

Childhood Needs Assessment for Cass-Clay:

Focusing on Family and Youth



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United Way of Cass-Clay by the North Dakota State Data Center
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report was to provide an assessment of the needs of people within the Fargo-Moorhead (F/M) metropolitan area in order to provide context for the United Way of Cass-Clay (UWCC) and their strategic planning process. Obviously, such a challenge is daunting and requires a methodological approach that makes the review of the data both manageable and constructive for the strategic planning process. The UWCC in their initial stages of their strategic planning process have chosen three priority themes to frame their upcoming initiatives; education, health, and income. Therefore, our challenge was to distill the large quantity of information regarding these three themes into a meaningful theoretical framework that would offer a cogent portrait of the needs of the residents within the F/M area. We accomplished this through three conceptual steps.

First, we recognized that the three priority themes are intertwined and, from a community's perspective, should be viewed holistically. However, education clearly is the major thread that serves as the underlying link. The research literature is unambiguous in demonstrating that improving health conditions within a community is directly linked to education. Similarly, the causal link to improved income among individuals or families within a community is education. Thus, we used the educational process as our organizing framework for our needs assessment.

Second, we recognized that education is an ongoing process. Therefore, we needed to set parameters that would strategically limit the amount of information that would be necessary to properly highlight the needs of the community. We made the critical decision to focus our attention on formative education, thus we restricted our overview to primary and secondary grades. Our logic was that this period of learning is required by law, thus we captured the greatest diversity. Moreover, the learning process at this stage is foundational and sets the stage for future learning regardless of age.

We organized the report from the perspective of stages of educational development. In order to assess the needs of the community, we wanted to examine the issues that impacted that learning process through each stage. Thus, we organized the report into three main sections representing a) school readiness, b) in-school success, and c) school achievement. It is important to recognize that although we focused on primary and secondary grades, the logic we are using with stages of educational development is transferrable to any age. For example, in the case of adult education one must also understand one's prior school preparation (i.e., school readiness), their in-class learning (i.e., in-school success), and the success of the program (i.e., achievement).

The final conceptual step in our approach to this needs assessment was to select a theoretical framework that addresses the causal link between education and behavior or outcomes. In other words, from a community's perspective, how do you identify what needs should be satisfied in order to impact the desired behavior or outcomes? Drawing upon the developmental literature, we used asset development as our guiding principle. Assets are both internal and external and can be viewed as a combination of skill sets and supportive environment. Internal assets are those positive experiences and qualities that help influence the choices people make in their actions and behaviors as caring and

responsible individuals. Similarly, external assets are the supportive components of the community, family, or networks that create a nurturing environment that cultivates the positive experiences of the individual. The key to this conceptual approach is that needs must be viewed from both the individual and support system's perspective. Additionally, this perspective also is transferrable to any age group, thus it serves as a useful framework to guide our analysis. However, for this needs assessment we will focus on the primary and secondary educational process.

Stages of Educational Developmental

School readiness centers on what issues most impact how well prepared a person is to enter the educational system. In this analysis, we addressed the assessment from the perspective of both the parent and the child. For example, we identified indicators representing health, education, and income issues that impact parents and their ability to prepare their child for school. Similarly, we addressed corresponding indicators from the child's perspective with regard to what most influences their ability to be fully prepared for school. We selected our indicators based on national research from Child Trends, a leading organization that specializes in monitoring the health and well-being of children. The value of using this source was that it provided scientific context regarding why each indicator is important in school readiness. In addition, indicators were selected based on their availability at low levels of geography, since the metropolitan area was our primary focus.

In-school success was our second main stage of analysis. Our emphasis in this section was on indicators that most influenced student's performance in school. These indicators ranged from risky behavior of students to environmental conditions in which students find themselves such as homelessness, foster care, poverty, or abusive situations. Once again, we relied heavily on Child Trends to guide our selection of indicators.

Our last stage of analysis was on formal measures of school achievement. Here we centered our attention on fairly common indicators of success such as proficiency scores, graduation rates, attendance, dropout status, and overall educational attainment.

Asset Development

The F/M metropolitan area has a rich database that explores asset development among children within the area. Unfortunately, a corresponding database for adults in the F/M was not available at the time of the analysis. Nonetheless, the overall concept of asset development is transferable to any age group. The Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) contracted with Search Institute on three separate occasions to examine asset development within the area. The latest was in 2007 when an extensive data collection activity was conducted in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead school districts. Data were collected from students in grades 4 through 12. As noted earlier, assets are useful in framing what activities are needed to best improve desired outcomes. Since activities can be easily linked to service providers, we felt this approach would be most useful to the United Way in their deliberations regarding funding priorities.

The Search Institute's Developmental Asset framework consists of 40 assets categorized into two main groups (i.e., internal and external) each containing 20 assets. The 20 assets within these two broad groups are further refined into four sectors. For example, the 20 external assets are clustered into four main groups representing 1) support, 2) empowerment, 3) boundaries and expectations, and 4) constructive use of time. Similarly, the 20 internal assets are clustered into four main groups representing 1) commitment to learning, 2) positive values, 3) social competencies, and 4) positive identity. These sectors are viewed as positive experiences and qualities that help influence the choices young people make in their development to adulthood as caring and responsible individuals.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results from our needs assessment highlight three major themes that should be considered in order to improve the well-being of children and families in the F/M area. The first focuses on strategically improving asset development specifically among youth within the metropolitan area. Assets are both internal and external, thus the desired change will require both individual (i.e., youth and parents/guardians) and environmental (e.g., organizational, community) changes. The second centers on improving self-sufficiency among families. This is a structural issue and requires improvements or enhancements in services or safety nets that assist individuals/families in need. Finally, the data indicate important differentials by location. This means that solutions will need to be place-based and that understanding the context of place is a vital first step.

Asset Development from a Youth Perspective

Data from the 2007 Search Institute asset profile of students in the Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools indicate a direct correlation between assets and lower risk-taking behavior and higher thriving behavior. Youth in grades 6 through 12 with 10 or fewer assets engaged in eight times as many risky behaviors, on average, than youth with 31 or more assets. The data indicate that with every increase of 10 assets, on average, youth will cut in half the number of risky behaviors in which they engage. The 24 risky behaviors that were included in the study ranged from alcohol, tobacco, and drug use to sexual intercourse, anti-social behavior and various forms of violence, truancy, gambling, eating disorders, depression, and suicide attempts. A similar but less dramatic correlation was found among students in grades 4 and 5. One can easily extend this causal relationship to adults. What is key from the analysis is that increasing assets, both internal and external, reduces risky behavior.

A similar correlation was found between assets and thriving behavior. Youth in grades 6 through 12 with 10 or fewer assets engaged in half as many thriving behaviors, on average, as their counterparts with 31 or more assets. The eight thriving behaviors included in the study ranged from success in school, helping others, and valuing diversity to healthy eating and resisting danger. This reinforces the conclusion that asset development, whether among youth or adults, increases the likelihood of positive outcomes, regardless of those outcomes.

Consideration should be given to strategically selecting categories of assets on which to focus. For example, the data indicate that the greatest need for asset improvement among students in the Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools is in the area of external assets, especially in three sectors a) support, b) empowerment, and c) boundaries and expectations. Moreover, it should be noted that in two of these three sectors, support and boundaries/expectations, there is a systematic decline in assets within the sector by grade. For example, within the support sector, positive family communications declined systematically by grade level. On average, 62 percent of students in grade 4 indicated they had positive family communication. However, by grade 12 only 18 percent of students reported positive

family communication. Similarly, 47 percent of students in grade 4 reported their parents were actively involved in helping them succeed in school. However, by grade 12 that proportion had dropped to 15 percent. The same pattern holds in the boundaries and expectation sector. For example, 62 percent of students in grade 4 indicated that their family has clear and consistent rules and consequences and monitors their whereabouts, while only 34 percent of those in grade 12 made such a claim. In general, of the 20 external assets explored in the study, the majority of students in grade 4 indicated having at least 15 of the 20 assets. In contrast, by the 12th grade, the majority of students only had 6 of the 20 external assets. Given the strong correlation between increased assets and thriving behavior or conversely avoidance of risky behavior, it seems clear that external asset development should be given significant attention.

The need for focus on internal asset development is less pronounced. With the notable exception of the social competencies sector, in general, the majority of students revealed strong internal asset development. However, the social competency sector contains very important values and competencies that appear lacking by many students across all grade levels. Important among these assets are planning and decision making, interpersonal competency, and cultural competency, of which the majority of students in each grade level lacked (except for cultural competency where the majority of students in grades 4 and 5 possessed that asset). The other notable internal asset that deserves attention is restraint and healthy lifestyle. The data indicate a significant decline in that asset starting in grade 8. Given the dramatic increase in childhood obesity and risky behavior, it is important that due attention is given to addressing this component of asset development.

Also, an interesting trend that deserves further attention is the gender differences in internal asset development. Among students in grades 6 to 12, a higher proportion of females than males possess internal assets involving positive values, social competence, and a commitment to learning. In addition, an opposite gender difference exists among positive identity assets, with females having lower self esteem and less of a sense of purpose than males in grades 6 to 12.

Although the data reviewed in this analysis specifically focus on primary and secondary grades, the obvious conclusion can be drawn to adults. Specifically, attention needs to be given to increasing the skill sets of individuals and simultaneously expanding the supportive components of the community, family, or networks that create and cultivate a positive environment.

Self-Sufficiency

The ability of individuals and families to be economically self-sufficient is a critical element in the long-term success of the F/M area. This needs assessment uncovered several indicators that demonstrate areas of concern with regard to self-sufficiency that deserve attention. The first is the relatively high proportion of unmarried women, who have at most a high school degree, giving birth to children. Although the percentages are below national averages, in certain locations within the metropolitan area (i.e., Moorhead city, West Fargo public school district) the number approaches one in five in 2008. These women and their children face much larger challenges to success given this circumstance.

The data raise a similar concern for children with parents who are foreign born. For example, the poverty rates for children ages 0 to 17 with foreign born parents is 36 percent in Clay County and 41 percent for those in the Moorhead Public School district in 2008. Poverty levels, in general, are high in these two locations. For example, in 2008, 20 percent of the children under age 5 were impoverished in Clay County while the rate topped 26 percent in the Moorhead Public School district. Poverty rates for school-aged children (i.e., 5 to 17 years of age) were much lower but also demonstrate the need for concern. For example, 12 percent of the children in that age group were impoverished in the Clay County and nearly 14 percent were impoverished in the Moorhead Public school district in 2008.

A final indicator that highlights the need for attention to self-sufficiency is homelessness. In the 2007-2008 school year, Fargo and West Fargo school districts reported 121 homeless school-aged children. A similar number (115) was reported in Clay County school districts. The economic challenges for these children and their parents along with the issues of self-esteem are self evident and deserve attention.

Location

As noted above, location is an important issue that should be considered when exploring approaches to improving the lives of children and families in the metropolitan area. The data reported in this needs assessment demonstrate marked differences within the metropolitan area in critical areas such as poverty, idle teens (i.e., youth ages 16 to 19 not enrolled in school or working), and educational attainment among young adults. This suggests that one may find more success with strategic approaches rather than single solutions intended to fit all. The implication is that the metropolitan area is not homogeneous and therefore an understanding of the local context should be viewed as an integral part of a successful solution.

CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

Search Institute Study

In an effort to assess the health and well-being of middle and high school age youth, the Search Institute has developed a framework of developmental assets. The Developmental Assets framework consists of 40 common sense, positive experiences and qualities that help influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults. The Search Institute has found that the more assets young people have, the less likely they are to engage in a wide range of high-risk behaviors and the more likely they are to thrive (see <http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets>).

In May 2007, the Search Institute administered a study of students in grades 6 through 12 in schools throughout Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead to determine the level of assets students reported having in each grade. At the same time, a separate survey was administered to students in grades 4 and 5. The results focused on two types of assets: external and internal.

External assets are positive developmental experiences that surround youth with support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and opportunities for constructive use of time. When provided by many different formal and informal systems in a community, they stimulate and nurture positive development in youth.

Internal assets are a young person's own commitments, values, and competencies. They are grouped into categories of educational commitment, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. Similar to the external assets, community is also important for the development of these internal assets.

The 40 external and internal assets, specific to adolescents in grades 6-12 (or all children ages 12 to 18), are listed and defined in Table 1. The 40 assets tailored to children in grades 4-5 (or all children ages 8 to 12) are defined in Table 2.

All of the data for this section were obtained from two studies: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools" and "Developmental Assets: A Profile of 4th and 5th Grade Students for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," which were prepared for the Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute in July 2007.

Table 1. The 40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents (ages 12-18), as Defined by the Search Institute

Note: Search Institute, <http://search-institute.org>, has identified the following building blocks of health development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

External	Support	1. Family support —Family life provides high levels of love and support.
		2. Positive family communication —Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.
		3. Other adult relationships —Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.
		4. Caring neighborhood —Young person experiences caring neighbors.
		5. Caring school climate —School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
		6. Parent involvement in schooling —Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.
	Empowerment	7. Community values youth —Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
		8. Youth as resources —Young people are given useful roles in the community.
		9. Service to others —Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
		10. Safety —Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.
	Boundaries & Expectations	11. Family boundaries —Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person’s whereabouts.
		12. School boundaries —School provides clear rules and consequences.
		13. Neighborhood boundaries —Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people’s behavior.
		14. Adult role models —Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
		15. Positive peer influence —Young person’s best friends model responsible behavior.
		16. High expectations —Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
	Constructive Use of Time	17. Creative activities —Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.
		18. Youth programs —Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.
		19. Religious community —Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
		20. Time at home —Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.
Internal	Commitment to Learning	21. Achievement motivation —Young person is motivated to do well in school.
		22. School engagement —Young person is actively engaged in learning.
		23. Homework —Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
		24. Bonding to school —Young person cares about her or his school.
		25. Reading for pleasure —Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
	Positive Values	26. Caring —Young person places high value on helping other people.
		27. Equality and social justice —Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
		28. Integrity —Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
		29. Honesty —Young person “tells the truth even when it is not easy.”
		30. Responsibility —Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
		31. Restraint —Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
	Social Competencies	32. Planning and decision making —Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
		33. Interpersonal competence —Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.
		34. Cultural competence —Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
		35. Resistance skills —Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
		36. Peaceful conflict resolution —Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
	Positive Identity	37. Personal power —Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”
		38. Self-esteem —Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
		39. Sense of purpose —Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.”
		40. Positive view of personal future —Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

Table 2. The 40 Developmental Assets for Middle Childhood (ages 8-12), as Defined by the Search Institute

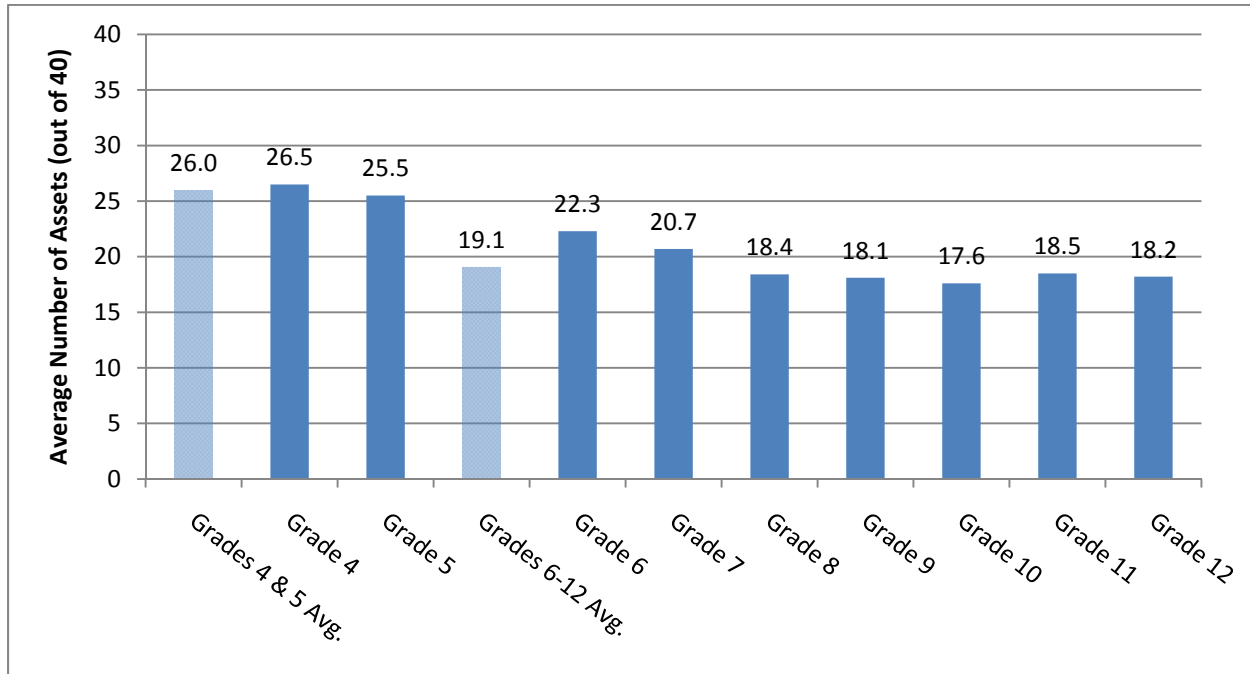
Note: Search Institute, <http://search-institute.org>, has identified the following building blocks of health development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

External	Support	1. Family support —Family life provides high levels of love and support.
		2. Positive family communication —Parent(s) and child communicate positively. Child feels comfortable seeking advice and counsel from parent(s).
		3. Other adult relationships —Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s).
		4. Caring neighborhood —Child experiences caring neighbors.
		5. Caring school climate —Relationships with teachers and peers provide a caring, encouraging environment.
		6. Parent involvement in schooling —Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school.
	Empowerment	7. Community values youth —Child feels valued and appreciated by adults in the community.
		8. Children as resources —Child is included in decisions at home and in the community.
		9. Service to others —Child has opportunities to help others in the community.
		10. Safety —Child feels safe at home, at school, and in his or her neighborhood.
	Boundaries & Expectations	11. Family boundaries —Family has clear and consistent rules and consequences and monitors the child’s whereabouts.
		12. School boundaries —School provides clear rules and consequences.
		13. Neighborhood boundaries —Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring the child’s behavior.
		14. Adult role models —Parent(s) and other adults in the child’s family, as well as nonfamily adults, model positive, responsible behavior.
		15. Positive peer influence —Child’s closest friends model positive, responsible behavior.
		16. High expectations —Parent(s) and teachers expect the child to do her or his best at school and in other activities.
	Constructive Use of Time	17. Creative activities —Child participates in music, art, drama, or creative writing two or more times per week.
		18. Child programs —Child participates two or more times per week in cocurricular school activities or structured community programs for children.
		19. Religious community —Child attends religious programs or services one or more times per week.
		20. Time at home —Child spends some time most days both in high-quality interaction with parents and doing things at home other than watching TV or playing video games.
Internal	Commitment to Learning	21. Achievement motivation —Child is motivated and strives to do well in school.
		22. Learning engagement —Child is responsive, attentive, and actively engaged in learning at school and enjoys participating in learning activities outside of school.
		23. Homework —Child usually hands in homework on time.
		24. Bonding to school —Child cares about teachers and other adults at school.
		25. Reading for pleasure —Child enjoys and engages in reading for fun most days of the week.
	Positive Values	26. Caring —Parent(s) tell the child it is important to help other people.
		27. Equality and social justice —Parent(s) tell the child it is important to speak up for equal rights for all people.
		28. Integrity —Parent(s) tell the child it is important to stand up for one’s beliefs.
		29. Honesty —Parent(s) tell the child it is important to tell the truth.
		30. Responsibility —Parent(s) tell the child it is important to accept personal responsibility for behavior.
		31. Healthy lifestyle —Parent(s) tell the child it is important to have good health habits and an understanding of healthy sexuality.
	Social Competencies	32. Planning and decision making —Child thinks about decisions and is usually happy with results of her or his decisions.
		33. Interpersonal competence —Child cares about and is affected by other people’s feelings, enjoys making friends, and, when frustrated or angry, tries to calm herself or himself.
		34. Cultural competence —Child knows and is comfortable with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and with her or his own cultural identity.
		35. Resistance skills —Child can stay away from people who are likely to get her or him in trouble and is able to say no to doing wrong or dangerous things.
		36. Peaceful conflict resolution —Child seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
	Positive Identity	37. Personal power —Child feels he or she has some influence over things that happen in her or his life.
		38. Self-esteem —Child likes and is proud to be the person that he or she is.
		39. Sense of purpose —Child sometimes thinks about what life means and whether there is a purpose for her or his life.
		40. Positive view of personal future —Child is optimistic about her or his personal future.

Results from the 2007 Search Institute study indicate that the number of assets reported by children in middle childhood tends to be greater than the number of assets reported by adolescents. For example, 4th and 5th grade students in the Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools had, on average, 26 out of 40 assets, compared to an average of 19 assets among 6th-12th graders. It is important to note that some of this difference may be due to wording differences between the childhood and adolescent surveys.

There was very little difference in the average number of assets held by students in grades 8 through 12 in 2007.

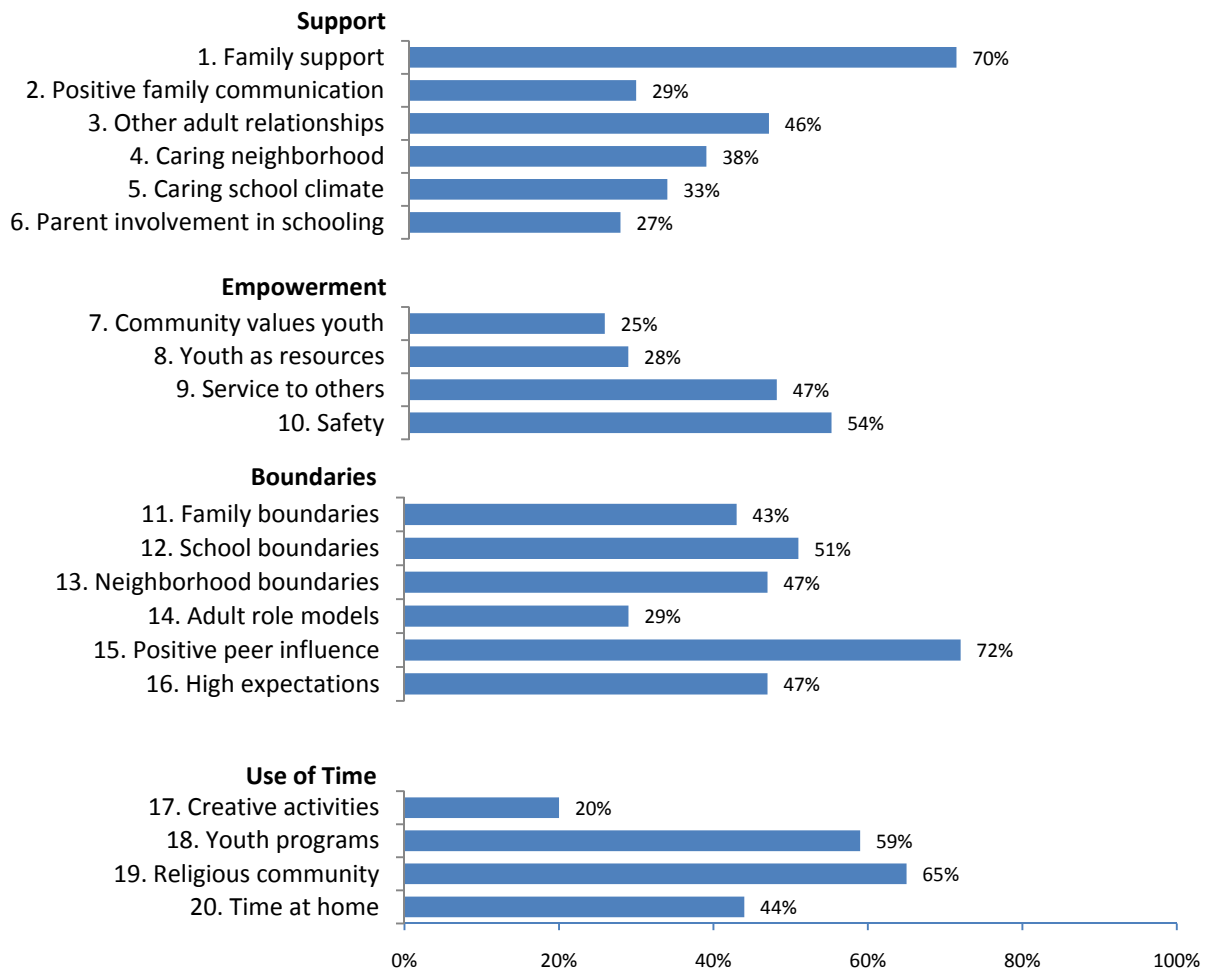
Figure 1. Average Number of Assets (out of 40) that Students Reported having, by Grade, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



The strongest external assets influencing 6th-12th grade students in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools are close friends who model responsible behavior (#15), families that provide a high level of love and support (#1), and religious activities at least one hour per week (#19); approximately 7 in 10 students reported having each of these assets in 2007. At least half of students spend at least three hours per week in sports, clubs, or other school/community organizations (#18); feel safe (#10); and said that their school provides clear rules and consequences (#12).

Conversely, only 1 in 5 students spend at least three hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts (#17). Also, less than 30 percent of students communicate positively with parents (#2); think that parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior (#14); are given useful roles in the community (#8); have parents who are actively involved in their school success (#6); and perceive that community adults value youth (#7).

Figure 2. Percent of Students in Grades 6-12 Reporting Each of the 20 External Assets in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007

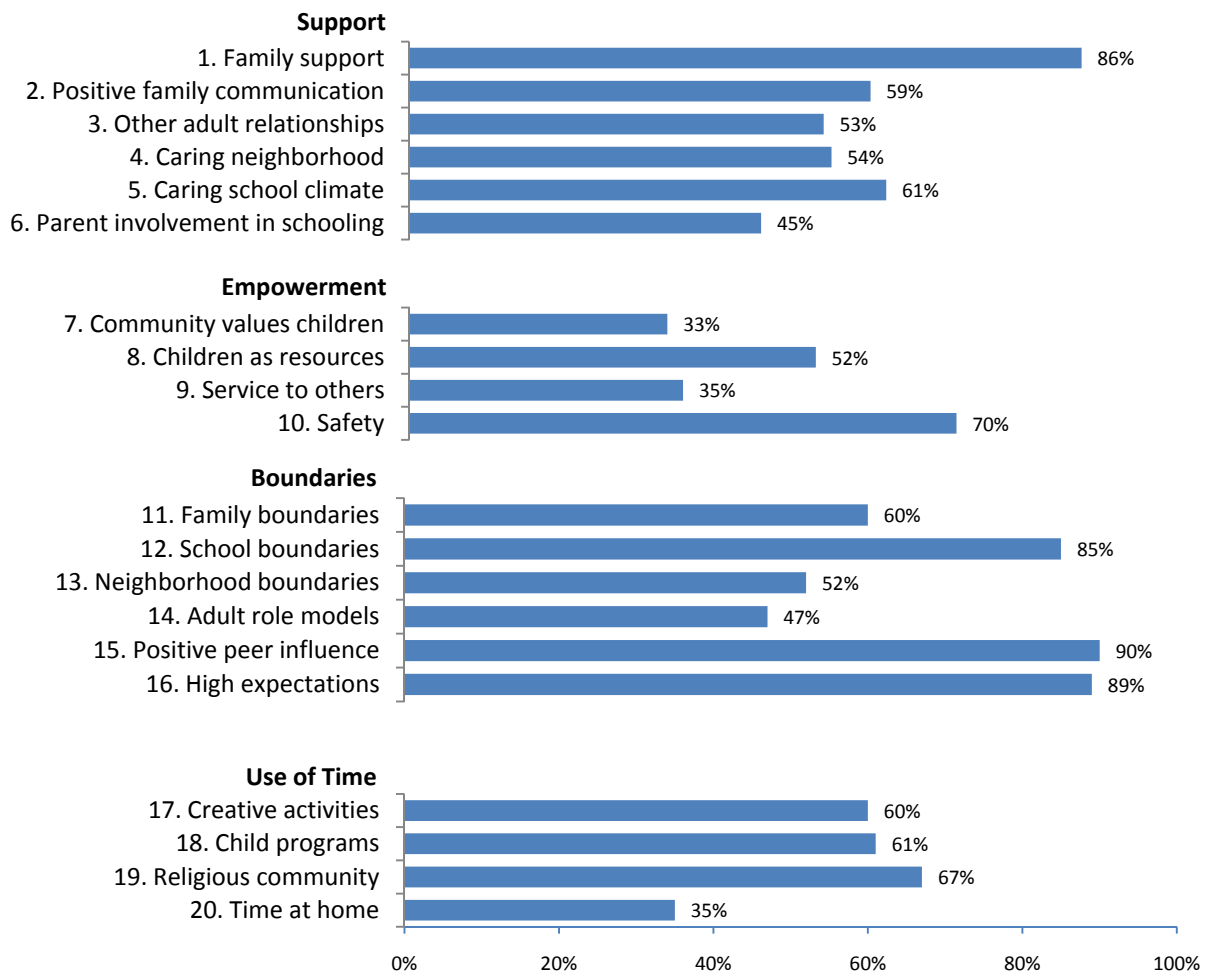


The strongest external assets influencing 4th-5th grade students in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools are close friends who model responsible behavior (#15), parents and teachers who expect the best from children (#16), families that provide a high level of love and support (#1), and schools that provide clear rules and consequences (#12); approximately 9 in 10 students reported having each of these assets.

At least half of students in grades 4-5 reported having 15 of the 20 external assets in 2007, compared to 6 of 20 for students in grades 6-12.

Only one in three students, approximately, reported spending quality time at home most days (#20), had opportunities to help others in the community (#9), and felt valued and appreciated by adults in the community (#7).

Figure 3. Percent of Students in Grades 4-5 Reporting Each of the 20 External Assets in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007

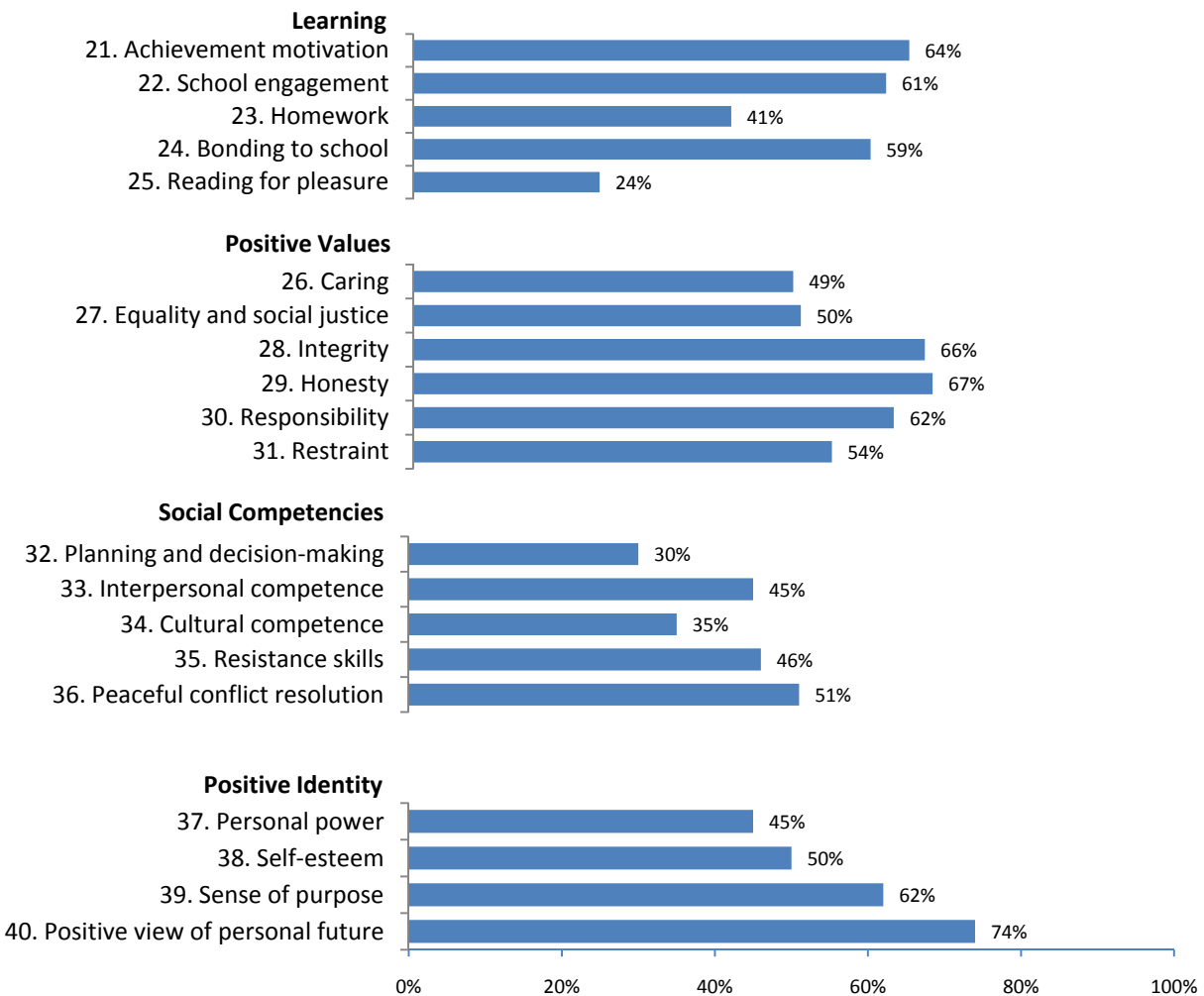


The strongest internal assets influencing 6th-12th grade students in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools are optimism regarding personal future (#40), honesty (#29), and integrity (#28); approximately 7 in 10 students reported having each of these internal assets.

Conversely, only 1 in 4 students read for pleasure at least three hours per week (#25). Also, 35 percent or fewer students have knowledge of and comfort with cultural/racial/ethnic diversity (#34) and know how to plan ahead and make choices (#32).

At least half of students in grades 6-12 reported having 12 of the 20 internal assets, compared to only 6 of the 20 external assets.

Figure 4. Percent of Students in Grades 6-12 Reporting Each of the 20 Internal Assets in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo students in grades 4-5 are strong in regards to internal assets. At least 7 out of 10 students have 12 of the 20 internal assets studied.

The strongest category of internal assets is Positive Values. Approximately 9 in 10 students are told by their parents the importance of telling the truth (#29) and that it is important to help other people (#26). Eight in 10 are told the importance of standing up for one’s beliefs (#28) and the importance of accepting personal responsibility for behavior (#30). Approximately 7 in 10 are told the importance of having good health habits and given an understanding of healthy sexuality (#31) and the importance of speaking up for equal rights for all people (#27).

Students also have a strong Commitment to Learning. At least 3 in 4 students in 4th and 5th grade care about teachers and other adults at school (#24), usually hand in their homework on time (#23), and are motivated and strive to do well in school (#21). Half enjoy and engage in reading for fun most days of the week (#25) (compared to 24 percent of 6th-12th graders) and are responsive, attentive, and actively engaged in learning at school and enjoy participating in learning activities outside of school (#22).

