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Minnesota Children:

Indicators and Trends

Minnesota State Planning Agency
December 1990

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Minnesota State Planning Agency

The Minnesota State Planning Agency is responsible for assuring that the State of Minnesota will benefit from integrated programs for the development and effective use of its human, physical, and financial resources.

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Minnesota Children:

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Executive Summary

This document presents a quick "scan" of some of the most readily available data describing Minnesota's 1,300,000 children. It was developed at the request of the Minnesota Children 2000 Commission. When census data begins to arrive in 1991 and 1992, a clearer, more up-to-date picture of Minnesota children will become available.

Major Trends Entering the 1990s

- **A Smaller and Older Child Population.** Although 65,000 new children are born each year, and others migrate into the state, Minnesota's child population is shrinking as a proportion of the state's total population. The child population is becoming older: the number of 15 to 19 year-olds is expected to increase by about 13 percent from 1990 to the year 2000, while the number of zero to four year-olds is projected to decline some 14 percent. Families are becoming smaller: more women are having no children, and the rate of third and fourth children being born dropped by 45 percent from 1970 to 1987 (relative to the female population of child-bearing age). In the past higher fertility rates in rural Minnesota fueled the state's population growth. **But during the 1980s, the fertility rate dropped sharply across greater Minnesota, to a level the same as that of the metropolitan area.** Metro suburban rates dropped slightly also from 1980 to 1987. Fertility rates increased only in Minneapolis and St. Paul proper.
- **Ethnic Diversity Increasing.** Children of color are becoming an increasing proportion of Minnesota's child population, leading Minnesota on the road to becoming a more diverse, dynamic community. **While four percent of the state's total population is minority, nine percent of school children and one-third of its population growth are people of color.** Besides the Twin Cities, communities such as Jackson, Willmar, Rochester, Albert Lea, and Bemidji have experienced great increases in Hispanic, Southeast Asian, or Native American residents.
- **Polarization Growing in Income and Education.** During the 1980s, both poverty and wealth increased in Minnesota and the nation. Income became more unevenly distributed, as did education. While Minnesota has the nation's highest high school graduation rate (91 percent), and one of the highest college participation rates, the percentage of youth dropping out of school crept up for all racial and ethnic groups during the 1980s. While Minnesota youth had the highest labor force participation rate in the nation, many struggle to advance beyond entry-level jobs as they form families. Earnings for young families declined nationwide. Unemployment of Native Americans and other youth of color remains high.
- **A Basic Needs Crisis Persists.** Over 200,000 Minnesota children are poor. An estimated 100,000 depend at least partially on food shelves. Fifty thousand lack health care coverage. For some, poor nutrition and inadequate prenatal and childhood health care impact their development and school performance. The rate of poverty is over three times higher for African American and Native American children than for white children.
- **Strains in Supportive Relationships and Parenting.** An estimated 15 to 20 percent of Minnesota children live with a single parent. Nationwide, the number of dual-worker families grew more rapidly than single-parent families during the 1980s. The divorce rate appears to have stabilized, while births of children outside marriage are increasing. Children of never-married parents have now surpassed children of divorced parents as the largest group of children dependent on public assistance. Destructive behaviors by parents and pregnant mothers, such as cocaine and alcohol abuse, have led to a surge in developmentally-delayed babies and children in need of foster homes.

Diverse Risk Behaviors of Youth Have Common Patterns.

Family and societal stresses contribute to an array of destructive behaviors by children as they get older. Risk behaviors of youth are often interconnected: drug or alcohol abuse, premature pregnancy,

dropping out of school, delinquency, and others. While a proliferation of remedial programs try to treat these symptoms, it is clear that a variety of behaviors result from a common complex of causes: parental abuse, family instability, unclear parental and social values, racism, sexism, or poverty. Policymakers are increasingly looking for holistic, preventive strategies that involve families and unite diverse agencies and programs.

New Policy Approaches Build on Children's Strengths.

Increasingly, policy-makers are looking to build on children's strengths rather than only treating problems. This means strengthening families, building support systems beyond families, and affirming diverse cultures. It means nurturing success and mastery in school and in work and community activities. Discussion groups with youth reveal their strong desire for success, security, achievement, and meaningful responsibilities. Youth service projects now have been created in most Minnesota school districts. However, there is no unduplicated data indicating what percentage of youth are involved in volunteerism, arts, athletics, or youth organizations.

State Investments in Children Are Concentrated in Education, but Growing in Early Childhood Programs.

What is state government's investment in children? The lion's share, 64 percent, is in education. Another 29 percent is in human services, primarily public assistance and medical care. Responding to research demonstrating the payoff for preventive investments in preschoolers, rapidly increasing expenditures are being made in childcare, Head Start, Children's Health Plan, and other programs. Funding levels for these measures are among the nation's highest, though they still fall far short of meeting demand. While public support for new spending in these areas has been strong, prudent policymakers must examine the effectiveness of their core investment in children—the dollars invested in public education.

Future Challenges: Some Answers May be Known.

While conditions for a share of Minnesota children have deteriorated, the magnitude of problems is smaller than in many other states. The challenges are more finite and potentially manageable. Nevertheless, bold strategies may be necessary to reshape old services away from the needs of institutions and towards the needs of consumers—children and families. Research and innovation around the country suggest that successful strategies to meet children's needs will need to incorporate the following principles:

- Assume that virtually all children can be successful, and build success and rewards around individual strengths.
- Empower ethnic communities to provide leadership in shaping and implementing solutions.
- Strengthen family and neighborhood support systems. Address family and societal strains and abuses.
- Leverage the existing massive investment in school facilities and education. At the same time, end the isolation of learning from the real activities of society, and the isolation of parents and community services from schools.
- Adopt a consumer-driven, integrated, one-stop shopping approach to public services.
- Deal with basic family income, health, and shelter needs.
- Pool public, private, and community resources.
- Place a high value on children. Challenge parental and public attitudes. Review the impacts of both public and private sector polices and practices.

Births

- About 65,000 children are born each year in Minnesota.
- Minnesota's fertility rate (births to women of child-bearing age) is close to that of the nation and neighboring states.
- Fertility rates have declined in greater Minnesota, and are now similar to those in the metro area.
- At the current fertility rate, Minnesota is not replacing its population. However, the total state population will continue to grow because births still exceed deaths.
- Net population migration in and out of the state is negligible, but immigration may be significant for certain groups such as Hispanic and Southeast Asian children.

Source: State Demographer, MN State Planning Agency

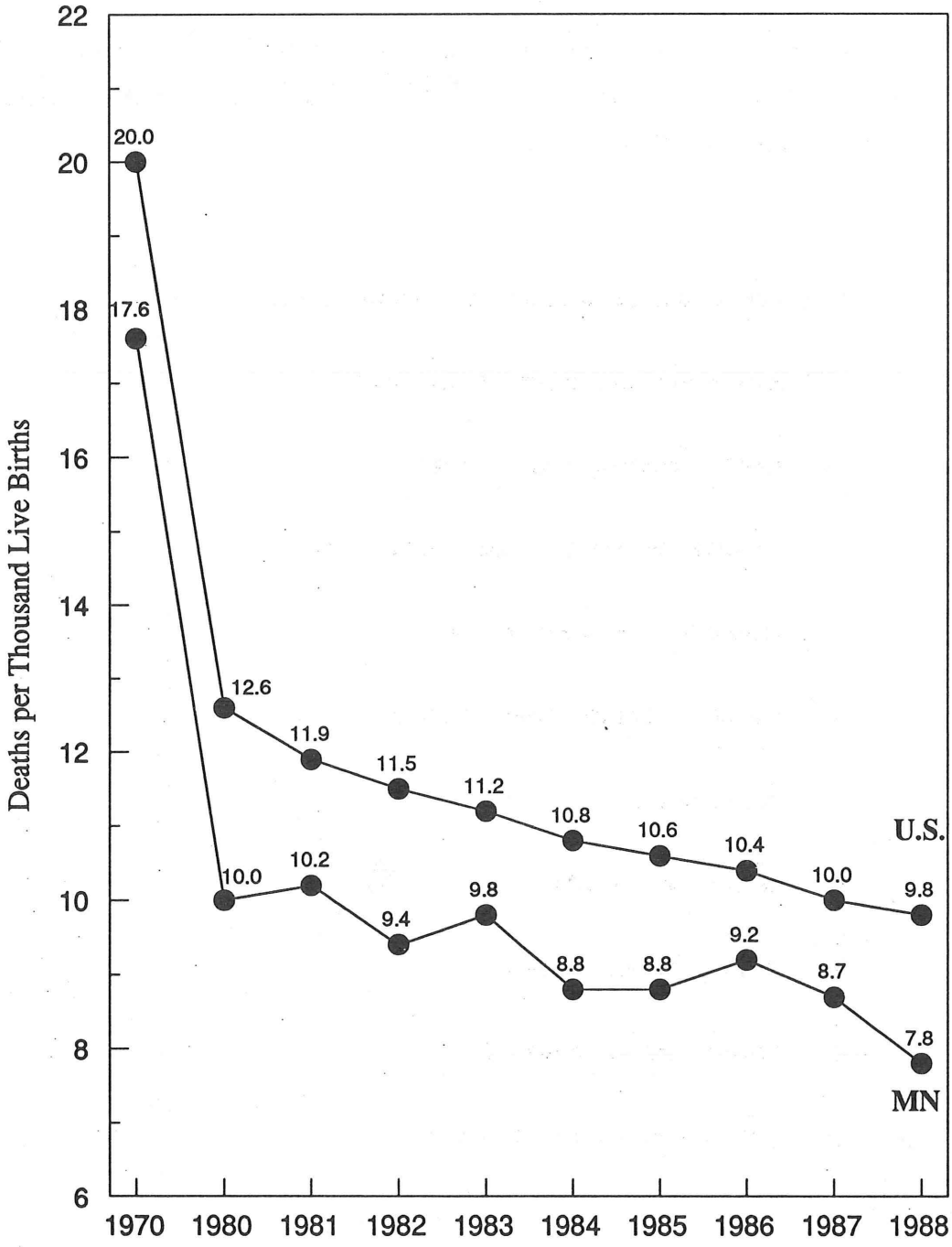
Population

- **Minnesota has about 1,3000,000 children ages 19 and under.**

- **Thirty percent of Minnesotans are children. This will decline to twenty-five percent by the year 2010.**

Source: State Demographer, MN State Planning Agency

Infant Mortality

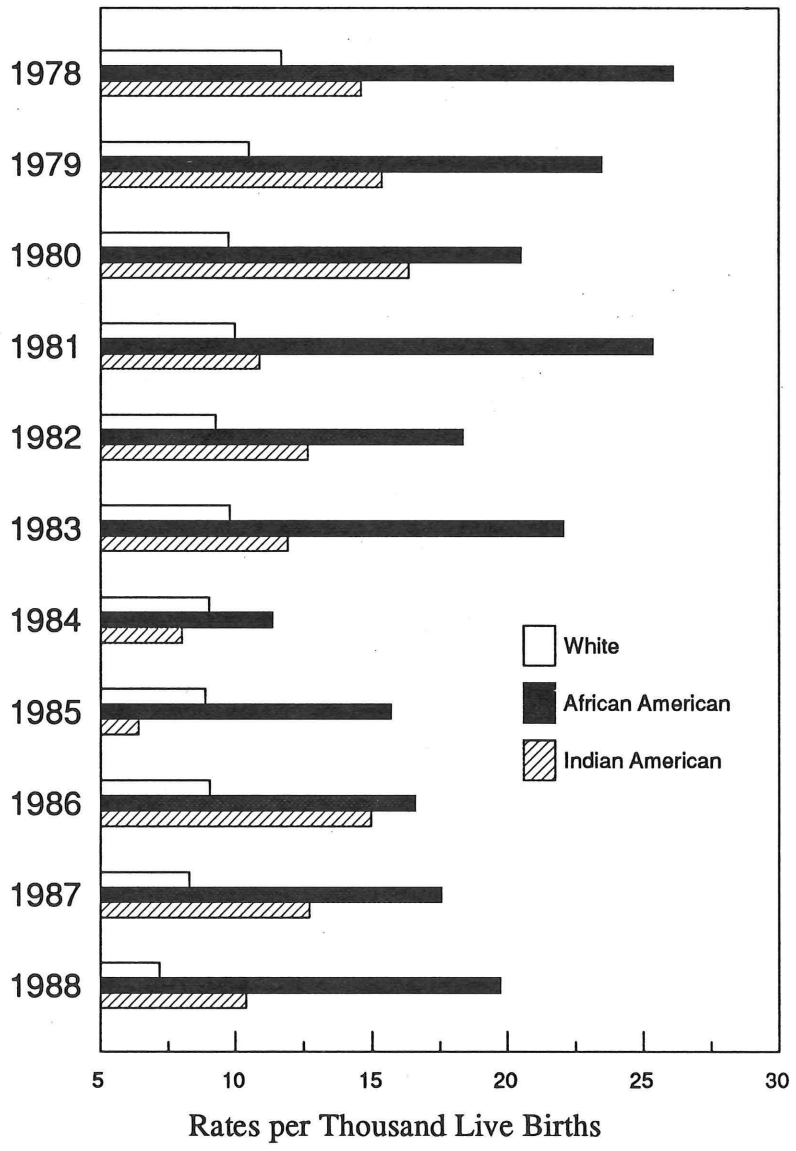


Source: MN Department of Health

Infant Death Rates by Race

Minnesota Residents, 1978 – 1988

- **The infant mortality rate increased for African Americans in the late 1980s, and remained high for American Indians.**



Source: MN Department of Health

Smaller, More Diverse Families

- **Minnesota mothers are slightly older than others in the United States.**
- **More Minnesota women are having no children or only one child than 20 years ago.**
- **The rate of women having three or more children declined in the 1970s, but stabilized in the 1980s.**
- **In 1987, 8.7 percent of Minnesota births were to women of color, compared to 5.7 percent in 1980.**
- **The birth rate for women of color is about twice that of white women.**

Source: State Demographer, MN State Planning Agency

Estimated Increases in Population by Race and Ethnicity

1980 – 1985

2%	White
15 – 20%	American Indian
23%	Hispanic
36%	African American
50 – 67%	Asian American

- **Minorities comprise less than four percent of Minnesota's population, but one-third of the state's population growth.**

- **Minority children in schools increased 28 percent from 1980 to 1986, while white children decreased 10 percent.**

