

the condition of education 2002



INDICATOR 17

Students' Absence From School

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2002*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2002*, visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002025>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement



Student Effort

Students' Absence From School

More than half of students in the 8th, 10th, and 12th grades missed 1 or more days of school in a 4-week period in spring 2000 due to illness, skipping school, or other reasons.

Missing school hinders students' learning, as well as that of their classmates when it leads to repetition of material in class. Yet absenteeism for various reasons is widespread, according to students' own reports. More than half of students in 8th, 10th, and 12th grades missed at least 1 day of school in a 4-week period (the reference period used throughout here). Specifically, 55 percent of 8th-graders, 60 percent of 10th-graders, and 72 percent of 12th-graders reported being absent at least 1 day of the 4 weeks in 2000. Moreover, about 13–14 percent of 8th- and 10th-graders were absent more than 5 days—or one-fourth of the school days in this reference period (see supplemental table 17-1).

Illness was the primary reason for absences in 2000, except among the seniors. Nevertheless, even among 10th-graders, fewer than half (45 percent) of absences were due to illness, and 39 percent were for reasons other than illness or skipping. Skipping school also contributed to absenteeism, but it played a smaller role than illness or other reasons. Skipping accounted for 26 percent of all days that 12th-graders were absent in 2000, 16 percent of those that 10th-

graders missed, and 9 percent of those that 8th-graders missed.

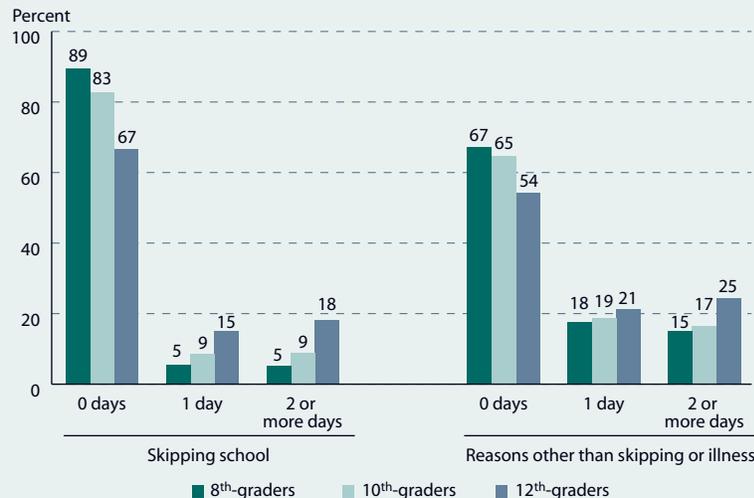
Although absenteeism due to illness did not rise with grade level, the propensity to miss school either by skipping or for other reasons increased notably with grade level. While 11 percent of 8th-graders skipped at least 1 day of school in a 4-week period in 2000, this figure increased to 17 percent for 10th-graders and to 33 percent for 12th-graders. Roughly one-third of students in 8th and 10th grades missed some school for other reasons in 2000, compared with nearly one-half of 12th-graders. Cutting classes—another way that students miss opportunities to learn and share ideas—also increased with grade level in 2000, repeating the pattern for skipping (see supplemental table 17-2).

The percentages of 12th-graders who had no absences and who cut no classes (in the 4-week period) have both decreased between 1983 and 2000 (see supplemental table 17-2). In addition, illness accounted for a decreasing proportion of total days absent for 12th-graders, from 40 percent of absences in 1983 to 34 percent in 2000 (see supplemental table 17-1).

NOTE: The data do not meet NCES standards for response rates. Students absent from the class in which the survey was administered are not included in the data. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research. Monitoring the Future 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-Grade Studies, 2000.

STUDENT ABSENTEEISM: Percentage distributions of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students by how many school days they missed in a 4-week period from skipping school, and for reasons other than skipping or illness: 2000



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Note 6
Supplemental Tables 17-1,
17-2

Hoachlander, Dykman, and
Godowsky 2001; National
Commission on the Senior
Year 2001.

