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How Young Latinos Communicate with Friends in the Digital Age

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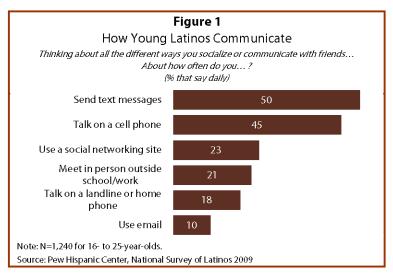
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Executive Summary

When it comes to socializing and communicating with friends, young Latinos (ages 16 to 25) make extensive use of mobile technology. Half say they text message (50%) their friends daily, and 45% say they talk daily with friends on a cell phone. Other communication platforms are less widely used for socializing. For example, fewer than one-in-five young Latinos (18%) say they talk



daily with their friends on a landline or home phone, and just 10% say they email their friends daily. These findings are based on a new analysis of data from a nationwide telephone survey of Latinos conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center, a project of the Pew Research Center.

Use of mobile communication technologies differs notably among young Latinos by nativity. Two-thirds (65%) of the native born say they communicate with their friends by text message daily, while just 26% of the foreign born do so. And more than half (55%) of the native born talk daily by cell phone with their friends, while just 29% of the foreign born say they do the same.

These differences are explained in part by the fact that the native born are more likely than the foreign born to have a cell phone in the first place. Overall, eight-in-ten (79%) young Latinos say they use a cell phone, with use greater among the native born than the foreign born—84% versus 70% (Livingston, 2010).

Even though text messaging and cell phone calls are the most widely used mediums of social communication among young Latinos, they use these platforms less extensively than do their non-Latino counterparts. Among 16- and 17-yearolds,¹ just under half (49%) of Hispanics text daily, compared with 64% of non-Hispanics. When it comes to talking with friends daily via cell phone, there is less i.

¹ This analysis is limited to people ages 16 and 17 as this is the age range for which comparable data for non-Hispanics is available from the Pew Research Center's Pew Internet and American Life Project (PIAL). For a description of PIAL's data, see the report "Teens and Mobile Phones."

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of a difference—44% of Hispanics say they do, compared with half (51%) of non-Hispanics who say the same.

Hispanics are the nation's largest and youngest minority ethnic group. In 2008, there were 46.9 million Hispanics in the U.S., representing 15.4% of the total U.S. population. Among young people, Hispanics represent an even larger share. Some 18%, or 7.5 million, of those ages 16 to 25 are Hispanic (<u>Pew Hispanic Center, 2010</u>).

Other key findings:

- <u>Language</u>: While 68% of English-dominant and half (50%) of bilingual young Latinos use text messaging daily for communication, just 19% of Spanish-dominant young Latinos do the same.
- <u>Gender</u>: Young Hispanic males are less likely than young Hispanic females to use social networking sites for communication—19% versus 27%. In contrast, young female Hispanics are less likely than young Hispanic males to communicate face-to-face outside school or work with their friends—15% versus 26%.
- <u>Hispanic Youths vs. Hispanic Adults</u>: Hispanics ages 16 to 25 are more likely than Hispanics ages 26 and older to use mobile technologies to communicate with their friends. While half (50%) of young Latinos use texting to communicate, just 21% of older Latinos do the same.
- <u>Latino Youths vs. Other Youths</u>: Among those ages 16 to 17, Latino youths are less likely than non-Latino youths to communicate daily via a landline or home phone with their friends—13% versus 32%.

About this Report

The 2009 National Survey of Latinos (NSL) focused on the attitudes, behaviors, experiences, and identities of young Latinos. It was conducted from August 5 through September 16, 2009, among a randomly selected, nationally representative sample of 2,012 Hispanics ages 16 and older, with an oversample of 1,240 Hispanics ages 16 to 25. The survey was conducted in both English and Spanish, on cellular as well as landline telephones. The margin of error for the full sample is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The margin of error for respondents ages 16 to 25 is plus or minus 4.6 percentage points, and the margin of error for respondents ages 26 and older is plus or minus 4.8 percentage points. For a full description of the survey methodology, see Appendix A.

Interviews were conducted for the Pew Hispanic Center by Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS).

This is the last of three reports about young Latinos based on the 2009 NSL. The first report explored the educational attitudes and expectations of young Latinos (Lopez, 2009). The second explored the attitudes, behaviors, identities, and demographics of Latino youths (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009).

A Note on Terminology

The terms "Latino" and "Hispanic" are used interchangeably in this report.

The term "youths" refers to 16- to 25-year-olds unless otherwise indicated. In this report, the terms "Latino youths" and "young Latinos" are used interchangeably, as are "Hispanic youths" and "young Hispanics."

"Foreign born" refers to persons born in Puerto Rico or outside of the United States. Although individuals born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens by birth, they are included among the foreign born because they are born into a Spanishdominant culture and because on many points their attitudes, views and beliefs are much closer to Hispanics born abroad than to Latinos born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia.

"Native born" or "U.S. born" refers to persons born in the United States and those born abroad to parents at least one of whom was a U.S. citizen.

