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AMERICA'S YOUNG ADULTS AT 24: SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, TRAINING, AND EMPLOYMENT TRANSITIONS BETWEEN AGES 23 AND 24

At age 24, a clear gender gap in educational attainment persists. While nearly 28 percent of women had received a bachelor's degree by the October when they were age 24, only 19 percent of men had done so, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Additionally, nearly the same percentage of men and women (12 and 13 percent, respectively) were enrolled in college at age 24, so it is unlikely the gap in educational attainment will close.

These findings are from the first 13 annual rounds of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997, which is a nationally representative survey of about 9,000 men and women who were born during the years 1980 to 1984. These respondents were ages 12 to 17 when first interviewed in 1997, and ages 24 to 30 when interviewed for the 13th time in 2009-10. The survey provides information on work and nonwork experiences, training, schooling, income, assets, and other characteristics. The information provided by respondents is representative of all men and women born in the early 1980s and living in the United States when the survey began in 1997.

This release focuses on the school enrollment and employment experiences of these individuals from the October when they were age 23 to the October when they were age 24. Respondents were age 23 in October during the years 2003 to 2008, and age 24 in October from 2004 to 2009.

Highlights from the longitudinal survey include:

- During the October when they were 24 years old, 19 percent of men had received a bachelor's degree, compared with 28 percent of women. (See table 1 and chart 1.)
- Among those who were enrolled in college when they were 23 years old, over one-fourth had received their bachelor's degree by age 24, while 23 percent were no longer enrolled in college or training. Non-Hispanic blacks and Hispanics or Latinos were less likely than non-Hispanic whites to have received a bachelor's degree between ages 23 and 24. (See table 2.)
- Seven percent of male high school graduates who had never enrolled in college were in the U.S. Armed Forces during the October when they were age 24, as were 7 percent of the 24-year old men who had attended college but had not earned a bachelor's degree and were no longer enrolled. Two percent of 24-year old men with a bachelor's degree were serving in the Armed Forces. (See table 3.)

- Individuals born from 1980 to 1984 held an average of 5.4 jobs from age 18 to age 24. Those with more education held more jobs than those with less education. (See table 4.)
- High school graduates who had never enrolled in college were employed an average of 75 percent of the weeks from age 18 to age 24. By comparison, those who had dropped out of high school were employed 55 percent of those weeks. (See table 4.)
- By their 25th birthday, 6 percent of the young adults who had not received a high school diploma had never held a job since turning 18. (See table 5.)

Educational Attainment at Age 24

At 24 years of age, 23 percent of individuals had received their bachelor’s degree, an increase from 19 percent at 23 years of age. The percentage of individuals enrolled in college decreased from 17 percent at age 23 to 13 percent at age 24. Forty-six percent of 24-year olds had graduated from high school and were not enrolled in college, and 9 percent had earned a General Educational Development (GED) credential and were not enrolled in college. Ten percent of individuals were high school dropouts during the October when they were age 24. (See table 1.)

Women were much more likely than men to have received a bachelor’s degree by the October when they were age 24, and were equally likely to still be enrolled in college. Twenty-eight percent of women had earned a bachelor’s degree, compared with 19 percent of men. At age 24, women were less likely than men to be a high school dropout or a high school graduate not enrolled in college. (See table 1.)

There remains a large and growing gap in educational attainment among racial and ethnic groups. Non-Hispanic whites are nearly three times as likely as Hispanics or Latinos to have received their bachelor’s degree at age 24. Twenty-eight percent of non-Hispanic whites had received their bachelor’s degree, compared with 11 percent of non-Hispanic blacks and 10 percent of Hispanics or Latinos. Non-Hispanic blacks and Hispanics or Latinos are about twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites to be high school dropouts in the October they were age 24. (See chart 2.)



Schooling and Training between Ages 23 and 24

Some people delay their college enrollment for a year or more after high school, and others enroll in college and then leave before earning a degree. By the October when age 23, a large proportion of individuals who will successfully attain a bachelor's degree had already done so, since only 17 percent of individuals were still enrolled in college the October when age 23. (See table 1.) By the October of the following year, 23 percent of those college-enrolled individuals were no longer enrolled in college or training, while 26 percent had earned a bachelor's degree. (See table 2.) Of those enrolled in college the October when age 23, an equal percent of men and women had earned their bachelor's degree by the following October when age 24 (27 and 25 percent, respectively).

