



THE 12TH ANNUAL

# GALLUP POLL OF THE PUBLIC'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by George H. Gallup

*Once again the Kappan is privileged to publish the full report of an attitude survey conducted by the Gallup Poll. The Gallup education polls are an established source of reliable information concerning trends in opinion about significant school questions. For school officials, the polls are valuable in at least two important ways: They alert decision makers to overall public reaction to a variety of school programs and policies. And they serve as a national benchmark against which local attitudes may be measured.*

*If local officials wish to employ questions asked in the Gallup education surveys, they are welcome to do so. The questions are not copyrighted. Moreover, no limitations are placed upon the use of information contained in this report,*

*beyond customary credit to source and observance of the usual canons of accuracy and completeness of quotation.*

*This year Phi Delta Kappa's Dissemination Division, assisted by the Gallup Organization, is prepared to help school districts and other agencies to survey local populations. For details of this service, called PACE, see the box on page 46.*

*The Charles F. Kettering Foundation, through its affiliate, I/D/E/A, is now financing the education poll, while Phi Delta Kappa has been authorized to publish it in full before distribution to other media. We are grateful to B. Frank Brown and John Bahner of I/D/E/A and Kettering for their strong support of the project. — SME*

## Purpose of the Study

This survey, which measures the attitudes of Americans toward their public schools, is the 12th annual survey in this series. Funding for the survey is currently provided by I/D/E/A, the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc., an affiliate of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation. A great effort is made each year to deal with issues of greatest concern to both educators and to the public. New as well as trend questions are included in this and every survey.

To be sure that the survey would embrace the most important issues in the field of education, the Kettering Foundation sent letters to educators across the nation asking for their ideas. Following this, an executive committee, including representatives of the Kettering Foundation and Gallup, met to discuss issues, evaluate proposed questions, and to suggest new questions for the survey.

We wish to thank all persons who contributed their ideas to this survey.

## Research Procedure

**The Sample.** The sample used in this survey embraced a total of 1,547 adults (18 years of age and older). It is described as a modified probability sample of the nation. Personal, in-home interviewing was conducted in all areas of the nation and in all types of communities. A description of the sample will be found at the end of this report.

**Time of Interviewing.** The fieldwork for this study was carried out during the period of 1-8 May 1980.

**The Report.** In the tables that follow, the heading "Parochial School Parents" includes not only parents of students who attend parochial schools but also parents of students who attend private or independent schools. This heading is used because parochial school students outnumber private or independent school students.

Due allowance must be made for statistical variation, especially in the case of findings for small groups where relatively few respondents were interviewed.

The findings of this report apply only to the U.S. as a whole and not to individual local communities. Local surveys, using the same questions, can be conducted to determine how local areas compare with the national norm.

## Major Problems Confronting the Public Schools in 1980

Discipline continues to be cited most often when people are asked to name the major problems facing the public schools in their own communities. Approximately one person in every four names "discipline." As was the case last year, second place goes to the "use of dope and drugs." Named in third place is "poor curriculum and poor standards."

Using such an "open" question permits persons interviewed to cite any problems that come to mind without benefit of a list. In fact, they can name as many as they wish. This question approach permits any new problems that may arise in any part of the nation to find their way onto the list.

The list of problems, as named by the public this year, remains much the same as last year with no significant changes.

Here is the question:

**What do you think are the biggest problems with which the public schools in this community must deal?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents** %
Lack of discipline	26	24	26	48
Use of dope/drugs	14	15	12	10
Poor curriculum/poor standards	11	11	10	10
Lack of proper financial support	10	9	11	9
Integration/busing (combined)	10	10	10	10
Large school/too many classes/overcrowding	7	6	8	5
Difficulty in getting good teachers	6	5	7	7
Parents' lack of interest	6	5	6	5
Teachers' lack of interest	6	4	7	8
Pupils' lack of interest/truancy	5	5	6	7
Crime/vandalism	4	5	3	5
Mismanagement of funds/programs	3	2	3	1
Drinking/alcoholism	2	2	1	3
Problems with administration	2	2	1	—
Lack of proper facilities	2	2	2	5
Communication problems	2	2	1	1
School board policies	1	1	1	2
Government interference	1	*	2	3
Teachers' strikes	1	1	1	1
Parents' involvement in school activities	1	1	1	2
Too many schools/declining enrollment	1	1	1	—
Transportation	1	1	*	—
Non-English-speaking students	1	*	2	1
There are no problems	3	2	6	2
Miscellaneous	2	2	3	1
Don't know	17	21	9	8

(Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple answers.)

\*Less than 1%.

\*\*Includes parents of students attending private and independent schools as well as parochial schools.

## 1980 Ratings of the Public Schools

Since 1974, when this rating series was first introduced, there has been a decline in the ratings given by the public to the public schools, but this decline has come to a halt. And there is some evidence from the results, although the changes are not statistically significant, that a turn has come.

The decline in the ratings may be due to changes in the emphasis placed upon the basics in many school districts, or to a better understanding among the general public of just what the schools are achieving. In any event, the downward trend has ended, at least for the present.

The question:

**Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and FAIL to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves, in this community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools here — A, B, C, D, or FAIL?**

Ratings Given the Public Schools	National Totals						
	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974
A rating	10	8	9	11	13	13	18
B rating	25	26	27	26	29	30	30
C rating	29	30	30	28	28	28	21
D rating	12	11	11	11	10	9	6
FAIL	6	7	8	5	6	7	5
Don't know	18	18	15	19	14	13	20

Examination of the results by major groups making up the U.S. population indicates that the persons most dissatisfied with their local public schools are blacks living in the North, mostly in central cities. A total of 33% of Northern blacks give their schools a D or FAIL rating. This contrasts with a figure of 13% for Southern blacks.

Persons living in rural communities and small towns and cities— under 50,000 population — give the highest ratings to their schools; those in towns over 50,000, the lowest ratings.

As in past surveys, younger adults who were interviewed in this study are more critical of the schools than those in older age brackets.

Persons living in the West rate their schools lower than do those who live in other areas of the nation. As in past surveys, inhabitants of the Midwest and South like their schools best; those in the East and West, least.

