



CONCERNING KIDS A SKILLMAN FOUNDATION STUDY

PARENTS AND KIDS: SUMMARY REPORTS

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Conducted by



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I. CONCERNING KIDS: TALKING ABOUT SEX, ALCOHOL, CIGARETTES, AND DRUGS

A. Talking about sex

Majorities of parents have talked with their child about when he or she is allowed to begin dating. More than 8 in 10 (82%) Detroit, more than 7 in 10 out-Wayne (74%) and Macomb (72%), and two thirds (66%) of Oakland parents have talked with their child about dating.

Similarly, majorities of parents report they have talked with their child about sex. More than 8 in 10 parents across Metro Detroit have talked with their kid about intercourse or oral sex; Detroit (88%), out-Wayne (83%), Macomb (84%), and Oakland (87%). Yet, about 1 in 10 Detroit (11%) and Oakland (12%) parents and slightly more out-Wayne (17%) and Macomb (16%) parents have not talked with their kids about sex.

Parents and kids have differing views regarding the sexual behaviors of kids. More than one quarter (27%) of Metro Detroit kids say that most kids their age are having intercourse or sex. While only 12% of parents think that most kids their child's age are having sex. However, more parents say that some kids their child's age are having intercourse or sex (49%) compared with 38% of kids who report some kids their age are having sex. Parents are more likely than kids to say only a few kids their child's age are having intercourse or sex (23% vs.16%). There is not a significant difference in the amount of parents (13%) and kids (15%) who say none of the kids their child's age are having intercourse or sex.

Kids are much more likely to say that most of youth their age are having oral sex (24%), whereas only 8% of parents say that most of youth their child's age are having oral sex. As with beliefs about intercourse, more parents than kids say that some kids are having oral sex (43% vs. 36%). More parents say only a few kids are having oral sex (22%) compared to kids (15%) and there is no difference in the number of parents and kids who say none of the youth their child's age are having oral sex (15% vs. 19%). However, more parents say they do not know (11%) than kids do (3%) if youth their age are having oral sex.

Overall most parents think kids are ready to make decisions about sex when they are married, physically and emotionally mature, or when they are a legal adult at age 18. When asked at what age do you think a person is ready to have intercourse or sex, one quarter (25%) of both parents and kids volunteer that a person is ready when they are married. More parents (19%) say a person is ready to have sex when they are physically and emotionally mature, compared to 15% of kids. About 2 in 10 Metro Detroit parents report age 18 is when most people are ready to have sex; Detroit (23%), out-Wayne (21%), Macomb (23%), and Oakland (21%).

Similarly, about one quarter (24%) of parents think a person is ready to have oral sex when they are married, and 18% say a person is ready to have oral sex when they are physically and emotionally mature. Eight percent of parents volunteered the response “never”, when asked at what age is a person ready to have oral sex.

Parents are also more likely to say a person is ready to have oral sex when they are married than kids are (24% vs. 17%). Parents and kids say that a person is ready to have oral sex when they are physically and emotionally mature about the same (18% vs.16%). About 2 in 10 tri-county and 1 in 10 Detroit parents report age 18 is when most people are ready to have oral sex.

B. Influence on when to have sex

Slightly more kids report their parents have a lot of influence on when they choose to have sex than parents think (50% vs. 47%). More parents say that they have a lot or some influence on when their child chooses to have intercourse or oral sex (84%) than kids who say their parent has a lot or some influence on their decision to have sex (74%).

Parents are more likely to think that older brothers and sisters will have a lot or some influence in a child’s decision to have intercourse or oral sex (78%) than kids (63%). More kids (33%) think that older brothers and sisters have not too much or no influence at all on when to have intercourse or oral sex compared with parents (19%).

Parents say that friends have a lot or some influence (75%) much more than kids say their friends do (53%) on the decision to have intercourse or oral sex. Kids are more likely to say their friends have not too much or no influence at all (45%) than parents (24%) when it comes to their decision to have intercourse or oral sex.

C. Concern about sexually transmitted diseases

Parents are very concerned with the issue of sexually transmitted diseases for children and youth in their community. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not a concern at all and 10 is a major concern, a majority of parents rate their concern with sexually transmitted diseases as a 7, 8, 9, or 10, for a top four box score of 78%. The mean concern score for parents regarding sexually transmitted diseases is 8.15 for Metro Detroit, 8.94 for City of Detroit, 7.60 for out-Wayne, 8.34 for Macomb, and 7.76 for Oakland.

Nearly two thirds (65%) of kids are very concerned with the issue of sexually transmitted diseases. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not a concern at all and 10 is a major concern, a majority of youth rate their concern with sexually transmitted diseases as a 7, 8, 9, or 10, for a top four box score of 65%. The mean concern score for youth regarding sexually transmitted diseases is 6.97 for Metro Detroit, 8.10 for City of Detroit, 6.58 for out-Wayne, 6.77 for Macomb, and 6.40 for Oakland.

D. Talking about alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs

The majority of kids in this survey report that they have not used alcohol, tried cigarettes, or used illegal drugs. Among those kids who report using these substances, alcohol is the most commonly used substance, followed by cigarettes and illegal drugs. There are also differing levels of parental awareness of this substances use, with parents being more likely to be aware of alcohol use than that of cigarettes or drugs.

Kids are more likely to report having tried alcohol than either cigarettes or illegal drugs. Thirty-six percent (36%) of kids report that they have drunk alcohol, compared to 16% who report that they have smoked at least part or all of a cigarette, and 10% who report that they have tried using illegal drugs.

