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ABSTRACT

This report details findings of a national survey of the attitudes and plans of American adolescents. Completing the questionnaire were non-home-schooled students 14 to 18 years of age from 1,334 households in a nationally representative sample. To permit regional comparisons, the questionnaires were mailed to representative households within each of the nine United States census regions. The report summarizes findings "at a glance" in 11 categories: (1) schools; (2) student environment; (3) courses important for future success; (4) attitudes; (5) opportunities; (6) effort and grades; (7) role models; (8) family relationships; (9) outside activities; (10) top career choices; and (11) the future. Survey findings are discussed under the following headings: (1) the academic environment-- evaluation of current experiences; (2) opportunities and effort; (3) life beyond the classroom; (4) the future; (5) future education; and (6) career and family. Among the key findings, the report notes that most youth appear to be meaningfully engaged in their schooling, viewing courses as very challenging (58 percent) and seeing them as "definitely preparing me for the future" (67 percent). Ninety percent reported that there is "at least one teacher or administrator who personally cares about my success." About three quarters of the sample are connected to at least one school-based co-curricular activity. High percentages of both boys and girls reported close relationships with parents and high percentages reported being connected to three or more friends. The report includes 31 data tables. (KB)

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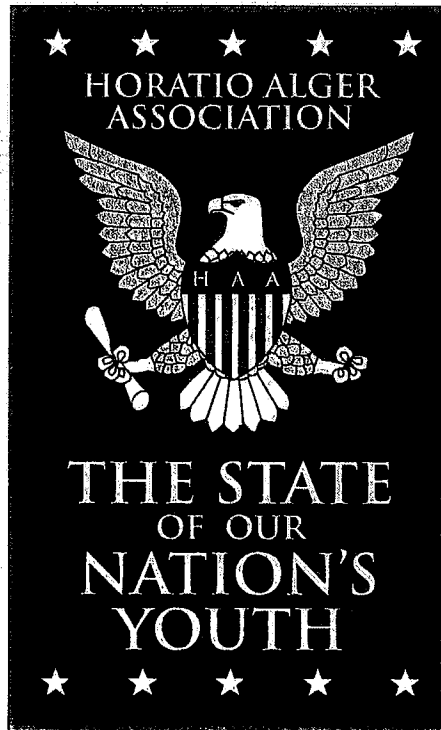
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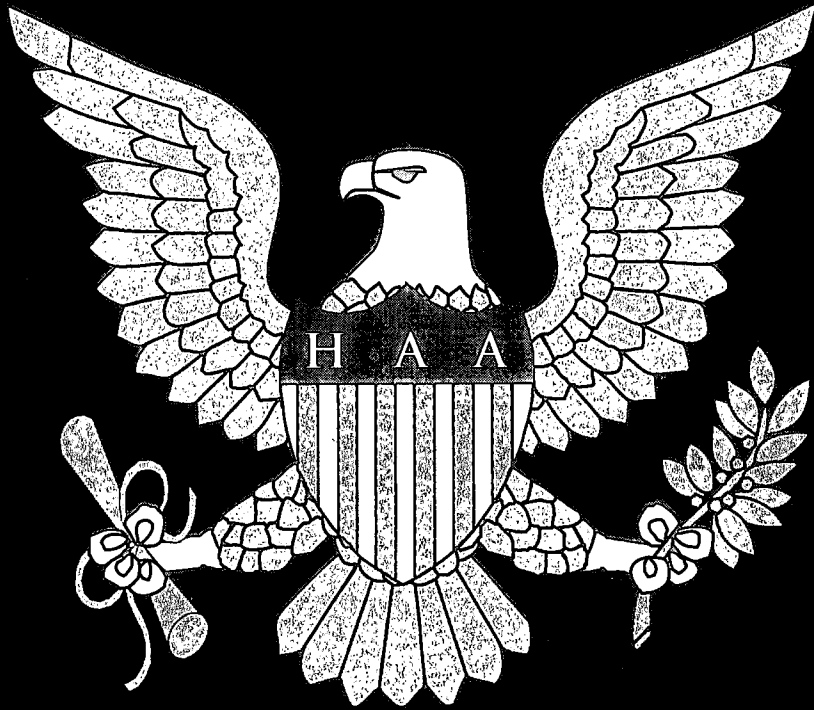
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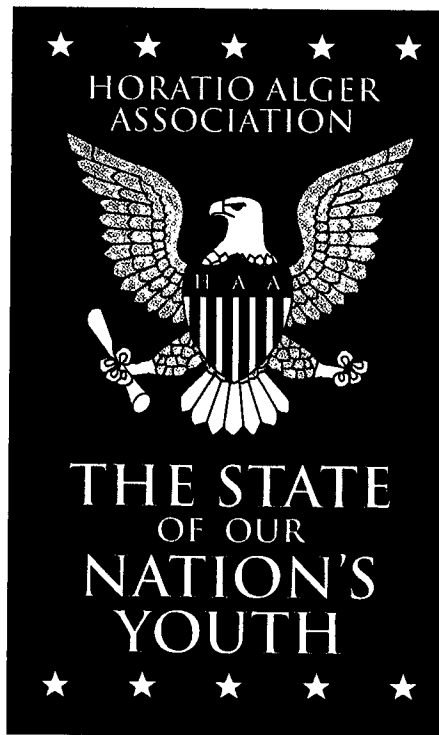
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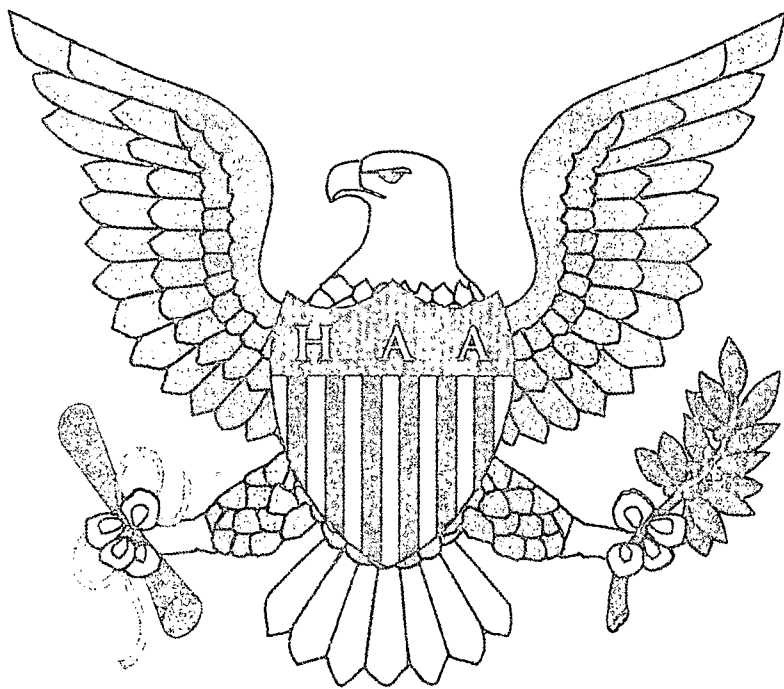
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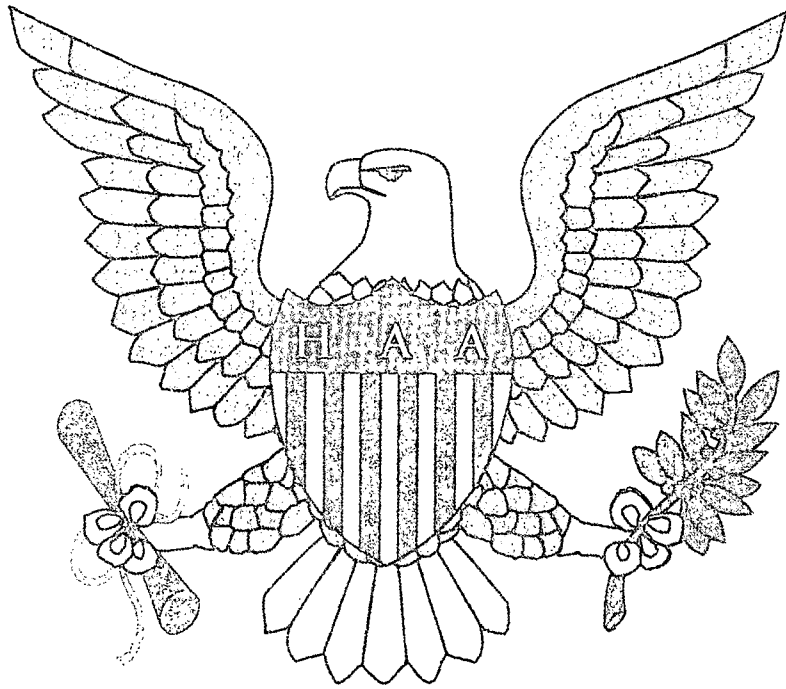
The *STATE OF OUR NATION'S YOUTH* is an annual effort to give voice to what's on the minds and in the hearts of the country's young people. In undertaking this important project, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans is honored to have partners who share our dedication to bringing the hopes, dreams, opinions and concerns of our children to the attention of the nation.