Nonwhites continue to lose ground academically. Compared with non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks and Hispanics or Latinos who were enrolled in college in the October when age 23 were more likely to have left college by October of the following year without a degree.

Instead of attending college, some young adults enroll in training to further their skills. Five percent of high school graduates who were not enrolled in college at age 23 were in a training program during the October when age 24, while 2 percent of those previously enrolled in college at age 23 were enrolled in a training program at age 24.

Employment Status at Age 24 of Young Adults Not Enrolled in School

At age 24, labor force status differed substantially by educational attainment. Those with more education were more likely to be employed in civilian jobs and less likely to not be in the labor force. Sixty percent of high school dropouts were employed in civilian jobs in the October they were age 24. At the same age, 76 percent of high school graduates who had never enrolled in college were employed in civilian jobs, and another 4 percent were serving in the Armed Forces. Among 24-year-old high school graduates who had some college experience, but had not earned a bachelor's degree and were no longer enrolled in college, 80 percent were employed in civilian jobs, and 4 percent were serving in the Armed Forces. Ninety-two percent of 24-year olds, who had earned a bachelor's degree and were no longer enrolled, were employed in civilian jobs, while 2 percent were serving in the Armed Forces. (See table 3.)

While men and women who had attended college or graduated from college are equally likely to be employed at age 24, at lower education levels, men are more likely to be working than women. Sixty-nine percent of male high school dropouts were employed in the civilian labor force during the October when they were age 24, compared with 49 percent of female dropouts. Among high school graduates who had never enrolled in college, 79 percent of men and 70 percent of women were employed in civilian jobs, and 7 percent of men and 1 percent of women were serving in the military. Eighty-one percent of men and 79 percent of women who had attended some college, but had not earned a bachelor's degree and were no longer enrolled, were employed in civilian jobs in the October when they were age 24. Seven percent of men in this educational-attainment group were serving in the military, compared with 2 percent of women. Among those who had earned a bachelor's degree and were no longer enrolled, approximately 94 percent of both men and women were either employed in civilian jobs or serving in the military during the October when they were age 24.

Employment Attachment of Young Adults

Individuals had an average of 5.4 jobs from the ages of 18 to 24 in 1998-2009. On average, men held 5.1 jobs and women held 5.6. (See table 4.) In this report, a job is defined as an uninterrupted period of work with a particular employer. (See the Technical Note for additional information on the definition of a job.)

On average, young adults represented by the survey sample were employed during 74 percent of all the weeks occurring from age 18 to age 24. They were unemployed—that is, without jobs but seeking and available for work—5 percent of the weeks. They were not in the labor force—that is, neither working nor seeking work—21 percent of the weeks.

The amount of time employed differs substantially between educational-attainment groups, especially among non-Hispanics blacks and Hispanics or Latinos. Non-Hispanics blacks with less than a high school diploma spent the same percent of time employed as they spent out of the labor force, 42 percent. By comparison, non-Hispanics black high school graduates who had never enrolled in college spent 62 percent of weeks employed and 25 percent of weeks out of the labor force. Non-Hispanics blacks with a bachelor's degree or more education were employed 69 percent of weeks from age 18 to age 24. Hispanic or Latino high school dropouts spent 61 percent of weeks employed, compared with 75 percent of weeks for Hispanic or Latino high school graduates.

The amount of time spent in the labor force also differs by sex. Men with less than a high school diploma spent 62 percent of weeks employed from age 18 to age 24. These men also spent 12 percent of weeks unemployed. By comparison, women with less than a high school diploma spent 45 percent of weeks employed and 10 percent of weeks unemployed from age 18 to age 24. Women without a high school diploma spent as much time out of the labor force as they did employed. Women with a bachelor's degree or more spent a larger proportion of weeks employed than did men with a bachelor's degree or more (75 versus 69 percent).

Duration of Employment Relationships

By their 25th birthday, nearly all young adults had held at least one job since age 18, although high school dropouts, especially female and non-Hispanic black dropouts, were less likely ever to have held a job than were young adults with more education. Most jobs held through age 24 were of relatively short duration. Of the jobs held by 18- to 24-year-old workers, 56 percent ended in 1 year or less, and another 14 percent ended in less than 2 years. Eleven percent of jobs lasted 2 years or more. Another 20 percent of jobs were ongoing at the time of the 2009-10 survey, and their ultimate duration is therefore not yet known. Jobs held by high school dropouts were more likely to end in 1 year or less than were jobs held by workers with more education. (See table 5.)

