

Trends & TudesSM

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Keeping you informed of current topics in youth and education research.

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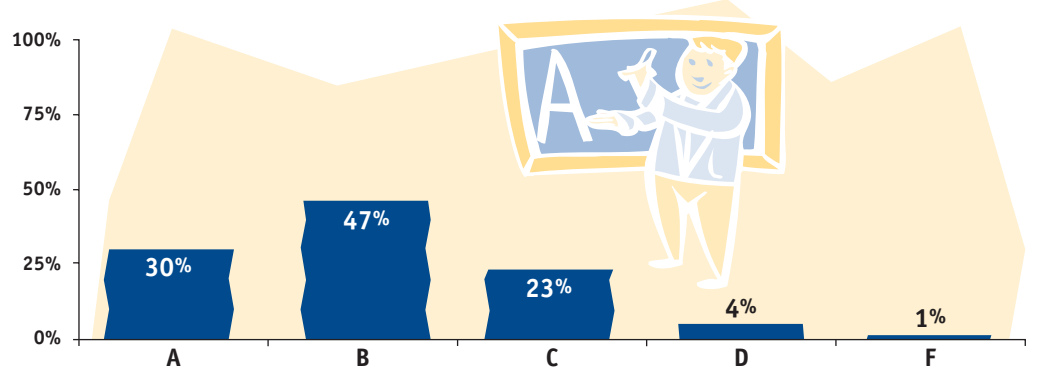
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Improving the Educational Environment in Schools: The Teacher Perspective

For about a dozen years, Harris Interactive has conducted research on behalf of K-12 school districts. The Harris Interactive School Poll system provides school districts with a valuable tool to measure and track teacher, student, and parent satisfaction with key aspects of the educational experience. This research program interviews students, parents and teachers in client school districts with the aim of helping school leadership consider stakeholder opinion when making decisions. In this month's issue of *Trends & Tudes*, we concentrate on insights we have gathered from nearly 12,000 teachers during the past two years.

When we look at the satisfaction level of teachers, we find that 77% rate their overall job satisfaction at an A or a B. The satisfaction level of teachers is slightly lower than the corresponding satisfaction level of both parents and students. It is well known in satisfaction research that employees tend to rate an organization lower than customers. Looking deeper into teacher satisfaction responses, we find that 91% are proud of the school they work in, 80% would choose teaching if they had to make their career choice again, and 87% would recommend their school to other teachers.

Teacher Overall Satisfaction Ratings (% of Teachers/Staff)



Source: Harris Interactive School Poll, 2002-2004, n = 11,979

Our goal in K-12 research is to do more than measure satisfaction and motivation. We seek to help districts understand what *drives* employee motivation and productivity. To that end, we inventory teacher experiences within nine functional school areas – from school atmosphere to equipment and facilities to their relationships with administrators and parents.

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Editorial: Our Take On It

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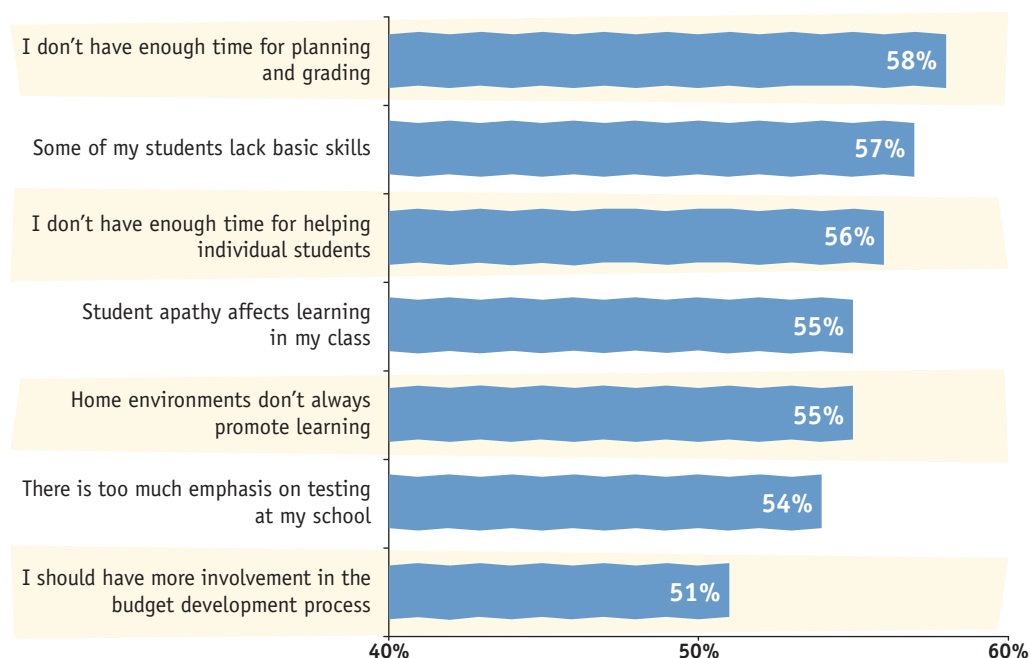
Imagine for a moment that you've landed a new job as a marketer in a consumer products company. You are charged with providing the best possible product to your customers, communicating with them effectively, keeping them satisfied, and with developing new products that are competitive with a rapidly changing world. However, you are constrained. You must make decisions based on one data source only – your outcomes, or sales information. As a marketer, you would know that sales were up or down but have no idea why. You would not be able to test customer response to a new product idea, understand how they are using your product, or learn about whether they are satisfied and what you need to do to improve their experiences. Through your skill as a marketer, you may very well make some sound decisions but would they be well-informed and customer-driven? You would, in essence, be driving without a road map.