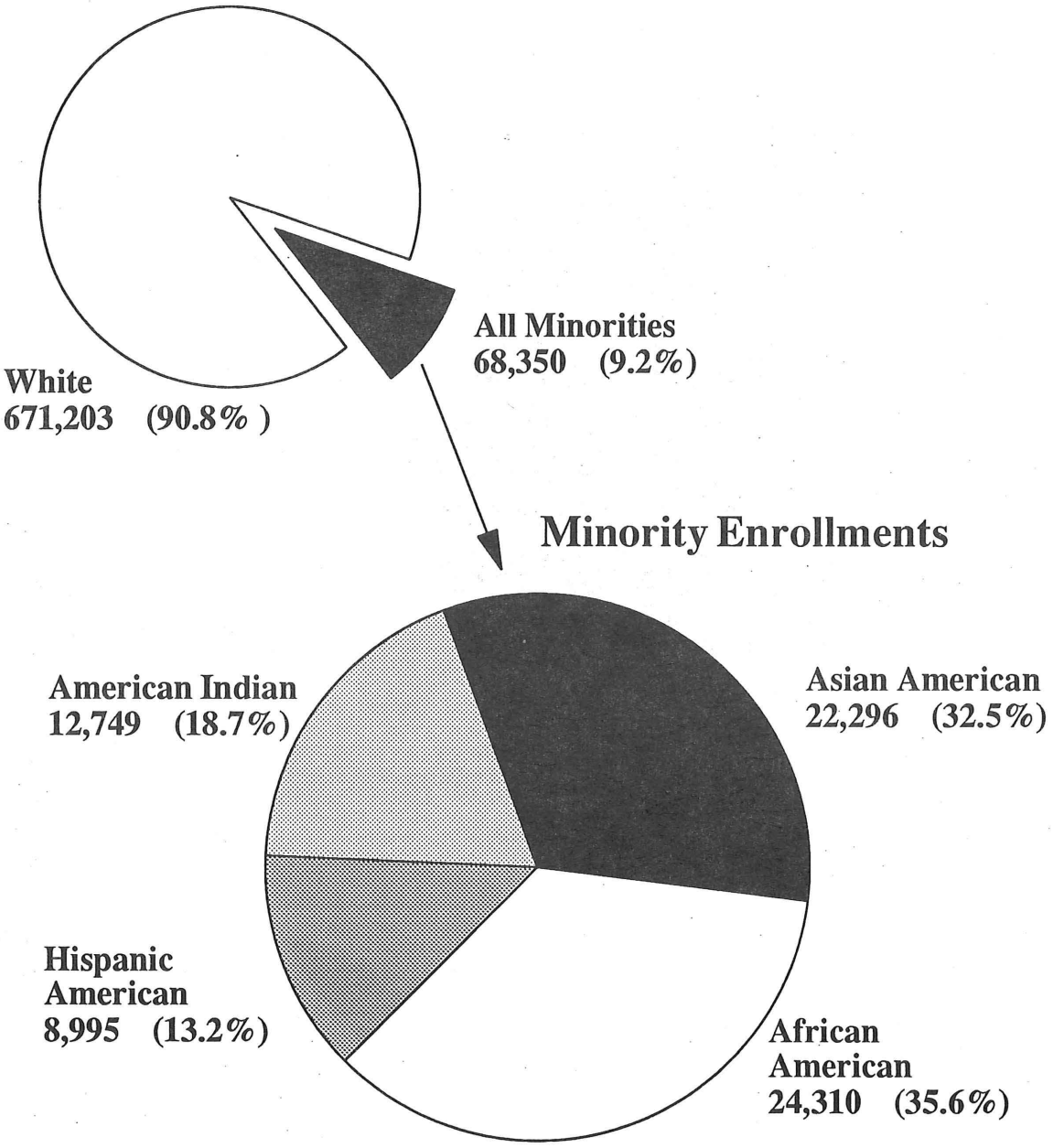
- **Fifty-one counties experienced increases in minority school enrollment of 25 percent or more from 1980 to 1988.**

Source: State Demographer, MN State Planning Agency; MN Department of Education

Minority School Children in Minnesota

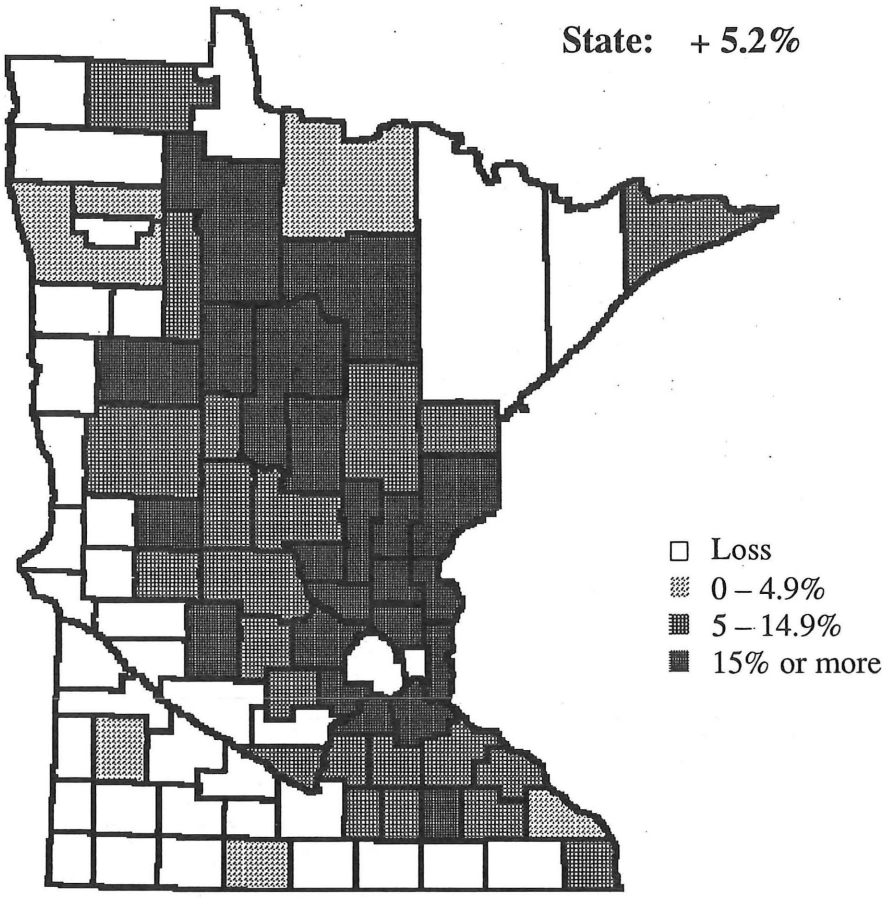
1989

Total Enrollment: 739,553



Source: MN Department of Education

Projected Population Change
1985 – 2000



Source: State Demographer, MN State Planning Agency

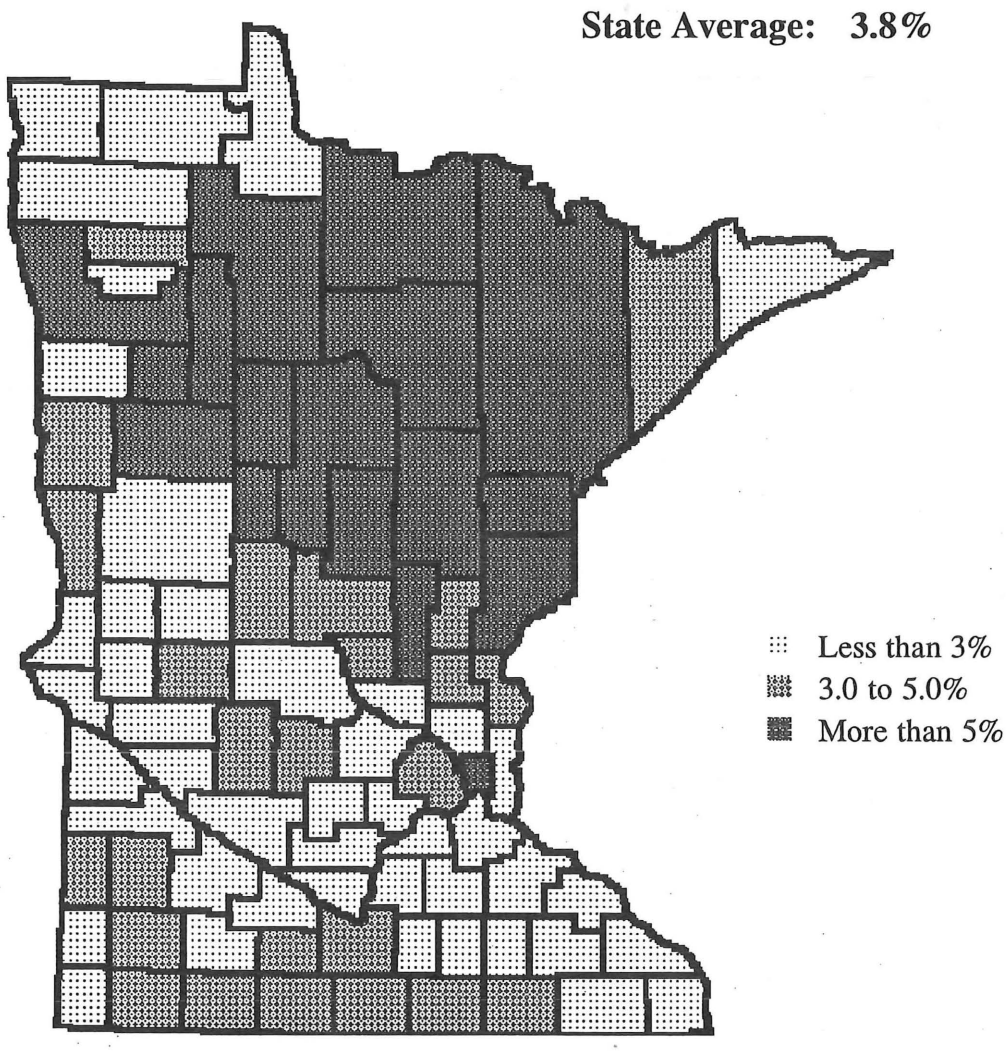
Children in Many Rural Counties Face Disproportionate Economic Stress

While Minnesota's child population is about evenly split between the seven-county metro area and greater Minnesota:

- **The ten poorest counties in Minnesota are all rural.**
- **Family earnings are lower and unemployment rates typically higher.**
- **Most of the counties with the highest rates of AFDC dependency are in northern Minnesota.**
- **Most of the counties with the highest teen pregnancy rates are rural.**

Source: Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota

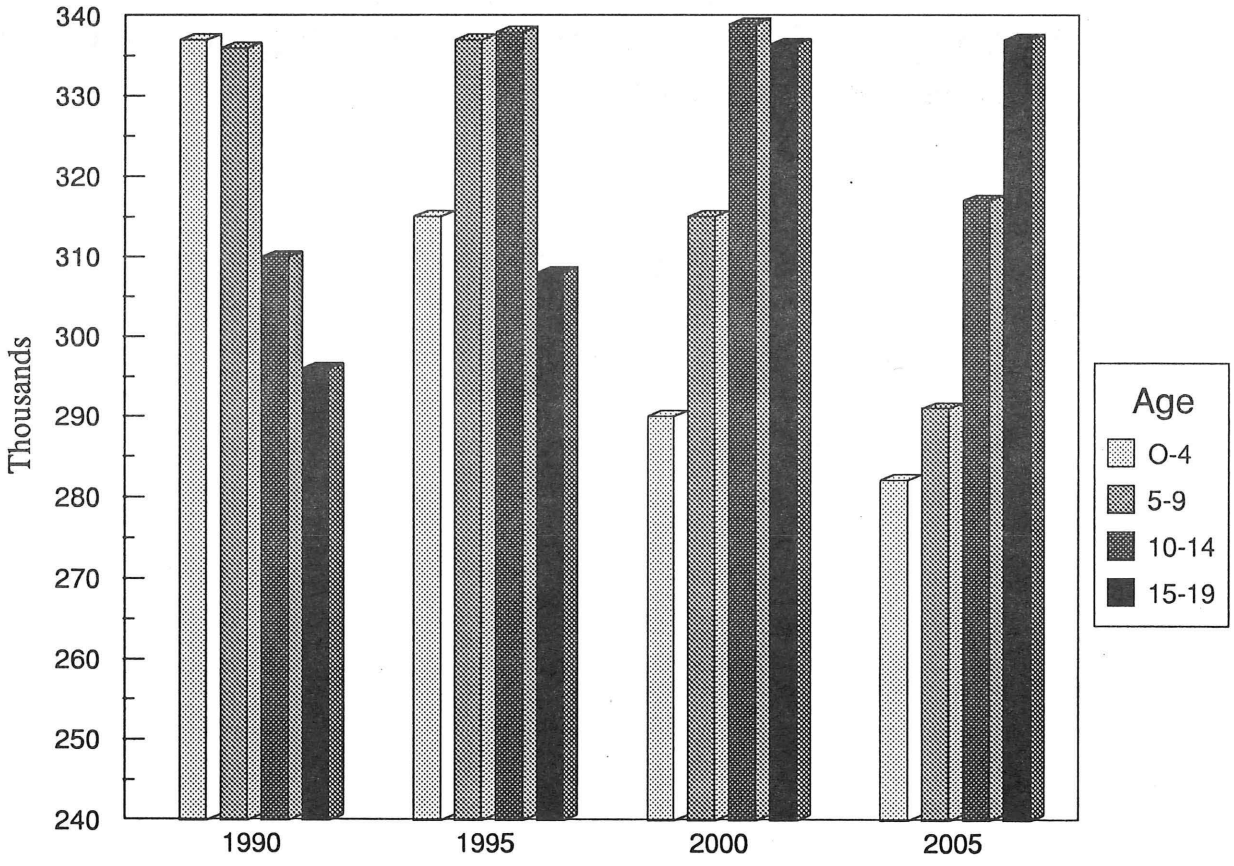
Percentage of Population Using AFDC
1986



Source: MN Department of Human Services; State Demographer, MN State Planning Agency

Minnesota Child Population Projections

The number of very young children will decrease into the next century.