The paired nature of this survey also permits analysis of the responses of both reported usage and parental perceptions of use of each of these substances. Parents were asked if they suspected or know that their children had used these substances. Although many of the parents of children who reported this substance use are unaware of their child's activities, parents are more likely to be aware that their children have tried alcohol than cigarettes or illegal drugs.

Slightly more than two-thirds (68%) of parents of children who report drinking alcohol are either aware or suspect that their kids have done so. In contrast, about one-third of these adolescent drinkers have parents who do not suspect that their children drink. Parents are somewhat less aware of their kids smoking and drug use behaviors. Of those kids who have smoked, 57% of their parents believe that their kids have tried smoking versus 43% who do not. Only about half of the parents whose kids report illegal drug use are aware of their children's drug behavior. Among those kids who have tried illegal drugs, 51% of their parents think that they have done so compared to 49% who do not.

These findings suggest that alcohol is the most commonly used substance among these teens, and also the one with the greatest level of parental awareness. In contrast, smoking and drug use are less prevalent. Equally important, among the parents whose children report using these substances, parents are less likely to be aware of smoking or drug behaviors.

As is typical of direct questions on sensitive subjects this survey found a social desirability effect on questions regarding drinking, smoking, and drug use. Social desirability occurs when respondents are unwilling to admit certain attitudes and behaviors because they are not considered to be socially acceptable. As a result, proxy questions were asked. In this case asking respondents about peers' usage yields responses closer to actual behavior. Direct questioning yields interesting data at a comparable level to look at differences between parents and kids and is more instructive than utilizing direct measures to estimate usage.

Interestingly, when comparing the percent of kids who report ever drinking alcohol (37%) or using drugs (10%) to current estimated public health data (47% and 29%), the alcohol use number is closer to the estimate than the drug use figure. This may be expected as drinking alcohol is considered more socially acceptable than using illegal drugs.

E. Drinking

There is a difference in parent beliefs and kids actions involving drinking alcohol. Teens think kids their age drink alcohol a lot or some (70%) more than parents think kids their child's age drinks alcohol a lot or some (58%). Parents were asked if they think their child has ever tried drinking alcohol before and more parents think their child has tried alcohol (42%) while only 37% of kids say they have tried alcohol.

- About 7 in 10 kids in Detroit (69%), out-Wayne (69%), and Oakland (68%), compared to 76% of Macomb think kids their age drink alcohol a lot or some.
- About 4 in 10 kids (37%) say they have drunk alcohol and 63% say they have not, compared to 42% of parents who think or know (4%) their child has tried alcohol 52% who think their child has not.

F. Smoking

There is no significant difference in parents thinking their teen has tried smoking and kids reporting they have actually smoked cigarettes before. Kids think youth their age smoke cigarettes a lot or some (69%) more than parents think youth their child's age smokes cigarettes a lot or some (60%). More than 8 in 10 kids say they have not smoked (84%), compared to 78% of parents who say they think their child has not tried smoking cigarettes before.

- About 7 in 10 kids in Detroit (69%) and out-Wayne (69%), compared to 78% of Macomb and 65% of Oakland teens, think kids their age smoke cigarettes a lot or some.

G. Illegal drugs

Parents are more concerned than kids with the issue of drug use in their community. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not a concern at all and 10 is a major concern, a majority of parents rate their concern with drug use as a 7, 8, 9, or 10, for a top four box score of 90%. The mean concern score for parents regarding drug use is 8.97 for Metro Detroit, 9.23 for City of Detroit, 8.81 for out-Wayne, 9.18 for Macomb, and 8.66 for Oakland.

Nearly two thirds (66%) of kids are very concerned with the issue of drug use. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not a concern at all and 10 is a major concern, a majority of youth rate their concern with drug use as a 7, 8, 9, or 10, for a top four box score of 66%. The mean concern score for youth regarding drug use is 7.09 for Metro Detroit, 7.67 for City of Detroit, 6.74 for out-Wayne, 7.33 for Macomb, and 6.64 for Oakland.

- Kids report marijuana, followed by ecstasy, alcohol, and cocaine as the types of drugs youth in their community are using most often.
- About 7 in 10 kids in Detroit (68%) compared to 65% in out-Wayne, 74% in Macomb, and 67% in Oakland think kids their age use drugs a lot or some.

Kids think youth their age use drugs a lot or some (69%) more than parents think youth their child's age uses drugs a lot or some (58%). Parents were asked if they think their child's friends have ever tried drugs before and 36% of parents say they think their child's friends have and 57% say they don't think they have. Kids were also asked if their friends have ever tried using drugs before and 41% of kids say their friends have and 56% say their friends have not.

- One in 10 kids (10%) say they have tried using an illegal drug and 90% say they have not, compared to 9% of parents who think their child has tried an illegal drug and 88% who think their child has not.

H. Influence on whether or not kids will drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes, or use drugs

Parents are think they have more of an influence on whether or not their kids will use drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes than kids say they do. Nearly all parents (95%) report they have either a lot (74%) or some (21%) influence on their child's decision making regarding using drugs, drinking, or smoking. Yet, 8 in 10 kids report their parents have either a lot (62%) or some (19%) influence on their decision making regarding using drugs, drinking, or smoking.