Language dominance is a composite measure based on self-described assessments of speaking and reading abilities. Spanish-dominant persons are more proficient in Spanish than in English, i.e., they speak and read Spanish "very well" or "pretty well" but rate their English speaking and reading ability lower. Bilingual refers to persons who are proficient in both English and Spanish. Englishdominant persons are more proficient in English than in Spanish.

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How Young Latinos Communicate

When it comes to communicating and socializing with their friends, young Latinos ages 16 to 25 are most likely to say they do so daily with either a text message or a call from a cell phone. Half (50%) say they use text messaging to communicate with their friends daily, while 45% say they do so using a cell phone.

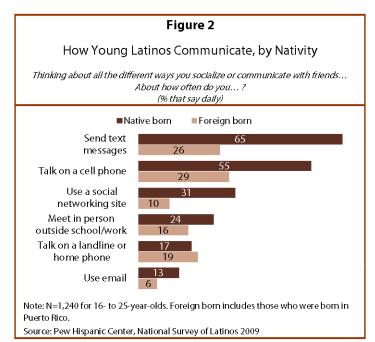
Social networking sites are also an important way that young Latinos communicate with their friends. Nearly one-in-four (23%) say they make daily use of social networking sites such as Facebook or MySpace to talk with their friends. In contrast, email is the least common form of daily communication among young Latinos—just 10% use it daily.

While mobile and internet technologies are the media that young Latinos use most for daily communication with their friends, they are not the only ones used. Onein-five (21%) young Latinos say they communicate daily face-to-face with their friends outside of school or work. And nearly as many, 18%, say they communicate daily with their friends using a landline or home phone.

The Native Born Use Mobile Technologies More than the Foreign Born

The use of mobile technologies for communication is more prevalent among native-born young Latinos than immigrant young Latinos. Two-thirds (65%) of native-born young Latinos say they use text messaging daily, while just 26% of the foreign born say the same. On cell phone use, U.S.-born young Latinos are nearly twice as likely as immigrant young Latinos to say they talk on a cell phone with friends daily—55% versus 29%.

When it comes to internet technologies, the native born are more than three times as likely as the foreign born to

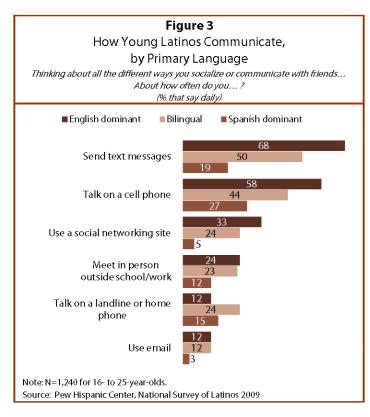


say they use a social networking site to communicate and socialize with friends daily—31% versus 10%. And some 13% of the native born use email daily to communicate, while just 6% of the foreign born do so.

Few differences exist between the native born and foreign born when using other forms of communication. One-in-four (24%) native-born young Latinos communicate daily in person with their friends outside of school or work, while 16% of immigrant young Latinos say they do so. Native-born and immigrant young Latinos are equally likely to say they use a landline or home phone to communicate with their friends daily—17% and 19%, respectively.

Spanish-Dominant Young Latinos Least Likely to Use Mobile or Internet Technologies

English-dominant young Hispanics are more likely than bilingual young Hispanics or Spanish-dominant young Hispanics to say they use mobile and internet technologies to communicate or socialize daily with their friends. Nearly seven-in-ten (68%) English-dominant young Latinos say they text daily, while half (50%) of bilingual young Latinos and fewer than two-in-ten (19%) Spanish-dominant young Latinos say the same. When it comes to talking on a cell phone with friends, nearly six-in-ten (58%) English-dominant young Latinos say they do this daily, while 44% of bilingual and 27% of Spanishdominant young Latinos say the same.



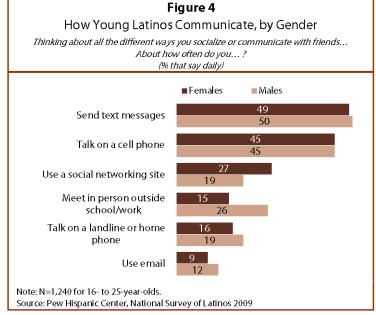
Daily use of social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace to communicate with friends is also more common among English-dominant (33%) and bilingual (24%) young Latinos than Spanish-dominant (5%) young Latinos. With regard to email, 12% of English-dominant and bilingual young Latinos daily use it, while just 3% of Spanish-dominant young Latinos do the same.

When it comes to other platforms for socializing, smaller differences emerge between English-dominant, bilingual and Spanish-dominant young Latinos. Nearly one-in-four English-dominant (24%) and bilingual (23%) Latino youths say they communicate daily with their friends in person, while 12% of Spanishdominant young Latinos say the same. And as far as use of a landline or home phone, bilingual youths (24%) are more likely to say they do this, compared with English-dominant (12%) and Spanish-dominant (15%) Latino youths.

Hispanic Females Use Traditional Mediums for Communication More than **Hispanic Males**

Young female Hispanics and young male Hispanics are equally like to use mobile technologies such as text messaging or a cell phone to communicate daily with their friends. However, according to the survey, young female Hispanics are more likely to use social networking sites to communicate daily with friends than young male Hispanics—27% versus 19%.