Further breakdowns follow:

	A	B	C	D	FAIL	Don't Know
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	10	25	29	12	6	18
<b>Sex</b>						
Men	10	27	28	12	6	17
Women	9	24	30	11	6	20
<b>Race</b>						
White	10	26	29	11	6	18
Nonwhite	9	20	29	15	7	20
<b>Age</b>						
18 to 29 years	4	23	39	14	7	13
30 to 49 years	14	28	28	14	5	11
50 and over	10	24	22	8	7	29
<b>Community Size</b>						
1 million & over	10	20	26	19	10	15
500,000 - 999,999	6	24	34	12	7	17
50,000 - 499,999	10	21	32	11	6	20
2,500 - 49,999	11	36	28	5	4	16
Under 2,500	10	28	27	10	4	21
Central city	8	17	31	16	11	17
<b>Education</b>						
Grade school	14	23	16	9	4	34
High school	8	24	33	12	7	16
College	9	30	28	12	6	15
<b>Region</b>						
East	8	27	24	14	9	18
Midwest	11	29	33	7	5	15
South	11	25	29	12	4	19
West	7	18	30	15	8	22
<b>Region/Race</b>						
Northern white	9	26	30	11	6	18
Southern white	11	27	27	12	5	18
Northern black	8	19	25	19	14	15
Southern black	11	20	33	12	1	23

### Public Confidence in American Institutions — 1980

To shed light on how the public schools stand in public respect when compared with other American institutions, a question was included in this year's survey asking respondents how much confidence they have — "a great deal," "a fair amount," or "very little" — in

several institutions. If respondents answered "none" or were "undecided," this is also recorded below.

The public schools do well in such a comparison of institutions, ranking second only to "the church, or organized religion."

The question:

**How much confidence do you, yourself, have in these American institutions to serve the public's needs — a great deal of confidence, a fair amount, or very little?**

	Great Deal	Fair Amount	Very Little	None (Volunteered)	Undecided
	%	%	%	%	%
The church	42	40	15	2	1
The public schools	28	46	20	3	3
The courts	19	45	28	5	3
Local government	19	51	23	4	3
State government	17	52	24	4	3
National government	14	47	31	5	3
Labor unions	17	38	30	9	6
Big business	13	42	36	5	4

From the results shown here we can conclude that even though the public is critical of the public schools, they still hold them in relatively high regard when compared with other public institutions.

### Ways to Improve Education In Your Community

What thoughts or suggestions do citizens have for improving education in their own communities? To gain insight into their views, the following question was asked:

**Here are a number of things which may have a good effect on the education students receive in the public schools of this community. Will you choose four (from a list of 14 suggestions) which you think are particularly important.**

Of the 14 suggestions listed, the one that receives top priority is "well-educated (trained) teachers and principals." Second in importance, among the public's selections, is "emphasis on basic education"; third is "teachers and principals personally interested in the progress of students."

It should be pointed out that the question places the emphasis upon "education." School morale and community support may be much more closely linked with winning teams and extracurricular activities.

Perhaps the greatest surprise in the public's selection is the relatively low priority given to "small classes" as a way to improve education.

Here are the results ranked in descending order of importance:

	National Totals	No Children In Schools	Public School Parents	Parochial School Parents
	%	%	%	%
1. Well-educated teachers and principals	50	50	48	64
2. Emphasis on basics such as reading, writing, computation	49	48	52	52
3. Teachers and principals personally interested in progress of students	44	43	48	38



	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
4. Good parent/teacher relationships	40	39	42	44
5. Careful check on student progress and effort	32	32	32	39
6. An orderly but not rigid atmosphere	27	26	28	38
7. Useful materials and adequate supplies	25	25	27	16
8. Small classes	25	24	28	20
9. Special classes for handicapped students	24	25	21	17
10. High goals and expectations on part of students	19	19	17	25
11. Wide variety of vocational courses	18	17	19	20
12. Advanced classes for the gifted	12	12	11	14
13. Extracurricular activities	6	5	7	7
14. Successful athletic teams	4	4	5	5
Don't know/ no answer	6	7	4	1

### What Level of Government Should Decide Curriculum Content?

The American public continues to believe that the local school board should have the greatest influence in deciding what is taught in the public schools. Even the state government wins few supporters as the agency that should decide what is taught locally.

In most European nations the curriculum is determined by the central government. With education now being represented within the U.S. government by a Cabinet position, the issue of who should set school curriculum is almost certain to arise here in the U.S. in coming years.

The question:

**In your opinion, who should have the greatest influence in deciding what is taught in the public schools here — the federal government, the state government, or the local school board?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
The federal government	9	9	8	10
The state government	15	16	15	15
The local school board	68	66	70	70
Don't know	8	9	7	5

Further breakdowns:

	Federal Govern- ment %	State Govern- ment %	Local School Board %	Don't Know %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	9	15	68	8
<b>Sex</b>				
Men	10	16	66	8
Women	7	15	70	8
<b>Race</b>				
White	8	16	68	8
Nonwhite	11	14	64	11

	Federal Govern- ment %	State Govern- ment %	Local School Board %	Don't Know %
<b>Age</b>				
18 to 29 years	11	17	68	4
30 to 49 years	10	14	69	7
50 & over	6	15	66	13
<b>Community Size</b>				
1 million & over	8	9	71	12
500,000 - 999,999	9	16	68	7
50,000 - 499,999	13	17	62	8
2,500 - 49,999	6	16	68	10
Under 2,500	6	17	71	6
<b>Education</b>				
Grade school	4	13	64	19
High school	9	15	69	7
College	11	16	67	6
<b>Region</b>				
East	8	14	68	10
Midwest	8	11	75	6
South	9	17	66	8
West	10	21	59	10

### Adult Education

Extrapolating from the data, about 45 million Americans (age 18 and older) say that they have taken courses in an adult education program or are presently engaged in such a program. A total of 13 million say they have taken such a course during the last year.

By far the greatest number of persons enrolled come from the 18-to-29 age group and from those who have attended college. Adult education is much more popular in the West than in other sections of the country. The lowest percentage of enrollees in adult education programs live in Eastern states.

The question, first asked in 1950 by the Gallup Poll and repeated in 1978 and again in the present survey, is:

**Are you now taking, or have you ever taken, any courses in an adult education program?**

	1950 %	1978 %	1980 %
Yes	20	31	29
No	80	68	70
Don't know	*	1	1

\*Less than 1%.

Other breakdowns follow:

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Yes	29	27	31	47
No	70	72	69	53
Don't know	1	1	*	*

\*Less than 1%.