Parents are also more likely to think their child's friends have more of an influence on whether or not their kids will use drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes than kids say they do. Over two-thirds of parents compared to 57% of teens report their friends have either a lot (29% and 30%, respectively) or some (39% and 29%, respectively) influence on kids will use drugs, smoke or drink.

Also, more than 8 in 10 parents think older brothers or sisters have more of an influence on whether or not their kids will use drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes than kids say they do. Just over half (52%) of kids report their older siblings have either a lot (34%) or some (18%) influence on them, compared to 85% of parents who report older siblings have either a lot (54%) or some (31%) influence.

II. VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

A. Prejudice and Discrimination

Kids in Metro Detroit report that gay and lesbian young people and are discriminated against in the school environment the most followed by Arabs and Chaldeans. Trends overall and by area are listed below, rank ordered from the group most discriminated against to the group least discriminated against.

Nearly half (47%) of kids in Metro Detroit report there is a lot or some prejudice and discrimination against gay and lesbian young people in the school environment. Thirty-one percent say there is no discrimination at all against this group. There are no differences between the City of Detroit, out-Wayne county, Macomb county, and Oakland county in terms of the amount of discrimination against gay and lesbian young people.

Overall, 33% of kids in Metro Detroit say that Arabs and Chaldeans experience a lot or some prejudice and discrimination in their schools. Forty-one percent say there is no discrimination against this group. Arabs and Chaldeans are discriminated against equally across all areas surveyed. About 3 in 10 kids in out-Wayne (31%), 38% in Macomb, and 31% in Oakland counties say this group is discriminated against a lot or some, and 32% of kids in the City of Detroit report the same. Kids in the City of Detroit (49%) are more likely to say there is no discrimination at all against Arabs and Chaldeans than kids in Macomb (37%) and Oakland (38%) counties.

According to kids, African Americans are more likely to experience no discrimination and prejudice at all in their school in the City of Detroit (57%) than in out-Wayne (48%), Macomb (44%), and Oakland (51%) counties. Similar numbers report African Americans experience prejudice and discrimination a lot or some across all areas surveyed; 22% of Detroit, 19% of out-Wayne, 23% of Macomb, and 18% of Oakland kids.

Just over half (51%) of kids in Metro Detroit say there is no discrimination at all against the disabled in schools, while 48% say there is a lot (8%), some (16%) or only a little (24%). This finding is stable across the different areas surveyed.

Fifteen percent of Metro Detroit area kids say that there is at least some prejudice and discrimination against Hispanic, Latino, and Spanish kids in their schools, while 59% say there is none at all. Hispanics, Latinos, and Spanish experience the same amount of prejudice and discrimination across the different areas of Metro Detroit.

In the City of Detroit, kids who are white are more likely to experience at least some prejudice and discrimination, according to 23% of kids there, compared with 13% in out-Wayne, 13% in Macomb, and 12% in Oakland counties. Kids in out-Wayne (70%), Macomb (72%), and Oakland (68%) counties say there is no prejudice and discrimination against people who are white compared to kids in the City of Detroit (59%).

Overall, 14% of Metro Detroit kids say that women are discriminated against a lot or some in their schools, while 67% say there is no prejudice against women at all. Kids in the City of Detroit are more likely to report at least some discrimination against women (21%) than kids in out-Wayne (14%), Macomb (12%) and Oakland (11%) counties. In Macomb and Oakland counties, 72% of kids say there is no prejudice and discrimination against women at all, more so than kids in the City of Detroit (60%).

B. Bullying in Schools

Parents and kids have similar beliefs about how safe their school is. A little more than half of both say it is very safe (52%) and about four out of ten think it is somewhat safe (42%, 39%). More kids think their school is either not too safe or not at all safe (8%) compared to 5% of parents.

- Parents in the City of Detroit are more likely to say their child's school is not too safe or not too safe at all (11%) than those in out-Wayne (2%), Macomb (3%), and Oakland (3%) counties.

- More parents in Oakland county say their child’s school is very safe (66%) compared to parents in the City of Detroit (35%), out-Wayne (57%), and Macomb county (52%).
- Kids in the City of Detroit (21%) are much more likely to say their school is not too safe or not safe at all than kids in out-Wayne (4%), Macomb (5%) and Oakland (3%) counties.

Kids are more likely to feel safe when walking to or from school (93%), than how parents feel about their child walking to or from school (88%).

- Parents in the City of Detroit are more likely to say they feel their child is not too safe or not at all safe (22%) when walking to and from school than parents in out-Wayne (6%), Macomb (7%), and Oakland counties (10%).
- Kids in the City of Detroit say they feel not too safe or not at all safe when they are walking to and from school (19%) more than those in out-Wayne (2%), Macomb (2%) and Oakland (4%) counties.

Kids are more likely to say they have seen someone get teased or bullied a lot or sometimes (82%) than parents to say they hear about someone getting teased or bullied (77%).

- Parents in Macomb county are more likely to say they hear about kids getting teased or bullied a lot or sometimes (82%) than parents in the City of Detroit (73%). Seventy-eight percent of parents in out-Wayne county and 77% in Oakland county report the same thing.
- Kids in Macomb county are more likely to say they see kids getting teased or bullied (88%) than kids in the City of Detroit (80%) and Oakland county (79%).

Parents hear about someone getting threatened with physical violence a lot or sometimes about the same frequency that kids see it happen at school (47% vs. 50%).

