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ABSTRACT

In November 1991 a survey was conducted of all students in Toronto (Ontario, Canada) secondary schools. The initial report gave demographic information about the student population. This report includes subgroup profiles, such as the characteristics of female versus male students, the similarities and differences among racial and ethnic groups, and the attributes of students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Male students outnumber females in the Toronto schools. Most white students are Canadian born, but most Asian and black students are foreign born. The most recent immigrants are Tamils from Sri Lanka and Black students from Africa. Single-parent families are most common among Black and Aboriginal families. Students from high socioeconomic status (SES) families are most likely to be white, Canadian-born speakers of English as the mother tongue, and living with two parents. Details on time spent after school, program level and postsecondary education plans, and school climate are provided. Eleven tables and 37 figures present student data. Two appendixes contain the survey and cover letter. (SLD)

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# The 1991 Every Secondary Student Survey, Part II: DETAILED PROFILES OF TORONTO'S SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

No. 204

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**The 1991 Every Secondary Student Survey, Part II:**  
**DETAILED PROFILES OF**  
**TORONTO'S SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Fall 1993

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&

Suzanne Ziegler

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background Characteristics

#### Gender

- o In Toronto secondary schools, male students outnumber female students, mainly in the General and Basic Level programs.
- o An equal proportion of females and males take math up to the OAC level, although male students are more likely to earn all three OAC math credits than females. In science, females are overrepresented in Biology courses, while males are overrepresented in Chemistry and, particularly, Physics.

#### Race

- o The majority of White students are Canadian-born, whereas most of the Asians and Blacks are foreign-born. Among the foreign-born, the most recent immigrants are the Tamils from Sri Lanka and Black students born in Africa.
- o While there are significant dissimilarities across the racial groups in terms of socio-demographic backgrounds and school-related variables, there are also some substantial differences within the racial groups (e.g. Jewish compared to Portuguese students, and African-born compared to Caribbean-born Black students).

#### Parental Presence

- o Single parent (mother only) families are most common among Black and Aboriginal students. Only a third of Black and less than half of the Aboriginal students live with two parents.
- o The majority of students living apart from their parents are over the age of 19, foreign-born, non-White and have a mother tongue which is not English.

#### Socio-economic Backgrounds

- o Students from high SES families are most likely to be White, Canadian-born, speakers of English as a mother tongue and living with two parents.
- o Students from low SES backgrounds are highly represented by those who are foreign-born and/or speakers of a mother tongue other than English.

- o Parents who are non-White or recently arrived in Canada are more likely to be employed in lower status jobs than those with similar educational level who are White or have been in Canada longer.

## School Related Characteristics

### Time Spent After School

- o Compared to male students, females tend to spend more time on homework and less time on part-time employment and are not as involved in extra-curricular activities as males.
- o Among the racial groups, Asians reported the longest hours spent on homework.
- o Certain subgroups of Black (those born in the Caribbean and Canada) and White (Jewish) students participate in extra-curricular activities more often than the rest of the student population.
- o Students of high SES backgrounds are more involved in extra-curricular activities than those from low SES families. The latter are likely to spend more hours on part-time work than the former.
- o Students living on their own are inclined to spend more time in both homework and part-time work but to be involved less frequently in extra-curricular activities.

### Program Level and Post-Secondary Plans

- o Students enrolled in Advanced Level courses and aspiring for university are more likely to be Asian or White, living with two parents, and to come from high SES families.
- o Students who are unsure about their career plans and need guidance are more likely to be non-White, to live on their own, and to come from low SES backgrounds.

### School Climate

- o Few differences are found between males and females, and students of various family backgrounds in how they perceive the school climate. However, a few noticeable differences are found among students of various cultural backgrounds (e.g. Korean students and Black students born in Canada and the Caribbean are more sensitive to racial equity issues at school than other groups of students.)



# SOME OVERALL FACTS & FIGURES

Toronto Secondary School Students, 1991-92

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS		Percent (%)	Population Estimate*	
<b>OVERALL POPULATION</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>27,000</b>	
Gender	Male	53	14,200	
	Female	47	12,600	
Race	White	54	14,500	
	Asian	30	8,000	
	Black	9	2,000	
	Aboriginal	1	300	
	Other	6	1,600	
Language/Culture	White	English only	21.6	5,800
		Portuguese	9.4	2,500
		Jewish	4.9	1,300
		Greek	4.4	1,200
		Italian	3.1	800
		Polish	1.6	400
	Asian	Chinese from Indochina**	11.5	3,100
		Tamil	10.4	2,800
		Indian	1.9	500
		Korean	1.8	500
	Black	Canadian-born	1.6	400
		Caribbean-born	3.4	900
		African-born	3.1	800
	Aboriginal	Canadian-born	2.4	600
	Other	Hispanic	0.7	200
Iranian		3.3	900	
Place of Birth	Canada	1	300	
	Outside Canada	57	15,300	
Year of Arrival (foreign-born only)	Before 1987	43	11,600	
	Since 1987	57	15,300	
Parental Presence at Home	Both Parents	63	16,900	
	Mother only	18	4,800	
	Father only	3	800	
	Not with parents	16	4,300	
Parents' Occupation	Professional	24	6,500	
	Semi-Professional/Technical	25	6,700	
	Skilled/Semi-skilled	32	8,600	
	Unskilled	6	1,600	
	Non-remunerative	13	3,500	
Level of Study	Basic	5	1,300	
	General	21	5,600	
	Advanced	74	19,900	
	Non-streamed	0.7	200	

\*The population estimates are based on 26,872 on-line student registration records as of November 1991, and rounded to the nearest hundredth. The figures do not include students from the four adult schools in the Toronto Board.

\*\*This category includes Vietnamese, Chinese-Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians.

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## INTRODUCTION

In November 1991, a survey of all students in Toronto secondary schools was conducted<sup>1</sup>; by mid-1992, a report entitled The 1991 Every Secondary Student Survey: Initial Findings (Brown, Cheng, Yau, & Ziegler), was released. It gives demographic information about the Toronto secondary school student population (e.g. age and gender distribution, racial and ethnic composition, and socio-economic makeup); it also presents students' responses to the several school-related questions included in the survey (e.g. program enrolment, school perception, after-school activities, and post-secondary school plans and aspirations). Due to the scope and the timeline of the initial report, the report did not include sub-group profiles - for instance, the characteristics of female versus male students, the commonalities and differences among racial and ethnic groups, the attributes of students from high socio-economic status (SES) vis-a-vis those from lower SES backgrounds.

In the following three sections of the present report, we shall take an indepth look at group characteristics and differences from three perspectives: (1) gender, (2) race and ethnicity, and (3) family background - one for each section.<sup>2</sup> Within each section, the *inter-relationships* among the socio-demographic and school-related variables - the same variables that have been broadly discussed in the initial report - will be analyzed in detail according to the theme of the section concerned. It should, however, be noted that each of these three sections can be treated as a unit of its own, since in each all the relevant socio-demographic and school-related information will be dealt with from a specific perspective. Therefore readers with a special interest can select the appropriate section for detailed information; or for a quick overview, refer to the summary attached to the end of each section. Readers who choose to read through the whole report should be warned that overlaps may seem to appear.

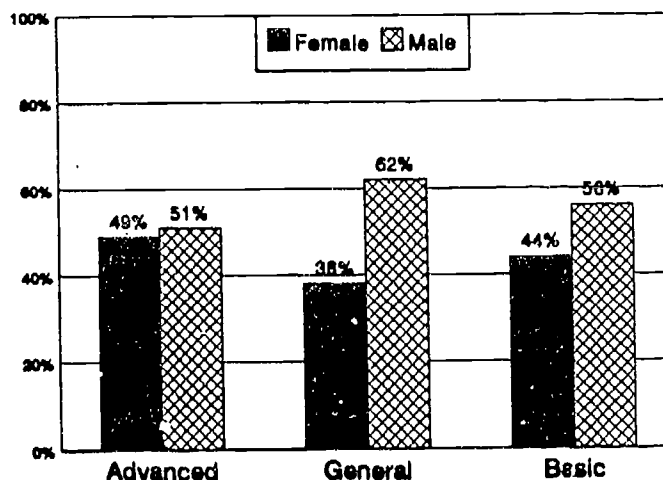
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1. For more information on the rationale of this survey, refer to the director's letter to students in Appendix 1.
  2. As in the first report, this study is based on the data collected from all Toronto's secondary schools, except for the four adult schools: City Adult Learning Centre, Adult Basic Education Centre, the Bickford Centre, and Jones Avenue Adult New Canadian Centre.

# 1 GENDER

## Overall Enrolment, Program Level and Gender

Overall, there are more male (53%) than female students (47%) enrolled in Toronto's secondary schools. However, a breakdown by program level indicates that gender distribution is more or less even at the Advanced level; but male students outnumber female at the other two program levels, especially the General Level where the female-male ratio is about 2:3. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1: Program level by Gender



## Course Enrolment and Gender

It is commonly believed that female students are underrepresented in math and science programs, especially at the senior level - i.e. beyond grade 10 when most of the compulsory credits have been completed. In order to understand if such gender differences exist in our secondary schools, Year 5 Advanced Level students<sup>3</sup> (i.e. those who have the opportunity to take courses up to OAC level) are examined.

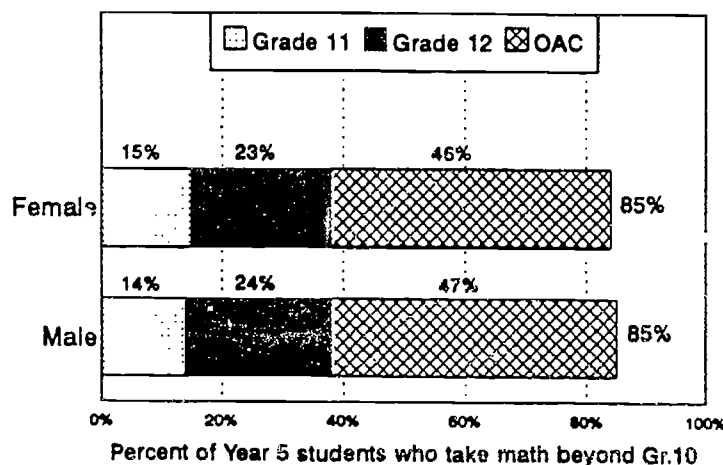
Our recent data<sup>4</sup> indicate that females are no longer underrepresented in Advanced senior-level math courses. As illustrated in Figure 2, an equal proportion (85%) of female and male students have participated in math beyond the grade 10 compulsory requirement; and the proportion of those who have attained the OAC level is almost the same (46% female versus 47% male). Yet, it should be noted that while over a quarter (27%) of male students who

3. These are students who entered secondary school in 1987-88.

4. Data on students' course enrolment were based on their Ontario Student Record (OSR) History File.

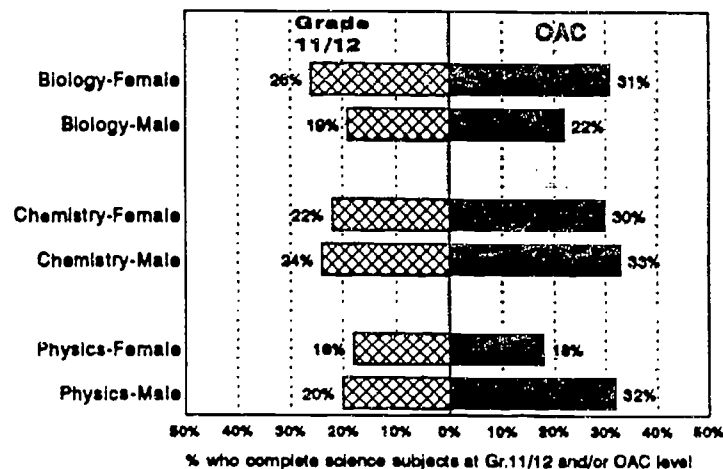
have OAC math have earned all three OAC math credits, only 12% of their female counterparts have done so. A closer look at specific OAC math courses further indicates that although an equal proportion (38% of Year 5 female and male students have Calculus credits, a slightly higher percentage of males than females have taken Algebra (29% versus 20%), and Functions and Relations (23% versus 19%).

Figure 2: Highest level of math enrolment by gender



Gender disparity is more apparent in the science enrolment pattern. Though a similar proportion of male and female students (76% versus 72%) have obtained science credits beyond grade 10, differences emerge when specific science subjects are considered. (See Figure 3.) A higher proportion of females than males have earned their Biology credits at both the grade 11/12 and OAC levels. In Chemistry, the pattern is reversed, though the difference is small. The largest discrepancy is in Physics, especially at the OAC level, where females are much less likely than males to earn an OAC Physics credit (18% versus 32%).

Figure 3: Highest level of science enrolment by gender



## School Climate and Gender

During the survey, students were asked about their perceptions of their school. Both female and male students responded to the seven school climate questions similarly.

## Time Spent After School and Gender

Female students tend to spend more time per week on homework than their male counterparts (2 hours more on average); but slightly fewer hours on part-time work (1 hour less). As far as extra-curricular activities are concerned, more male students reported participating often or sometimes (60%) than their female peers (52%). (See Table 1.) Unfortunately, data on types of extra-curricular activities are not available to verify if gender differences exist in the participation pattern.

**Table 1: Time spent after school by gender**

TIME SPENT AFTER SCHOOL		OVERALL %	Male %	Female %
HOMEWORK (hours/week)	Do not do homework	4	6	2
	Overall average no. of hours	10 hrs	9 hrs	11 hrs
WORK (hours/week)	Do not work	60	60	59
	Overall average no. of hours	14 hrs	15 hrs	14 hrs
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	Often	21	24	19
	Sometimes	24	36	33
	Rarely	23	22	25
	Never	21	19	23
	TOTAL	100	100	100

## Future Plans and Gender

With regard to students' post-secondary educational plans, a higher percentage of female students (61%) than male students (53%) aspire to attend university after secondary school. Correspondingly, more females (71%) than (64%) males think their parents expect them to enter university. (See Table 2.) As far as career plans are concerned, an equal proportion (65%) of female and male students have one or more occupational goals in mind.



Table 2: Future plans by gender

FUTURE PLANS		OVERALL %	Male %	Female %
STUDENTS' POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL PLANS	University	56	53	61
	Community College	17	18	16
	Work full-time	5	5	4
	Not sure	19	21	17
	Other	3	3	2
	TOTAL	100	100	100
PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT	University	67	64	71
	Community College	15	16	13
	Work full-time	4	4	3
	Not sure	10	12	9
	Other	4	4	4
	TOTAL	100	100	100
STUDENTS' CAREER PLANS	I have one specific occupation in mind.	26	26	26
	I have narrowed my plans to several possibilities.	39	39	39
	I am undecided and need help.	15	14	17
	I am undecided but don't need help at this time.	20	21	18
	TOTAL	100	100	100

## Overview

- o Male students outnumber female students in Toronto secondary schools, but mainly in General and Basic Level programs.
- o A similar proportion of female and male students have participated in math up to the OAC level, although males are more likely than females to earn all three OAC math credits.
- o In science, while a higher proportion of females than males have earned Biology credits, the reverse is true in Chemistry and especially Physics.
- o There is no gender difference in terms of students' perception of their school.
- o Female students tend to participate less frequently in extra-curricular activities, but spend more time on homework and less time on part-time job than their male counterparts.
- o Female students are more likely than male to aspire to attend university after secondary school.

