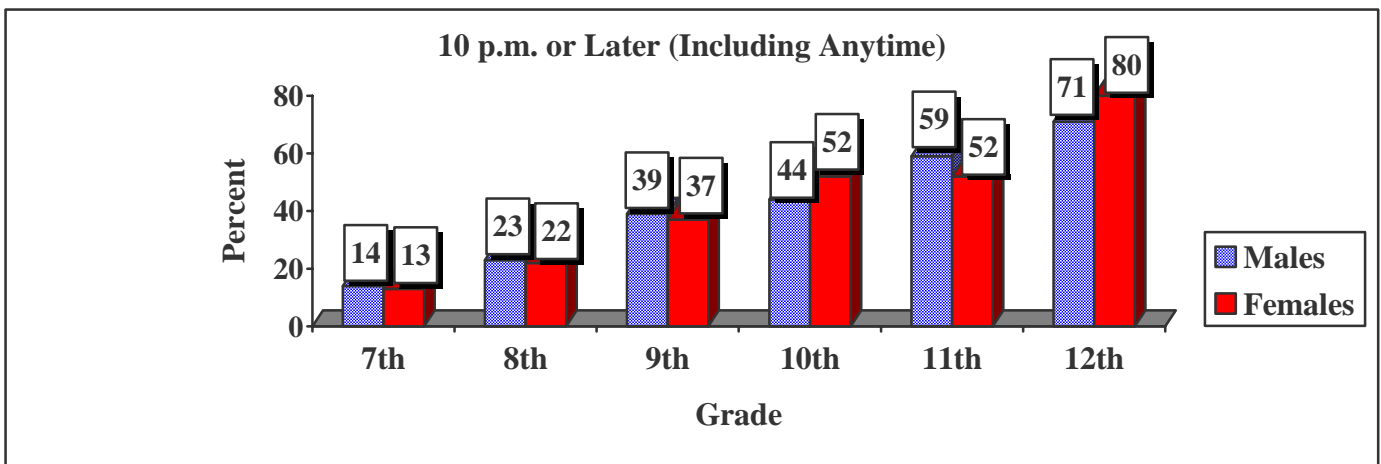
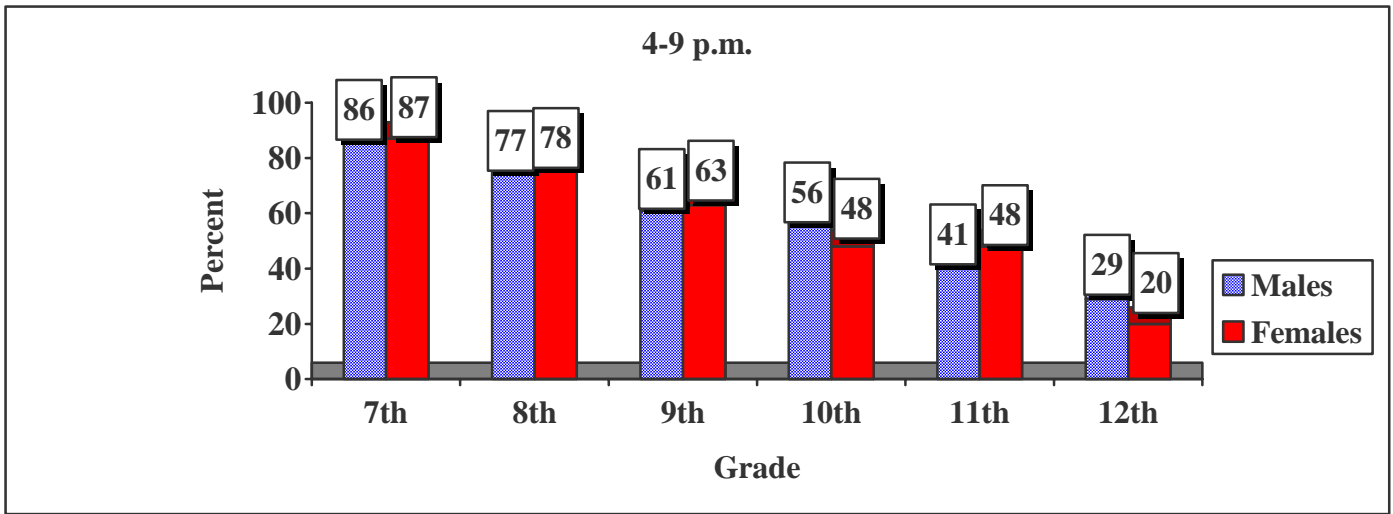
Eighty-eight percent (82%) of students who get A's or A/B's spend some time on the Internet per week.