- Parents in the City of Detroit hear about kids getting threatened with physical violence a lot or sometimes (56%) more than parents in out-Wayne (43%), Macomb (48%), and Oakland (39%) counties.
- Kids in the City of Detroit see kids getting threatened with physical violence a lot or sometimes (62%) more than kids in out-Wayne (44%), Macomb (54%), and Oakland (42%) counties.

III. CONCERNING PARENTS AND KIDS RELATIONSHIPS

A. How parents and kids spend their time together

A clear majority (79%) of Metro Detroit parents believe growing up is harder for kids today than it was when they were growing up. Kids are more divided, with 57% reporting growing up is harder today than when their parent was growing up, and pluralities say it is easier (20%) or about the same (22%) today.

- Kids between the age of 15 to 18 years say that growing up today is harder (60%) more than those who are 12 to 14 years old (54%). The younger group is more likely to say its easier (23%) than older kids (17%), and 22% of both age groups think growing up today is about the same.

The majority of parents surveyed describe their relationship with their children as excellent, however the majority of kids are more divided and rate their relationship as excellent or good. More than 6 in 10 tri-county parents think their relationship with their child is excellent; 65% of out-Wayne, 64% of Macomb, and 65% of Oakland, while 55% of Detroit parents report their relationship as excellent. More than 3 in 10 tri-county parents think their relationship with their child is good; 32% of out-Wayne, 34% of Macomb, and 32% of Oakland, while 37% of Detroit parents report their relationship as good.

Kids are more likely to rate their relationship with parents as either “excellent or good”; Detroit (40% and 47%, respectively), out-Wayne (45% and 48%, respectively), Macomb (45% and 46%, respectively), and Oakland (47% and 41%, respectively). Across all four areas surveyed 10% of kids describe their relationship with their parent as “fair or poor”, compared to 4% of parents who describe their relationship this way.

- More kids age 12 to 14 (48%) describe their relationship with their parent as “excellent” than kids age 15 to 18 (40%). Younger and older kids rate their relationship with their parent as “fair or poor” about the same amount, 10% and 11%, respectively.

Most kids admit they tell their parents some or most about their daily life, but not everything. About half of all kids in out-Wayne (50%), Macomb (51%), and Oakland (52%) county compared to 42% of Detroit kids tell their parents “most” things. About three in ten kids in out-Wayne (32%), Macomb (28%), and Oakland (32%) county compared to 34% of Detroit kids tell their parents “some” things. About one in ten kids tell their parents “everything”; 12% of Detroit, 11% out-Wayne, 12% Macomb, and 9% Oakland.

- Kids that are younger are slightly more likely to tell their parents “most things” (51%) than older kids (47%), while more older kids (33%) say they tell their parents “some” things, compared with 30% of younger kids. There is no difference between younger and older kids for telling their parents “everything”, (11% and 10%, respectively).

When kids were asked about the kinds of things that they tell their parents and how honest they are in telling them, the majority of kids say they are “somewhat” honest. More than half of Detroit kids (56%), out-Wayne (57%), Macomb (58%), and Oakland (54%) say they are somewhat honest when talking with their parents. About 4 in 10 kids say they are “very honest” when talking with their parents; 39% of Detroit, 40% of out-Wayne, 42% of Macomb, and 45% of Oakland.

- Kids age 12 to 14 and those ages 15 to 18 do not differ in terms of how honest they are about the things they tell their parents.

B. What kids like to do these days

Most Metro Detroit parents and kids enjoy spending time together talking and hanging-out. About 2 in 10 (19%) parents report talking is what they enjoy doing the most with their child, followed by 14% of parents who report doing “anything and everything” as long as it is quality time or personal time with their child. Watching their kid playing sports (13%) and watching TV,

movies, and listening to music (8%) are also mentioned as activities parents enjoy doing the most with their child.

Metro Detroit kids also mention spending time together “hanging-out” (17%) and talking (13%) with their parent as what they enjoy doing the most with their parent. Kids also mention watching TV and movies (19%) and shopping (13%) as activities they enjoy doing the most with parents.

Metro Detroit kids spend most of their free time either hanging-out (25%), playing sports (19%), or watching TV (10%). Parents are aware of how kids are spending their free time. Most parents report their kids are playing sports (18%), watching TV (13%), or hanging-out (12%).

A clear majority of Metro Detroit parents report doing each of the following activities with their child at least sometimes.

Watching TV

More than 8 in 10 tri-county parents watch TV a lot or sometimes with their kids; out-Wayne (24% and 61%, respectively), Macomb (24% and 60%, respectively), and Oakland (26% and 57%, respectively). Nine in ten City of Detroit parents watch TV a lot (42%) or sometimes (48%) with their kids.

Playing games or sports

About 8 in 10 tri-county parents play games or sports with their kids a lot or sometimes; out-Wayne (28% and 53%, respectively), Macomb (29% and 52%, respectively), and Oakland (27% and 52%, respectively). Slightly more than three quarters of City of Detroit parents play games or sports a lot (27%) or sometimes (49%) with their kids.

Helping with homework

More than 7 in 10 tri-county parents help kids with homework a lot or sometimes; out-Wayne (41% and 36%, respectively), Macomb (36% and 38%, respectively), and Oakland (38% and 41%, respectively). Nearly nine in ten City of Detroit parents help kids with homework a lot (57%) or sometimes (31%).

Going to the movies

About 6 in 10 tri-county parents go to the movies with their kids a lot or sometimes; out-Wayne (13% and 47%, respectively), Macomb (12% and 47%, respectively), and Oakland (9% and 50%, respectively). Compared to three quarters of City of Detroit parents going to the movies a lot (24%) or sometimes (51%) with their kids.