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained using data from the first 13 rounds of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97). The NLSY97 collects extensive information on labor market behavior and educational experiences. Information about respondents' families and communities also is obtained in the survey.

This survey is conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago and the Center for Human Resource Research at The Ohio State University, under the direction and sponsorship of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Partial funding support for the survey has been provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the U.S. Department of Justice, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Defense, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Science Foundation.

Sample

The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 is a nationally representative sample of 8,984 young men and women who were ages 12 to 16 on December 31, 1996. This sample is composed of the following groups:

- A cross-sectional sample designed to represent the noninstitutionalized, civilian segment of young people living in the U.S. in 1997 and born between January 1, 1980, and December 31, 1984.
- Supplemental samples of Hispanic or Latino and black youths living in the U.S. in 1997 and born between January 1, 1980, and December 31, 1984.

The thirteenth round of annual interviews took place between October 2009 and May 2010. This release examines the period from respondents 18th birthday until the month before respondents were age 25. All results except the first two age categories of table 1 are weighted using the survey weights from the round in which the respondents were age 24. The estimates of school enrollment status at ages 22 and 23 use the survey weights from the round in which the respondents were those ages. The survey weights correct for oversampling of some demographic groups and nonresponse. When weighted, the data represent all people who were born in the years 1980 to 1984 and living in the U.S. in 1997. Not represented by the survey are U.S. immigrants who were born from 1980 to 1984 and moved to the U.S. after 1997. NLSY97 sample members remain eligible to be interviewed during military service or if they become incarcerated or institutionalized.

Work history data

The total number of jobs that people hold during their work life is an easy concept to understand but a difficult one to measure. Reliable estimates require a survey that interviews the same people over the course of their entire work life and also keeps track of all the jobs they ever held. The NLSY97 tracks the number of jobs that people have held, but the respondents in this survey are still young, and have many years of schooling and work life ahead of them. As the cohort continues to age, however, more complete information will become available.

A unique feature of the NLSY97 is that it collects the beginning and ending dates of all jobs held by a respondent so that a longitudinal history can be constructed of each respondent's work experiences. The NLSY97 work history data provide a week-by-week work record of each respondent from January 1, 1994, through the most recent survey date. These data contain information on the respondent's labor force status each week, the usual hours worked per week at all jobs, and earnings for all jobs. If a respondent worked at more than one job in any week, hours and earnings are obtained for additional jobs. When a respondent who missed one or more consecutive survey rounds is interviewed again, he or she is asked to provide information about all time since the last interview.

Interaction between time and age in a longitudinal survey

Because the NLSY97 is a longitudinal survey, meaning the same people are surveyed over time, the ages of the respondents change with each survey round. It is important to keep in mind this inherent link between the calendar years and the ages of the respondents. The youngest respondents in the sample (birth year 1984) turned 24 during calendar year 2008, whereas the oldest respondents (birth year 1980) turned 24 during calendar year 2004. Some respondents may not be used in all tables if information about their work history is incomplete.

Definitions

School enrollment status. If a respondent was enrolled in college at any point during the month of October, he or she is counted as enrolled. If a respondent had not earned a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) credential, he or she is counted as a high school dropout.

Training. The NLSY97 obtains information on formal training experiences outside of regular schooling. The training questions explore what kinds of training

respondents obtain, where and when they are trained, how the training is paid for, and what skills are acquired. Training programs include: Business or secretarial training; vocational, technical, or trade training; vocational rehabilitation centers; licensed practical nursing or registered nursing programs; apprenticeship programs; adult basic education and GED programs; correspondence courses; formal company training or seminars; and government training.

Employed. The NLSY97 collects employment histories for civilian jobs and military service. Respondents are classified as employed if they did any work during the specified time period as paid employees, as self-employed proprietors of their own businesses, as unpaid workers in a business owned by a member of their family, or if they were serving in the Armed Forces.