## 2 RACE, ETHNICITY AND LANGUAGE

This section will examine student characteristics of the four major racial groups: Whites (54%), Asians (30%), Blacks (9%) and Aboriginals (1%). It will also highlight how students from different races and cultures resemble and differ from each other in socio-demographic characteristics and school-related variables.

### Cultural Group by Race

The ethnic/cultural subgroups are identified through information provided by students on the survey forms about their race, birthplace, first language, and ethnicity. (See Appendix 2.) Among Whites, the most sizeable language/ethnic groups are the "English only" (40%)<sup>5</sup>, Portuguese (17%), Jewish (9%), Greek (8%), Italian (6%), and Polish (3%) students.

Among Asians, the largest groups include the Chinese (38%)<sup>6</sup>, students from Indochina (34%)<sup>7</sup>, Tamil's (6%), Indians (6%), and Koreans (5%).

Blacks students can be divided into three major groups according to their place of birth: Canada (37%), the Caribbean (34%), and Africa (24%).

Among the Aboriginals, the two major groups are those born in Canada (54%) and those born in Central/South America (39%).<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the four racial groups, there are two unique groups of considerable size that are worth mentioning, namely the Hispanic and Iranian students. Because their members identified themselves under a number of racial categories, it is difficult to fit them under anyone of the major racial categories discussed above.<sup>9</sup>

---

5. This group is made up of mainly students who identified themselves as British, English, Scottish and Irish.

6. This group includes mainly Chinese born in China, Hong Kong and Canada.

7. The birthplace of these students is mainly Vietnam, but the ethnic make-up is almost half-and-half for Chinese and Vietnamese.

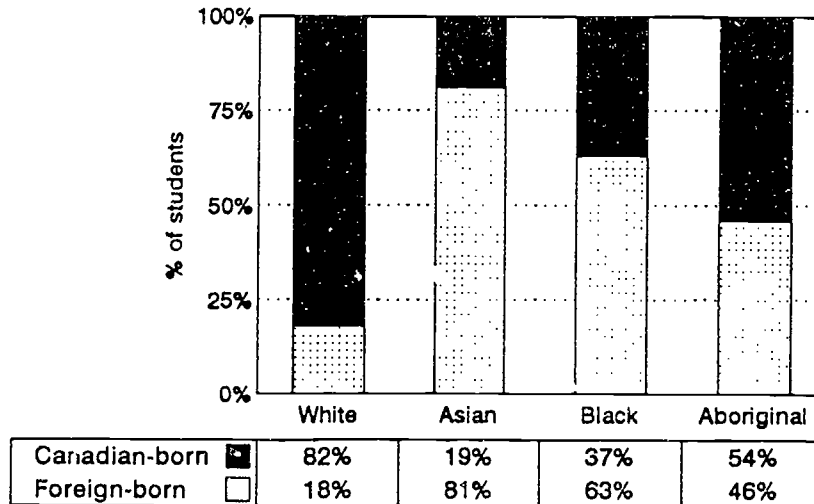
8. Since the majority of the Aboriginals from Central/South America are Spanish speaking, the detailed analyses of this group will be presented under the heading of "Hispanic".

9. Students of Iranian origin classified themselves mainly under one of three racial categories: Asian, White or "Other". Spanish-speaking students classified themselves mainly under one of four racial categories: Aboriginal, White, Mixed or "Other".

## Place of Birth and Race

The vast majority of White students (82%) are Canadian-born, compared to about one fifth of Asians (19%), one-third of Blacks (37%) and half of the Aboriginals (54%). (See Figure 4).

Figure 4: Place of birth by race



Among the foreign-born students across all racial groups, Blacks have the largest proportion (69%) of recent immigrants who have arrived in Canada since 1987. (See Figure 5).

Figure 5: Year of arrival by race

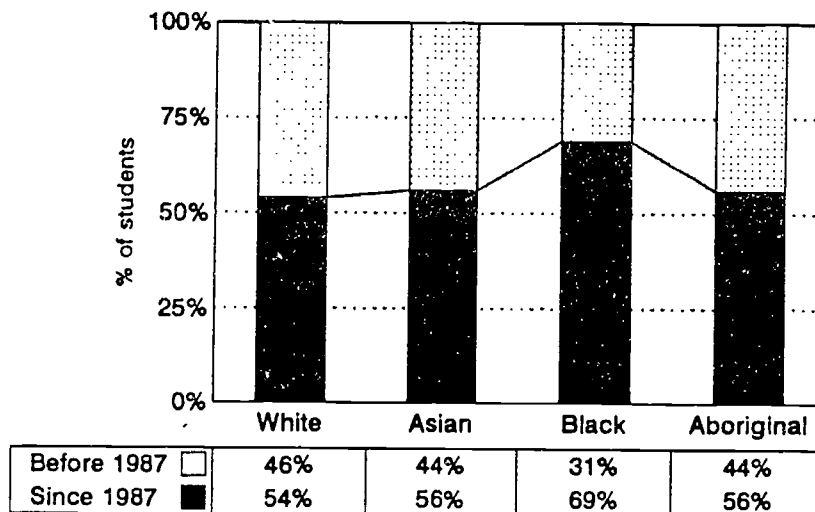


Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics of students by cultural groups

		OVERALL % (27000)*	White					
			English only % (5800)	Portuguese % (2500)	Jewish % (1300)	Greek % (1200)	Italian % (800)	Polish % (400)
Place of Birth	Canada	57	95	62	86	94	95	35
	Outside Canada	43	5	38	14	6	5	65
Year of Arrival (foreign-born only)	Before 1980	18	53	25	41	47	32	4
	1980-1982	14	19	6	17	9	16	13
	1983-1986	13	10	13	13	10	10	14
	1987-1989	31	8	34	16	26	29	37
	1990-1991	26	11	22	13	6	13	31
Parental Presence at Home	Both Parents	63	61	85	73	86	79	57
	Mother only	18	24	8	16	7	11	25
	Father only	3	5	1	4	3	4	4
	Not with parents	16	10	6	7	4	6	15
Parents' Education	University	44	62	5	89	12	16	42
	Community college	16	14	6	5	15	13	26
	Secondary school	27	23	29	6	39	38	25
	Elementary school	13	2	61	<1	34	34	7
Parents' Occupation	Professional	24	44	3	65	7	10	28
	Semi-Professional/Technical	25	26	12	23	34	21	19
	Skilled/Semi-skilled	32	20	61	9	43	50	31
	Unskilled	6	3	12	1	9	7	6
	Non-remunerative (incl. unemployed)	13	6	12	3	7	12	16
Level of Study	Basic	5	4	9	1	3	5	2
	General	21	15	39	4	18	27	17
	Advanced	74	80	53	95	78	67	81
School Climate (% who agree or strongly agree)	Extra help is available at school when I need it.	81	82	83	79	80	81	80
	This school treats students of all races and ethnic backgrounds fairly and equally.	73	77	78	74	73	74	76
	I feel I "belong" to this school.	73	76	77	77	71	79	73
	My school gives students the help they need for planning their future education and careers.	70	64	76	68	70	74	68
	Most teachers at this school make an effort to know their students.	66	64	69	59	64	70	60
	This school has an atmosphere that encourages students to learn.	65	64	67	63	61	60	57
	Students at this school have enough say over the things that are important to them.	50	50	48	53	46	50	49
Extra-Curricular Activities	Often	21	29	18	32	23	20	20
	Sometimes	34	33	31	37	32	33	30
	Rarely	23	23	26	21	25	25	23
	Never	21	15	25	10	20	22	27
Homework (hours/week)	No homework	4	5	7	2	3	6	3
	Basic	5 hrs	3 hrs	3 hrs	4 hrs	4 hrs	4 hrs	5 hrs
	General	7 hrs	5 hrs	6 hrs	7 hrs	6 hrs	5 hrs	6 hrs
	Advanced	11 hrs	9 hrs	9 hrs	9 hrs	10 hrs	9 hrs	11 hrs
	Average hours (not incl. 0 hrs)	10 hrs	8 hrs	7 hrs	9 hrs	9 hrs	8 hrs	10 hrs
Work (hours/week)	Do not work	60	57	52	57	47	48	51
	Average hours (not incl. 0 hrs)	14 hrs	13 hrs	18 hrs	10 hrs	15 hrs	16 hrs	15 hrs
Students' Post-Secondary School Plans	University	58	61	29	84	55	44	49
	Community College	17	12	26	2	22	22	21
	Work full-time	5	4	10	1	4	7	4
	Not sure	19	18	31	8	16	24	21
Parents' Expectations of Student	Other	3	3	4	3	3	3	4
	University	67	70	40	87	68	57	60
	Community College	15	10	27	2	18	21	21
	Work full-time	4	3	11	2	3	6	1
Students' Career Plans	Not sure	10	11	17	5	8	11	14
	Other	4	6	4	4	3	5	4
	I have one specific occupation in mind.	26	22	32	17	26	28	25
	I have narrowed my plans to several possibilities.	39	43	34	48	45	44	39
	I am undecided and need help.	15	9	16	10	10	11	18
	I am undecided but don't need help at this time.	20	26	18	26	19	17	18

\*All cultural subgroups, except for the Canadian-Aboriginals, constitute at least 1% of the secondary school population. The ethnic groups are identified through information provided by students on the survey forms about their race, ethnicity, birthplace and first languages.

\*\*The population estimates are based on 29,872 on-line student registration records as of November 1991, and rounded to the nearest hundredth. The figures do not include students from the four adult schools in the Toronto Board.

Asian					Black			Aboriginal	Other	
Chinese %	from Indochina %	Tamil %	Indian %	Korean %	from Canada %	from the Caribbean %	from Africa %	from Canada %	Hispanic %	Iranian %
(3100)	(2800)	(500)	(500)	(400)	(900)	(800)	(600)	(200)	(400)	(300)
29	-	1	42	42	100	-	-	100	23	4
71	100	99	58	58	-	100	100	-	77	96
12	16	<1	18	21	-	14	4	-	15	2
19	24	<1	8	9	-	9	2	-	5	4
8	21	5	7	8	-	19	5	-	10	7
28	23	44	40	35	-	42	39	-	43	52
34	16	50	27	27	-	16	50	-	27	35
68	60	29	77	81	44	33	18	40	51	51
8	12	10	11	7	40	41	8	34	25	14
2	2	3	1	3	4	6	2	5	6	4
22	26	58	11	10	12	20	72	20	19	31
31	27	26	42	74	37	22	38	38	36	48
17	19	27	25	11	32	36	24	18	19	17
40	41	42	27	13	25	33	22	36	32	28
12	13	4	7	2	6	9	15	8	13	6
12	6	20	15	13	18	8	19	17	16	22
32	16	20	29	66	30	28	32	31	18	23
37	38	27	37	12	36	39	22	24	36	18
7	6	7	9	3	8	10	5	7	7	3
11	34	26	11	6	9	15	22	20	22	35
3	4	4	6	2	7	14	5	9	5	4
13	22	22	14	4	27	42	36	38	33	19
84	73	73	79	94	65	43	58	53	61	76
77	82	89	81	77	80	83	78	88	85	74
70	72	85	74	60	55	65	73	80	76	72
65	69	87	74	65	70	72	82	65	69	77
69	73	90	78	61	70	73	75	68	76	76
65	70	87	73	55	59	70	80	70	69	64
62	66	89	77	60	59	76	82	60	71	68
50	50	71	56	48	48	50	61	46	55	52
15	10	10	17	20	33	31	13	16	15	21
36	37	53	39	39	33	30	35	39	39	34
27	24	12	22	30	19	18	14	19	20	20
22	30	24	21	11	16	21	39	26	26	26
3	3	3	3	1	7	7	3	8	5	5
10 hrs	10 hrs	10 hrs	4 hrs	0 hrs	3 hrs	4 hrs	11 hrs	3 hrs	4 hrs	8 hrs
11 hrs	10 hrs	11 hrs	8 hrs	5 hrs	4 hrs	7 hrs	12 hrs	5 hrs	7 hrs	9 hrs
13 hrs	13 hrs	15 hrs	12 hrs	12 hrs	10 hrs	10 hrs	14 hrs	9 hrs	10 hrs	13 hrs
13 hrs	12 hrs	14 hrs	11 hrs	12 hrs	8 hrs	8 hrs	13 hrs	7 hrs	9 hrs	12 hrs
65	68	75	62	57	62	63	67	67	66	67
14 hrs	14 hrs	17 hrs	14 hrs	13 hrs	13 hrs	16 hrs	17 hrs	14 hrs	16 hrs	14 hrs
75	51	56	60	86	50	29	41	41	45	70
8	21	21	12	5	27	38	37	26	23	14
2	3	7	7	<1	4	10	3	8	5	3
14	24	15	19	7	17	19	17	20	22	12
1	1	1	3	2	2	4	1	5	3	2
85	66	65	70	93	61	41	51	53	61	78
6	19	15	9	3	22	37	25	20	22	9
2	3	4	6	<1	3	5	5	3	2	3
7	11	15	12	2	10	14	15	19	10	7
1	1	1	3	2	4	2	5	6	4	3
22	28	46	27	26	31	40	33	29	28	38
40	29	19	39	43	41	34	21	38	35	34
17	27	23	16	21	11	15	37	14	20	17
20	16	12	17	9	17	11	8	19	17	11

In-depth analyses of the data by birthplace, arrival year and ethnicity reveal the following findings:

### **Whites**

Among White students, most of the "English only" (95%), Jewish (86%), Greek (94%) and Italian (95%) students are Canadian-born, compared to a much lower percentage of Portuguese (62%) and Polish (35%) students. The fairly recent arrival of the latter two groups is also evidenced by the fact that more than half of the Portuguese (56%) and Polish (68%) students arrived since 1987. (See Table 3 p.8).

### **Asians**

Although the majority of Asian students are born overseas, some variations are found among the Asian subgroups. The Indians and Koreans have the lowest proportion of foreign-born, while the Indochinese<sup>10</sup> and Tamils have the highest proportion. Among Asian students born overseas, Tamils are the most recent immigrants, with 94% of them landing in Canada between 1987 and 1991. In contrast, the majority of students from Indochina arrived in Canada prior to 1987, mainly in the early 1980's. (See Table 3).