Eating meals together

On average Metro Detroit parents and kids eat meals together 5 days a week. More City of Detroit parents than tri-county parents report having meals with their family everyday of the week. Nearly half (48%) of Detroit parents compared to 34% of out-Wayne, 37% of Macomb, and 41% of Oakland county parents eat with their family everyday. One third (33%) of Detroit parents have meals with their family 4 to 6 times a week compared to 48% of out-Wayne, 43% of Macomb, and 44% of Oakland parents. Less than 2 in 10 parents have meals with their family 1 to 3 times per week; 17% of Detroit, 16% of out-Wayne, 19% of Macomb, and 14% of Oakland. And, 2% of parents in Detroit and out-Wayne, and 1% of Macomb parents report never having meals with their family.

Yet Metro Detroit kids are more likely than their parents to say they eat meals with their family twice a week or less. More than one third (36%) of Detroit kids compared to 41% of out-Wayne, 42% of Macomb, and 37% of Oakland county kids eat with their family everyday. Less than 3 in 10 (28%) Detroit kids have meals with their family 4 to 6 times a week compared to 39% of out-Wayne, 34% of Macomb, and 38% of Oakland kids. Roughly one quarter (26%) of Detroit kids have meals with their family 1 to 3 times per week compared to 17% of out-Wayne, 20% of Macomb, and 23% of Oakland. And, 8% of kids in Detroit, 2% of out-Wayne, 4% of Macomb, and 1% of Oakland kids report never having meals with their family.

Kids were asked how they spend their time between the hours of 3p.m. and 5p.m. on an average school day. Doing homework was the top activity reported by 46% of Detroit kids, 41% of out-Wayne and Macomb kids, and 50% of Oakland kids. Sports practice was the second most reported activity with 7% of Detroit kids, 16% of out-Wayne and Macomb, and 18% of Oakland kids. Hanging out with friends and watching TV were the next two popular activities kids report; Detroit (7% and 13%, respectively), out-Wayne (13% and 9%, respectively), Macomb (11% and 6%, respectively), and Oakland (5% and 9%, respectively).

When kids were asked what is the one thing they do that they are most enthusiastic about a variety of activities were reported. Being on a sports team was the most popular response with 47% of Metro Detroit kids mentioning this activity, followed by playing a musical instrument or being in band (9%), and being involved in performance arts (8%). Parents also report being on a sports team (40%), playing a musical instrument or being in a band (11%), performance arts (6%), and hobbies (7%) as the top activities their child does that he or she is most enthusiastic about.

Kids were asked if they are involved in specific activities ranging from having a part-time job to being part of a social club or organization, while parents were asked how important it is for their child to be involved in each of these activities. Overall the majority of parents find it important for kids to be well rounded and involved in most activities. There are some differences between kids from Detroit and the surrounding counties with regards to a few specific activities, but in most cases kids are involved at about the same rate within Metro Detroit.

More (71%) Detroit kids are involved in church and church activities than out-Wayne (59%), Macomb (58%), and Oakland (57%) kids. Majorities of parents across all four areas consider it important for their kids to be involved in church and church activities. Parents in Detroit (72%) are significantly more likely to consider being involved with church and church activities as “very important” compared to tri-county parents; 54% of out-Wayne, 56% of Macomb, and 45% of Oakland. More than 9 in 10 (91%) Detroit parents consider it at least somewhat important for their kids to be involved in church and church activities. More than 8 in 10 tri-county parents consider it at least somewhat important for their kids to be involved in church and church activities; out-Wayne (84%), Macomb (85%), and Oakland (83%).

More out-Wayne and Macomb (75%), and Oakland (74%) kids play sports than City of Detroit (68%) kids. Majorities of parents across all four areas consider it important for their kids to be involved with sports. About 8 in 10 parents of Detroit (78%), out-Wayne (81%), Macomb (85%), and Oakland (80%) parents consider it at least somewhat important for kids to play sports.

And, more Detroit and Oakland (47%) kids have a part-time job during the summer than out-Wayne (38%) and Macomb (39%) kids. Less than one-quarter of Detroit (22%) and Macomb (21%) kids have a part time job during the school year compared to one quarter of out-Wayne (25%) and Oakland (26%) kids.

Majorities of parents find it important that kids have a part-time job during the summer. More than 8 in 10 City of Detroit parents consider kids having a part time job as very (51%) or somewhat (35%) important. About 8 in 10 out-Wayne and Macomb county parents also think it is very (36% and 35%, respectively) or somewhat (43% and 46%) important for kids to have a part time summer job. Three quarters of Oakland parents agree with 28% reporting this is very and 47% saying somewhat important.

Yet, when it comes to the importance of kids having a part-time job during the school year City of Detroit parents are divided while most tri-county parents do not consider it all that important. Over half of Detroit parents consider a part-time job during the school year very or somewhat important (54%) and more than two fifths (46%) think it is not too or not at all important. More than one third of parents from out-Wayne (38%), Macomb (34%), and Oakland (35%) county think a part-time job during the school year is very or somewhat important and more than six in ten think it is not too or not at all important (60%, 65%, and 65%, respectively).

Slightly fewer City of Detroit (44%) kids are involved in performance arts such as music, dancing, theater or acting than tri-county kids; out-Wayne (45%), Macomb (48%), and Oakland (53%). Across Metro Detroit the majority (78%) of parents consider kids involvement in the performance arts to be at least somewhat important.