Fewer than half of students care about or are affected by other people’s feelings, enjoy making friends, and when frustrated or angry, try to calm themselves (#33); think about decisions and are usually happy with results of their decisions (#32); and sometimes think about what life means and whether there is a purpose for their life (#39).

Figure 5. Percent of Students in Grades 4-5 Reporting Each of the 20 Internal Assets: May 2007

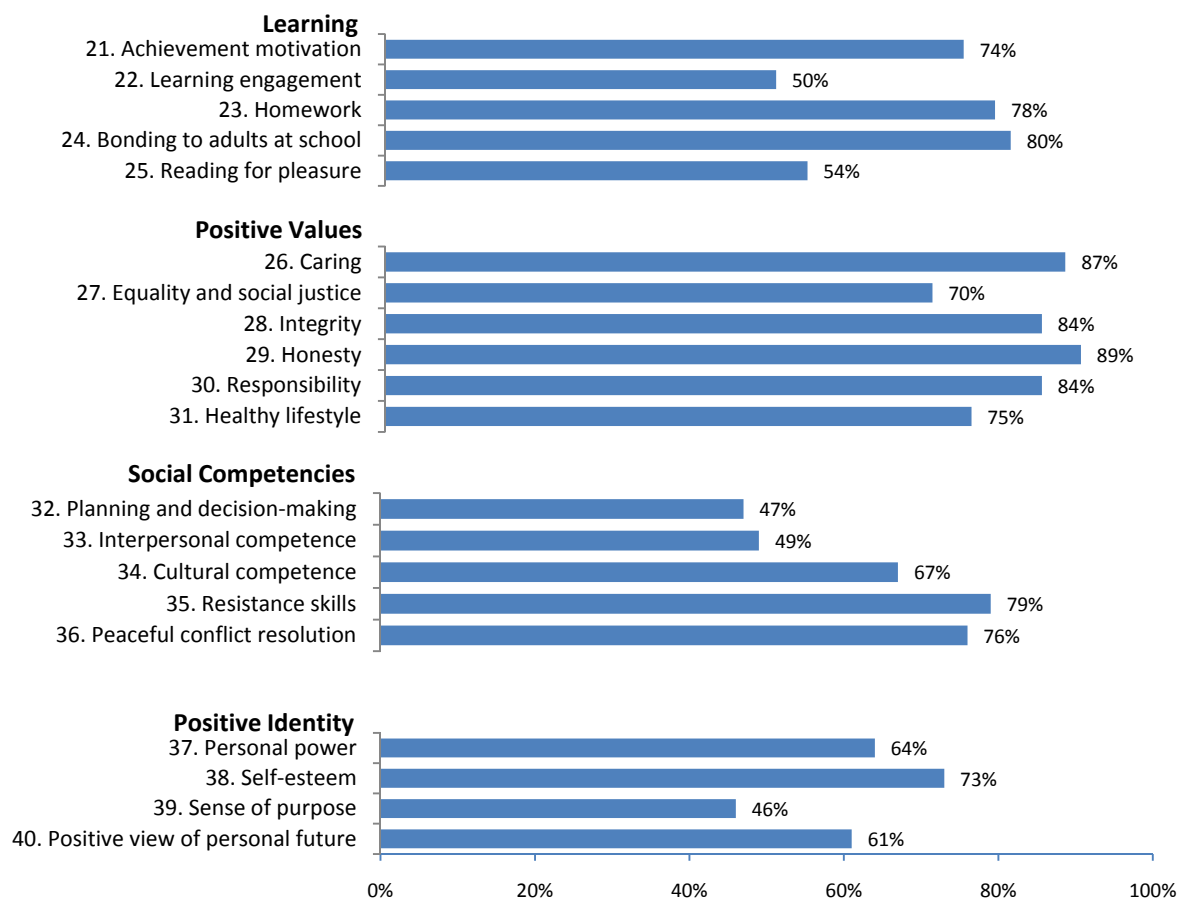


Table 3 contains the percentage of students who reported having each of the 40 assets by grade and gender for the Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools in May 2007. Differences of 5 percentage points or more between grade levels or between males and females are meaningful and worthy of thought and consideration (but are not always statistically significant). See Figures 6 and 7 for a graphical presentation of the responses by grade.

Table 3. Percent of Students Who Report Having Each External and Internal Asset, by Gender & Grade in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007

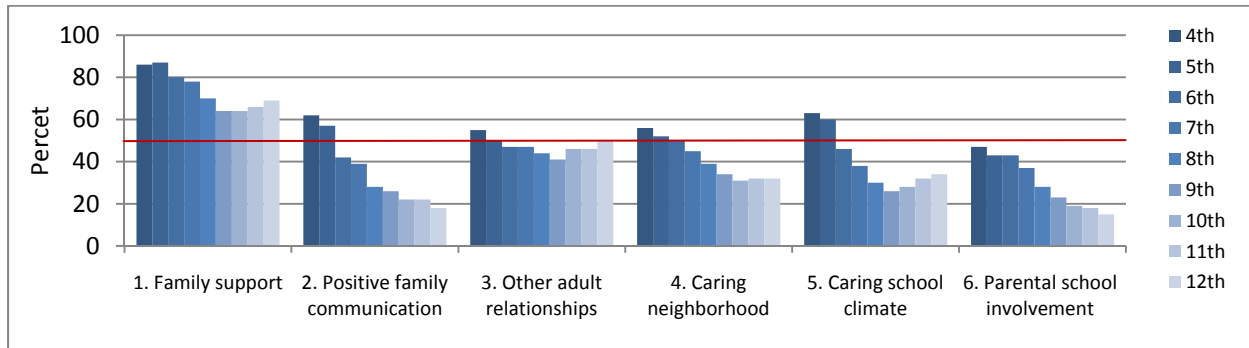
External Asset	Overall		Grades 4 & 5		Grades 6 to 12		Grade									
	4 th -5 th	6 th -12 th	Male	Female	Male	Female	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th	
Support																
1. Family support	86	70	86	87	70	71	86	87	80	78	70	64	64	66	69	
2. Positive family communication	59	29	59	59	27	31	62	57	42	39	28	26	22	22	18	
3. Other adult relationships	53	46	50	56	42	49	55	50	47	47	44	41	46	46	50	
4. Caring neighborhood	54	38	52	56	37	40	56	52	50	45	39	34	31	32	32	
5. Caring school climate	61	33	61	62	30	37	63	60	46	38	30	26	28	32	34	
6. Parent involvement in schooling	45	27	44	46	27	27	47	43	43	37	28	23	19	18	15	
Empowerment																
7. Community values youth/children	33	25	31	35	23	27	36	30	39	32	23	20	16	20	20	
8. Youth/children as resources	52	28	50	54	27	30	54	51	38	31	24	26	25	27	27	
9. Service to others	35	47	29	42	43	51	37	33	56	48	44	46	44	45	45	
10. Safety	70	54	70	70	64	43	64	76	45	47	51	52	57	63	66	
Boundaries & Expectations																
11. Family boundaries	60	43	57	62	41	46	62	58	49	49	45	42	41	40	34	
12. School boundaries	85	51	87	84	49	53	84	86	69	63	50	44	41	44	41	
13. Neighborhood boundaries	52	47	50	53	46	47	53	51	59	55	49	45	39	40	34	
14. Adult role models	47	29	44	49	26	31	47	46	38	35	26	24	24	26	27	
15. Positive peer influence	90	72	88	92	69	74	90	90	91	87	73	68	58	63	56	
16. High expectations	89	47	88	90	45	50	90	89	62	54	43	39	45	41	44	
Constructive Use of Time																
17. Creative activities	60	20	49	71	15	24	62	57	23	22	20	19	19	15	18	
18. Youth/child programs	61	59	63	59	58	60	63	60	60	63	60	58	58	60	55	
19. Religious community	67	65	63	72	62	68	68	67	75	72	67	68	58	58	53	
20. Time at home	35	44	29	42	42	45	38	32	50	48	44	44	41	41	34	

Internal Asset	Overall		Grades 4 & 5		Grades 6 to 12		Grade									
	4 th -5 th	6 th -12 th	Male	Female	Male	Female	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th	
Commitment to Learning																
21. Achievement motivation	74	64	69	78	55	73	74	73	72	71	62	61	60	60	57	
22. Learning engagement	50	61	45	55	53	69	56	43	66	62	57	58	58	66	62	
23. Homework	78	41	74	81	34	49	78	78	35	35	39	47	45	50	41	
24. Bonding to school and adults at school	80	59	75	86	54	65	83	77	72	63	48	55	57	64	58	
25. Reading for pleasure	54	24	49	60	18	30	58	50	25	24	25	25	23	20	23	
Positive Values																
26. Caring	87	49	86	88	38	60	87	87	57	50	44	46	47	50	51	
27. Equality and social justice	70	50	69	70	38	61	67	72	56	53	48	48	47	47	46	
28. Integrity	84	66	83	85	58	74	83	85	62	59	58	67	70	74	79	
29. Honesty	89	67	87	90	59	74	88	89	71	66	62	64	66	69	71	
30. Responsibility	84	62	83	86	56	68	85	84	64	60	56	59	62	68	69	
31. Restraint/healthy lifestyle	75	54	69	82	48	60	76	75	80	75	61	48	38	35	29	
Social Competencies																
32. Planning and decision-making	47	30	46	48	26	35	47	47	32	29	27	27	30	33	38	
33. Interpersonal competence	49	45	42	55	29	61	49	48	51	45	45	44	42	46	46	
34. Cultural competence	67	35	64	69	29	40	67	66	41	37	37	34	32	31	29	
35. Resistance skills	79	46	76	82	39	52	78	79	59	54	42	42	37	41	42	
36. Peaceful conflict resolution	76	51	67	86	37	64	82	71	64	55	47	43	44	50	50	
Positive Identity																
37. Personal power	64	45	65	62	44	46	64	63	42	45	42	42	44	49	54	
38. Self-esteem	73	50	73	73	57	44	72	74	52	54	49	46	47	50	55	
39. Sense of purpose	46	62	46	45	66	59	47	44	65	65	61	59	57	64	67	
40. Positive view of personal future	61	74	60	62	71	76	60	62	75	76	70	73	71	75	75	

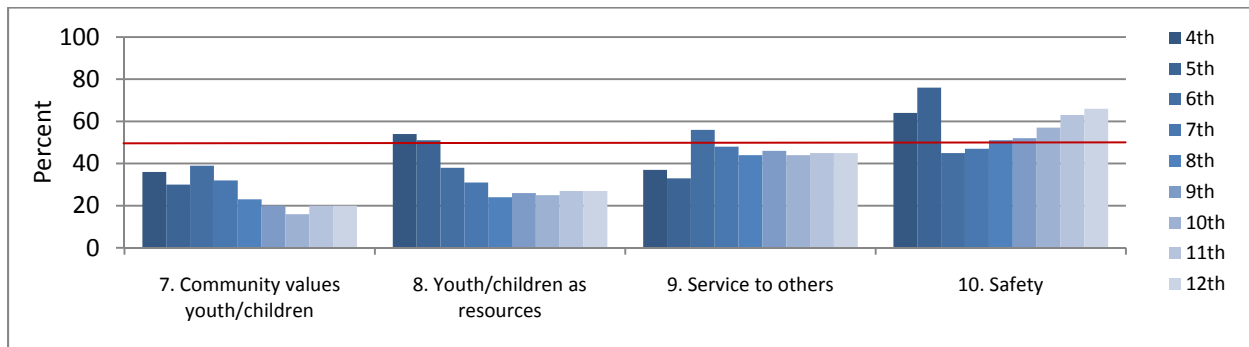
Figure 6. Percent of Students in Grades 4-12 Who Report Having Each External Asset, by Grade, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007

Notes: In Figure 6, the red line indicates 50 percent. Some of the differences between 4th-5th grade students and 6th-12th grade students may be due to wording differences in the middle childhood and adolescent surveys.

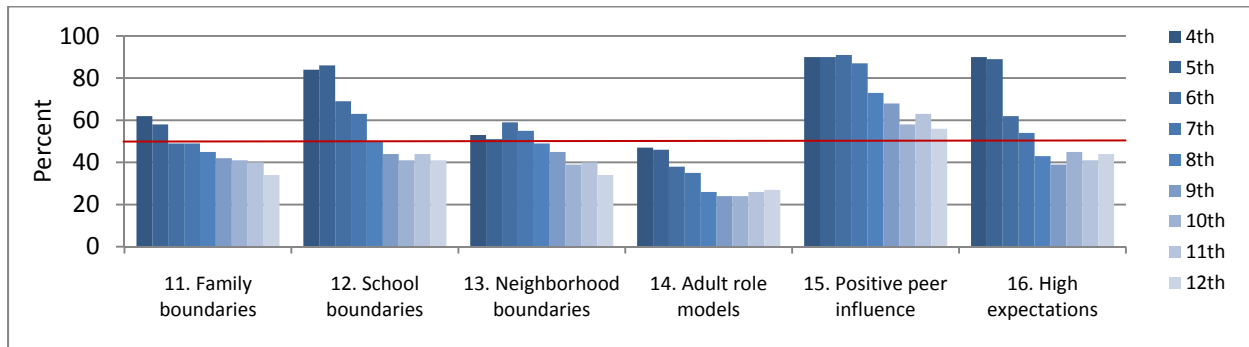
Support



Empowerment



Boundaries and Expectations



Constructive Use of Time

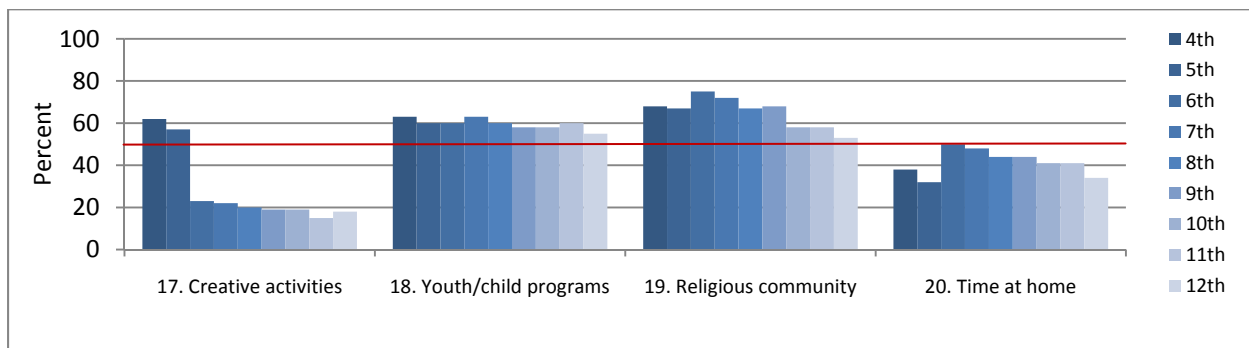
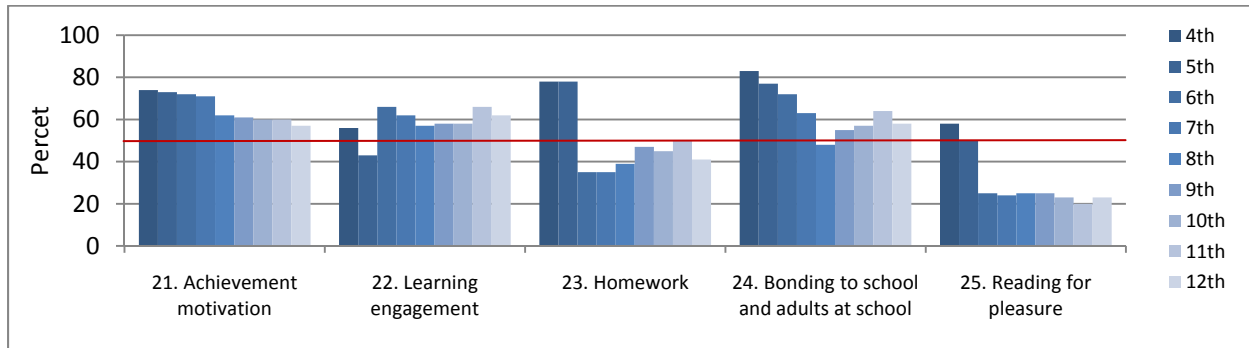


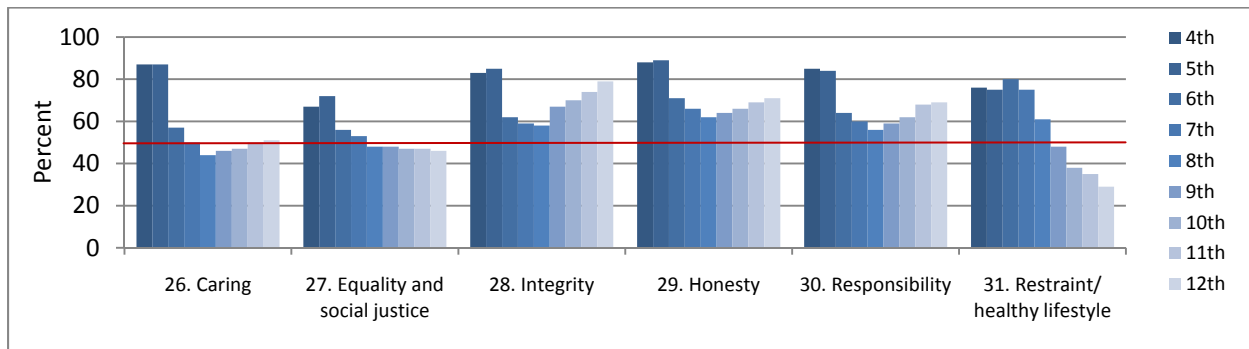
Figure 7. Percent of Students in Grades 4-12 Who Report Having Each Internal Asset, by Grade, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007

Notes: In Figure 7, the red line indicates 50 percent. Some of the differences between 4th-5th grade students and 6th-12th grade students may be due to wording differences in the middle childhood and adolescent surveys.

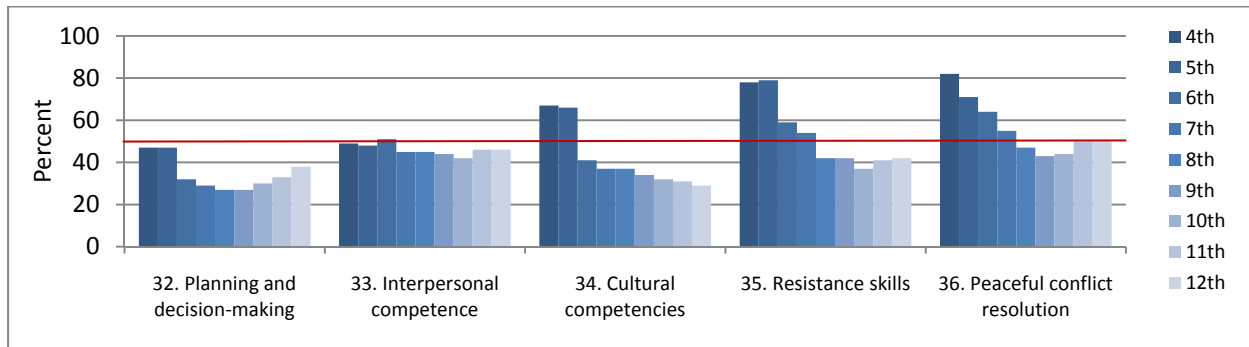
Commitment to Learning



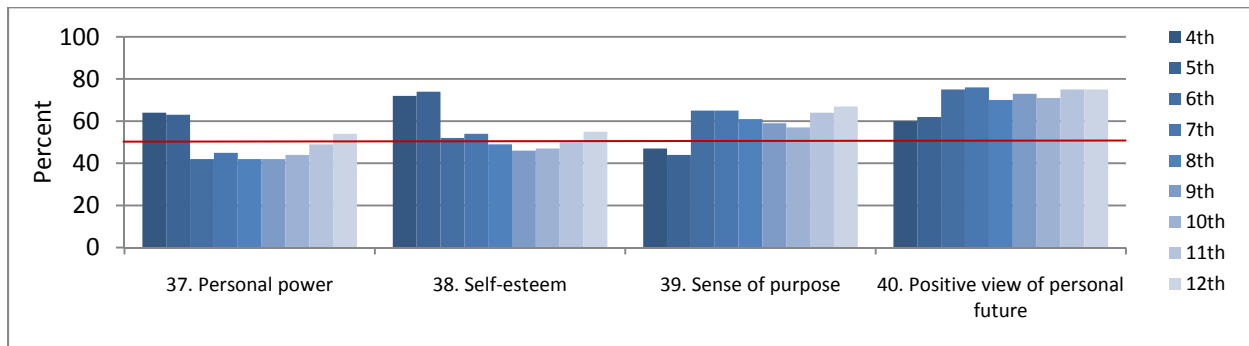
Positive Values



Social Competencies



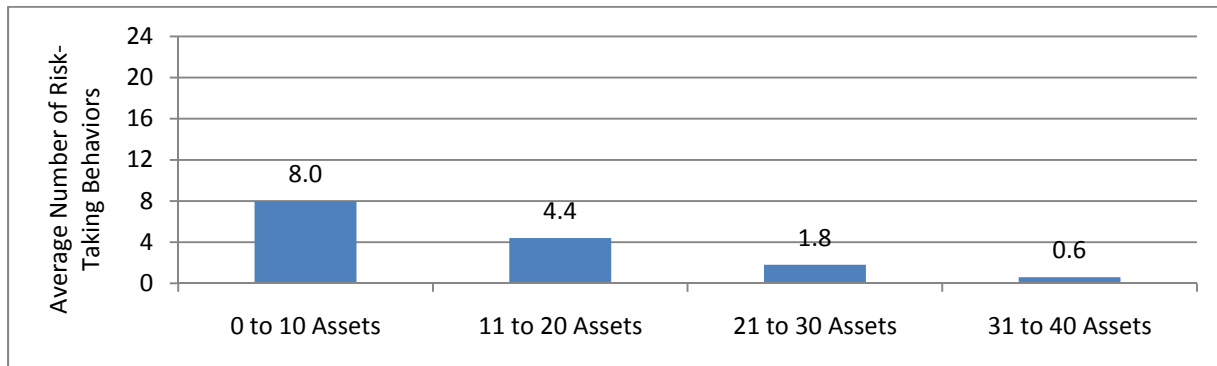
Positive Identity



As the number of assets increases for 6th-12th grade students in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools, the number of risky behaviors decreases. On average, students with at least 31 of the 40 developmental assets engage in one risky behavior. In contrast, those students with 10 or fewer assets engage in, on average, eight risky behaviors.

The 24 risky behaviors for 6th-12th grade students (i.e., adolescents) include various levels of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use; sexual intercourse; anti-social behaviors; various forms of violence; truancy; gambling; eating disorders; depression; and suicide attempts.

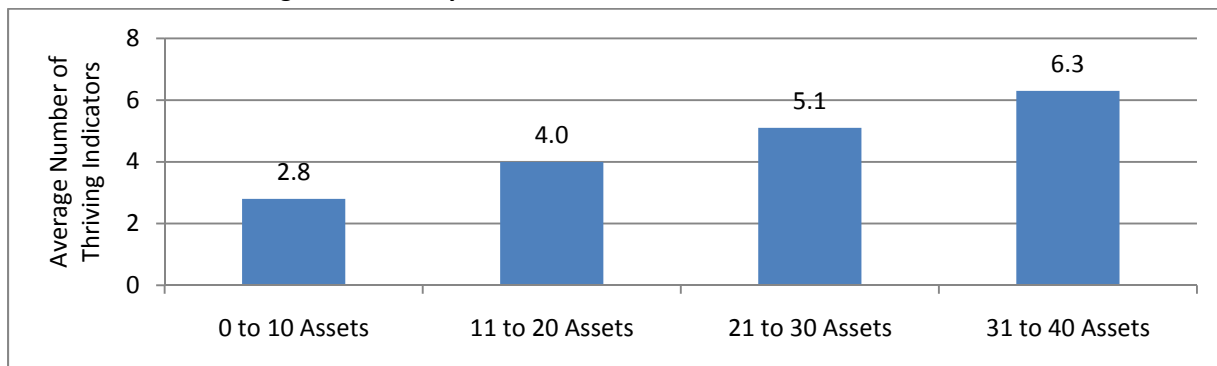
Figure 8. Average Number of Risk-Taking Behaviors (out of 24) by Asset Level for Students in Grades 6-12 in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Just as assets protect children from engaging in risky behaviors, they also promote engaging in positive, developmentally appropriate behaviors. As the number of assets increases for students in grades 6-12 in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools, the number of thriving indicators increases. On average, students with at least 31 of the 40 developmental assets engage in six thriving behaviors. In contrast, those students with 10 or fewer assets report, on average, three thriving indicators.

The eight thriving indicators for 6th-12th grade students include success in school, helping others, value of diversity, maintaining good health, exhibiting good leadership, resisting danger, delay of gratification, and overcoming adversity.

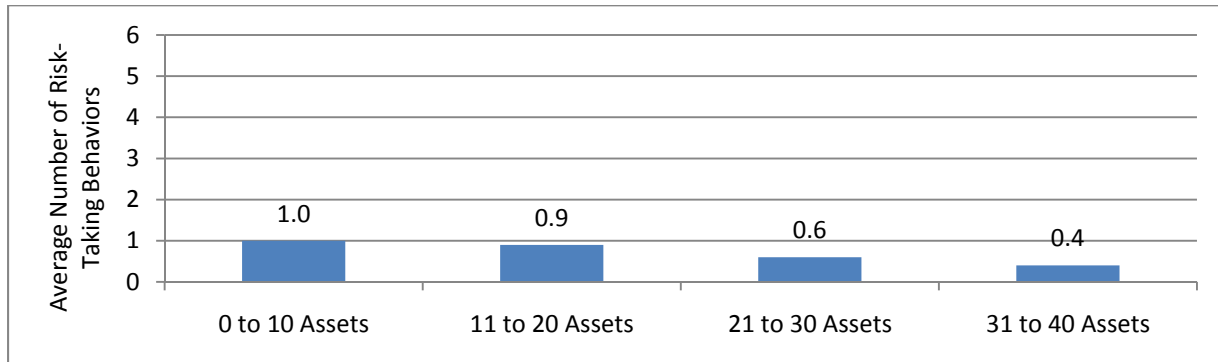
Figure 9. Average Number of Thriving Indicators (out of 8) by Asset Level for Students in Grades 6-12 in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Similar results were found for 4th and 5th grade students in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools. As the number of assets increases, the number of risky behaviors decreases. On average, students with at least 31 of the 40 developmental assets engage in 0.4 risky behaviors. In contrast, those students with 10 or fewer assets engage in, on average, one risky behavior.

The six risky behaviors for 4th and 5th graders (i.e., middle childhood) were identified as the use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana; anti-social behavior; physical aggression or violence; and sadness.

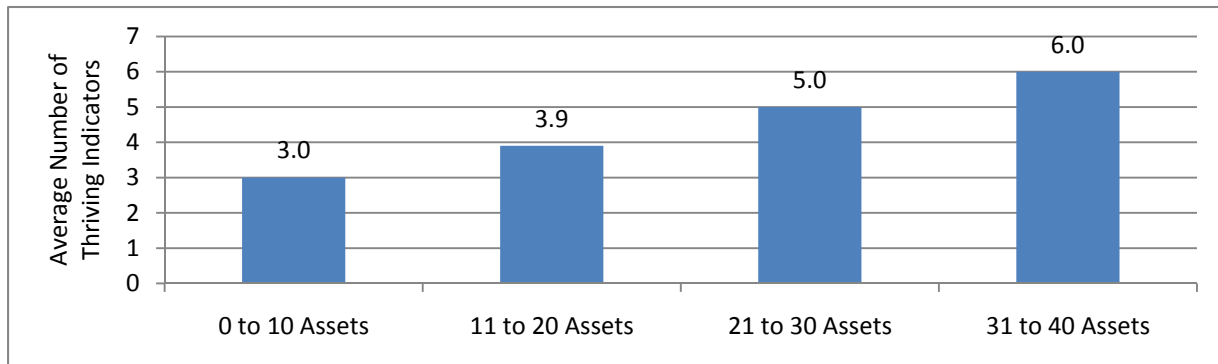
Figure 10. Average Number of Risk-Taking Behaviors (out of 6) by Asset Level for Students in Grades 4-5 in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Similar to older students, as the number of assets increases for students in grades 4-5, the number of thriving indicators increases. On average, 4th and 5th grade students in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools with at least 31 of the 40 developmental assets engage in six thriving behaviors. In contrast, those students with 10 or fewer assets report, on average, three thriving indicators.

The seven thriving indicators for 4th and 5th grade students include success in school, helping others, value of diversity, delay of gratification, coregulation (i.e., child often helps parents make decisions about things child cares about), coping, and life satisfaction.

Figure 11. Average Number of Thriving Indicators (out of 7) by Asset Level for Students in Grades 4-5 in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



SCHOOL READINESS

School readiness can be defined as the skills, knowledge, behaviors, and accomplishments that children know and can do as they enter kindergarten in the areas of physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language development, cognition and general knowledge, and creativity and the arts.

A study conducted by the Minnesota Department of Education concluded that in 2008, 61 percent of children entering kindergarten in Minnesota were proficient in physical development. Less than half of students were proficient in personal and social development (49 percent), the arts (49 percent), language and literacy (47 percent), and mathematical thinking (44 percent) (School Readiness Study: Developmental Assessment at Kindergarten Entrance, Minnesota Department of Education, Fall 2008. Available at <http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/groups/EarlyLearning/documents/Report/013941.pdf>).

Proficiency was defined in the study as an indication that the child can reliably and consistently demonstrate the skill, knowledge, behavior, or accomplishment represented by the indicator.

While we don't have community-level data for measuring school readiness in this manner, we can look at factors that have a definite impact on the early development of children and affect the child's readiness for school – both parental and child characteristics.

For select indicators, data are presented by school district to provide context within Cass and Clay counties. In the Appendix section of this report, we have included a map showing the school district boundaries (see p.78).

Parental Characteristics

Low Birth Weight Infants

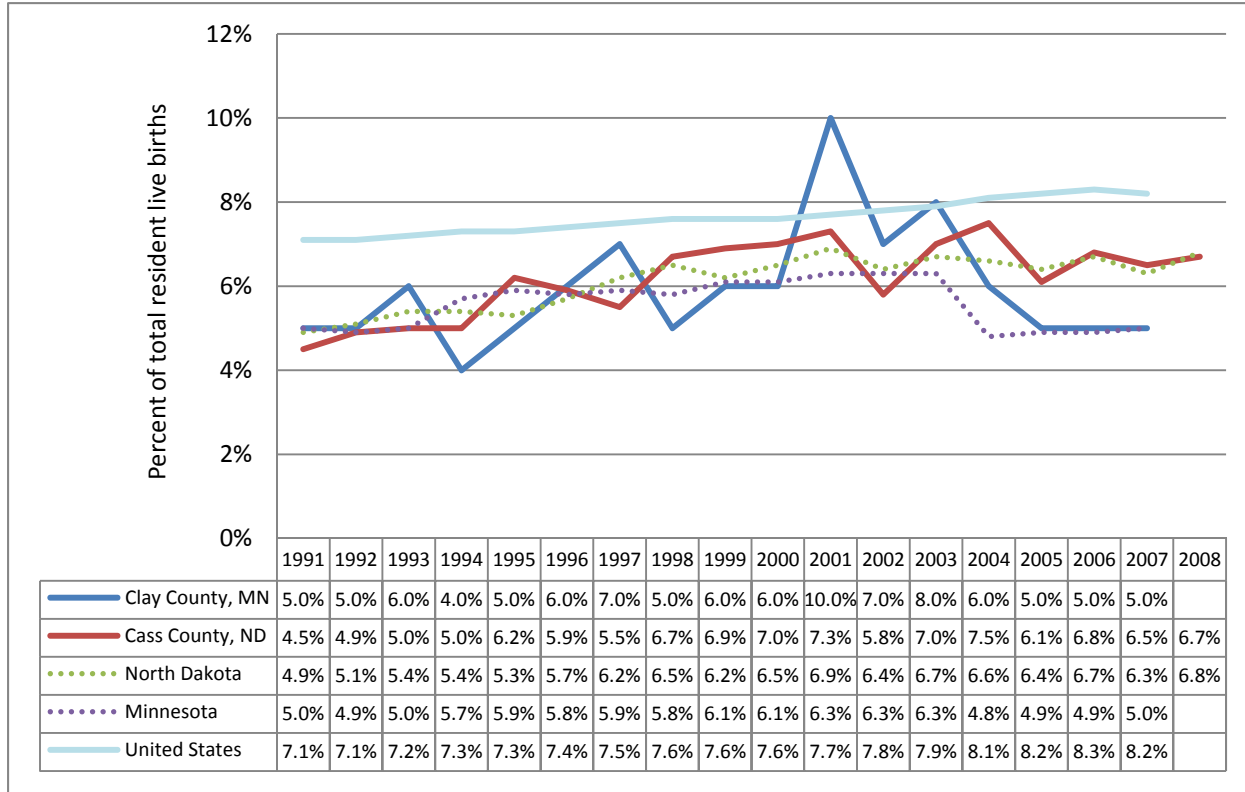
Infants born at a low birth weight are at increased risk of long-term disability and impaired development. Infants born under 2,500 grams are more likely than heavier infants to experience delayed motor and social development. Lower birth weight also increases a child's likelihood of having a school-age learning disability, being enrolled in special education classes, having a lower IQ, and dropping out of high school. Risk for many of these outcomes increases substantially as birth weight decreases, with very low birth weight babies being most at risk. Being born with a low birth weight also incurs enormous economic costs, including higher medical expenditures, special education and social service expenses, and decreased productivity in adulthood (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/?q=node/67>).

The rate of low-weight births in Clay County, MN rose to 10 percent in 2001, up from a low of 4 percent in 1994; the rate then decreased to 5 percent in 2005 where it remained until 2007. The rate in Cass County, ND has experienced much smaller fluctuations during the past 10 years, averaging 6 percent per year since 1991.

From 2005 to 2007, the rate of low-weight births in Clay County has mirrored the statewide average in Minnesota (i.e., approximately 5.0 percent per year). Likewise, from 2006 to 2008, the rates in Cass County have been similar to the statewide average in North Dakota (i.e., approximately 6.6 percent per year on average).

Overall, the rate of low-weight births in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area has trended lower than the national average over the past 20 years.

Figure 12. Low Weight Births as a Percentage of Total Resident Live Births: 1991 to 2008



Note: Blank cells in the data table indicate that no data were available. Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center website, Data by State. Retrieved 11/30/09 at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate>.

