

**Table 12. Percentage distribution of high school sophomores, by demographic and family characteristics: 1980, 1990, and 2002**

Demographic/family characteristic	1980	1990	2002
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	48.1	49.9	50.5
Female	51.9	50.1	49.6
<b>Race/ethnicity<sup>1</sup></b>			
American Indian	1.6	1.1	1.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.4	4.0	4.2
Black	13.4	12.5	14.4
Hispanic	7.8	10.7	15.9
White	75.8	71.7	60.3
More than one race	—	—	4.3
<b>Age<sup>2</sup></b>			
15 and below	57.9	44.6	44.2
16	37.5	46.6	49.0
17 and above	4.6	8.8	6.8
<b>Family composition</b>			
Mother and father	69.6	63.5	57.9
Mother or father and guardian	8.9	15.2	16.3
Single parent	17.2	18.1	21.8
Other <sup>3</sup>	4.3	3.1	4.0
<b>Parents' highest education level</b>			
High school or less	42.0	29.2	27.2
Some college or more	58.0	70.8	72.8

— Not available

<sup>1</sup> Asian/Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, Black includes African American, and Hispanic includes Latino. All race categories exclude Hispanic or Latino origin.<sup>2</sup> Age as of March 1 of 1980, 1990, or 2002.<sup>3</sup> Includes two guardians, single guardian, and respondent to parent survey who lives with student less than half the time.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1980 Sophomores (HS&amp;B:80), "Base Year and First Follow-up, 1980–82"; National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), "First and Second Follow-up, 1990–92"; and Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002), "Base Year and First Follow-up, 2002–04."

Sophomore cohorts may differ with respect to grade repetition and age. If grade promotion policies have become more strict over time—especially if students are less likely to be promoted from the critical first year of high school (9<sup>th</sup> grade)—then more sophomores could have experienced being held back, and the average age of sophomores would be higher. Although HS&B does not provide information on grade retention, data are available in NELS:88 and ELS:2002. The percentage of students held back in 9<sup>th</sup> grade was not statistically different in