Across Metro Detroit 8 in 10 parents consider kids involvement in social clubs or organizations to be at least somewhat important. Oakland county (42%) kids are more involved in social clubs or organizations than out-Wayne (39%), Macomb (32%), and City of Detroit (34%) kids.

The majority of Metro Detroit (91%) parents consider kids volunteering for a community service organization to be at least somewhat important. Oakland county (55%) kids are volunteers for a community service organization more than out-Wayne (46%), Macomb (43%), and City of Detroit (41%) kids.

C. What parents and kids dislike about each other

Both parents and kids were asked what one thing the other does that “drives them crazy”. Most kids report nagging and parents telling them what to do (29%) is the one thing that their parent does that drives them crazy. Most parents say the one thing their child does that drives them crazy is arguing or talking back (16%), followed by being messy (14%).

IV. KIDS CONCERNS

Top 4 box ratings¹ for how concerned Metro Detroit kids are with issues ranging from education and health, to violence are reported below. Each issue is rank ordered by mean according to areas kids are most to least concerned. The data show a cluster of five issues with similar mean scores, followed by three additional issues with lower but still above average scores. Quality of teachers rank as the top concern for kids, followed by quality of schools, crime and violence, concern over drugs, and sexually transmitted diseases.

The mean score for concern about **quality of teachers** is 7.13. Two thirds (66%) of children from Metro Detroit express major concern about the quality of teachers. Among children from the City of Detroit, almost three quarters (74%) express major concern about the quality of teachers. Over six in ten (62%) children from out-Wayne county, two thirds (66%) from Macomb county and almost two thirds (65%) from Oakland county express major concern about the quality of teachers.

The second concern is **quality of schools** with the mean of 7.09. Two thirds (66%) of children from Metro Detroit express major concern about the quality of schools. Among children from the City of Detroit, over three quarters (76%) express major concern about the quality of schools. Almost six in ten (58%) children from out-Wayne, about seven in ten (68%) from Macomb and over six in ten (62%) from Oakland express major concern about the quality of schools.

The mean score for concern about **crime and violence** is also 7.09. Two thirds (66%) of children across the four counties express major concern about crime and violence. Over one quarter of children from the City of Detroit (78%) and 61% of out-Wayne express major concern about crime and violence. Almost seven in ten (69%) children from Macomb and 57% from Oakland express major concern about crime and violence.

Tied with quality of schools and crime and violence, concern about **drugs** receives a mean score of 7.09. Two thirds (66%) of children from Metro Detroit express major concern about drugs. Among children from the City of Detroit, nearly three quarters (74%) express major concern about using drugs. Six in ten (60%) children from out-Wayne and Oakland and 67% from Macomb express major concern about drugs.

¹ Top 4 box ratings include 7, 8, 9 and 10 on a scale of zero to ten with 0 being not a concern at all and 10 being a major concern.

The mean score for concern about **sexually transmitted diseases** is 6.97. Nearly two thirds (65%) of children in all areas surveyed express major concern about sexually transmitted diseases. Among children from Detroit, 8 in 10 (80%) express major concern about sexually transmitted diseases. Nearly two thirds (62%) of children from out-Wayne, two thirds (66%) from Macomb and more than a half (56 %) of children from Oakland express major concern about sexually transmitted diseases.

The mean score for concern about **getting along with parents** is 6.52. Fifty-seven percent of children across the four counties express major concern about getting along with parents. Among children from Detroit, 67% express major concern about getting along with parents. More than half (53%) of children from out-Wayne, 57% of children from Macomb, and 53% of children from Oakland express major concern about getting along with parents.

The mean score for concern about **peer pressure** is 6.13. More than half (52%) of children in all areas surveyed express major concern about peer pressure. Among children from Detroit, 54% express major concern about peer pressure. More than half of children from out-Wayne (53%) and Macomb (56%) and less than half (47%) of children from Oakland express major concern about peer pressure.

The mean score for concern about **other problems at home** is 5.06. Nearly four in ten (39%) children from Metro Detroit express major concern about other problems at home. Among children from the city of Detroit, less than half (46%) express major concern about other problems at home. More than one third (34%) of children from out-Wayne, 43% from Macomb and more than three in ten (32%) from Oakland express major concern about other problems at home.

V. PARENTS TALK TO THEIR KIDS

A. Parents talk with kids about discrimination because of race, religion, cultural beliefs, and sexual orientation; sexual orientation is most difficult for parents to talk about

Parents were asked if they have ever personally talked with their children about people being treated differently because of their race, and nearly all (90%) parents in the Metro Detroit area report they have talked with their children about this. One in ten parents say they have not talked with their children about people being treated differently because of their race.

Although less than 9 in 10, the majority (83%) of parents in the Metro Detroit area report they personally have talked with their children about people being treated differently because of their cultural beliefs or customs. Just more than 1 in 10 (16%) parents say they have not talked with their children about people being discriminated against because of their cultural beliefs or customs.

Similarly, 78% of parents in the Metro Detroit area report they personally have talked with their children about people being treated differently because of their religion. About 2 in 10

parents have not talked with their children about people being treated differently because of their religion.

And, while fewer parents talk with kids about people being treated differently because of their sexual orientation than other reasons, still a majority (75%) of parents have talked with their children about this. About one quarter (23%) of parents have not talked with their children about people being discriminated against because of their sexual orientation.