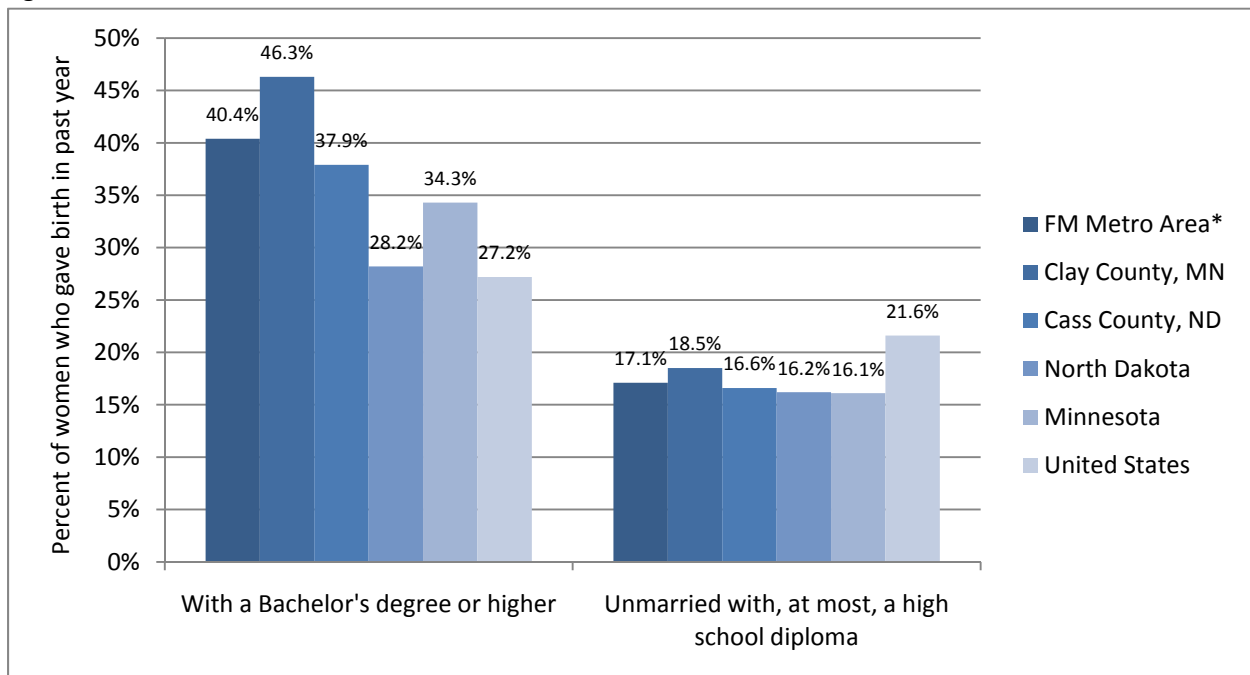
Parental Education

Higher levels of parent educational attainment are strongly associated with positive outcomes for children in many areas, including school readiness and educational achievement, health and health-related behaviors including smoking and binge drinking, and pro-social activities such as volunteering. Children of more educated parents are also likely to have access to greater material, human, and social resources (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/archivepgs/67.htm>).

In the Fargo-Moorhead metro area (i.e., Cass and Clay counties combined), 40 percent of women who gave birth in the past 12 months had a Bachelor's degree or higher level of education in 2008. The proportion of women who recently gave birth that had a Bachelor's degree or higher was somewhat larger in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area than in North Dakota (28.2 percent) and Minnesota (34.3 percent) in 2008.

Nearly one in five women who recently gave birth in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area was unmarried with, at most, a high school diploma in 2008 (17.1 percent). This proportion was similar to that of North Dakota and Minnesota in 2008.

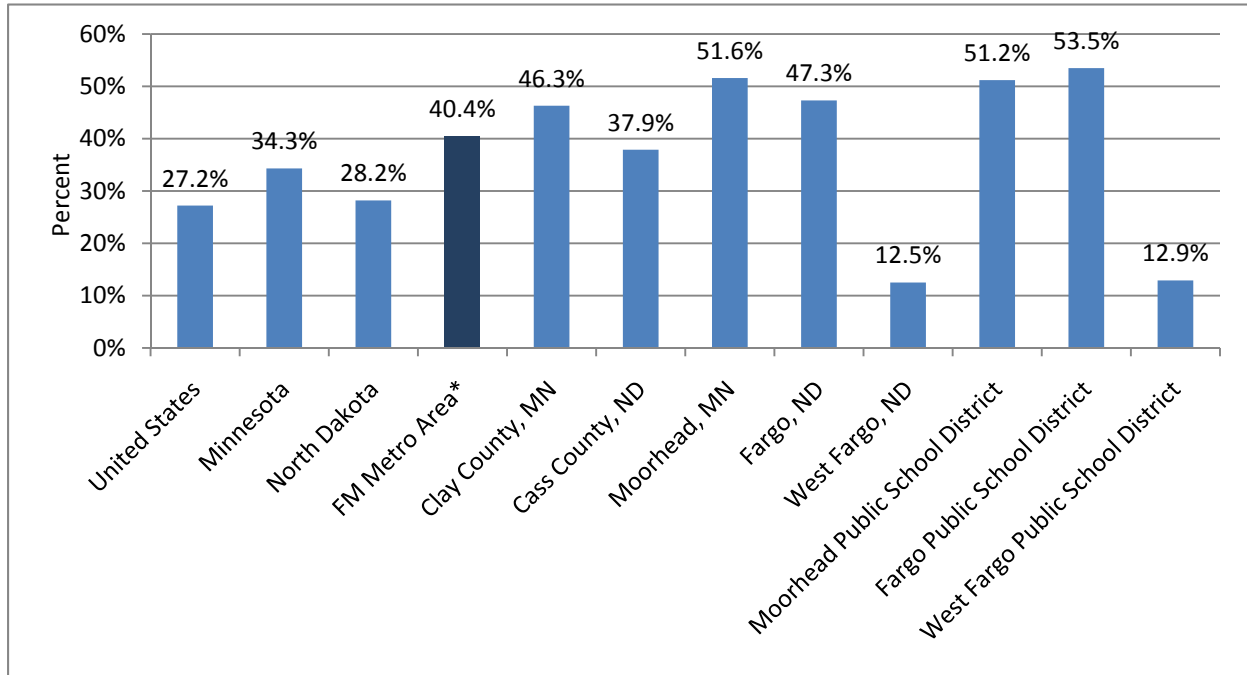
Figure 13. Educational Attainment of Women Who Gave Birth within the Past 12 Months: 2008



Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table B13014. Retrieved on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>.

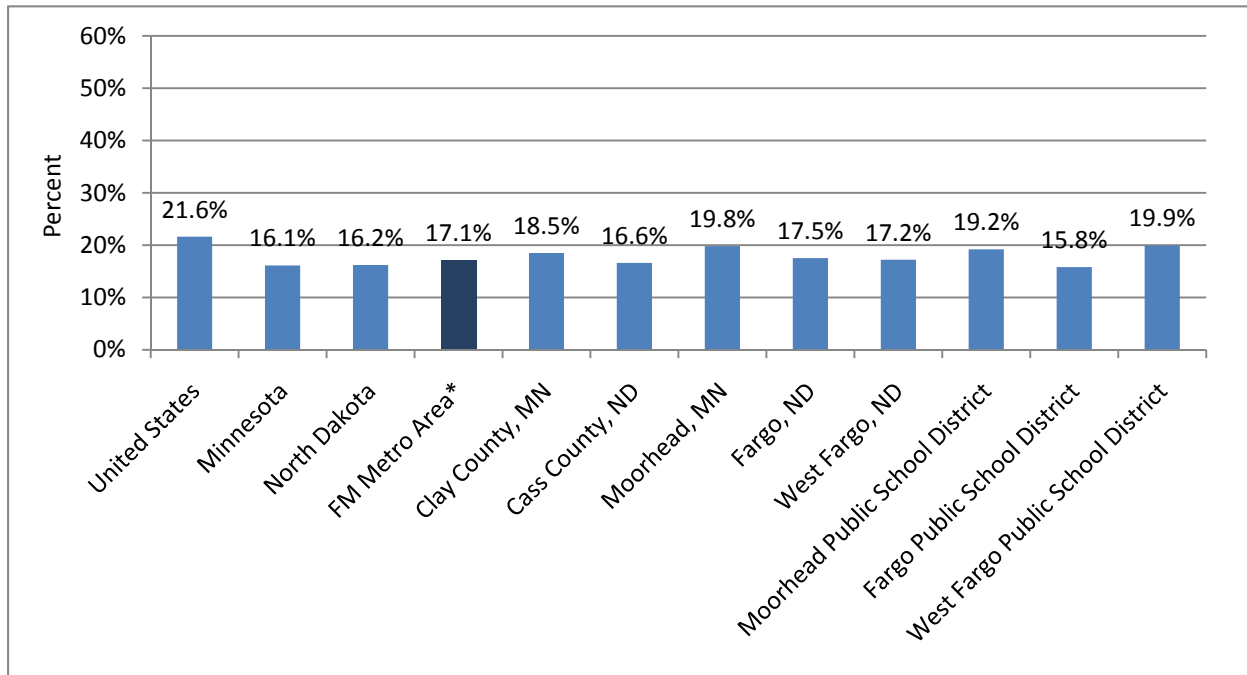
Figure 14. Women Who Gave Birth within the Past 12 Months – Percent with Bachelor’s Degree or Higher: 2008



Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B13014. Retrieved on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size.

Figure 15. Women Who Gave Birth within the Past 12 Months – Percent Who are Unmarried with, At Most, a High School Diploma: 2008



Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table B13014. Retrieved on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size.

Parental Nativity and Language Spoken at Home

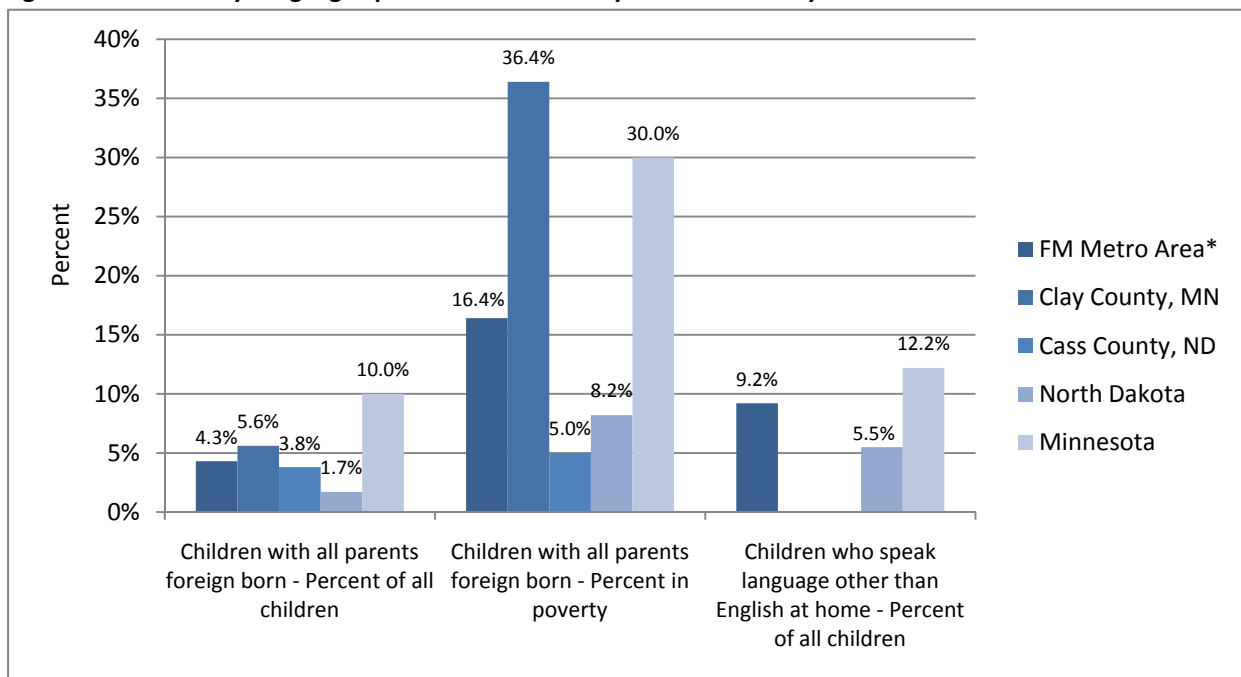
Parental involvement in school can lead to increased academic performance and positive social outcomes for children, as well as enable teachers to identify learning problems at an earlier age. Teachers' lack of understanding of cultural context can hinder child development. Parents who do not speak English well may feel less comfortable or less welcome getting involved in their children's school (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/archivepgs/104.htm>).

In the Fargo-Moorhead metro area, 4 percent of all children had parents (i.e., all available parents) who were born in a foreign country in 2008. The proportion of children having all parents born in a foreign country is smaller in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area than in Minnesota (10 percent) and larger in the metro area than in North Dakota (2 percent).

Of the Fargo-Moorhead metro area children whose parents were born in a foreign country, 16 percent were living in poverty in 2008. The majority of these impoverished children lived in Clay County, Minnesota.

Nearly 1 in 10 children in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area spoke a language other than English at home (9.2 percent) in 2008.

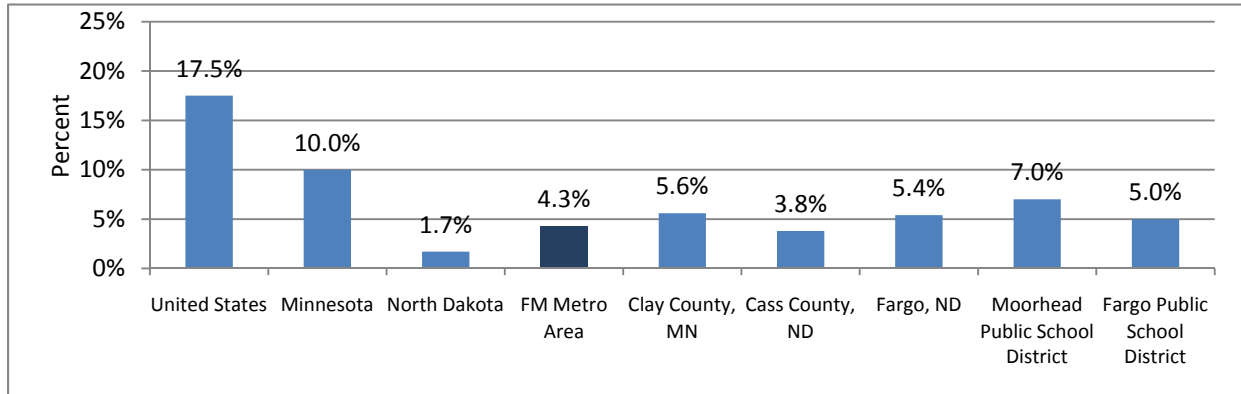
Figure 16. Children by Language Spoken at Home and by Parental Nativity Status: 2008



Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.

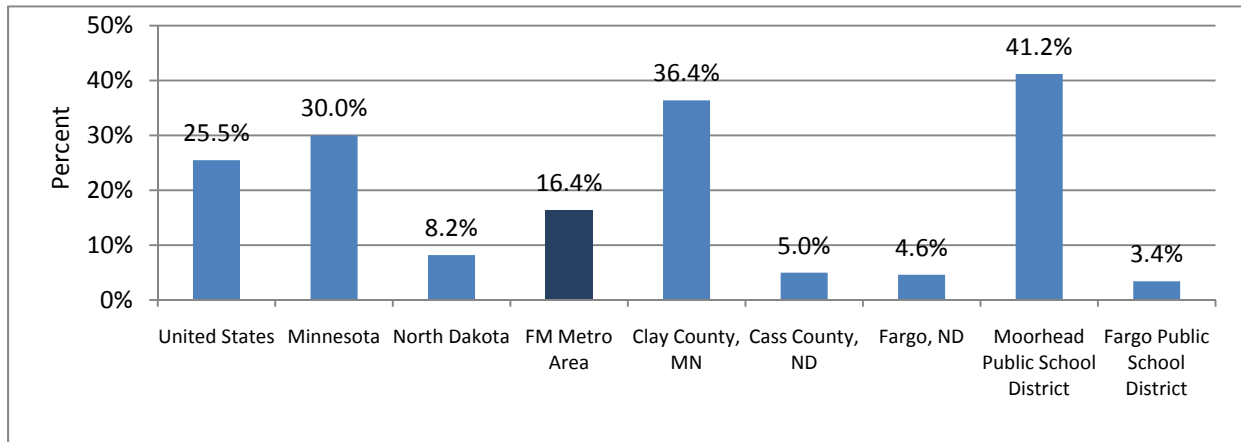
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Tables B05010 and B16004. Retrieved on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>.

Figure 17. Children Ages 0 to 17 – Percent with All Parents Foreign Born: 2008



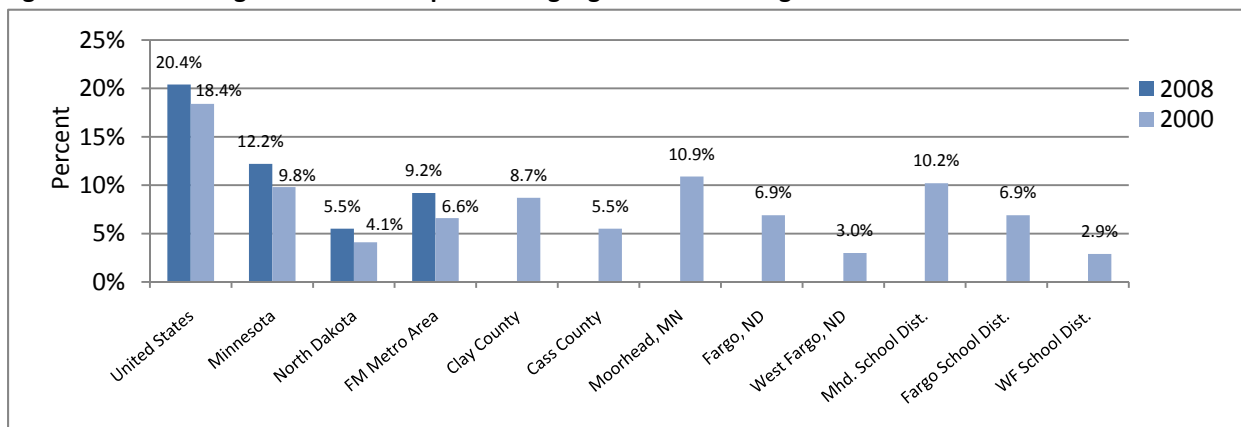
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table B05010. Retrieved on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size.

Figure 18. Children Ages 0 to 17 with All Parents Foreign Born – Percent in Poverty: 2008



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table B05010. Retrieved on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size.

Figure 19. Children Ages 5 to 17 Who Speak a Language Other Than English at Home: 2000 and 2008



Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B16004. Retrieved on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for counties, cities, or school districts due to sample size. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table P19. Retrieved on 11/25/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table P19. Retrieved on 11/25/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> - using the Download Data option.

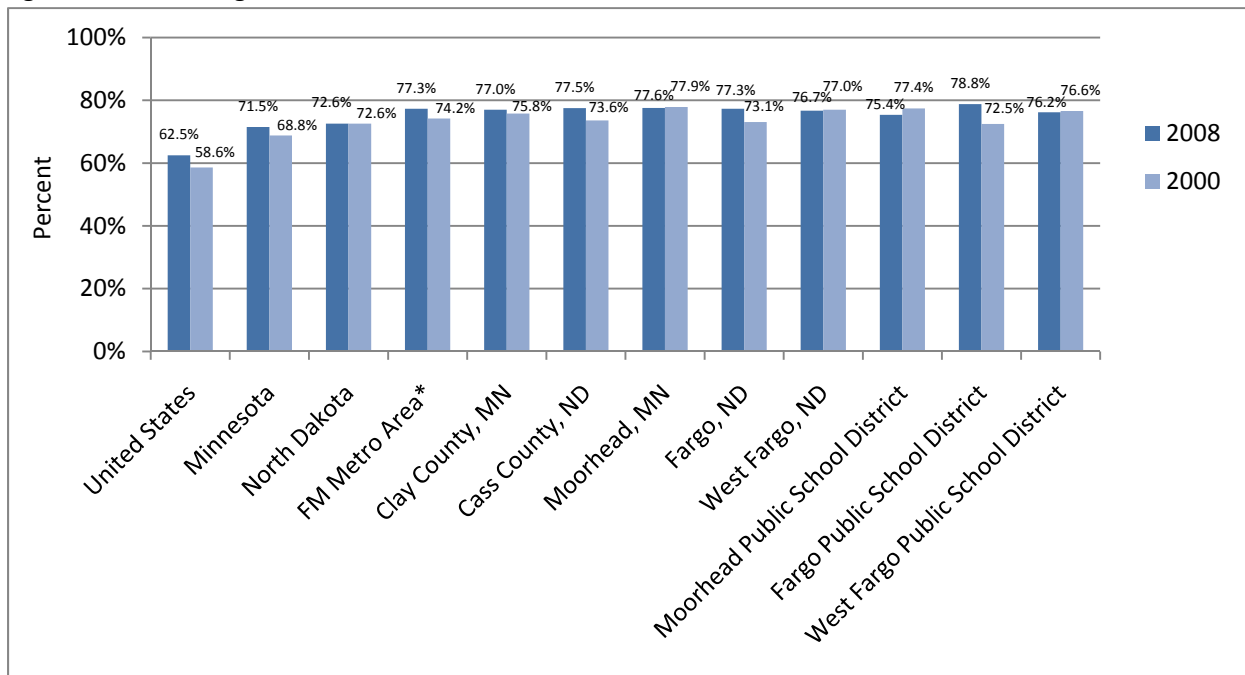
Working Parents

Full-time, full-year employment is a major determinant of financial stability and well-being for families. For low-income families, it is not a guarantee of escape from poverty but it is associated with higher family income and greater access to private health insurance. Higher income, in turn, is associated with many positive child outcomes including better health, academic achievement, and financial well-being as adults. However, in some cases, long hours of employment among mothers of very young children have been associated with modestly negative development outcomes (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/archivepgs/68.htm>).

In the Fargo-Moorhead metro area, 77 percent of children ages 0 to 5 had all available parents working in the labor force in 2008. The proportion of children with working parents in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area was similar to the proportion in Minnesota (72 percent) and in North Dakota (73 percent), but slightly larger than the national average (63 percent) in 2008.

The proportion of children with working parents in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area increased from 74 percent in 2000 to 77 percent in 2008. Statistically, there was no significant change in this proportion during this time.

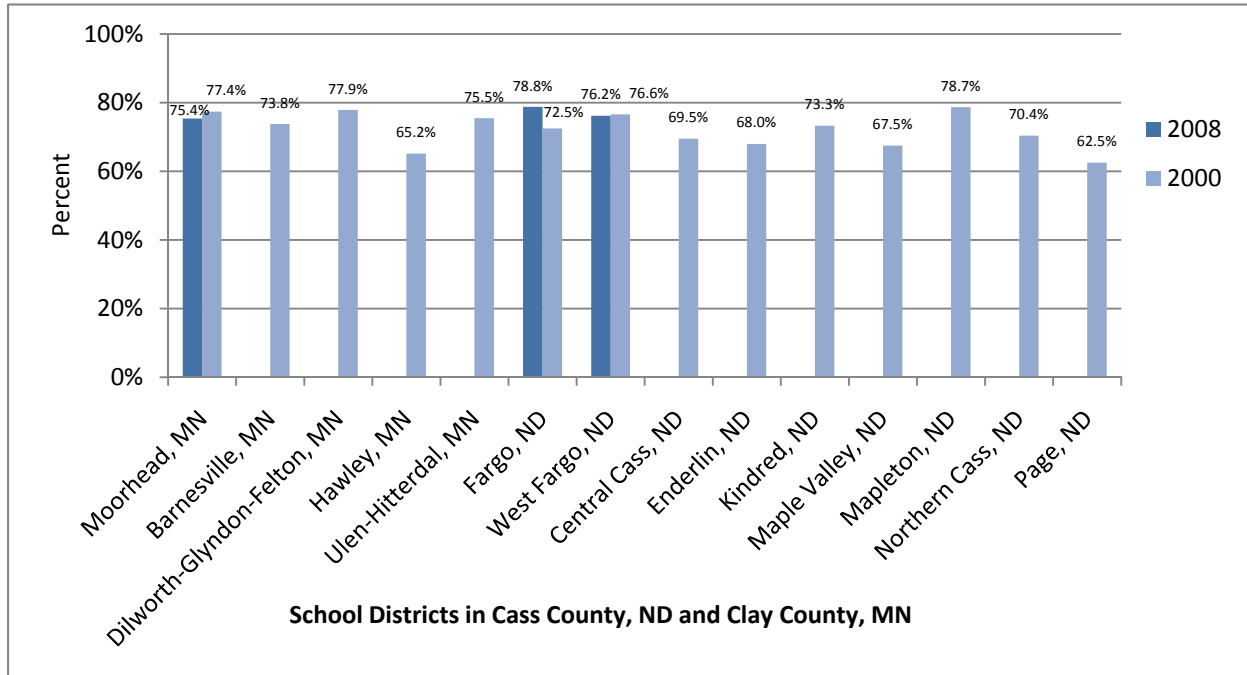
Figure 20. Children Ages 0 to 5 – Percent with All Parents in the Labor Force: 2000 and 2008



Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.

Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B23008. Retrieved interactively on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table P46. Retrieved interactively on 11/25/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table P46. Retrieved on 11/25/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> - using the Download Data option.

Figure 21. Children Ages 0 to 5 – Percent with All Parents in the Labor Force by School District: 2000 and 2008



Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B23008. Retrieved interactively on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table P46. Retrieved interactively on 11/25/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table P46. Retrieved on 11/25/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> - using the Download Data option.

Child Characteristics

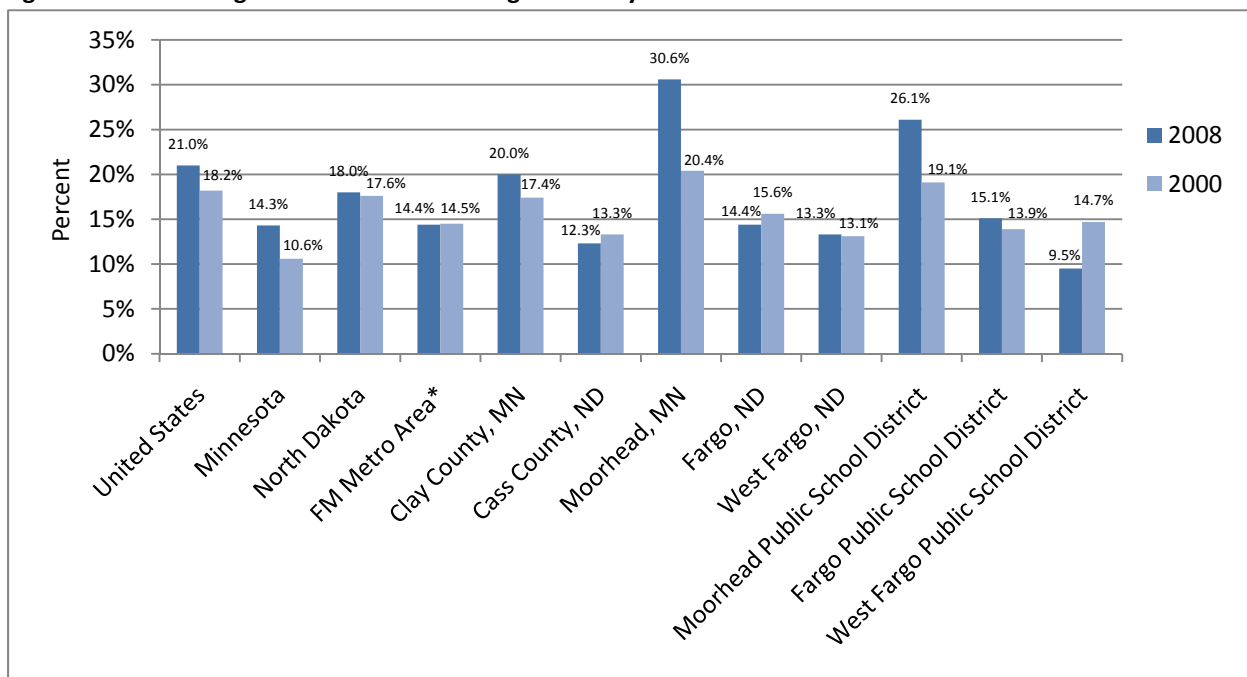
Child Poverty

Aside from physical and mental health, poverty in childhood and adolescence is associated with a higher risk for poorer cognitive and academic outcomes, lower school attendance, lower reading and math test scores, increased distractibility, and higher rates of grade failure and early high school dropout. Poor children are also more likely than other children to have externalizing and other behavior problems, and emotional problems, and are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviors during adolescence. Finally, growing up in poverty is associated with lower occupational status and lower wages in adulthood (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/?q=node/221>).

In the Fargo-Moorhead metro area, 14 percent of children ages 0 to 4 were living in poverty in 2008. The poverty rate for children ages 0 to 4 in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area did not change from 2000 to 2008.

The poverty rate for children ages 0 to 4 was significantly higher in the city of Moorhead (31 percent) than in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area overall (14 percent) in 2008.

Figure 22. Children Ages 0 to 4 – Percent Living in Poverty: 2000 and 2008

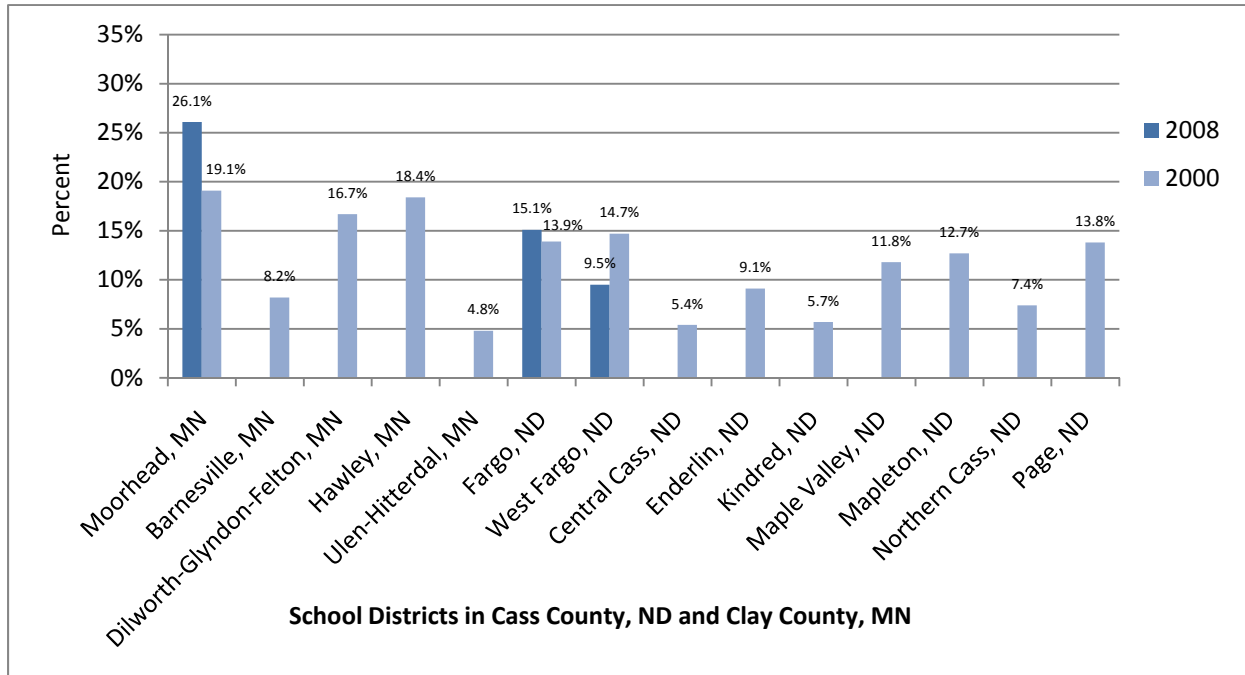


Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.

Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B17001. Retrieved interactively on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table PCT49. Retrieved interactively on 11/25/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table PCT49. Retrieved on 11/25/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> using the Download Data option.

Poverty rates for children ages 0 to 4 varied significantly between school districts in Cass and Clay counties in 2000. 2008 data for school districts with fewer than 20,000 people are not available.

Figure 23. Children Ages 0 to 4 – Percent Living in Poverty by Public School District: 2000 and 2008



Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B17001. Retrieved interactively on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table PCT49. Retrieved interactively on 11/25/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table PCT49. Retrieved on 11/25/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> using the Download Data option.

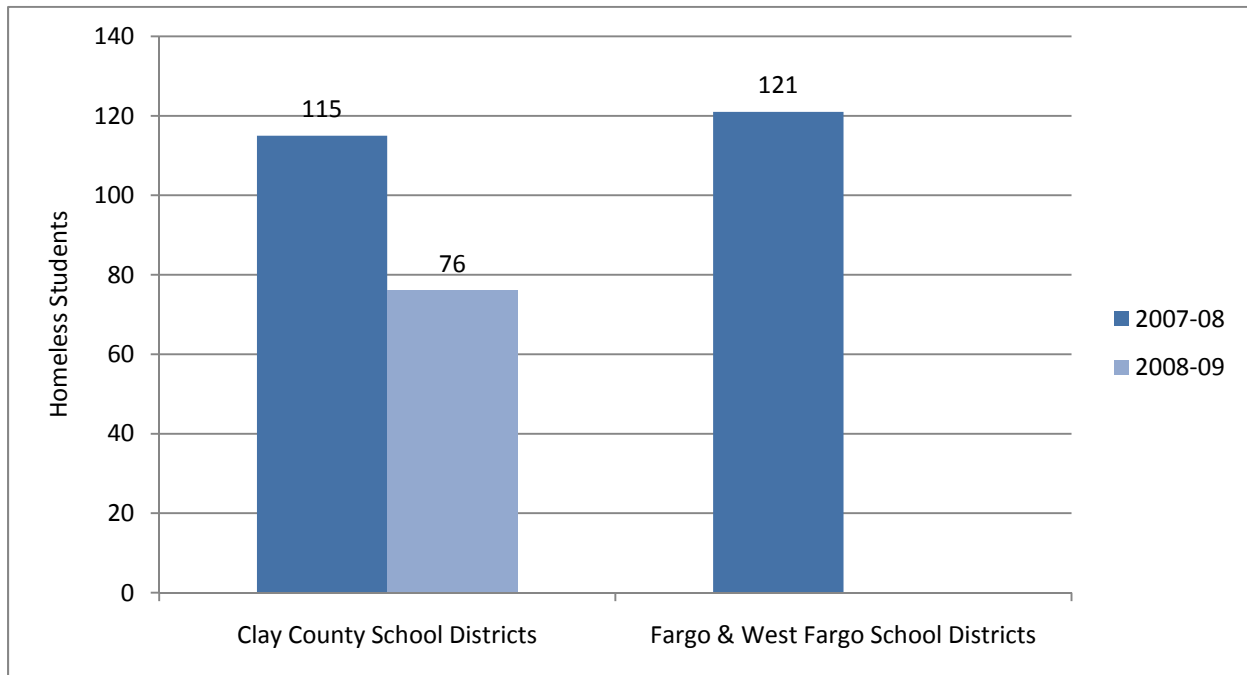
Homelessness

Homelessness influences every facet of a child's life – from conception to young adulthood. The experience of homelessness inhibits the physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioral development of children (Homelessness and its Effect on Children – a report by Ellen Hart-Shegos of Hart-Shegos and Associates, Inc. for the Family Housing Fund in December 1999).