First and foremost, the Association is grateful to its Board of Directors and all of its Members for their strong, continuing commitment to this effort. We extend a special note of appreciation to Mr. & Mrs. George L. Argyros, Mr. & Mrs. Terry M. Giles, Mr. & Mrs. H. Wayne Huizenga, Mr. & Mrs. Richard L. Knowlton, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth L. Lay, Mr. & Mrs. James R. Moffett, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Neubauer, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Scott, Jr. and Mr. & Mrs. Dennis R. Washington.

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Our thanks and appreciation go to the Field Directors and educators who helped select our student panel: Kay Baker, Director of Communications, Hurst-Eules-Bedford Independent School District, Bedford, Texas; Ron Nicola, Chairman, Social Studies Department, Livermore High School, Livermore, California; Wally Hayes, Former Executive Director, Maine Association of Student Councils, Westbrook, Maine; Vicki Baker, Associate Superintendent of North Kansas City School District, Kansas City, Missouri; Arline Cathchings, Guidance Counselor, Paul Laurence Dunbar Pre-Engineering High School, Washington, D.C.; and William Parrish, President, William Clay Parrish, Jr. Foundation, Vienna, Virginia.

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INTRODUCTION

For more than half a century, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., has been listening to our nation's young people—listening to their hopes and fears, and encouraging them to strive for their dreams and aspirations.

Founded in 1947, the Horatio Alger Association was created to demonstrate that obstacles can be overcome and that the American dream is attainable through hard work, honest actions, and determination. The Association reaffirms these critically important truths each year by identifying outstanding role models whose lives are characterized by great success, triumph over adversity, and an abiding commitment to helping others.

As it honors these American values, the Association, through an ever-expanding array of educational activities, gives hope, inspiration, and assistance to the young people of this nation. Through the continuing generosity of its Members, the Association annually awards more than \$2 million in college scholarships to promising high school seniors who, like the Association's members, have confronted and vanquished some of life's most forbidding roadblocks.

This report, the *State of Our Nation's Youth*, represents another of our organization's efforts to hear what is in the hearts and on the minds of young people. In publishing this annual back-to-school survey, we hope to give voice to our teenagers' thoughts and opinions. The Association recognizes that the youth of today are the future of America tomorrow. Our youth have much to say, and if we are to be the compassionate and thoughtful guardians of their best interests, we must understand and appreciate their concerns, motivations, expectations, and opinions. The better we understand young people, the more effectively we may assist them in fulfilling their potential and accomplishing their goals. In America, a success for one is a triumph for all.

The Association is committed to providing the annual *State of Our Nation's Youth* report to the educational community. We hope you find this information useful in working with our nation's youth.

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FOREWORD

There are many commendable features to this Horatio Alger Association's *State of Our Nation's Youth* study. Among them is its focus on assessing indicators of positive health. A well-known concept in the field of youth development is that health is not synonymous with being problem-free. Yet, many of the national monitoring systems focused on youth primarily track the risks, deficits, and health-compromising behaviors to be prevented. Such indicators capture only part of the concept of health. The *State of Our Nation's Youth* draws us more into the territory of the experiences, resources, and opportunities to be promoted. If we are to become a more developmentally attentive nation, both these prevention and promotion dimensions must drive research, policy, and practice. I also value the sustained commitment to this national study, with emerging trend data that adds texture and context to the findings.

One of the themes explored in these annual studies is what might be called "connectedness," one of the newer concepts social scientists use to describe healthy development. This concept refers to embeddedness within multiple social institutions and adult and peer relationships. To be "connected" is to be engaged, to belong, to be known and affirmed, to have a certain permanence in relationships, to be valued, and to be empowered to contribute. All of these essential developmental experiences are of heightened importance in the 14 to 18-age range and all of them have their primary sources in caring and constructive places and relationships. It is from this core understanding of what youth need to succeed that recent national mobilization efforts are grounded.

As I reflect on the rich data in this year's *State of Our Nation's Youth*, I am drawn to the many indicators that address this theme of connectedness. To a considerable degree, the data suggest that we are doing well in raising a next generation buoyed by caring and attentive places and people. For example:

- Most youth appear to be meaningfully engaged in the schooling enterprise, viewing courses as very challenging (58%) and seeing them as "definitely preparing me for the future" (67%). On the more relational dimension of schools, 90 percent report there is "at least one teacher or administrator who personally cares about my success" and 60 percent say, "there is at least one teacher or administrator I can talk with about my personal problems."
- About three-quarters (76%) of the national sample are connected to at

least one school-based cocurricular activity, with females reporting a higher rate (82%) than males (71%).

- High percentages of both boys and girls report close relationships with parents.
- High percentages report being connected to three or more friends (62% of boys, 68% of girls).

We can interpret this range of findings on the theme of “connectedness” in several ways. First, we ought to celebrate that school, family, peer, and organizational connections are more the rule than the exception. In all studies like this, however, we ought to note that the non-respondents to the mailed survey may tend to be youth who are more pushed away and forgotten (i.e., disconnected). Hence, the true national numbers may be less affirming.

Second, we ought to be extremely mindful of and attentive to youth in all of our communities—both large and small—who do not benefit from these many forms of connection. In fact, if we were able to construct a scale on connectedness and ask what percent of American youth benefit simultaneously from many forms of connectedness (e.g., to school, family, peers, organizations, and non-related adults), I’d estimate the percentage would not be higher than 50. To make connectedness to multiple people and places a reality for all, we will need to unleash a national awakening of institutional and citizen power. Connectedness, I would argue, emerges less from professionalized programs and services and more from communities of people choosing to place children and adolescents at the center of daily life. It is my hope that across the next decade, this on-going national barometer will detect and report a resurgence in adults choosing to connect with youth.



Dr. Peter L. Benson

Dr. Benson is a Social Psychologist, Author of *All Kids are Our Kids*, and President of Search Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The table below summarizes the major survey findings.

AT A GLANCE

SCHOOLS	TOTAL 2000	TOTAL 1999	TOTAL 1998	TOTAL 1997
Give their schools an "A" or "B"	68%	66%	66%	73%
Agree that courses school offers are preparing them for the future	67%	64%	69%	NA
Agree that courses their school offers are challenging	58%	55%	60%	NA
Believe that it is important to most of their teachers that they do their best	65%	63%*	68%	NA
Have at least one teacher or administrator to talk with about personal problems	60%	63%	66%	NA
STUDENT ENVIRONMENT				
Always feel safe in their school	40%	37%	44%	NA
Believe teachers and administrators have taken all necessary steps to make them feel safe and secure	43%	35%	43%	NA
Feel that the behavior of other students in their school interferes with their performance	40%	38%	40%	NA
COURSES IMPORTANT FOR FUTURE SUCCESS				
Computer courses	93%	93%	91%	93%
Mathematics	92%	93%	92%	92%
English	90%	89%	90%	92%
Business	82%	83%	78%	84%
Science	79%	79%	79%	87%
ATTITUDES				
Try to take the most difficult and challenging courses they can	51%	48%*	52%	NA
Believe the amount of work they do is very important to later success in life	66%	66%	66%	NA
Personally important to them that they do their best in all of their classes	72%	72%	73%	NA
OPPORTUNITIES				
Believe the harder they work the more opportunities will be available to them	73%	73%	74%	NA
Believe they will have many opportunities available to them after they graduate	76%	68%	71%	NA
Believe there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes	58%	55%	58%	NA
EFFORT AND GRADES				
Received mostly A's on last report card	24%	24%	25%	NA
Homework is a priority; complete before other activities	43%	38%	40%	NA
Mean number of hours of homework per week	5.8	5.9	6.1	6.6

Note: **Red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.

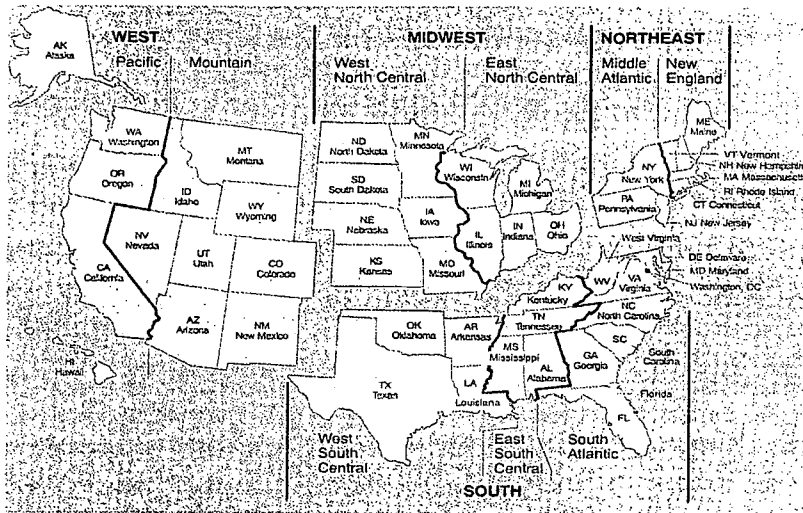
*Significantly different at the .10 level.