Those respondents who said they had taken a course in an adult education program were then asked, "When was that?" Eight percent said they had taken a course within the last year, 8% said one to three years ago, and 13% said over three years ago.

Below is a complete sample breakdown of all persons interviewed in the survey who say they have taken an adult education course during the last year:

<b>Sex</b>	<b>%</b>
Men	8
Women	8
<b>Race</b>	
White	9
Nonwhite	5
<b>Age</b>	
18 to 29 years	14
30 to 49 years	7
50 & over	4
<b>Education</b>	
Grade school	1
High school	6
College	15
<b>Community Size</b>	
1 million & over	6
500,000 - 999,999	13
50,000 - 499,999	10
2,500 - 49,999	7
Under 2,500	6
<b>Region</b>	
East	5
Midwest	8
South	7
West	15

### Keeping in Touch with Parents Of Schoolchildren

One of the complaints that parents voice is that the school does not keep them sufficiently well informed about the progress of their children or give them enough guidance as to what they, as parents, can do at home to help their children in school.

One of the most successful efforts to keep in close touch with parents is the plan worked out by Superintendent Billy Reagan of the Houston Independent School District. His work in Houston gave rise to the following question asked in the present survey:

**In your opinion, should or should not parents be asked to meet with school personnel before each new school semester to examine the grades, test scores, and career goals for each child and to work out a program to be followed both in school and at home?**

Wide approval for this suggestion was found throughout the nation, as the following figures reveal:

	<b>National Totals %</b>	<b>No Children In Schools %</b>	<b>Public School Parents %</b>	<b>Parochial School Parents %</b>
Yes, favor this plan	84	85	83	83
No, do not favor	11	9	14	14
Don't know	5	6	3	3

The highest vote in favor of the plan was found among Northern blacks. They voted for it 95 to 1.

Overwhelming support for this idea comes from every group in the population in every area of the nation.

The Houston plan, which relies greatly on computers, keeps parents in almost constant touch with school personnel regarding the progress and problems of their children in this public school system.

Further breakdowns:

	<b>Yes, Should Be Asked To Meet %</b>	<b>No, Should Not Be Asked %</b>	<b>Don't Know %</b>
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Sex</b>			
Men	83	12	5
Women	85	10	5
<b>Race</b>			
White	84	12	4
Nonwhite	89	6	5
<b>Age</b>			
18 to 29 years	86	12	2
30 to 49 years	85	13	2
50 & over	83	9	8
<b>Community Size</b>			
1 million & over	85	10	5
500,000 - 999,999	86	9	5
50,000 - 499,999	85	12	3
2,500 - 49,999	85	11	4
Under 2,500	83	12	5
<b>Education</b>			
Grade school	84	8	8
High school	85	10	5
College	84	13	3
<b>Region</b>			
East	88	9	3
Midwest	86	10	4
South	83	12	5
West	80	14	6
<b>Region/Race</b>			
Northern white	84	12	4
Southern white	83	12	5
Northern black	95	1	4
Southern black	83	10	7

### Importance of Schools

There is universal agreement that schools are extremely important to one's future success; in fact, all groups in the population — the well educated and the poorly educated — hold this view. More significant, perhaps, is that the public has greater faith in the schools today than in 1973.

The question asked in 1973 and in the present survey:

**How important are schools to one's future success — extremely important, fairly important, not too important?**

	<b>National Totals %</b>	<b>No Children In Schools %</b>	<b>Public School Parents %</b>	<b>Parochial School Parents %</b>
Extremely important	82	80	85	84
Fairly important	15	16	13	15
Not too important	2	2	2	—
No opinion	1	2	*	1

\*Less than 1%.

Here are the results for 1980 and for 1973, when this same question was put to the public. In 1973 slightly fewer respondents replied that schools were extremely important. Here is the comparison:

	<b>National Totals 1973 %</b>	<b>National Totals 1980 %</b>
Schools are extremely important to success	76	82
Fairly important	19	15
Not too important	4	2
No opinion	1	1

Further breakdowns for 1980 follow:

	Importance of Schools for Success			
	Extremely Important %	Fairly Important %	Not Too Important %	No Opinion %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Men	79	17	2	2
Women	84	14	1	1
<b>Race</b>				
White	81	15	2	2
Nonwhite	82	16	1	1
<b>Age</b>				
18 to 29 years	77	19	4	*
30 to 49 years	87	13	*	*
50 & over	80	15	1	4
<b>Community Size</b>				
1 million & over	82	15	2	1
500,000 - 999,999	85	11	1	3
50,000 - 499,999	81	16	2	1
2,500 - 49,999	80	15	3	2
Under 2,500	80	17	1	2
<b>Education</b>				
Grade school	77	17	2	4
High school	84	13	2	1
College	80	18	1	1
<b>Region</b>				
East	86	11	2	1
Midwest	80	17	2	1
South	84	15	—	1
West	75	19	4	2

\*Less than 1%.

## Teaching as a Career

In two earlier surveys in this annual series, respondents were asked whether they would like to have a child of theirs take up teaching in the public schools as a career.

When the same question was repeated this year, in the spring of 1980, a significant change in the public's attitude was found.

When the question was first asked in 1969, 75% of all respondents said they would like to have a child of theirs take up teaching. This figure dropped to 67% in the 1972 survey and has fallen to 48% in the present survey.

Here is the question:

**Would you like to have a child of yours take up teaching in the public schools as a career?**

	1969 %	1972 %	1980 %
Yes	75	67	48
No	15	22	40
Don't know	10	11	12

Almost everyone will have his or her own reasons as to why a teaching career is less attractive today than it was years ago. But whatever the reasons, the education profession would seem to have a public relations problem on its hands.

Here are the 1980 results by children in school:

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Yes	48	46	56	43
No	40	41	35	51
Don't know	12	13	9	6

During the eight-year span between this survey and the last time the above question was asked, the attractiveness of education as a career has declined. First, there has been a well-known surplus of teachers at many levels and in several subject-matter areas and geographic regions. Young people who would like to teach weren't sure they could find a job after spending at least four years in preparation. Second, teacher salaries have not kept up with inflation; in fact, they have declined more than salaries in most other callings. Finally, there have evidently been real changes in school-age children. They are not as well motivated to learn nowadays. Certainly achievement in the adolescent years has declined. Violence, vandalism, and drug use have been heavily publicized. The public is aware of a phenomenon unheard of in an earlier generation: teacher burnout. No wonder parents are slow to urge their children to enter such a profession.

