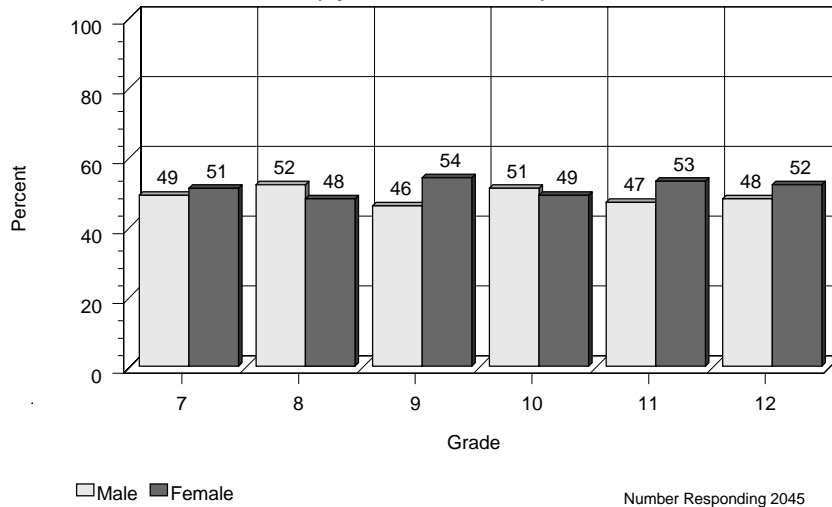

CHAPTER 3

Characteristics of Exeter Cooperative School District Students and Their Families

To give readers an overview of local teens, this chapter provides a summary of demographic and family characteristics of the students who participated in the survey.

In October 1999, 92% of middle school students¹ (grades 7 and 8 only) and 87% of high school students (grades 9 through 12) were surveyed. A total of 2,045 usable surveys were used for analysis in this report (middle school, 791 and high school, 1,254). Of all the youth responding to the survey, 49% were male and 51% were female. Forty-four percent (44%) of students have had to change schools at least once since they began school. Figure 3-1 shows the grade and gender breakdown of the sample. Of the middle school students, 51% were male and 49% were female. Of the high school students, 48% were male and 52% were female.

Figure 3-1: Grade and Gender of Students Taking the TAP Survey (By Grade and Gender)



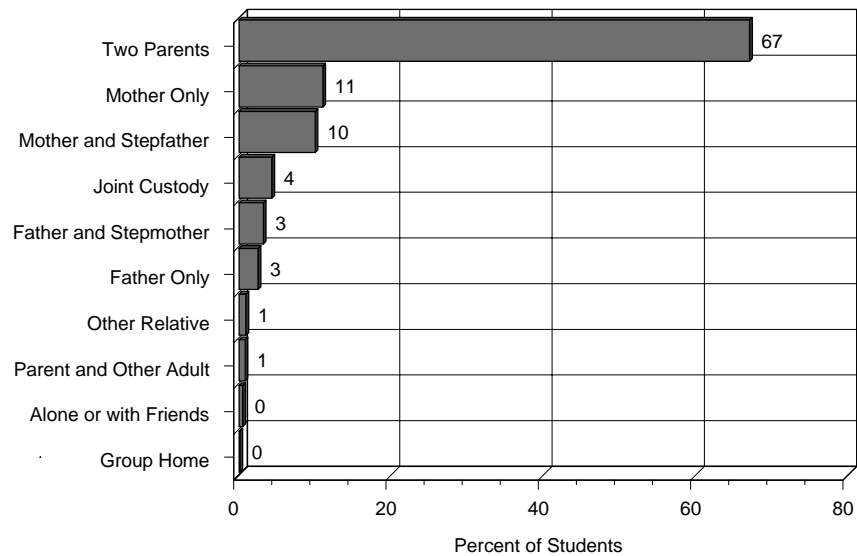
¹ For purposes of this report, when the term "middle school" is used, it refers to only 7th and 8th graders.

The following chart shows the numbers of students in each grade.