In a similar study conducted in 2001, only 38% of males and 36% of females spent three or more hours per week on the Internet.

Of those teens that spend three or more hours on the internet per week, 12% have been victims of cyberbullying and 12% have engaged in cyberbullying.

## SCHOOL NIGHT CURFEW

Student responses to the question, “About what time must you be home on school nights (Sunday – Thursday)?”



### Other Notable Finding:

Eighty-two percent (82%) of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders have a school night curfew of 4-9 p.m. Fifty-seven (57%) of 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders report this and 35% of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders say their school night curfew is 4-9 p.m.

Eighteen percent (18%) of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders and 43% of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders report a school night curfew of after 10:00 p.m. Over 65% of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders say this.

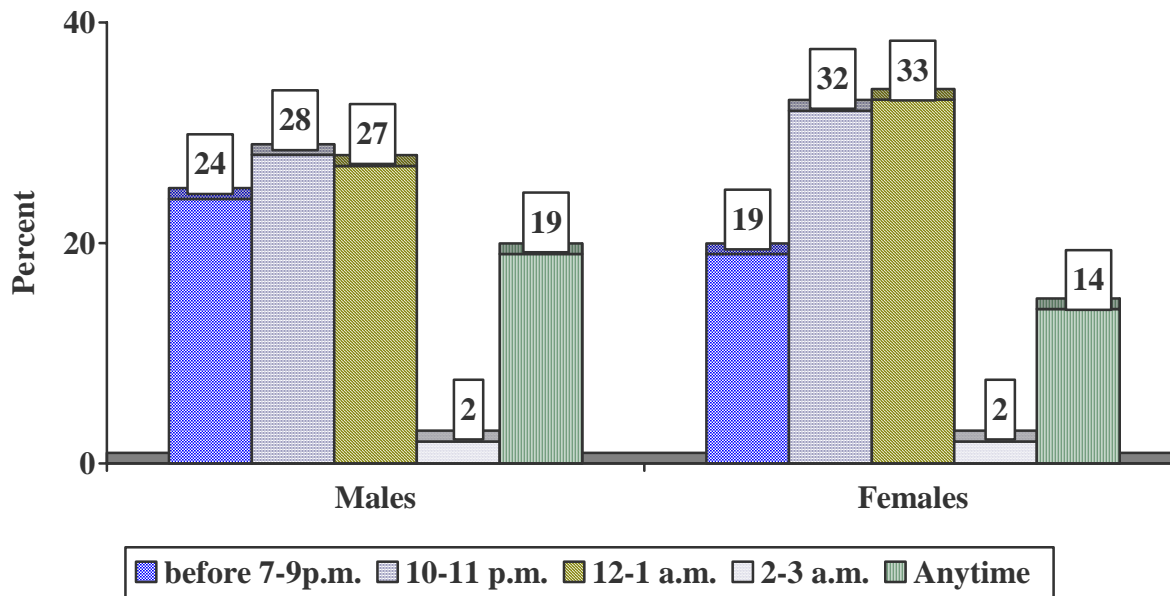
Fifty-eight percent (58%) of youth who get A's and A/B's report they have a school night curfew of 9:00 p.m. or earlier.

Fourteen percent (14%) of 12<sup>th</sup> grade males and females report that their curfew is anytime on school nights.

Compared to the 2001 SWYS data, overall teens are reporting earlier curfews.

## WEEKEND CURFEW

Student responses to the question, “About what time must you be home on most weekend nights (Friday & Saturday)?”