This is the type of environment our nation's educational leaders face each day. There is intense pressure to improve educational outcomes (student achievement) but little guidance on how to effect change. Given that the "product" our school leaders manage is critical to society and to families, proposed solutions are inherently political. So, in addition to the limited information they have to

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When we look at the *most frequently reported problems* in schools, we find that teachers tend to concentrate on two types of issues. The first surround time pressures they face ("I don't have enough time for planning or grading;" "I don't have enough time for helping individual students.") and the second include issues regarding the skills and motivations of some students ("Some of my students lack basic skills;" "Student apathy affects learning in my class.>"). We also find teachers tend to be critical of the level of support they receive from parents. In fact, parental support is typically the lowest rated area of the school experience for teachers.

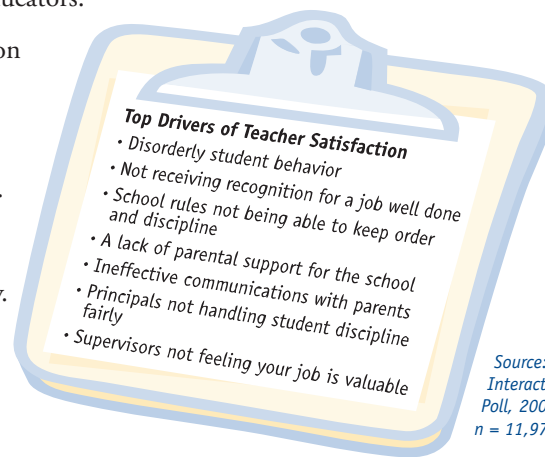
Most Frequently Reported Problems In Schools (According To Teachers)



Source: Harris Interactive School Poll, 2002-2004, n = 11,979

However, when we conduct a statistical analysis, we find that the time pressures teachers face do not influence their satisfaction level. It is accepted that teaching is a hectic occupation, and that the required curriculum does not leave the extra time teachers would like to have. Time pressures are felt, but accepted by educators.

The key drivers of teacher satisfaction relate to student behavior, a lack of reward and recognition for good teaching performance, and also a perceived lack of parental support. These are the types of items we feel schools must work on to improve teacher satisfaction and productivity.



Source: Harris Interactive School Poll, 2002-2004, n = 11,979

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formulate their decisions, they face scrutiny from many sources.

Education is a field rife with reform and replete with achievement (outcomes) information. The establishment of *No Child Left Behind* will greatly increase the amount of achievement data available to educators and educational researchers. But is this the type of data America's schools need in order to improve?

The types of information available to school district managers are not always actionable. Achievement data tell school leaders about how well they are meeting standards and whether they are getting better over time. However, these data tell district managers little about *what* to do to facilitate change, *how* to make changes, and *where* to focus improvement efforts. In effect, achievement data are a report card without a diagnostic element. And, it is diagnostic information that allows leaders to facilitate change, to create the future. Our school leaders face myriad issues with limited time and resources, and need research that can help them prioritize their improvement efforts.

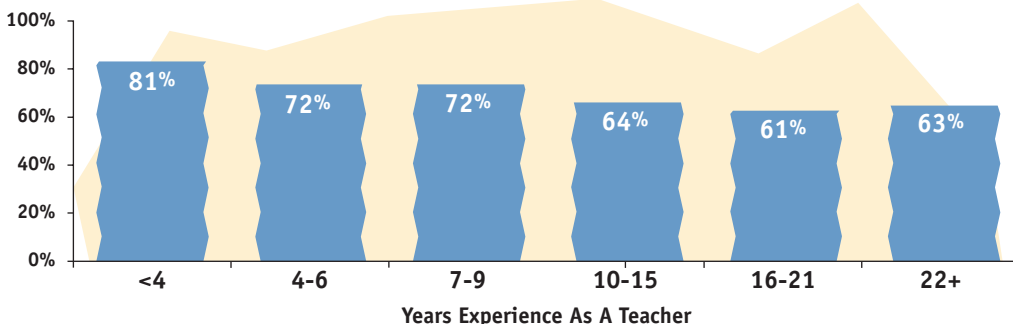
In 1993, Harris Interactive recognized this challenge. Noticing that school district surveys tended to be *reactive* in their approach to gathering information from district stakeholders (understanding public opinion after a failed budget election, documenting concerns surrounding a