<u>Total</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
399	7 th graders	197	202
392	8 th graders	205	187
377	9 th graders	173	204
359	10 th graders	182	177
289	11 th graders	137	152
229	12 th graders	110	119

Students reported a number of different family living situations. Figure 3-2 shows most students (67%) live with two parents. Other common living situations are, single parent families at 14%, and blended or step-families at 13%. The remaining 6% of students live in other living situations. There are no major differences between middle and high school students.

Figure 3-2: Family Living Situations



Number Responding 2036

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the students reported that their biological parents have been involved in a separation or divorce. This contrasts with the number of students who say that their parents have never been divorced or separated (67%). As Figure 3-3 shows, the length of time since divorce ranges from currently happening now to more than ten years ago.

Figure 3-3: Biological Parents Divorced or Separated

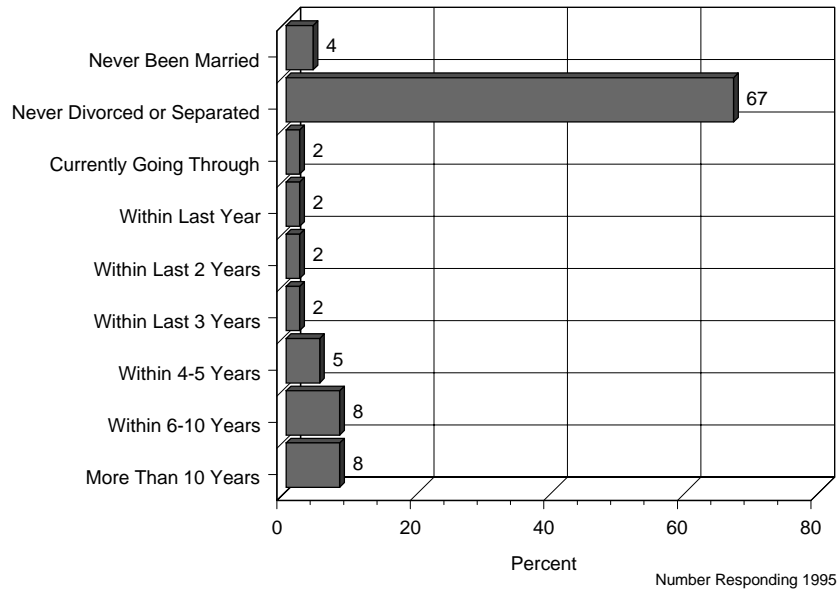
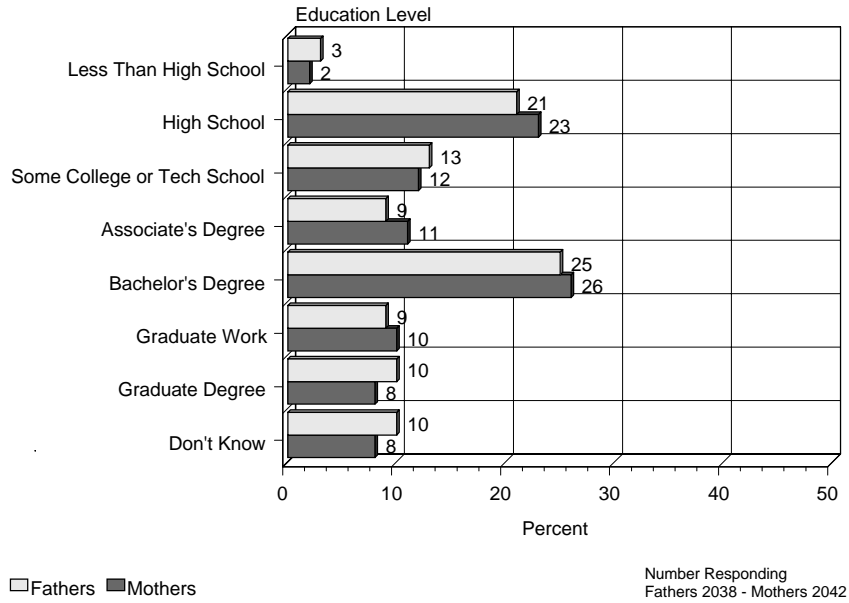