Source: State Demographer, MN State Planning Agency

United States Children in Dual-Worker Families

- **In 1988, 43 percent of children under 18 in the United States lived in dual-worker families, compared to 30 percent in 1975.**

- **This type of family increased more rapidly than single-parent families.**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

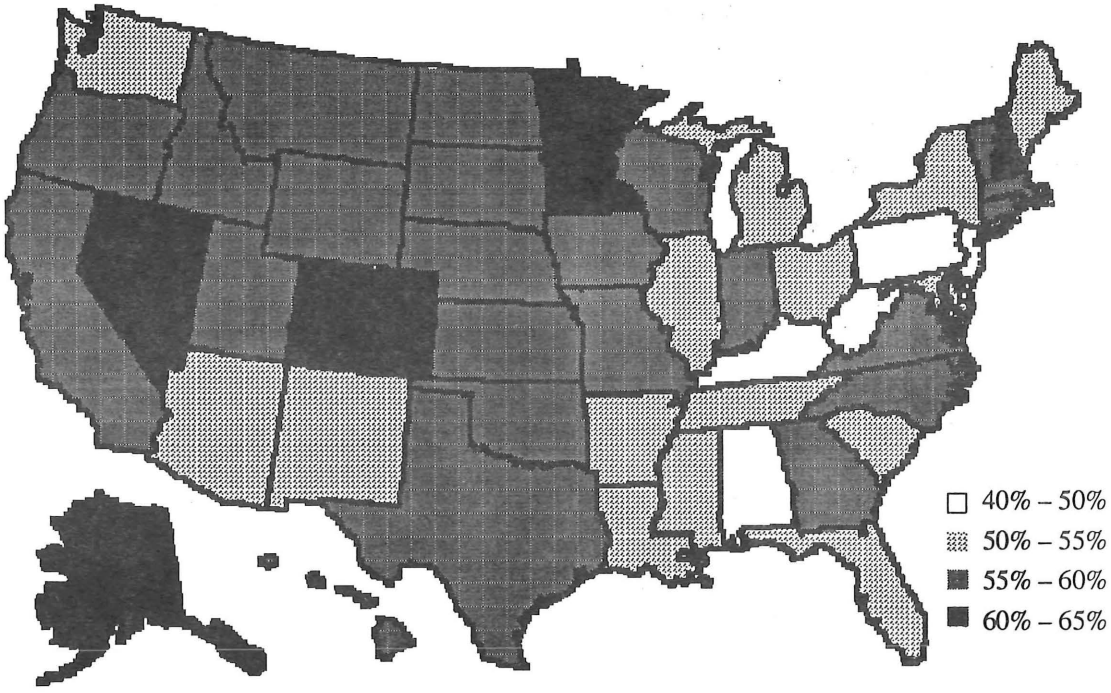
Minnesota Women in the Labor Force

- **Fifty percent of mothers with preschoolers (1985).**
- **Sixty-seven percent of mothers with children ages 6-17 (1985).**
- **Sixty-two percent of all women – fifth highest rate among states (1987).**

Source: Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota; Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

Female Labor Force Participation

1985



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Single Parenting is Increasing

- **Minnesota: Twelve percent of Minnesota children lived with a single parent in 1980 – below the national rate.**

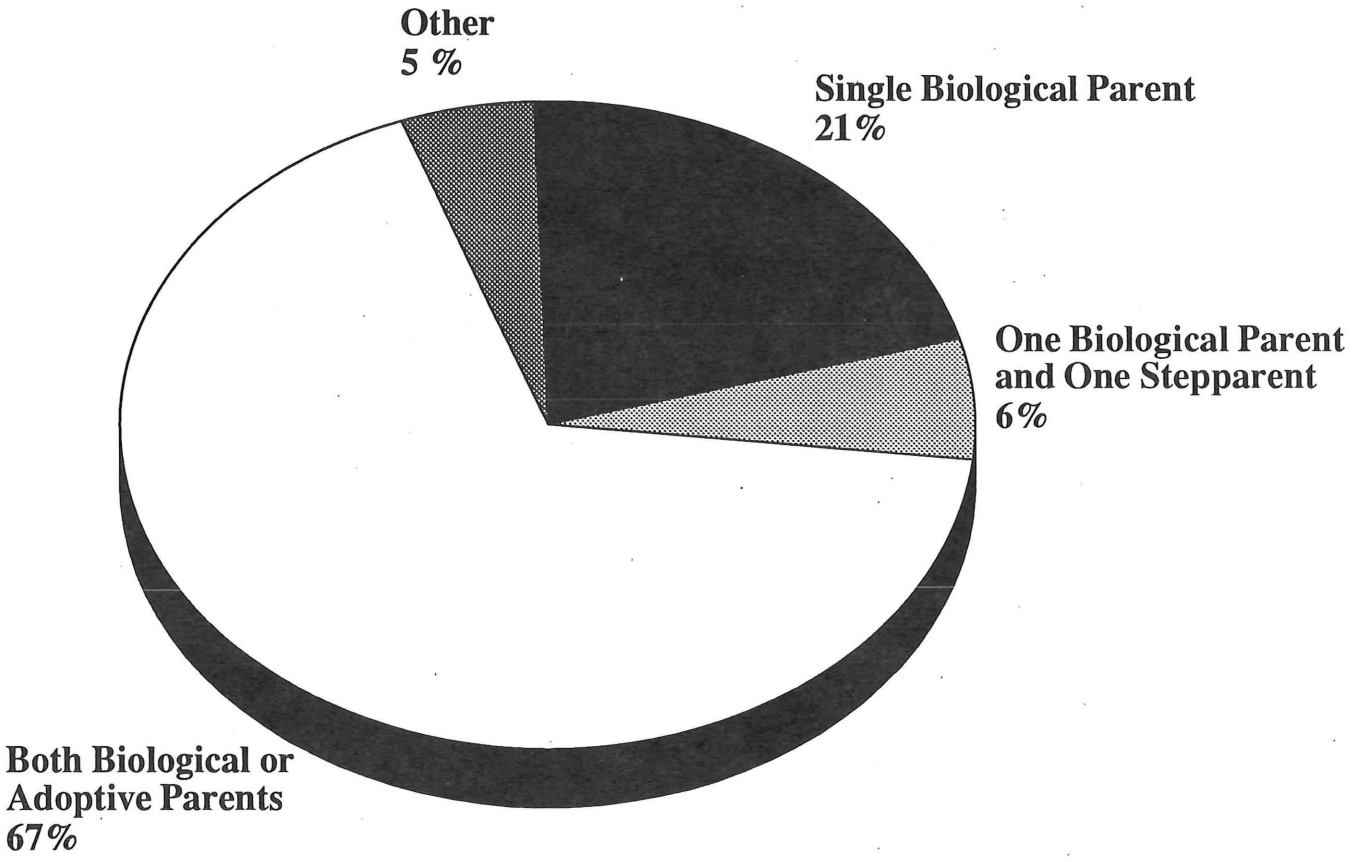
- **United States: Today, nearly one-fourth of United States children live in single-parent households. The rate went from 16 percent in 1975 to 22 percent in 1988.**

- **Poverty Incidence – United States: Female-headed, single-parent families have the highest poverty rate of any type of family. Their average income was $12,000 in 1988, compared to over $40,000 for two-parent families. Fifty-four percent of children in such households are poor.**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Minnesota Family Composition
1989

Minnesota adolescents report living with:



Sample of 91,000 sixth, ninth, and twelfth graders

Source: MN Department of Education, Student Survey – 1989

Births to Unmarried and Teen Parents

- **The percentage of babies born to unmarried mothers in increasing steadily in Minnesota. It is increasing for both teen mothers and older mothers.**

- **The percentages in 1988 were:**

All ages:	**18 percent**
Teens (19 and under):	**76 percent**

- **An undetermined number of these mothers marry the father sometime after giving birth.**

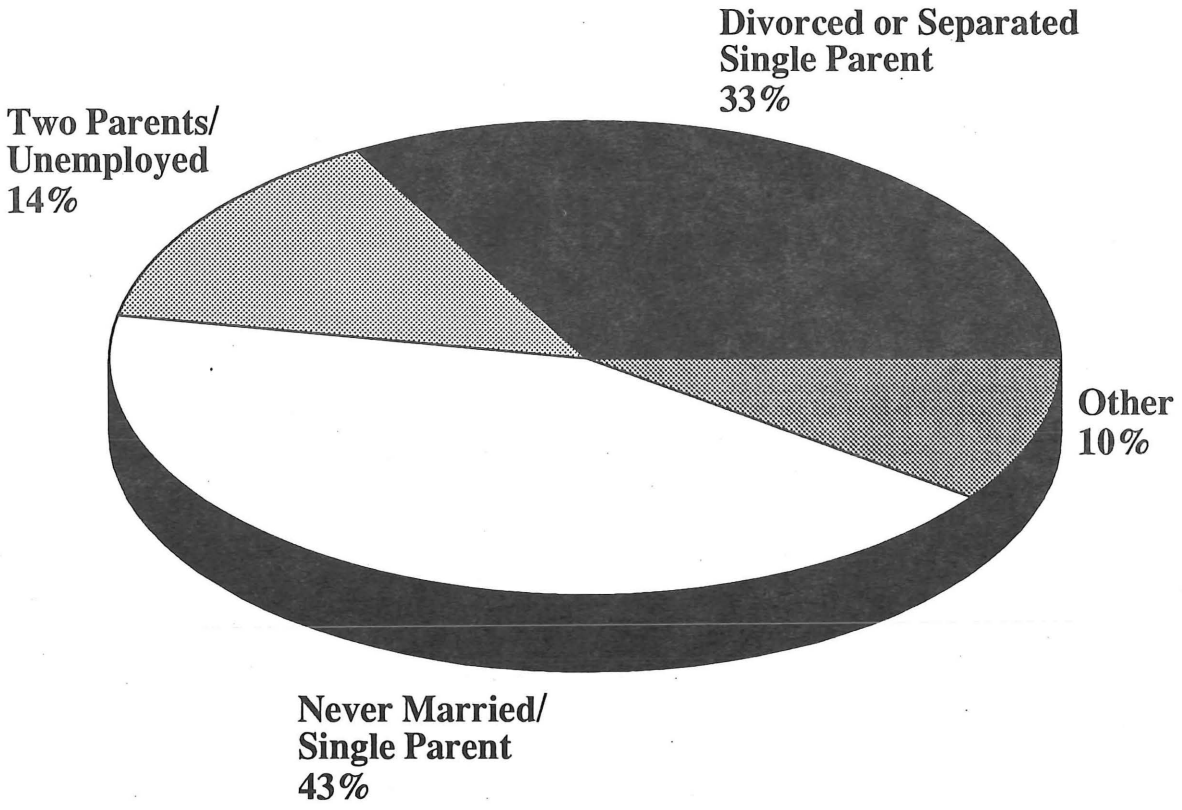
- **There are about 5,000 children born to teen mothers each year in Minnesota. Fifty-five percent are outside the seven-county metro area.**

- **Minnesota's teen birth rate appears to be stable and is one of the lowest in the country. However, the number of children born to teens could increase greatly in the 1990s as the teen population grows.**

Source: MN Department of Health

Parental Status of Children on Public Assistance (AFDC)

Minnesota (FY1989)

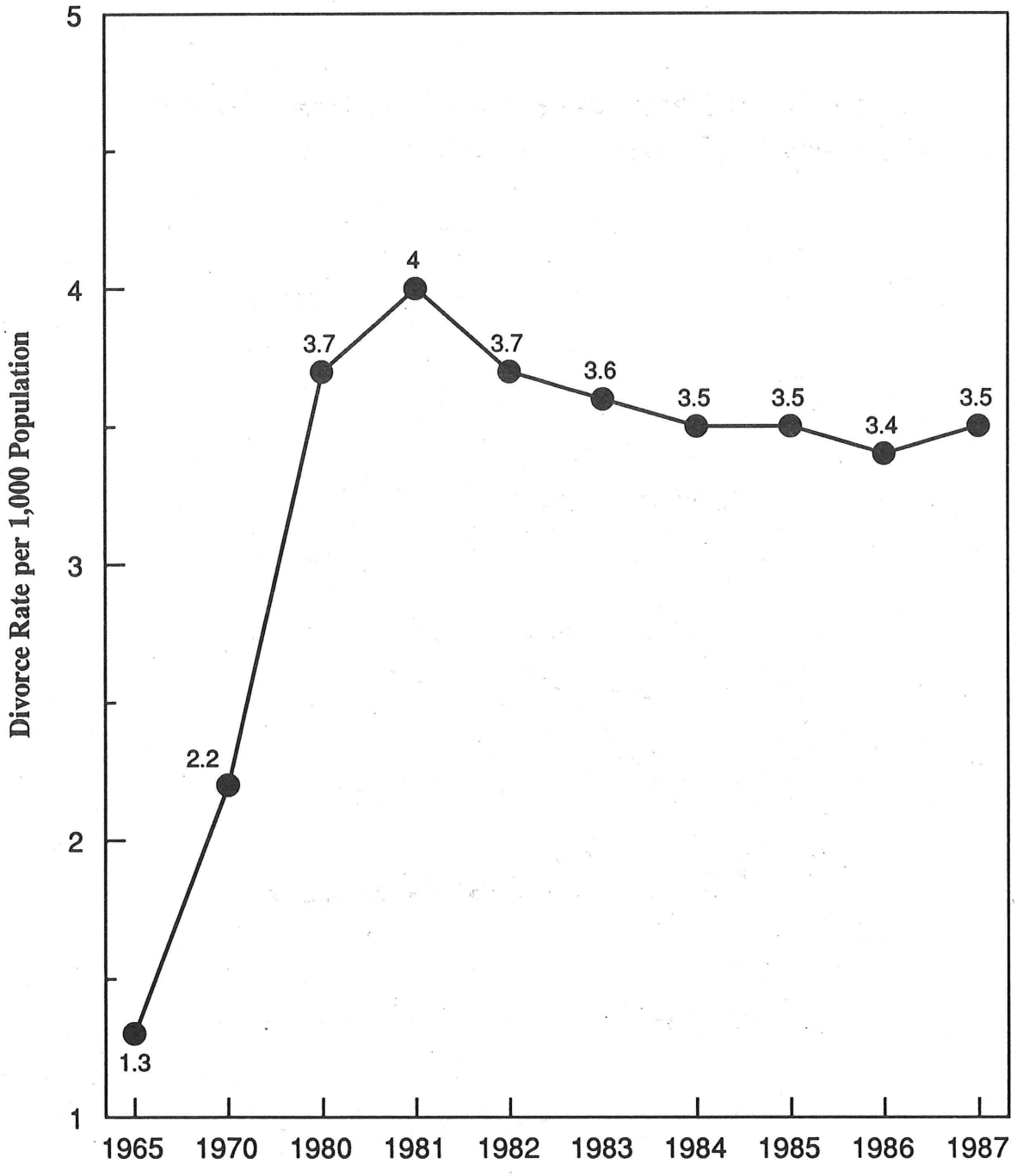


Total Children on AFDC in 1989 – 106,000

Source: MN Department of Human Services

Trend in Minnesota Divorce Rate

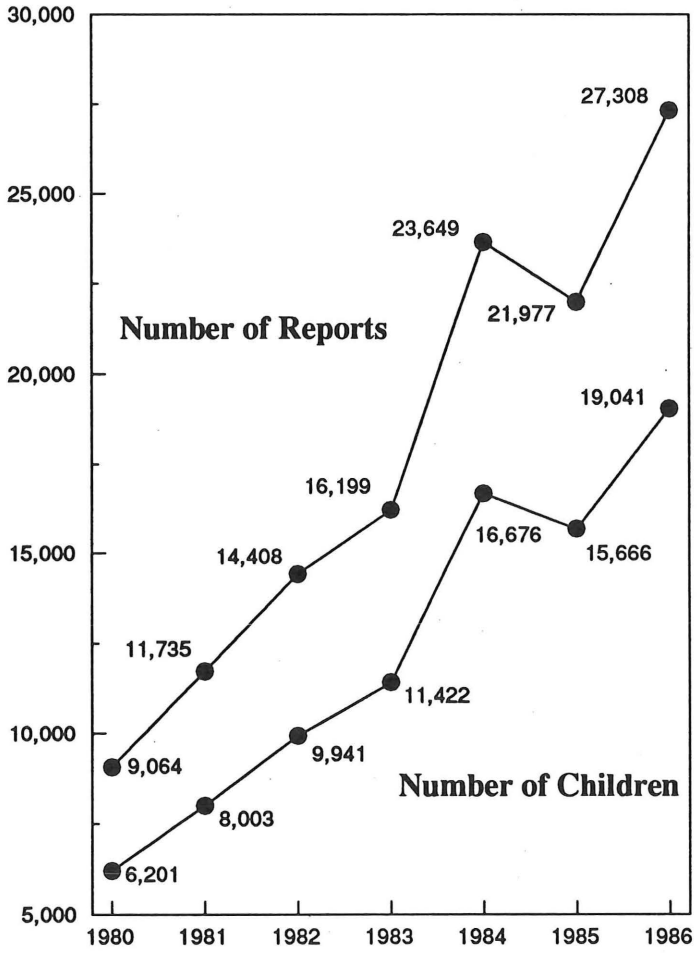
1965 – 1987



Source: MN Department of Health

Child Maltreatment Reports
1980 – 1986

Neglect is the most common form of maltreatment, followed by physical abuse and sexual abuse.