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Finally, the Harris Interactive School Poll shows that on the whole, teachers agree with our viewpoint that to improve education schools need to include all district stakeholders in the process. Educational quality involves both an expertise and a delivery of that expertise, and it is the customers of the process that are in the best position to judge how the service is being delivered. As the chart below indicates, most teachers feel that students should have the opportunity to rate their performance – something that is currently rarely done in schools.

Should Students Have The Opportunity To Rate Your Performance? (% Yes)



Source: Harris Interactive School Poll, 2002-2004, n = 11,979

As an aside, in projects we have conducted where students do rate teacher performance, they rate their teachers highly. Teaching is typically one of the highest rated areas of the school experience from the perspective of students.

More information on Harris Interactive's work in public school districts is available at: <http://www.harrisinteractive.com/productsandservices/schoolpoll.asp>

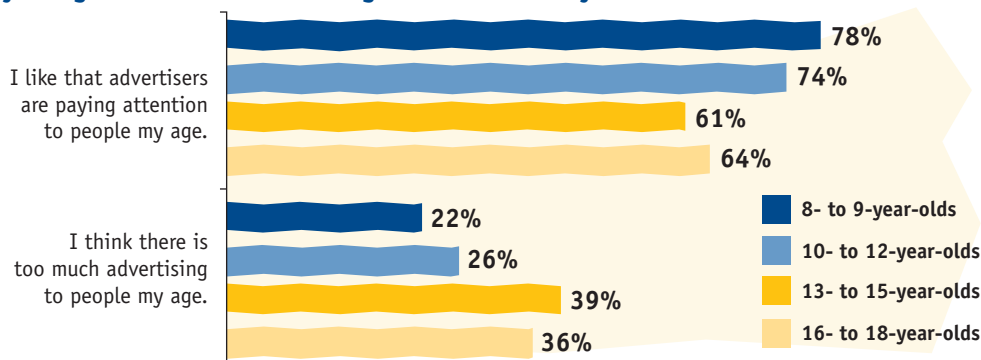
Ask a Question...

Have a burning question you would like to ask kids and teens? Here's your chance to submit a free question for our upcoming YouthQuerySM youth omnibus. Just send us an email with your suggestion. We will pick one question each month and then publish the results in the next issue of the newsletter.

...Get an Answer

The following question was submitted by a member of the media:

As you may know, there are many advertisements that are directed specifically to people of your age. Which of the following comes closest to your view?



Source: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM, October 2004, n=1,198, 8- to 18-year-olds

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controversial issue within a community, etc.), we committed to developing a management information system that would allow school leaders to become proactive managers. In short, we took some of the best customer information practices available to industry and tailored them to K-12 education.

The Harris Interactive School Poll system surveys every parent, teacher, and student within a school system and provides an actionable, key driver analysis of what drives motivation and achievement. It was developed with extensive input from educational researchers, school administrators, and parents and students. More than 250 school districts and 1.5 million respondents later, we have seen school districts that employ the program become more customer and employee focused, have clearer direction and goals for their quality improvement efforts, and have their achievement data soar.

There is not a successful marketing organization in the world that makes decisions solely on its own “gut feeling” and their outcomes data. Instead, successful organizations have institutionalized systems for applying customer opinion to nearly every consequential decision that is made. It is time for our nation’s schools to do the same – to recognize that it does indeed take a village of students, teachers and parents to raise a child, and that that village needs more input into how that child is educated.

Recent Research for Public Release

Only a Quarter (25%) Of U.S. Adults Would Consider Allowing a Child of Theirs to Participate in a Clinical Research Study

Willingness to have a child participate is influenced by adults’ perceptions of risks, benefits, physician involvement and compensation

The need for clinical research involving children is largely endorsed by U.S. adults with two-thirds (67%) believing pediatric research studies are needed to advance the treatment of diseases that affect children. However, only a quarter (25%) of adults would consider allowing a child of theirs to participate in a clinical research study, while 30 percent would not consider it and 45 percent are unsure.

Factors Which Increase Likelihood Of Participation

“Assuming a child of yours were eligible, would you be more likely to consider allowing your child to participate in a clinical research study if...?”