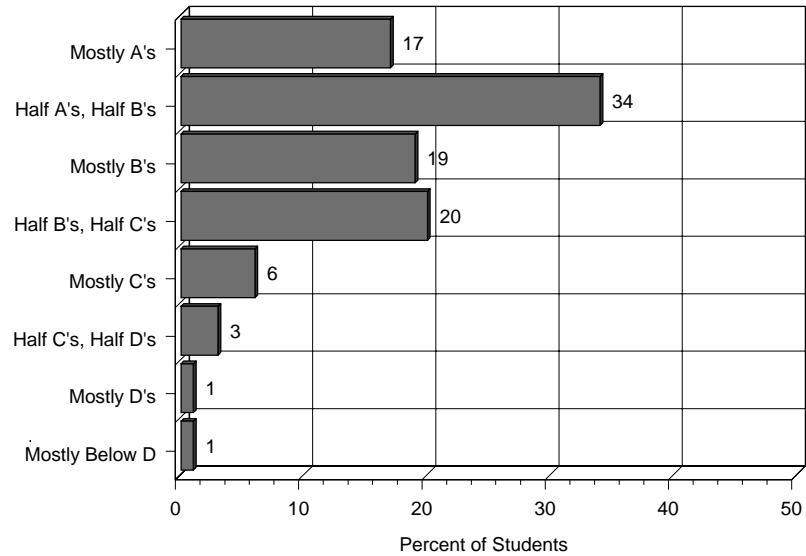
Figure 3-4 shows the range of parental education. Only 3% of all fathers and 2% of all mothers have less than a high school education. In addition, 44% of the fathers and 44% of the mothers were reported to have a bachelors degree or higher. More fathers had completed a graduate degree than mothers (10% vs. 8%). There were no major differences in other education levels of mothers and fathers.

Figure 3-4: Parental Education Levels



Most youth (96%) taking the survey reported they usually received an average grade of "C" or better on their report cards. Seventy percent (70%) of the students reported having a "B" average or higher. Figure 3-5 shows the range of answers for average grade level teens receive.

Figure 3-5: Average Student Letter Grade



Number Responding 2039

Figure 3-6 shows the average letter grade by school level (middle school versus high school). The middle school students reported notably higher grade levels than high school students. Eighty percent (80%) of middle school youth reported a "B" average or higher, while 63% of high school youth are in the same category.

**Figure 3-6: Average Student Letter Grade
(By School Level)**

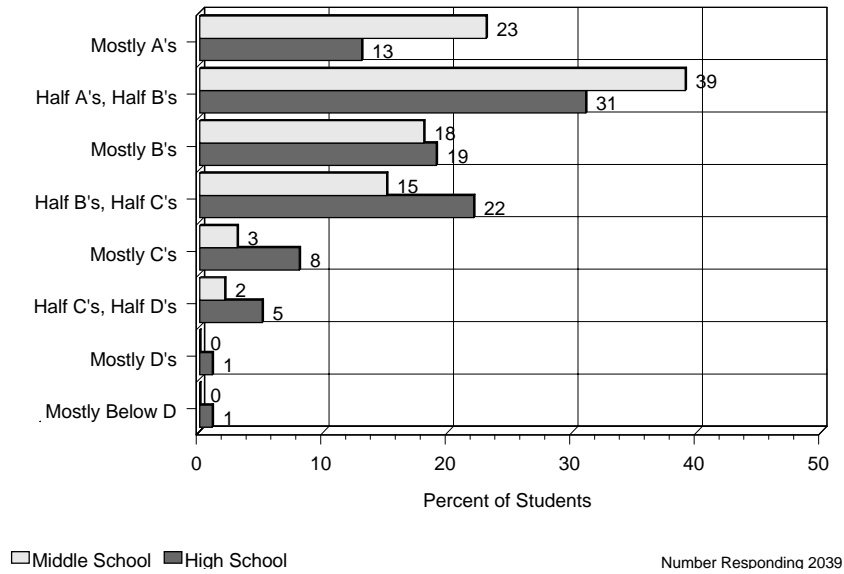


Figure 3-7 shows the differences in average grade levels by gender. It shows that females reported higher average grade levels than males did. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of females reported a "B" average or higher, versus 62% of males.

Figure 3-7: Average Student Letter Grade (By Gender)

