

Trends & Tudes

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

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♦ EDITORS ♦

Kelly Bagnaschi

Senior Research Assistant
Youth and Education Research
800.866.7655 Ext. 7164
kbagnaschi@harrisinteractive.com

Dana Markow, PhD

Senior Research Director
Youth and Education Research
800.575.4749 Ext. 6676
dmarkow@harrisinteractive.com

What Do Teenagers Want to Be When They Grow Up?

Since 1977, *The Harris Poll*® has tracked the prestige of 22 different professions and occupations. This year, American adults say that scientists, firemen and doctors have the most prestige. In this issue of *Trends & Tudes*, we look at how teens view occupations. Which jobs are prestigious and to which jobs do they aspire?

Teens were presented with a list of professions and occupations representing an array of jobs. The most prestigious profession of all is doctor. Over half of teens (55%) say that a doctor has very great prestige. However, not every medical profession fares this well among today's youth. Only 21% of teens believe that nursing has very great prestige. This finding is not only cause for concern given the hiring shortage in this area but also differs markedly from adults' perception. Nearly half of adults (47%) – more than twice as many as teens – believe that nursing has very great prestige.

Top 10 Prestigious Professions and Occupations*

(% saying "very great prestige")

Base: Teens and Adults (see source below)

Teens		Adults	
#1	Doctor (55%)	#1	Scientist (57%)
#2	Member of Congress (41%)	#2	Fireman** (55%)
#3	Military Officer (40%)	#3	Doctor (52%)
#4	Fireman** (38%)	#4	Teacher (49%)
#5	Scientist (36%)	#5	Nurse (47%)
#6	Actor (36%)	#6	Military Officer (46%)
#7	Police Officer (32%)	#7	Police Officer (42%)
#8	Athlete (31%)	#8	Priest/Minister/Clergyman** (38%)
#9	Lawyer (29%)	#9	Member of Congress (30%)
#10	Entertainer (29%)	#10	Engineer (28%)

Source: Teen data from Harris Interactive YouthQuery™, conducted online October 2003, sample of 654 teens, 13- to 18-years-old; adult data from *The Harris Poll*®, conducted by telephone August 2003, sample of 1,011 adults 18-year-old and over.

* PRESTIGE OF 22 PROFESSIONS AND OCCUPATIONS (question asked in both teen and adult surveys)

"For each, (please tell us/would you tell me) if you feel it is an occupation of very great prestige, considerable prestige, some prestige or hardly any prestige at all?"

** Questions that contain reference to "man" in profession titles reflect how they were originally asked in the adult survey.

The references remain the same in order not to disrupt the trending of the data related to these professions.