The number of students determined to be homeless in school districts within Clay County, MN numbered 76 in the 2008-09 school year. This number is down from 115 in 2007-08.

Within Cass County, ND 121 children were reported as homeless in the Fargo and West Fargo school districts in the 2007-08 school year.

Figure 24. Homeless Children Enrolled in School as Reported by Public School Districts: 2007-08 and 2008-09



Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, No Child Left Behind Programs, McKinney Vento-Act data. Retrieved at http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Accountability_Programs/No_Child_Left_Behind_Programs/Homeless_Ed_McKinney_Vento/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, special request.

Head Start

A recent rigorous national evaluation of the impact of Head Start on three- and four-year-olds, the Head Start Impact Study, found gains for Head Start children in pre-reading, pre-writing, vocabulary and literacy skills. Children assigned to participate in Head Start also had fewer behavior problems, better overall physical health, less hyperactivity, and more access to dental care. More positive effects were found for children who entered the program as three-year olds than as four-year olds. Another study found that four-year olds participating in Head Start did better in receptive language and phonemic awareness than four-year olds of similar backgrounds who were wait-listed for the Head Start program. Other studies find that children who attended Head Start are more likely to stay in school, and have lower rates of grade retention in early elementary school. Head Start participants were also more likely to have been fully immunized and to have better access to health care (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/archivepgs/97.htm>).

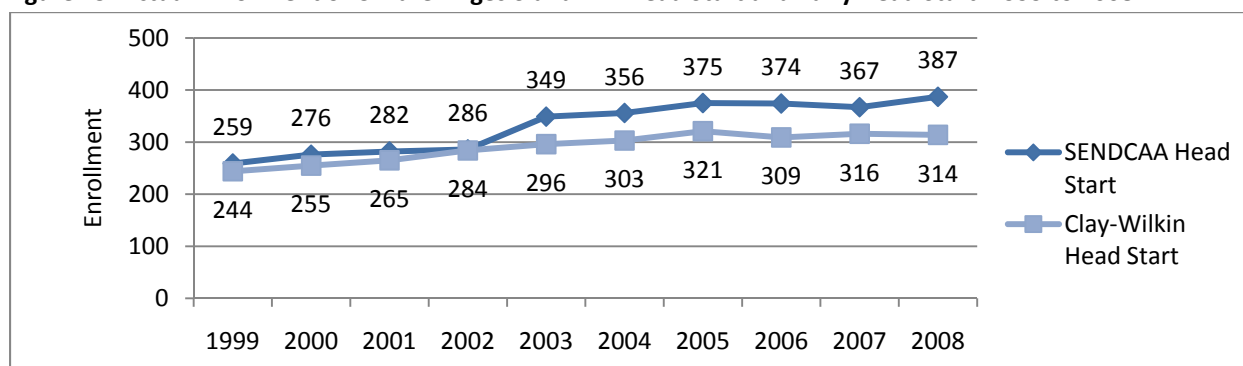
Information on Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment was obtained from the Program Information Reports (PIR) which publishes data provided by individual Head Start and Early Head Start programs by state on an annual basis.

The data for Cass County programs are aggregated into data reported by the Southeastern North Dakota Community Action Agency (SENDCAA). SENDCAA aggregates data for Cass, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties in North Dakota. The Clay-Wilkin Head Start Program aggregates data for Clay and Wilkin counties in Minnesota. In the following figures, these aggregated data are presented to represent the Cass and Clay county regions.

Since 1999, Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment of 3- and 4-year-olds in the Cass County region has grown an average of 5 percent per year. Enrollment grew an average of 3 percent per year in the Clay County region.

Funding for Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment in the Cass County region has remained unchanged since 2004 – allowing for 369 children. The difference between funded and actual enrollment is the turnover of students during the year. Funding in the Clay County region has remained relatively unchanged since 2006 – allowing for 272 students.

Figure 25. Actual Enrollment of Children Ages 3 and 4 in Head Start and Early Head Start: 1999 to 2008

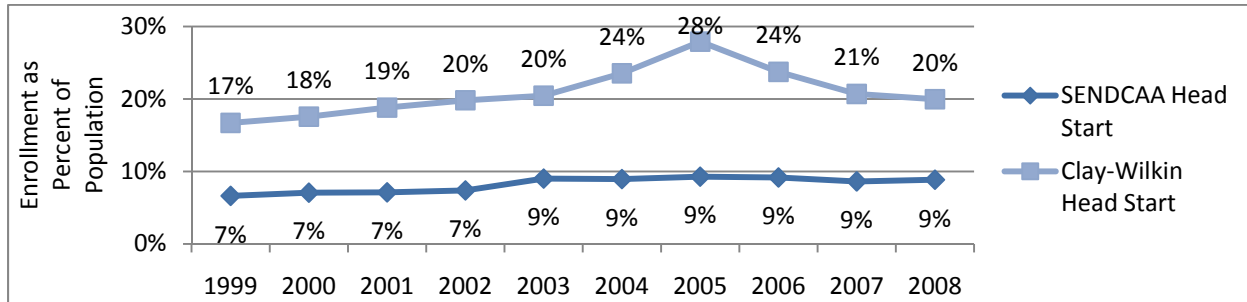


Notes: SENDCAA Head Start (Southeastern North Dakota Community Action Agency) consists of Cass, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties in North Dakota. Clay-Wilkin Head Start consists of Clay and Wilkin counties in Minnesota.

Sources: Office of Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) Database, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Early Childhood and Learning Center, Office of Head Start, Head Start Enterprise System, <https://hses.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>. Population data were obtained from the Bridged-Race Intercensal Estimates which were prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau with support from the National Cancer Institute and made available by the National Center for Health Statistics, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/popbridge/popbridge.htm>.

The Head Start enrollment rate of 3- and 4-year-olds in Clay and Wilkin counties (i.e., children ages 3 and 4 enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start as a percentage of all children ages 3 and 4) has consistently exceeded the Cass County region's rate by at least twice as much for the past 10 years.

Figure 26. Enrollment of Children Ages 3 and 4 in Head Start and Early Head Start as a Percent of Total Population of Children Ages 3 and 4: 1999 to 2008



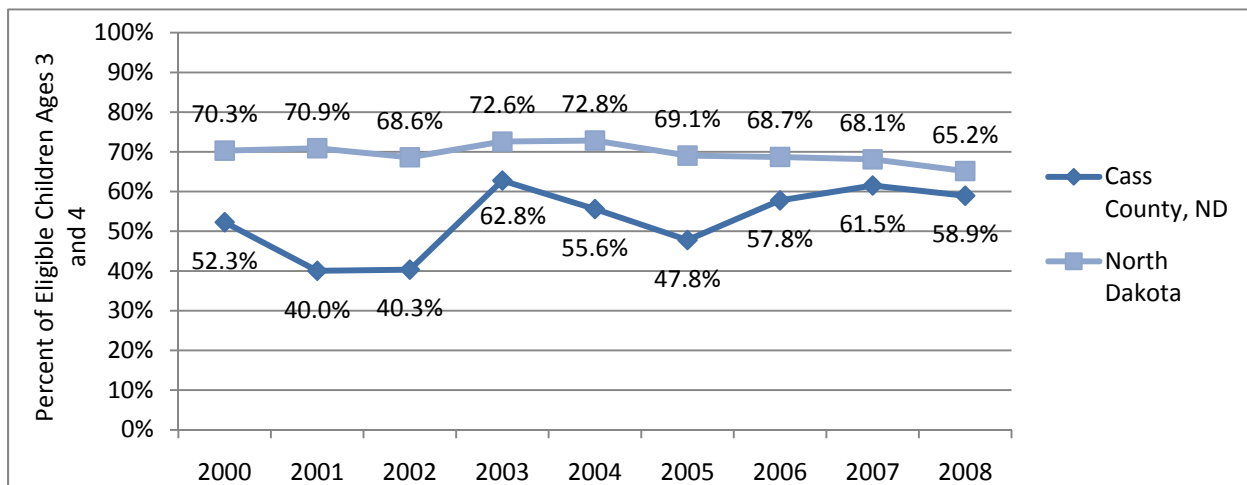
Notes: SENDCAA Head Start (Southeastern North Dakota Community Action Agency) consists of Cass, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties in North Dakota. Clay-Wilkin Head Start consists of Clay and Wilkin counties in Minnesota.

Sources: Office of Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) Database, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Early Childhood and Learning Center, Office of Head Start, Head Start Enterprise System, <https://hses.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>. Population data were obtained from the Bridged-Race Intercensal Estimates which were prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau with support from the National Cancer Institute and made available by the National Center for Health Statistics, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/popbridge/popbridge.htm>.

Prior to 2009, the North Dakota KIDS COUNT program collected county-specific Head Start enrollment and eligibility data from each Head Start program director in North Dakota. Thus, SENDCAA provided the following data for Cass County specifically.

In 2008, 59 percent of children ages 3 and 4 who were eligible for Head Start in Cass County, ND were actually enrolled in Head Start. This means that 41 percent of Head Start eligible children in Cass County, ND were not enrolled in 2008.

Figure 27. Children Ages 3 and 4 Enrolled in Head Start as a Percent of All Head Start Eligible Children Ages 3 and 4: 2000 to 2008



Note: Eligible children ages 3 and 4 include those children ages 3 and 4 who are enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start, on the Head Start waiting list, receiving TANF, and others deemed eligible by Head Start staff.

Source: North Dakota Head Start Program directors, special request.

Social and Emotional Development

Children enter school with a range of knowledge and skills in multiple domains—physical, social, emotional, linguistic, and cognitive. There is no exact profile of a child who is "ready" for school. Nevertheless, children whose skills are far behind those of their new classmates do enter school at a disadvantage. If they are unable to catch up, they face greater challenges throughout their school careers. Social development is an important, often over-looked factor in children's transition to kindergarten. A child who is socially ready for school should be able to make friends, get along with peers, and communicate well with peers and teachers. Children who arrive at kindergarten with social competencies generally have an easier time forming relationships with their peers and better school outcomes (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/archivepgs/47.htm>).

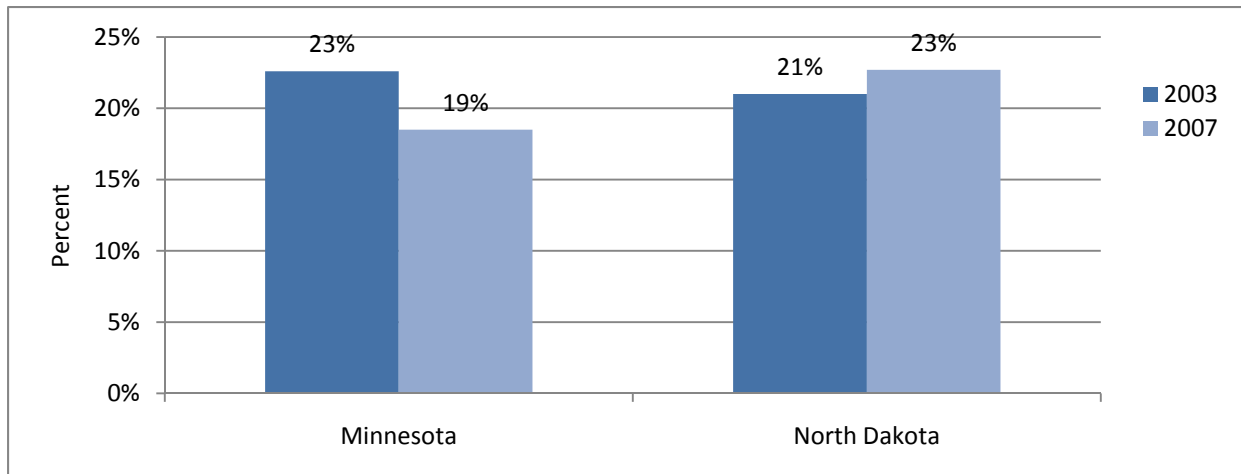
Lacking local data for indicators relating to social and emotional development, we have provided state level data for two indicators from the National Survey of Children's Health focusing on children ages 4 months to 5 years.

Parents' concerns about their child's learning, development and behavior can be an indication of a child's risk for developmental, behavioral and/or social delays. Eight items asking about specific parental concerns, derived from the Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status© (PEDS) (see <http://www.nschdata.org/Content/Guide2007.aspx#56>), are included in the National Survey of Children's Health. Parental responses were scored to identify children at high, moderate, low or no risk for developmental, behavioral and/or social delays. The basic logic for scoring the PEDS© is that for specific ages there are age-specific parental concerns that are "predictive" of a child's risk for delays. The more concerns a parent has to items that are "predictive" of a child's risk, the more at risk the child is for delays. For additional information, visit the following link, <http://nschdata.org/Viewdocument.aspx?item=316>.

Approximately one in five children ages 4 months to 5 years is at moderate to high risk for developmental, behavioral, or social delays in both Minnesota and North Dakota. There was no significant change in the proportion of children ages 4 months to 5 years who are at risk for developmental, behavioral, or social delays from 2003 to 2007.

Data for the Fargo-Moorhead metro area are unavailable.

Figure 28. Children Ages 4 Months to 5 Years – Percent at Moderate to High Risk for Developmental, Behavioral, or Social Delays: 2003 and 2007

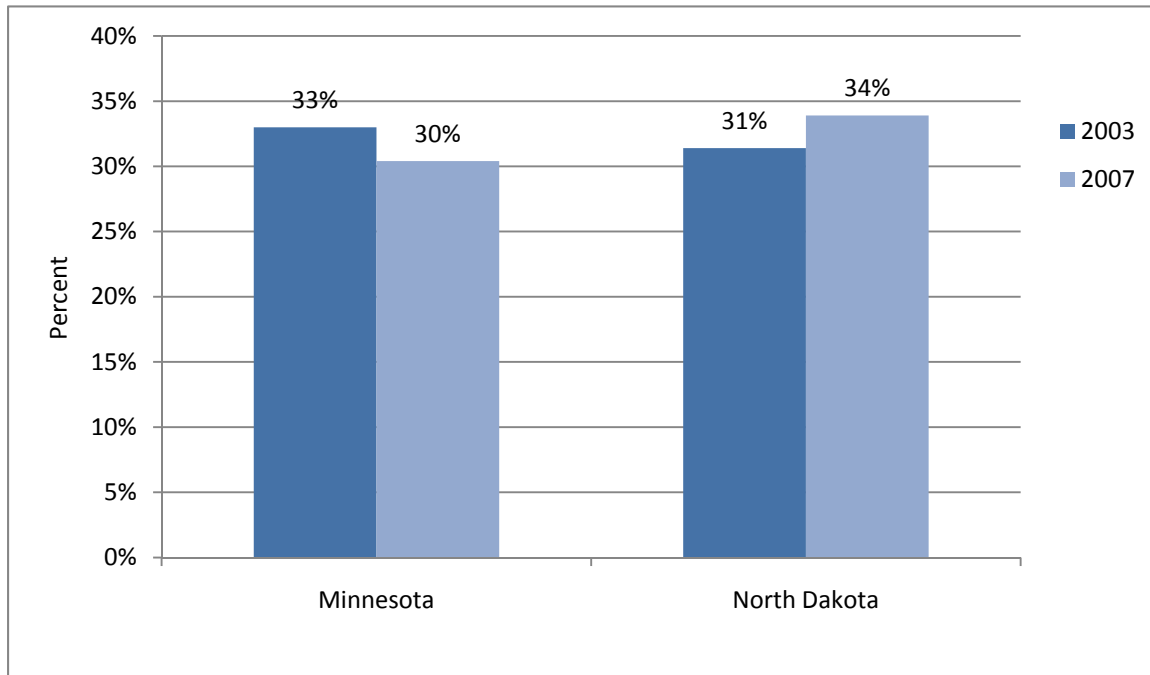


Source: The Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2003 and 2007 National Survey of Children's Health. Child Health Status Indicator 2.2. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health website. Retrieved 12/17/09 at <http://nschdata.org>.

Approximately one out of three children ages 4 months to 5 years have parents who are concerned about the child's physical, behavioral, or social development in both Minnesota and North Dakota. There was no significant change in the proportion of children ages 4 months to 5 years who have parents with concerns about their child's development from 2003 to 2007.

Data for the Fargo-Moorhead metro area are unavailable.

Figure 29. Children Ages 4 Months to 5 Years - Percent Having Parents with One or More Concerns About the Child's Physical, Behavioral, or Social Development: 2003 and 2007



Source: The Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2003 and 2007 National Survey of Children's Health. Child Health Status Indicator 2.1. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health website. Retrieved 12/17/09 at <http://nschdata.org>.

IN-SCHOOL SUCCESS

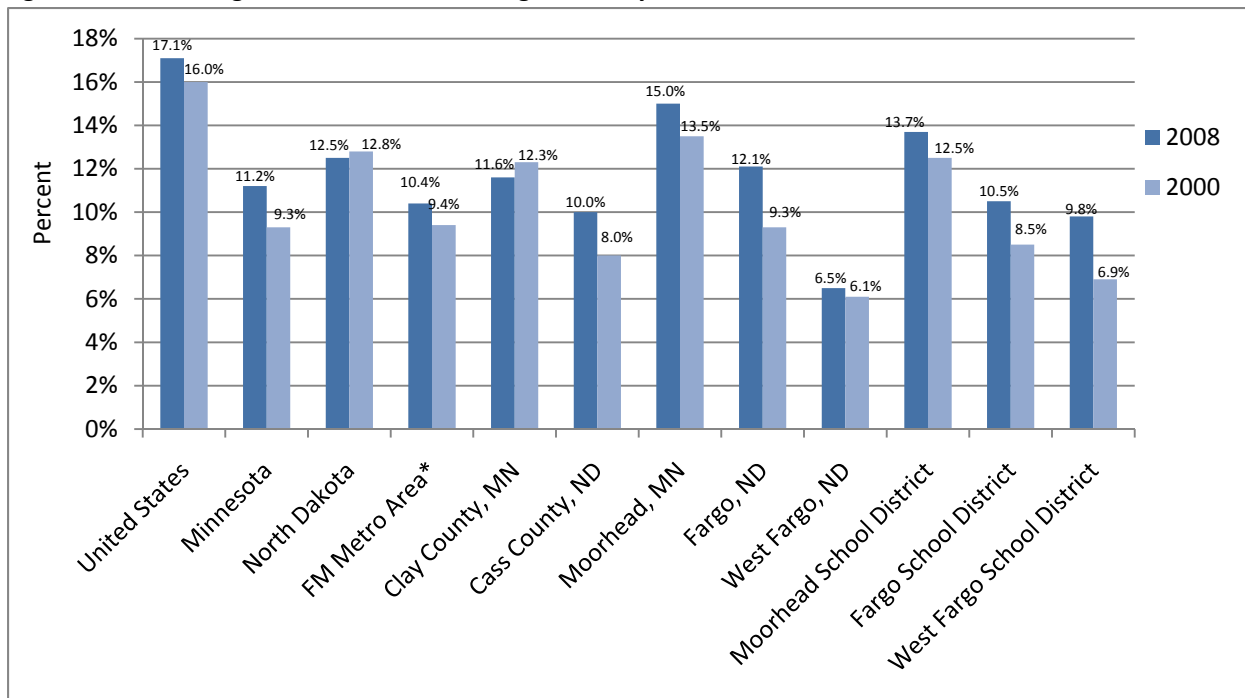
As discussed earlier, the more assets a child has, the less risky behavior the child exhibits. In this section we explore data which highlight the level of risk children in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area are experiencing. In addition to risky behavior, other environmental factors integral to the success of a child are presented such as youth and adolescent poverty, health insurance coverage, foster care, special education, and abuse and neglect.

Youth and Adolescent Poverty

Aside from physical and mental health, poverty in childhood and adolescence is associated with a higher risk for poorer cognitive and academic outcomes, lower school attendance, lower reading and math test scores, increased distractibility, and higher rates of grade failure and early high school dropout. Poor children are also more likely than other children to have externalizing and other behavior problems, and emotional problems, and are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviors during adolescence. Finally, growing up in poverty is associated with lower occupational status and lower wages in adulthood (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/?q=node/221>).

In the Fargo-Moorhead metro area, 10 percent of children ages 5 to 17 were living in poverty in 2008. Poverty rates for children ages 5 to 17 were somewhat higher in Clay County, MN than in Cass County, ND in both 2000 and 2008. In all of the geographies presented below, the child poverty rate remained relatively unchanged or increased from 2000 to 2008.

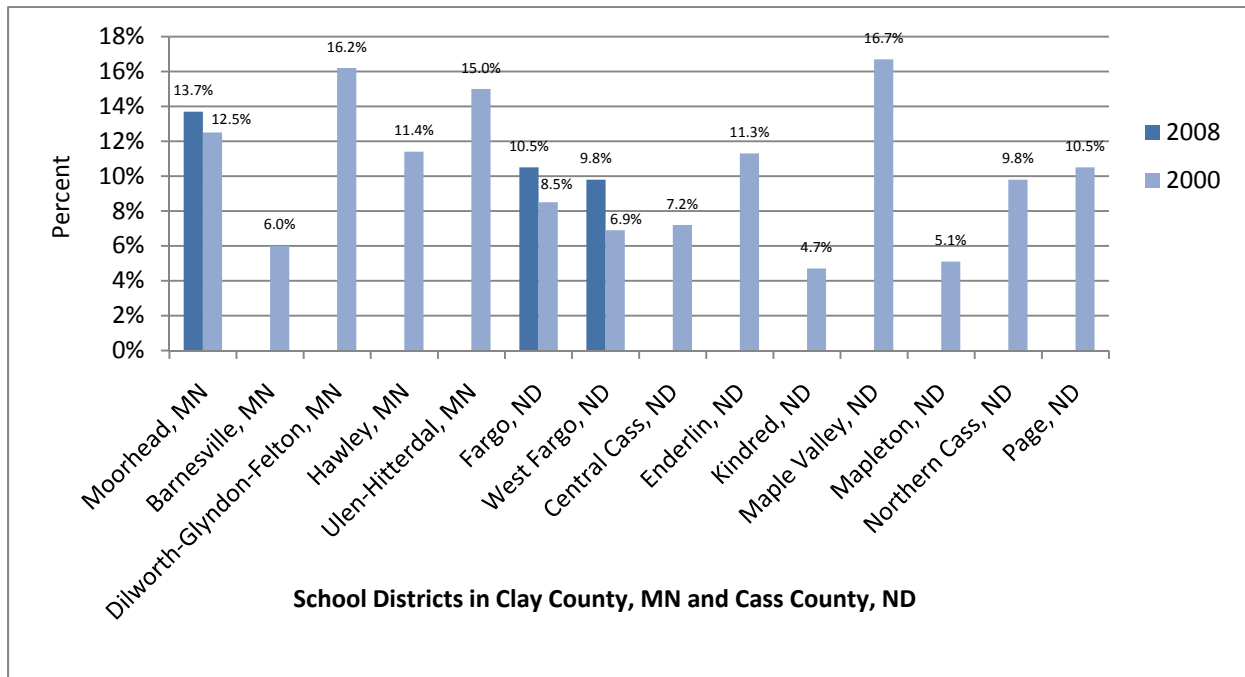
Figure 30. Children ages 5 to 17 – Percent Living in Poverty: 2000 and 2008



Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined. Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B17001. Retrieved interactively on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table PCT49. Retrieved interactively on 11/25/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table PCT49. Retrieved on 11/25/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> using the Download Data option.

Poverty rates for children ages 5 to 17 varied significantly between school districts in Cass and Clay counties in 2000. 2008 data for school districts with fewer than 20,000 people are not available.

Figure 31. Children ages 5 to 17 – Percent Living in Poverty by Public School District: 2000 and 2008



Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B17001. Retrieved interactively on 11/24/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table PCT49. Retrieved interactively on 11/25/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table PCT49. Retrieved on 11/25/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> using the Download Data option.

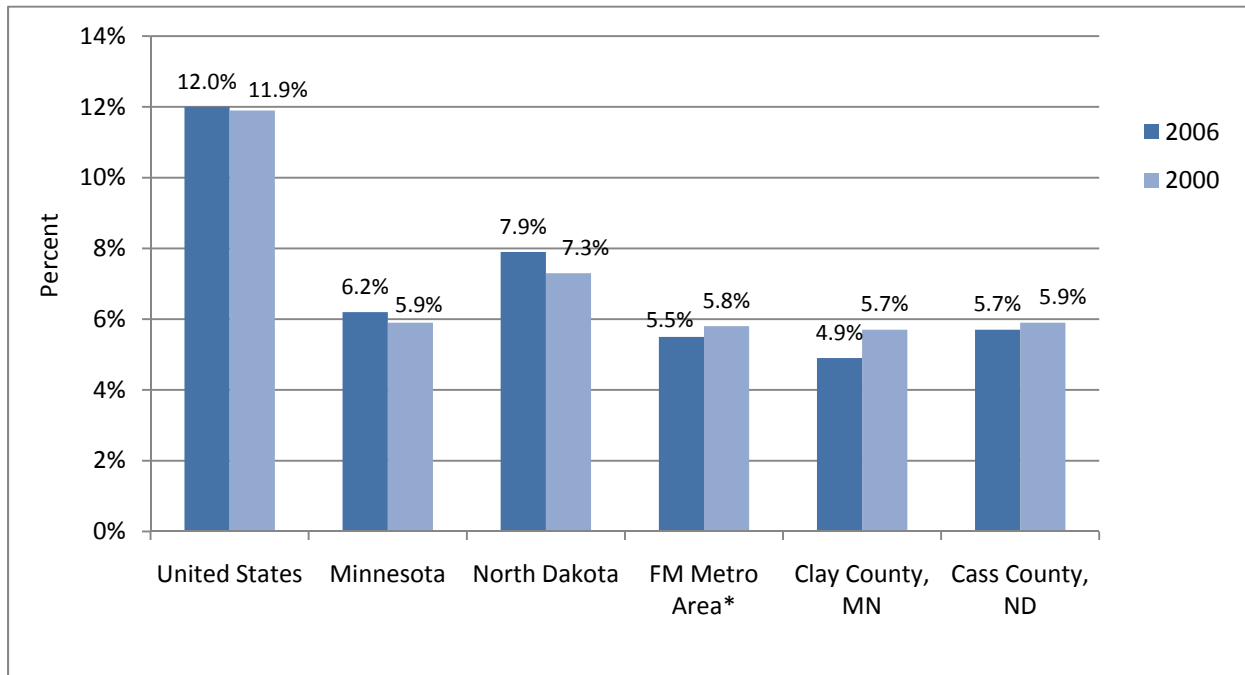
Health Insurance

Children not covered by health insurance are less likely than those with insurance to have a regular source of health care and are less likely than the privately insured to have used prescription medicines. Children without health insurance are also more likely than others to receive late or no care for health problems, putting them at greater risk for hospitalization. In addition to resulting in reduced access to health care, a lack of health insurance can also negatively influence children’s school attendance and participation in extracurricular activities, and increase parental financial and emotional stress (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/?q=node/229>).

In the Fargo-Moorhead metro area, 6 percent of children ages 0 to 17 were uninsured in 2006 (i.e., approximately 2,536 children). The proportion of children without health insurance was smaller in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area (6 percent) than nationally (12 percent) in 2006.

There was relatively little change in the uninsured rate of children in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area from 2000 to 2006.

Figure 32. Children Ages 0 to 17 – Percent without Health Insurance: 2000 and 2006



Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, 2000 and 2006 Health Insurance Coverage Status for Counties. Retrieved interactively on 11/24/09 at <http://www.census.gov/did/www/sahie>.

Foster Care

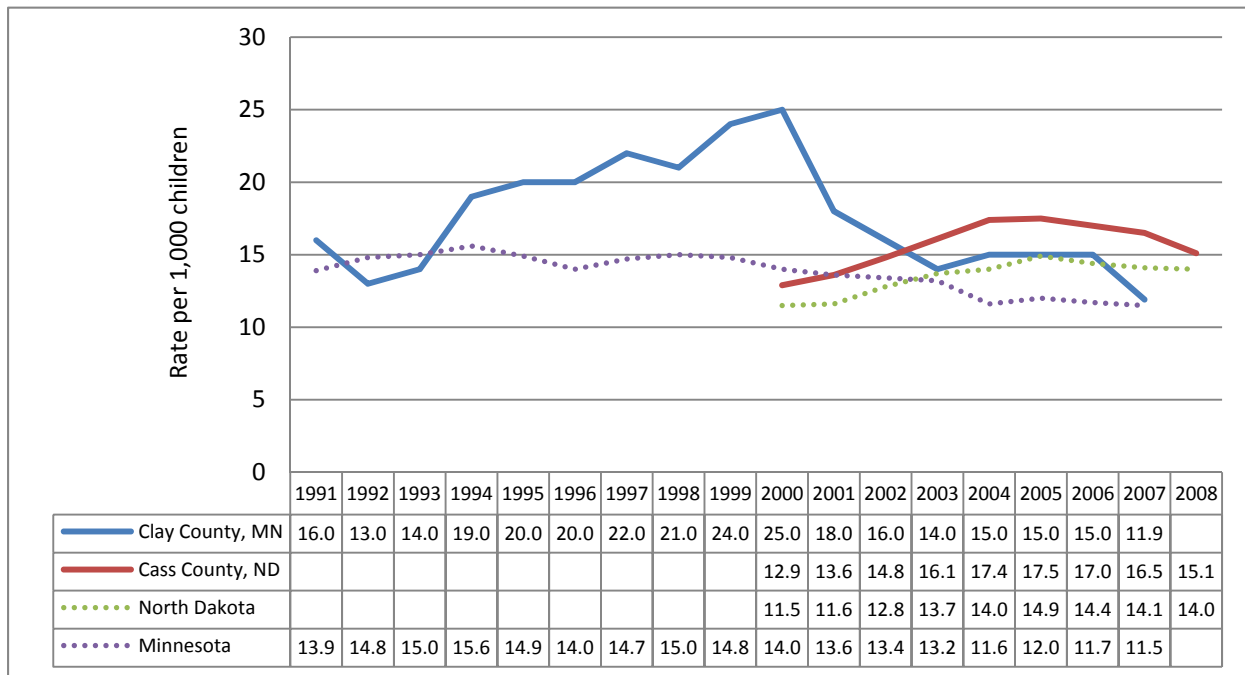
Because of their history, children in foster care are more likely than other children to exhibit high levels of behavioral and emotional problems. They are also more likely to be suspended or expelled from school and to exhibit low levels of school engagement and involvement with extracurricular activities. Children in foster care are also more likely to have received mental health services in the past year, to have a limiting physical, learning, or mental health condition, or to be in poor or fair health.

Youth who “age out” of foster care instead of returning home may face challenges to making a successful transition to adulthood. As adults, children who spent long periods of time in multiple foster care homes were more likely than other children to encounter problems such as unemployment, homelessness, and incarceration, as well as to experience early pregnancy (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/?q=node/199>).

The rate of children in Clay County who are served by the foster care system rose steadily during the 1990s, from 16 per 1,000 in 1991 to 25 per 1,000 in 2000. The rate dropped in half to 12 per 1,000 by 2007.

Back in 2000, the rate of Cass County children in foster care was half the Clay County rate (13.0 per 1,000 compared to 25 per 1,000, respectively). By 2007, the rate of Cass County children in foster care rose to 17 per 1,000 – a rate exceeding Clay County, Minnesota, and North Dakota.

Figure 33. Children Served by the Foster Care System – Rate Per 1,000 Children: 1991 to 2008



Note: Empty cells indicate that no data are available.

Sources: Minnesota - The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center website, Data by State. Retrieved 11/30/09 at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate>. North Dakota – North Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services, AFCARS data.

Special Education

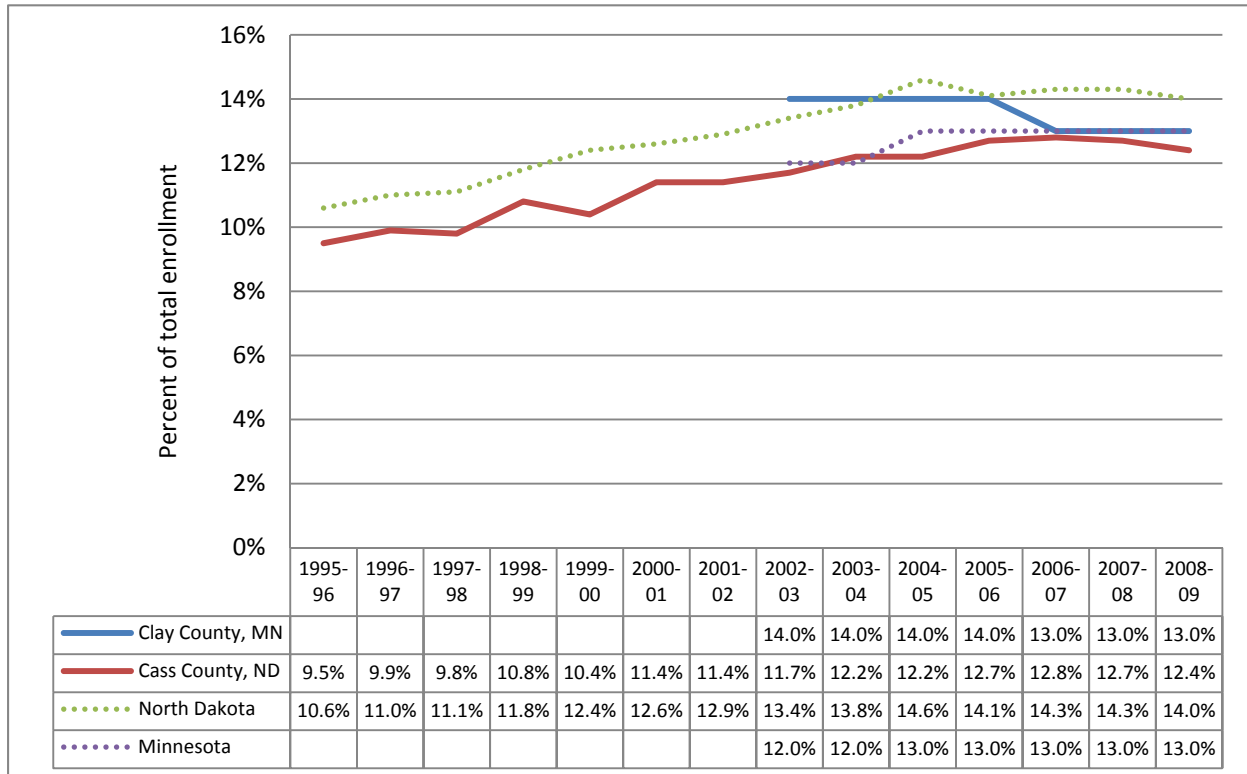
Learning disabilities include a number of discrete disorders that affect children's ability to learn. A learning disability can be a life-long condition affecting many aspects of life including education and employment, family life, and daily routines. However, persons with learning disabilities can learn. Academic supports and accommodations can help the learning process, as can medical treatment for certain disorders (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/archivepgs/65.htm>).