Unemployed. Respondents are classified as unemployed if they did not work during the specified time period but reported that they looked for work or were on layoff from a job. No probing for intensity of job search is done.

Not in the labor force. Respondents are classified as not in the labor force if they did not work or look for work during the specified time period.

Job. A job is defined as an uninterrupted period of work with a particular employer. Jobs are therefore

employer-based, not position-based. If a respondent indicates that he or she left a job but in a subsequent survey returned to the same job, it would be counted as a new job. For example, if an individual worked in a retail establishment, quit, and then resumed working for the same employer at a later date, this sequence would count as two jobs, rather than one. For self-employed workers, each “new” job is defined by the individuals themselves.

Race and ethnic groups. In this release, the findings are reported for non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, and Hispanics or Latinos. These groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates. In other BLS publications, estimates usually are published for whites, blacks, and Hispanics or Latinos, but these groups are not mutually exclusive. “Hispanic or Latino” is considered to be an ethnic group, and people in that group can be of any race. Most other BLS publications include estimates for Hispanics or Latinos in the white and black race groups in addition to the Hispanic or Latino ethnic group.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Educational attainment of young adults during the October when ages 22 to 24 in 2002-09 by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

(Percent distribution)

Characteristic	Educational attainment					
	Total	High school dropouts	High school graduates, not enrolled in college	General Educational Development (GED) recipients, not enrolled in college	Enrolled in college	Bachelor's degree or more ¹
Total, October when age 22	100.0	11.3	44.1	7.3	27.3	9.7
Men	100.0	12.4	46.4	8.5	25.4	6.9
Women	100.0	10.1	41.7	5.9	29.3	12.7
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	9.0	43.1	7.0	29.2	11.5
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	17.3	47.1	10.3	20.4	4.4
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	17.2	49.4	5.8	23.1	3.6
Total, October when age 23	100.0	10.6	45.6	7.9	17.0	18.7
Men	100.0	11.7	47.9	9.2	16.7	14.2
Women	100.0	9.4	43.1	6.6	17.4	23.4
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	8.3	44.4	7.6	17.0	22.4
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	16.4	47.8	11.3	15.5	8.8
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	16.6	52.2	6.8	16.1	8.1
Total, October when age 24	100.0	10.2	45.5	8.5	12.6	23.0
Men	100.0	11.2	47.8	9.9	12.2	18.7
Women	100.0	9.2	43.0	6.9	13.1	27.6
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	8.2	44.4	8.0	11.9	27.5
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	15.7	48.5	12.4	12.1	11.1
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	15.4	51.1	7.7	15.3	10.1

¹ Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees or professional degrees such as law or medical degrees.

NOTE: The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 consists of young men and women who were ages 12 to 16 on December 31, 1996. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates.

Table 2. School or training enrollment status during the October when age 24 in 2004-09 by school enrollment status during the October when age 23, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

(Percent distribution)

School enrollment status during the October when age 23	Total	School enrollment status during the October when age 24			Earned Bachelor's Degree	
		Not enrolled in school or training program	Enrolled in College ²	Enrolled in training program ³	Not enrolled in graduate or professional program	Enrolled in graduate or professional program
High school graduates, not enrolled in college ¹	100.0	87.4	6.9	5.3	0.4	(⁴)
Men	100.0	87.6	5.8	6.3	0.3	(⁴)
Women	100.0	87.2	8.2	4.1	0.5	(⁴)
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	88.0	6.4	5.2	0.4	(⁴)
Men	100.0	87.5	5.9	6.5	0.2	(⁴)
Women	100.0	88.5	7.1	3.6	0.7	(⁴)
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	88.3	6.9	4.5	0.3	(⁴)
Men	100.0	92.4	3.5	3.6	0.4	(⁴)
Women	100.0	83.5	10.9	5.5	0.2	(⁴)
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	85.3	8.6	5.8	(⁴)	0.2
Men	100.0	84.1	8.7	7.1	(⁴)	0.1
Women	100.0	86.9	8.5	4.3	(⁴)	0.3
Enrolled in college	100.0	22.6	49.9	1.6	21.8	4.0
Men	100.0	21.9	49.7	1.8	21.2	5.3
Women	100.0	23.4	50.1	1.4	22.4	2.6
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	20.4	48.0	1.7	25.4	4.5
Men	100.0	19.9	47.4	2.1	24.2	6.3
Women	100.0	20.9	48.6	1.2	26.7	2.6
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	32.8	49.9	2.4	13.2	1.7
Men	100.0	34.9	45.0	0.8	17.4	2.0
Women	100.0	31.1	53.9	3.8	9.8	1.4
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	26.2	58.6	1.3	10.5	3.4
Men	100.0	25.6	58.0	2.5	9.0	4.9
Women	100.0	26.9	59.2	(⁴)	12.1	1.8

¹ Respondents who have received a General Educational Development (GED) credential are counted as high school graduates.