### **Blacks**

Blacks from the Caribbean (mainly Jamaica, Trinidad/Tobago, Guyana, and Grenada) immigrated to Canada earlier than those from Africa (mostly Ethiopia and Somalia). The percent of arrivals for the Caribbean Blacks dwindled from 42% to 16% between 1987 and 1991. At the same time, the percent of arrivals for the African Blacks, rose from 39% to 50%. (See Table 3).

### **Other**

Almost all of the Iranian students (96%) are foreign-born and a large majority of them (87%) have arrived in this country from Iran and Afghanistan since 1987. (See Table 3).

About three-quarters of the Hispanic students (77%) are born overseas and most come from El Salvador, Ecuador, Chile and Nicaragua. The majority of these foreign-born Hispanic students (70%) landed in this country since 1987.

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10. The largest Indochinese group is the Vietnamese.



## Family Background and Race

### Parental Presence

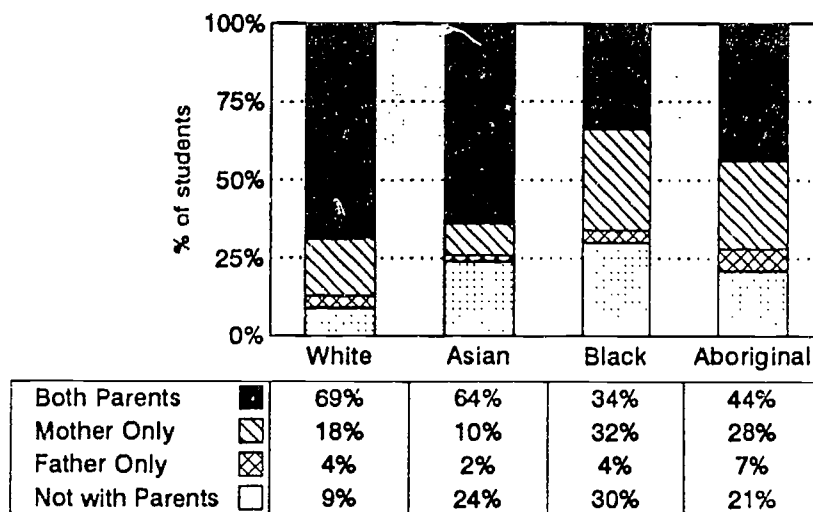
About two-thirds of White (69%) and Asian (64%) students come from two-parent homes. In contrast, only one-third (34%) of Blacks and less than half (44%) of Aboriginals come from this type of family setting. (See Figure 6).

Whites are least likely to indicate the absence of parents at home (9%) compared to the other three racial groups who have 21%-30% of the students living in such home environment.

Asians are least likely to come from lone-parent families (12%), whereas both Blacks (36%) and Aboriginals (35%) are much more likely than other groups to live with one parent, especially the mother.

The likelihood of Black students living with both parents (34%), mother only (32%), and not with any parent at all (30%) is almost equal.

**Figure 6: Parental presence by race**



Some key findings drawn from the detailed analyses of the racial/cultural subgroups, as shown in Table 3 (p.8), are:

- o The racial/cultural groups with the largest percent of two-parent families are Portuguese (85%), Greeks (86%), and Koreans (81%).

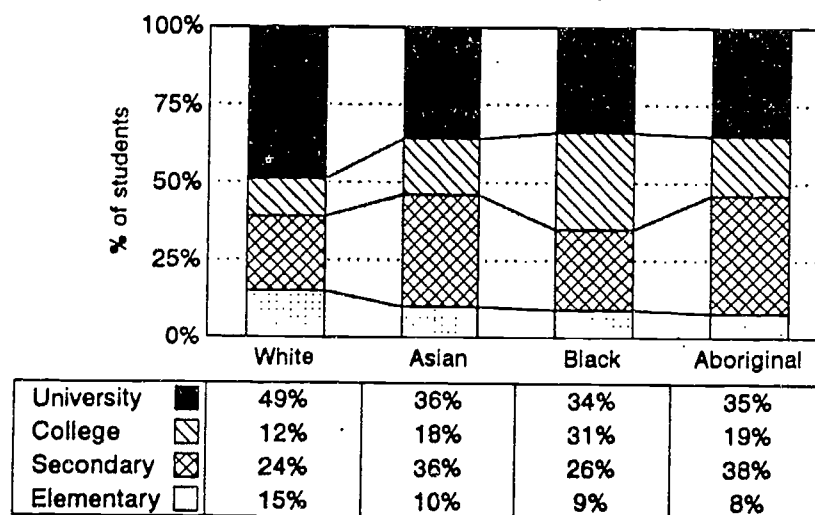
- o Canadian-born Aboriginals (34%), and Blacks born in Canada (40%) and the Caribbean (41%) have the highest percent of students living with mother-only.
- o In situations where students do not live with any parent, Blacks from Africa (72%) and Tamils (58%) account for the largest percentage. This is not surprising, since many of them arrived recently in Canada without an intact family, and these two groups of students are also overrepresented among those over 19 years of age.

## Family Socio-Economic Status

### Parents' education

Compared to other racial groups, White students reported the highest percentage of their parents at both ends of the education continuum - 49% with university and 15% with elementary school education. Black parents are found to have the highest proportion with community college education (31%). Asian (36%) and Aboriginal (38%) students are more likely than other groups to have parents with secondary school education only. (See Figure 7).

Figure 7: Parental education by race



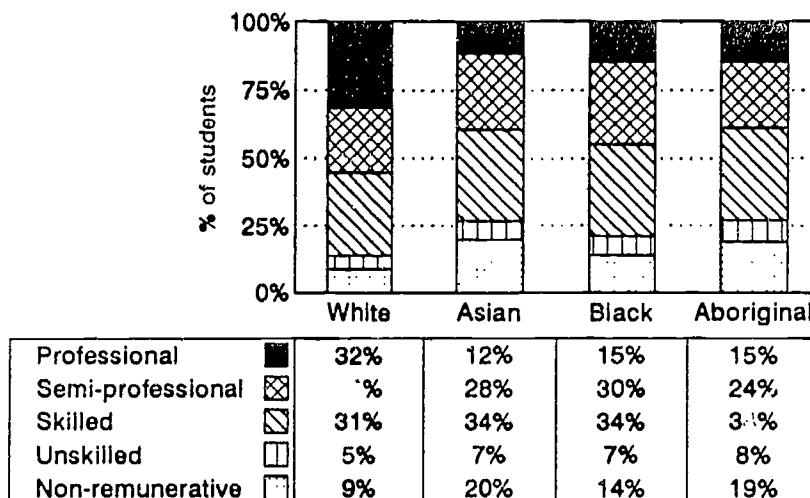
Data extracted from Table 3 (p.8) indicate that:

- o The majority of the parents of Jewish (89%), Korean (74%) and "English only" (62%) students have university training.
- o Compared to all other cultural subgroups, Blacks born in Canada (32%) and the Caribbean (36%) have the highest percent of parents with community college education.
- o Over one-third of the students of Portuguese (61%), Greek (34%), and Italian (34%) roots reported elementary school as their parents' highest education.

## Parents' occupation

The percent of White parents in professional occupations (32%) is almost double that of other races (12-15%). White parents also have the lowest percent in the non-remunerative category (9%), compared to Asians (20%), Aboriginals (19%) and Blacks (14%). (See Figure 8).<sup>11</sup>

Figure 8: Parental occupation by race



Some striking differences found across the racial/cultural subgroups, as shown in Table 3 (p. 8) are:

- o Jewish (65%) and "English only" (44%) students have the highest percent of parents who are professionals.
- o Iranians (35%), students from Vietnam (34%), Tamils (26%), Hispanics (22%), and Blacks from Africa (22%), many of whom arrived in Canada as refugees, are more likely than other groups to report their parents' occupation as "non-remunerative".
- o A few other groups that stand out in certain occupation categories are: Koreans in semi-professional/technical/middle managerial occupations (66%), and Portuguese (61%), Italian (50%) and Greek (43%) in skilled/semi-skilled jobs.

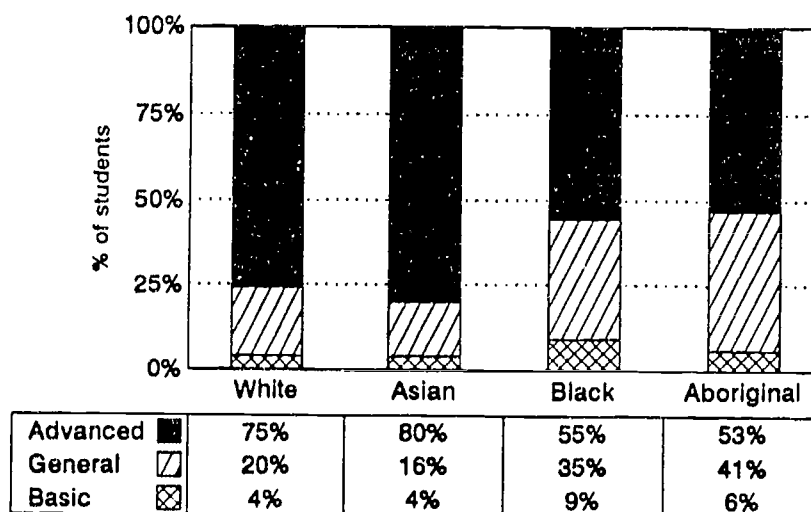
11. Examples for each occupational category are 1) Professional: accountant, lawyer, teacher, social worker; 2) semi-professional, technical, middle managerial: nurse, computer programmer, restaurant/store owner, office manager; 3) skilled, semi-skilled: salesperson, office clerks, carpenter, mechanic; 4) unskilled: labourer, waiter, caretaker, parking attendant; 5) non-remunerative: homemaker, student, welfare recipient, retiree.

## Program Level and Race

Whites and Asians are more likely to be in Advanced Level programs than students from other racial groups. (See Figure 9). About three-quarters of Whites (75%) and Asians (80%) take mainly Advanced courses, compared to about half of Blacks (55%) and Aboriginals (53%).

Conversely, Blacks (35%) and Aboriginals (41%) are more likely to take mainly General Level courses than Whites (20%) and Asians (16%). A similar statement can be made about the Basic Level courses, with 9% of Blacks and 6% of Aboriginals taking this type of courses, compared to 4% for both White and Asian students.

Figure 9: Program level by race



Further study of the cultural-ethnic groups by program level in Table 3 (p.8) reveals that:

- o Students most likely to study in Advanced Level courses are: Jewish (95%), Korean (94%), Chinese (84%), Polish (81%), and Whites whose first language is English only (80%). Among Black students, more Canadian-born (65%) than African-born (58%) or Caribbean-born (43%) study at the Advanced Level.
- o Blacks who came from the Caribbean (42%) and Africa (36%), Portuguese (39%), Canadian-born Aboriginals (38%),<sup>12</sup> and Hispanics (33%) have at least one-third of their populations enrolled in General Level courses.
- o Caribbean-born Blacks (14%), Canadian-born Aboriginals (9%) and Portuguese (9%) have the highest percent of students in Basic Level courses.

12. Aboriginal students born outside of Canada, mainly from Central and South America, have an even higher percent (44%) than the Canadian-born enrolled in the General Level program.

## School Climate and Race

Table 4 shows minor variations in students' attitudes toward school across the racial groups. The only exception is the lower than average proportions of Black students who think that school treats students of all races fairly.

**Table 4: School climate by race**

<b>SCHOOL CLIMATE</b> (Percentage who agree or agree strongly with the statements)	<b>OVERALL</b> %	<b>Whites</b> %	<b>Asians</b> %	<b>Blacks</b> %	<b>Aboriginals</b> %
Extra help is available at school when I need it.	81	81	80	80	84
This school treats students of all races and ethnic backgrounds fairly and equally.	73	76	71	62	78
I feel I "belong" to this school.	73	75	69	73	66
My school gives students the help they need for planning their future education and careers.	70	69	72	72	72
Most teachers at this school make an effort to know their students.	66	65	68	67	67
This school has an atmosphere that encourages students to learn.	65	64	67	69	62
Students at this school have enough say over the things that are important to them.	50	50	52	51	51

Further examination of the ethnic groups in Table 3 reveals that:

- o There is a wide range of attitudes toward schools among Asian students. Compared to all ethnic subgroups, the Tamils responded most positively to all seven school climate items on the questionnaire (90%-71%), while the Korean students gave the least positive responses (77%-48%).
- o Blacks have quite diverse attitudes towards school among themselves. While about three-quarters (73%) of Blacks from Africa think their school treats students of all races and ethnic backgrounds fairly and equally, only about half of their Canadian-born counterparts (55%) think this way. Caribbean-born Blacks are more positive than the Canadian-born (65%), but still quite negative relative to students of other cultural groups. Similar patterns for the three groups of Black students appear in most other items. (See Table 3).



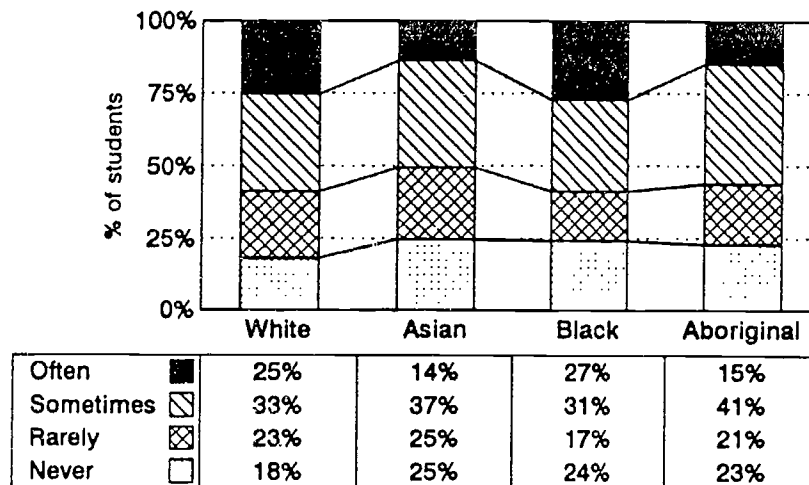
- o Canadian-born Aboriginals tend to have mixed feelings about school. While, on the one hand, they feel more positive than most other students about their school in providing extra help (88%) and treating students of all races equally (80%), they are not as likely as other groups to have a sense of belonging to their school (65%). (See Table 3).

## Time Spent After School and Race

### Extra-curricular activities

Asian and Aboriginal students tend to be less active in extra-curricular activities than Whites and Blacks. Only 14% of the former and 15% of the latter reported frequent involvement in such activities in contrast to 25% of Whites and 27% of Blacks. (See Figure 10).