YOUTH AND EDUCATION
The Harris Poll® PEOPLE

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Editorial: Our Take On It

by Dana Markow, PhD
Senior Research Director

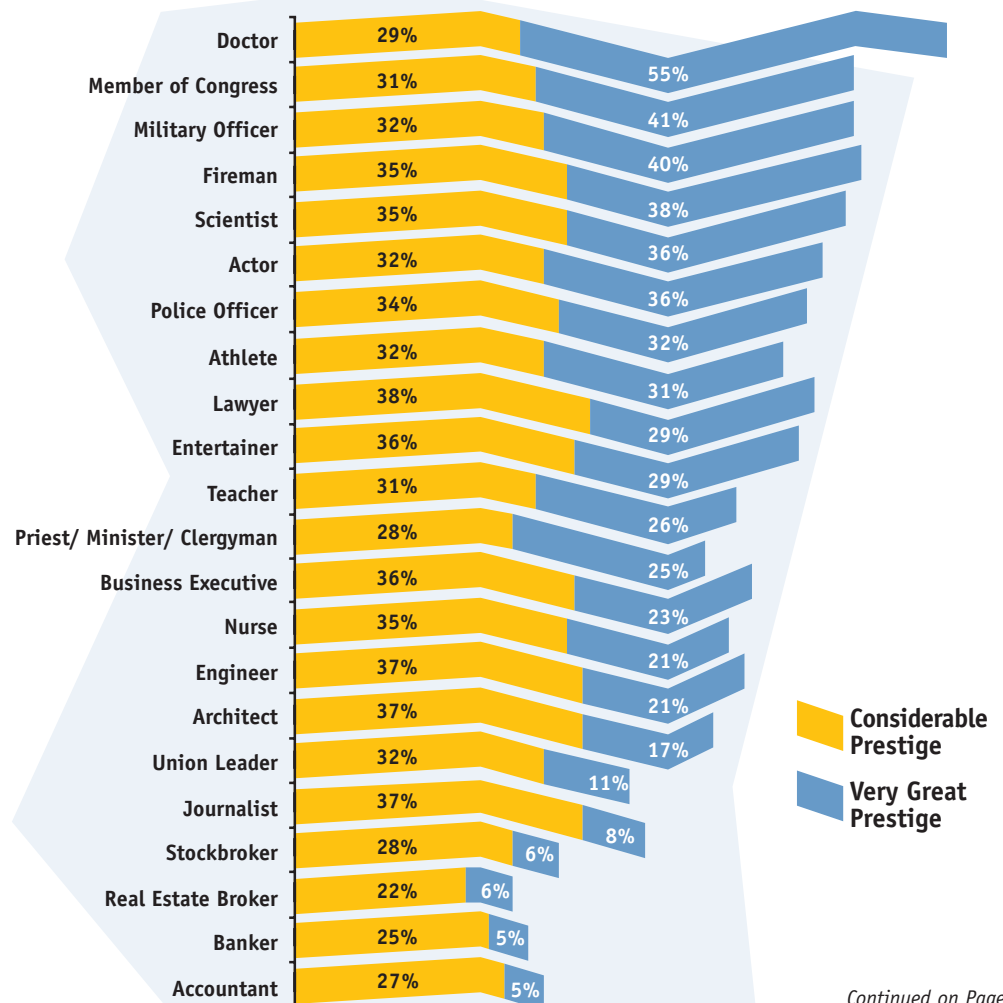
Very often in our work, a main research question centers on age differences. How do tweens differ from teens? How do both of these groups differ from adults? The research method used to address such questions is typically a cross-sectional design. In a cross-sectional design, participants of different ages are observed at the same point in time. Any differences between the age groups are attributed to developmental changes as children and teens get older. A cross-sectional design has the advantage of being a relatively quick and efficient way of revealing age trends.

The cross-sectional design does have a potential drawback, particularly when studying groups with large age differences (e.g., tweens vs. adults). A well-known illustration of this drawback is a series of studies that purportedly revealed that intelligence increased until the age of 30 years and then declined. The studies that demonstrated this result were based on a cross-sectional design. The over-30 crowd should not get too depressed over this result (nor should the under-30 crowd become too smug)! Later analysis of additional data revealed that other factors (such as education, culture, etc.) and not age may have

For adults, a major component of prestige is respect. Adults' most prestigious occupations are not necessarily related to high salaries or fame, such as they are with teens, with whom celebrity plays a greater role in prestige. Actors, athletes and entertainers all make the teens' top-10 list but are not among adults' top ten most prestigious occupations. The teens' top-10 list also includes professions that are not necessarily high-salaried, such as military officer, fireman and police officer, which teens may value for the respect and esteem that they command.

Money, often a component of "celebrity," appears to be a more important factor for teens and may also account for why doctors appear much higher than nurses on the teens' list and why lawyers make the teens' top-10 list of prestigious occupations but not the adults' top-10. However, money clearly is not the only factor related to prestige for teens – high-earning occupations such as stockbroker and banker are among teens' least prestigious occupations. In fact, recent scandals in business and journalism may have taken their toll in this area. Fewer than 1 in 10 teens believe that a journalist (8%), stockbroker (6%), banker (5%) or an accountant (5%) are occupations of very great prestige. Despite these findings, a business executive is still viewed by nearly one-quarter of teens (23%) as having very great prestige.

Prestige of 22 Professions and Occupations Among Teenagers



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explained the difference in IQ scores. These factors were associated with the generation in which each group was born and not the age the groups were at the time of the study. These generational factors are known as cohort effects.

A research approach that can minimize the cohort effect is a longitudinal design. In this approach, the same groups of individuals are observed over a long period of time. These participants are all from the same generation or cohort. Unfortunately, the time commitment for researchers and participants and the high cost of longitudinal studies usually make this approach unfeasible. And longitudinal designs have weaknesses as well, since participants retaking the same survey at multiple times could affect results. In addition, since the study is conducted with only one generation, the results may be detecting a historical trend and not be able to be generalized to other groups.

Ideally, a research design that combines both cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches would enable you to address the second concern. In such a design, several cohorts are studied over time. Analyses can be done within cohorts – a longitudinal comparison. Further analyses can be done across cohorts at the same point in time – a cross-sectional comparison of different age groups. In addition,

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A closer look at the occupations that teens rate high in prestige reveals the importance of public service for this generation. Four in 10 teens believe that being a member of Congress (41%), a military officer (40%) or a fireman (38%) is an occupation of very great prestige.