² A small percent of respondents were enrolled in both college and training. They are counted in the college category only.

³ Training includes any courses, training programs, or apprenticeships designed to help people find a job, improve their job skills, or learn a new job.

⁴ Less than .05 percent

NOTE: This table excludes individuals who had earned a bachelor's degree by the October when age 23. The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 consists of young men and women who were ages 12 to 16 on December 31, 1996. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates. Educational attainment is determined as of age 24.

Table 3. Employment status of young adults not enrolled in school during the October when age 24 in 2004-09 by educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

(Percent distribution)

Educational attainment during the October when age 24	Employment status during the October when age 24				
	Total	Employed civilian	Serving in Armed Forces	Unemployed	Not in the labor force
Total	100.0	76.9	3.0	4.4	15.7
Men	100.0	77.7	4.9	5.1	12.4
Women	100.0	75.9	1.1	3.8	19.2
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	79.8	3.1	3.5	13.6
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	67.2	2.8	7.3	22.8
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	75.1	2.9	5.1	16.9
High school dropouts	100.0	60.2	0.1	8.9	30.9
Men	100.0	69.2	0.1	9.8	20.9
Women	100.0	48.6	(¹)	7.7	43.6
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	64.7	(¹)	8.2	27.1
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	45.5	0.2	11.8	42.5
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	65.4	(¹)	7.3	27.3
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ²	100.0	75.6	4.3	4.7	15.5
Men	100.0	79.3	6.8	4.5	9.4
Women	100.0	70.1	0.5	5.0	24.3
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	78.6	4.4	3.1	13.9
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	66.9	4.3	8.9	19.9
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	72.7	4.4	5.6	17.4
Some college, no longer enrolled	100.0	80.1	4.4	4.2	11.3
Men	100.0	81.3	6.7	4.9	7.1
Women	100.0	78.9	2.1	3.4	15.6
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	81.5	4.7	3.3	10.5
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	74.9	3.4	6.4	15.2
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	82.6	4.2	3.6	9.6
Bachelor's degree or more, no longer enrolled ³	100.0	92.1	1.5	2.2	4.1
Men	100.0	91.4	2.4	3.0	3.2
Women	100.0	92.6	0.9	1.7	4.9
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	92.3	1.5	1.8	4.3
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	93.2	0.5	3.0	3.3
Hispanic or Latino	100.0	93.1	1.8	2.9	2.2

¹ Less than .05 percent.

² Respondents who have received a General Educational Development (GED) credential are counted as high school graduates.

³ Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees or professional degrees such as law or medical degrees.

NOTE: The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 consists of young men and women who were ages 12 to 16 on December 31, 1996. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates.

Table 4. Percent of weeks individuals were employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force from age 18 through age 24 in 1998-2009 by educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