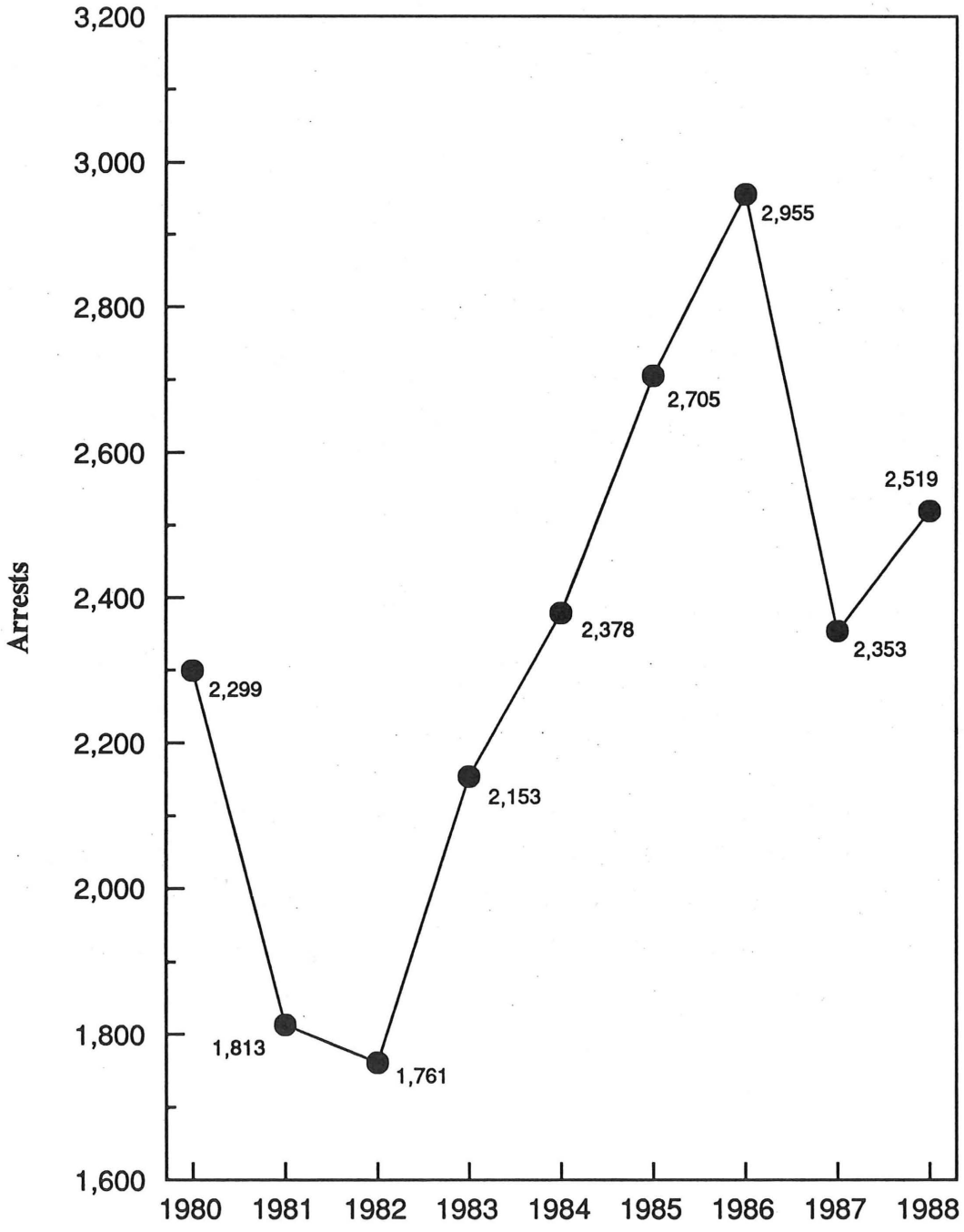


Twenty percent were unsubstantiated

Source: MN Department of Human Services

Arrests of Juveniles for Runaway

1980 – 1988



Source: Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Out-of-Home Placements Increase Sharply

- **The number of Minnesota children newly entering "placement" into shelter care (less than 30 days) or substitute care (greater than 30 days) outside of their own homes increased 48 percent from 1986 (6,031) to 1989 (8,901).**

- **The total number of children in out-of-home placement on a temporary or permanent basis at some time during the year increased from 11,681 in 1986 to 15,044 in 1989 – a 29 percent increase.**

- **At the end of 1989, 5.9 children per 1,000 population were in placement – up from 4.8 three years earlier.**

- **Family preservation is a goal of public policy. Some of the children in substitute care return to their families, but many need permanent placements. The proportion actually adopted remains low.**

Source: MN Department of Human Services

Improved Placement Procedures Needed for Children of Color

- **Substitute care (over 30 days) includes family foster homes, group homes, and institutional residences.**
- **Although they represented about eight percent of Minnesota's child population in 1988, * minority heritage children represented one-third of children entering foster care.**
- **Children of color represent 50 percent of those entering foster care in Hennepin County, where they are only 10 percent of the child population.**
- **According to the law, the state must attempt to place minority children with families of their own ethnic heritage.**
- **There is a critical shortage of licensed foster homes, adoptive homes, and other placement options, especially for children of color and children with special needs. Older children, in particular, need more options.**
- **Some willing minority families currently face barriers to licensing and adoption. Changes in procedures may be able to remove barriers.**

* *Based on school enrollment data, MN Department of Education*

Source: MN Department of Human Services

Destructive Behaviors by Youth Share Common Sources

- **Persons working with youth increasingly believe that a variety of destructive and risk-taking behaviors often derive from the same set of causes in family and society.**

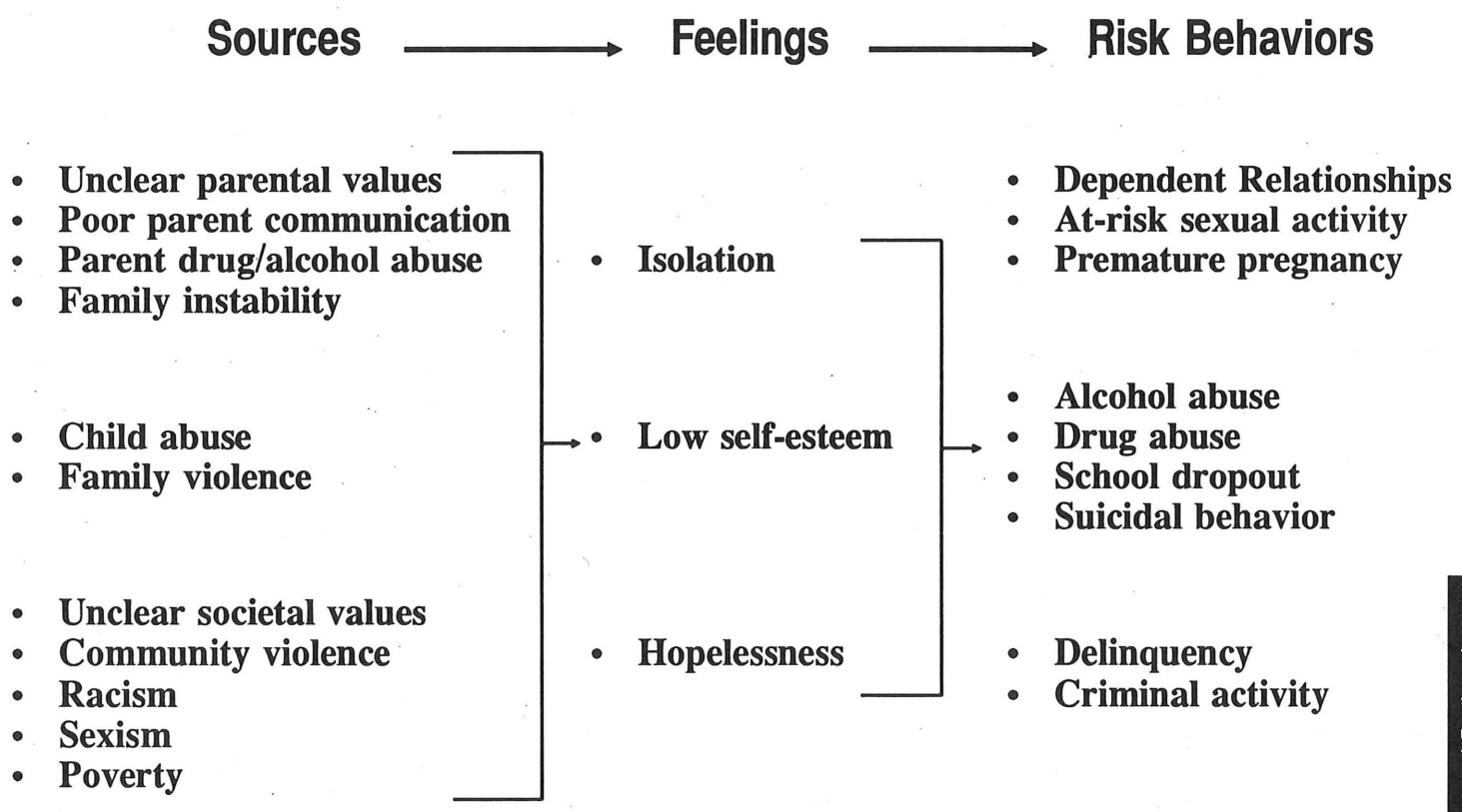
- **These causes typically produce feelings of:**

  Low self-esteem
  Low self-confidence
  Hopelessness for the future
  Isolation
  Sense that no one cares

- **Some youth react with destructive behaviors towards themselves, others towards society.**

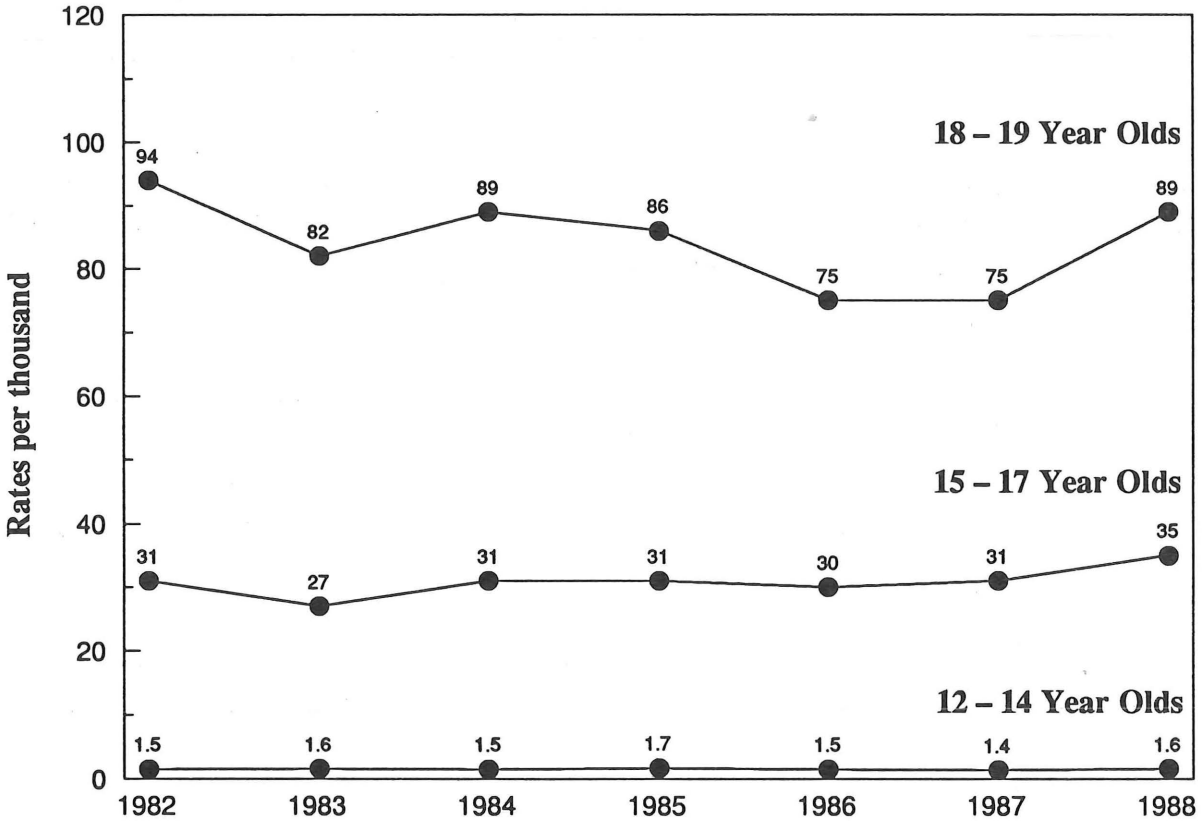
Source: MN State Planning Agency; MN Department of Education, Student Survey, 1989

Common Patterns of Destructive Behaviors by Youth



Adolescent Pregnancy Rates *

1982 – 1988



Females Ages 12 – 19

* *Does not include miscarriages*

Source: Adolescent Health Database, DATANET, MN State Planning Agency; MN Department of Health

Alcohol and Drug Use

- **Twenty-four percent of 6th, 9th, and 12th graders report a family alcohol or drug use problem.**

- **Minnesota 9th graders reporting regular use of: ***

Alcohol only:	**20%**
Drugs and alcohol:	**7%**
Drugs only:	**1%**

- **Minnesota 12th graders reporting regular use of:**

Alcohol only:	**44%**
Drugs and alcohol:	**11%**
Drugs only:	**1%**

- **Less than two percent of 6th, 9th, and 12th graders report having ever used cocaine or steroids.**

* *Regular use defined as use at least monthly*

Source: MN Department of Education, Student Survey, 1989

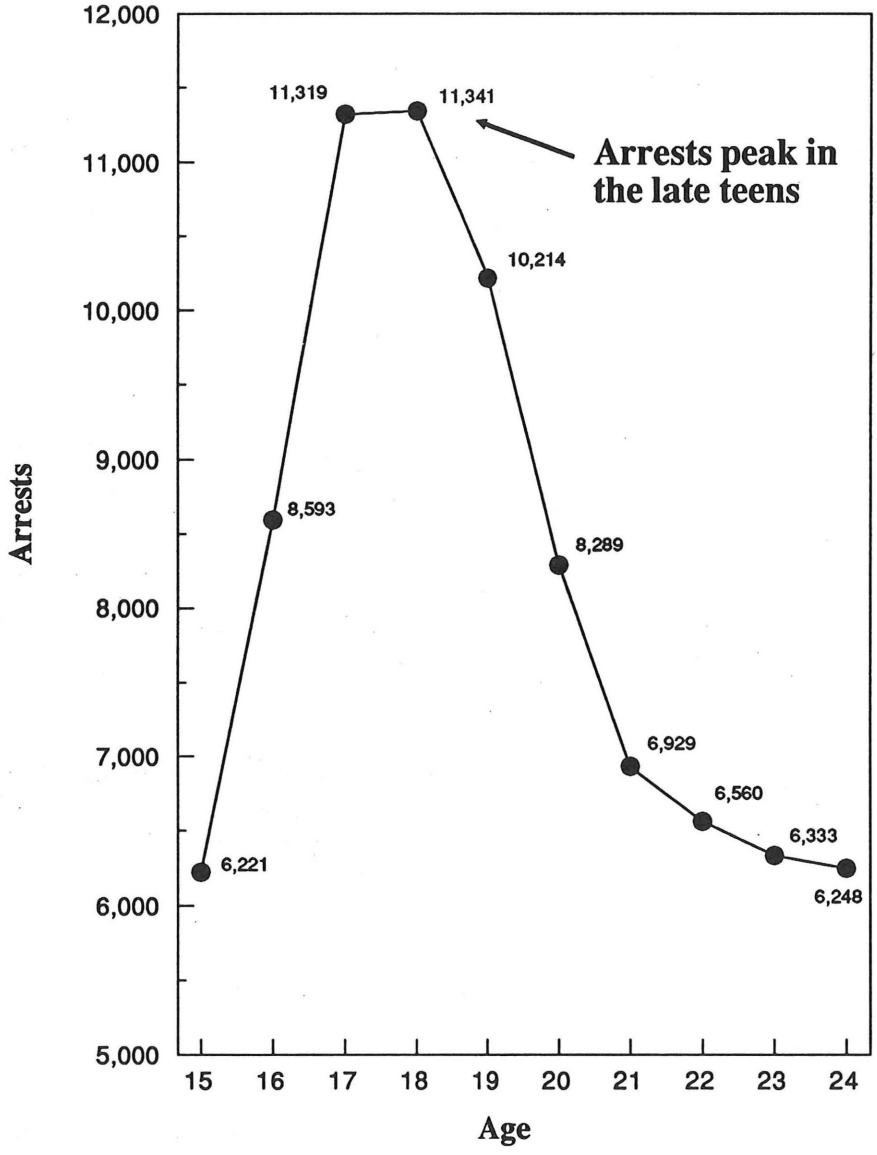
Suicidal Behavior

- **One out of nine 6th, 9th, and 12th grade students report ever having attempted suicide.**
- **These self-reported rates are highest for females in 9th grade (20%) and 12th grade (16%).**
- **Actual suicides per capita by children ages 10 to 19 increased somewhat during the 1980s, peaking during the farm crisis of the mid 1980s, and then remaining above 1980 levels.**