At A Glance (continued)	TOTAL 2000	TOTAL 1999	TOTAL 1998	TOTAL 1997
ROLE MODELS				
Role model is family member	41%	41%	41%	NA
FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS				
Mother is a person they can confide in about personal problems	72%	69%	69%	NA
Father is a person they can confide in about personal problems	41%	43%	41%	NA
OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES				
Have a group of friends they hang out with	65%	67%	64%	NA
Had a job in past school year	40%	39%	38%	NA
Participated in athletic teams or clubs	46%	46%	51%	47%
Participated in band/orchestra	18%	20%*	17%	17%
TOP CAREER CHOICES				
Business person	6%	7%	6%	5%
Teacher	7%	6%	8%	10%
Medical doctor	7%	6%	7%	6%
Computer hardware/software developer	10%	9%	7%	9%
Engineer	5%	5%	6%	3%
THE FUTURE				
Percentage planning to continue their education	78%	79%*	82%	88%
Percentage planning to attend a four-year college or university	62%	58%	61%	62%
Top reason for seeking further education after high school is to get a good job	38%	39%	39%	34%
Top reason for seeking further education is to have the ability to make a difference/change things for the better	20%	19%	20%	23%
Ideal age for marriage	25.5	25.3	25.5	24.8
Number of children desired (includes those who do not want children)	2.1	2.1*	2.0	1.9

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.

*Significantly different at the .10 level.

MAP OF U.S. CENSUS REGIONS



FINAL SAMPLE

REGION	FINAL SAMPLE	1999 CPS
New England	4.7%	4.5%
Mid-Atlantic	14.2%	13.7%
East North Central	17.1%	17.3%
West North Central	7.4%	7.0%
South Atlantic	15.9%	17.3%
East South Central	7.1%	6.7%
West South Central	12.1%	12.3%
Mountain	6.9%	6.4%
Pacific	14.6%	14.9%
HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
<\$15,000	10.7%	11.2%
\$15,000-\$29,999	14.9%	15.8%
\$30,000-\$49,999	20.3%	21.2%
\$50,000-\$74,999	23.1%	22.9%
\$75,000 and above	31.0%	29.0%
HOUSEHOLD SIZE		
2 members	7.2%	7.9%
3 members	24.3%	24.7%
4 members	35.4%	34.0%
5+ members	33.1%	33.5%
HOUSEHOLD DESIGNATION		
Husband/Wife	69.7%	68.1%
Male/Relative	5.5%	6.1%
Female/Relative	23.4%	24.4%
Male/Non-Relative	1.0%	1.1%
Female/Non-Relative	0.3%	0.3%
AGE		
14 years	20.9%	20.1%
15 years	21.0%	20.0%
16 years	21.6%	20.6%
17 years	20.2%	20.2%
18 years	15.8%	19.1%

Note: CPS – Current Population Survey

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FINDINGS

THE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT EVALUATION OF CURRENT EXPERIENCES

Schools' Overall Performance

When asked to give their school a grade, more than two-thirds (68%) of today's teens gave their school either an A or B. This is consistent with results reported since 1998, but fewer than the 73% reported in 1997. Today's males and females reported similar results. More students attending private schools (91%) were likely to give their school an A or B than those attending public schools (65%). More students earning A's and B's themselves (79%) were likely to give their school an A or B than those earning below a C (18%).

Courses Ratings

Just over two-thirds (67%) of today's teens felt their courses were definitely preparing them for the future. Fewer students (58%) felt their courses were challenging. Both of these ratings were consistent with 1999 data but trending up toward 1998 levels. Only half (50%) of today's teens felt their courses were interesting, while fewer (38%) described their courses as exciting. Two-thirds (65%) felt they had an opportunity for open discussion in their classrooms. This year, more females felt their courses were interesting and that they had more of an opportunity for open discussion than did males. Compared to public school students, more private school students felt their courses were definitely preparing them for the future (63% public vs. 87% private), challenging (55% public vs. 81% private), interesting (49% public vs. 61% private), exciting (37% public vs. 46% private), and giving them more opportunity for open discussion (63% public vs. 78% private). Interestingly, those living in the East North Central (66%) and South Atlantic (67%) were more likely to agree that their courses were challenging than those living in New England (49%), West North Central (50%), West South Central (53%) and Pacific (52%) regions.

Computer usage/programming remained the course rated the highest in importance by most teens, followed by mathematics and English. While the rank of the top 10 courses remained unchanged since 1999, sex/health education, family living/home economics, physical education, government, and foreign languages received lower importance ratings. Females rated English, family living/home economics, foreign languages,

music, art, and drama as being more important than males. In fact, females ranked English as the most important course. Males gave more importance to vocational and physical education than females.

Behavior of Students

Only 12% of today's teens indicated the behavior of students in their school was a positive influence on their performance, while 40% indicated it interfered with their performance. Males (43%), students in public schools (42%), and those receiving grades below C (62%) indicated it was more of a problem than did females (36%), those in private schools (26%), or those earning A's/B's (35%) or B's/C's (47%).

Consistent with previous data, about half (49%) of today's students indicated they felt the rules on student conduct were about right, while 18% felt they were too lax and 33% felt they were too strict. More males (37%) indicated the rules were too strict compared to females (29%). Students receiving grades below C (65%) were more likely to indicate the rules were too strict than students receiving A's/B's (28%) or B's/C's (40%).

More than half (59%) of today's teens indicated they believe no or few students cheat. This is consistent with previous research. Compared to males (63%), fewer females (55%) believe no or few students cheat. Compared to private school students (76%), fewer public school students (56%) believe no or few students cheat.

Safety and Security

Forty percent (40%) of today's students always feel safe in their schools, consistent with 1999 results. Males (43%) were slightly more likely to feel safe in their schools than females (37%). Private school students (64%) were more likely to feel safe in their schools than public school students (36%). Students receiving A's/B's (44%) and B's/C's (33%) were more likely to feel safe than those receiving grades below C (20%). Interestingly, students living in the Mid Atlantic (50%) were more likely to indicate they always feel safe compared to those living in the East North Central (36%), South Atlantic (36%), East South Central (36%), and Mountain (35%) regions.

The proportion of students who feel their teachers and administrators have taken all the necessary steps for safety and security increased to 43%, consistent with the levels reported in 1998. Those who feel teachers and administrators have taken some steps toward safety and security declined to 49%, again, consistent with 1998 levels. Private school students (57%) and those receiving A's/B's (45%) and B's/C's (42%) were more likely to feel teachers and administrators have taken all the necessary steps for safety and security than public school students (41%) and those receiving grades below C (25%).

Concern and Caring

Almost all (90%) of today's teens feel there is at least one teacher or administrator who personally cares about their success. More than eight out of 10 (82%) could talk to a teacher about their school problems, and three-fourths (75%) could always find a teacher to talk to when needed. Fewer, (65%) felt it was important to most of their teachers that they do their best, and fewer still (60%) could talk to a teacher or administrator about personal problems. All of these results are consistent with 1999 results. However, with the exception of finding a teacher or administrator who personally cares about their success, all are trending down from 1998. Females were more likely to talk to teachers and administrators about school and personal problems, find a teacher to talk to, and feel it is important to their teachers that they do their best. Students receiving grades below a C (76%) were less likely to feel their teachers and administrators cared than those receiving A's/B's (92%) and B's/C's (87%).

Consistent with previous research, more than half of today's students feel the amount of work required by teachers (53%) and parents (57%) is about right. Forty percent (40%) believe the amount of work required by teachers is too much, while 28% say the amount of work required by parents is too much. Compared to males, females were more likely to feel the amount of work required by parents is about right and less likely to indicate it was too much.

Public vs. Private

When asked whether they believe students receive a better education in a public or private school, more than half (57%) stated they believe they can receive a good education in either type of school. One-fourth (28%) indicated they could receive a better education in a private school, while 15% indicated they could receive a good education in a public school. These results are consistent with previous research. Males were more likely than females to indicate they could receive a better education in a private school, while females were more likely to indicate they could receive a good education in either type of school.

OPPORTUNITIES AND EFFORT

Opportunities

More of today's teens (76%) believe they have many opportunities available to them after graduation than those in 1999 (68%). Three-fourths (73%) feel the harder they work, the more opportunities there will be. More than half (58%) feel there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes. Females were more likely to feel a sense of opportunity than males. Those students receiving A's/B's (85%) and B's/C's (62%) were more likely to feel a sense of opportunity than those receiving grades below C (35%). Students in a household with an annual income less than \$30,000 were less likely to indicate a sense of opportunity than all the others. Students living in a single-parent household were less likely to feel there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes.