Figure 10: Extra-curricular activities by race



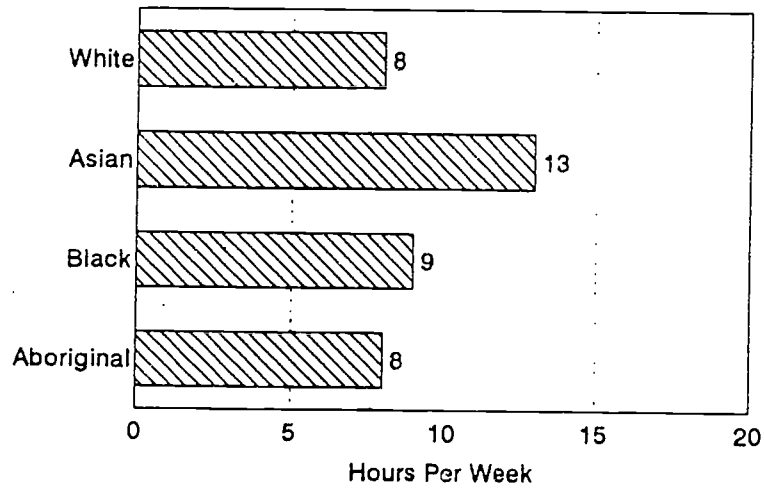
Further investigation of the data shows that:

- o Jewish students (32%) and Black students born in Canada (33%) and the Caribbean (31%) take part in extra-curricular activities most often. (See Table 3).
- o At the other extreme, about 30-40% of Asian students from Indochina (30%), and Black students from Africa (39%) never take part in such activities. Again, the difference of the African-born Blacks from the other two groups of Blacks is apparent here.

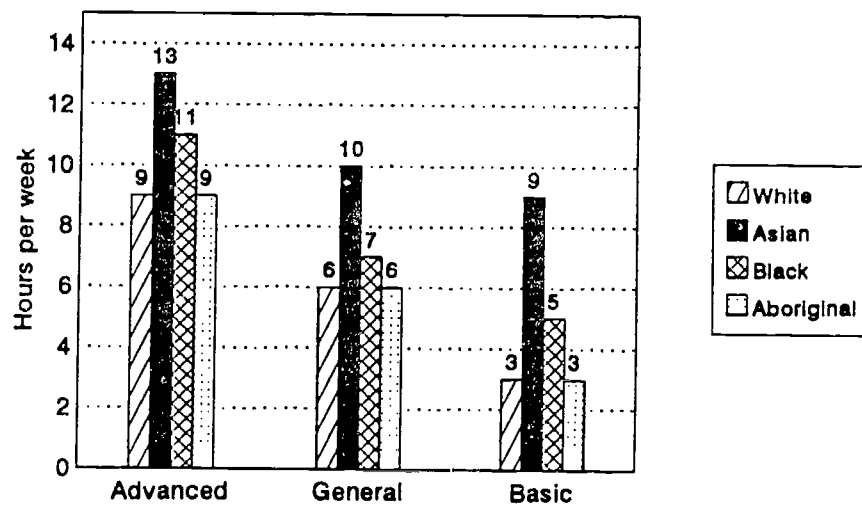
## Homework

Asians reported spending more time on homework than all other racial groups.<sup>13</sup> (See Figure 11). They spend an average of 13 hours a week doing homework, compared to 8-9 hours reported by other racial groups. This pattern is consistent across all program levels. (See Figure 12).

**Figure 11: Homework hours by race**



**Figure 12: Homework hours by program level and race**



13. Asians also have the lowest percent of students who do not do homework (3%), compared to Whites (5%), Blacks (6%) and Aboriginals (7%).

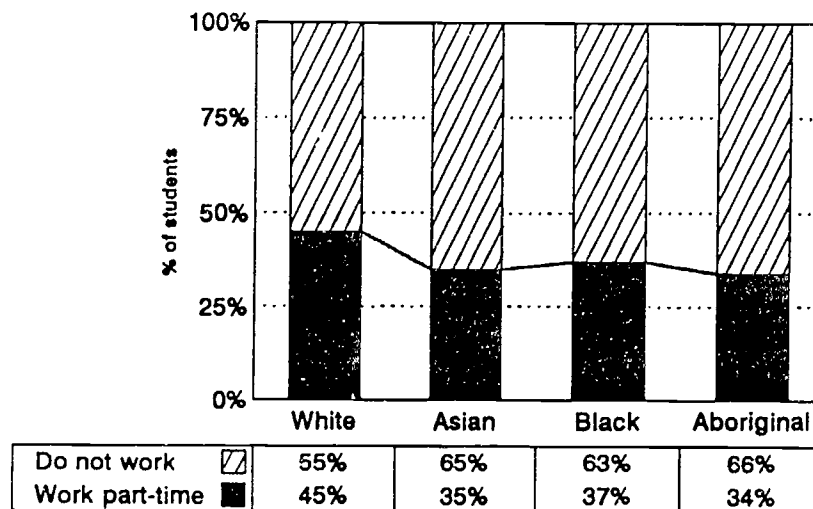
According to Table 3 (p.8)

- o Students who spend the most hours per week doing homework are the Tamils (14 hours), Chinese (13 hours) and Blacks from Africa (13 hours).
- o The three groups of Black students differ dramatically in their time spent on homework. The differences range from 3 hours a week for the Canadian-born to 11 hours for the African-born at the Basic Level. The differential is also 8 hours between these two groups at the General Level. However, the gap is narrowed to a 4 hour difference at the Advanced Level.

### Part-time work

Among the four racial groups, Whites have the largest proportion of students working part-time (45% vs 34%-37%). (see Figure 13).

Figure 13: Part-time work by race



On the whole the amount of time spent on part-time work does not vary substantially across the four major racial groups. The average work hours range from 14 for Whites and Asians, and 15 hours for Blacks and Aboriginals.

However, further breakdown of the data in Table 3 (p.8) brings out some pronounced differences among the various subgroups:

- o The Portuguese (18 hours), Tamils (17 hours), and Blacks from Africa (17 hours) spend the longest average hours doing part-time work.<sup>14</sup>
- o Jewish students spend the fewest hours (10) on such activities.

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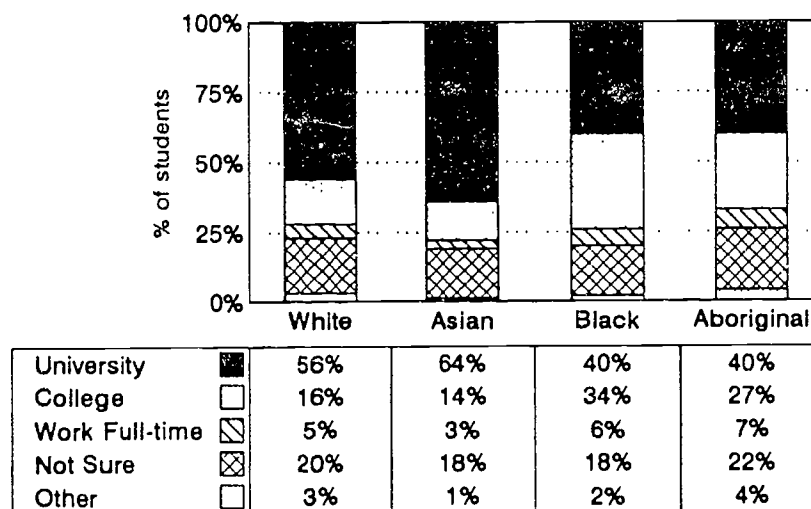
14. While only 25 % of the Tamils and 33 % of the African-born Blacks work part-time, those who do tend to work longer than students from most other cultural groups (17 hours vs 14 hours for the overall average).

## Future Plans and Race

### Students' post-secondary school plans

About two-thirds (64%) of Asians and over half (56%) of Whites plan to attend university. In comparison, less than half of Blacks and Aboriginals (40%) expect to go this route after high school. Instead, a much higher percentage of Blacks (34%) and Aboriginals (27%) plan to go to community college than other groups (14%-16%). (See Figure 14). The percent of students not sure about their future is approximately one-fifth (18%-22%) across all racial groups.

Figure 14: Post-secondary school plans by race



Great variations in students' aspirations *within* each racial group is quite apparent in Table 3 (p.8). The Table also shows a number of other noticeable differences *across* the racial groups.

- o Among Whites, the percent of students with university plans ranges dramatically from 84% for the Jewish to 29% for the Portuguese students.
- o Among Asians, clearly more Chinese (75%) and Korean (86%) students aspire to go to university than Tamils (56%) and students from Indochina (51%).
- o The three groups of Black students: Canadian-born (50%), African-born (41%), and Caribbean-born (29%) also differ substantially in their plans to attend university.
- o A high proportion of Iranian students aspire to attend university (70%).

- o Portuguese students (10%) and Blacks from the Caribbean (10%) are more likely to plan for full-time work after high school than the overall student population (5%).
- o Portuguese students also have the highest percent (31%) who are unsure about their post-secondary plans.

### Parents' expectations of students

According to the students' responses, their parents' expectations are similar to but higher than theirs in terms of attending university. As well, fewer of their parents seem uncertain about the students' post secondary school plans. These findings apply consistently across all racial groups. (See Figures 14 & 15).

Figure 15: Parents' expectations by race

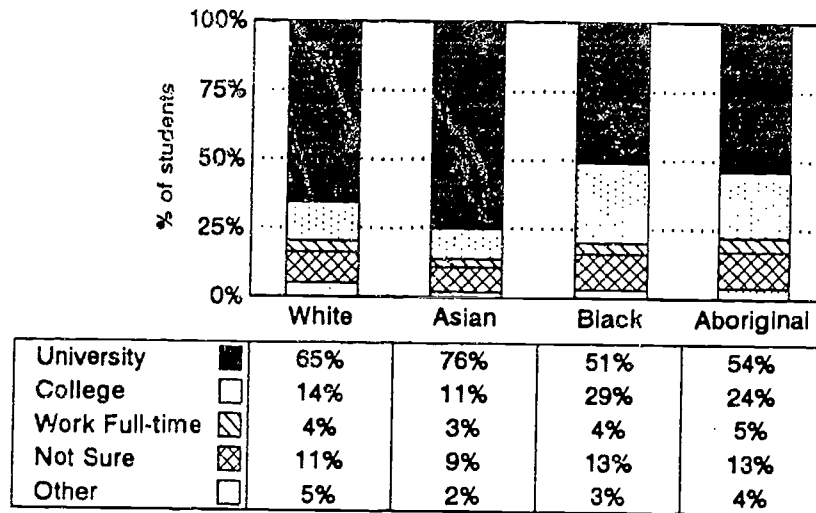


Table 3 (p.8) shows that the expectation gap between parents and students about their university plans is smallest for the Jewish (3%) and biggest for the Hispanic (16%) and Indochinese students (15%).

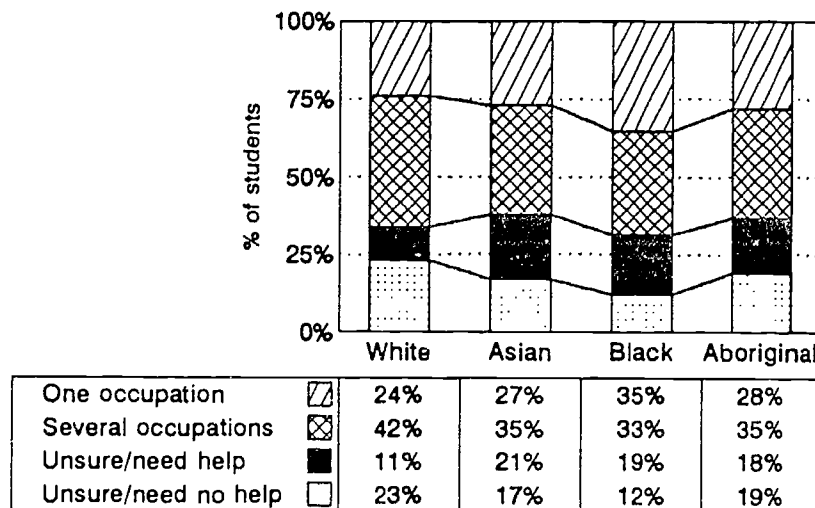


## Students' career plans

The proportion of students who have chosen a specific occupation is somewhat higher among Blacks (35%) than the other three racial groups (24%-28%). (See Figure 16). Across all ethnic subgroups, Tamil students (46%) and Blacks from the Caribbean (40%) show the highest percentages with one specific occupation in mind. (See Table 3).

About one-fifth of students of Asian (21%), Black (19%) and Aboriginal (18%) descent indicated uncertainty about their future plans and a need for help. The parallel percentage for White students is rather low (11%). Further probing of the data shows that the three subgroups who most expressed need for help are the Africa-born Blacks (37%), Indochinese (27%) and Tamils (23%).

Figure 16: Students' career plans by race



## SUMMARY

### Whites

White students constitute 54% of the secondary school student population. They are mainly represented by students who speak English-only as their mother tongue (mostly of British descent), Portuguese, Jewish, Greek, Italian and Polish.

- o The majority are Canadian-born, except for the Polish, most of whom arrived since 1987.
- o Most live with two parents, especially the Greek, Portuguese, Italian and Jewish students.

After examining the characteristics of Whites according to their similarities and differences, the following groupings emerge:

#### English-only and Jewish students

- o are most likely to come from high SES homes (i.e. parents have university education and/or professional jobs);
- o are highly likely to study in Advanced courses and plan to attend university;
- o do less homework and part-time work, but are more active in after-school programs than most other Toronto students.<sup>15</sup>

#### Portuguese and Italian students

- o tend to have low SES background (i.e. parents have elementary education and/or skilled or semi-skilled jobs);
- o are more inclined than other White students to study in General and Basic level courses<sup>16</sup> and not as likely to plan for university;
- o do less homework, but more part-time work and are not as active in extra-curricular activities as most other students in the Toronto secondary schools.<sup>17</sup>

#### Greek students

- o are similar to the Portuguese and Italians in family backgrounds;
- o do more homework but less part-time work and are more active in extra-curricular activities than the Portuguese and Italians;
- o resemble the English-only students in course enrolment and university plans.

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15. Jewish students reported the least amount of part-time work (10 hours) across all cultural group.

16. Portuguese students show the highest percent (9%) in Basic level courses among Whites.

17. Portuguese and Canadian-Aboriginal students both reported the least hours (7) of homework. Portuguese students also reported the most hours of part-time work (18) across all cultural groups.

## Asians

Asian students make up 30% of all high school students. They are mainly Chinese (born in China, Hong Kong and Canada), students from Indochina (Vietnamese, Chinese-Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians), Tamils, Indians and Koreans.