Students' Absence From School

Table 17-1 Percentage distributions of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students according to how many school days they missed in a 4-week period, and average percentage of their total absences attributed to illness, skipping school, or other reasons: 1983, 1991, and 2000

Grade	Total days absent from school				Percentage of total absences attributed to each reason		
	0 days	1 day	2 to 5 days	More than 5 days	Illness	Skipped school	Other reasons
	1983						
12	33.5	19.2	27.8	19.6	40.0	22.7	37.3
	1991						
8	44.2	17.9	22.1	15.8	59.9	8.4	31.8
10	38.9	19.6	24.8	16.7	50.1	16.0	33.9
12	31.1	19.6	28.3	21.0	37.5	25.8	36.7
	2000						
8	44.6	19.5	22.7	13.1	53.1	9.0	37.9
10	40.2	20.7	25.1	14.1	45.4	15.6	39.0
12	28.4	20.0	30.2	21.4	34.2	26.1	39.7

NOTE: The data do not meet NCES standards for response rates. "Other reasons" were not specified in the survey. Students absent from the class in which the survey was administered are not represented in the data. Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

SOURCE: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research. Monitoring the Future 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-Grade Studies, 1983, 1991, and 2000.

Students' Absence From School

Table 17-2 Percentage distributions of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students according to how many days of school they missed in a 4-week period, by reason for absence, and according to how many classes they cut: 1983, 1991, and 2000

Grade	Days absent from school, by reason for absence								
	Illness			Skipped school			Other reasons		
	0 days	1 day	2 or more days	0 days	1 day	2 or more days	0 days	1 day	2 or more days
1983									
12	57.8	17.8	24.5	71.9	12.6	15.5	59.0	19.4	21.6
1991									
8	55.7	17.2	27.2	89.7	5.2	5.1	70.0	15.2	14.8
10	57.3	18.1	24.6	81.5	9.1	9.4	66.5	16.7	16.7
12	58.4	17.1	24.5	68.3	14.2	17.5	58.3	19.2	22.5
2000									
8	59.6	18.1	22.3	89.4	5.4	5.2	67.3	17.6	15.1
10	61.0	18.2	20.8	82.7	8.6	8.8	64.8	18.7	16.5
12	58.7	17.6	23.7	66.8	15.0	18.2	54.4	21.2	24.5
Grade	Number of classes cut								
	None	1 or 2	3 or more						
1983									
12	66.4	20.1	13.5						
1991									
8	87.2	8.7	4.1						
10	74.6	16.7	8.7						
12	64.8	21.0	14.2						
2000									
8	88.4	7.5	4.0						
10	75.5	15.2	9.3						
12	63.0	21.2	15.8						

NOTE: The data do not meet NCES standards for response rates. "Other reasons" were not specified in the survey. Students absent from the class in which the survey was administered are not represented in the data. Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

SOURCE: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research. Monitoring the Future 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-Grade Studies, 1983, 1991, and 2000.

Students' Absence From School

Table S17 Standard errors for the percentage distributions of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students by how many school days they missed in a 4-week period from skipping school, and for reasons other than skipping or illness: 2000

Students	Skipped school			Absent for other reasons		
	0 days	1 day	2 or more days	0 days	1 day	2 or more days
8th-graders	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.5
10th-graders	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.6
12th-graders	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.7

SOURCE: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research. Monitoring the Future 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-Grade Studies, 2000.

Students' Absence From School

Table S17-1 Standard errors for the percentage distributions of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students according to how many school days they missed in a 4-week period, and average percentage of their total absences attributed to illness, skipping school, or other reasons: 1983, 1991, and 2000

Grade	Total days absent from school				Percentage of total absences attributed to each reason		
	0 days	1 day	2 to 5 days	More than 5 days	Illness	Skipped school	Other reasons
1983							
12	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.7
1991							
8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.7
10	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.7
12	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.8
2000							
8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.9	0.5	0.8
10	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.6	0.9
12	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9

SOURCE: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research. Monitoring the Future 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-Grade Studies, 1983, 1991, and 2000.

Students' Absence From School

Table S17-2 Standard errors for the percentage distributions of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students according to how many days of school they missed in a 4-week period, by reason for absence, and according to how many classes they cut: 1983, 1991, and 2000

Grade	Days absent from school, by reason for absence								
	Illness			Skipped school			Other reasons		
	0 days	1 day	2 or more days	0 days	1 day	2 or more days	0 days	1 day	2 or more days
	1983								
12	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6
	1991								
8	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.5	0.5
10	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.6
12	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6
	2000								
8	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.5
10	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.6
12	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.7
Grade	Number of classes cut								
	None	1 or 2	3 or more						
	1983								
12	0.7	0.6	0.5						
	1991								
8	0.5	0.4	0.3						
10	0.7	0.6	0.4						
12	0.7	0.6	0.5						
	2000								
8	0.5	0.4	0.3						
10	0.7	0.6	0.5						
12	0.8	0.7	0.6						

SOURCE: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research. Monitoring the Future 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-Grade Studies, 1983, 1991, and 2000.