Further breakdowns:

	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Sex</b>			
Men	48	39	13
Women	49	41	10
<b>Race</b>			
White	47	41	12
Nonwhite	53	34	13
<b>Age</b>			
18 to 29 years	43	47	10
30 to 49 years	51	37	12
50 & over	50	38	12
<b>Community Size</b>			
1 million & over	51	38	11
500,000 - 999,999	41	50	9
50,000 - 499,999	50	39	11
2,500 - 49,999	48	38	14
Under 2,500	48	40	12
<b>Education</b>			
Grade school	54	33	13
High school	49	40	11
College	45	44	11
<b>Region</b>			
East	45	43	12
Midwest	52	38	10
South	47	42	11
West	49	36	15

## Nongraded Schools

The nongraded school concept continues to win wide approval from the public, even though the approval percentage is down slightly from an earlier survey when the same question was asked.

The following question was asked both in 1972 and in the current survey:

**Should a student be able to progress through the school system at his own speed and without regard to the usual grade levels? This would mean that he might study seventh-grade math but only fifth-grade English. Would you favor or oppose such a plan in the local schools?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Favor	62	63	60	60
Oppose	30	28	35	37
No opinion	8	9	5	3

Here is the comparison of 1972 results with those of 1980:

	National Totals 1972 %	National Totals 1980 %
Favor	71	62
Oppose	22	30
No opinion	7	8

#### Education

	Favor %	Oppose %	Don't Know %
Grade school	81	11	8
High school	84	12	4
College	71	24	5
<b>Region</b>			
East	79	18	3
Midwest	79	16	5
South	82	14	4
West	78	15	7

## Moral Instruction

In the 1975 survey in this series a question dealt with the need for instruction in morals and moral behavior. The vote at that time was overwhelmingly in favor: 79% in favor, 15% opposed, 6% no opinion.

Interestingly, in the present survey almost identical results were found: 79% in favor, 16% opposed, and 5% with no opinion.

In the early years of public school education, the teaching of morals was regarded as an integral part of the educational program. Anyone who examines the McGuffey Readers, first published in 1836, will discover that the teaching of morals was as important as the teaching of reading. And as the *Columbia Encyclopedia* observes, "Their influence in shaping the American mind of the mid-19th century can scarcely be exaggerated."

No one has yet found a good modern equivalent of these readers as a way to instruct students in morals and moral behavior, but, as the survey findings indicate, the public is eagerly hoping that a way to achieve this type of instruction will be found. It is significant that parents of children now attending school are the group that favors this kind of instruction most, although all major groups in the population strongly favor the idea.

Here is the question asked both in 1975 and in the present survey:

**Would you favor or oppose instruction in the schools that would deal with morals and moral behavior?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Favor	79	78	84	83
Oppose	16	17	12	12
Don't know	5	5	4	5

Further breakdowns follow:

	Favor %	Oppose %	Don't Know %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Sex</b>			
Men	77	18	5
Women	81	14	5
<b>Race</b>			
White	79	16	5
Nonwhite	83	12	5
<b>Age</b>			
18 to 29 years	73	24	3
30 to 49 years	81	14	5
50 & over	83	10	7
<b>Community Size</b>			
1 million & over	77	18	5
500,000 - 999,999	78	19	3
50,000 - 499,999	79	16	5
2,500 - 49,999	78	15	7
Under 2,500	84	13	3

## Cost of Education

The idea has been advanced that if parents and their school-age children knew how much money is spent to provide an education for them, absenteeism would decline. In short, if being absent from school could be correlated with dollars, then the temptation to stay away from classes and from school would be reduced.

The costs can be estimated in this way: The average school year consists of 184 days, and the average cost for each child per school year is approximately \$1,800 to \$2,000, or about \$10 per day. Since there are usually five class periods per day, then the cost per class per student is about \$2.

One of the first questions to be asked is how these amounts — \$10 per school day, \$2 per class — strike the average citizen. Do the figures seem high, low, or about what is expected?

Here is the question put to respondents in this survey:

**It costs taxpayers about \$2 an hour for each student for each class he or she attends — or about \$10 for each school day. Are these figures higher, lower, or about the same as what you had thought?**

	Cost Per School Day			
	Higher %	Lower %	About The Same %	Don't Know %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Men	29	20	35	16
Women	28	18	33	21
<b>Race</b>				
White	28	19	35	18
Nonwhite	33	22	26	19
<b>Age</b>				
18 to 29 years	35	17	35	13
30 to 49 years	24	27	32	17
50 & over	28	14	34	24
<b>Community Size</b>				
1 million & over	26	20	32	22
500,000 - 999,999	25	28	28	19
50,000 - 499,999	30	20	33	17
2,500 - 49,999	24	21	33	22
Under 2,500	33	13	39	15
<b>Education</b>				
Grade school	34	10	33	23
High school	29	19	33	19
College	23	25	36	16
<b>Region</b>				
East	30	21	34	15
Midwest	29	18	32	21
South	30	17	35	18
West	23	24	33	20

The greatest differences are found between the best-educated group (those who have attended college) and the least well educated (those whose education ended with grade school). To the grade school group the figures were higher than expected: 34% to 10%; with the college educated the costs cited were slightly lower than expected: 23% to 25%.

Since lower-income respondents were much more inclined to underestimate the costs, and since the children of the poorer families of the nation are most likely to drop out of school or be absent from classes, this argument about cost and wasted money might be useful to students and their parents in promoting regular school attendance. The student who has been absent 10 days has, in effect, lost \$100.

Further breakdowns:

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Cost Per School Day				
Higher	29	29	29	16
Lower	19	17	23	29
About the same	34	34	33	39
Don't know	18	20	15	16

### Early Graduation

Every major group in the population believes that, if high school students can meet academic requirements in three years instead of four, they should be permitted to graduate early. The least enthusiastic about this proposal are parents of children now attending school. On the other hand, those most in favor are recent graduates — persons 18 to 29 years of age.

When this question was first asked in 1977, similar results were found.

It can be argued that in an era of increasing specialization, with students requiring more and more years of college and post-college training, an earlier start on college work would permit a student to engage in his or her chosen calling that much earlier. But many parents are reluctant to see their children go off to college at the age of 17 or earlier.