B. Parents talk with kids about drinking, smoking, drugs, and sex

Nearly all (93%) parents in the Metro Detroit area report they personally have talked with their children about not drinking alcohol. Only 7% of parents say they have not talked with their children about not drinking alcohol.

Nearly all (95%) parents in the Metro Detroit area report they personally have talked with their children about not smoking cigarettes. Only 5% of parents say they have not talked with their children about smoking.

Similarly, nearly all (96%) parents in the Metro Detroit area report they personally have talked with their children about using illegal drugs. Only 4% of parents say they have not talked with their children about using illegal drugs.

The majority (72%) of parents report if they believed their child was using illegal drugs the action they would most likely take would be talking to their child. Other actions followed; about 2 in 10 (18%) parents would contact healthcare treatment professionals, 6% of parents say they would punish their child and 3% would contact the authorities.

Majorities of parents have talked with their child about when he or she is allowed to begin dating. More than 8 in 10 (82%) Detroit, more than 7 in 10 out-Wayne (74%) and Macomb (72%), and two thirds (66%) of Oakland parents have talked with their child about dating.

Similarly, majorities of parents report they have talked with their child about sex. More than 8 in 10 parents across Metro Detroit have talked with their kid about intercourse or oral sex; Detroit (88%), out-Wayne (83%), Macomb (84%), and Oakland (87%). Yet, about 1 in 10 Detroit (11%) and Oakland (12%) parents and slightly more out-Wayne (17%) and Macomb (16%) parents have not talked with their kids about sex.

VI. CONCERNING KIDS: ROLE MODELS AND MEDIA INFLUENCE

A. Role Models

Interestingly, kids and their parents' role model or personal hero is their mom. More than 2 in 10 kids say their mom (20%) and most parents say their mom (23%). More kids mention "no one" (14%), than their dad (12%), although another 5% mention both parents. Eleven percent of

kids say they “don’t know” who is their role model or personal hero. Parents mention their dad (16%) and another 5% mention both parents at higher rates than kids. Less than 2 in 10 parents say, “no one” (3%) or they “don’t know” (13%) who is their role model.

Other mentions kids report as role models include; brothers and sisters (5%), grandparents (5%), other family members (3%), famous athletes (6%) such as Steve Yzerman, Michael Jordan, Barry Sanders, Sammy Sosa, and Shaquille O’Neal to mention a few, famous singers (5%) including Aaliyah, Ashanti, Beyonce, Eminem, and 50 Cent, actors or TV stars (3%) examples include Adam Sandler, Angelina Jolie, Oprah, Ozzy, and others, teachers and coaches (2%), Jesus and God (2%), friends and neighbors (2%), historic figures (2%) including Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Albert Einstein, and cartoon figures (1%) like Spiderman, Superman, and Wonder Woman.

Other mentions parents report as role models include; Jesus, the Lord, or biblical persons (8%), clergyperson (1%), other family members (10%); including grandparent (5%), husband or wife (1%), aunt or uncle (2%), and sister or brother (2%), political figures (4%) such as President Bush (1%), Hillary Clinton (1%), Eleanor Roosevelt (1%), and Ronald Regan (1%). Martin Luther King, Jr. (1%), Oprah Winfrey (1%), Mother Theresa (1%), and John Wayne (1%) were also mentioned by a few parents.

B. Media Influence

Nearly 8 in 10 (79%) Metro Detroit parents think entertainment media such as TV, movies, video games, magazines and the Internet influence their child’s personal values, aspirations, and dreams at least somewhat. More than 7 in 10 City of Detroit parents think their child’s personal values are influenced a lot (33%) or some (40%) by entertainment media. More than three quarters of parents in out-Wayne think their child’s personal values are influenced a lot (35%) or some (42%) by entertainment media. More than 8 in 10 Macomb and Oakland parents think their child’s personal values are influenced a lot (35% and 36%, respectively) or some (47% and 46%, respectively) by entertainment media.

While most parents think entertainment media influences kids, kids do not think they are influenced as strongly as their parents do. On the other-hand just more than half (45%) of Metro Detroit kids do not think that entertainment media such as TV, movies, video games, magazines, and the Internet influence their personal values, aspirations, and dreams much at all. Fifty-four percent of kids in the City of Detroit report entertainment media influences them a lot (14%) or some (40%). Just less than half of kids in out-Wayne say entertainment media influences them a lot (11%) or some (38%). More than six in ten kids from Macomb think entertainment media influences them a lot (15%) or some (46%). More than half of kids in Oakland county say entertainment media influences them a lot (10%) or some (45%).

- Kids age 12 to 14 and older kids age 15 to 18 say they are influenced the same amount by entertainment media; 57% and 54% respectively, report being influenced at least some by media, while 42% and 46% respectively, say they are not too or not at all influenced by media.

VII. CONCERNING KIDS' FUTURE: WHAT DO KIDS WANT TO DO WITH THEIR FUTURE AND DO PARENTS AGREE?

When asked what they want to do with their life, kids from Metro Detroit report a wide variety of goals. The top two career choices are medical professions (18%) and being a pro-athlete (8%). Teacher, engineer, actor and showbiz, as well as fashion, design and architect careers all were mentioned by 6% of Metro kids. And 5% report an interest in a law career.

- Among children from the City of Detroit, 19% indicate the medical field as their top career interest, and one in ten report a pro-athlete career. Eighteen percent of children from out-Wayne county would choose a medical career and 8% a teaching career. Approximately two in ten (19%) children from Macomb county would choose a medical career and almost one in ten (9%) a pro-athlete career. Sixteen percent of children from Oakland county would choose a medical career and almost one in ten (9%) a fashion, design and architect career.