Effort

Just over half (51%) of today's teens try to take the most difficult and challenging courses. Compared to 1999, more teens in 2000 indicated doing homework was a priority (43%). Three-fourths (72%) said it is important to them to do their best in all their classes, while two-thirds (66%) feel the amount of work they do in school is important to success later in life. Females were more likely than males to indicate across the board that the amount of effort they put into their schoolwork is important and a priority. Students in a household with an annual income less than \$30,000 were less likely to indicate the importance of effort. Students living in a single-parent or step household were also less likely to indicate the importance of effort.

In 2000, the mean number of hours students spent doing homework per week was 5.8. While this level is consistent with that reported in 1999, it is down from the 6.6 reported in 1997. Females (6.6), those attending private schools (9.1), and students receiving A's/B's (6.5) spend more time per week doing homework, while those living in single parent (4.7) or step households (4.4) spend less time per week doing homework.

Grades

One-fourth (24%) of today's teens received mostly A's on their last report card, while 14% received mostly B's and 29% received all A's and B's. More females (29%) than males (19%) and private (36%) than public (22%) students received mostly A's. Students living in step (13%) or single-parent households (13%) were less likely to receive mostly A's.

LIFE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Participation in Cocurricular Activities

Three-fourths (76%) of today's teens participated in some type of school-related activity, consistent with 1999 levels. Overall, females were more likely to participate in any activity than males. Students living in single-parent (66%) or step households (65%), and those with an annual income less than \$30,000 (60%) were less likely to participate. Students living in the West North Central (87%) were more likely to indicate they participated in a cocurricular activity than those living in other regions.

The majority of students participated in some form of athletics (46%) or service/volunteer group (23%). Males were more likely to indicate they participate in athletics, while females were more likely to indicate they participated in service groups, honor societies, choirs, drama, school publications, language clubs, and cheerleading.

Jobs

In total, 4 out of 10 teens (40%) had a job this past school year. Teens aged 16–18 were more likely to have a job than those aged 14–15. Interestingly, teens living in New England (57%) and the East North Central (50%) were also more likely to indicate they had a job than those living in other regions. There were no differences in the proportion of teens holding jobs based on grades received.

On average, teens work slightly less than 17 hours per week, consistent with previous research. Those teens living in single-parent (19.5)/step households (20.6) or households with incomes less than \$30,000 (20.7) and \$30,000–\$49,999 (17.8) indicated they work more hours than other teens, while those living in New England (12.9) work fewer hours. Public school students (17.3) and those earning B's/C's (18.3) indicated they work more hours than private schools (12.6) students and those earning A's/B's (16.1).

While there have been no changes in the proportion of teens holding jobs, both male and female teens aged 14–15 indicated they worked more hours in 2000 than in 1999.

Social Life

Two-thirds (65%) of today's teens have a group of friends they hang out with, while 28% only hang out with one or two close friends. In 2000, 7% indicated they prefer to spend most of their time alone. More males prefer to be alone than females. These levels remain consistent with those

previously reported. Teens living in single-parent (34%)/step households (34%) and those with annual incomes less than \$30,000 (41%) were more likely to report they only hang out with one or two close friends and less likely to report they have a group of friends.

Family Relationships

In 2000, 85% of male teens indicated they could talk to their mothers about day-to-day issues, while 70% indicated they could talk to their fathers about day-to-day issues. Only 69% of male teens could confide in their mothers about personal issues and 48% could confide in their fathers. Male teens feel their parents care about them, with 97% reporting their mother cares and 91% reporting their father cares.

Similarly, 85% of female teens indicated their mother is a person they can talk to about day-to-day issues, while only 58% indicated they could talk to their fathers about day-to-day issues. Only one-third (34%) of females feel they could confide in their fathers about personal issues, while 75% could confide in their mothers. Females, too, indicated their parents care about them, with 96% reporting their mother cares and 92% reporting their father cares.

Role Model

When asked to pick one person who could be considered their role model, 41% of today's teens indicated it was a family member, 14% indicated a friend or family friend, and 9% indicated a teacher/education professional. These results are consistent with previous research. Females were more likely to indicate a friend/family friend than males, while males were more likely to indicate a sports/sports-related professional, religious, or business leader.

THE FUTURE

Students were asked to indicate their biggest problem or challenge, if any, during the next year. They were asked to write in their answers, and their responses were then classified into major categories: personal goals, academics, and career. As in previous years, 41% stated issues related to personal goals, with equal levels (39%) reporting concerns with academics and only 9% mentioning a problem or challenge with career. Again in 2000, achieving and maintaining good grades was mentioned most frequently (27%). Females were more likely than males to indicate a problem or challenge with personal goals and selecting a college.

Plans After High School

Almost two-thirds (62%) of today's teens plan to attend a four-year college or university after high school and 12% plan to attend a two-year college. The proportion of those planning to attend a four-year college is up from the 58% reported in 1999, while the proportion of those planning to attend a two-year college is down from 16% reported in 1999. One-fourth (27%) of today's teens plan on getting a job, while 14% were undecided. Compared to 1999, fewer teens in 2000 plan to attend a training or vocational school (8%) or get married (6%). Males tend to be more likely to join the armed forces, while females were more likely to indicate they would attend college, get married, or join a volunteer organization.

FUTURE EDUCATION

Motivating Factor for Seeking Further Education

As in previous research, 4 out of 10 students (38%) indicated their greatest motivating factor for seeking further education was to get a job or a well-paying job. One in five (20%) want to have the ability to make a difference or change things for the better, while 15% want independence and 13% want more options available to them. More males than females mentioned getting a job/well-paying job, while more females than males mentioned having the ability to make a difference.

Public vs. Private

Just under one-third (30%) indicated they would prefer to attend a public college or university, 27% indicated they would prefer a private college or university, while 42% indicated they had no preference. This is consistent with 1999 data, and there were no preference differences between males and females. Not surprisingly, those currently attending public high schools had a higher preference for public colleges and those attending

private high schools had a higher preference for private colleges. Thirty-three percent (33%) of public school students preferred public college while 15% of private school students preferred public college. Fifty percent (50%) of private school students preferred private college while 24% of public school students preferred private college.

College Finances

Two-thirds (64%) of today's students have begun planning for how to pay for college. Those attending public school (62%) and those living in a household with an annual income of less than \$30,000 (41%) were less likely to have started, compared to others. In addition, teens earning grades below a C (32%) or those living in households with single parents (55%) or step-parents (55%) were less likely to have started.

Consistent with previous research, students plan to use many sources to finance their education. Almost two-thirds (61%) plan on scholarships, while 50% plan on parents paying, 47% having a job outside school, 44% student loans, and 35% grants. More females plan on having scholarships, student loans, and grants than males. Forty percent (40%) feel it will be difficult to finance their education, while 17% feel it will not be difficult. The majority of respondents (82%) expect to have a job while attending college or vocational school.

More than half (58%) indicate they expect the total cost of their first year of college to be \$10,000 or greater. Since 1999, fewer teens expect the cost to be under \$3,000 while more expect the cost to be \$7,000–\$9,999.

CAREER AND FAMILY

Future Career

When asked what careers they were interested in pursuing after high school graduation, teaching, medical doctor, and computer software development were each mentioned by 7% of today's students, followed by business (6%). There were no real differences in responses since 1999. Males were more likely to mention computer software development, engineering, and military service, while females were more likely to mention law, psychology, teaching, and veterinary medicine.

In 2000, only 7% of today's teens expect to earn less than \$15,000, while 17% expect to earn \$15,000–\$24,999; 28% expect to earn \$25,000–\$34,999; 25% expect to earn \$35,000–\$49,999; 14% expect to earn \$50,000–\$74,999, and 8% expect to earn \$75,000 and more. Students'

salary expectations rose slightly since 1999, with fewer expecting to earn \$15,000–\$24,999 and more expecting to earn \$50,000–\$74,999. Female salary expectations tend to be slightly lower than male expectations.

Marriage and Children

In 2000, students indicated that the ideal age for marriage was 25, consistent with previous data. Males tend to feel the ideal age for marriage is older (26) compared to females (24). On average, today's teens would like to have 2.1 children. Based on only those who want children, on average, today's teens would like to have 2.3 children. Females tend to want more children than males.

Personal Success and the American Dream

When asked to indicate how important various aspects of their lives were to their own personal success, almost all indicated work and career (99%), personal development and satisfaction (97%), friendships (95%), and their immediate family (92%). Further, 80% indicated extended family as important, 77% indicated making a contribution to society, and 74% mentioned religious/spiritual activities. These results are consistent with previous research with one exception: in 2000 there were more responses of religious/spiritual activities than in previous years. Females gave higher importance ratings to personal development and satisfaction, extended family, making a contribution to society, and religious/spiritual activities.