In the 2008-09 school year, similar proportions of children received special education services in public schools in Cass and Clay counties (12 percent and 13 percent, respectively).

Since 2002-03, there has been relatively little change in the proportion of children enrolled in special education in Cass County, Clay County, North Dakota, and Minnesota.

In Cass County and North Dakota, the proportion of youth enrolled in special education prior to 2002-03 rose consistently from approximately 10 percent in 1995-96. Historical data for Minnesota and Clay County were unavailable.

Figure 34. Public School Children Enrolled in Special Education: 1995-96 to 2008-09



Notes: Minnesota data reflect students in kindergarten through 12th grade public schools enrolled in special education (as a proportion of K-12 public school enrollment). North Dakota data reflect children ages 3 to 21 enrolled in public school special education programs (as a proportion of all public school enrollment). Empty cells indicate that no data are available.

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center website, Data by State. Retrieved 11/30/09 at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate>.

Child Abuse and Neglect

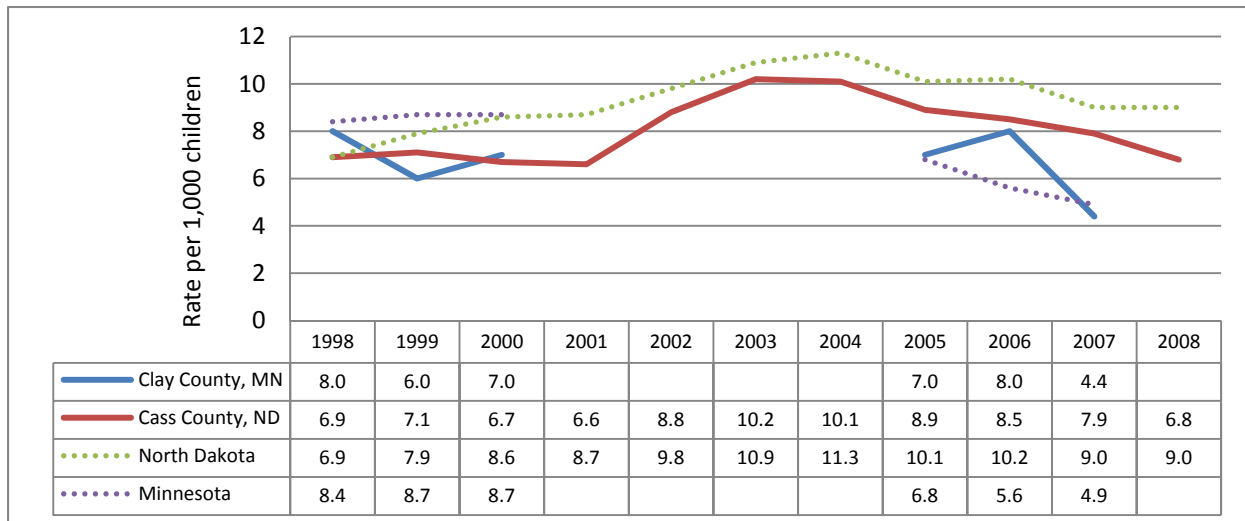
Child maltreatment (a term that encompasses both abuse and neglect) is associated with physical injuries, delayed physical growth, and neurological damage. Child maltreatment is also associated with psychological and emotional problems such as aggression, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. In extreme cases, child abuse and neglect can lead to death. In 2007, approximately 1,760 children died as the result of abuse or neglect nationally. In addition, child abuse is linked to an increased risk of substance abuse, eating disorders, obesity, depression, suicide, and sexual promiscuity later in life. Women who were victims of physical assault as children are twice as likely to be victims of physical assault as adults. Also, some evidence suggests that victims of child maltreatment may be more likely than others to engage in deviant or criminal behavior as juveniles and adults.

Child maltreatment is influenced by a number of factors, including poor knowledge of child development, substance abuse, other forms of domestic violence, and mental illness. Although maltreatment occurs in families at all economic levels, abuse and, especially, neglect are more common in poor and extremely poor families than in families with higher incomes (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/?q=node/69>).

In 2007, 4 out of every 1,000 children ages 0 to 17 in Clay County were abused or neglected (i.e., cases were substantiated by a child protection worker); this rate is down from 8 per 1,000 in 2006 (no data are available for 2001 through 2004). If a child protection worker substantiates a report, the case will typically be referred to a law enforcement agency.

In Cass County, rates of child abuse and neglect mirror statewide trends over the past 10 years. In 2008, 7 out of every 1,000 children ages 0 to 17 in Cass County required immediate services for abuse and neglect (as determined by a child protection worker); this rate is down from 10 per 1,000 in 2003.

Figure 35. Children Abused and Neglected – Rate Per 1,000 Children: 1998 to 2008



Notes: Minnesota data reflect the rate of children for whom a report of child abuse or neglect was substantiated by a county child protection worker. North Dakota data reflect the rate of children for whom a report of child abuse or neglect was substantiated by a county child protection worker and immediate services were required. Empty cells indicate that no data are available.

Sources: Minnesota - The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center website, Data by State. Retrieved 11/30/09 at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate>. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services, special request. Empty cells indicate that no data are available.

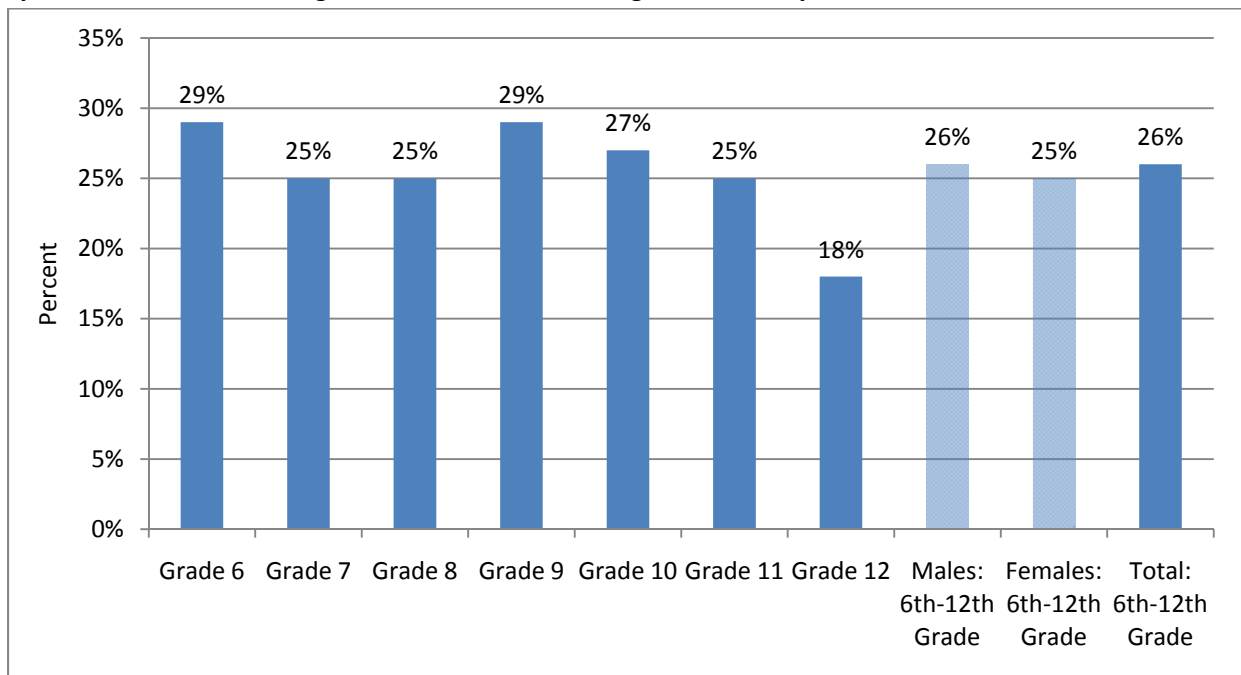
For adolescents specifically, self-reported abuse rates are available from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets.

Approximately one in four 6th to 12th graders in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools indicated they have been physically abused (i.e., someone caused them to have a scar, black and blue marks, welts, bleeding, or a broken bone) by family or someone living with them in 2007 (26 percent).

The self-reported rate of abuse was highest for 6th and 9th graders with 29 percent of students in each grade reporting abuse. The rate of abuse declines somewhat for 12th graders. In 2007, 18 percent of students in grade 12 reported abuse.

There was relatively no difference in the self-reported abuse rate between males and females in grades 6-12.

Figure 36. Children in Grades 6-12 Who Have Been Physically Harmed by Family or Someone Living with Them, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Fighting and Violence

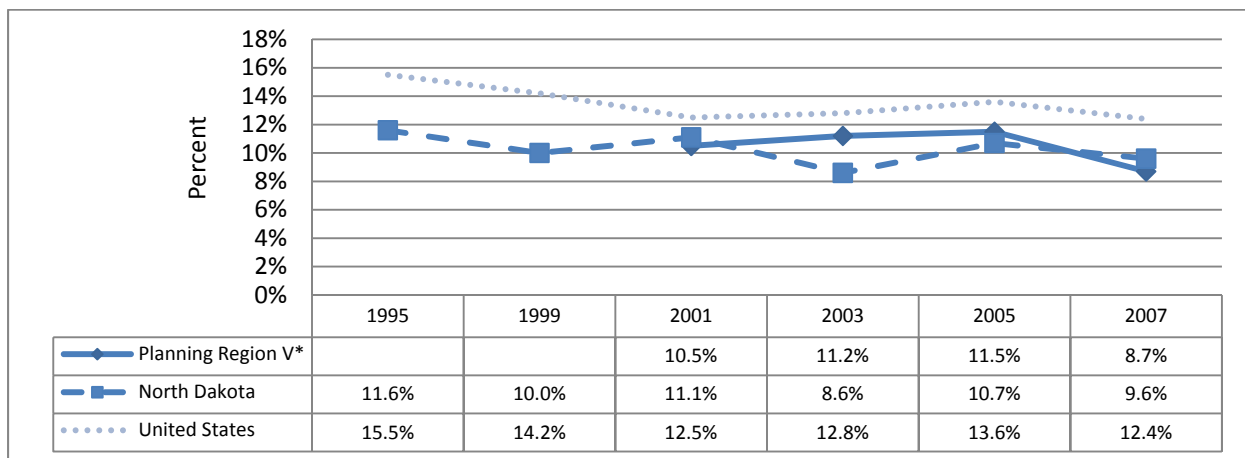
Physical fighting by youth can lead to serious injury and even death. Risk factors that predict violence by youth include substance abuse by the youth, conflict and abuse in the home, harsh or inattentive parenting, antisocial and delinquent peers, and neighborhoods where crime and drug use are prevalent. Youth who are involved in physical fighting are also often engaged in other high risk activities such as illegal drug use, binge drinking, carrying weapons, and having unsafe sex. Youth attending schools where fighting is common may be unable to maintain the focus necessary for academic success. Adolescents who are victims of violence are also more likely to be a victim or perpetrator of violence during adulthood. The likelihood of drug use, property offenses, and stress during adulthood also increases with youth violence (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/archivepgs/22.htm>).

North Dakota has eight established planning regions for the purposes of standardizing the areas being served by state agencies. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction uses these planning regions for reporting the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Since we were unable to obtain YRBS data specific to Cass County, we are presenting YRBS data for Planning Region V which consists of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties combined. The YRBS is not administered in Minnesota; however, youth risk data for Minnesota and Clay County are available through the Minnesota Student Survey.

Within Planning Region V, the proportion of high school students involved in a physical fight on school property in the past 12 months changed little from 2001 to 2005 (10.5 percent to 11.5 percent, respectively); the proportion decreased to 8.7 percent in 2007.

In 2007, the proportion of high school students involved in a physical fight on school property in the past 12 months was smaller in Planning Region V (8.7 percent) than in North Dakota (9.6 percent) and nationally (12.4 percent).

Figure 37. High School Students in Grades 9-12 Who Were in a Physical Fight on School Property at Least Once in the Past Year: 1995 to 2007



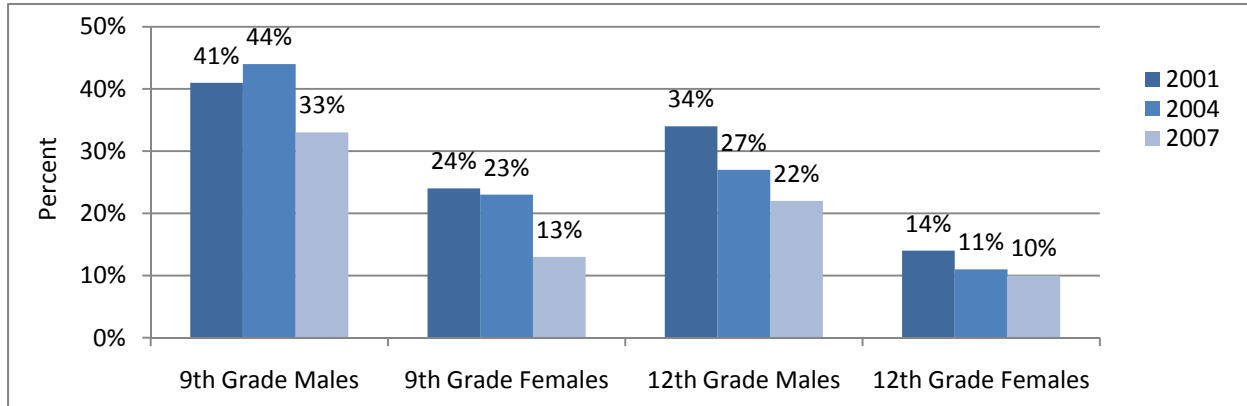
Notes: Blank cells indicate that no data are available. *Planning Region V includes the North Dakota counties of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent.

Sources: The North Dakota Youth Behavior Risk Survey. 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007 Statewide, Regional, and Urban/Rural Results. Retrieved at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm>. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. Retrieved at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

Within Clay County, Minnesota, the proportion of 9th and 12th graders who hit or beat someone up in the past 12 months decreased from 2001 to 2007 for both males and females.

Within Clay County, males are more likely than females to hit or beat someone up; 9th graders are more likely than 12th graders to hit or beat someone up.

Figure 38. High School Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Hit or Beat Someone Up in the Past Year, by Gender, in Clay County, MN: 2001 to 2007

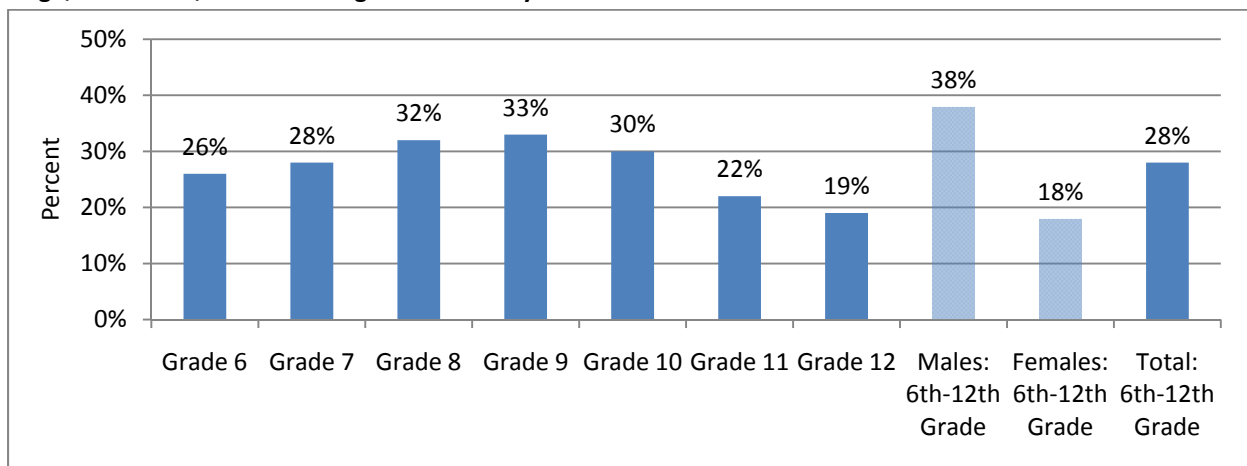


Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

Data on violence are also available for students in grades 6-12 in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets. According to the May 2007 study, rates of violence increase throughout junior high, then decrease in high school. One in four 6th grade students in the Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo schools reported hitting someone at least once in the past year. This proportion rose to one in three students by 9th grade and decreased to one in five students by 12th grade.

Among 6th-12th graders in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools, males were twice as likely as females to have hit someone in the past year.

Figure 39. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Hit Someone at Least Once in Last Year, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Anti-Social Behavior

Juvenile delinquency has potentially high stakes for both individuals and society as a whole. Delinquency is linked to higher crime rates in adulthood and other negative outcomes. One estimate suggests that between 50 and 75 percent of adolescents nationwide who have spent time in juvenile detention centers are incarcerated later in life.

Mental health needs are often urgent for adolescents in the justice system. Many have mental illness (nationally, estimates range as high as 60 percent, compared with 20 percent among the total adolescent population). In juvenile detention facilities, many of these problems go untreated or are dealt with inadequately. Suicide rates in juvenile detention facilities are more than four times higher than for adolescents overall. Suicide is even more likely for adolescents confined in isolation (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/?q=node/129>).

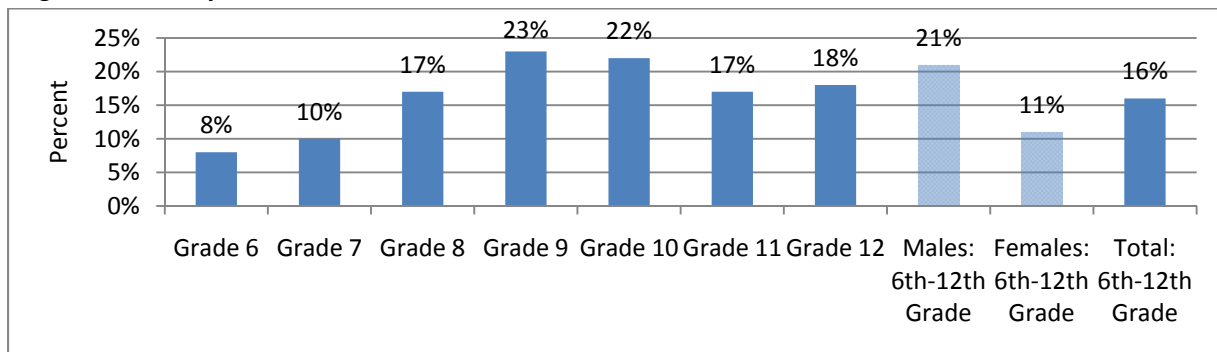
Data on anti-social behavior are available for students in grades 4-12 in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets. According to the May 2007 study, 3 percent of youth in 4th and 5th grades reported having damaged property just for fun more than once during the last year – with males being four times more likely than females to be at risk for this behavior.

Among 6-12 graders, 16 percent reported having been involved in three or more incidents of shoplifting, trouble with the police, or vandalism in the past year.

The risk of students being involved in three or more incidents of shoplifting, trouble with the police, or vandalism in the past year increases with grade between grades 6 and 9. In 2007, 8 percent of 6th graders in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools reported these anti-social behaviors. This rate doubles for students in 8th grade (17 percent) and increases to 23 percent for 9th graders. The rate dips to 17 percent for students in 11th grade and changes little in 12th grade (18 percent).

When grades 6-12 are combined, there were twice as many males as females who were involved in three or more incidents of shoplifting, trouble with the police, or vandalism in the past year (21 percent and 11 percent, respectively).

Figure 40. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who have been Involved in Three or More Incidents of Shoplifting, Trouble with the Police, or Vandalism in the Past Year, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Alcohol Use

Alcohol use among youth is associated with a wide variety of risky behaviors and poor outcomes, including unprotected sexual intercourse, vulnerability to coerced sexual activity, the use of marijuana, traffic deaths, and poor academic performance. Alcohol use among adolescents is also related to an increased risk of alcohol dependence in adulthood. Binge drinking can lead to many health disorders including cancer, liver, pancreatic, and cardiovascular diseases, as well as a variety of gastrointestinal problems, neurological disorders, and reproductive system disorders. Contextual risk factors associated with adolescent drinking include having alcoholic parents; a lack of parental support, monitoring, and communication; and having peers who drink (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/?q=node/140>).

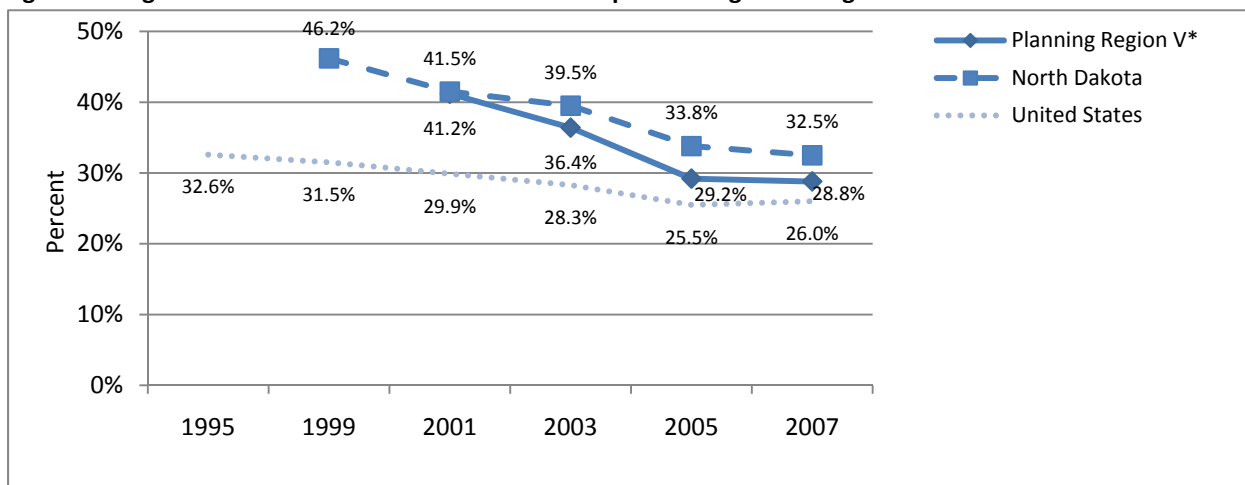
North Dakota has eight established planning regions for the purposes of standardizing the areas being served by state agencies. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction uses these planning regions for reporting the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Since we were unable to obtain YRBS data specific to Cass County, we are presenting YRBS data for Planning Region V which consists of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties combined. The YRBS is not administered in Minnesota; however, youth risk data for Minnesota and Clay County are available through the Minnesota Student Survey.

The proportion of high school students in grades 9 through 12 who reported binge drinking (i.e., five or more drinks in a row within a couple hours, aka episodic heavy drinking) in the past month has decreased in North Dakota, Planning Region V, and the nation from 2001 to 2007.

In 2001, 41.2 percent of high school students in Planning Region V reported binge drinking in the past month; this proportion dropped to 28.8 percent in 2007.

The rates of high school binge drinking have remained slightly smaller in Planning Region V than statewide from 2001 to 2007; yet slightly larger in Planning Region V than the nation since 2003.

Figure 41. High School Students in Grades 9-12 Who Reported Binge Drinking in the Past Month: 1995 to 2007



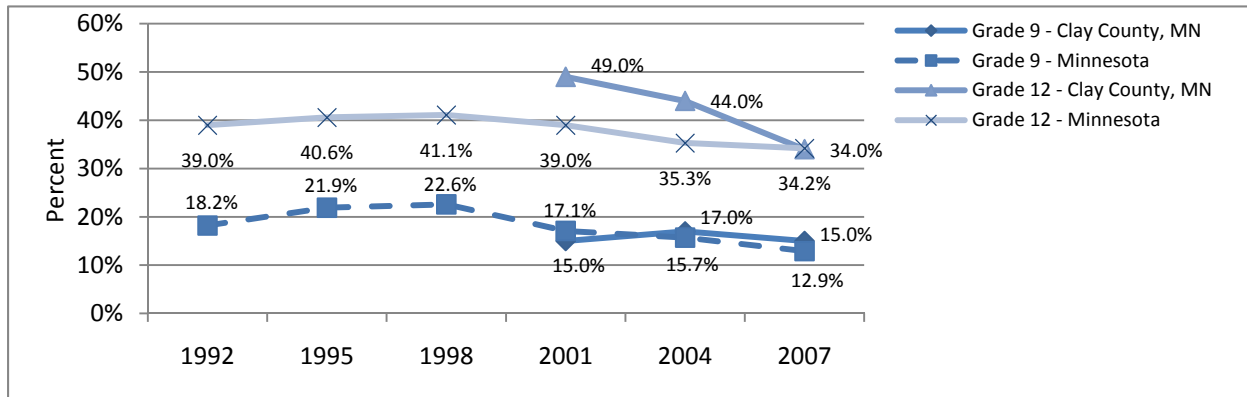
Notes: Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in a row, within a couple of hours, at least once in the past month. *Planning Region V includes the North Dakota counties of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent.

Sources: The North Dakota Youth Behavior Risk Survey. 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007 Statewide, Regional, and Urban/Rural Results. Retrieved at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. Retrieved at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

The rate of binge drinking among Clay County high school students was more than two times higher for 12th grade males than for 9th grade males in 2001, 2004, and 2007.

In 2001, 49 percent of 12th grade males in Clay County reported binge drinking in the past two weeks, compared to 15 percent of 9th grade males. In 2004, the binge drinking rate decreased among 12th grade males to 44 percent – it decreased again in 2007 to 34 percent. The rate among 9th grader males saw relatively little change during this time.

Figure 42. Male Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Reported Binge Drinking in the Past Two Weeks: 1992 to 2007



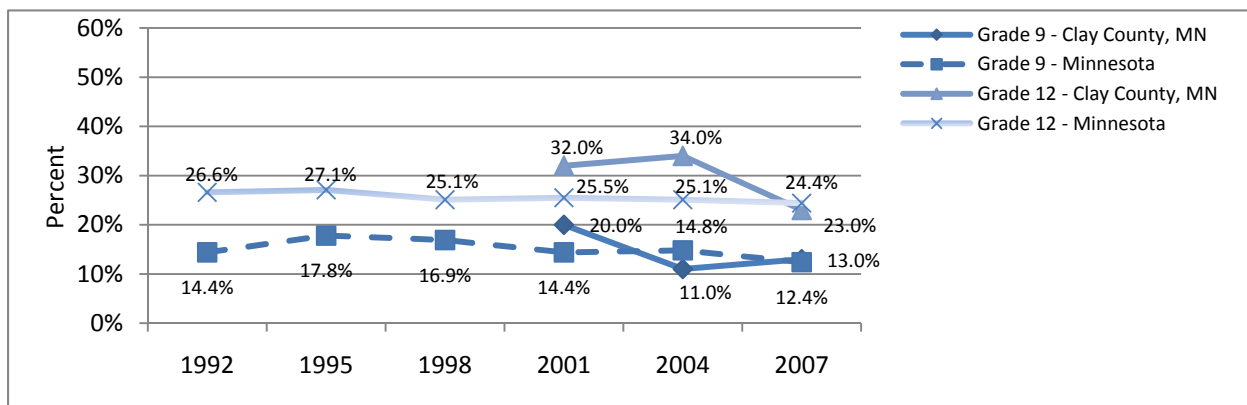
Note: Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in a row, within a couple of hours, at least once in the past two weeks.

Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

Binge drinking rates in Clay County were smaller among females than males in 12th grade in 2001, 2004, and 2007. There was less of a difference in binge drinking between males and females among 9th graders. In 2007, 13 percent of 9th grade females in Clay County reported binge drinking, compared to 15 percent of 9th grade males.

As with males, binge drinking rates among female students in Clay County were higher among 12th graders than 9th graders. However, in 2007, the rate of binge drinking among 12th grade females decreased to 23 percent, which narrowed the gap between grades.

Figure 43. Female Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Reported Binge Drinking in the Past Two Weeks: 1992 to 2007



Note: Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in a row, within a couple of hours, at least once in the past two weeks.

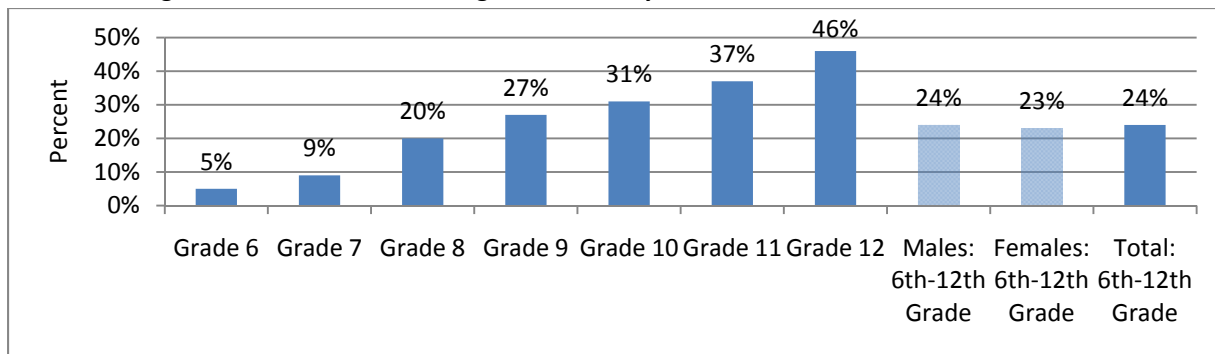
Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

Data on alcohol use are also available for students in grades 4-12 in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets. According to the May 2007 study, 3 percent of youth in grades 4 and 5 reported using alcohol more than once during the *past year*. Among 6-12 graders, 24 percent reported using alcohol at least once in the *past month*.

The likelihood of alcohol use grows exponentially by grade. In 2007, 5 percent of 6th graders in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools reported using alcohol in the past month. This rate doubles for each grade in junior high, resulting in 20 percent of 8th graders using alcohol. The rate continues to increase in high school so that by 12th grade, nearly half of students reported alcohol use in the past month.

When grades 6-12 are combined, there was relatively no difference between males and females who used alcohol in the past month – approximately one in four.

Figure 44. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Used Alcohol at Least Once in Past Month, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007

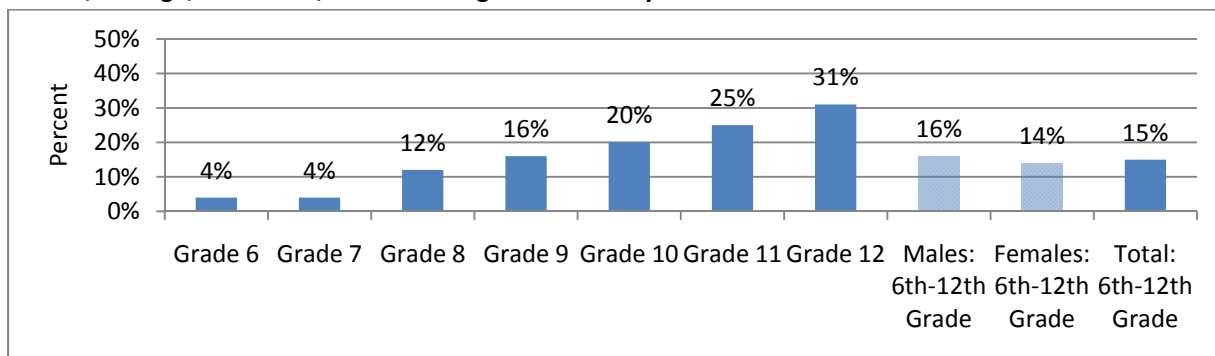


Source: “Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools,” prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

The rapid rate of increase by grade for general alcohol usage applies to reports of drunkenness as well. According to the 2007 study, 4 percent of students in 6th grade reported getting drunk in the past two weeks. This rate increases to 12 percent for 8th graders, 20 percent for 10th graders, and 31 percent for 12th graders.

When grades 6-12 are combined, there was relatively no difference between males and females who reported getting drunk in the last two weeks (i.e., 16 percent of males and 14 percent of females).

Figure 45. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Got Drunk at Least Once in the Last Two Weeks, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



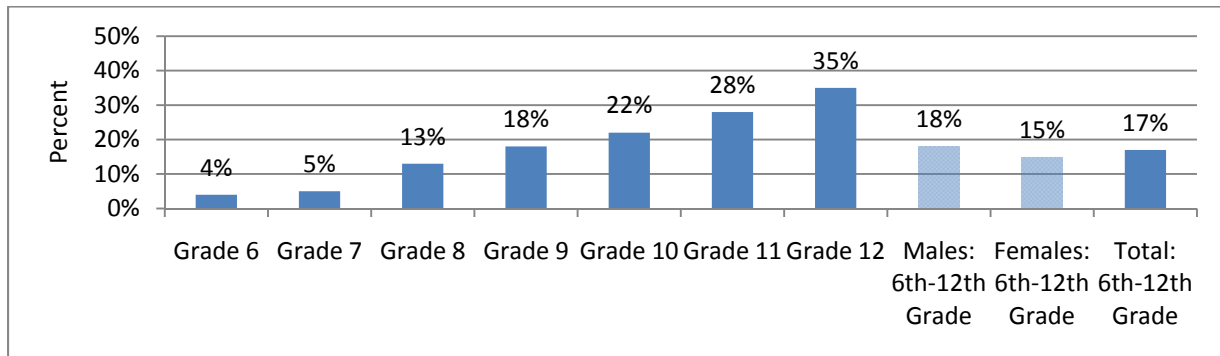
Source: “Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools,” prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

The Search Institute provides one additional indicator relating to alcohol use among students in grades 6-12. While it doesn't fit the general definition of binge drinking (i.e., five or more drinks in a row), this indicator identifies high risk behavior relating to alcohol.

In 2007, 4 percent of 6th graders in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools reported using alcohol at least three times in the past month or got drunk in the past two weeks. This rate increases to 13 percent for 8th graders, 22 percent for 10th graders, and 35 percent for 12th graders.

When grades 6-12 are combined, there was relatively no difference between males and females who reported alcohol use at least three times in past month or getting drunk in the past two weeks (i.e., 18 percent of males and 15 percent of females).

Figure 46. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Reported Using Alcohol at Least Three Times in Past Month or Got Drunk At Least Once in the Last Two Weeks, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Tobacco Use

Cigarette smoking, which usually starts in adolescence, is the leading preventable cause of premature death in the United States. More than 430,000 Americans die each year from tobacco-related illnesses. A report by the Surgeon General finds that reducing the prevalence of smoking to the levels suggested by the Healthy People 2010 initiative would prevent 7.1 million premature deaths after the year 2010.