Almost seven in ten (69%) parents from Metro Detroit report that they talk a lot with their children about what they want to do after high school.

- More than three quarters (76%) of parents from the City of Detroit say that they talk a lot with their children about their future. Almost two thirds (65%) of parents from out-Wayne, two thirds of parents from Macomb and more than two thirds (67%) of parents from Oakland report that they talk a lot with their children about their future.

More than eight in ten (83%) parents from Metro Detroit want their children to go to college after high school. Four percent of Metro Detroit parents want their children to get a job or start working in a particular field after high school graduation. Five percent of Metro parents say that they would like any choice their children make and 5% say that they just want to see their children happy and successful.

- Eighty-seven percent of parents from the City of Detroit report that they want their children to go to college.
- More than eight in ten (81%) of parents from out-Wayne and Macomb say that they want their children to go to college. Four percent from out-Wayne and 5% of parents from Macomb report that they want their children to find job or go to the particular field of work after the high school. Seven percent from out-Wayne and 4% of parents from Macomb say that they will like any choice their children make.
- Eighty four percent of parents from Oakland county say that they want their children to go to college and 1% say that they want their children to work after high school. Five percent say that they will like any choice their children make.

A majority (81%) of kids from Metro Detroit say that they are very interested in going to college.

- More than three quarters (78%) of children from the City of Detroit, 82% from out-Wayne, more than eight in ten (81%) from Macomb and 84 % from Oakland county report that they are very interested in going to college.

When asked how prepared they are for college, majority (84%) of kids from Metro Detroit report that they are very or somewhat prepared.

- More than eight in ten (81%) children from the City of Detroit, 87% from out-Wayne and 85% from Macomb and Oakland report that they are very or somewhat prepared for college.

When asked how confident they feel in knowing where to get help for college preparation, kids from Metro Detroit are split in saying that they are either very (46%) or somewhat (43%) confident.

- Approximately half of the children (51%) from the City of Detroit compared to less than half (49%) from out-Wayne, 39% from Macomb and 47% from Oakland report that they are very confident in knowing where to get help for college preparation. Thirty seven percent of children from the City of Detroit compared to 43% from out-Wayne, 47% from Macomb and 44% from Oakland report that they are somewhat confident where to get help for college preparation.

More than three quarters (76%) of kids from Metro Detroit say that the MEAP tests are very or somewhat important.

- More than 8 in 10 children from the City of Detroit (84%), three quarters of children from out-Wayne, 73% from Macomb and 72% from Oakland report that the MEAP tests are very or somewhat important to their future.

When asked how interested they are in having a mentor in their life, seven in ten children from Metro Detroit say that they are interested, and 22% say that they are not too interested and 8% say that they are not at all interested.

- Eighty five percent of children from the City of Detroit say that they are interested in having a mentor in their life, one in ten are not too interested and 6% are not at all interested.
- Two thirds (66%) of children from out-Wayne say they are interested in having a mentor in their life, 27 % are not too interested and 7% are not at all interested.
- Nearly two thirds (65%) of children from Macomb and Oakland county say that they are interested in having a mentor, one quarter say that they are not too interested and one in ten and 11% from Macomb and Oakland county respectively, say they are not at all interested.

When asked what they would want to discuss personally with a mentor if they had one, the top first mention among children from Metro Detroit is school (27%), followed by general life problems (15%) and planning for their future college and career (12%).

- Three in ten of children from the City of Detroit mention school first, followed by general life problems (14%) and future planning for their college and career (12%).
- Twenty one percent of children from out-Wayne county report school (21%) first followed by general life problems (19%) and planning for their future college and career (14%).
- Twenty eight percent of children from Macomb county also report school on the first place followed by general life problems (16%) and planning for their future college and career (10%).
- Thirty one percent of children from Oakland county mention school first followed by planning for their future college and career (14%) and general life problems (11%).

When asked what 3 main characteristics or qualities they would look for in a mentor if they had one, children from Metro Detroit top characteristics mentioned are; a nice and friendly person (17%), understanding and open-minded (10%), and an intelligent person (10%).

- Among children from the City of Detroit, top mentions are; nice and friendly person (21%), good listener (9%) and an open-minded and intelligent person (9%).
- Among children from out-Wayne, top mentions are; nice and friendly (16%), and a good listener (13%).
- Among children from Macomb, top two first mentions are; nice and friendly (16%) and sense of humor qualities (10%).
- Among children from Oakland, top mentions are nice and friendly (15%), open-minded (15%), and a good listener (13%).

Methodology

The Skillman Foundation commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut to conduct a survey of Metropolitan Detroit parents and kids on issues concerning youth today. The Skillman Foundation's survey of parents and kids is one of a kind groundbreaking survey for the Detroit Metro area. This survey is part of the Concerning Kids series and was conducted July 1 through October 6, 2003. For the first time ever a regionally representative survey of parents and their children age 12-17 explored what kids opinions are on issues they face today like health, sex, drugs, alcohol, education, and relationships with their parents. Other topics areas covered in the survey include mentoring, safety in and outside of school, and violence.

The margin of error is $\pm 3.5\%$ for the total parent and child population and $\pm 6.6\%$ for each of the metropolitan areas surveyed. The margin of error may be greater for smaller sub-groups.

An executive summary and actual study results are available to the public at www.skillman.org.