The question:

**If high school students can meet academic requirements in three years instead of four, should they, or should they not, be permitted to graduate early?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Yes, should	77	79	73	70
No, should not	19	16	24	26
Don't know	4	5	3	4

Further breakdowns:

	Yes, Should %	No, Should Not %	Don't Know %
NATIONAL TOTALS	77	19	4
Sex			
Men	78	18	4
Women	77	19	4
Race			
White	77	19	4
Nonwhite	80	16	4

	Yes, Should %	No, Should Not %	Don't Know %
Age			
18 to 29 years	84	15	1
30 to 49 years	76	21	3
50 & over	72	20	8
Community Size			
1 million & over	82	14	4
500,000 - 999,999	77	18	5
50,000 - 499,999	75	20	5
2,500 - 49,999	79	18	3
Under 2,500	76	21	3
Education			
Grade school	72	19	9
High school	75	22	3
College	84	13	3
Region			
East	76	21	3
Midwest	78	19	3
South	77	19	4
West	79	14	7

### Should Public School Teachers Be Permitted to Strike?

A conservative trend in most areas of American life evidenced by survey findings parallels increasing public opposition to strikes by public school teachers. In 1975, when this question was last put to the public in this series, a slight majority opposed strikes. The vote then was 48% opposed to strikes and 45% in favor, with 7% having no opinion. When the same question was asked in the present survey, 52% opposed strikes, 40% favored them, and 8% had no opinion.

The question:

**Should public school teachers be permitted to strike or not?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Yes	40	39	43	41
No	52	53	49	51
Don't know	8	8	8	8

The greatest changes were found among college-educated respondents, a group that favored strikes five years ago by a 52% to 44% margin and now opposes strikes by nearly the same margin, 51% to 43%.

In the Eastern states opinion was equally divided in 1975. A total of 46% favored strikes; 46% opposed them. Today the comparable figures are 34% in favor, 58% opposed.

Interestingly, parents of children attending the public schools have less objection to strikes than do those who have no children of school age.

Further breakdowns follow:

	Permit Teachers to Strike?		
	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
NATIONAL TOTALS	40	52	8
Sex			
Men	40	54	6
Women	39	51	10
Race			
White	38	54	8
Nonwhite	53	39	8
Age			
18 to 29 years	57	40	3
30 to 49 years	42	49	9
50 & over	25	64	11



	Permit Teachers to Strike?		
	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
<b>Community size</b>			
1 million & over	39	49	12
500,000 - 999,999	43	51	6
50,000 - 499,999	46	48	6
2,500 - 49,999	38	53	9
Under 2,500	35	58	7
<b>Education</b>			
Grade school	31	57	12
High school	41	51	8
College	43	51	6
<b>Region</b>			
East	34	58	8
Midwest	44	50	6
South	40	51	9
West	43	48	9

	Should They Add Personnel?		
	Yes, They Should Add Personnel %	No, They Should Not %	Don't Know %
<b>Community Size</b>			
1 million & over	69	26	5
500,000 - 999,999	63	32	5
50,000 - 499,999	67	27	6
2,500 - 49,999	57	37	6
Under 2,500	63	32	5
Central city	71	23	6
<b>Education</b>			
Grade school	74	14	12
High school	64	31	5
College	59	37	4
<b>Region</b>			
East	73	23	4
Midwest	57	36	7
South	67	27	6
West	58	37	5

## Helping Students Get Jobs

One of the most perplexing problems that modern industrial societies face is how best to deal with student transition from school to job. The very high unemployment rate in the U.S. among high school graduates and dropouts has yet to be solved. Some European nations have found that a combination of postsecondary schooling and job apprenticeship helps ease the transition from school to job. In the U.S. — judging from the high unemployment rates of youth — we have yet to find a solution. This fact accounts, perhaps, for the highly favorable vote for the proposal to add personnel to the school staff to help students and recent graduates get jobs.

Every group in the population favors this idea, and by very substantial amounts. Understandably, nonwhites, who have the highest youth unemployment rates in the population, are most in favor.

The question:

**In your opinion, should or should not the public schools *add personnel* to help students and recent graduates get jobs?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Yes, they should add personnel	64	65	64	53
No, they should not	30	29	32	45
Don't know	6	6	4	2

Further breakdowns:

	Yes, They Should Add Personnel %	No, They Should Not %	Don't Know %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Sex</b>			
Men	63	31	6
Women	66	29	5
<b>Race</b>			
White	61	34	5
Nonwhite	86	8	6
<b>Age</b>			
18 to 29 years	73	25	2
30 to 49 years	62	33	5
50 & over	59	32	9

## Priorities for the New Federal Department of Education

To gain some insight into the priorities, as the American public perceives them, for the newly established Department of Education in the federal government, respondents in the present survey were asked what this new department should give special attention to during the next few years. They were handed a list of 13 areas and asked to choose five of the 13 that they thought merited the most attention.

The list is by no means all-inclusive, and the areas listed are not necessarily the ones regarded as most important by either Congress or by top officials of the new Department of Education. The results, however, provide an indication of the way the public is thinking regarding educational priorities.

Here is the question asked:

**As you may know, a new federal Department of Education has been established with Cabinet status. We would like to know what you think this new department should give *special attention* to in the next few years. Will you choose five of the areas listed on this card which you think are *most* important.**

The priorities that follow are arranged in descending order of mention nationwide:

Areas that the public hopes the new Department of Education will give special attention to in the next few years:	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
1. Basic education (reading, writing, arithmetic)	69	68	72	71
2. Vocational training (training students for jobs)	56	55	57	53
3. Improving teacher training and education	46	44	50	51
4. Helping students choose careers	46	46	44	44
5. Parent training to help parents become more fully involved in their children's education	45	48	37	48
6. Helping more students obtain a college education	35	34	38	34

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
7. Developing individual educational plans for every child	33	31	38	35
8. Providing more opportunities for gifted students	25	25	26	23
9. Preschool education	24	26	21	19
10. Lifelong learning (continuing education through adult life)	23	22	21	33
11. Better educational use of television	20	20	21	19
12. International education, including foreign language study	19	19	20	20
13. Improving opportunities for women and minorities	18	18	17	14

(Figures add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.)