More than half (53%) of today's teens' idea of the American Dream involved personal/familial enrichment, while 34% involved possessions/career, and 30% monetary gain/comfort. Specifically, teens commented on emotional needs/desires, job/career, and having enough money for a comfortable living. Since 1999, fewer teens mentioned emotional needs/desires, happiness/enjoyment, love/attention/affection, and success/achievement. More teens mentioned having enough money for a comfortable living and being their own person. Compared to males, more females indicated their idea of the American Dream had to do with emotional needs/desires, happiness/enjoyment, and job/career. Males mentioned being rich more often than females. Teens from households earning less than \$30,000 a year (43%) were less likely than others to mention personal/familial enrichment than all others.

Greatest National Problems

As in the past, when asked to name the greatest problem facing the United States today, teens focused on crime and violence (33%) and the decline of family, moral, and social values (27%). Since 1999, responses of crime and violence were on the decline while responses of declining family, moral, and social values were on the rise. Other concerns include envi-

ronmental pollution/deterioration (18%) and AIDS (12%). Males tend to mention drugs and terrorism more than females, while females tend to mention health care more than males.

Choice for President

Because 2000 is a national election year, today's teens were asked if they were able to vote, which candidate would receive their vote. In total, 57% stated George W. Bush, while 36% indicated Al Gore. There were no differences in responses based on gender. However, teens living in households earning less than \$30,000 (42%) were more likely to mention Al Gore than households earning \$75,000 and above (32%). Teens living in households earning \$50,000–\$74,999 (61%) and \$75,000 and above (63%) were more likely to mention George W. Bush than those in households earning less than \$30,000 (49%).

THE SURVEY

The *State of Our Nation's Youth* is a survey and analysis of the attitudes and plans of American teenagers as they head into the 2000–2001 school year. In this survey, students between the ages of 14 and 18 are given the opportunity to express their opinions on relevant family, school, and social issues.

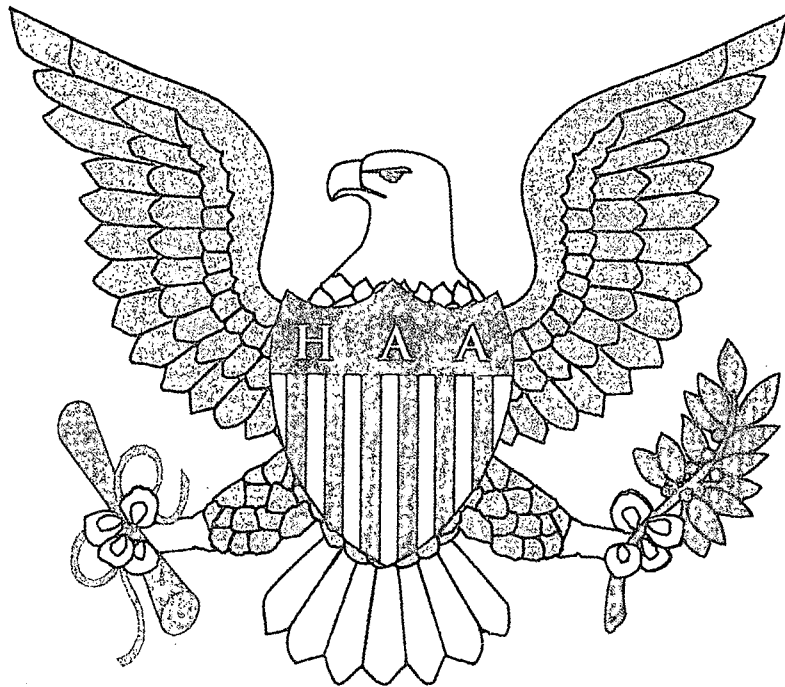
NFO Research, the world's third largest custom research firm, conducted the study via self-administered mail questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of a four-page, legal-sized booklet mailed on April 18, 2000 to 2,250 individuals between the ages of 14 and 18. Returned surveys were accepted through May 19, 2000. There was a 59% total return rate (representing a total of 1,334 households).

The sample for the 2000 study was selected from the NFO Research Panel and balanced to 1999 Current Population Survey estimates to be nationally representative of households with a male or female head of household 18 years of age or older and the presence of an individual 14–18 years of age. To permit regional comparisons, the questionnaires were mailed to representative households within each of the nine United States Census regions. The households were selected based on household income, household size, market size, race, household designation (presence of other members in a household), as well as age and gender of the individual teen. One teen in the household, identified by age and gender on the survey document, was randomly selected to complete the survey.

Because the primary focus of the survey is to obtain national-level data, a NFO proprietary weighting procedure was used for data weighting before the data tabulations were done, in order to ensure correct representation of Census regions within the national sample. Reports on subgroup comparisons (i.e. gender, race, family type) are made only when response rates and sample sizes permit.

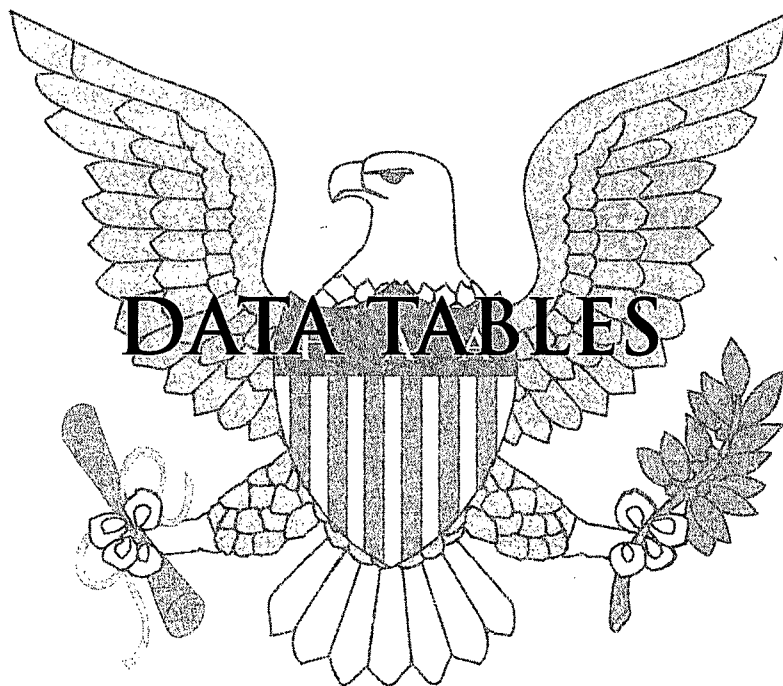
At the tabulation stage, 133 respondents were eliminated from the basis of the report because they were either home-schooled (41) or do not currently attend school (92). Teens were instructed in the materials they received with the questionnaire to return the survey within a given time period. Teens who did not return the questionnaire by the cutoff date were excluded from the sample.

Because of normal sample fluctuations, not all differences between groups or time periods represent true differences in the population. Therefore, significant differences (differences that do reflect population differences) have been noted in this report. Differences that are significant at the .05 level are indicative of greater differences between groups than those significant at only the .10 level.



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DATA TABLES

In many cases, students were allowed to select more than one response. For tables in which more than one response was given, the proportions will not add up to 100%. In some cases, students contributed multiple responses when only one response was requested. This information was also preserved in the tables, causing proportions to total to more than 100%.

Individual items may not total 100% due to rounding. Whole number percents were rounded from decimal percents using the following guidelines: Decimals greater than or equal to .5 were rounded up. Decimals less than .5 were rounded down.

HOW STUDENTS GRADE THEIR SCHOOL'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
TOTAL A OR B	68%	66%		73%	66%	70%
A	17%	17%	19%	19%	18%	17%
B	51%	49%	47%	54%	48%	53%
C	26%	26%	27%	22%	27%	25%
D	5%	6%	5%	4%	6%	4%
F	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

QUALITY OF COURSES

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Males 2000	Females 2000
Courses are definitely preparing me for the future	67%	64%	69%	65%	69%
Courses are very challenging	58%	55%	60%	56%	60%
Courses are very interesting	50%	49%	51%	44%	57%
Courses are very exciting	38%	35%	36%	35%	41%*
Have opportunity for open discussion in my classes	65%	66%	68%	60%	70%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

Note: * Significantly different at the .10 level

Not asked in 1997

RATINGS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF COURSES

(% Very, Somewhat Important)

2000 Rank	1999 Rank	1998 Rank	1997 Rank		Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
1	1	2	1	Computer usage/ programming	93%	93%	91%	93%	95%	92%
2	2	1	2	Mathematics	92%	93%	92%	92%	93%	91%
3	3	3	3	English	90%	89%	90%	92%	87%	94%
4	4	5	5	Business/ commercial	82%	83%	78%	84%	82%	83%
5	5	4	4	Science	79%	79%	79%	87%	81%	77%
6	6	8	8	Government	66%*	70%	65%	76%	65%	68%
7	7	6	7	Sex education/ health education	64%	70%	67%	77%	63%	67%
8	8	7	9	Family living/ home economics	63%	68%	65%	68%	56%	70%
9	9	9	6	History/social studies	63%	65%	62%	77%	62%	64%
10	10	10	11	Foreign languages	58%*	62%	57%	65%	52%	65%
11	13	13	13	Religion	53%	52%	51%	44%	52%	54%
12	12	12	10	Vocational	52%	54%	53%	66%	63%	40%
13	11	11	12	Physical education	49%	54%	54%	57%	57%	41%
14	15	14	15	Music	39%	38%	35%	39%	33%	45%
15	14	15	14	Art	38%	38%*	34%	43%	34%	42%
16	16	16	16	Drama	24%	24%	21%	27%	19%	30%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