- o The majority are foreign-born, with the Tamils being the most recent immigrants.
- o They have a low proportion of parents in professional jobs.
- o Compared to other racial groups, Asians tend to do more homework but are not as active in after-school programs.

The following groupings are used to bring out further commonalities and contrasts among the subgroups:

### Chinese and Korean students

- o The majority live with two parents, especially Korean students.
- o Chinese students have a high proportion of parents with secondary education only, while Koreans have a high percent of parents with university training, which is atypical of Asian students in the Toronto schools.
- o A large majority of Chinese and Korean students study in Advanced courses and desire to attend university.
- o Chinese and Korean students (especially Koreans) have more negative perceptions about school than most other cultural groups.

### Students from Indochina

- o Compared to most other groups across the system, students from Indochina are more likely to live apart from parents, or have parents with no employment and/or secondary school education only.<sup>18</sup>
- o Compared to other Asian students such as Chinese, Koreans and Indians, they are more inclined to study in General level courses and plan for community college. They are also less active in extra-curricular activities.

### Tamil students

- o Tamils are similar to the Indochinese students in family circumstances,<sup>19</sup> course enrolment, post-secondary plans and extra-curricular program involvement.
- o They do the most hours of homework (14) across the system and more hours of part-time work (17) than most other secondary students.
- o They have the most positive perceptions about school in the entire system.

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18. Over a quarter of the students from Indochina do not have parents at home. About a third have unemployed parents and about 40% have parents with secondary education.

19. Over half of the students from Sri Lanka do not have parents at home. About a quarter have unemployed parents and about 40% have parents with secondary education.

## Blacks

Black students make up 9% of all secondary students. The three major groups are those born in Canada, the Caribbean, and Africa. The majority of the foreign-born Black students arrived from Ethiopia and Somalia since 1987.

The three Black groups share the following common characteristics:

- o They are less likely than most other students to live with two parents.
- o They are more likely than Whites, Asians and Aboriginals to have parents with community college education.
- o Compared to most other groups, Blacks have low representation in Advanced level courses, but high representation in General and Basic level courses. This is especially true for the Caribbean-born Blacks.<sup>20</sup>
- o They are less likely than most other students to plan for university, but more likely to aspire for community college. This is especially true for the Caribbean-born Blacks.<sup>21</sup>

However, African-born Blacks exhibit some unique characteristics which distinguish them from the Canadian- and Caribbean-born Black students:

- o While a disproportionate number of Canadian- and Caribbean-born Blacks live with mother only (40-41%), a disproportionate number of African Blacks (72%) live apart from their parents.
- o African Black students are more inclined to have unemployed parents (22%) than the other two groups of Blacks (15% for Caribbean-born and 9% for Canadian-born.)
- o Black students born in Africa commit more time doing homework and part-time work than other Blacks.
- o Compared to all other racial-ethnic groups in the system, African-born Black students are among the least involved, while other Blacks are most involved in extra-curricular activities.
- o African-born Black students are much more positive than other Blacks (especially Canadian-born) about the way their school treats students of all races and ethnic backgrounds.<sup>22</sup>

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20. The representation of Caribbean-born Blacks in Advanced, General and Basic levels are 43%, 42% and 14% vs 74%, 21% and 5% respectively for the overall population.

21. The percent of Caribbean-born Blacks with university and college plans are 29% and 38% respectively vs 56% and 17% for the overall population.

22. The percentages of Blacks who perceived their school as fair to students of all races are: 55% for the Canadian-born, 65% for the Caribbean-born and 73% for the African-born.

## Aboriginals

Aboriginal students make up approximately 1% of the high school population, the majority of whom are born in Canada.<sup>23</sup> When compared with the overall population, Canadian-born Aboriginal students are:

- o not as likely to live with two parents (40% vs 63% overall), but more likely to live with mother-only (34% vs 18% overall);
- o more likely to have parents with secondary education only (36% vs 27% overall) or with no employment (20% vs 13% overall);
- o more likely to enrol in General or Basic Level courses (47% vs 26% overall) and plan for community college (26% vs 17% overall);
- o not as involved in extra-curricular activities and devoting less time on homework (7 hours vs 10 hours overall);
- o less likely to have a sense of belonging to their school, but more positive about their school for providing extra help and treating students of all races equally.

## Hispanics

Students who speak Spanish as their mother tongue make up 3% of all high school students in the Toronto system. They come from diverse racial backgrounds<sup>24</sup>. The majority of them are born in Central and South America and arrived in Canada since 1987. When measured against the overall population, they are:

- o not as likely to live with two parents (51% vs 63% overall);
- o more likely to have parents with secondary education only (32% vs 27% overall) or who are unemployed (22% vs 13% overall);
- o more likely to study in General level courses (33% vs 21% overall), and to plan for community college (23% vs 17% overall);
- o less active in extra-curricular activities, doing slightly less homework (9 vs 10 hours overall), but more part-time work (16 vs 14 hours overall).

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23. Aboriginals born in Central and South America make up 39% of all Aboriginals. Since the majority of them are Spanish-speaking, they will be described under the Hispanic group.

24. The major racial groups of the Hispanics include White (34%), Mixed (19%), Aboriginal (18%) or "Other" (29%).

### 3 FAMILY BACKGROUND

This section will describe and compare the characteristics of students from different types of family backgrounds as measured by parental presence at home, and parental occupation and education. It will also investigate whether family backgrounds make any difference on what type of courses students enrol in, how they spend their time, their attitudes towards school and their post-secondary plans.

#### 3.1 Parental Presence

##### Race and Parental Presence

When students of different racial origins are grouped according to whom they live with, some distinct patterns emerge.<sup>25</sup>

Table 5: Race and parental presence

RACE	OVERALL %	Both Parents %	Mother only %	Father only %	Not with Parents %
Whites	54	60	56	60	30
Asians	30	30	18	18	45
Blacks	9	5	17	11	18
Aboriginals	1	1	2	3	2
Other	6	4	8	9	6
TOTAL*	100	100	100	100	100

\* Percentage figures may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Within the group of students living with both parents, Whites are overrepresented. The share of White students living with both parents (60%) is larger than their presence in the overall student population (54%). Black students, on the other hand, are underrepresented in this type of family. (See Table 5).

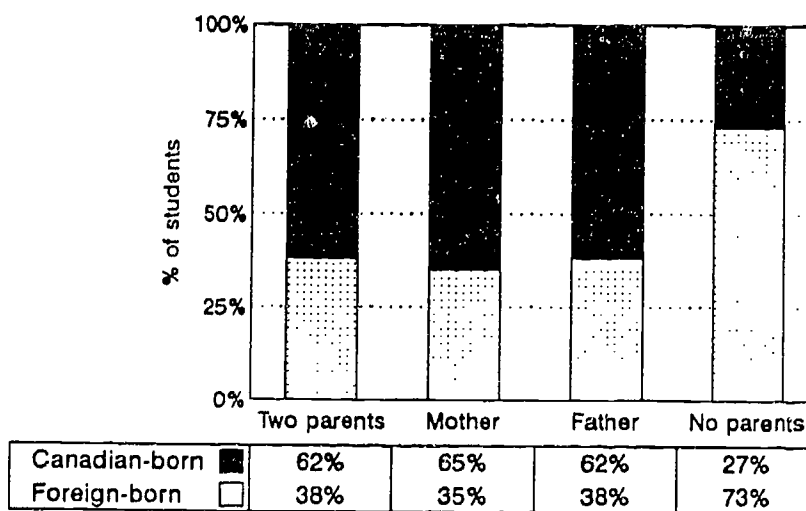
Among students living in lone-parent situations, Blacks and Aboriginals are overrepresented. This is especially true for Black students living with mother-only. While Blacks represent 9% of all Toronto secondary students, they account for 17% of all students living with mother

25. Although the relationship between race and parental presence has been dealt with in a previous section on Race and Ethnicity, the presentation here employs a different approach, using parental presence rather than race as focus. For example, within the group of students living with two parents, we will investigate the percent distribution of the racial groups, whereas, in the former case, we used the racial groups as focus, and looked at the distribution of two-parent, lone-parent and no-parent families within each racial group.

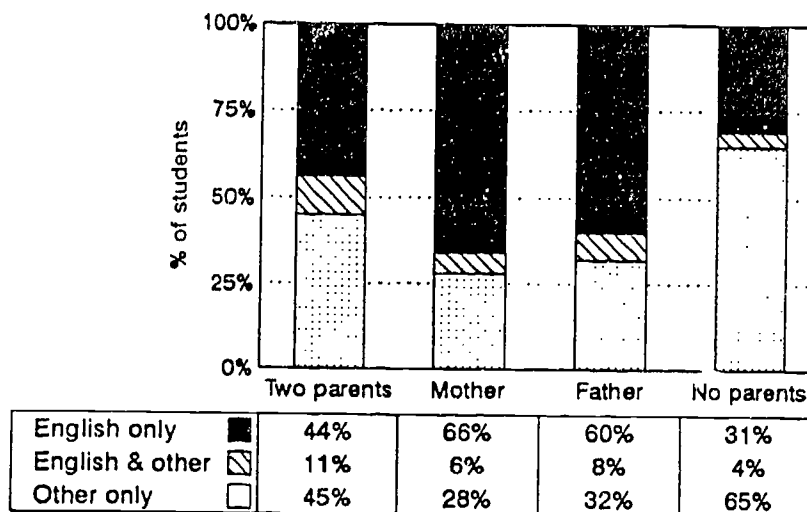
only. In contrast, Asians have disproportionately fewer students living in one-parent homes (18%) relative to their composition in the overall population (30%).

Among students living on their own, three-quarters of them are 19 years old and over. The majority of them (73%) are born overseas, in contrast to slightly above a third (38%) of students living with parents. (See Figure 17). The birthplaces of the former are mainly found in Asia (Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, China and Taiwan) and Africa (Ethiopia and Somalia). Most of these students also learned languages other than English (65%) as first language. (See Figure 18).

**Figure 17: Birthplace by parental presence**



**Figure 18: First language by parental presence**

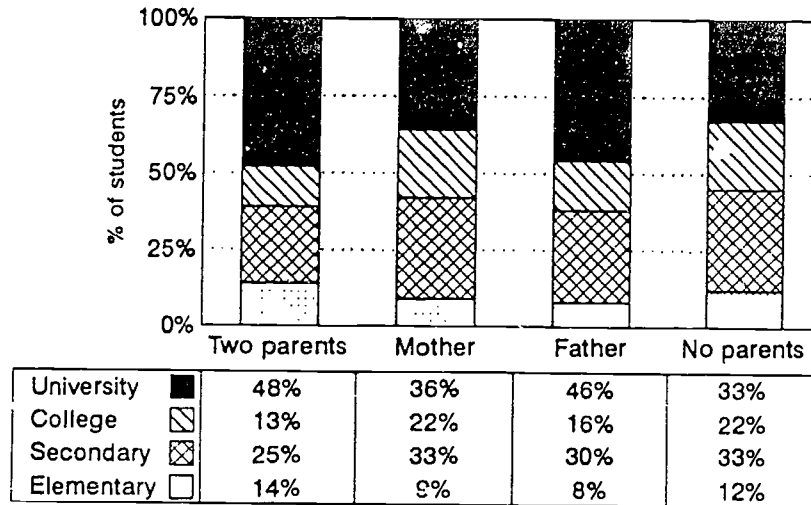




## Family Socio-economic Status and Parental Presence

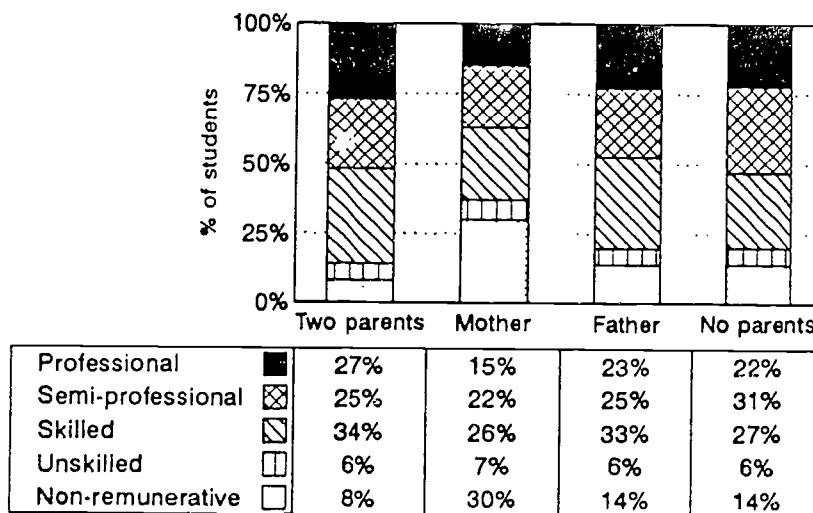
Students who live with mother only (36%) or on their own (33%) are not as likely as students living with two-parents (48%), or those living with father only (46%) to report their parents' university education.

**Figure 19: Parental education by parental presence**



Students who live with mother only (30%) are more likely than their peers from other types of family setting (8%-14%) to report parental occupation as non-remunerative.

**Figure 20: Parental occupation by parental presence**



## Program Level and Parental Presence

The number of students from two-parent homes are somewhat overrepresented in Advanced level courses. While 74% of all secondary students are in this academic stream, 80% of students with two parents are enrolled in this type of courses. Their representation in General (17%) and Basic (3%) level courses is proportionately small compared to the overall population (21% General, 5% Basic).

Conversely, students from single-parent homes or with no parents are underrepresented in Advanced level courses and overrepresented in General and Basic level enrolment. The overrepresentation of students living on their own (mostly older students) in General level courses (31% vs 21% overall) is quite prominent.

**Table 6: Program level by parental presence**

PROGRAM LEVEL	OVERALL	Both Parents	Mother only	Father only	Not with Parents
	%	%	%	%	%
Basic	5	3	7	6	6
General	21	17	23	23	31
Advanced	74	80	70	71	63
TOTAL*	100	100	100	100	100

\* Percentage figures may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

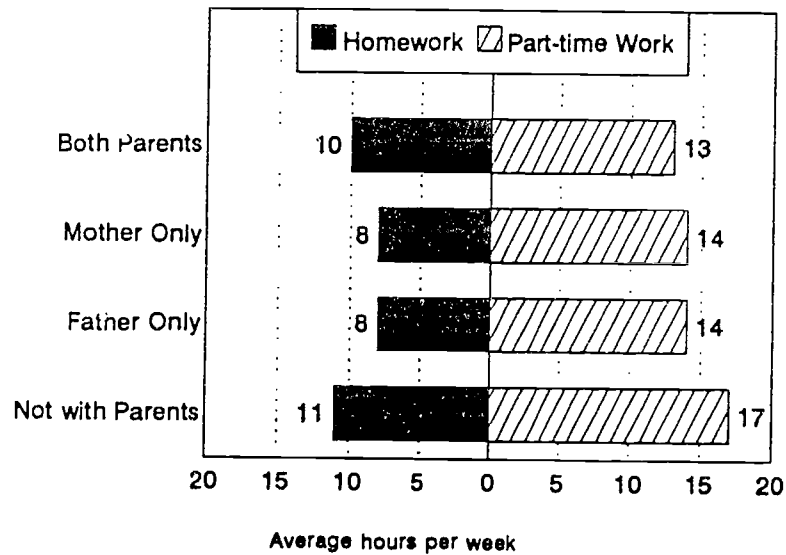
## School Climate and Parental Presence

It appears that students' attitudes towards school are quite similar regardless of whom they live with.