Source: MN Department of Education, Student Survey, 1989

Number of Persons Arrested by Age *

1988



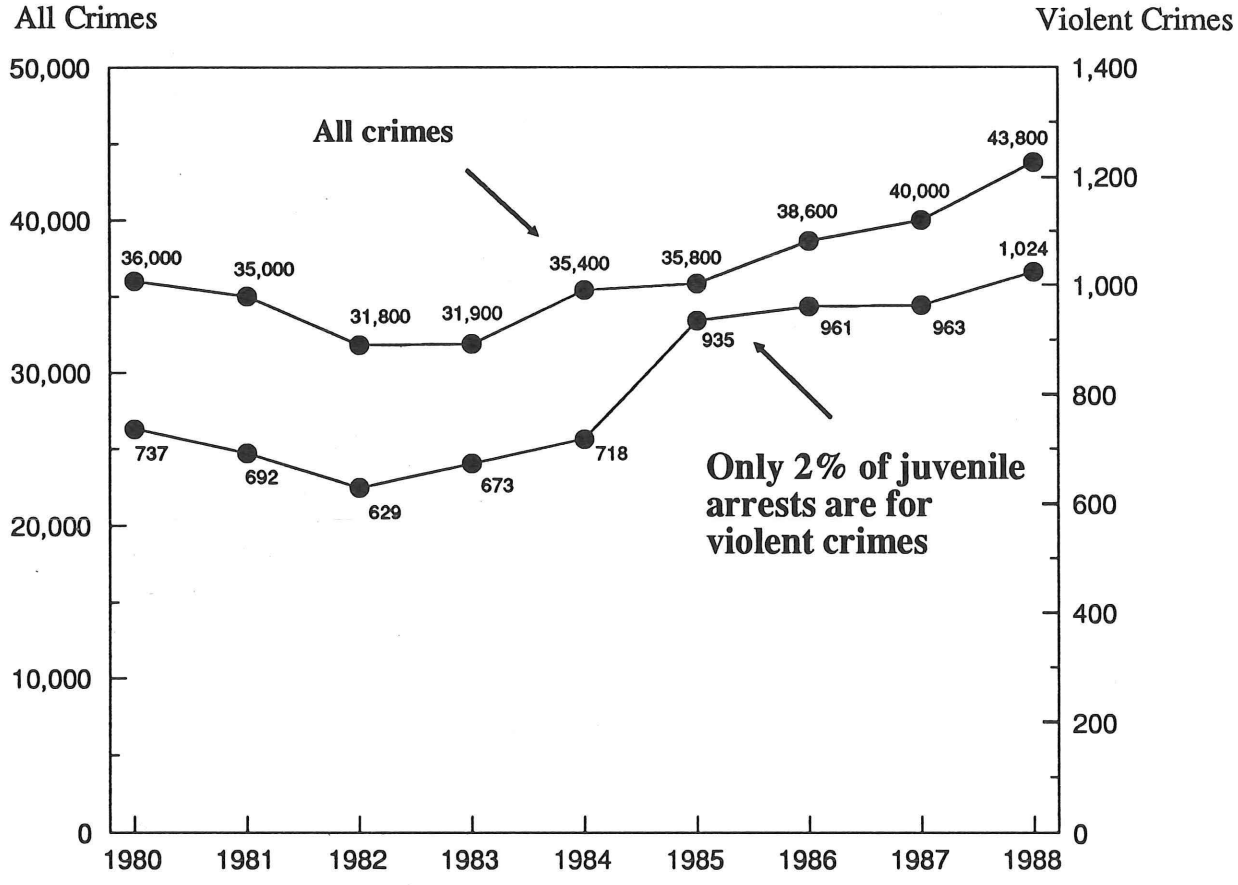
* *Arrests for runaway and curfew not counted*

Source: Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Minnesota Juvenile Arrest Totals All Crimes and Violent Crimes Compared *

1980 – 1988

Arrests are increasing despite a decline in the number of juveniles.



* *Violent crimes include murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault*

Source: Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Systematic Early Intervention

- **Research shows that children who are likely to drop out of school or engage in other risk behaviors can be identified at third grade or earlier.**

- **Few systematic approaches are in place to intervene with such children at an early age.**

Source: Committee for Economic Development, *Children in Need: Investment Strategies for the Educationally Disadvantaged.* New York: 1987

Youth Service

- **Participation:**
  - **An undetermined number of Minnesota youth from elementary through college-age.**
- **Sponsorship:**
  - **Schools, colleges, 4-H, campfire, scouts, YMCA, YWCA, churches, public agencies, etc..**
- **Projects:**
  - **Peer tutoring, peer counseling, mentoring, environmental, alcohol and drug abuse prevention, career internships, health care, senior citizens.**
- **School programs:**
  - **Inclusion in curriculum encouraged by state.**
  - **280 districts participating.**
  - **Supported by state aid at 25 cents per capita.**
- **DNR State Parks: Youth volunteers increased from 4,000 in 1986 to 14,000 in 1989.**

Source: MN Department of Education; National Youth Leadership Council; MN Department of Natural Resources

Local Youth Development Plans

- **In the fall of 1990, 295 school districts will implement program (established in 1987).**

- **Plans focus on one of the following:**

  Youth Service
  Youth Support Network
  Youth Career Connections
  Youth Leadership
  After-School Enrichment

- **Plans are developed by the Community Education Advisory Council, consisting of:**

  School Staff
  Parents
  Youth
  Police
  Other
  Mayors and Local Officials
  Community Agencies
  Youth Agencies
  Social Service Agencies

- **Supported by local school levy and state aid:**

  $3M total for youth development and youth service

Source: MN Department of Education

High School Participation

Since 1981, Minnesota has had legislation that prohibits sexual discrimination in athletic programs in Minnesota schools. Although there is no centralized, quantitative data, it is believed that female participation has increased dramatically over the last eight to ten years.

1988 – 1989 School Year:

- **Athletic (including cheerleading):**

  144,272 * **(both male and female)**

- **Fine Arts (debate, one-act plays, band, orchestra, choir, pom poms, dance lines, flags, rifles):**

  119,548 * **(both male and female)**

* *Some youth may be counted more than once*

Source: MN State High School League

Religious Involvement

- **Over half of Minnesota 6th and 9th graders report attending religious services weekly and rate religion "pretty important" or "very important."**

- **Seventy percent of 6th and 9th graders report at least monthly attendance; 30 percent report no or rare religious involvement.**

- **Religious participation falls off sharply for 12th graders, but 85 percent still feel that religion is at least "a little important" in their lives.**

Source: MN Department of Education, Student Survey, 1989

Teens Working
(Ages 16 – 19)

- **More teenagers are in the labor force in Minnesota than in any other state.**

1st:	**Minnesota:**	**74%**
2nd:	**Utah:**	**69%**
3rd:	**Wisconsin:**	**68%**
	Midwest:	**61%**
	United States:	**55%**

- **However, Minnesota teenagers work fewer hours than those in most other states, averaging 24 hrs/wk..**

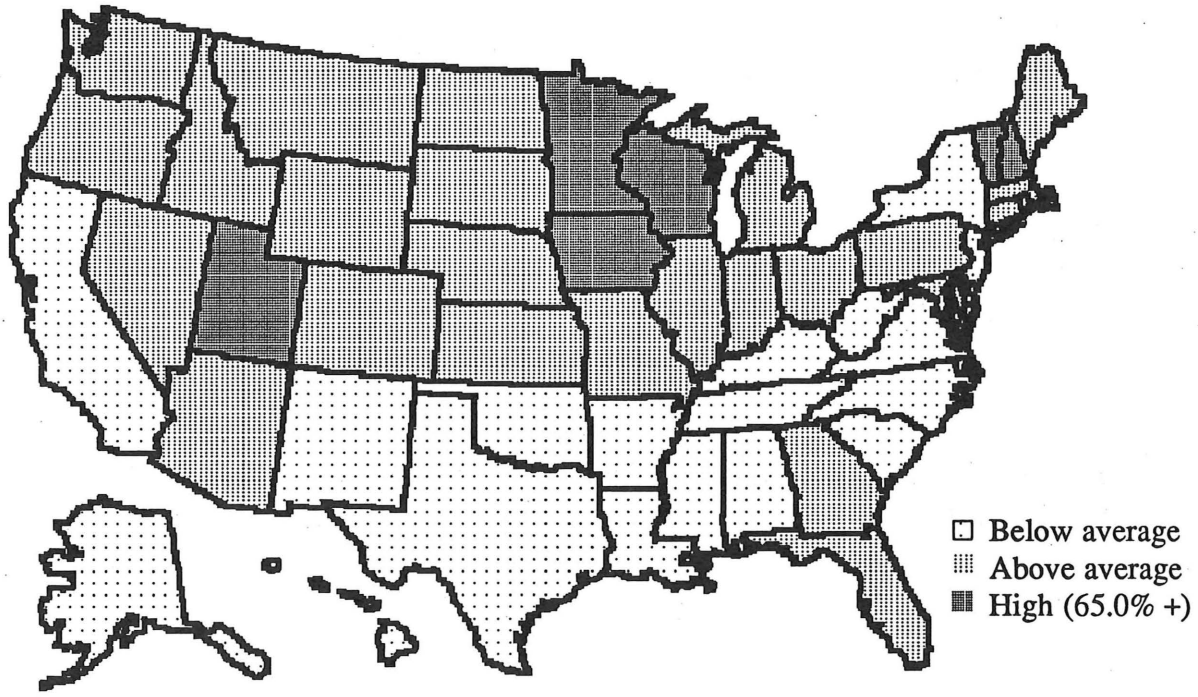
  This probably reflects their higher school participation rate.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1987

Percentage of Teenagers in Labor Force

Ages 16 – 19

1987



U.S. Average 54.7%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

High School Graduation

- **Minnesota's high school graduation rate in 1988 was 90.9 percent, highest in the United States. ***
- **The national rate was only 71.1 percent in 1988.**
- **There was no decisive trend in the rate in Minnesota during the period from 1983 to 1988.**
- **In 1988, 54,600 Minnesotans graduated from public schools and 4,200 from nonpublic schools.**

---

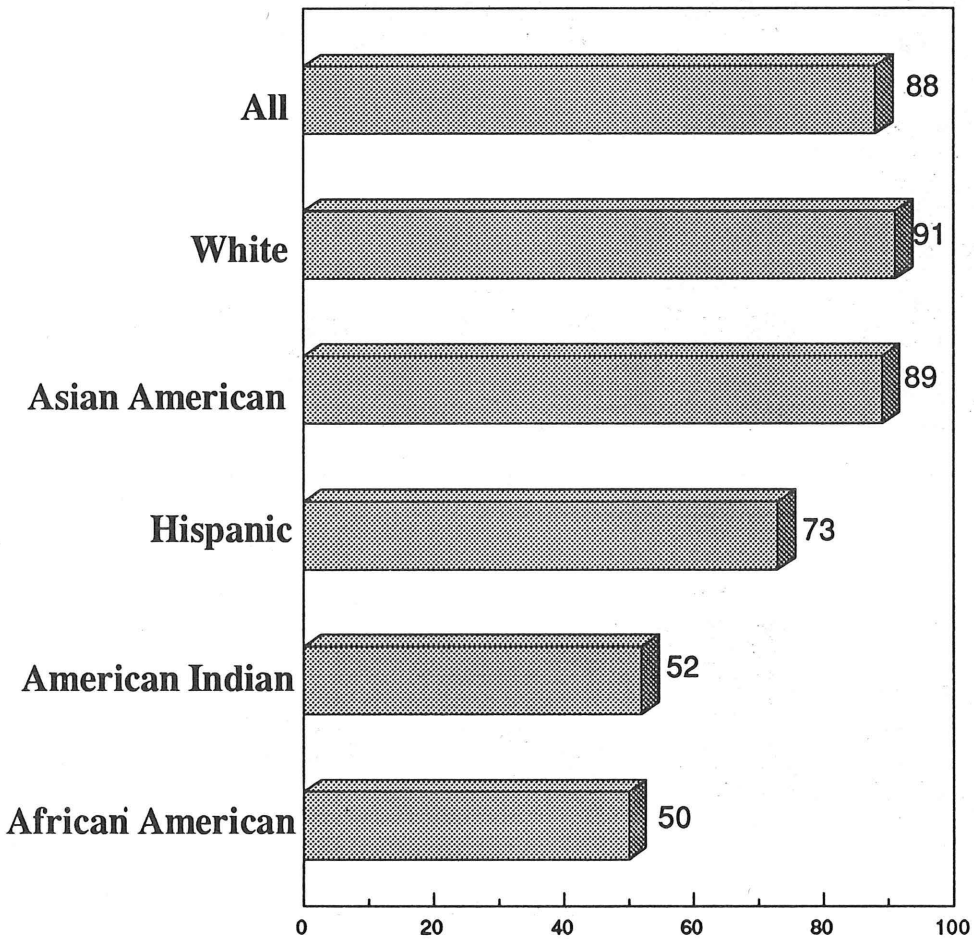
* *The ratio of public school graduates to the number of 9th graders four years earlier, adjusted for interstate migration*