Significantly different at the .10 level

CHEATING BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOLS

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Males 2000	Females 2000
Believe no or few students cheat	59%	57%	54%	63%*	55%
Believe half or most students cheat	41%	43%	46%	38%	45%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference at the .05 level. (males vs females)

Not asked in 1997

AMOUNT OF SAFETY/SECURITY IN SCHOOL

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Males 2000	Females 2000
Always feel safe in my school	40%	37%	44%	43%*	37%
Teachers and administrators have taken all necessary steps for my safety and security	43%	35%	43%	43%	44%
Teachers and administrators have taken some steps toward my safety and security	49%	55%	48%	48%	50%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

Note: * Significantly different at the .10 level
Not asked in 1997

CONCERN AND AVAILABILITY OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Males 2000	Females 2000
There is at least one teacher or administrator who personally cares about my success	90%	90%	89%	89%	91%
There is at least one teacher or administrator I can talk with about my school problems	82%	82%	84%	78%	86%
There is at least one teacher or administrator who is always available when needed	75%	78%	78%	71%	80%
It is important to most of my teachers that I do my best	65%	63%*	68%	61%	69%
There is at least one teacher or administrator I can talk with about my personal problems	60%	63%	66%	58%	62%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference at the .05 level. (males vs females)

Note: *Significantly different at the .10 level

Not asked in 1997

STUDENT OPINION OF PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE EDUCATION

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Males 2000	Females 2000
Receive better education in a public school	15%	16%	16%	15%
Receive better education in a private school	28%	26%	30%	25%
Can receive good education in either type of school	57%	58%	54%	61%

Note: **Bold red** figure indicate significant difference from previous years at the .05 level. (males vs females)

Not asked in 1997 and 1998

AMOUNT OF WORK REQUIRED BY TEACHERS AND PARENTS

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Males 2000	Females 2000
Amount of work required by teachers					
Not enough	7%	7%	9%	7%	8%
About right	53%	54%	53%	52%	53%
Too much	40%	39%	38%	41%	39%
Amount of work required by parents					
Not enough	16%	16%	13%	16%	15%
About right	57%	57%	59%	53%	61%
Too much	28%	27%	28%	31%	24%

Note: **Bold red** figure indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.
(males vs. females)
Not asked in 1997

A SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY

	The harder I work the more opportunities will be available to me	I will have many opportunities available to me after I graduate	I feel there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races/social classes
By Year			
2000	73%	76%	58%
1999	73%	68%	55%
1998	74%	71%	58%
By Gender 2000			
Male	70%	72%	55%
Female	76%	80%	61%*
By Household Income 2000			
Under \$30,000	60%	60%	49%
\$30,000-\$49,999	78%	78%	55%
\$50,000-\$74,999	77%	79%	66%
\$75,000 and over	78%	84%	62%
By Family Type 2000			
Nuclear	73%	76%	58%
Single Parents	68%	70%	49%
Step	65%	73%	55%
Extended	73%	77%	55%

Note: **Bold red** figure indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.
(males vs. females)
Note: * Significantly different at the .10 level
Not asked in 1997

Note: Families are defined as follows:
Nuclear Family: A family in which student lives with both parents
Step Family: A family in which student lives with a step-parent
Single Parent Family: A family in which student lives with only one parent
Extended Family: A family in which student lives with relatives in addition to parents and siblings

DEGREE OF EFFORT AND CHALLENGE

By Year	I try to take the most difficult and challenging courses	The amount of work I do in school now is important to my success later in life	It is important to me that I do my best in all my classes	Doing homework is a priority for me
2000	51%	66%	72%	43%
1999	48%	66%	72%	38%
1998	52%	66%	73%	40%
By Gender 2000				
Male	46%	61%	63%	36%
Female	56%	71%	61%	49%
By Household Income 2000				
Under \$30,000	35%	55%	61%	33%
\$30,000-\$49,999	50%	71%	78%	51%
\$50,000-\$74,999	54%	66%	71%	4%
\$75,000 and above	62%	71%	77%	45%
By Family Type 2000				
Nuclear	51%	66%	72%	42%
Single Parents	38%	62%	63%	36%
Step	35%	62%	60%	35%
Extended	54%	69%	73%	42%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.
(males vs. females)

Note: * Significantly different at the .10 level

Not asked in 1997

CHALLENGING COURSES, HOMEWORK, AND GRADES: SELF-REPORTED

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
Percent taking most difficult and challenging courses	51%	48%*	52%	na	46%	56%
Mean number of homework hours per week	5.8	5.9	6.1	6.6	5.1	6.6
Percent receiving mostly A's on last report card	24%	24%	25%	na	19%	29%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

Note: * Significantly different at the .10 level

PARTICIPATION IN COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
Athletic team/clubs	46%	46%	51%	47%	53%	39%
Service/volunteer groups	23%*	20%	23%	23%	18%	27%
Honor societies	19%	19%	21%	22%	13%	25%
Band/orchestra	18%	20%*	17%	17%	16%	19%
Choir/choral groups	14%	15%	15%	17%	8%	21%
Drama/theatre	12%	13%	12%	14%	9%	15%
Career-oriented clubs	11%	10%	12%	12%	12%	11%
Student council/government	11%	11%	11%	8%	9%	12%*
School publications	10%	10%	11%	9%	7%	14%
Language clubs	9%	10%	12%	13%	6%	14%
Cheerleading	6%	6%	5%*	3%	0.3%	12%
Debate/speech	5%	6%	5%	5%	4%	7%
Science clubs	4%	5%	5%	6%	5%	4%
Participate in any activity	76%	77%	82%	76%	71%	82%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

Note: * Significantly different at the .10 level

TEENS HOLDING JOBS

	Had Job Last Year			Average Hours Worked	
	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 2000	Total 1999
Total	40%	39%	38%	16.8	16.9
Age and Gender					
Male teens 14-15	20%	19%	23%	14.8*	11.0
Female teens 14-15	18%	17%	15%	12.8	8.5
Male teens 16-18	52%	51%	53%	17.5	18.6
Female teens 16-18	58%	56%	53%	17.6	18.4
Grades in School					
A/B	40%	40%	39%	16.1	15.8
B/C	40%	38%	37%	18.3	18.2
Below C	34%	29%	46%	18.3	20.5
Type of School					
Public	40%	38%	38%	17.3	17.0
Private	42%	39%	36%	12.6	13.0
Income					
Under \$30,000	37%	32%	32%	20.7	19.1
\$30,000-\$49,999	40%	39%	37%	17.8	18.1
\$50,000-\$74,999	40%	44%	46%	14.6	15.2
\$75,000 and above	41%	40%	40%	14.9	15.5
Type of Family					
Nuclear	40%	39%	39%	16.8	16.7
Single parents	37%	37%	35%	19.5	20.3
Step	36%	34%	34%	20.6	19.3
Extended	37%	42%	38%	17.0	17.2

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.

* Significantly different at the .10 level

Note: 1998 survey did not ask hours worked in typical week.

Not asked in 1997

TEENS' SOCIAL LIFE

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Males 2000	Females 2000
Have a group of friends I hang out with	65%	67%	64%	62%	68%*
Only hang out with one or two close friends	28%	28%	31%	29%	28%
Prefer to spend most of my time alone	7%	6%	5%	9%	4%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

Not asked in 1997

MALE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

(Based on those living with family member)

	Mother	Father	Brother(s)	Sister(s)	Grand-Parent(s)
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2000

Is a person I can talk to about day-to-day issues	85%	70%	44%	36%	44%
Is a person I can confide in about my personal problems	69%	48%	34%	26%	37%
Is a person I get along well with	82%	76%	62%	54%	71%
Is a person who really cares about me	97%	91%	63%	61%	83%
Is a person I share family experiences with	83%	75%	74%	68%	72%
Is a person I like	89%	86%	77%	77%	85%
Is a person I respect	88%	88%	57%	50%	87%

1999

Is a person I can talk to about day-to-day issues	83%	70%	45%	43%	44%
Is a person I can confide in about my personal problems	68%	55%	38%	32%	32%
Is a person I get along well with	83%	77%	64%	55%	75%
Is a person who really cares about me	94%	91%	63%	66%	84%
Is a person I share family experiences with	82%	80%	68%	68%	65%
Is a person I like	90%	87%	76%	72%	83%
Is a person I respect	89%	90%	57%	56%	92%

1998

Is a person I can talk to about day-to-day issues	87%	67%	45%	41%	49%
Is a person I can confide in about my personal problems	70%	51%	38%	32%	32%
Is a person I get along well with	83%	72%	59%	57%	69%
Is a person who really cares about me	96%	87%	62%	66%	71%
Is a person I share family experiences with	83%	74%	65%	67%	67%
Is a person I like	90%	84%	72%	76%	76%
Is a person I respect	92%	86%	56%	55%	79%

1997

Is a person I have no difficulty getting along with	86%	79%	76%	64%	na
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Note: 1997 question different than subsequent years. 1997 results indicate those answering a 1 or 2 (out of a 4 point scale) when asked the level of difficulty in getting along with that person. Because of differing family configurations, these numbers have not been statistically tested.