### One-Year Internship for Teachers

A number of persons interviewed in this 12-year series of surveys complain about the difficulty of getting "good" teachers, enough to place this problem among the top 10 "most important problems facing the local schools." This may explain, in part, why the public favors the idea of an internship of one year at half pay for those who wish to enter the teaching profession. On the other hand, an internship at half pay may discourage many young persons from entering this profession, which is already losing some of its appeal.

The question:

**Teachers now receive certificates to teach upon completion of their college coursework. Some people believe that teachers should be required to spend one year as interns in the schools at half pay before they are given a certificate to teach. Do you think this is a good idea or a poor idea?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Good idea	56	56	55	56
Poor idea	36	35	37	42
Don't know	8	9	8	2

Analysis of the vote by groups indicates that the most recent graduates — those 18 to 29 years of age — are most in favor of the internship proposal. Those who are over 50 are most opposed.

Further breakdowns:

	Internship for Teachers		
	Good Idea %	Poor Idea %	Don't Know %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Sex</b>			
Men	54	38	8
Women	58	33	9
<b>Race</b>			
White	56	36	8
Nonwhite	55	34	11

	Internship for Teachers		
	Good Idea %	Poor Idea %	Don't Know %
<b>Age</b>			
18 to 29 years	62	32	6
30 to 49 years	59	35	6
50 & over	49	39	12
<b>Community Size</b>			
1 million & over	64	28	8
500,000 - 999,999	57	37	6
50,000 - 499,999	54	36	10
2,500 - 49,999	47	43	10
Under 2,500	56	36	8
<b>Education</b>			
Grade school	48	35	17
High school	59	34	7
College	54	40	6
<b>Region</b>			
East	60	33	7
Midwest	56	36	8
South	50	41	9
West	59	30	11

### Behavior Problems and Who Should Deal with Them

Of the more serious behavior problems with which the public schools must deal, only two of seven, in the opinion of those interviewed in the survey, should be dealt with by the courts rather than by parents or by the school. The two are "vandalism of school property" and "bringing weapons to school." "Truancy" should be dealt with chiefly by parents, and the school should deal primarily with "fighting in school," "using alcohol or drugs on school property," "striking a teacher," and "stealing money or clothing from other students."

Here is the question:

**Here are some student behavior problems which may occur in school. In your opinion, who should deal with each kind of problem — should it be the parents, the school, or the courts?\***

	National Totals			
Who Should Deal with:	Parents %	School %	Courts %	Don't Know %
Truancy (skipping school)	72	45	9	2
Vandalism of school property	44	39	50	2
Bringing weapons to school	41	35	59	3
Fighting in school	42	75	10	3
Using alcohol or drugs on school property	50	57	35	2
Striking a teacher	43	56	35	3
Stealing money or clothing from other students	48	58	30	3

\*Multiple answers permitted.

The original data show that a substantial portion of the public believes most of these problems should be dealt with by a combination of school and parents, and in some instances by the courts also.

Analysis of the findings by groups reveals no important differences between those who have children now attending public school and those who have no children of school age. Those who have children now attending independent schools are also in agreement as to where the prime responsibility rests.

Breakdowns for those with no children in school:

Who Should Deal with:	Parents %	School %	Courts %	Don't Know %
Truancy (skipping school)	71	45	10	3
Vandalism of school property	42	39	51	3
Bringing weapons to school	38	33	62	3
Fighting in school	39	74	10	4
Using alcohol or drugs on school property	47	57	36	3
Striking a teacher	41	55	36	4
Stealing money or clothing from other students	45	57	31	4

Breakdowns for those with children in public school:

Who Should Deal with:	Parents %	School %	Courts %	Don't Know %
Truancy (skipping school)	76	42	8	1
Vandalism of school property	47	39	46	1
Bringing weapons to school	48	39	51	2
Fighting in school	49	77	9	1
Using alcohol or drugs on school property	57	58	35	1
Striking a teacher	49	57	31	2
Stealing money or clothing from other students	55	59	27	1

Breakdowns for those with children in parochial school:

Who Should Deal with:	Parents %	School %	Courts %	Don't Know %
Truancy (skipping school)	64	58	5	—
Vandalism of school property	45	47	53	—
Bringing weapons to school	34	39	58	3
Fighting in school	46	71	12	1
Using alcohol or drugs on school property	58	62	29	2
Striking a teacher	44	58	41	1
Stealing money or clothing from other students	44	57	41	1

### Requiring Nonunion Members To Pay Union Dues

The public is fairly evenly divided on the question of whether teachers — in districts where there are teacher unions — should be required to pay union dues even though they do not belong to the union. A slight plurality is found on the side of requiring them to pay dues. The public's ambivalence on unions has been evidenced in earlier surveys indicating that, while our respondents favor unions for teachers, they are opposed to strikes.

The question:

**In schools where there are teacher unions, should those teachers who do not belong to the union be required to pay union dues, since they share the benefits of union bargaining?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Yes, should be required to pay	47	47	49	51
No, should not	44	44	43	47
Don't know	9	9	8	2

Differences are found on this issue by sections of the nation. Residents of the South oppose requiring teachers to pay union dues when they do not belong by a vote of 54% opposed to 37% in favor. Sentiment is evenly divided in the small cities and rural communities. The college educated, who are found largely in the upper-income levels, vote against this requirement by 58% to 35%.

Further breakdowns:

	Yes, Should Be Required To Pay %	No, Should Not %	Don't Know %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Sex</b>			
Men	44	47	9
Women	50	41	9
<b>Race</b>			
White	47	45	8
Nonwhite	52	37	11
<b>Age</b>			
18 to 29 years	56	40	4
30 to 49 years	44	46	10
50 & over	44	44	12
<b>Community Size</b>			
1 million & over	47	43	10
500,000 - 999,999	53	38	9
50,000 - 499,999	49	42	9
2,500 - 49,999	44	45	11
Under 2,500	46	47	7
<b>Education</b>			
Grade school	45	39	16
High school	55	37	8
College	35	58	7
<b>Region</b>			
East	54	39	7
Midwest	54	37	9
South	37	54	9
West	46	43	11



"We've taught him very little. We figured you would like to train him in your own way."

## Preparing for One-Parent Families

The American public appears to be ready to deal with a problem that is certain to have an important effect on schooling. Children who spend a substantial amount of time with a lone parent will undoubtedly have a different home environment, different training, and special needs.