Source: U.S. Department of Education

Minnesota High School Graduation Rates by Racial/Ethnic Group

1987

- **Graduation rates are very low in several communities of color.**

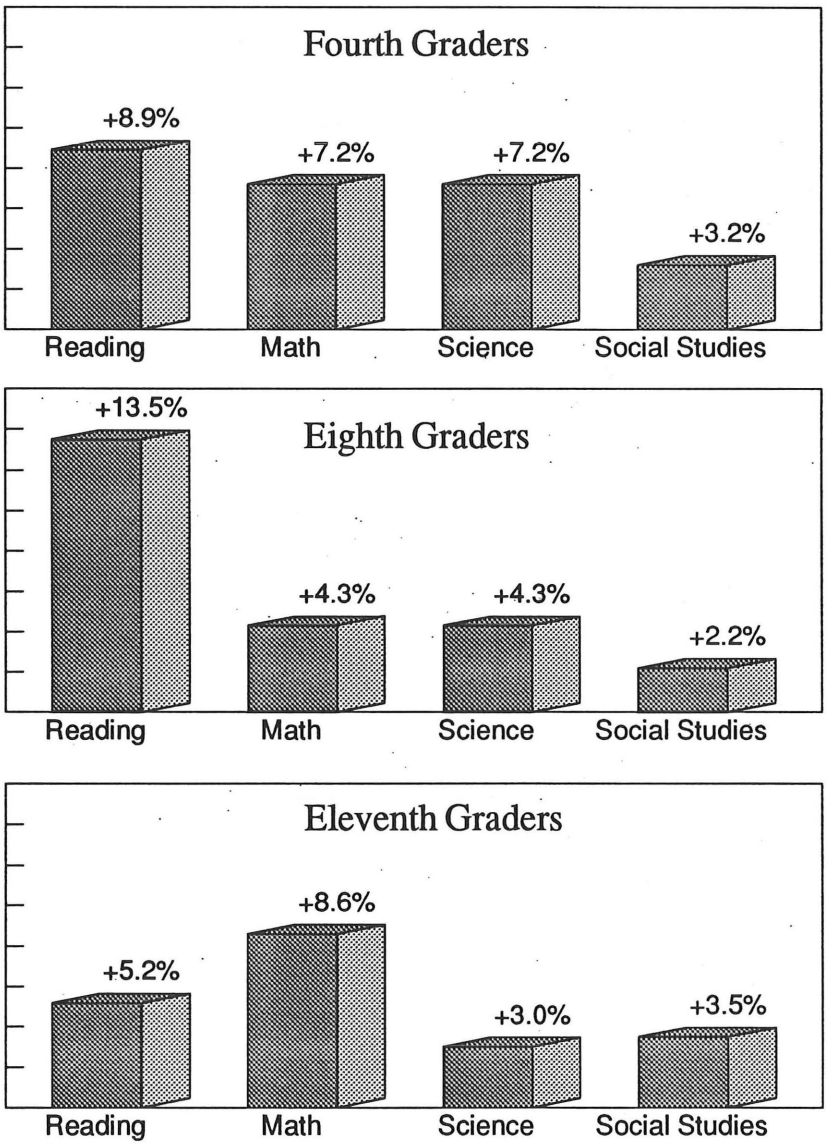


Percentage of public 9th grade students who graduate four years later

Source: MN Department of Education

Minnesota Students' Test Scores Compared to Nation

1985 – 1987



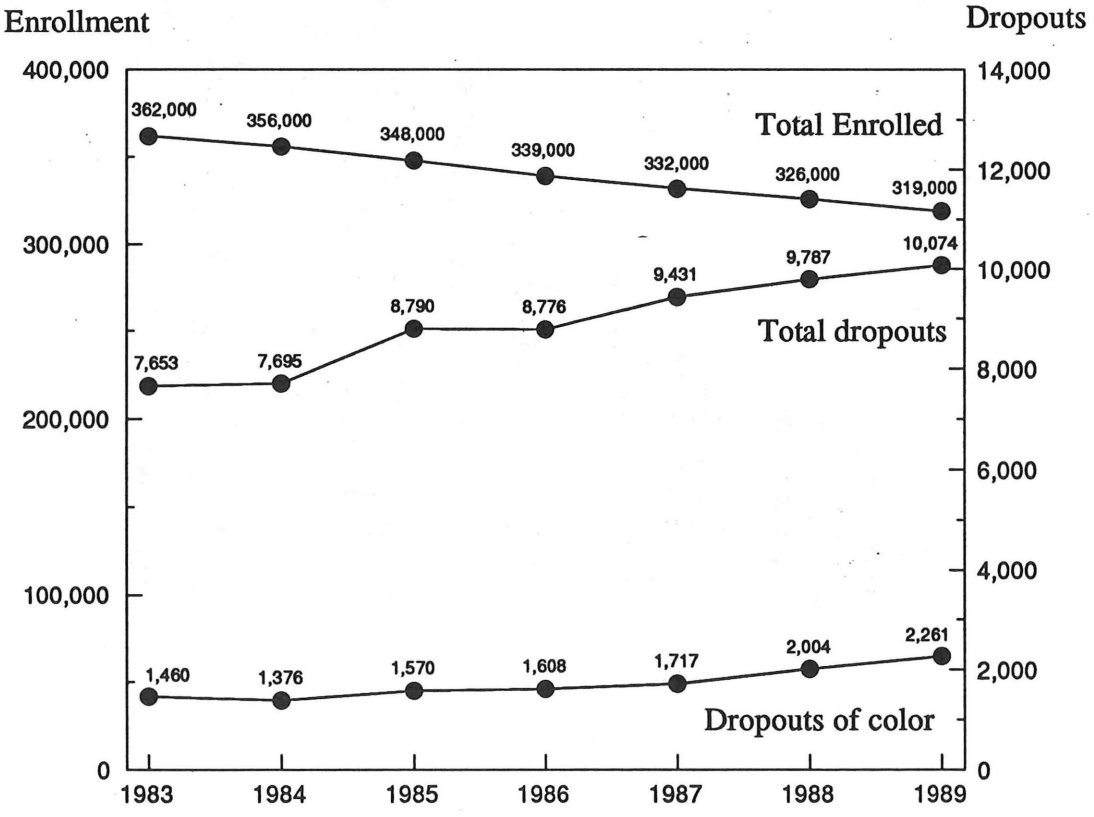
Selected Comparable Assessment Items

Source: MN Department of Education, Educational Assessment Scores

School Enrollment and Dropouts Grades 7 – 12

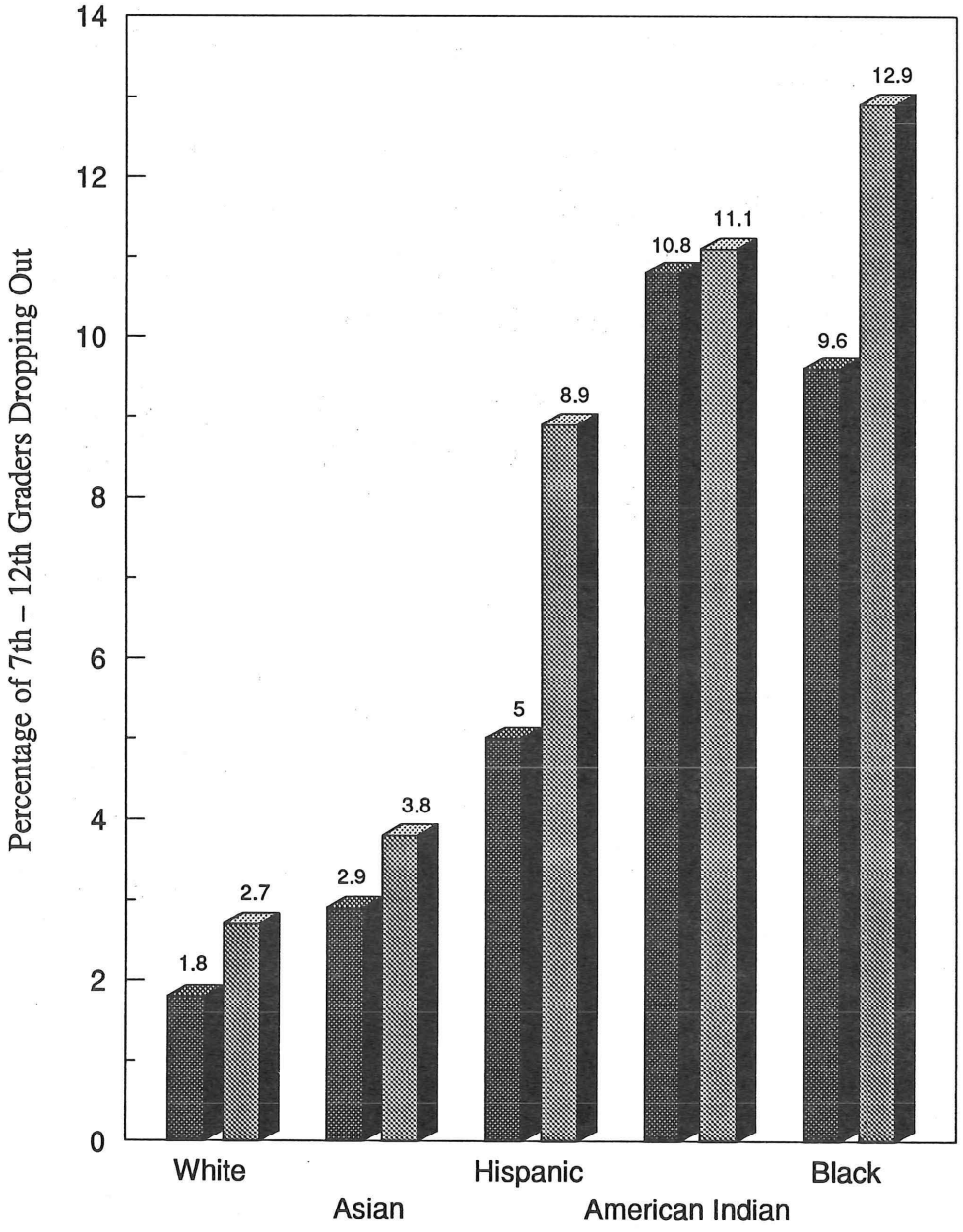
1983 – 1989

- **Dropouts are increasing despite declining enrollment.**
- **Seventy-seven percent of dropouts are white, but the minority share is increasing.**
- **Nationally, it's estimated that at least half of all dropouts eventually finish school.**
- **Minnesota's enrollment options programs served over 6,000 dropouts and potential dropouts in 1990.**



Source: MN Department of Education

Minnesota Annual School Dropout Rate by Race/Ethnicity 1983 – 1989



Source: MN Department of Education

College Entrance Test Scores

- **On the ACT test in 1989, Minnesota students scored fourth highest in the country out of 28 states. ***

- **An estimated 89 percent of Minnesota high school graduates enroll in post-secondary education within six years.**

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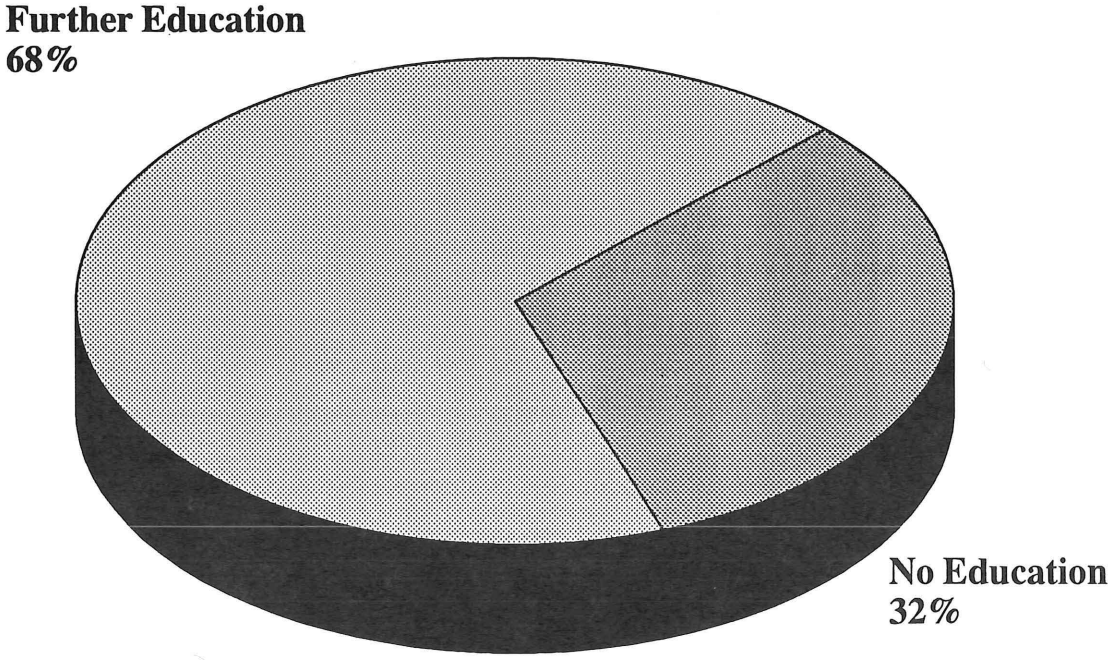
* *Forty-six percent of Minnesota high school graduates took the test*