Characteristic	Average Number of Jobs	Percent of total weeks while ages 18 to 24 in 1998-2009		
		Employed	Unemployed	Not in labor force
Total, ages 18 to 24 in 1998-2009.....	5.4	73.6	5.4	20.6
Less than a high school diploma	5.0	54.7	10.9	33.7
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	5.0	74.9	7.1	17.6
Some college or associate degree	5.4	77.8	4.7	17.2
Bachelor's degree or more ²	5.9	72.3	3.0	24.4
Men	5.1	75.3	5.8	18.5
Less than a high school diploma	5.2	62.3	12.1	25.1
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	5.1	79.3	7.3	12.9
Some college or associate degree	5.1	79.4	4.6	15.7
Bachelors degree or more ²	5.4	68.5	3.1	28.1
Women	5.6	71.8	5.0	22.9
Less than a high school diploma	4.7	45.3	9.5	44.5
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	4.8	68.5	6.8	24.3
Some college or associate degree	5.7	76.2	4.8	18.7
Bachelor's degree or more ²	6.3	75.2	2.9	21.6
White, non-Hispanic	5.6	76.1	4.4	19.1
Less than a high school diploma	6.0	57.6	10.7	30.9
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	5.1	78.5	5.8	15.3
Some college or associate degree	5.6	80.2	3.7	15.8
Bachelor's degree or more ²	6.1	73.5	2.8	23.5
Black, non-Hispanic	5.0	63.6	9.8	26.1
Less than a high school diploma	3.5	42.4	15.2	41.8
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	4.7	62.3	11.9	25.2
Some college or associate degree	5.3	69.8	8.5	21.5
Bachelor's degree or more ²	6.0	69.3	4.0	26.4
Hispanic or Latino	4.7	73.5	5.7	20.6
Less than a high school diploma	4.3	60.7	7.2	31.7
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	4.6	74.7	6.9	18.1
Some college or associate degree	4.8	77.5	4.9	17.4
Bachelor's degree or more ²	5.0	71.7	3.7	24.2

¹ Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

² Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees or professional degrees, such as law or medical degrees.

NOTE: This table excludes individuals who had not yet turned age 25 when interviewed in 2009-10.

Percentages do not sum to 100 percent due to a small number of respondents whose employment status cannot be determined for all weeks.

The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 consists of young men and women who were ages 12 to 16 on December 31, 1996. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates. Educational attainment is determined as of age 24.

Table 5. Duration of employment relationship with a single employer for all jobs from age 18 to age 24 in 1998-2009 by educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

Characteristic	Percent ever held a job	Percent distribution of duration of employment relationships			
		1 year or less	More than 1 year but less than 2 years	2 years or more	Ongoing at the 2009 - 10 survey
Total, ages 18 to 24 in 1998-2009	98.4	55.9	13.8	10.7	19.6
Less than a high school diploma	94.4	64.4	11.6	7.1	16.9
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	98.2	55.2	13.1	10.6	21.1
Some college or associate degree	98.7	54.8	14.3	11.4	19.5
Bachelor's degree or more ²	99.5	55.3	14.3	11.0	19.3
Men	98.1	55.4	13.0	10.4	21.2
Less than a high school diploma	95.5	61.1	11.7	8.0	19.3
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	98.1	54.3	12.8	10.1	22.8
Some college or associate degree	98.2	54.6	13.6	11.1	20.7
Bachelor's degree or more ²	98.9	56.0	12.7	10.5	20.8
Women	98.7	56.4	14.5	11.1	18.0
Less than a high school diploma	93.0	68.7	11.4	6.0	13.8
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	98.2	56.4	13.5	11.4	18.7
Some college or associate degree	99.1	55.1	15.0	11.6	18.3
Bachelor's degree or more ²	(³)	54.8	15.5	11.5	18.2
White, non-Hispanic	98.9	55.7	13.8	11.2	19.3
Less than a high school diploma	96.5	66.2	10.9	7.4	15.6
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	98.7	54.1	12.9	11.2	21.8
Some college or associate degree	98.8	55.1	14.0	12.3	18.6
Bachelor's degree or more ²	99.7	55.6	14.7	10.8	18.9
Black, non-Hispanic	96.5	60.4	12.7	8.3	18.7
Less than a high school diploma	87.8	69.3	11.4	5.0	14.3
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	95.9	62.2	12.8	7.5	17.5
Some college or associate degree	98.7	58.2	12.9	8.2	20.6
Bachelor's degree or more ²	99.6	55.3	12.9	12.6	19.2
Hispanic or Latino	98.6	52.0	14.4	10.6	23.0
Less than a high school diploma	95.6	56.3	13.2	7.8	22.6
High school graduates, never enrolled in college ¹	98.7	52.0	13.4	11.8	22.8
Some college or associate degree	99.1	51.1	15.6	10.6	22.8
Bachelor's degree or more ²	(³)	49.8	14.1	11.6	24.5

¹ Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

² Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees or professional degrees such as law or medical degrees.

³ Number rounds to 100 percent.

NOTE: This table excludes individuals who had not yet turned age 25 when interviewed in 2009-10. The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 consists of young men and women who were ages 12 to 16 on December 31, 1996. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates. Educational attainment is determined as of age 24.