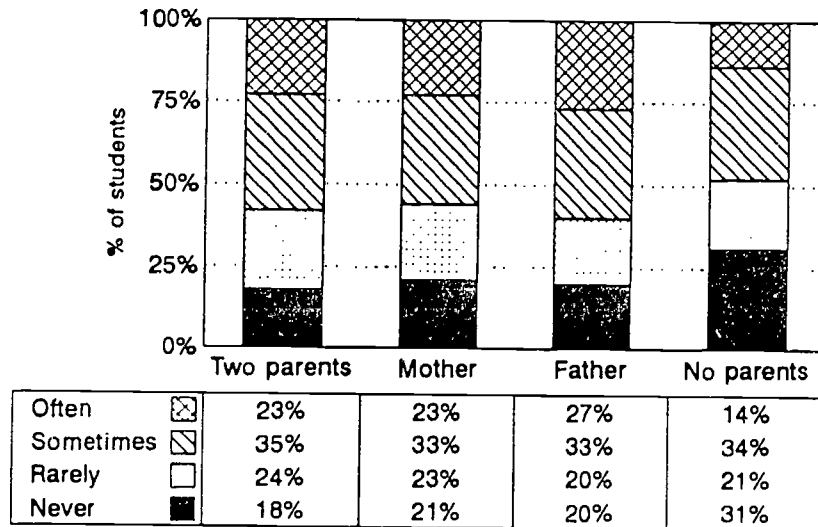
## Time Spent After School and Parental Presence

Students who live with one or two parents are rather similar in how they spend their time, but they differ quite substantially from students who live apart from parents in this respect. Figure 21 shows that students living on their own tend to commit more time to part-time work (17 hours/week) than students living with parents (13-14 hour/week). The former also devote more time to homework (11 hours/week) than other students (8-10 hours/week). This may partly explain why students living on their own are more likely (31%) than other students (18%-21%) to say they never participate in any extra-curricular activities. (See Figure 22.)

**Figure 21: Homework and part-time work by parental presence**



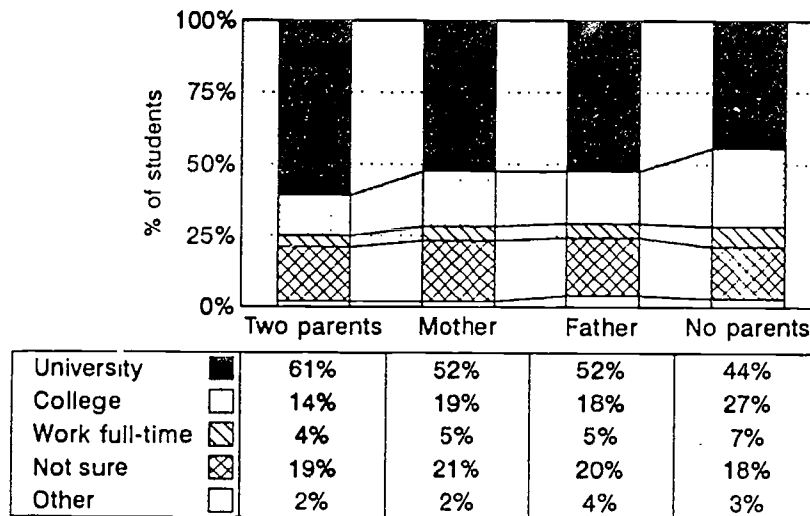
**Figure 22: Extra-curricular activities by parental presence**



## Future Plans and Parental Presence

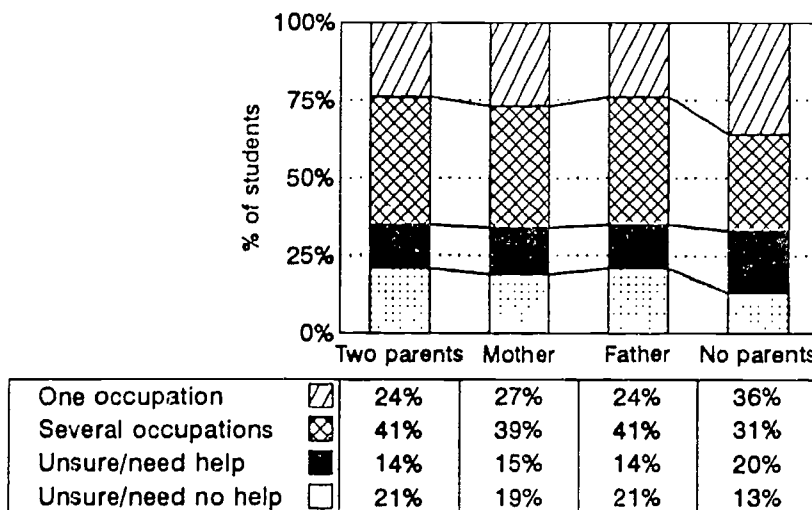
Students from two-parent homes are most likely to plan for university (61%) compared to students who come from lone-parent households (52%) and those without parents at home (44%). Conversely, students not living with parents are more inclined to aim for a community college education (27%) than their peers with one or both parents at home (14%-19%).

**Figure 23: Post-secondary school plans by parental presence**



Compared to students living with parents, those living on their own tend to say more frequently either that they have one specific occupation in mind, or that they are unsure and need help in terms of career plans. (See Figure 24).

**Figure 24: Career plans by parental presence**



## SUMMARY

Students living with two parents are overrepresented by those:

- o who are White,
- o who come from high SES families,
- o who enrol in Advanced level courses,
- o with aspiration for university education.

Students living with mother only are overrepresented by those:

- o who are Black or Aboriginal,
- o whose first language is English only,
- o who have parents with community college or secondary school education only,
- o who have parents with no employment,
- o who enrol in General or Basic level courses,
- o who do less homework than other students.

Students living on their own are overrepresented by those:

- o who are foreign-born, Black or Asian,
- o whose mother tongue is not English,
- o who have parents with community college or secondary school education only,
- o who enrol in General level courses, and aspire for community college,
- o who feel uncertain about their career plans and a need for help,
- o who never participate in extra-curricular activities,
- o who do more homework and part-time work than other students.

### 3.2 Family Socio-economic Status - Parents' Occupation and Education

In the 1987 and earlier Every Secondary Student surveys, only parental occupation was used as an indicator of SES (socio-economic status). In this survey, parental education data were collected for the first time to provide a more complete picture of SES. Parents' education is an important data source to supplement occupational data especially for immigrant populations. It is generally believed that recent immigrants tend to be employed in jobs lower in status than those held in their countries of origin, and hence their current occupations alone may not be an accurate reflection of their SES.

As indicated in table 7, immigrant groups who have been here for a few generations are much more likely to be employed in jobs which match their educational qualifications than groups who arrived recently. For example, among the White group, over two-thirds of Jewish and British parents with university training have professional occupations. Whereas, a much lower percentage of the more recent immigrant groups with university training (eg. Portuguese, Greek) hold professional occupations.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 7: Occupations of parents with university education by ethnicity**

<u>Cultural Subgroups</u>		<u>Professional</u> %	<u>Semi Professional</u> %	<u>Skilled</u> %	<u>Unskilled</u> %	<u>Non-Remunerative</u> %
OVERALL		55	26	13	2	5
White	English only	67	22	8	1	2
	Portuguese	37	18	33	3	8
	Jewish	72	20	6	<1	1
	Greek	42	35	19	4	0
	Italian	49	23	22	3	3
	Polish	50	19	17	5	9
Asian	Chinese	31	33	23	6	7
	from Indochina	20	23	28	6	22
	Tamil	30	16	27	16	11
	Indian	36	35	21	5	3
	Korean	17	65	9	3	6
Black	from Canada	37	35	20	3	5
	from the Caribbean	15	34	36	4	11
	from Africa	45	24	22	4	6
Aboriginal	from Canada	38	33	21	0	8
Other	Hispanic	37	22	27	4	10
	Iranian	41	26	13	1	19

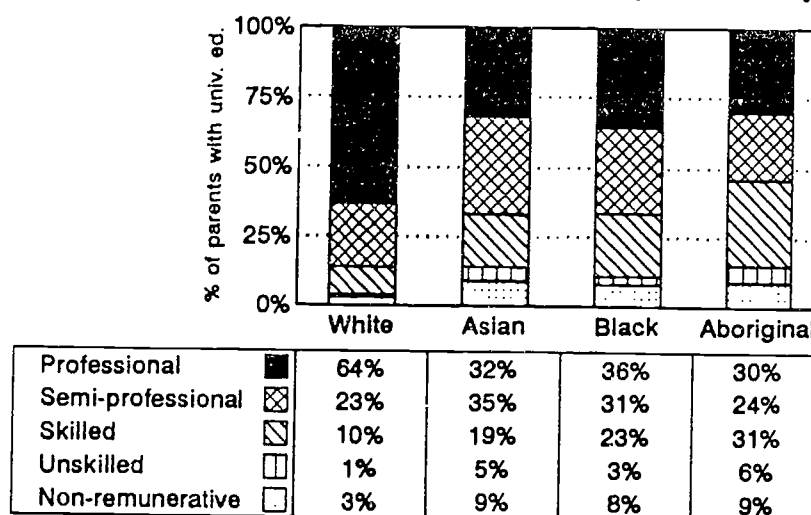
\* The data include only students who indicated "university" as their parents' education. Students who reported living on their own have not been included in this table.

26. See examples of occupational categories under the section on Race and Ethnicity.

Table 7 also shows that the lack of status congruity between education and occupation is related not only to recency of arrival, but also to race. This can be illustrated by the fact that 50% of the Polish parents, in contrast to 15% of the Caribbean-born parents with university training hold professional jobs, even though both groups are quite recent immigrants.

Figure 25 shows a pattern of employment by broad racial categories which clearly favours Whites over non-Whites<sup>27</sup>. It demonstrates that while two-thirds of White parents with university training are employed in professional jobs, only about one-third of non-Whites experience this type of status congruity between education and occupation.

**Figure 25: Occupations of parents with university education by race**



When students are grouped according to their parent's education and occupation, the following profiles emerge:

## Race and SES

### Parents' Education

Students whose parents have university education are mostly Whites, and mainly represented by the Jewish and English-only students. (See Table 3 p. 8 and Table 8).

27. Although most of the recent immigrants are non-White, not all non-Whites who experience this kind of status incongruity are immigrants, e.g. Canadian-born Aboriginals.



Among students with college educated parents, over half are non-Whites. One finding that stands out is that the proportion of Blacks in this category (16%) is double their proportions in other types of education (6%-8%).

Within the group of students with secondary school educated parents, Whites and non-Whites share almost the same proportion. However, Asians and Aboriginals are overrepresented compared to their presence in the school population.

The majority of students whose parents have elementary school education only are Whites. The largest ethnic groups in this category are the Portuguese, Greek and Italian students. (See Table 3 p. 8).

**Table 8: Race by parental education**

RACE	OVERALL %	University %	College %	Secondary %	Elementary %
Whites	54	65	45	51	70
Asians	30	22	31	34	20
Blacks	9	6	16	8	6
Aboriginals	1	1	1	2	1
Other	6	6	7	5	3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Figure 26 shows a very strong relationship between parent's education and first language. It shows the majority of English-only students have parents with university education. In contrast, the majority of students with non-English mother tongue have parents with elementary education. This relationship is clearly illustrated by the high percentage of Jewish (89%) and low percentage of Portuguese (5%) students with university educated parents. (See Table 3 p. 8).

**Figure 26: First language by parental education**

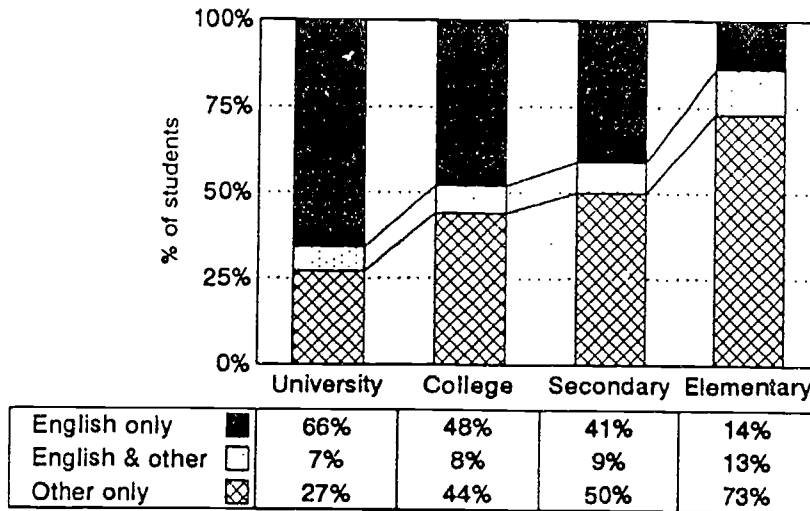
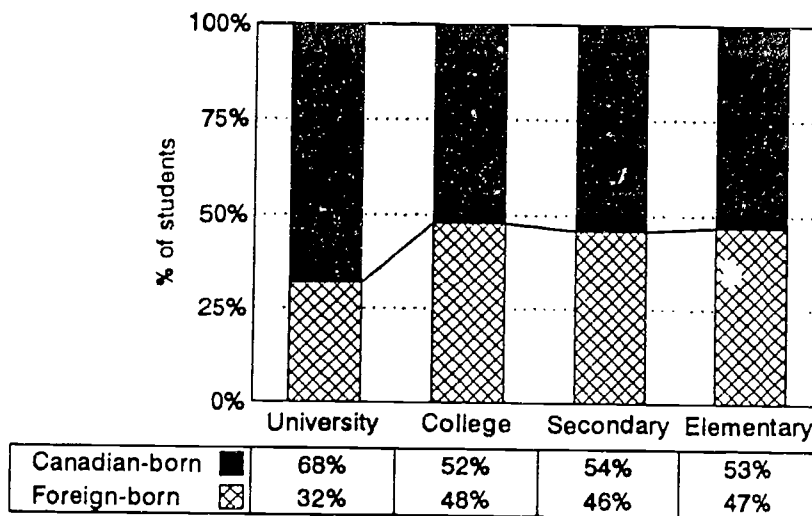


Figure 27 shows a moderate relationship between parental education and students' birthplace. Within the group with university educated parents, Canadian-born students are clearly the majority, whereas within the other three groups where parents have lower than university education, the proportion of Canadian-born drops to slightly over half.