Teaching just misses teens' top-10 list of most prestigious professions. One-quarter (26%) says that teaching has very great prestige. However, teaching is among teens' five most desired occupations. When asked which one job they would most like to have, teens select occupations both with and without high prestige:

- Doctor (10%)
- Teacher (8%)
- Actor (8%)
- Engineer (6%)
- Entertainer (5%)
- Athlete (5%)
- President of the United States (5%)
- Scientist (5%).

One question that these survey results raise is whether the differences seen between teens' and adults' ratings of occupations' prestige are related to their different stages in life and experience, or whether teens' greater emphasis on celebrity and also public service, reflect core, defining aspects of their generation.

A press release from the recent Harris Poll on this subject is available at http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/index.asp?PID=406



Announcing...

The Harris Interactive/Kid Power Poll of Youth Marketers

Ever considered how youth marketers view advertising and marketing to children? Or current issues with regard to advertising and selling to children? And what the future holds for the current youth generation?

We will soon be conducting an online poll to find out, and you will be invited to take part. In conjunction with Kid Power, we will poll a sample of individuals working in the youth industry to understand their opinions on topics such as:

- Careers in youth marketing and their career satisfaction
- Ethical issues inherent in selling to children
- Overall views toward the Millennial generation
- Views towards the proper industry role in issues such as nutrition and obesity in children, advertising in schools, and violent content in the media.

Results will be shared in an upcoming issue of *Trends & Tudes* and will be sent to all who participate. In addition, we will be presenting the findings at Kid Power Spring 2004 in May. We thank you in advance for helping us with this important poll. Look for an email soon that will explain how you can take part in this poll.

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this combined design also allows for a comparison of how different generations change over time. For example, E. B. White once stated "A man's liberal and conservative phases seem to follow each other in a succession of waves from the time he is born." A study that followed multiple generations over time would be a good approach for examining how political attitudes change across the lifespan and how this development may differ across generations.

This comparison of different research designs highlights the importance of generations, a topic of much interest to those who look for trends in youth and youth marketing. Characterizing generations at a particular point in time involves examining developmental issues, life stage issues and historical trends. Because Harris Interactive has been conducting research with children and teens for more than 20 years, we enjoy having the opportunity to look at trends over time and examine these generational differences.

Ask a Question...

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

...Get an Answer

Sarah McEvily from ESPN submitted the following question:

Which of the following media do you most prefer to use when looking for sports information?

	Boys	Girls
TV	42%	32%
Internet	26%	26%
Newspapers	7%	9%
Magazines	5%	5%
Radio	1%	3%
Books	2%	2%
Video games	2%	1%
Movies	1%	0%
None of these	13%	23%

Source: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM, November 2003, online survey of 8- to 18-year-olds

Recent Research for Public Release

A Third of Public Has Had Flu Shots: Substantial Numbers Have Tried and Failed to Get Flu Shots for Children (12%) or Themselves (5%)

Rochester, NY—December 30, 2003—This year, most people who say they were concerned they might get the flu say they armed themselves with a flu shot, according to results of a recent Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll. Nevertheless, perhaps because public information about vaccination has increased the demand, there are others who tried, but failed, to get themselves or their children vaccinated.

This poll of 1,792 U.S. adults nationwide was conducted online between December 18 and 22, 2003 by Harris Interactive for The Wall Street Journal Online's Health Industry Edition, which offers authoritative analysis, breaking news and commentary from top health industry journalists.

To access a downloadable PDF of this Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll with complete data tables, please visit:

http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_wsaj.asp where previous issues of the Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll are also archived.

Contact Us

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

Note to Subscribers

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

Coming Soon...

360 Youth College Explorer: 2003-2004, Powered by Harris Interactive

360 Youth College Explorer, the annual study of college students powered by Harris Interactive, will be available in January on a subscription basis. This is the only study of its kind to provide marketers with insights about the entire college market of 18- to 30-year-olds including full- and part-time students, students at 2- and 4-year institutions, and undergraduate and graduate students. This year's topics cover income and spending, financial services, online behavior, technology and wireless, entertainment, food and dining, and much more. Contact us at 877.919.4765 or info@harrisinteractive.com for details.

Let's Meet at Kid Power!

Harris Interactive is pleased to sponsor and present at **Kid Power Spring 2004, May 3-4**, in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

We will present:

- Issues of gender among children (presenting with the Girl Scouts Research Institute)
- Results of the Harris Interactive/Kid Power poll on ethics in youth marketing.

Please join us at this event.

More information is at www.kidpowerx.com



Trends & Tudes Poll Vault

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