Source: U.S. Department of Education

Minnesota High School Follow-up Education Activities

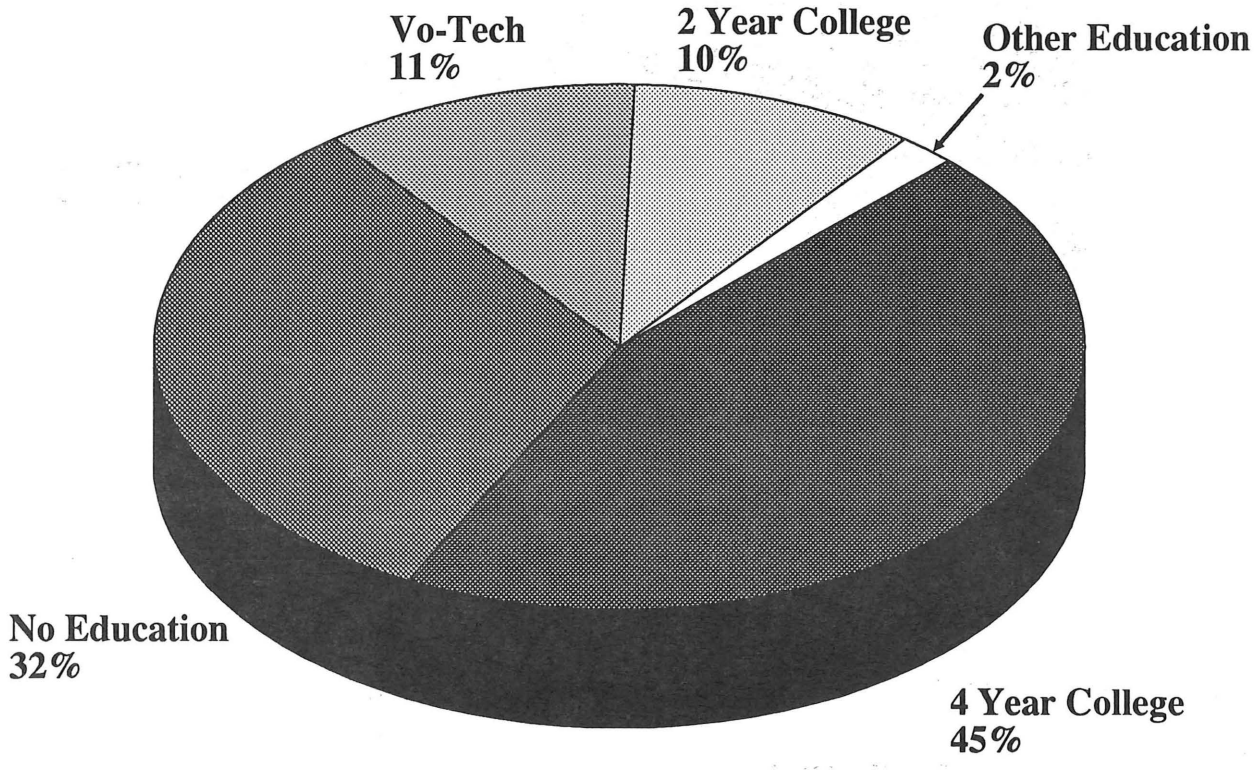
Class of 1986 – One Year Later



Source: MN Technical College System

Minnesota High School Follow-up Education Activities

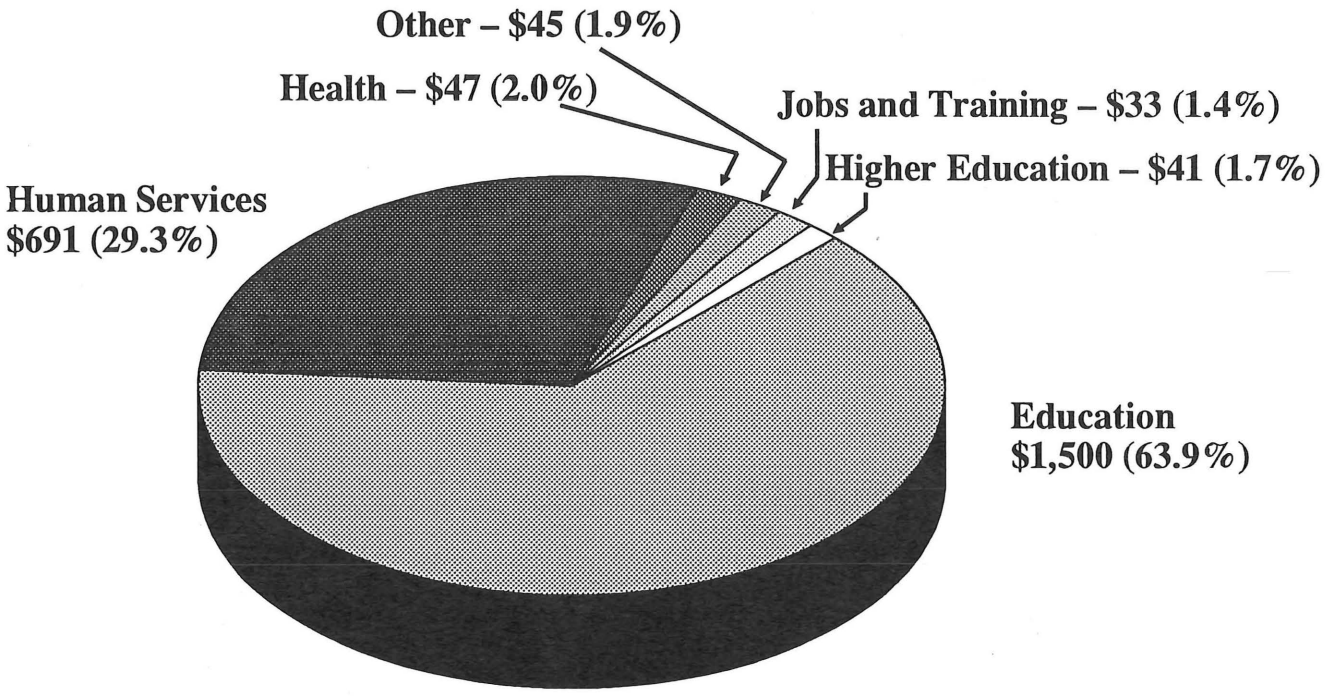
Class of 1986 – One Year Later



Source: MN Technical College System

State Agencies' Annual Investment in Children *

FY 1986 – 1988



Total: $2,357 Million

* *State and federal funds estimated annual average in millions*

Other	Dollars	Percent
Corrections	11	0.5
Metropolitan Council	10	0.4
All Other	24	1.0

Source: MN State Planning Agency

Education Investment

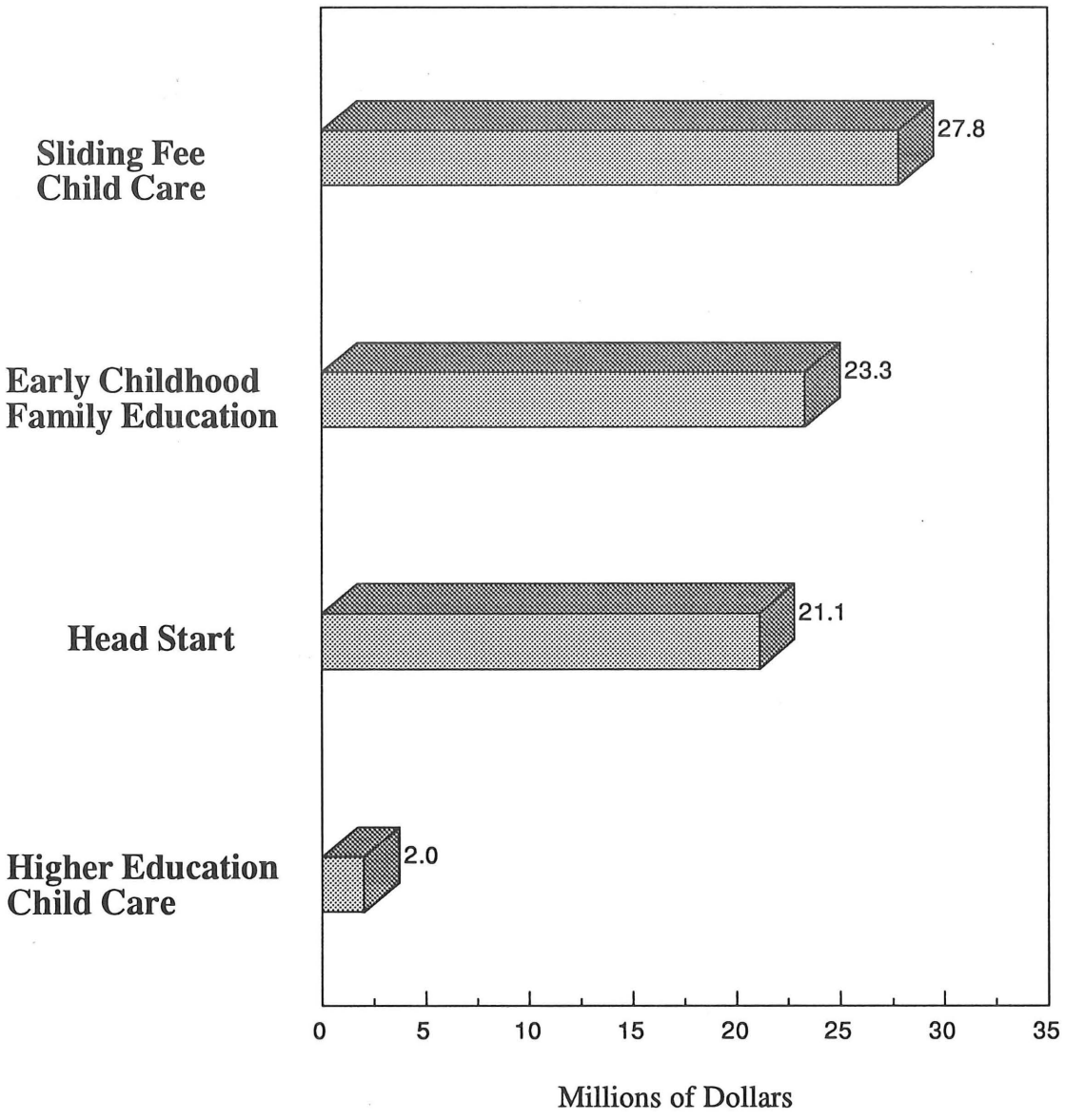
- **Minnesota invested an average of $4,386 per public school student in 1988.**

- **This was slightly above the national average, and ranked 18th among the states.**

Source: U.S. Department of Education

Public Funds for Child Care and Development

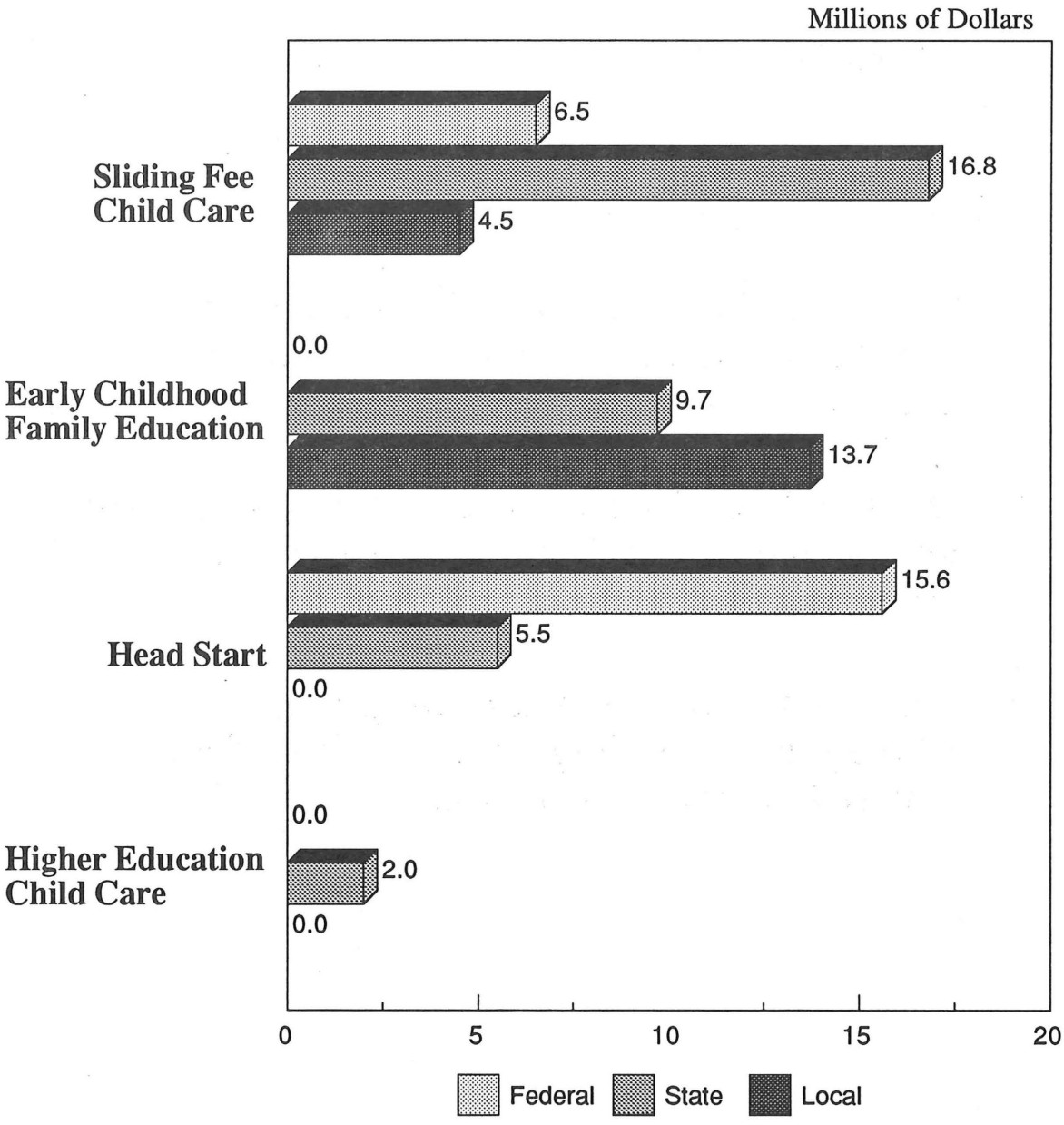
Minnesota (FY 1990)



Source: Various State Agencies

Source of Funds for Child Care

Minnesota (FY 1990)



Source: Various State Agencies

Demand for and Supply of Child Care

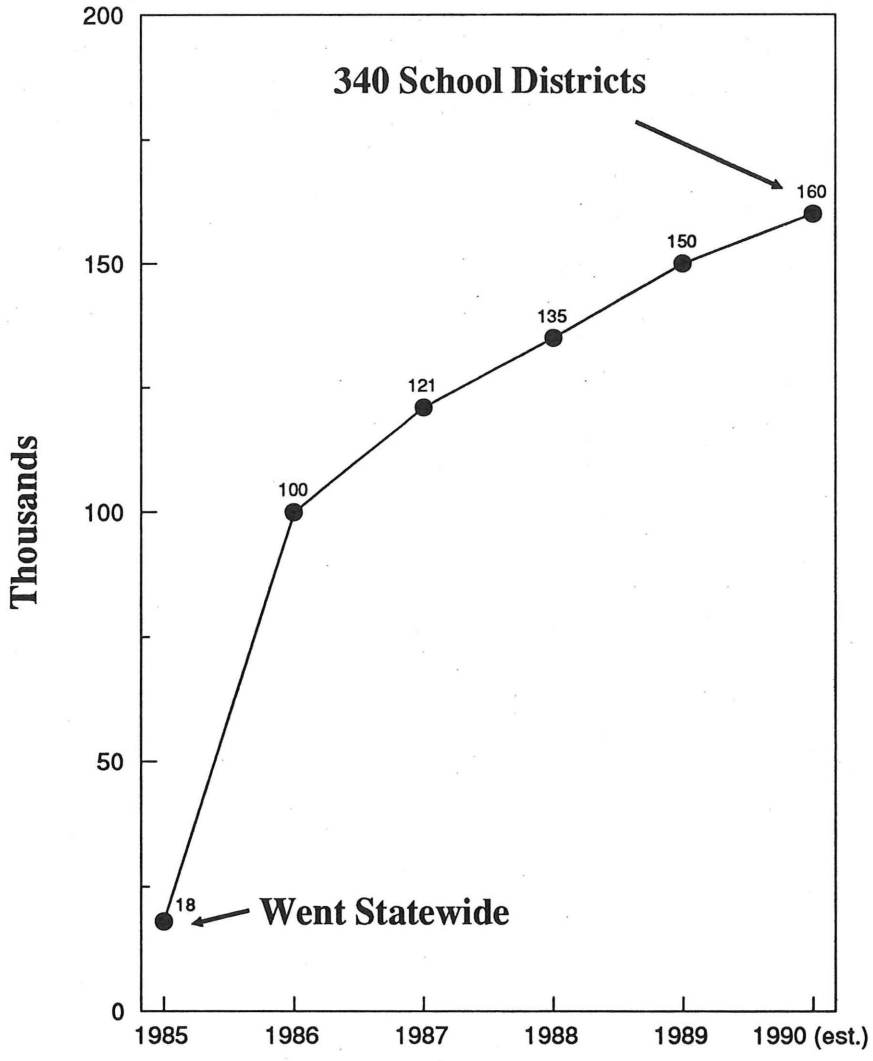
- **An estimated 250,000 Minnesota children under age six have mothers in the labor force.**
- **Many are cared for by fathers, relatives, neighbors, and friends.**
- **There are about 40 licensed child care slots for each 100 children with a mother in the labor force. There are additional legal unlicensed slots.**
- **The supply of licensed slots varies dramatically among counties, with the lowest numbers in rural regions.**
- **Family day care dominates in greater Minnesota, while the metro area is shifting heavily to center-based care.**