**Figure 27: Place of birth by parental education**



## Parents' Occupation

Students whose parents hold professional occupations are mostly White. Again, they are highly represented by the Jewish and the English-only students. (See Table 9)

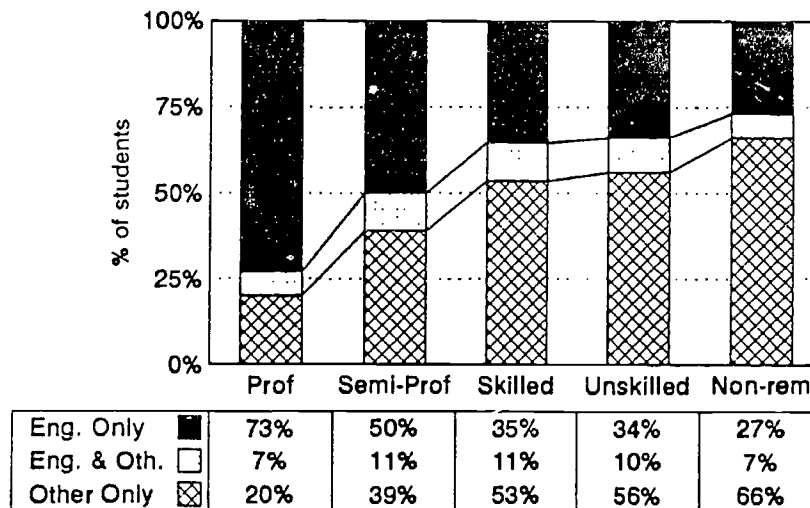
Students who indicated their parents' occupation as non-remunerative are clearly overrepresented by non-Whites, especially Asians (e.g. those from Indochina and Sri Lanka, see Table 3 p. 8).

**Table 9: Race by parental occupation**

RACE	OVERALL %	Prof. %	Semi-Prof./ Technical %	Skilled/ Semi-Skilled %	Unskilled %	Non Remunerative %
Whites	54	75	53	54	50	38
Asians	30	14	32	32	33	45
Blacks	9	5	9	8	10	9
Aboriginals	1	1	1	1	2	2
Other	6	5	5	5	5	6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

Figure 28 shows that first language is again as potent a predictor for parental occupation as it is for parental education. While the majority of the English-only students have parents in the highest occupational group, the majority of students who speak other languages as mother tongue have parents in the three lowest categories.

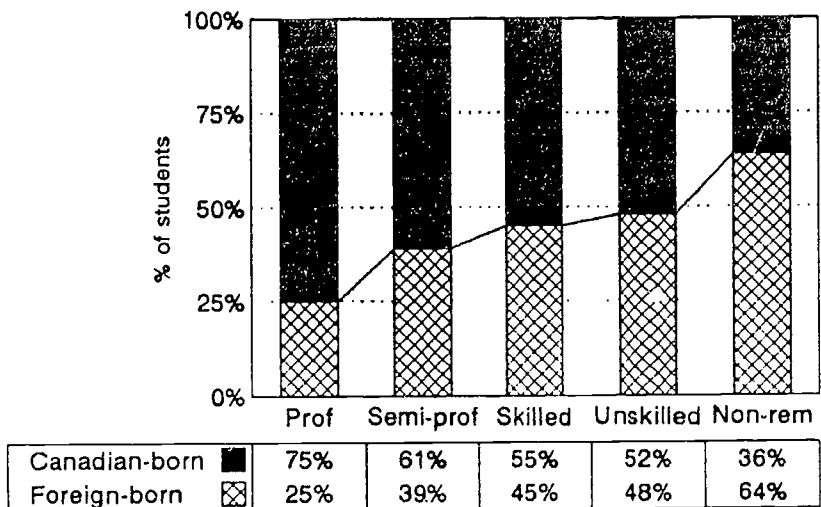
**Figure 28: First language by parental education**



The caption for Figure 28 should be read as "First language by parental occupation".

Birthplace appears to be a stronger predictor for parent's occupation than education. While the majority of Canadian-born students have parents who are professional and semi-professional, the majority of foreign-born students have parents who are unemployed. (See Figure 29.)

**Figure 29: Place of birth by parental occupation**



## Program Level and SES

Tables 10 and 11 show that while three-quarters of the student population are enrolled in Advanced level courses, over 90% of high SES students take this type of courses. Their underrepresentation in General (7-8%) and Basic (1%) level courses compared to the overall population (21% General, 5% Basic) is also very obvious.

At the other extreme of the SES continuum -- where parents are employed in unskilled jobs or have no gainful employment, or have only elementary education -- students are overrepresented in General and Basic level enrolment.

**Table 10: Program level by parental occupation**

PROGRAM LEVEL	OVERALL %	Prof. %	Semi-Prof./ Technical %	Skilled/ Semi-skilled %	Unskilled %	Non- Remunerative %
Basic	5	1	2	5	8	9
General	21	7	15	24	31	29
Advanced	74	92	83	71	60	62
TOTAL *	100	100	100	100	100	100

\* Percentage figures may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

**Table 11: Program level by parental education**

PROGRAM LEVEL	OVERALL %	University %	College %	Secondary %	Elementary %
Basic	5	1	4	5	7
General	21	8	21	26	32
Advanced	74	91	75	69	61
TOTAL *	100	100	100	100	100

\* Percentage figures may not add up 100 due to rounding.

## School Climate and SES

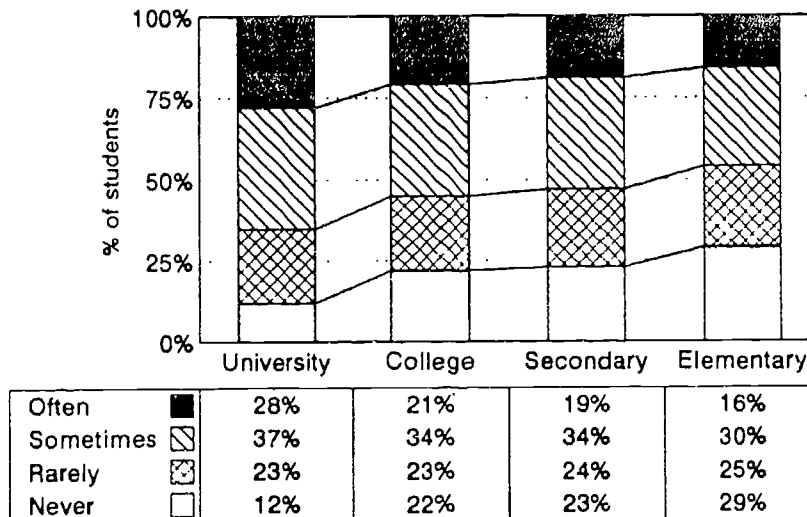
There are no consistent patterns in how students feel about school according to their SES.

## Time Spent After School and SES

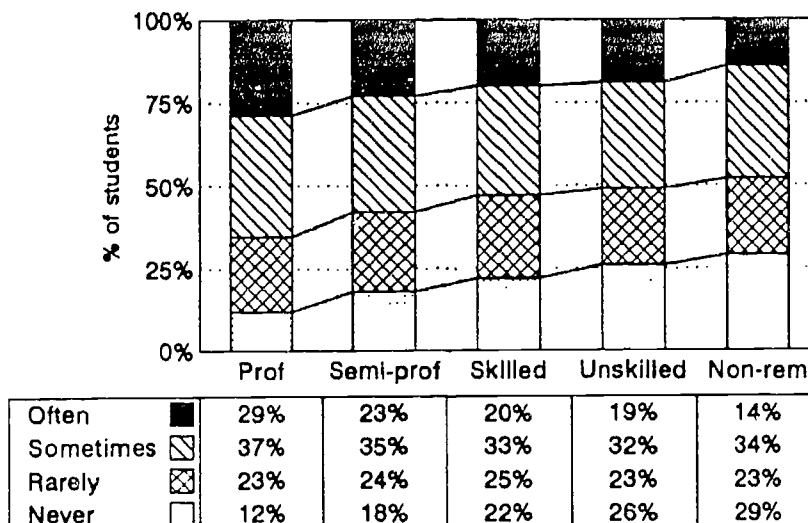
### Extra-curricular activities

A consistent trend is observed between students' SES and their involvement in extra-curricular activities. It appears that the level of participation increases slightly as SES goes up and vice versa. (See Figures 30 and 31). While over a quarter (28%-29%) of the students from the highest SES group (i.e. parents with university education and/or professional jobs) take part often in extra-curricular activities, only around 15% of the students from the lowest SES backgrounds (i.e. parents with elementary school education or unemployed) do so on a frequent basis.

**Figure 30: Extra-curricular activities by parental education**



**Figure 31: Extra-curricular activities by parental occupation**

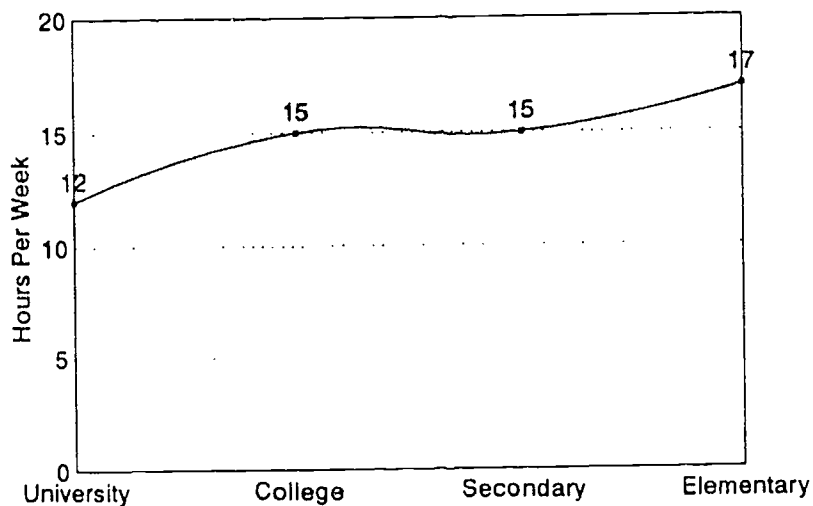


## Homework and part-time work

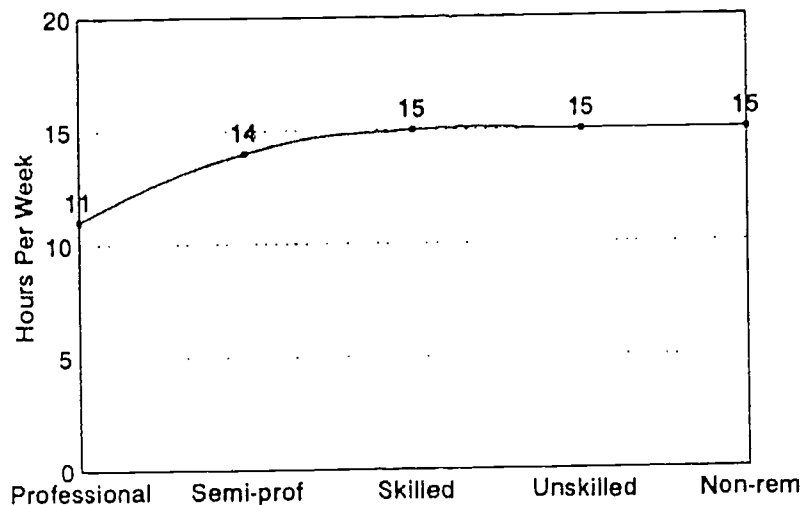
The amount of time spent on homework does not seem to differ very much according to the students' SES. However, there is a distinct difference in the amount of time spent on part-time work among students from different SES backgrounds. (See Figures 32 and 33).

The pattern is quite clear that as parents' years of education decrease, students' time spent on part-time work increases. The hours of part-time work per week for students with university, community college, secondary and elementary educated parents go up progressively from 12 to 17 hours. A similar relationship can be observed between students' hours of work and parents' occupation.

**Figure 32: Students' part-time work by parental education**



**Figure 33: Students' part-time work by parental occupation**



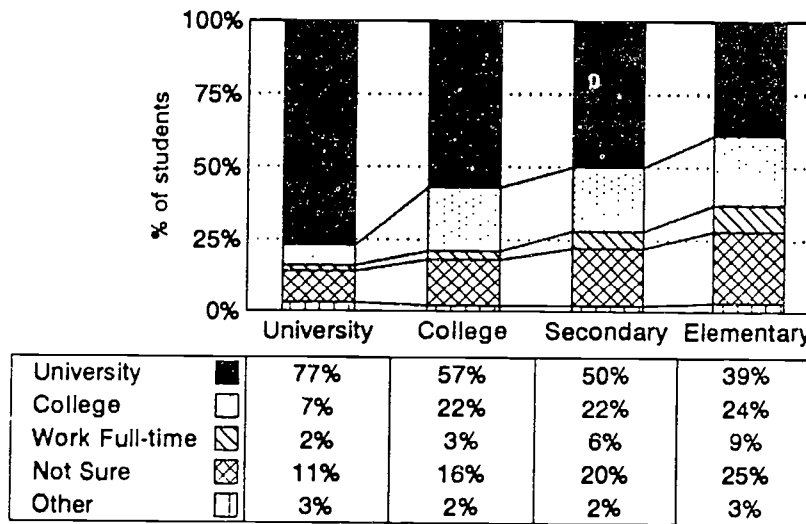


## Future Plans and SES

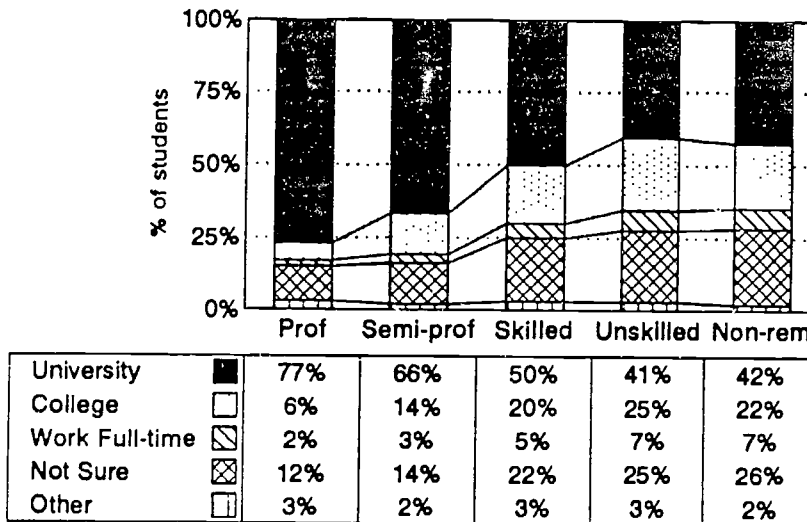
### Post-secondary school plans

A strong positive relationship between SES and post-secondary plans is apparent in the data: the higher the SES, the higher is the percentage of students who aspire to university as their future academic option. While 77% of students from the highest SES cited university in their post-secondary plans, only about 40% of their counterparts from the lowest socio-economic group indicated this option. Students' assessment of their parents' expectations also follows the same pattern. (See Figures 34 and 35).