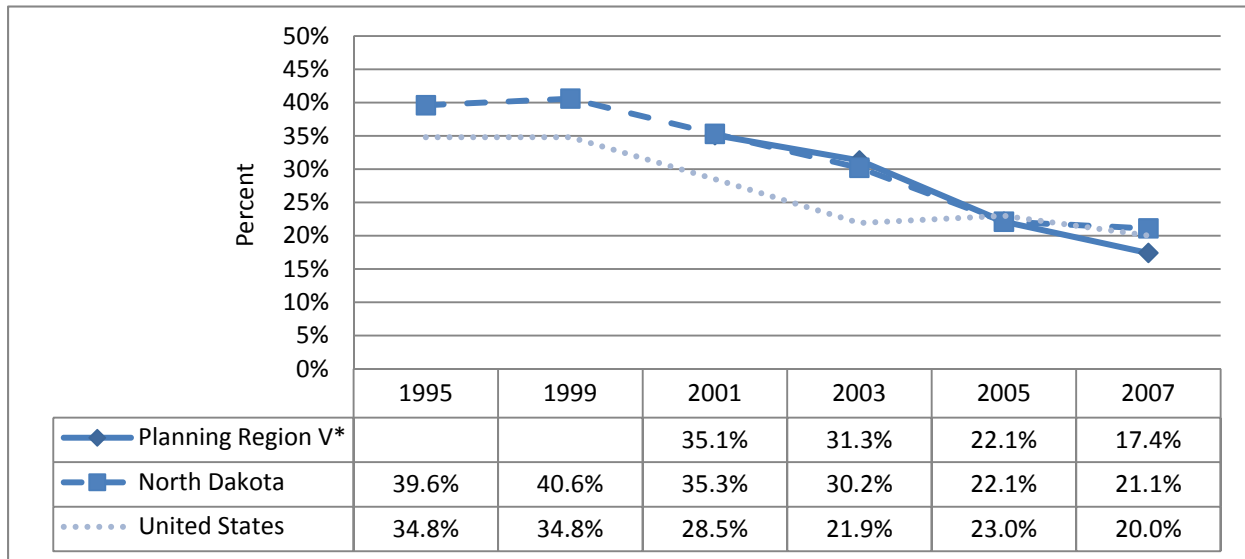
Youth who smoke are more likely to drink, to use other drugs, and to engage in a variety of other risky behaviors. They are also less likely to be physically fit and more likely to suffer from respiratory problems (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/?q=node/133>).

North Dakota has eight established planning regions for the purposes of standardizing the areas being served by state agencies. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction uses these planning regions for reporting the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Since we were unable to obtain YRBS data specific to Cass County, we are presenting YRBS data for Planning Region V which consists of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties combined. The YRBS is not administered in Minnesota; however, youth risk data for Minnesota and Clay County are available through the Minnesota Student Survey.

The proportion of high school students (i.e., grades 9 through 12) who reported smoking cigarettes in the past month has decreased in North Dakota, Planning Region V, and the nation from 2001 to 2007.

In 2001, 35.1 percent of high school students in Planning Region V reported smoking cigarettes in the past month; this proportion dropped in half to 17.4 percent in 2007.

Figure 47. High School Students in Grades 9-12 Who Smoked Cigarettes on at Least One Day in the Past Month: 1995 to 2007



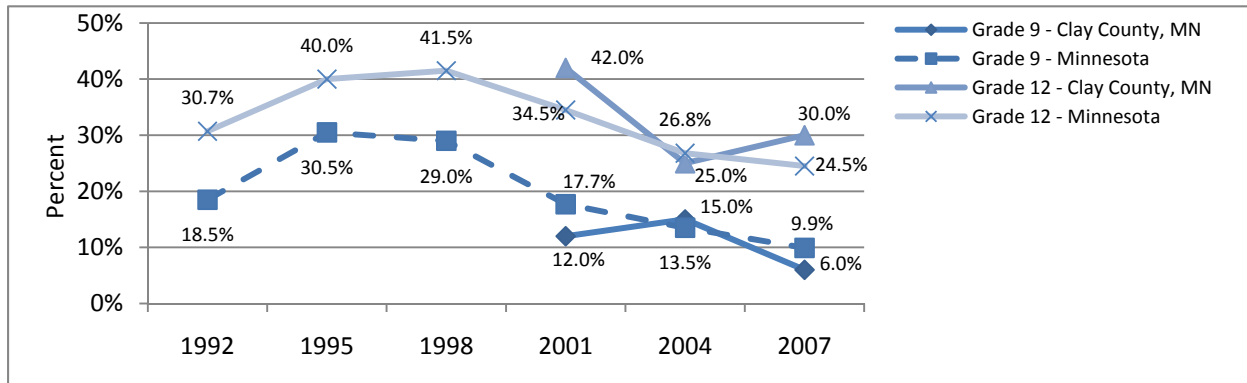
Notes: Empty cells indicate that no data are available. *Planning Region V includes the North Dakota counties of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent.

Sources: The North Dakota Youth Behavior Risk Survey. 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007 Statewide, Regional, and Urban/Rural Results. Retrieved at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. Retrieved at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

The current smoking rate among Clay County male students is five times higher for 12th graders than 9th graders. In 2007, 30 percent of 12th grade males in Clay County reported smoking in the past month, compared to 6 percent of 9th grade males.

In 2001, 42 percent of 12th grade males in Clay County reported smoking in the past month – compared to 12 percent of 9th grade males. In 2004, the current smoking rate decreased considerably among 12th grade males to 25 percent – it increased slightly to 30 percent in 2007. The rate among 9th grader males saw relatively little change from 2001 to 2004 (12 percent and 13.5 percent, respectively). In 2007, the rate dropped in half to 6 percent.

Figure 48. Male Students in Grades 9 & 12 Who Smoked Cigarettes at Least One Day in Past Month: 1992 to 2007

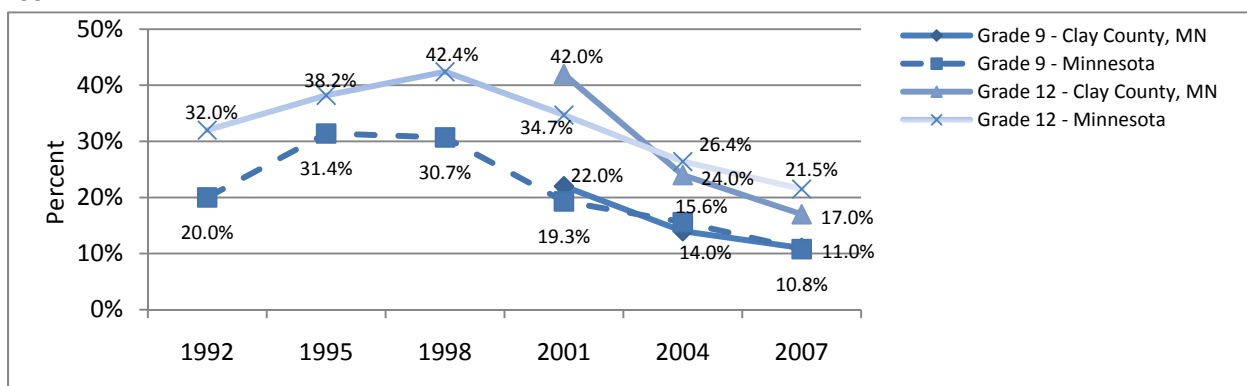


Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

Current smoking rates among Clay County female students are somewhat higher for 12th graders than 9th graders. In 2007, 17 percent of 12th grade females in Clay County reported smoking in the past month, compared to 11 percent of 9th grade females.

In 2001, the proportion of 12th graders in Clay County who smoked in the past month was the same for males and females (i.e., 42 percent each). Both rates dropped nearly in half by 2004. In 2007, the rate for 12th grade females dropped to 17 percent but the rate for 12th grade males rose to 30 percent. The proportion of 9th grade females who smoked in the past month dropped in half from 2001 to 2007 (22 percent to 11 percent, respectively).

Figure 49. Female Students in Grades 9 & 12 Who Smoked Cigarettes at Least One Day in Past Month: 1992 to 2007

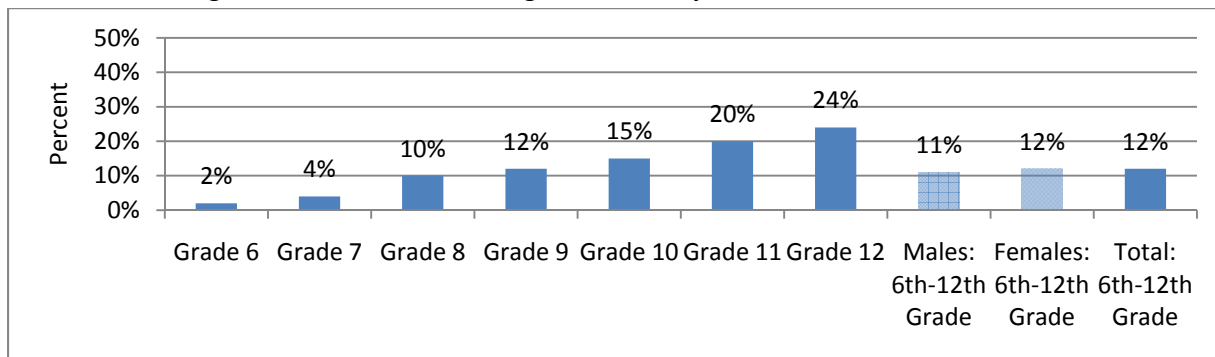


Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

Data on tobacco use are also available for students in grades 4-12 in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets. According to the May 2007 study, 1 percent of youth in 4th and 5th grades reported smoking cigarettes more than once during the *past year*. Among 6-12 graders, 12 percent smoked cigarettes at least once in the *past month*.

In 2007, 2 percent of 6th graders in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools reported smoking cigarettes in the past month. This rate increases to 10 percent for 8th graders, 15 percent for 10th graders, and 24 percent for 12th graders. When grades 6-12 are combined, there was relatively no difference between males and females who reported smoking cigarettes in the past month (i.e., 11 percent of males and 12 percent of females).

Figure 50. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Smoked Cigarettes at Least Once in the Past Month, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007

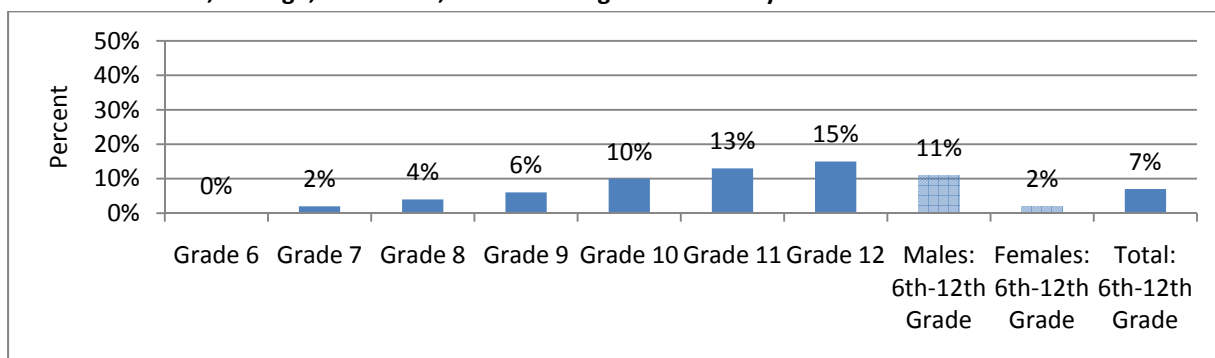


Source: “Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools,” prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Smokeless tobacco is also a concern for youth. Males in grades 6-12 were just as likely to use smokeless tobacco in the past year as smoke cigarettes in the past month in 2007 (11 percent each). Only 2 percent of females in grades 6-12 reported using smokeless tobacco in the past year, compared to 12 percent who smoked cigarettes in the past month.

Again, the risk for smokeless tobacco use increases with each grade. In 2007, 2 percent of 7th graders in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools reported using smokeless tobacco in the past year. This rate increases to 10 percent for 10th graders and 15 percent for 12th graders.

Figure 51. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Used Smokeless Tobacco at Least Once in the Past Year, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



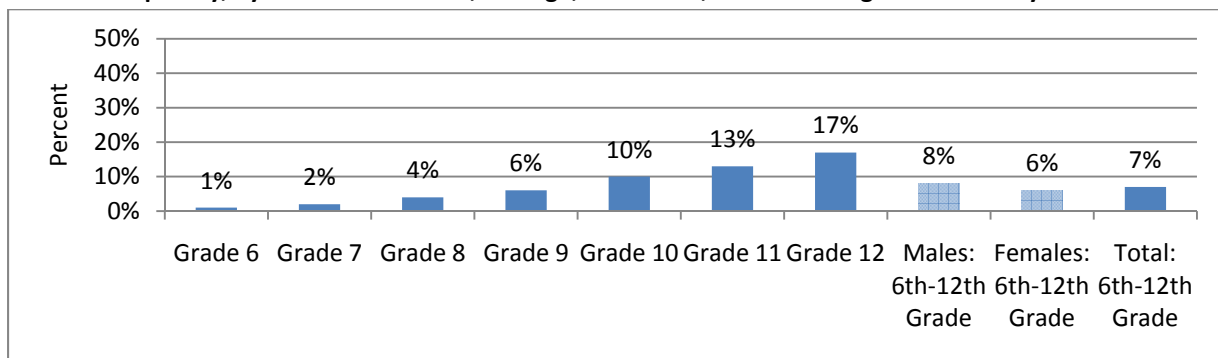
Source: “Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools,” prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

The Search Institute provides one additional indicator relating to tobacco use among students in grades 6-12. In 2007, 7 percent of students in grades 6-12 in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools reported smoking cigarettes every day or using chewing tobacco frequently.

Students in grade 12 had the greatest risk for this level of tobacco usage. In 2007, 17 percent of students in 12th grade reported smoking cigarettes every day or using chewing tobacco frequently.

When grades 6-12 are combined, there was relatively little difference between males and females who reported smoking cigarettes every day or using chewing tobacco frequently (i.e., 8 percent of males and 6 percent of females).

Figure 52. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Reported Smoking Cigarettes Every Day or Using Chewing Tobacco Frequently, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Marijuana Use

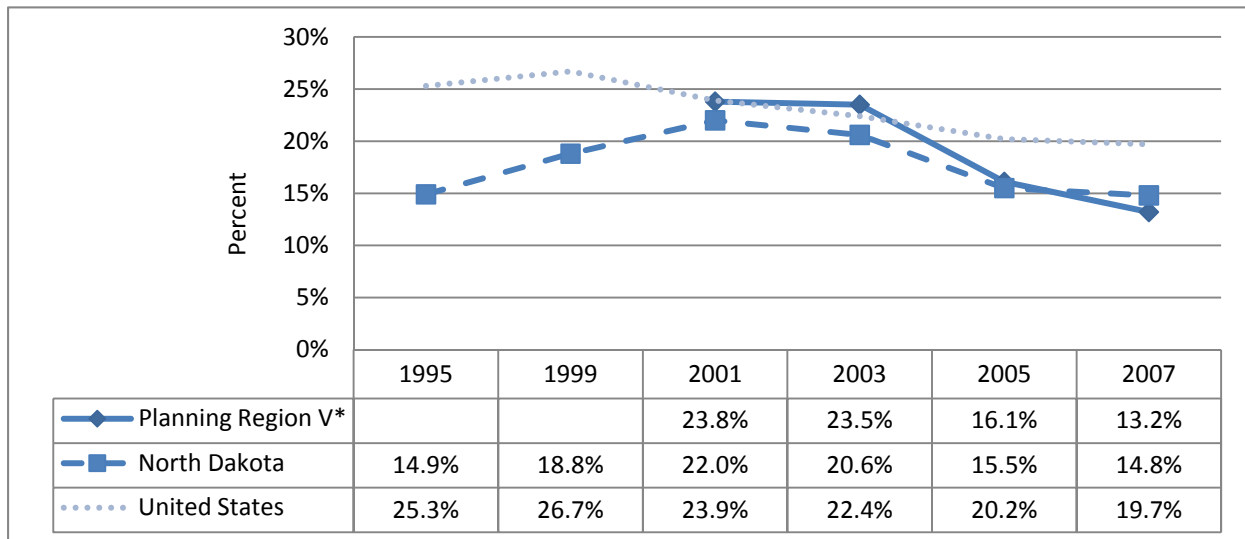
Marijuana is used for the intoxication or high that it gives most users. For most youth, marijuana is not difficult to obtain. Many think marijuana is not as harmful as other illicit drugs; however, it has both short- and long-term health effects. The short-term effects include memory problems, loss of coordination, anxiety attacks, and increased heart rate. Possible long-term effects include respiratory problems, a weakened immune system, and cognitive deficits. While causation is complex, teens who use marijuana are also more likely to have lower achievement, more delinquent behavior and aggression, and weaker relationships with parents than non-users (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/archivepgs/46.htm>).

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The proportion of high school students in grades 9 through 12 who used marijuana in the past month has decreased in Planning Region V, North Dakota, and the nation from 2001 to 2007. In 2001, 23.8 percent of high school students in Planning Region V reported using marijuana in the past month; this proportion dropped to 13.2 percent in 2007.

In 2007, the proportion of high school students who used marijuana in the past month in Planning Region V (13.2 percent) was similar to the proportion in North Dakota (14.8 percent) and smaller than the national average (19.7 percent).

Figure 53. High School Students in Grades 9-12 Who Used Marijuana at Least Once in the Past Month: 1995 to 2007



Notes: Empty cells indicate that no data are available. *Planning Region V includes the North Dakota counties of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent.

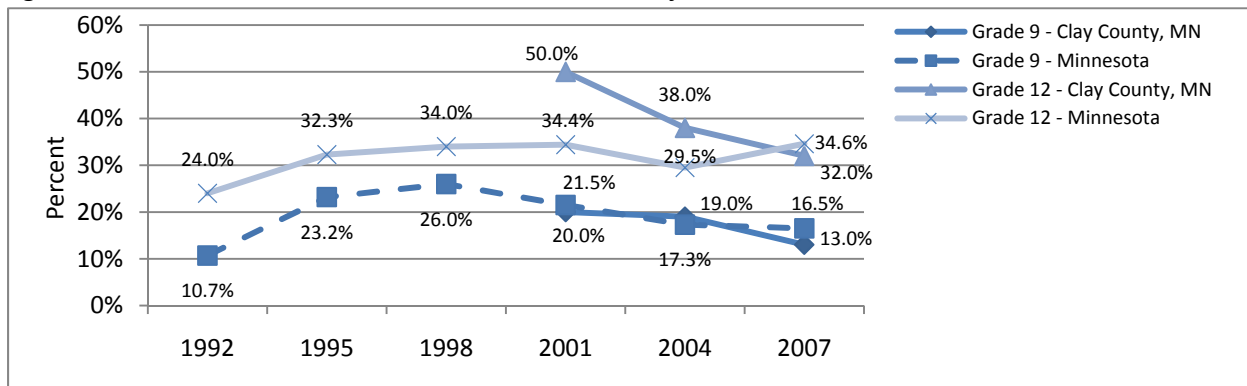
Sources: The North Dakota Youth Behavior Risk Survey. 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007 Statewide, Regional, and Urban/Rural Results. Retrieved at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. Retrieved at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

In 2001, past year marijuana use was higher among 12th graders (both males and females) in Clay County than in Minnesota statewide (the same pattern exists for current tobacco use, binge drinking, and sexual activity). Data for 2004 and 2007 show considerable decreases in these rates for Clay County – in 2007, the past year marijuana use rates for 12th grade males and females in Clay County were slightly lower than the statewide averages.

The past year marijuana use rate among Clay County male students is more than twice as high for 12th graders than 9th graders. In 2007, 32 percent of 12th grade males in Clay County reported using marijuana in the past year, compared to 13 percent of 9th grade males.

Back in 2001, 50 percent of 12th grade males in Clay County reported using marijuana in the past year – compared to 20 percent of 9th grade males. In 2004, the past year marijuana use rate decreased among 12th grade males to 38 percent – it decreased to 32 percent in 2007. The rate among 9th grade males saw relatively little change from 2001 to 2004 (20 percent and 19 percent, respectively) - in 2007, the rate decreased to 13 percent.

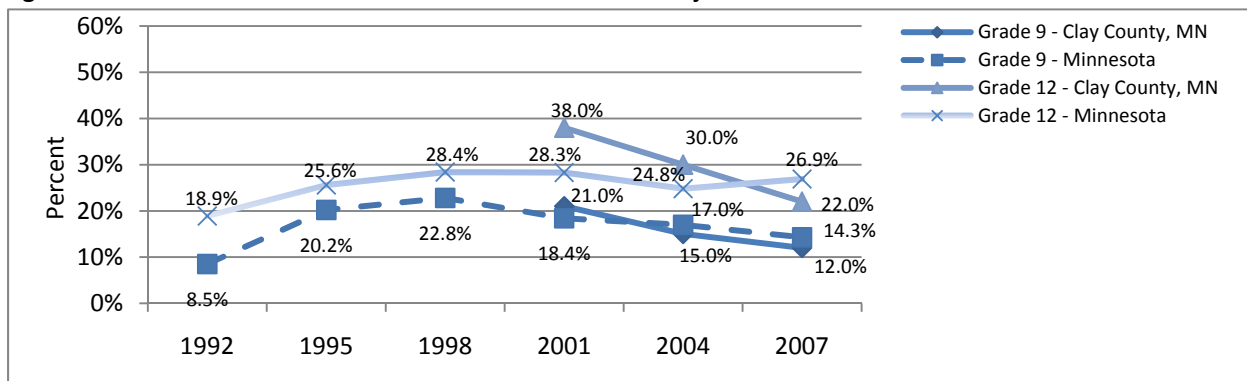
Figure 54. Male Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Used Marijuana in the Past Year: 1992 to 2007



Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

The proportion of 12th graders in Clay County who used marijuana in the past year was smaller for females than males in 2001, 2004, and 2007. In 2001, 38 percent of 12th grade females in Clay County reported using marijuana in the past year. This rate decreased to 30 percent in 2004 and 22 percent in 2007. The proportion of 9th grade females who used marijuana in the past year was similar to 9th grade males in all three years (i.e., approximately one in five in 2001 and slightly more than 1 in 10 in 2007).

Figure 55. Female Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Used Marijuana in the Past Year: 1992 to 2007



Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

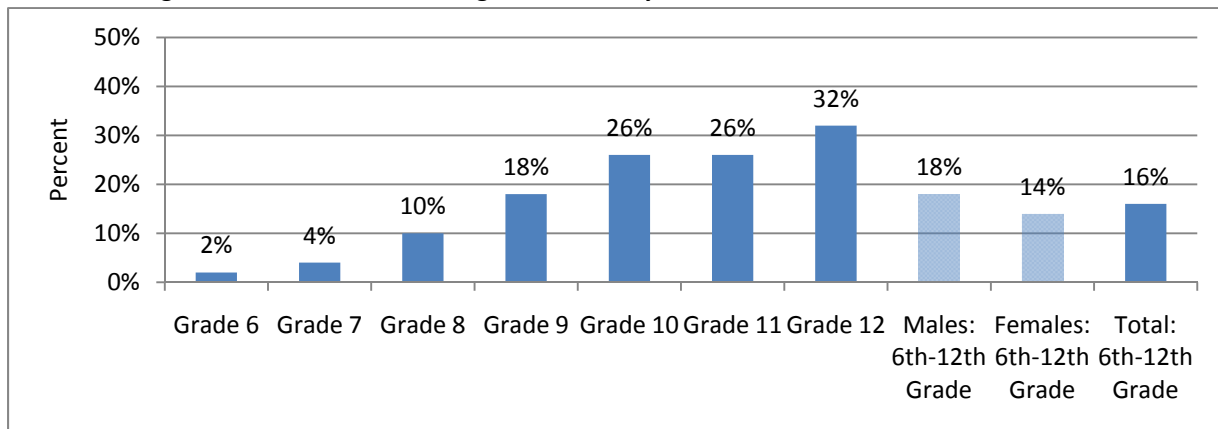
Data on marijuana use are also available for students in grades 4-12 in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets. According to the May 2007 study, 1 percent of youth in 4th and 5th grades reported using marijuana more than once during the past year. Among 6-12 graders, 16 percent used marijuana at least once during the past year.

As with alcohol and tobacco, the risk for marijuana use increases with each grade.

In 2007, 2 percent of 6th graders in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools reported using marijuana at least once during the past year. This rate increases to 10 percent for 8th graders, 26 percent for 10th graders, and 32 percent for 12th graders.

When grades 6-12 are combined, there was relatively little difference between males and females who reported using marijuana during the past year (i.e., 18 percent of males and 14 percent of females).

Figure 56. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Used Marijuana at Least Once in the Past Year, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Sexual Activity

Sexually active teenagers are at an immediate risk of becoming pregnant and/or of acquiring a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Young sexually active teens are much less likely than older teens to use contraception consistently; however, the vast majority of teen births are unintended. Data from 2002 indicates that approximately 88 percent of pregnancies to women ages 15 to 19 in the U.S. were unintended. Teen pregnancy rates, birth rates, and rates of STIs in the U.S. are among the highest in the industrialized world.

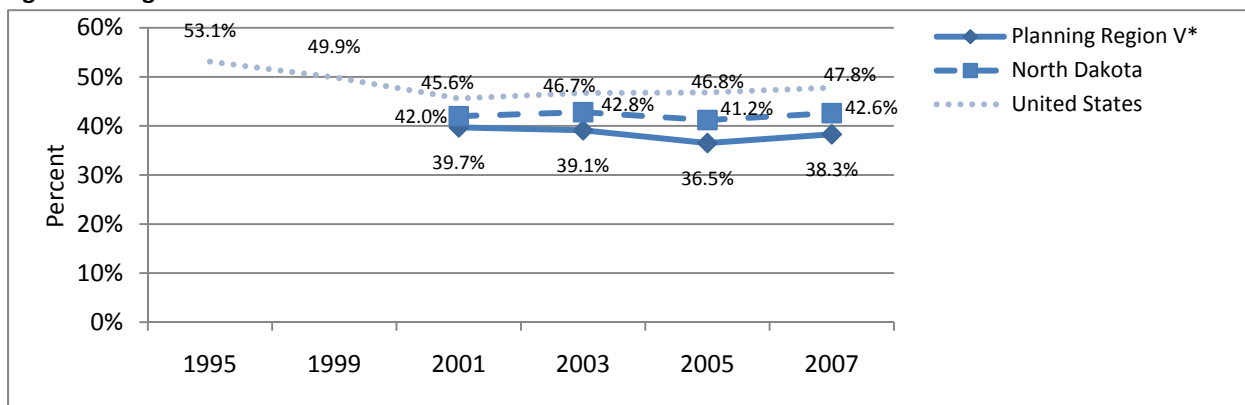
The best way to prevent unplanned pregnancies and STIs is abstinence (either never having sex or discontinuing sexual activity). Adolescents who delay their first sexual experience are less likely to regret the timing of their first experience, have fewer sexual partners, and are less likely to be involved in unhealthy sexual relationships. However, among sexually active teenagers, consistent and effective contraceptive use is necessary to avoid unwanted pregnancies and STIs (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/archivepgs/23.htm>).

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Since 2001, the proportion of high school students who have ever had sexual intercourse has remained relatively unchanged in Planning Region V, North Dakota, and the nation. The proportion of high school students in Planning Region V who had sexual intercourse at least once was 38.3 percent in 2007.

The proportion of students who have had sexual intercourse has trended slightly lower in Planning Region V than in North Dakota and the nation. In 2007, 38.3 percent of students had sexual intercourse in Planning Region V compared to 42.6 percent in North Dakota and 47.8 percent nationwide.

Figure 57. High School Students in Grades 9-12 Who Ever Had Sexual Intercourse: 1995 to 2007



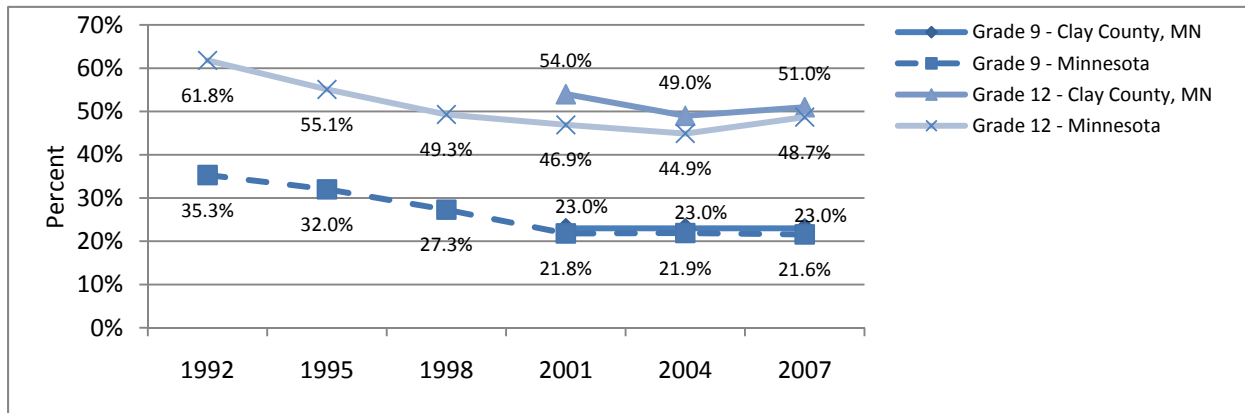
*Planning Region V includes the North Dakota counties of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent.

Sources: The North Dakota Youth Behavior Risk Survey. 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007 Statewide, Regional, and Urban/Rural Results. Retrieved at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. Retrieved at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

The percentage of male students (9th and 12th graders) in Minnesota who report having ever engaged in sexual intercourse fell steadily between 1992 and 2001. However, this downward trend lost strength starting in 2001 and has remained relatively unchanged through 2007.

The trend since 2001 for male students in Clay County is similar to the consistency seen statewide. In 2007, half of 12th grade males had engaged in sexual intercourse – a rate relatively unchanged from 54 percent in 2001. Nearly one in four 9th grade males in Clay County had engaged in sexual intercourse by 2007 – a rate unchanged from 2001.

Figure 58. Male Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Ever Had Sexual Intercourse: 1992 to 2007

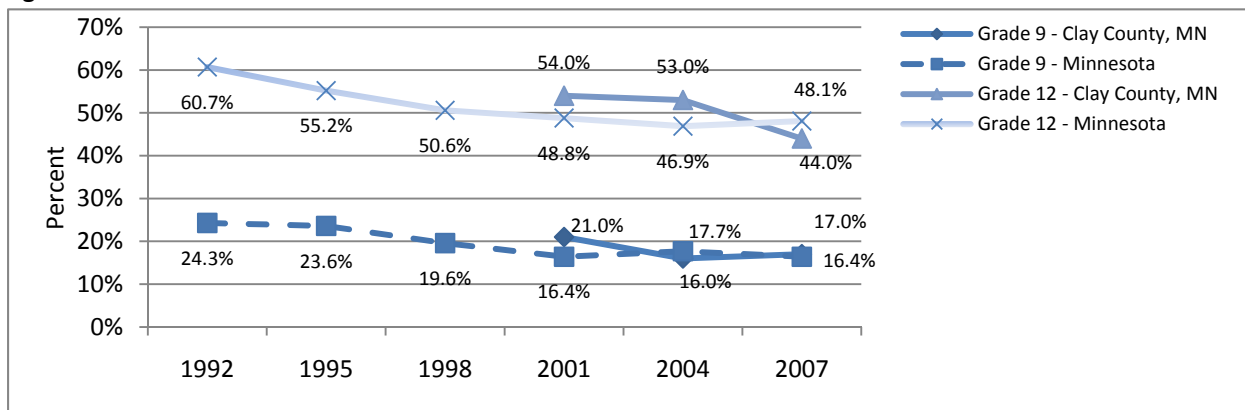


Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

Similar to male students in Minnesota, the percentage of female students (9th and 12th graders) in Minnesota who report having ever engaged in sexual intercourse fell steadily between 1992 and 2001. As with males, this downward trend among females students lost strength starting in 2001 and has remained relatively unchanged through 2007.

The trend since 2001 for 9th female students in Clay County is similar to the consistency seen statewide. In 2007, 17 percent of 9th grade females had engaged in sexual intercourse – a rate relatively unchanged from 21 percent in 2001. For 12th grade females in Clay County, the rate dropped to 44 percent in 2007 – down from 54 percent in 2001.

Figure 59. Female Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Ever Had Sexual Intercourse: 1992 to 2007



Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

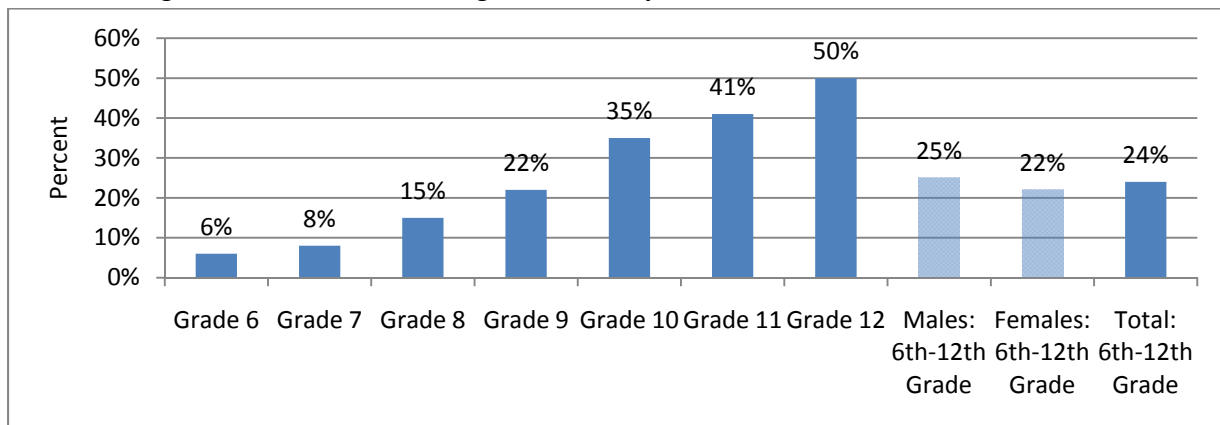
Data on sexual activity are also available for students in grades 6-12 in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets. According to the May 2007 study, 24 percent of youth in grades 6-12 reported having engaged in sexual intercourse at least one time.

As with substance use, the risk for sexual activity increases with each grade.

In 2007, 6 percent of 6th graders in the Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools reported having had sexual intercourse. This rate increases to 15 percent for 8th graders, 35 percent for 10th graders, and 50 percent for 12th graders.

When grades 6-12 are combined, there was relatively little difference between males and females who reported having had sexual intercourse (i.e., 25 percent of males and 22 percent of females).