FEMALE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

(Based on those living with family member)

	Mother	Father	Brother(s)	Sister(s)	Grand-Parent(s)
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2000					
Is a person I can talk to about day-to-day issues	85%	58%	36%	53%	33%
Is a person I can confide in about my personal problems	75%	34%	22%	49%	30%
Is a person I get along well with	77%	71%	59%	60%	62%
Is a person who really cares about me	96%	92%	67%	75%	82%
Is a person I share family experiences with	86%	77%	64%	75%	67%
Is a person I like	90%	83%	76%	77%	88%
Is a person I respect	93%	84%	52%	52%	90%

1999					
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Is a person I can talk to about day-to-day issues	86%	59%	40%	60%	43%
Is a person I can confide in about my personal problems	70%	30%	23%	48%	27%
Is a person I get along well with	79%	68%	58%	66%	64%
Is a person who really cares about me	95%	88%	67%	75%	81%
Is a person I share family experiences with	84%	73%	67%	75%	61%
Is a person I like	90%	80%	77%	80%	79%
Is a person I respect	92%	82%	56%	62%	81%

1998					
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Is a person I can talk to about day-to-day issues	84%	55%	42%	56%	50%
Is a person I can confide in about my personal problems	69%	29%	23%	41%	33%
Is a person I get along well with	76%	65%	59%	60%	67%
Is a person who really cares about me	96%	87%	76%	77%	79%
Is a person I share family experiences with	84%	70%	66%	73%	67%
Is a person I like	88%	79%	78%	79%	82%
Is a person I respect	90%	84%	56%	57%	91%

1997					
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Is a person I have no difficulty getting along with	81%	78%	69%	62%	na
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Note: 1997 question different than subsequent years. 1997 results indicate those answering a 1 or 2 (out of a 4 point scale) when asked the level of difficulty in getting along with that person. Because of differing family configurations, these numbers have not been statistically tested.

**IF YOU COULD PICK ONE PERSON TO BE YOUR ROLE MODEL,
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES
WOULD YOUR ROLE MODEL BE IN?**

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Males 2000	Females 2000
Family member	41%	41%	41%	39%	43%
Friends/family friend	14%	13%	14%	10%	19%
Teaching/education	9%	10%	11%	8%	11%
Sports/sports-related	9%	9%	10%	13%	4%
Entertainment industry	7%	6%	5%	6%	8%
Religious leader	5%	4%	4%	7%	3%
Business leader	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%
National political leader	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Other	13%	15%*	12%	12%	13%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

*Significantly different at the .10 level

Not asked in 1997

GREATEST PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE DURING THE NEXT YEAR

	TOTAL 2000	TOTAL 1999	TOTAL 1998	MALES 2000	FEMALES 2000
ACADEMICS	39%		43%	38%	41%
Acceptance into college or college of choice	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%
Achieving and maintaining good grades or a good GPA, keeping up in class	27%	26%	25%	27%	27%
Choosing a curriculum	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%*
Graduating/completing school year	5%	6%	7%	5%	4%
Selecting a college	3%	3%	5%	2%	5%
PERSONAL GOALS	41%	41%	40%	38%	44%^S
Adjusting to college	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%
Adjusting to new school/environment	6%	7%	0%	6%	7%
Excel/participate in sports/athletic activities	3%	3%	5%	4%	2%
Financial arrangements	5%*	7%	6%	4%	6%
Getting along with peers or family	7%	7%	8%	6%	8%
Getting to school	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%
More freedom/independence	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%
Other comments on self-improvement	3%	5%	5%	3%	2%
Time management	6%	5%	6%	5%	7%
Transportation/mobility	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%
CAREER	9%	10%	10%	11%	8%
Finding/working at a job	6%	5%	7%	8%*	5%
Selecting a career or career goal	3%	4%	4%	2%	3%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

Responses below 2% are not included in this table.

Not asked in 1997

PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
Attend four-year college or university	62%	58%	61%	62%	60%	65%*
Attend two-year college	12%	16%	14%	23%	11%	14%*
Attend a training or vocation school	8%*	10%	11%	10%	9%	7%
Get a job	27%	29%	31%	48%	27%	28%
Get married	6%*	8%	6%*	9%	4%	8%
Join the armed forces	7%	8%	8%	8%	10%	3%
Join a volunteer organization	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	4%
Travel	9%	9%	9%	17%	8%	10%
Undecided	14%	13%	12%	na	14%	13%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

GREATEST MOTIVATING FACTOR FOR SEEKING FURTHER EDUCATION

(Based on those planning to attend college or training/vocational school)

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
A mechanism to getting a job/well-paying job	38%	39%	39%	34%	44%	31%
To have the ability to make a difference/change things for the better	20%	19%	20%	23%	17%	22%*
Independence	15%	13%	14%	15%	14%	16%
More options becoming available	13%	12%	12%	13%	12%	13%
Self-enrichment	7%	7%	6%*	9%	8%	7%
A mechanism to getting further education	6%	6%	6%	3%	7%	5%
Following the footsteps of someone I admire	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%
Family acceptance or pressures	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Social status or acceptance	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

TYPE OF COLLEGE WOULD PREFER TO ATTEND

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Males 2000	Females 2000
Would prefer to attend public college or university	30%	31%	29%	32%
Would prefer to attend private college or university	27%	29%	28%	27%
Have no preference for college or university type (public or private)	42%	40%	43%	42%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

Not asked in 1997 and 1998

HAVE STARTED PLANNING FOR HOW TO PAY FOR COLLEGE EDUCATION

	Total 2000	Total 1999
TOTAL HAVE STARTED	64%	66%
TYPE OF FAMILY		
Nuclear	65%	66%
Single parents	55%	54%
Step	55%	59%
Extended	65%	64%
SCHOOL TYPE		
Public school	62%*	65%
Private school	82%	74%
GRADES IN SCHOOL		
A/B	72%	72%
B/C	50%	54%
Below C	32%	40%
GENDER		
Males	65%	67%
Females	64%	64%
INCOME		
Under \$30,000	41%	37%
\$30,000 - \$49,999	62%	66%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	64%	77%
\$75,000 and above	83%	82%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.

Not asked in 1997 and 1998

ANTICIPATING WAYS TO FINANCE COLLEGE EDUCATION

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Males 2000	Females 2000
Scholarships	61%	61%	56%	66%
Parents are paying	50%	51%	48%	51%
A job outside of school	47%	49%	47%	47%
Student loans	44%	46%	39%	49%
Grants	35%	38%	31%	39%
Student sponsored job	13%	13%	12%	14%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference at the .05 level.

* Significantly different at the .10 level

Not asked in 1997 and 1998

EXPECTED TOTAL COST OF FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Males 2000	Females 2000
Under \$3,000	10%*	13%	9%	11%
\$3,000-\$4,999	9%	10%	8%	11%
\$5,000-\$6,999	11%	12%	10%	12%
\$7,000-\$9,999	11%	7%	12%	10%
\$10,000-\$14,999	23%	22%	24%	21%
\$15,000-\$19,999	14%	11%	14%	13%
\$20,000-\$49,999	19%	22%	20%	19%
\$50,000 and above	2%	2%	2%	3%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.
(males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

Not asked in 1997 and 1998

TOP CAREER CHOICES

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
Art	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Business	6%	7%	6%	5%	7%	5%
Computer software development	7%	5%	4%	6%	12%	1%
Engineering	5%	5%	6%	3%	8%	1%
Law	4%	4%	4%	5%	3%	6%
Medical doctor	7%	6%	7%	6%	5%	8%
Military service	3%	4%	3%	2%	5%	1%
Music	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Psychology	4%	4%	3%	3%	1%	8%
Teaching	7%	6%	8%	10%	4%	11%
Veterinarian	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	6%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.
(males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

WHAT SALARY DO YOU EXPECT TO EARN PER YEAR WHEN YOU BEGIN YOUR CAREER?