To cope with this situation, three proposals were presented to those persons included in the survey; all three were approved by overwhelming majorities.

The question:

**The number of one-parent families in the U.S. is growing each year due to the high divorce rate, and it is predicted that nearly half of the children born in 1980 will live, for a considerable period of time, with only one parent. Because of this, some people believe that the schools must find new ways to deal with the children from these broken homes. Of course, this will cost more money. Now, here are three proposals. For each one tell me whether you think it would be a good idea or a poor idea for the schools here.**

### Proposal 1

**Make school personnel available for evening counseling with single parents who are working if their children are having trouble at school.**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Good idea	86	86	85	84
Poor idea	10	9	12	15
Don't know	4	5	3	1

### Proposal 2

**Give teachers training to help them deal with special problems of children from one-parent families.**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Good idea	83	84	83	81
Poor idea	12	11	13	16
Don't know	5	5	4	3

### Proposal 3

**Provide activities so children can spend more time at school rather than going to an empty house.**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Good idea	76	79	70	72
Poor idea	18	15	26	25
Don't know	6	6	4	3

## The Bilingual Problem

Bilingual education continues to be a controversial program. Should students be taught in the language of

their parents? Should they be able to learn some of their subjects in their native language while they are learning English?

A third alternative is to require students to learn English in special classes before they are enrolled in the public schools. This alternative appeals to more than eight out of every 10 persons included in the present survey. And it receives overwhelming approval by all major groups in the population.

Here is the question:

**Many families who come from other countries have children who cannot speak English. Should or should not these children be required to learn English in special classes before they are enrolled in the public schools?**

	National Totals %	No Children In Schools %	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Yes, they should	82	82	83	80
No, they should not	13	13	13	18
Don't know	5	5	4	2

Further breakdowns:

	Yes, They Should %	No, They Should Not %	Don't Know %
<b>NATIONAL TOTALS</b>	82	13	5
<b>Sex</b>			
Men	83	13	4
Women	81	14	5
<b>Race</b>			
White	82	14	4
Nonwhite	80	9	11
<b>Age</b>			
18 to 29 years	89	10	1
30 to 49 years	81	15	4
50 & over	77	16	7
<b>Community Size</b>			
1 million & over	83	14	3
500,000 - 999,999	91	6	3
50,000 - 499,999	83	12	5
2,500 - 49,999	79	16	5
Under 2,500	79	15	6
<b>Education</b>			
Grade school	74	17	9
High school	84	12	4
College	82	15	3
<b>Region</b>			
East	82	15	3
Midwest	86	10	4
South	80	14	6
West	79	16	5

## Learning About Other Nations

As communication and travel make the world smaller, and as the threat of a world-devastating war continues, should students spend more time learning about other nations of the world than they presently do? Many educators believe that global education is the trend of the future and that schools should begin to take account of this.

Parents of children now attending either public school or parochial school were asked if they thought students should spend more time studying about other people and the way they live. Those with children in the public schools were almost evenly divided: 45% said they should spend more time on global education; 46% said they spend enough time now. The vote of parents

with children now attending independent schools was also evenly divided.

The question:

**Should students spend more time than they now do learning about other nations of the world and the way people live there, or do you think they spend enough time now?**

	Asked of Parents Only	
	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Should spend more time	45	46
Spend enough time now	46	47
Don't know	9	7

## Basic Education in Local Schools

Schools throughout the nation are giving more attention to basic education. But it may take time to convince parents and the general public that enough attention is being given to this program in their own schools. To gain some insight into how parents regard this movement, this question was asked of parents with children in school:

**Is it your impression that the local public school system gives enough attention, or not enough attention, to reading, writing, and arithmetic?**

	Asked of Parents Only	
	Public School Parents %	Parochial School Parents %
Enough attention	34	17
Not enough attention	61	72
Don't know	5	11

## Want Reprints? A 10-Year Compilation?

*Reprints of this 12th annual Gallup survey of public attitudes toward the public schools may be ordered from Phi Delta Kappa. The minimum order is 25 copies for \$6. Additional copies are 15 cents each. This price includes postage for parcel post delivery. Where possible, a check or money order should accompany orders.*

*If faster delivery is desired, do not include a remittance with your order. You will be billed at the above rates plus any additional cost involved in the method of delivery.*

*Note also that copies of the first 10 Gallup surveys are now available in book form. The volume features an introductory analysis by George Gallup.*

*The Gallup Polls of Attitudes Toward Education, 1969-1978 may be ordered for \$5.50 each or \$4.50 each in quantities of five or more.*

*Orders for reprints or the book should be addressed to Phi Delta Kappa, Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402. Ph. 812/339-1156.*

Parents of children attending either public or parochial school say not enough attention is being given to the basics in the local public schools. It is not surprising to find that parents with children attending parochial schools are even more critical of the public school curriculum than those with children attending public schools.

## COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE

### Analysis of Respondents

<b>Adults</b>	%	<b>Political affiliation (cont.)</b>	%
No children in schools	68	Independent	30
Public school parents	28*	Other	3
Parochial school parents	6*		
		<b>Income</b>	%
		\$20,000 and over	36
		\$15,000 to \$19,999	18
		\$10,000 to \$14,999	19
		\$ 7,000 to \$ 9,999	9
		\$ 5,000 to \$ 6,999	7
		\$ 3,000 to \$ 4,999	6
<b>Sex</b>	%	Under \$3,000	4
Men	48	Undesignated	1
Women	52		
		<b>Region</b>	%
<b>Race</b>	%	East	27
White	86	Midwest	27
Nonwhite	14	South	28
		West	18
<b>Age</b>	%		
18 to 24 years	18	<b>Community size</b>	%
25 to 29 years	12	1 million and over	20
30 to 49 years	33	500,000 to 999,999	11
50 & over	37	50,000 to 499,999	27
Undesignated	*	2,500 to 49,999	15
		Under 2,500	27
		<b>Education</b>	%
<b>Occupation</b>	%	Elementary grades	15
Business & professional	27	High school incomplete	15
Clerical & sales	7	High school complete	36
Farm	3	Technical, trade, or	
Skilled labor	18	business school	5
Unskilled labor	22	College incomplete	16
Non-labor force	21	College graduate	13
Undesignated	2	Undesignated	*
<b>Political affiliation</b>	%		
Republican	22		
Democrat	45		

\*Total exceeds 32% because some parents have children attending more than one kind of school.