Figure 60. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who have had Sexual Intercourse at Least Once, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Suicide

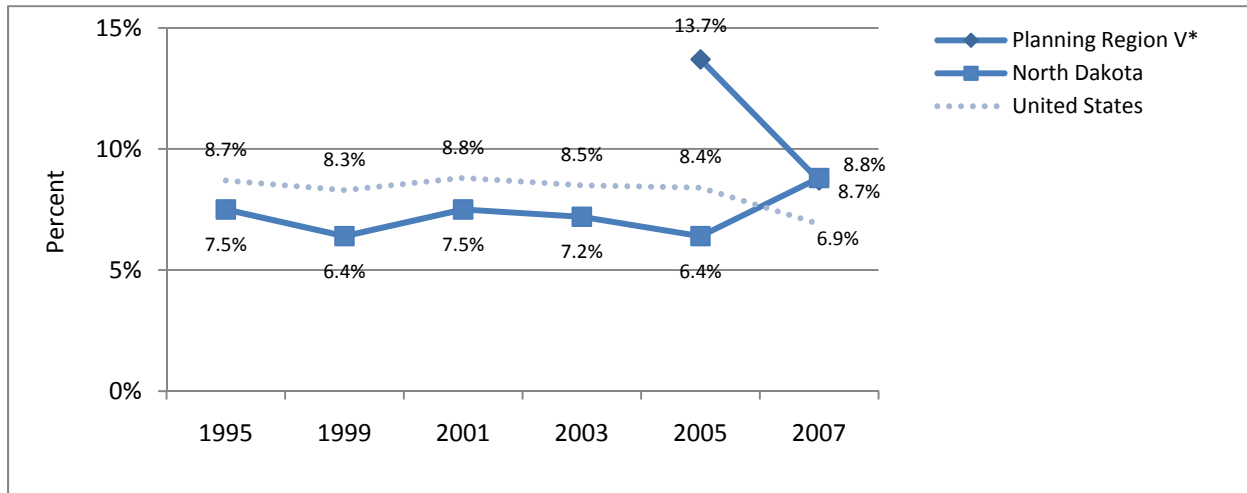
Suicide is the third leading cause of death among teenagers ages 15-19 nationally. Considering or attempting suicide is often indicative of serious mental health problems, and may signal other traumatic life events such as physical or sexual abuse. Youth are much more likely to think about and attempt suicide if they are depressed. Other risk factors for suicide include: co-occurring substance or alcohol abuse and mental disorders; a family history of suicide; physical illness; relational, social, work, or financial loss; and easy access to lethal methods, especially guns. Finally, youth who have experienced stressful life events, who have poor levels of communication with their parents, and who have been exposed to the suicidal behaviors of others are more likely than others to commit suicide (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/?q=node/122>).

North Dakota has eight established planning regions for the purposes of standardizing the areas being served by state agencies. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction uses these planning regions for reporting the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Since we were unable to obtain YRBS data specific to Cass County, we are presenting YRBS data for Planning Region V which consists of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties combined. The YRBS is not administered in Minnesota; however, youth risk data for Minnesota and Clay County are available through the Minnesota Student Survey.

The proportion of high school students attempting suicide in the past year remained relatively unchanged in North Dakota and the nation from 1995 to 2005 – with North Dakota rates trending slightly below national averages. From 2005 to 2007, the national rate decreased from 8.4 percent to 6.9 percent. At the same time, North Dakota’s rate rose from 6.4 percent to 8.8 percent – exceeding the national average in 2007.

In 2005, nearly one in seven high school students attempted suicide in Planning Region V (13.7 percent). The proportion of high school students who attempted suicide in 2005 was twice as large in Planning Region V than in North Dakota (6.4 percent). In 2007, the proportion of students attempting suicide in Planning Region V decreased to 8.7 percent – rate similar to the statewide average of 8.8 percent.

Figure 61. High School Students in Grades 9-12 Who Attempted Suicide in the Past Year: 1995 to 2007



*Planning Region V includes the North Dakota counties of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent.

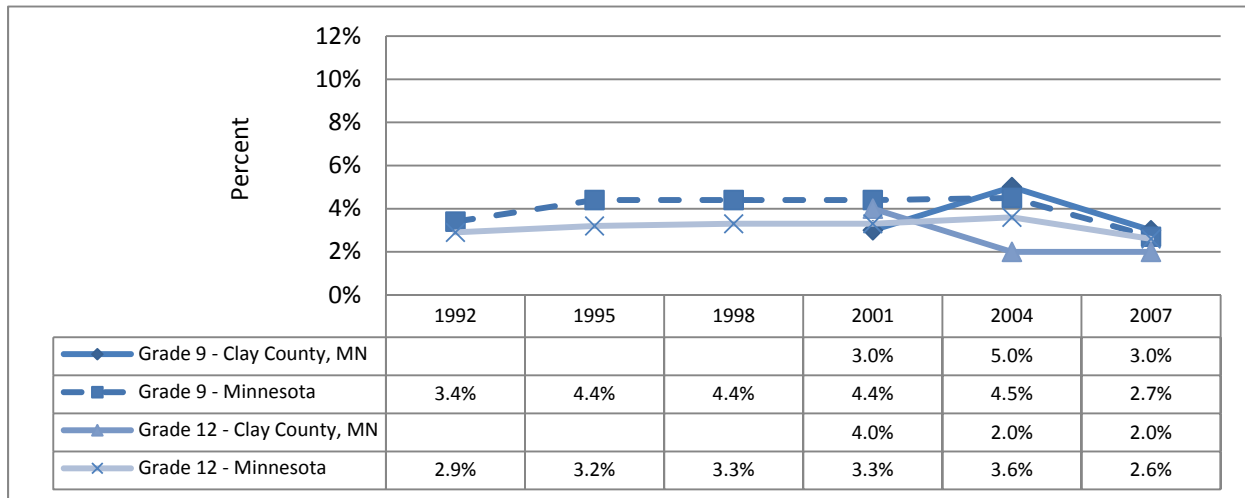
Sources: The North Dakota Youth Behavior Risk Survey. 2005 and 2007 Statewide, Regional, and Urban/Rural Results. Retrieved at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. Retrieved at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

Ninth grade females were twice as likely to attempt suicide as 9th grade males and all 12th graders (regardless of gender) in both Clay County and Minnesota overall in 2001, 2004, and 2007.

In Clay County, one in 10 females in 9th grade attempted suicide in 2001 (11.0 percent). This proportion decreased by nearly half to 6.0 percent in 2007.

For males and females in both 9th and 12th grades in Clay County and Minnesota, the proportion of students attempting suicide decreased from 2004 to 2007 (with the exception of 12th grade males in Clay County where there was no change).

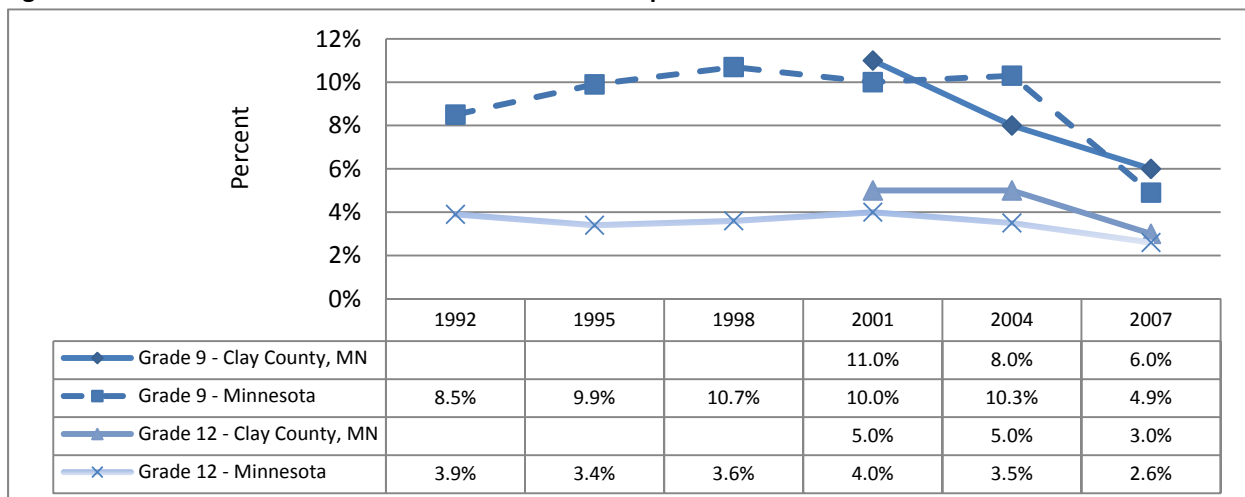
Figure 62. Male Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Attempted Suicide in the Past Year: 1992 to 2007



Note: Empty cells indicate that no data are available.

Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

Figure 63. Female Students in Grades 9 and 12 Who Attempted Suicide in the Past Year: 1992 to 2007



Note: Empty cells indicate that no data are available.

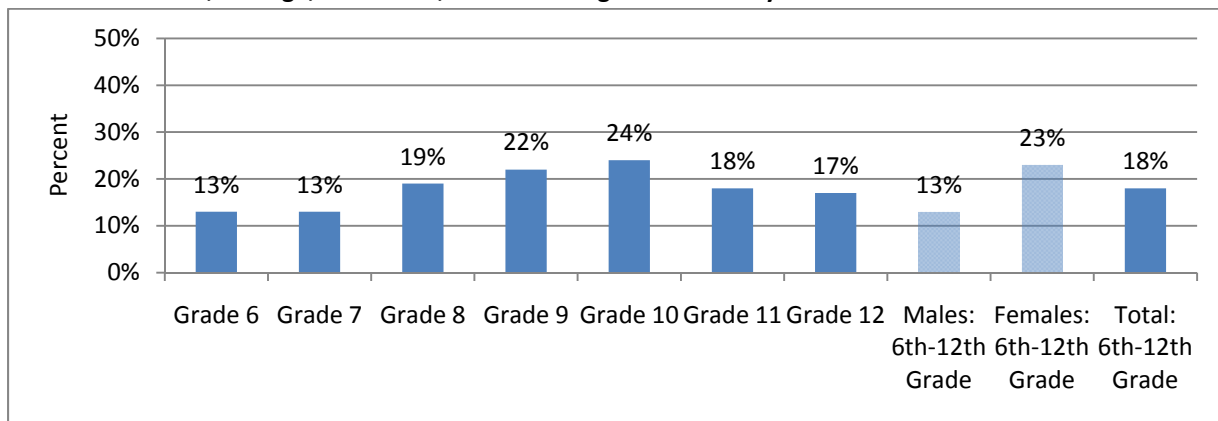
Source: The Minnesota Student Survey. 2001, 2004, and 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>.

Data on depression and suicide are also available for students in grades 4-12 in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets. According to the May 2007 study, 41 percent of students in grades 4 and 5 reported feeling sad or depressed a few or more times in the past month.

For students in grades 6-12, the likelihood of depression and/or suicide attempts increases by grade through 10th grade, then decreases somewhat for 11th and 12th graders. In 2007, 13 percent of 6th grade students in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools were frequently depressed and/or attempted suicide. The rate grew to 24 percent for 10th graders and decreased somewhat to 17 percent for 12th graders.

When grades 6-12 are combined, female students were almost twice as likely as males to be frequently depressed and/or attempt suicide in 2007.

Figure 64. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who are Frequently Depressed and/or have Attempted Suicide, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

Physical Activity

Regular physical activity has both short- and long-term health benefits. For adolescents, participation in sports, physical education classes, or any other type of regular exercise helps to build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, controls weight, and has positive psychological benefits. Adolescents who exercise also improve their long-term health. Participation in physical activity decreases the risk of developing diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension. Additionally, people who are active in their youth tend to remain active and physically fit as adults (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/archivepgs/16.htm>).

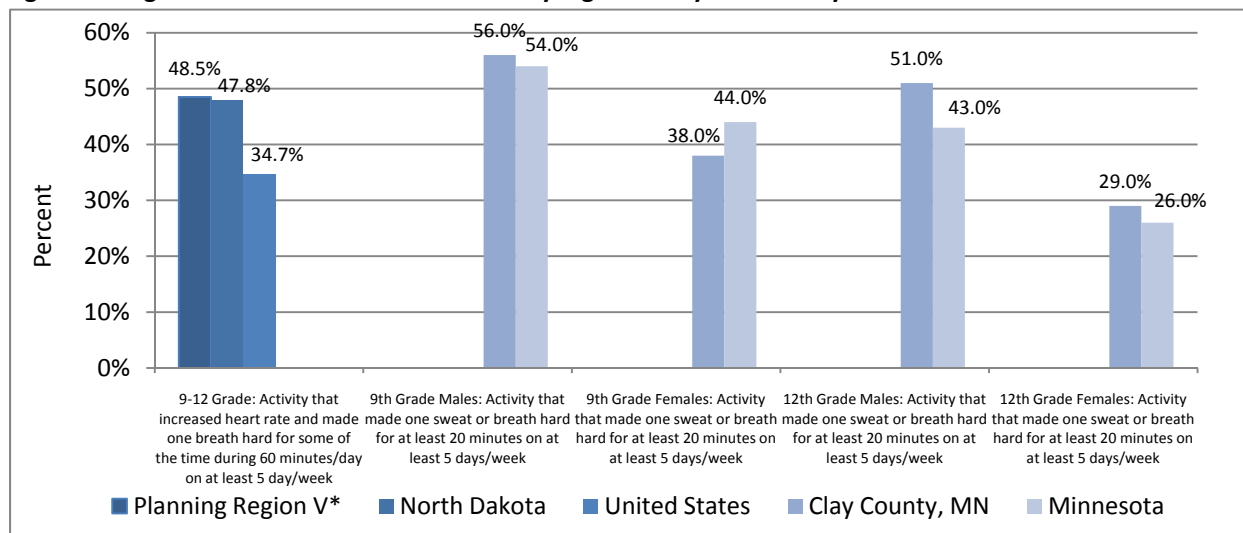
North Dakota has eight established planning regions for the purposes of standardizing the areas being served by state agencies. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction uses these planning regions for reporting the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Since we were unable to obtain YRBS data specific to Cass County, we are presenting YRBS data for Planning Region V which consists of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties combined. The YRBS is not administered in Minnesota; however, youth risk data for Minnesota and Clay County are available through the Minnesota Student Survey.

The proportion of high school students in grades 9 through 12 that meet the current recommendations for physical activity (i.e., increased heart rate and hard breathing for some of the time during 60 minutes per day for at least five days a week) in Planning Region V (48.5 percent) was similar to the proportion in North Dakota (47.8 percent) and slightly higher than the national average (34.7 percent) in 2007.

Clay county students in 12th grade, both males and females, were more likely than 12th graders statewide (i.e., Minnesota) to sweat or breath hard for at least 20 minutes five days a week.

Clay County students in grade 9 are more likely to get 20 minutes of vigorous exercise five days a week than are students in grade 12.

Figure 65. High School Students in Grades 9-12 by Vigorous Physical Activity Levels: 2007



*Planning Region V includes the North Dakota counties of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent.

Sources: The North Dakota Youth Behavior Risk Survey. 2007 Statewide, Regional, and Urban/Rural Results. Retrieved at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtml>. The Minnesota Student Survey. 2007 County Tables and the 1992-2007 Trends Report. Retrieved at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. Retrieved at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

Television Viewing

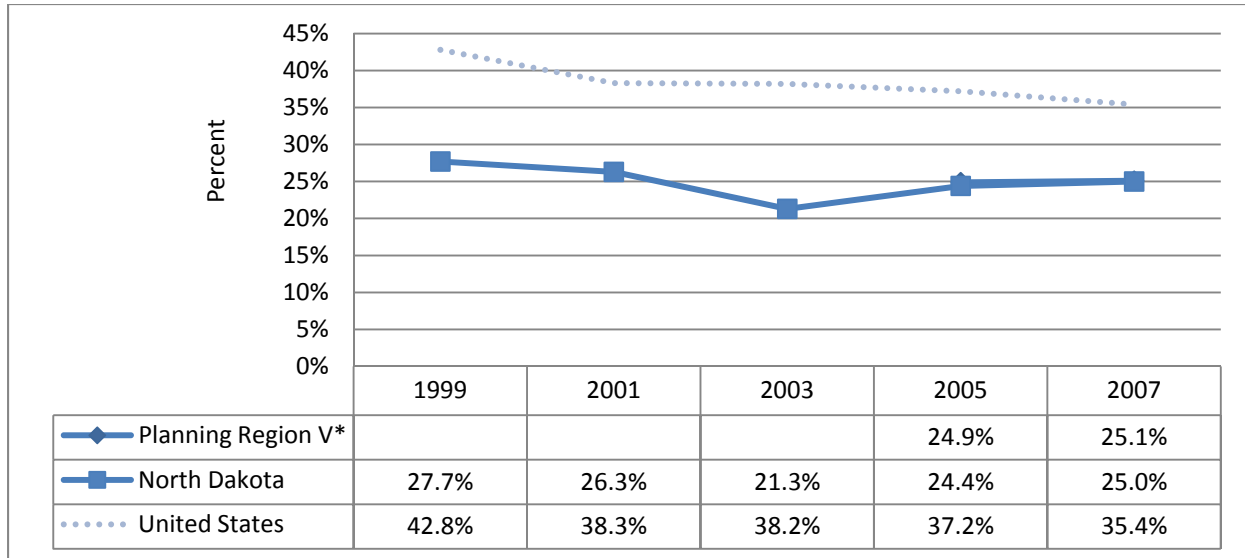
When students are watching television excessively, they are less likely to be spending time doing homework or reading, participating in after school activities, exercising frequently, or actively engaging in other intellectually stimulating activities. In addition, excessive exposure to violent television programs may increase aggression levels. Research also finds that excessive television viewing at young ages (ages one to three) is linked to a decreased attention span later on (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/archivepgs/55.htm>).

North Dakota has eight established planning regions for the purposes of standardizing the areas being served by state agencies. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction uses these planning regions for reporting the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Since we were unable to obtain YRBS data specific to Cass County, we are presenting YRBS data for Planning Region V which consists of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent counties combined. The YRBS is not administered in Minnesota; however, youth risk data for Minnesota and Clay County are available through the Minnesota Student Survey.

One in four high school students in Planning Region V reported watching at least three hours of television per school day in 2007; a proportion that has remained relatively unchanged since 2005.

The proportion of high school students who reported watching at least three hours of television per school day in 2007 was larger nationally (35.4 percent) than in North Dakota (25.0 percent) and Planning Region V (25.1 percent).

Figure 66. High School Students in Grades 9-12 Who Reported Watching Three or More Hours of Television Per School Day: 2003 to 2007



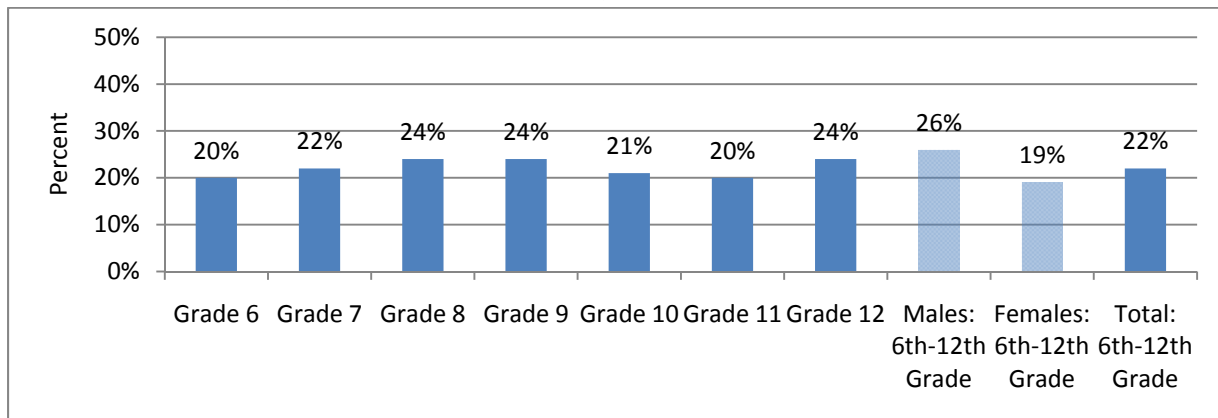
Notes: Empty cells indicate that data are unavailable. *Planning Region V includes the North Dakota counties of Cass, Steele, Traill, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent.

Sources: The North Dakota Youth Behavior Risk Survey. 2005 and 2007 Statewide, Regional, and Urban/Rural Results. Retrieved at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. Retrieved at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

Data on television exposure are also available for students in grades 4-12 in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead schools from the Search Institute study on childhood developmental assets. According to the May 2007 study, half of students in grades 4 and 5 reported watching TV or videos *two or more* hours per school day (52 percent). One in five students in grades 6-12 reported watching TV or videos *three or more* hours per school day (22 percent).

For students in grades 6-12, the likelihood of watching television three or more hours per school day does not change much with each grade level. When grades 6-12 are combined, male students were somewhat more likely than females to watch television or videos three or more hours per school day in 2007 (26 percent and 19 percent, respectively).

Figure 67. Percent of Youth in Grades 6-12 Who Watch TV or Videos Three or More Hours Per School Day, by Grade and Gender, in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools: May 2007



Source: "Developmental Assets: A Profile of Youth for Fargo/West Fargo/Moorhead Schools," prepared for Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative (now Metro Youth Partnership) by Search Institute, July 2007.

SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

A map showing the boundaries of school districts in Cass and Clay counties is provided in the Appendix on page 78.

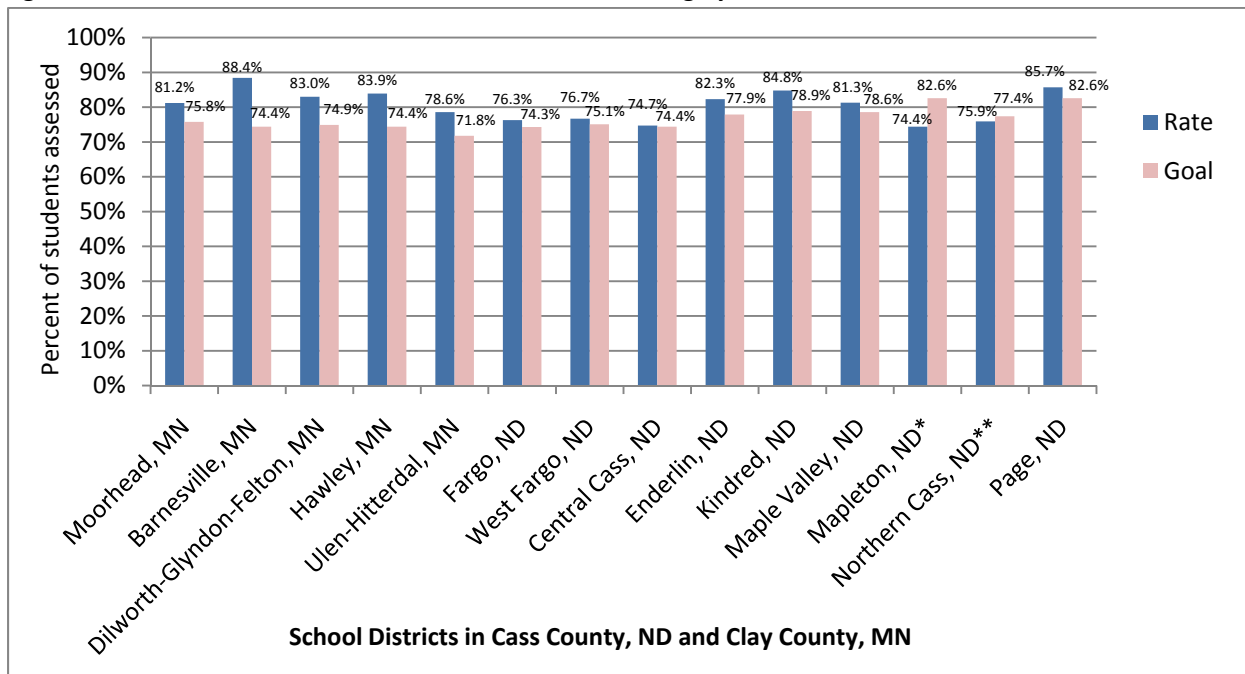
Reading Proficiency

The ability to read proficiently is a fundamental skill that affects the learning experiences and school performance of children and adolescents. Students, who are competent readers, as measured by their performance on reading tests, are more likely to perform well in other subjects, such as math and science. Reading achievement also predicts one's likelihood of graduating from high school and attending college.

Reading skills also influence students' well-being as adults. Strong reading skills protect against unemployment in early adulthood. Further, adults with limited reading abilities are likely to pass these limitations on their children (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/archivepgs/29.htm>).

With the exception of Mapleton School District in Cass County, the composite reading proficiency rates in Cass and Clay county school districts met or exceeded the reading proficiency goals for each respective district in 2008-09.

Figure 68. Students who are Proficient or Advanced in Reading by School District: 2008-09



Notes: Reading and math assessments were administered in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11. *In the Mapleton school district, there were insufficient data to determine adequate yearly progress; therefore, up to three years of data were combined to obtain the proficiency rate.

**In the Northern Cass district, the difference between the rate and goal is statistically insignificant.

Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, School Report Card Information, <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>. Choose NCLB Data Report under School Report Card to obtain actual data for each district. For interpretation, visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/NCLB_AYP/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>. For interpretation, visit <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0809.pdf>

The subgroups presented in Figures 69-74 did not meet reading proficiency goals in the school districts identified.

Figure 69. Reading Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Reading Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Moorhead Public School District: 2008-09

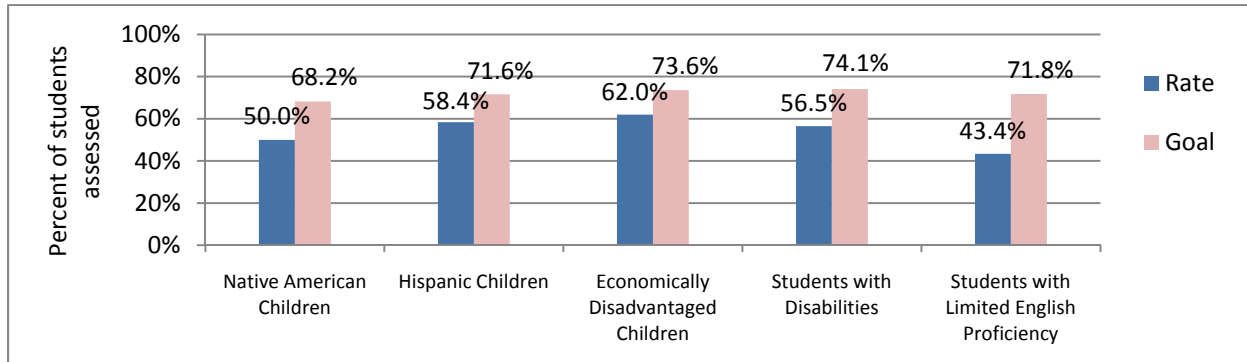


Figure 70. Reading Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Reading Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Fargo Public School District: 2008-09

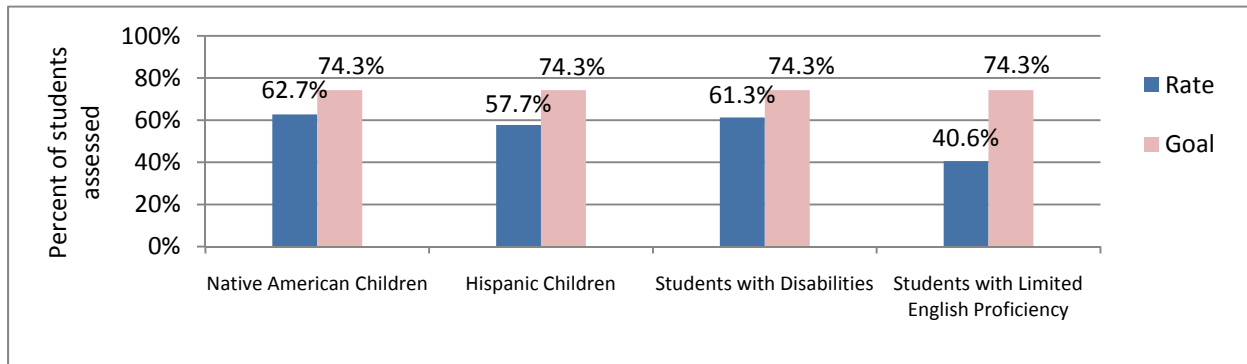
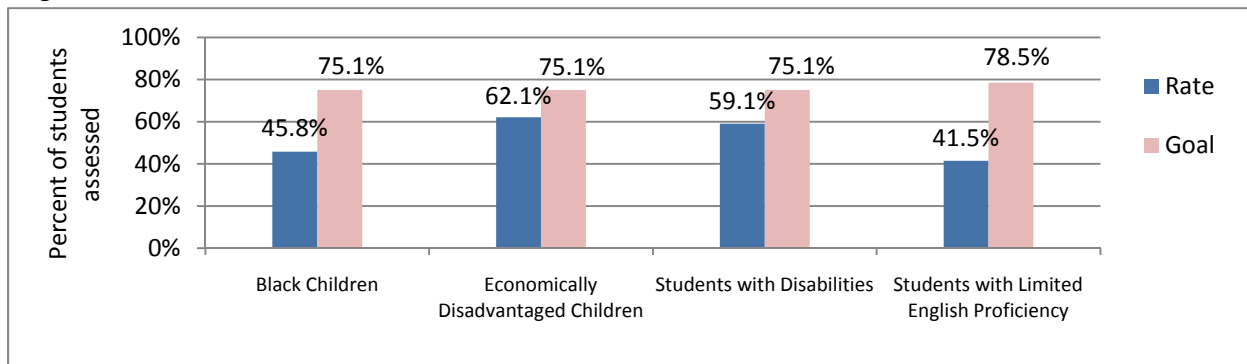


Figure 71. Reading Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Reading Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the West Fargo Public School District: 2008-09



Notes: Reading and math assessments were administered in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11. Rates reflect the percent of students who were proficient or advanced in reading.

Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, School Report Card Information, <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>. Choose NCLB Data Report under School Report Card to obtain actual data for each district. For interpretation, visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/NCLB_AYP/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>. For interpretation, visit <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0809.pdf>

Figure 72. Reading Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Reading Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Hawley Public School District: 2008-09

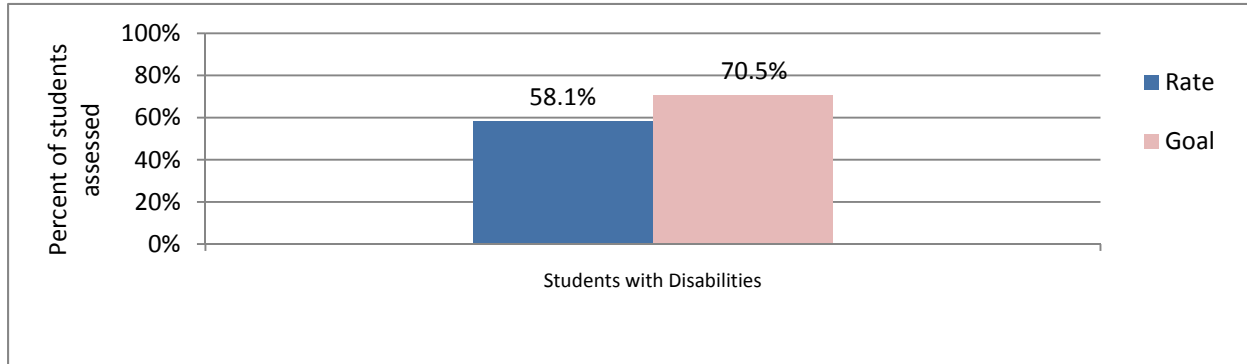


Figure 73. Reading Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Reading Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Northern Cass Public School District: 2008-09

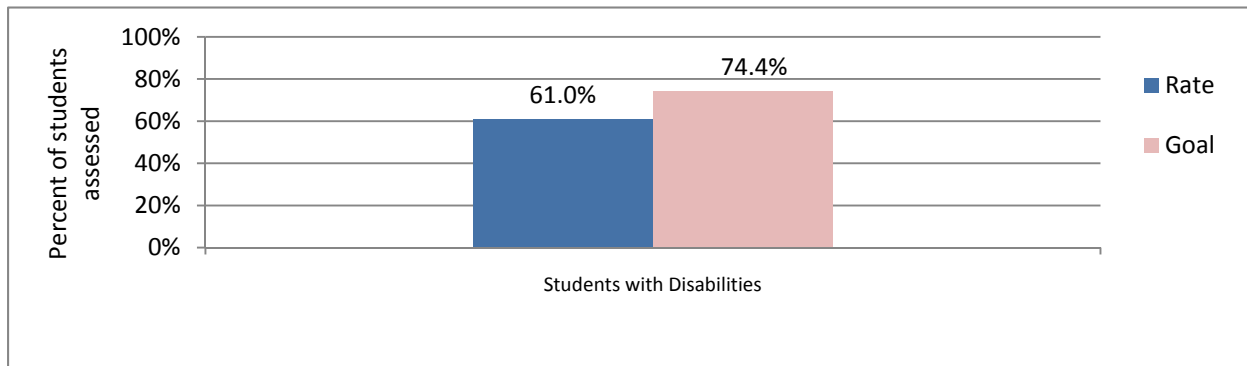
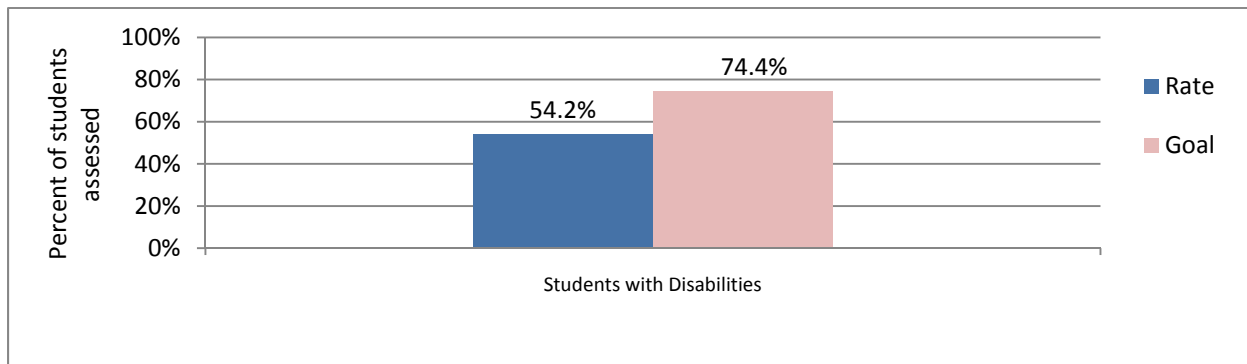


Figure 74. Reading Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Reading Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Central Cass Public School District: 2008-09



Notes: Reading and math assessments were administered in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11. Rates reflect the percent of students who were proficient or advanced in reading.