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### Key Findings:

Fifty-two percent (52%) of males and 51% of females report a weekend curfew of 11:00 p.m. or earlier.

Twenty-seven percent (27%) of males and 33% of females report a curfew of midnight to 1:00 a.m.

Nineteen percent (19%) of males and 14% females report their curfew is “anytime”.

### Other Notable Findings:

Seventy-one percent (71%) of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders report a curfew of before 7:00-11:00 p.m.

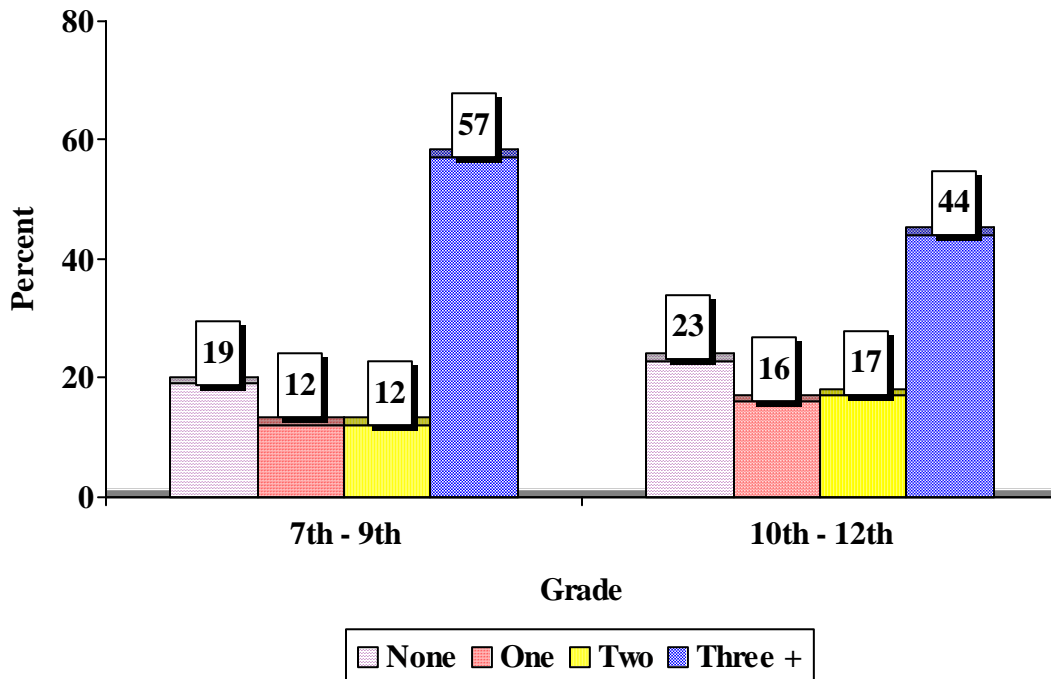
One in four 12<sup>th</sup> graders say they have a curfew of “anytime”.

Thirty-three percent (33%) of teens who have smoked in the past 30 days have no weekend curfew. Only 13% of those who have not smoked in the past 30 days have no weekend curfew.

Fifty-five percent (55%) of teens that have drunk alcohol have a weekend curfew of 1 a.m. or later.

## FAMILY EATS DINNER TOGETHER

Student responses to the question, “How many nights per week does your family (e.g., you, your siblings, and parent(s) who live at home) sit down to dinner together?”



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### Key Findings:

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> graders eat three or more evening meals per week with their family, and 44% of 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders eat three or more evening meals together.

One in four (23%) of 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders report that they eat no evening meals with their family.

### Other Notable Findings:

Of the youth who get A's and A/B's, 56% eat dinner with their family three or more times per week.

Thirty percent (30%) of youth who report eating none, one or two dinners a week with their family work 10 or more hours a week on a job. Whereas, 22% of those that eat more than three meals a week together work more than 10 hours a week.

Fifty-five percent (55%) of those who don't smoke and 58% of those who don't drink alcohol eat dinner with their family three or more nights per week.