\*Less than 1%.

\*Less than 1%.

## THE DESIGN OF THE SAMPLE

The sampling procedure is designed to produce an approximation of the adult civilian population, age 18 and older, living in the U. S., except for those persons in institutions such as prisons or hospitals.

The design of the sample is that of a replicated probability sample, down to the block level in the case of urban areas and to segments of townships in the case of rural areas. Approximately 300 sampling locations are used in each survey. Interpenetrating samples can be provided for any given study when appropriate.

The sample design included stratification by these four size-of-community strata, using 1970 census data: 1) cities of population 1,000,000 and over; 2) 250,000 to 999,999; 3) 50,000 to 249,999; 4) all other population. Each of these strata was further stratified into seven geographic regions: New England, Middle Atlantic, East Central, West Central, South, Mountain, and Pacific. Within each city-size/regional stratum, the population was arrayed in geographic order and zoned into equal-sized groups of sampling units. Pairs of localities were selected in each zone, with probability of selection of each locality proportional to its population size in the 1970 census, producing two replicated samples of localities.



Within localities so selected for which the requisite population data are reported, subdivisions were drawn with the probability of selection proportional to size of population. In all other localities, small definable geographic areas were selected with equal probability.

Separately for each survey, within each subdivision so selected for which block statistics are available, a sample of blocks or block clusters is drawn with probability of selection proportional to the number of dwelling units. In all other subdivisions or areas, blocks or segments are drawn at random or with equal probability.

In each cluster of blocks and each segment so selected, a randomly selected starting point is designated on the interviewer's map of the area. Starting at this point, interviewers are required to follow a given direction in the selection of households until their assignment is completed.

Interviewing is conducted at times when adults, in general, are most likely to be at home, which means on weekends, or, if on weekdays, after 4 p.m. for women and after 6 p.m. for men.

Allowance for persons not at home is made by a "times-at-home" weighting procedure rather than by "call-backs." This procedure is a standard method for reducing the sample bias that would otherwise result from underrepresentation in the sample of persons who are difficult to find at home.

The prestratification by regions is routinely supplemented by fitting each obtained sample to the latest available Census Bureau estimates of the regional distribution of the population. Also, minor adjustments of the sample are made by educational attainment by men and women separately, based on the annual estimates of the Census Bureau (derived from their Current Population Survey) and by age.

## SAMPLING TOLERANCES

In interpreting survey results, it should be borne in mind that all sample surveys are subject to sampling error, i.e., the extent to which the results may differ from what would be obtained if the whole population surveyed had been interviewed. The size of sampling error depends largely on the number of interviews.

The following tables may be used in estimating the sampling error of any percentage in this report. The computed allowances have taken into account the effect of the sample design upon sampling error. They may be interpreted as indicating the range (plus or minus the figure shown) within which the results of repeated samplings in the same time period could be expected to vary 95% of the time, assuming the same sampling procedure, the same interviewers, and the same questionnaire.

The first table shows how much allowance should be made for the sampling error of a percentage:

**Recommended Allowance for Sampling Error of a Percentage**

	In Percentage Points (at 95 in 100 confidence level)*						
	Sample Size						
	1,500	1,000	750	600	400	200	100
Percentages near 10	2	2	3	3	4	5	7
Percentages near 20	2	3	4	4	5	7	9
Percentages near 30	3	4	4	4	6	8	10
Percentages near 40	3	4	4	5	6	8	11
Percentages near 50	3	4	4	5	6	8	11
Percentages near 60	3	4	4	5	6	8	11
Percentages near 70	3	4	4	4	6	8	10
Percentages near 80	2	3	4	4	5	7	9
Percentages near 90	2	2	3	3	4	5	7

\*The chances are 95 in 100 that the sampling error is not larger than the figures shown.

The table would be used in the following manner: Let us say a reported percentage is 33 for a group that includes 1,500 respondents. We go to the row for "percentages near 30" and across to the column headed "1,500." The number at this point is 3, which means that the 33% obtained in the sample is subject to a sampling error of plus or minus three points. Another way of saying it is that very probably (95 chances out of 100) the average of repeated samplings would be somewhere between 30 and 36, with the most likely figure the 33 obtained.

In comparing survey results in two samples such as, for example, men and women, the question arises as to how large a difference between them must be before one can be reasonably sure that it reflects a real difference. In the tables below, the number of points that must be allowed for in such comparisons is indicated.

Two tables are provided. One is for percentages near 20 or 80; the other for percentages near 50. For percentages in between, the error to be allowed for is between those shown in the two tables:

**Recommended Allowance for Sampling Error  
Of the Difference**

TABLE A	In Percentage Points (at 95 in 100 confidence level)			
	Percentages near 20 or near 80			
Size of Sample	750	600	400	200
750	5			
600	5	6		
400	6	6	7	
200	8	8	8	10

  

TABLE B	Percentages near 50			
	750	600	400	200
Size of Sample	750	600	400	200
750	6			
600	7	7		
400	7	8	8	
200	10	10	10	12

Here is an example of how the tables would be used: Let us say that 50% of men respond a certain way and 40% of women respond that way also, for a difference of 10 percentage points between them. Can we say with any assurance that the 10-point difference reflects a real difference between men and women on the question? The sample contains approximately 750 men and 750 women.

Since the percentages are near 50, we consult Table B, and, since the two samples are about 750 persons each, we look for the number in the column headed "750," which is also the row designated "750." We find the number 6 here. This means that the allowance for error should be six points and that, in concluding that the percentage among men is somewhere between four and 16 points higher than the percentage among women, we should be wrong only about 5% of the time. In other words, we can conclude with considerable confidence that a difference exists in the direction observed and that it amounts to at least four percentage points.

If, in another case, men's responses amount to 22%, say, and women's 24%, we consult Table A, because these percentages are near 20. We look in the column headed "750" and see that the number is 5. Obviously, then, the two-point difference is inconclusive.

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Here are chapter headings in the manual that constitutes the heart of the kit: The Questionnaire, Questions Classified According to Topics, Sampling, Interviewing, and Analyzing the Data. There are seven appendices.

Persons interested in using PACE should write or call Bugher or Duckett at Phi Delta Kappa, Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402, phone 812/339-1156. Price of the 291-page basic kit is \$39.50. Additional items are available. Bugher and Duckett will consult with PACE users when their schedules permit.