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
Under \$15,000	7%	8%	7%	8%	7%	6%
\$15,000-\$24,999	17%	24%	23%	26%	14%	21%
\$25,000-\$34,999	28%	26%	30%	32%	28%	29%
\$35,000-\$49,999	25%	24%	22%	18%	27%	24%
\$50,000-\$74,999	14%*	11%	11%	11%	13%	15%
\$75,000 or more	8%	7%	8%	6%	11%	6%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.
(males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
Ideal age for marriage	25.5	25.3	25.5	24.8	26.2	24.8
Number of children would like (based on those who do want children)	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.4*
Number of children would like (including those who do not want children)	2.1	2.1*	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.1

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.
(males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

IMPORTANT TO PERSONAL SUCCESS (% Agree/Agree Strongly)

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
Work and career	99%	99%	98%	98%	99%	99%
Personal development and satisfaction	97%	97%	97%	97%	96%	98%
Friendships	95%	95%	94%	95%	94%	96%
Immediate family	92%	94%	92%	88%	91%	93%
Extended family	80%	79%*	75%	73%	78%	83%*
Make a contribution to society	77%	76%	76%	78%	72%	82%
Religious/spiritual activities	74%	68%	78%	78%	70%	78%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level.
(males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF THE AMERICAN DREAM?

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Males 2000	Females 2000
PERSONAL/FAMILIAL ENRICHMENT					
	53%	56%	54%	48%	
Be my own person	3%	1%	3%	2%	4%*
Children	5%*	7%	5%	5%	6%
Emotional needs/desires	39%	45%	43%	35%	44%
Family	16%	15%	13%	14%	18%*
Freedom/choice	9%	10%	7%	9%	8%
Friend/neighbors/community	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Happiness/enjoyment	13%	17%	15%	11%	16%
Healthy, active life/longevity	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Love/attention/affection	2%	5%	6%	2%	3%*
Marriage	3%	4%	3%	2%	4%
Security	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%
Spouse/significant others	5%	5%	4%	6%	4%
Success/achievement	12%	15%	14%	10%	14%*
POSSESSIONS/CAREER					
	34%		29%	34%	35%
Education	5%	5%	5%	4%	7%*
Home/apartment	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%
Job/career	24%	24%	21%	21%	27%
Motor vehicle	5%	5%	4%	5%	4%
MONETARY GAIN/COMFORT					
	30%	29%*	25%		25%
Being rich	6%	7%	6%	10%	2%
Have enough money for extras	4%*	5%	3%	4%	3%
Have money/comfortable living	18%	14%	16%	18%	18%
UNIVERSAL WELFARE					
	15%	16%	18%	14%	17%
Better religious ties	3%	2%*	3%	3%	2%
Equality	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Happiness, peace, and harmony	4%	6%	5%	4%	5%
Less/no crime/violence/war	3%	3%	5%	2%	5%*
More tolerance/less discrimination	2%	3%*	2%	2%	2%
People reaching out to each other, improving quality of life	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

Not asked in 1997

THE GREATEST NATIONAL PROBLEMS

	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Males 2000	Females 2000
AIDS	12%	10%	15%	23%	14%	11%
Crime/violence	33%	40%	30%	30%	34%	32%
Decline of family, moral and social values	27%	22%	23%	34%	25%	28%
Domestic terrorism	3%	3%	2%	na	4%*	2%
Drugs	18%	16%	17%	19%	22%	15%
Environmental pollution/ deterioration	8%	6%	7%	8%	9%	6%
Health care	4%	4%	3%	8%	3%	6%
International terrorism	3%	3%	1%	na	4%	1%
Poverty/unemployment	6%	5%	5%	11%	6%	5%
Racial tension/ discrimination	7%	8%	6%	11%	6%	9%
Sexual harassment	3%	2%	3%	na	3%	3%
The U.S. budget	3%	2%	3%	8%	4%*	2%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences from previous year at the .05 level. (males vs females)

* Significantly different at the .10 level

Note: 1997 survey did not include separate breakouts for domestic vs. international terrorism and other noted responses. Fewer response choices would result in higher percentages for the available responses. Therefore, differences between 1997 and 1998 may not be real changes in opinion.

CHOICE FOR PRESIDENT

	Total 2000	Males 2000	Females 2000
George W. Bush	57%	58%	56%
Al Gore	36%	35%	38%

Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant difference from total at the .05 level.

THE HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1947 to combat a growing attitude among young people that economic opportunity was a thing of the past, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., is a non-profit organization. The Association strives to motivate and educate our nation's young people about the economic and personal opportunities afforded them by the promise of the American free enterprise system.

The Association brings the "Horatio Alger heroes" of today together with those of tomorrow by bestowing the Horatio Alger Award annually, hosting Horatio Alger Youth Seminars, sponsoring the National Scholars Conference, and awarding more than \$2 million annually in grants and college scholarships.

MEMBERSHIP

Consisting of more than 500 Horatio Alger Award winners, the membership represents all walks of American life. Members have made outstanding contributions in the fields of science, medicine, business, entertainment, athletics, law and jurisprudence, religion, education, and the arts.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Horatio Alger Association focuses on recognizing outstanding Americans who serve as role models and who in turn help to motivate and educate America's youth. With that mission in mind, the Association sponsors the following programs.

The Horatio Alger Award. This honor is presented each year to Americans who serve as outstanding role models. They have triumphed over adversity and have excelled professionally in their respective fields. They have also made significant contributions to improving their communities and the nation.

Horatio Alger National Scholarships and Specialized Grants. More than \$2 million in grants and college scholarships are awarded annually to promising secondary school students who have overcome adversity and who have given of themselves with outstanding community involvement.

Horatio Alger National Scholars Conference. All recipients of the Horatio Alger National Scholarships attend, as guests of the Association, an educational conference to meet with Association Members, to gain an enhanced understanding of the American free enterprise system, and to gain deeper insight into the operation of the federal government.

Horatio Alger Collegiate Partners. This premier network of colleges and universities from across the country works in partnership with the Association to provide special scholarship and financial aid opportunities for Horatio Alger National Scholars who attend their schools.

Horatio Alger State Scholarship and Student Achievement Programs. Scholarships are awarded to students who have demonstrated strength of character in the face of adversity and who have strong academic potential, community involvement, and a desire for a college education.

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Horatio Alger Nebraska Scholarship Program. Each year, 100 students from Nebraska who have exhibited integrity and perseverance in overcoming personal adversity receive a scholarship, as well as educational and financial counseling in support of their college education.

Horatio Alger Internship and Placement Service. This program gives Horatio Alger National Scholars an opportunity to gain practical work experience while attending college, with the possibility of permanent placement following graduation.

Horatio Alger School of Excellence. Each year, a secondary school is recognized for outstanding commitment to its students, and a \$5,000 educational grant is awarded to that school's district to further its work with youth.

State of Our Nation's Youth. This annual survey of America's students asks youth between the ages of 14 and 18 about the people, institutions, and issues that shape their lives.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Association carries the Horatio Alger message to millions of American families to increase public awareness of its educational services. These messages include the following programs.

Only in America Television Broadcast. Since 1993, the annual Horatio Alger Awards program has reached millions of American households through national broadcasts on CBS, NBC, PBS, and through syndication on network affiliate and cable channels.

Against the Odds Television Series. These 30-minute programs feature the inspiring real-life stories of Association Members, which are broadcast on PBS and syndicated on network affiliate and cable channels nationwide.

National Educational Telecommunications Association Partnership. Through NETA's extensive educational network, the annual Horatio Alger Awards broadcast is available to more than 16,000 school districts across the nation with a curriculum guide for use in the classroom.

World Wide Web Home Page. The home page features biographical information about Association Members and Horatio Alger National Scholars as well as descriptions of the educational programs and activities of the Horatio Alger Association. The Association's web site is: <http://www.horatioalger.com>.

PUBLICATIONS

Only in America: Opportunity Still Knocks annually announces the Horatio Alger Association's Award winners and National Scholars.

Quotations: Success Secrets of Power Thinkers is a collection of inspirational quotations and biographical information from the Members of the Horatio Alger Association.

The Forum, the Association's semiannual magazine, provides current information about Members, Association activities, and educational issues.

Strive and Succeed, the Association's student newsletter, provides current information about the National Scholars, Association activities, and educational programs.

Biennial Report details the Association's recent accomplishments and presents plans for future achievements.

Educational Mission provides a comprehensive overview of the Association's educational activities.

Collegiate Partners Guide: A Partnership for Success describes the Collegiate Partners program and provides students with information about college selection and financial aid.

The National Scholars Survey is a biennial study that assesses how the more than 1,000 young people who have received scholarships from the Association view themselves, their world, and their opportunities for success.

Only in America: A Legacy of Achievement and *An Investment in America's Future* provide options for supporting the educational programs and activities of the Association and for contributing to the organization's endowment fund.

The State of Our Nation's Youth conveys the results of a national survey on the attitudes and beliefs of teenagers, and *Portrait of Contrasts* compares the results of this survey with the survey responses of Horatio Alger National Scholars.

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