**Figure 34: Students' post-secondary plans by parental education**



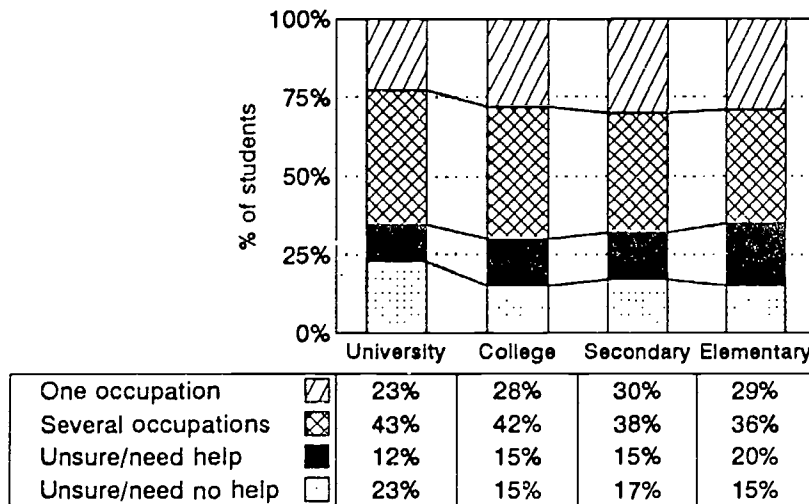
**Figure 35: Students' post-secondary plans by parental occupation**



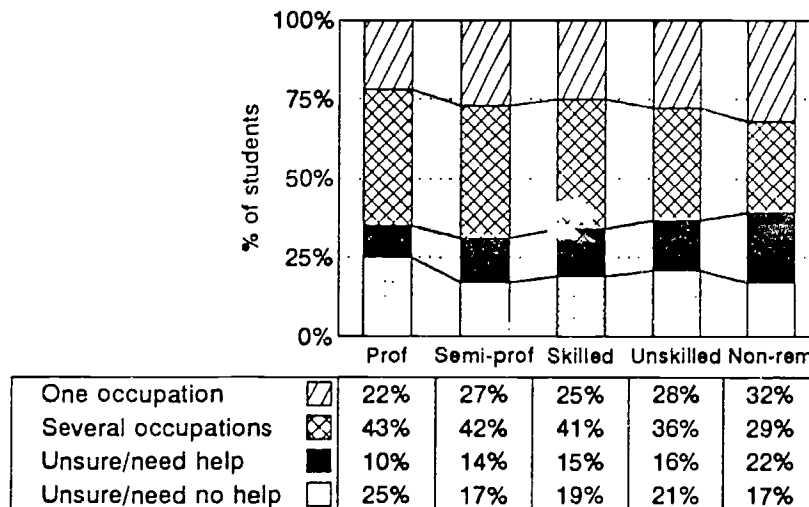
## Career Plans

There seems to be some minor differences in students' career plans according to SES. Students from the lower SES groups tend to show uncertainty about their career plans and felt need for guidance more often than those from the higher SES groups. (See Figures 36 and 37).

**Figure 36: Students' career plan by parental education**



**Figure 37: Students' career plan by parental occupation**



## SUMMARY

### Students from high SES families

Most of the students whose parents are university trained and/or have professional jobs are White, Canadian-born, speak only English at home, and live with two parents. A clear majority of them are enrolled in Advanced level courses and aspire for university. They participate more often in extra-curricular activities and do fewer hours of part-time work than students from low SES families.

### Students from low SES families

Students whose parents are unemployed or have only elementary education have some common characteristics. A disproportionate number of them are enrolled in General or Basic level courses. They are less likely to aspire for university and feel more uncertain about their post-secondary plans than students from high SES backgrounds. They are also less involved in extra-curricular activities, but do more part-time work than their peers from high SES families.

However, some differences are found among the low SES groups:

Students whose parents are unemployed are:

- o mostly foreign-born, non-White and speakers of a first language other than English,
- o likely to have parents with community college,
- o likely to live with mother only.

Students whose parents have only elementary education are:

- o mostly Whites and speakers of a non-English mother tongue,
- o mostly living with both parents who have skilled or semi-skilled jobs.

## REFERENCE

Brown, R.S., Cheng, M., Yau, M., & Ziegler, S. (1992). The 1991 every secondary student survey: Initial findings. Toronto: The Board of Education for the City of Toronto, Research Services (Report #200).

Cheng, M., Tsuji, G., Yau, M., & Ziegler, S. (1989). The every secondary student survey: Fall, 1987. Toronto: The Board of Education for the City of Toronto, Research Services (Report #191).

## Appendix 1

### Director's letter to secondary school students, November 1991

*Director*  
Joan M. Green  
*Associate Director—Human Resources*  
Beverley Brophy  
*Associate Director—Operations*  
Linda Grayson  
*Associate Director—Program*  
Edward W. Gordon  
*Comptroller of Buildings and Plans*  
Michael J. Rose  
*Comptroller of Finance*  
Ron Trbovich  
*Superintendent—Information Services*  
Chumbo Poe-Mutuma

# TORONTO BOARD OF EDUCATION



155 College Street,  
Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1P6  
(416) 598-4931

Dear Student:

Every few years the Toronto Board of Education conducts the Every Secondary Student Survey. A major reason for this survey is to help educators see schools and schooling from the students' point of view, and to make changes in programs that will better meet students' needs.

Another purpose of the survey is to obtain a description of the student population--including gender, age, and language, along with family, ethnic and racial background. Students' marks and credits are looked at side by side with this information, with a view to providing the best programs and opportunities for all students. This survey will assist the Board in determining whether all our students, regardless of background, are well-served by the system, and will also highlight any barriers to successful student outcomes.

The information we gather is also shared with community groups that work with the Board -- for example, Home and School Associations, Parent Teacher Associations, The Black Parents Consultative Committee, and the Portuguese Liaison Committee, and others.

The ultimate aim of this information is to provide the best possible learning environment, so that all students will have the same opportunity to be successful in school, and to earn the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

All information given is confidential, and all reports based on it will describe groups, not individuals. While your participation is voluntary, we are depending on your cooperation to give an accurate description of Toronto's secondary school students. Without your input, the information will be less complete and accurate.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan M. Green".

Joan M. Green  
Director of Education

## Appendix 2

Every secondary school student survey forms, November 1991  
(Forms A & B)



Every Secondary Student Survey, 1991-1992  
Research Services  
Toronto Board of Education

In order to improve programs in Toronto schools, we need to know more about our students. This survey is confidential. No information on individual students will be shared or reported. Information on all 30,000 students is combined to get an overall picture of students and schools.

Please help us get the information to describe our students and improve our programs by answering the questions below. If any particular question causes you concern, skip it.

- A. At what level are you taking most of your courses this year? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Basic
  - 2 General
  - 3 Advanced
  - 4 Non-streamed (for Rosedale Heights students only)
- B. What do you plan to do after leaving high school? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 I'm not sure yet
  - 2 To attend community college (for example: George Brown, Seneca, Centennial)
  - 3 To go to work full-time
  - 4 To attend university (for example: York, Guelph, Ryerson)
  - 5 Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- C. On average, how much time do you spend doing homework each week— Monday through Sunday? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 About \_\_\_\_\_ hours each week.
  - 2 None.
- D. Besides going to school, do you work on weekdays— Monday through Friday? (Do not include the job that you take for your co-op program. Circle one number only.)
- 1 Yes, about \_\_\_\_\_ hours between Monday and Friday.
  - 2 No, I do not work on weekdays.
- E. Do you work on weekends— Saturday and/or Sunday? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Yes, about \_\_\_\_\_ hours Saturday and/or Sunday.
  - 2 No, I do not work on weekends.
- F. How often do you take part in extra-curricular activities: for example sports, yearbook, clubs? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Often
  - 2 Sometimes
  - 3 Rarely
  - 4 Never
- G. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school. (Circle one number for each statement.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. I feel I "belong" in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
b. This school has an atmosphere that encourages students to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
c. This school treats students of all races and ethnic backgrounds fairly and equally.	1	2	3	4	5
d. Extra help is available at school when I need it.	1	2	3	4	5
e. Students at this school have enough say over the things that are important to them.	1	2	3	4	5
f. Most teachers at this school make an effort to get to know their students.	1	2	3	4	5
g. My school gives students the help they need for planning their future education and careers.	1	2	3	4	5

(PLEASE TURN OVER)

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- H. Where were you born? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Canada (If born in Canada, please go to question "J")
  - 2 Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- I. If you were not born in Canada, when did you arrive in Canada? 19 \_\_\_\_
- J. To which of the following groups do you belong? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Aboriginal (Native people of North or South America)
  - 2 Asian
  - 3 Black
  - 4 White
  - 5 Mixed
  - 6 Other (describe): \_\_\_\_\_
- K. Do you think of yourself as Canadian? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No
- L. In addition to (or instead of) Canadian, please indicate which ethnic or cultural group(s) your parents/ancestors belong to. (Circle as many as appropriate.)
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 African                                   | 14 Italian   |
| 2 Arab                                      | 15 Jewish  |
| 3 British (English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh) | 16 Korean  |
| 4 Bulgarian                                 | 17 Native American/Metis (including North/South America) |
| 5 Caribbean                                 | 18 Pakistani   |
| 6 Chinese                                   | 19 Polish  |
| 7 Dutch                                     | 20 Portuguese  |
| 8 East Indian                               | 21 Spanish   |
| 9 Filipino                                  | 22 Tamil   |
| 10 French                                   | 23 Ukrainian   |
| 11 German                                   | 24 Vietnamese  |
| 12 Greek                                    | 25 Others (describe): _____                              |
| 13 Iranian/Persian                          |  |
- M. What is (are) your first language(s)— that is, the language(s) you first learned at home?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. With whom are you living? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Both father and mother
  - 2 Mother only
  - 3 Father only
  - 4 Guardian(s)
  - 5 On my own
  - 6 Other (describe): \_\_\_\_\_
- |   | FATHER  | MOTHER  |
|---|---|---|
| N. What is (are) your parents' first language(s)?   | _____   | _____   |
| O. What are your parents' occupations?<br>FOR EXAMPLE: carpenter, unemployed, high school teacher, housewife, restaurant owner. (Please write <i>what</i> they do, not <i>where</i> they work.) | _____   | _____   |
| P. What are your parents' highest education levels? (Circle one number for each parent)   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 elementary school</li> <li>2 secondary school</li> <li>3 community college</li> <li>3 university</li> <li>4 I don't know</li> <li>5 Other (describe): _____</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 elementary school</li> <li>2 secondary school</li> <li>3 community college</li> <li>3 university</li> <li>4 I don't know</li> <li>5 Other (describe): _____</li> </ol> |

Confidentiality: The information collected on this form will be protected under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1989.

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Every Secondary Student Survey, 1991-1992  
Research Services  
Toronto Board of Education

In order to improve programs in Toronto schools, we need to know more about our students. This survey is confidential. No information on individual students will be shared or reported. Information on all 30,000 students is combined to get an overall picture of students and schools.

Please help us get the information to describe our students and improve our programs by answering the questions below. If any particular question causes you concern, skip it.

- A. At what level are you taking most of your courses this year? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Basic
  - 2 General
  - 3 Advanced
  - 4 Non-streamed (for Rosedale Heights students only)
- B. What do you plan to do after leaving high school? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 I'm not sure yet
  - 2 To attend community college (for example: George Brown, Seneca, Centennial)
  - 3 To go to work full-time
  - 4 To attend university (for example: York, Guelph, Ryerson)
  - 5 Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- C. What do you think your parent(s) would like you to do after leaving high school? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 This question is not applicable to me
  - 2 I'm not sure
  - 3 To attend community college (for example: George Brown, Seneca, Centennial)
  - 4 To go to work full-time
  - 5 To attend university (for example: York, Guelph, Ryerson)
  - 6 Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- D. How certain are you of your future career plans at this time? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 I have one specific occupation in mind for myself.
  - 2 I have narrowed my plans to several possibilities.
  - 3 I am undecided and need help.
  - 4 I am undecided but don't need help at this time.
- E. On average, how much time do you spend doing homework each week— Monday through Sunday? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 About \_\_\_\_\_ hours each week.
  - 2 None.
- F. Besides going to school, do you work on weekdays— Monday through Friday? (Do not include the job that you take for your co-op program. Circle one number only.)
- 1 Yes, about \_\_\_\_\_ hours between Monday and Friday.
  - 2 No, I do not work on weekdays.
- G. Do you work on weekends— Saturday and/or Sunday? (Circle one number only.)
- 1 Yes, about \_\_\_\_\_ hours Saturday and/or Sunday.
  - 2 No, I do not work on weekends.

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H. Where were you born? (Circle one number only.)

- 1 Canada (If born in Canada, please go to question "J")
- 2 Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

I. If you were not born in Canada, when did you arrive in Canada? 19 \_\_\_\_

J. To which of the following groups do you belong? (Circle one number only.)

- 1 Aboriginal (Native people of North or South America)
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- 5 Mixed
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K. Do you think of yourself as Canadian? (Circle one number only.)

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

L. In addition to (or instead of) Canadian, please indicate which ethnic or cultural group(s) your parents/ancestors belong to. (Circle as many as appropriate.)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 African                                   | 14 Italian   |
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| 13 Iranian/Persian                          |  |

M. What is (are) your first language(s)— that is, the language(s) you first learned at home?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q. With whom are you living? (Circle one number only.)

- 1 Both father and mother
- 2 Mother only
- 3 Father only
- 4 Guardian(s)
- 5 On my own
- 6 Other (describe): \_\_\_\_\_

	FATHER	MOTHER
N. What is (are) your parents' first language(s)?	_____	_____

O. What are your parents' occupations? FOR EXAMPLE: carpenter, unemployed, high school teacher, housewife, restaurant owner. (Please write what they do, not where they work.)	_____	_____
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P. What are your parents' highest education levels? (Circle one number for each parent)	1 elementary school	1 elementary school
	2 secondary school	2 secondary school
	3 community college	3 community college
	3 university	3 university
	4 I don't know	4 I don't know
	5 Other (describe): _____	5 Other (describe): _____

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