Source: Resources for Child Caring

Parents and Children in Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)

1985-1990

- **Participation increased from 18,000 to 160,000.**
- **Funding increased from 1 to 23 million dollars**



Source: MN Department of Education

Head Start

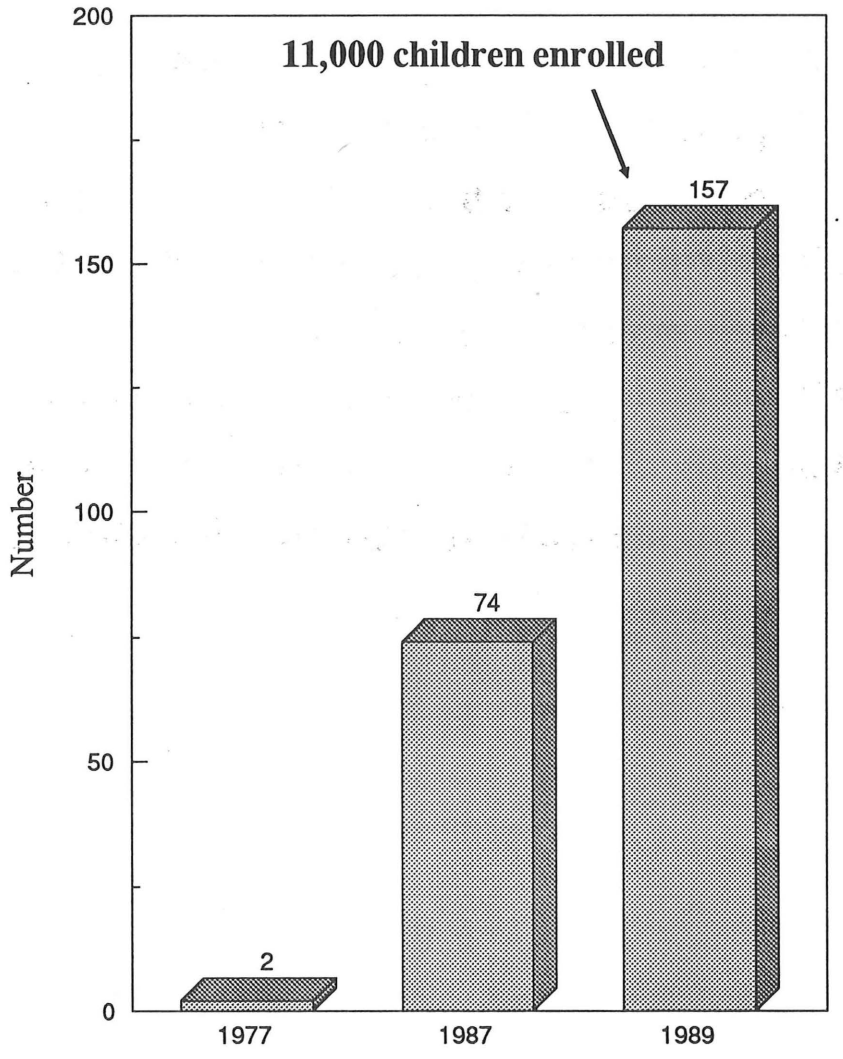
- **Eligibility:**
  - **Three, four, and five year-olds, below poverty level or developmentally disabled.**
- **Enrollment:**
  - **1/3 of eligibles (8,000 of 23,000).**
- **Types of Programs:**
  - **1/2 day center-based.**
  - **Weekly home-based.**
- **Components:**
  - **Education: intellectual, social, emotional growth.**
  - **Health: immunization, testing, treatment.**
  - **Nutrition.**
  - **Mental Health.**
  - **Parent Involvement.**
  - **Connection to Social Services.**
- **Delivery System:**
  - **35 local community agencies and Indian reservations funded through Minnesota Department of Jobs and Training.**
- **Investment:**
  - **$2,500 per child annually.**
  - **$15.6M federal, $5.5M state.**

Source: MN Department of Jobs and Training

Extended Day Programs

Number of Districts or Nonpublic Schools

- **75% of programs are in the metro area.**
- **71% of programs are in public schools.**



Source: MN Department of Education

Employer Support for Child Care

There are 16 private-sector, employer-sponsored child care facilities in Minnesota (1989). Seven are in greater Minnesota.

A 1989 survey of 1,014 metro-area employers found that:

- **1% have a worksite childcare center.**
- **4% provide a child care subsidy.**
- **9% contribute to local childcare programs.**
- **12% participate in a child care referral service.**
- **27% allow job sharing.**
- **29% provide paid leave for new parents.**
- **64% provide unpaid leave for new parents.**
- **71% provide leave to care for sick children.**

Source: Resources for Child Caring

Parental Behavior

Children become the victims of some behaviors of their parents. The number of developmentally-impaired children may be growing.

- **AIDS**
  - **An HIV-positive woman of child-bearing age has a 30 – 40 percent chance of delivering a baby that is HIV-positive.**
- **Cocaine**
  - **The use of cocaine during pregnancy can cause fetal injury, premature birth, infant cocaine addiction and developmental problems. Ten infants died of cocaine-related causes in Hennepin County in 1989.**
- **Alcohol**
  - **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is the single most preventable cause of birth defects. Three out of every 1,000 live births are children with full or partial FAS.**
- **Tobacco**
  - **The risk of a low birthweight baby increased 53 percent for pregnant women who are light smokers and 130 percent for those who smoke one pack of cigarettes per day or more.**

Source: MN Department of Health

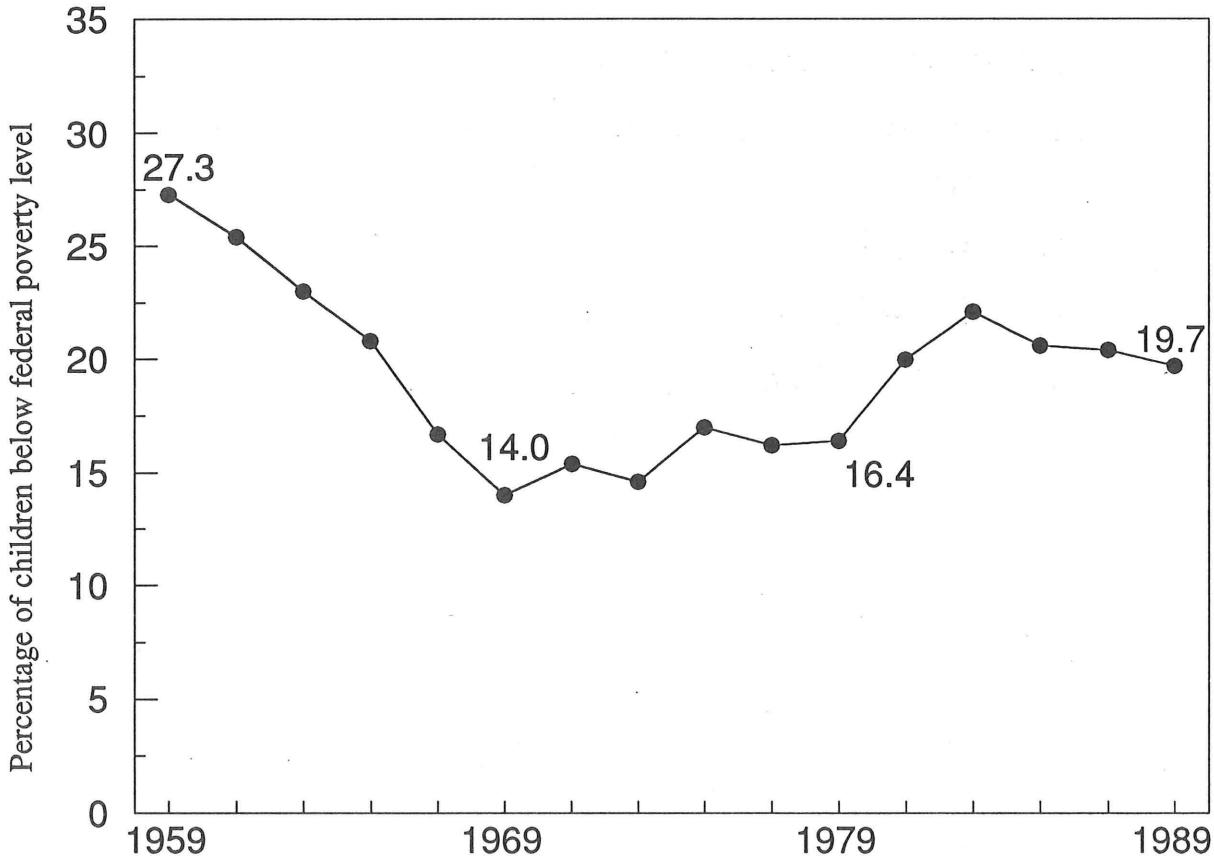
Child Hunger and Nutrition Issues

- More than 100,000 Minnesota children are so hungry their parents go to food shelves. There are children in two-thirds of all food-shelf households.
- Children go without entire meals in one out of five families with children that use food shelves.
- At least 1,500 pregnant women use Minnesota food shelves at any given time.
- Poor nutrition in pregnancy can cause:
  - low birthweight
  - developmental disabilities
  - birth defects
  - infant death
- Babies that go hungry or have inadequate nutrition are more likely to:
  - be developmentally or learning disabled
  - have delayed bone development and stunted growth
  - have more infections
  - have behavior problems
- Long term anemia in children brought on by hunger or poor nutrition causes poor growth, low weight gain, heart problems, weakened immune system, mental and physical slowness, and poor school performance.

Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota

U.S. Child Poverty Rate

1959 – 1988



Minnesota Child Poverty Rate

1982 – 1987 Average:	16.3%
State Ranking:	17th Lowest

Source: Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota

Minnesota Poverty Trends

During the 1980s, the increases in poverty were concentrated in children of:

- **never-married mothers.**
- **unemployed or underemployed two-parent families.**
- **minorities.**
- **rural families.**
- **young families.**

Welfare Dependency Grew Dramatically for Children in Two-Parent Families During the 1980s

1978: 3,600 on AFDC

1989: 17,900 on AFDC

Total Children on AFDC in 1989: 105,200
(monthly average)

Source: MN Department of Human Services (FY Data)

More Young Two-Parent Families are Poor

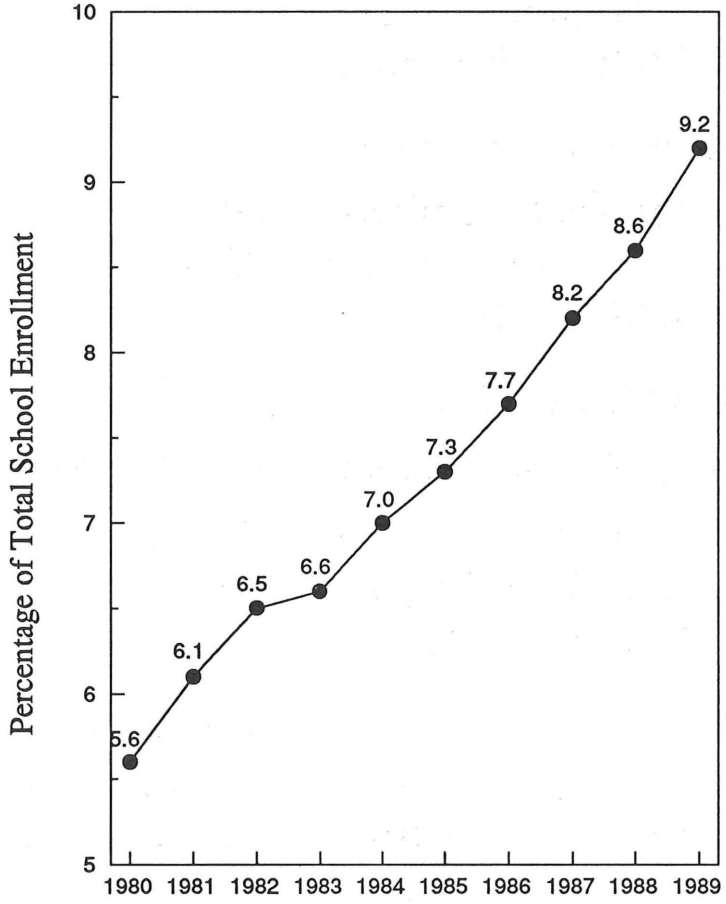
- **In the United States, as a whole, poverty in families headed by someone younger than 25 nearly doubled since 1973, reaching 30 percent by 1985. Poverty for children in young two-parent families more than doubled. By 1985, nearly half (48%) of all children living in young families were poor.**

Source: Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota

Minority Children in Minnesota Schools *

1980 – 1989

Children of color comprise 9 percent of school enrollment in Minnesota, compared to 30 percent nationally.



* *Includes pre-kindergarten*

Source: MN Department of Education

Children of Color in Minnesota

Children born nonwhite in Minnesota are much more likely to:

- **be poor:**
  - **African American and American Indian: 34% poor**
  - **White: 9% poor**
- **be born to a teen mother:**
  - **American Indian: 26%**
  - **African American: 23%**
  - **White: 10%**
- **die before age four.**
- **live in a female-headed, single-parent family.**
  - **African American: 48%**
  - **American Indian: 40%**
  - **White: 11%**
- **be in out-of-home or correctional placements:**
  - **African American and American Indian six to eleven times more likely than white**
- **be unable to get a job as a teen:**
  - **American Indian: 32%**
  - **African American and Hispanic: 21%**
  - **White: 10%**

Source: Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota

Trend in Minnesota Student Test Scores
1978 – 1987

- **From 1978 to 1987, assessments of 11th graders showed average changes of:**

  + 5% in Reading
  + 8% in Math
  + 3% in Science
  – 8% in Social Studies

- **Testing of incoming students by Minnesota colleges shows widespread deficiencies in basic reading and math skills.**

- **Only one-third of Minnesota school districts have policies on the minimum reading or math skills required for graduation.**

Source: MN Department of Education, Educational Assessment Scores on items comparable to National Assessment of Education Process (NAEP); MN Technical College System; MN Community College System

Children's Agenda Policy Goals

The Children's Policy Academy, designed by the Minnesota State Planning Agency, identified a series of policy goals. Several dozen state, local, and private sector leaders participated in developing the goals. Those goals are to:

- **achieve a 96 percent high school graduation rate by 1996.**
- **assure that all high school graduates have the basic skills necessary for work or further education.**
- **provide for the basic needs of children in nutrition, health care, housing, parenting, safety, self-esteem, and growth.**
- **ensure support to families and children to avoid and/or to cope with high-risk behaviors.**
- **provide support for parents in their primary role as parents from government, employers, professionals, and the community.**
- **structure education to meet individual needs and support the transition to self-sufficient adulthood.**
- **strengthen the link between education and job opportunities.**
- **coordinate public, private, and local efforts to meet these policy goals.**

Source: MN State Planning Agency, 1988

Challenges for the Future of Minnesota Children

- **Multicultural approaches, multiethnic empowerment.**
- **Respond to family basic needs.**
- **Bolster children's relationships.**
- **Address destructive behaviors at family and societal sources.**
- **Increase meaningful participation in society.**
- **Achievement and rewards for all children.**
- **Build on the most effective public and private models, and create new models.**