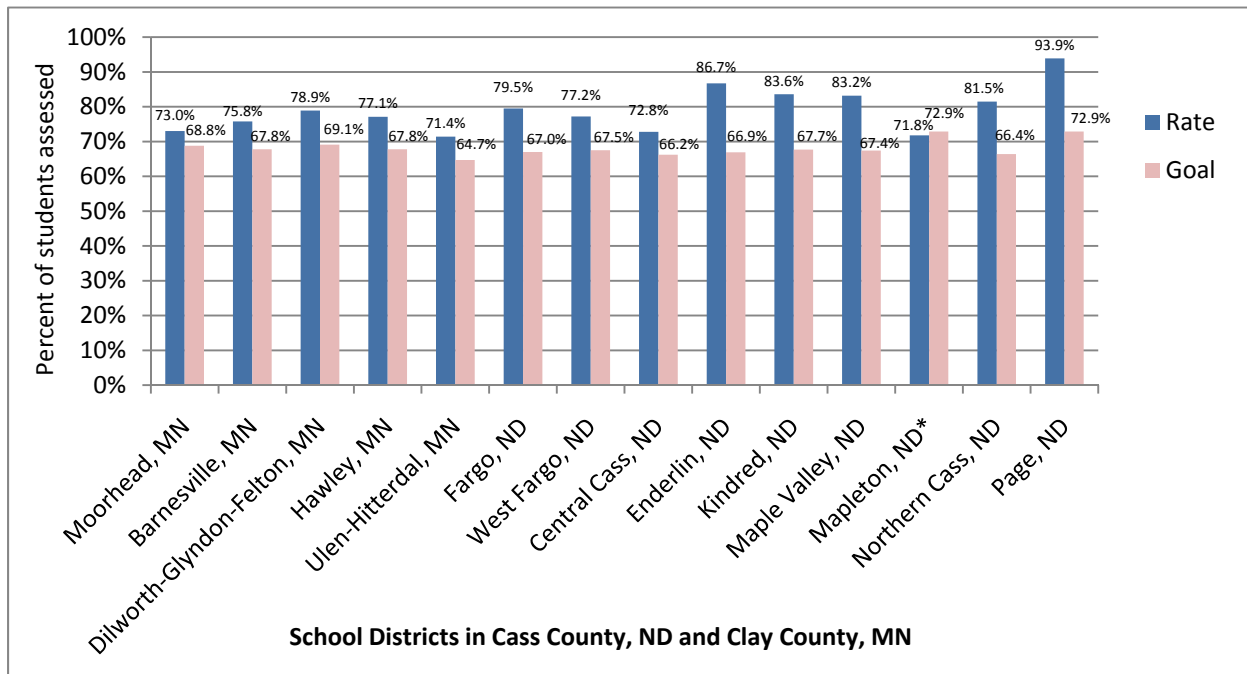
Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, School Report Card Information, <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>. Choose NCLB Data Report under School Report Card to obtain actual data for each district. For interpretation, visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/NCLB_AYP/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>. For interpretation, visit <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0809.pdf>

Math Proficiency

Competence in mathematics is essential for functioning in everyday life, as well as for success in our increasingly technological workplace. Students who take higher level mathematics and science courses which require strong fundamental skills in mathematics are more likely to attend and to complete college. The importance of mathematics extends beyond the academic domain. Young people who transition to adulthood with limited mathematics skills are likely to find it difficult to function in society. Basic arithmetic skills are required for everyday computations and sometimes for job applications. Competence in mathematics skills is related to higher levels of employability. Analyses find that, since 1976, the influence of high school students' mathematics skills on earnings later in life has grown continuously (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/archivepgs/09.htm>).

With the exception of Mapleton school district, math proficiency rates in Cass and Clay county school districts exceeded individual district goals by at least four points and by as much as 21 points in 2008-09.

Figure 75. Students who are Proficient or Advanced in Math by School District: 2008-09



Note: Reading and math assessments were administered in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11. *In the Mapleton school district, there were insufficient data to determine adequate yearly progress; therefore, up to three years of data were combined to obtain the proficiency rate; the difference between the rate and goal is statistically insignificant.

Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, School Report Card Information, <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>. Choose NCLB Data Report under School Report Card to obtain actual data for each district. For interpretation, visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/NCLB_AYP/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>. For interpretation, visit <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0809.pdf>

The subgroups presented in Figures 76-81 did not meet math proficiency goals in the school districts identified.

Figure 76. Math Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Math Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Moorhead Public School District: 2008-09

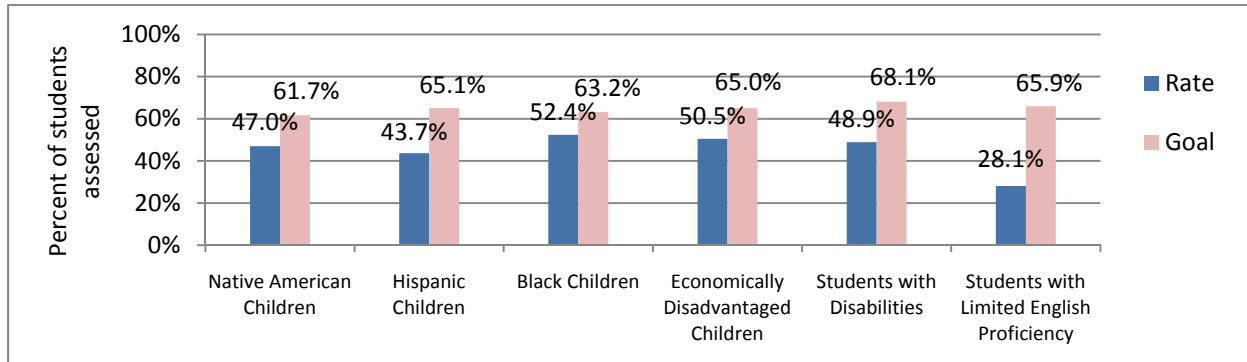


Figure 77. Math Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Math Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Fargo Public School District: 2008-09

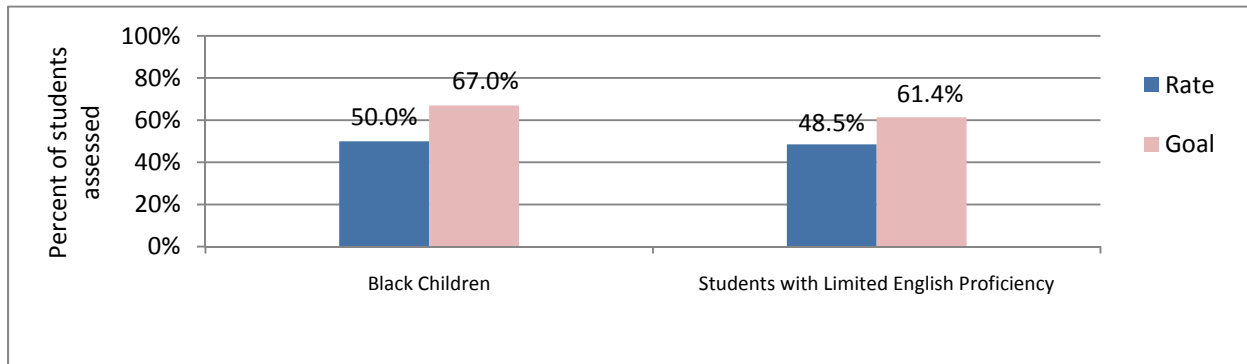
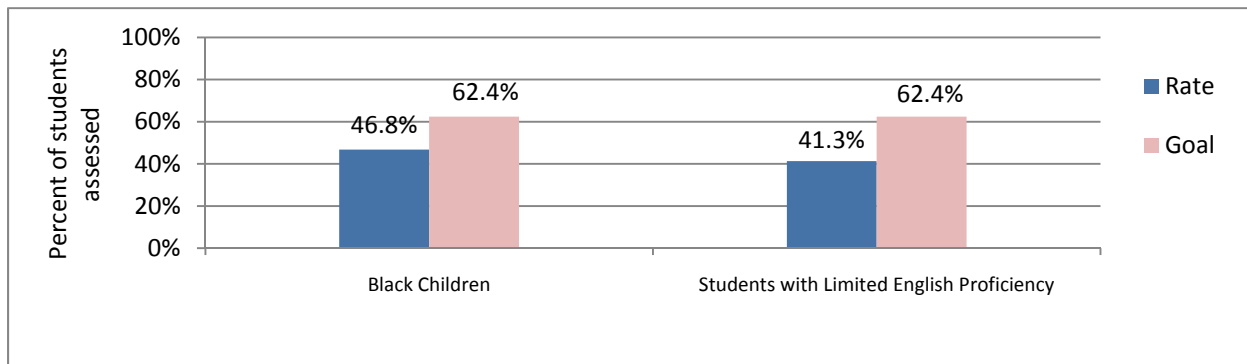


Figure 78. Math Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Math Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the West Fargo Public School District: 2008-09



Notes: Reading and math assessments were administered in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11. Rates reflect the percent of students who were proficient or advanced in reading.

Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, School Report Card Information, <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>. Choose NCLB Data Report under School Report Card to obtain actual data for each district. For interpretation, visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/NCLB_AYP/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>. For interpretation, visit <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0809.pdf>

Figure 79. Math Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Math Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Hawley Public School District: 2008-09

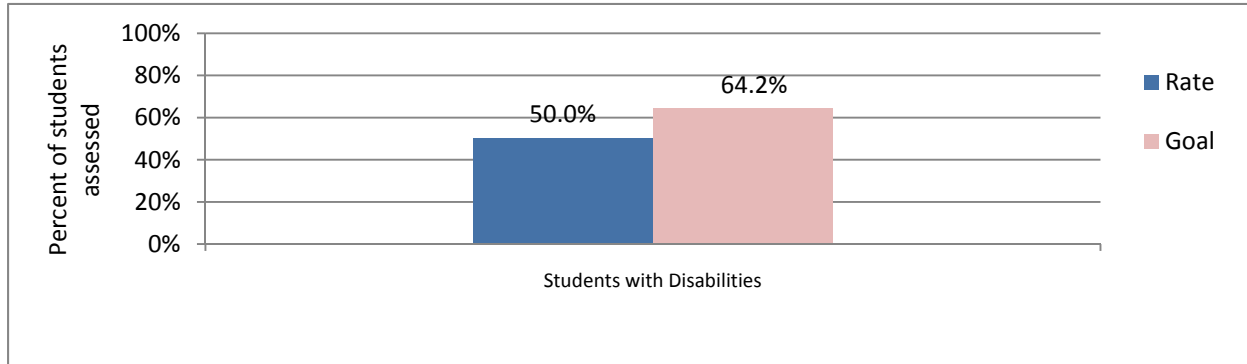
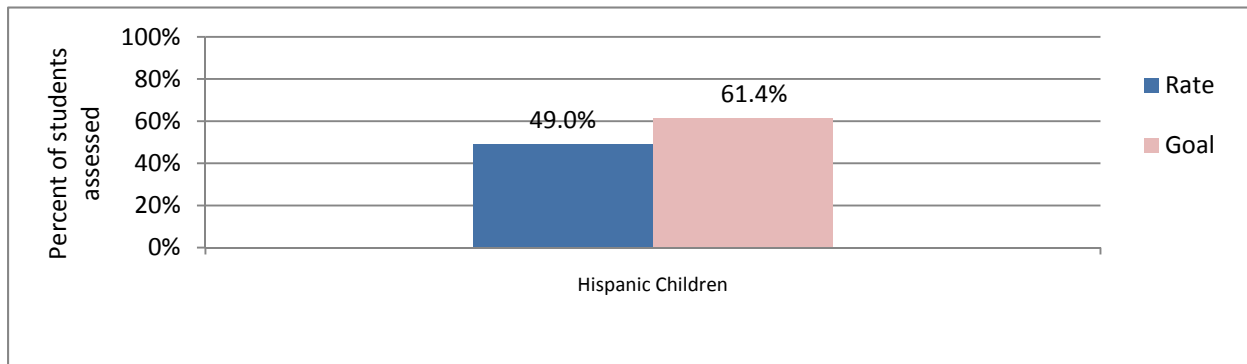


Figure 80. Math Proficiency Rates that did not Meet Math Proficiency Goals, by Subgroup, in the Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Public School District: 2008-09



Notes: Reading and math assessments were administered in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11. Rates reflect the percent of students who were proficient or advanced in reading.

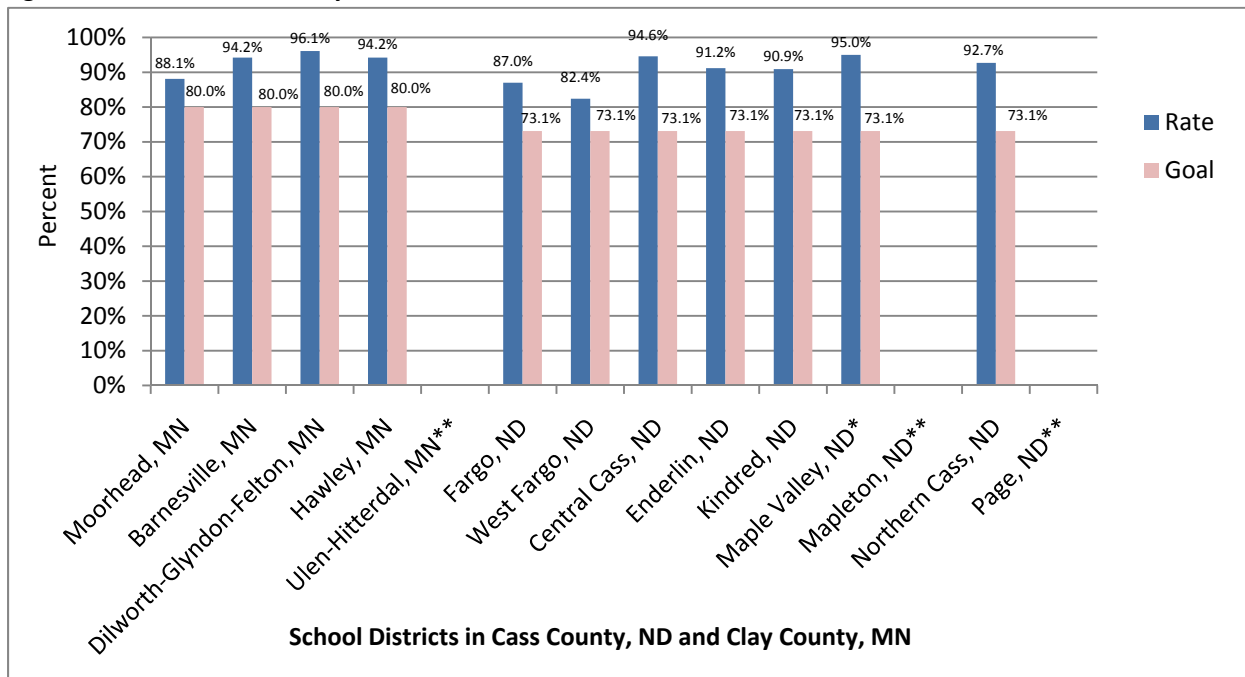
Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, School Report Card Information, <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>. Choose NCLB Data Report under School Report Card to obtain actual data for each district. For interpretation, visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/NCLB_AYP/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>. For interpretation, visit <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0809.pdf>

Graduation Rates

Young people who drop out of high school are unlikely to have the minimum skills and credentials necessary to function in today's increasingly complex society and technological workplace. The completion of high school is required for accessing post-secondary education and is a minimum requirement for most jobs. High school dropouts are more likely than high school completers to be unemployed. Additionally, a high school diploma leads to higher income and occupational status. Interestingly, however, many youth who drop out of high school eventually earn a diploma or a GED. One study found that 63 percent of students who dropped out had earned a diploma or GED within eight years of the year they should have originally graduated. Studies have found that young adults with low education and skill levels are more likely to live in poverty and to receive government assistance. High school dropouts are likely to stay on public assistance longer than those with at least a high school degree. Further, high school dropouts are more likely to become involved in crime (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/archivepgs/01.htm>).

Graduation rates in all Cass and Clay county school districts (for which data are available) exceeded the district goals by at least eight points in 2008-09. Note that the definitions used for graduation rates are different in Minnesota and North Dakota.

Figure 81. Graduation Rates by School District: 2008-09



Notes: In Minnesota, the graduation rate is a count of those graduating in a particular year divided by a count of those same graduates minus grade 12 students dropping out in that year, grade 11 students dropping out one year previous, grade 10 students dropping out two years previous, and grade 9 students dropping out three years previous. In North Dakota, the graduation rate is a cohort rate, measuring the number of graduates who completed high school in four years divided by those same graduates minus 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade dropouts of the same graduation cohort. *The graduation rate is greater than or equal to 95%. **Graduation rates are unavailable for these districts.

Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, School Report Card Information, <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>. Choose NCLB Data Report under School Report Card to obtain actual data for each district. For interpretation, visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/NCLB_AYP/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>. For interpretation, visit <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0809.pdf>

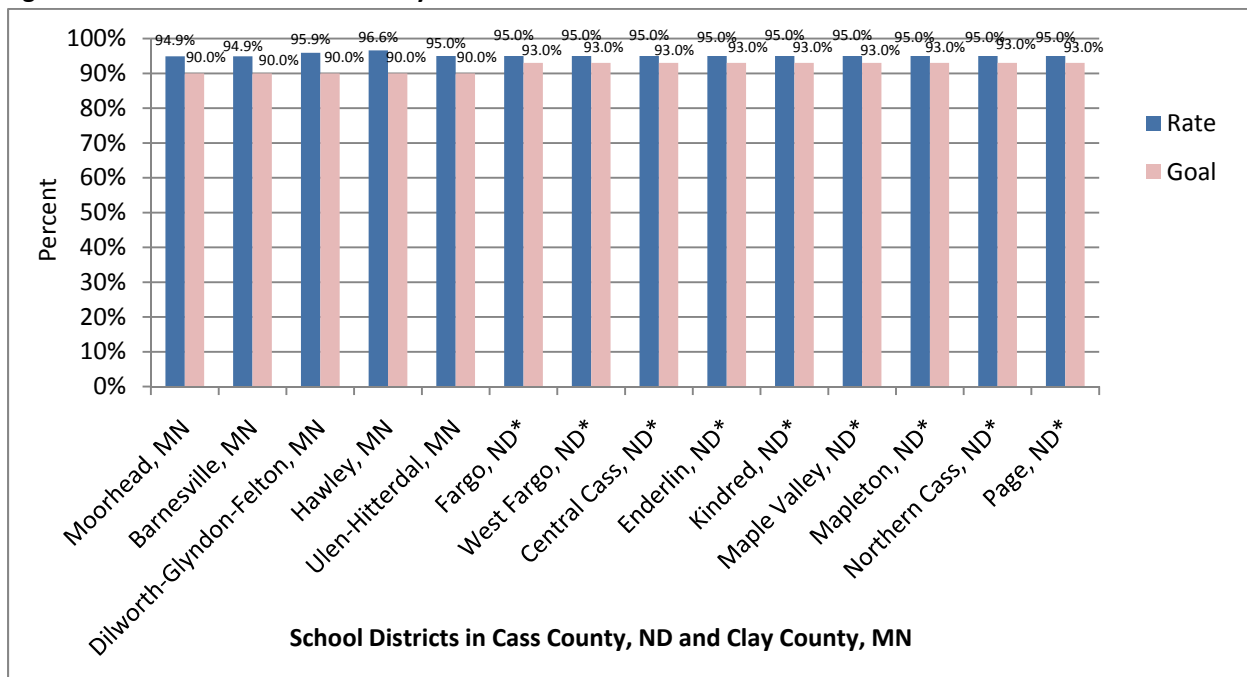
Attendance Rates

School attendance is an important factor for school success among youth. Studies show that better attendance is related to higher achievement for students of all backgrounds. Students who attend school regularly score higher on achievement tests than their peers who are frequently absent. Many factors can lead to student absenteeism. Family health or financial concerns, poor school climate, drug and alcohol use, transportation problems and differing community attitudes towards education are all conditions that can affect whether or not a child is attending school.

Chronic truancy (regular unexcused absence), in particular, is a predictor of undesirable outcomes in adolescence, including academic failure, school dropout, substance abuse, and gang and criminal activity (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/?q=node/154>).

Attendance rates in all Cass and Clay county school districts exceeded the district goals in 2008-09. Note that the definitions used for attendance rates are different in Minnesota and North Dakota.

Figure 82. School Attendance Rates by School District: 2008-09



Notes: In Minnesota, the attendance rate is defined as the average daily attendance in a particular year divided by the average daily membership in that same year. In North Dakota, the attendance rate is defined as the aggregate days of attendance in a school divided by the aggregate days of enrollment for students in grades 3-8 and 11 (i.e., those participating in the annual statewide assessments). *The attendance rate is greater than or equal to 95%.

Sources: Minnesota - Minnesota Department of Education, School Report Card Information, <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>. Choose NCLB Data Report under School Report Card to obtain actual data for each district. For interpretation, visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/NCLB_AYP/index.html. North Dakota - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>. For interpretation, visit <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0809.pdf>

Idle Youth

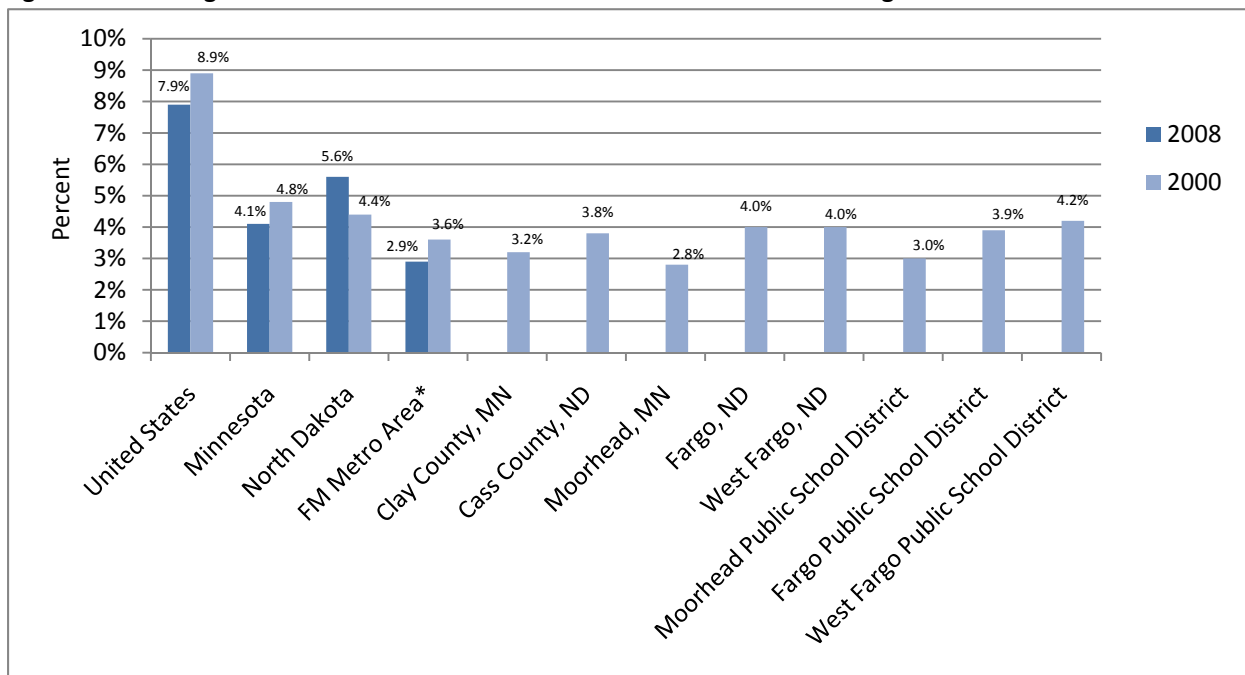
The transition for youth into independent adult society can be quite difficult. Steady employment is one of the steps to becoming an independent adult. There are various reasons that youth may not be working nor enrolled in school, such as an inability to find work or leaving the workforce to start a family. In addition, the exploration of different career paths and moving back and forth between school and work has become more common during early adulthood.

Higher levels of education are increasingly necessary to obtain steady well-paying employment. Males who are neither enrolled in school nor working are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior or illegal activities to earn money. Females are more likely to become dependent on welfare. Young adults in the juvenile justice, foster care, and special education system tend to drop out of these systems at an early age, leaving them ineligible for system services meant to aid in the transition to adulthood. Even if these youth eventually do obtain jobs, they tend to earn less money (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/archivepgs/87.htm>).

In the Fargo-Moorhead metro area, 2.9 percent of youth ages 16 to 19 were neither working nor enrolled in school (i.e., idle teens) in 2008. The proportion of idle teens was smaller in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area than in North Dakota (5.6 percent), Minnesota (4.1 percent), and nationally (7.9 percent) in 2008.

The proportion of idle teens decreased slightly in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area, Minnesota, and nationally from 2000 to 2008; the proportion rose slightly in North Dakota.

Figure 83. Youth ages 16 to 19 – Percent Not Enrolled in School and Not Working: 2000 and 2008

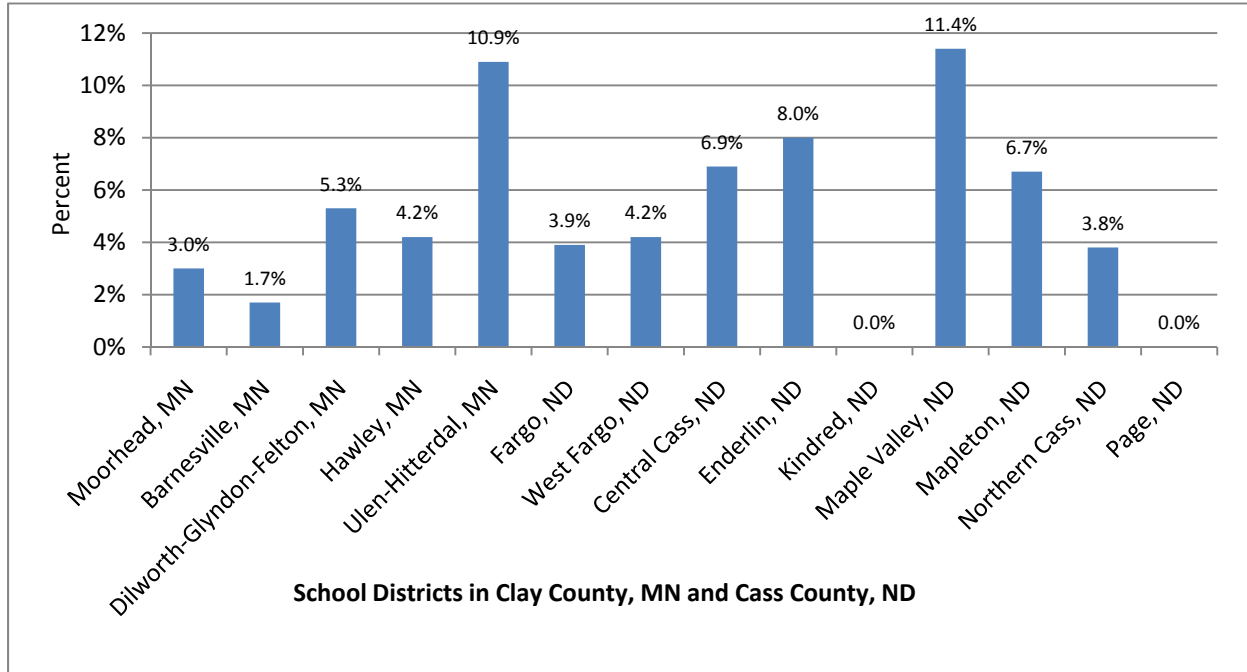


Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.

Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B14005. Retrieved interactively on 11/30/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table P38. Retrieved interactively on 11/30/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table P38. Retrieved on 11/30/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> using the Download Data option.

The proportion of idle teens (i.e., youth ages 16 to 19 who are not working and not enrolled in school) was nearly three times higher in the Ulen-Hitterdal and Maple Valley school districts than in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area overall (10.9 percent and 11.4 percent compared to 3.6 percent, respectively) in 2000.

Figure 84. Youth ages 16 to 19 – Percent Not Enrolled in School and Not Working by School District: 2000



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table P38. Retrieved interactively on 11/30/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table P38. Retrieved on 11/30/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> using the Download Data option.

Educational Attainment of Young Adults

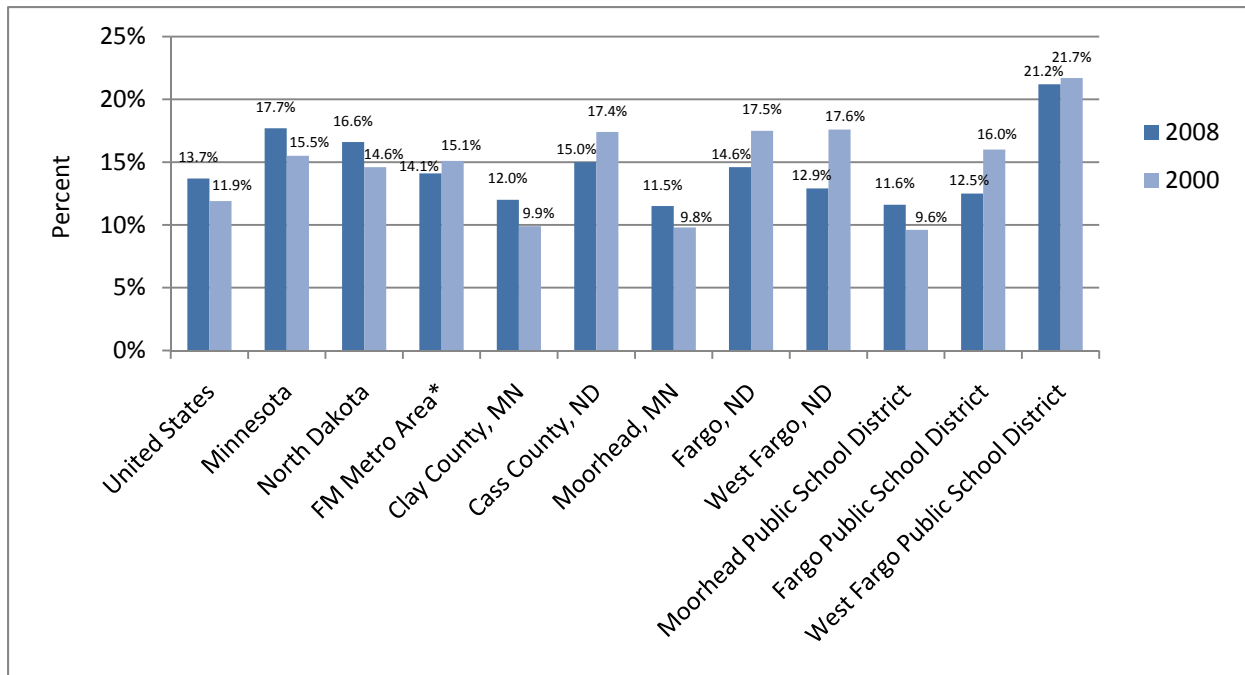
Educational attainment is a powerful predictor of well-being. Young adults who have completed higher levels of education are more likely to achieve economic success than those who have not. In addition to qualifying one for a broader range of jobs, completing more years of education also protects against unemployment. Further, higher levels of educational attainment often lead to higher wages and income: in 2000, Americans with bachelor's degrees or higher earned a median income that was more than double that of their peers with only high school diplomas. In the past few decades, earning differentials by education level have been increasing, especially among men. Adults with higher levels of education also report being in better health and having higher levels of socio-emotional well-being. They are also less likely to divorce, or be incarcerated (Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/?q=node/163>).

In the Fargo-Moorhead metro area, one in seven youth ages 18 to 24 had an associate, Bachelor's, or advanced degree in 2008 (14.1 percent).

The proportion of youth ages 18 to 24 with an associate, Bachelor's, or advanced degree was higher in Cass County (17.4 percent) than in Clay County (9.9 percent) in 2000; however, by 2008, the proportion decreased in Cass County to 15.0 percent and rose in Clay County to 12.0 percent.

In the West Fargo school district, approximately one in five youth ages 18 to 24 had an associate, Bachelor's, or advanced degree in both 2000 and 2008 (21.7 percent and 21.2 percent, respectively).

Figure 85. Youth Ages 18 to 24 – Percent with an Associate, Bachelor's, or Advanced Degree: 2000 and 2008



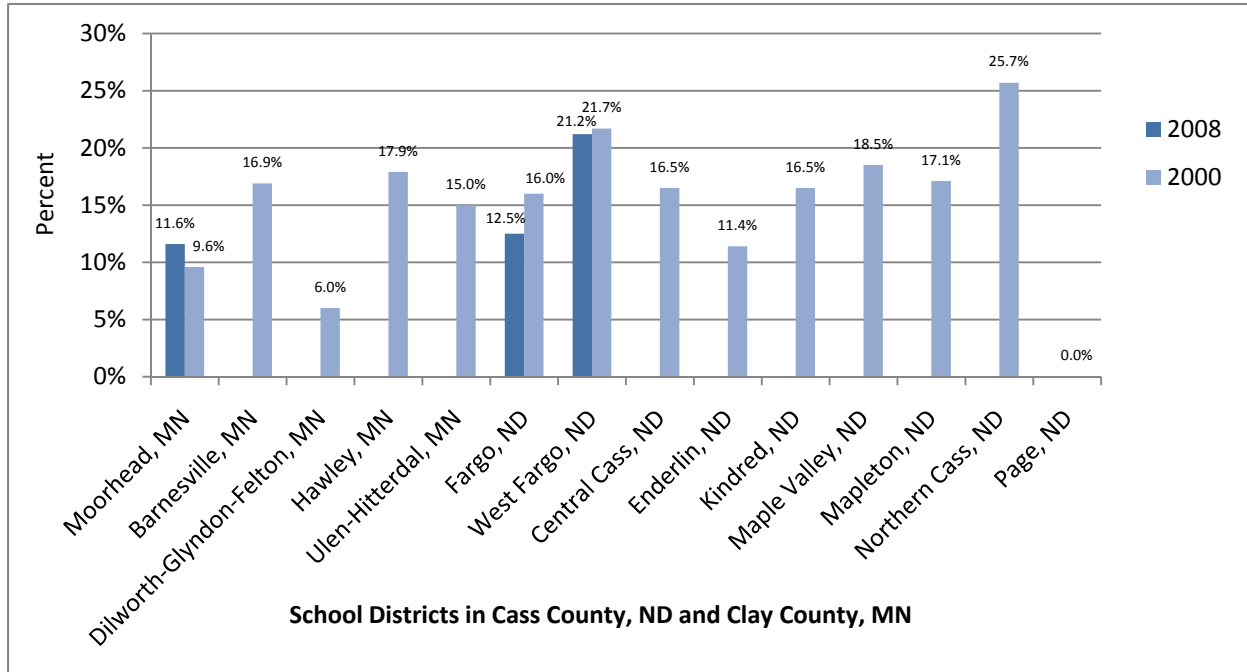
Note: *FM Metro Area (i.e., Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area) is defined as Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN combined.

Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B15001. Retrieved interactively on 11/30/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table PCT25. Retrieved interactively on 11/30/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table PCT25. Retrieved on 11/30/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> using the Download Data option.

Of all the school districts in Cass and Clay counties, Northern Cass had the largest percentage of youth ages 18 to 24 with an associate, Bachelor's, or advanced degree in 2000 (25.7 percent); West Fargo school district followed at 21.7 percent.

In the Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton school district, only 6 percent of youth ages 18 to 24 had a college degree in 2000.

Figure 86. Youth Ages 18 to 24 – Percent with an Associate, Bachelor's, or Advanced Degree by School District: 2000 and 2008



Sources: 2008 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, Table B15001. Retrieved interactively on 11/30/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. 2008 data were not available for all geographies due to sample size. 2000 Data - U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 - Sample Data, Table PCT25. Retrieved interactively on 11/30/09 at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. The National Center for Education Statistics, School District Demographics System, Census 2000 School District Tabulation (STP2), Table PCT25. Retrieved on 11/30/09 at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/> using the Download Data option.

APPENDIX

School District Map for Cass County, ND and Clay County, MN