Base: All Adults (n=5,822)

	Yes	No	Not Sure
CHILD HEALTH AND WELL BEING			
You thought the drug would cure your child	% 75	10	15
Your child had a terminal illness	% 73	11	17
There were no risks involved	% 72	12	16
Your child’s current treatment options were no longer effective	% 70	12	18
It would benefit your child or someone else’s child	% 69	11	20
You would receive your child’s test results during the study	% 64	16	20
The benefits outweighed the risks	% 64	13	23
You knew all the risks associated with the treatment	% 62	15	23
You were able to talk to the parents of other children in the study	% 57	19	24
There were minimal side effects associated with the treatment	% 56	19	25
Your child would see a doctor more often	% 48	25	27
Your child would get an active drug and not a sugar pill (placebo)	% 47	20	33
The drug/treatment had not been tested in children but had previously been tested in adults and animals	% 34	28	39
Your child did not have a terminal illness	% 27	36	38
Your child were healthy	% 26	44	30
PHYSICIAN SUPPORT			
Your child’s pediatrician/specialist recommended it	% 68	12	21
Your child’s physician recommended that he/she participate in the study	% 66	13	21
Your child’s physician would be informed and kept up to date about your child’s participation in the trial	% 65	16	19
Your child’s physician/specialist were conducting the study	% 56	18	26
Your child’s physician/specialist were not conducting the study	% 21	34	45
COMPENSATION			
The drug/treatment were free	% 58	19	24
Your family received compensation	% 37	29	33

Trends & Tudes Poll Vault

To view previous issues of *Trends & Tudes*, please visit our website at http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_k12.asp

Contact Us

To make suggestions regarding this newsletter or to discuss a business issue involving youth or the people and issues that influence today's youth, please contact us at 877.919.4765 or info@harrisinteractive.com.

You received this newsletter because you provided your contact information to a member of our youth research team. If you would prefer to be removed from our distribution list, please send an email to HI_youth_research@harrisinteractive.net with the word "Remove" in the subject line. If others in your organization are interested in receiving our information, please have them forward their email address to HI_youth_research@harrisinteractive.net.



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These are some of the results of a Harris Interactive survey conducted online in the United States between May 6 and 17, 2004 among a nationwide cross section of 5,822 adults, of whom 3,220 have one or more children

It is of further interest to know the factors motivating parents to actually allow their children to participate. The table above shows the greatest level of interest occurring when the child has a serious illness (73%), the parent perceives the drug could provide a cure (75%), and/or the child's own pediatrician recommends (68%) or conducts (56%) the treatment.

Perceived risks and benefits are also central to the decision-making process for pediatric participation.

Nearly three-fourths (72%) of all adults would be more likely to consider allowing their child to participate if there were no risks involved or if the child's current treatment options were no longer effective (70%). Eighty percent would be likely to allow their child to participate if they had a zero percent chance of receiving a placebo. This percentage decreases to 74 percent when a 15 percent chance of receiving a placebo is introduced.

To read the full release on this topic, including multiple tables, please visit <http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/allnewsbydate.asp?NewsID=868>

We Have a Winner!

YouthPulse 2004 – The Definitive Study of the Internet Generation is Reward For a Few Minutes' Work.

Stacy Okonowsky, President/CEO of OMEGA Marketing, a sports and entertainment marketing and promotion firm, is the winner drawn from all people who completed the brief readership survey we conducted over the past two months.

Thanks to all who entered and gave us your feedback on *Trends & Tudes*. As always, we are interested in your opinions and suggestions. Please send any comments to kbagnashi@harrisinteractive.com.

To learn more about how YouthPulse provides unmatched, comprehensive insight into kids ages 8 through 21, visit <http://www.harrisinteractive.com/expertise/youthpulse.asp>, or contact us at 877.919.4765 or info@harrisinteractive.com.

AutoYOUTHSM Brings Together Youth and Automotive Expertise – With Powerful Results

In a joint effort between our Youth Research and Automotive & Transportation Research groups, Harris Interactive presents the first annual study providing in-depth market knowledge in this area. AutoYOUTH's study design and survey was co-designed with extensive OEM, advertising agency and supplier feedback, and answers key questions, including:

- How much influence do young adults and teens exert on their family's vehicle purchase decision?
- How are brand preferences formed with young adults and teens?
- What role do parents play in a young adult's vehicle purchase decision?
- What media do young people utilize – magazine, cable TV, network TV, newspaper, Internet and/or radio – when getting informed about a new vehicle?

AutoYOUTH surveys over 3,000 U.S. panelists each year from its own Youth and Automotive Insights panels, particularly U.S. Generation Y-Millennials from ages 13 through 30. To learn more, please contact us at 877.919.4765 or info@harrisinteractive.com.