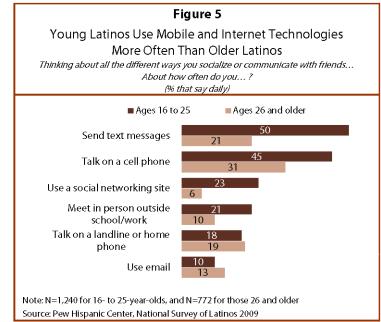
In contrast, when it comes to faceto-face communication outside of



work or school, young male Hispanics are more likely than young female Hispanics to do this. Some 26% of young male Hispanics say they communicate or socialize daily in person with their friends, while just 15% of female Hispanics do the same. When it comes to communication through a landline or home phone, young male Hispanics are more likely to say they do this than young female Hispanics—19% versus 16%. And when it comes to email, 12% of Hispanic males use it daily to communicate with friends, while 9% of Hispanic females do the same.

Latino Youths More Likely than Older Latinos to Communicate Through Mobile and Internet Technologies

Latino youths ages 16 to 25 are more likely than Latinos ages 26 and older to use texting and cell phones to communicate and socialize with their friends. The age difference is particularly stark for texting, with only 21% of older Latinos saying they text friends on a daily basis, compared with half (50%) of Latino youths. Even with the rapid proliferation of cell phones, age differences in daily use remain notable; 45% of Latino youth report



talking on a cell phone daily with their friends, compared with 31% of older Latinos.

Also, young Latinos are almost four times as likely as older Latinos to reach out to friends using social networking sites—23% versus 6%.

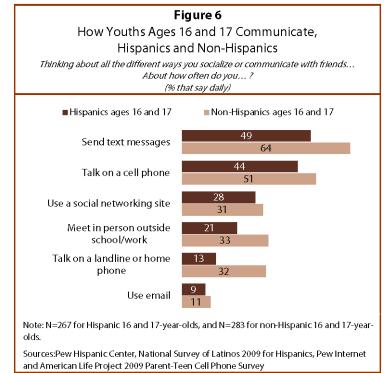
By contrast, Latino youths and older Latinos are equally likely to send emails daily to friends—about one-in-ten of each group do so.

When it comes to more traditional forms of socializing and communicating, young Latinos, and those ages 26 and older are similar in terms of the use of a landline or home phone. Some 18% of youths use a landline or home phone daily, as do 19% of Latinos ages 26 and older. However, youths are more than twice as likely to report that they socialize in person with their friends daily. While one-inten (10%) Latinos 26 and older do so, this share rises to 21% among Latinos ages 16 to 25.

Youth Communication Patterns: Hispanics and Non-Hispanics

Young Latinos are less inclined than their non-Latino counterparts to use mobile technologies to communicate with friends. Among Latinos ages 16 and 17, 49% say they text daily and 44% say they talk on a cell phone daily to communicate with their friends. Texting is even more prevalent among the non-Hispanic youth population ages 16 and 17. Almost two-thirds (64%) report texting daily to friends, and some 51% of non-Hispanic youths talk on a cell phone daily to socialize with their friends (Lenhart, Ling, Campbell and Purcell, 2010).²

Use of internet technologies, including social networking sites and



 $^{^{2}}$ Race and ethnicity for teens in Lenhart, Ling, Campbell and Purcell (<u>2010</u>) are based upon the self-reported race and ethnicity of the teen's parent.

email, do not differ markedly between Hispanic teens ages 16 and 17 and teens of the same age in the non-Hispanic population. Some 28% of Hispanics report that they use social networking sites such as Facebook or MySpace daily to communicate with their friends, compared with 31% of the non-Hispanic population of the same age. Email use is similarly low for both groups—9% of Latino teens ages 16 and 17 use email daily to communicate with their friends, as do 11% of comparable non-Hispanic youths.

Notable differences are apparent when looking at the use of more traditional methods of socializing with friends. While just 21% of Latinos ages 16 and 17 report that they spend time in person with their friends outside of school or work daily, for the non-Hispanic youth population ages 16 and 17 this share reaches 33%. And while only 13% of Latinos ages 16 and 17 use a landline or home phone daily to maintain contact with friends, almost one-third (32%) of non-Hispanic youths of the same age say they do so.

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Appendix A: 2009 National Survey of Latinos, Survey Methodology and Topline

About the Survey

Results for this study are based on telephone interviews conducted by Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS), an independent research company, among a nationally representative sample of 2,012 Latino respondents ages 16 and older,³ from Aug. 5 to Sept. 16, 2009. Of those respondents, 1,002 were native born (excluding Puerto Rico) and 1,008 were foreign born (including Puerto Rico). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points for total respondents.

Interviews were conducted with 1,240 respondents ages 16 to 25 and 772 respondents ages 26 and older. The margin of error for respondents ages 16 to 25 is plus or minus 4.6 percentage points, and the margin of error for respondents ages 26 and older is 4.8 percentage points.

Taken together, there were 711 native-born Hispanics ages 16 to 25; 529 foreignborn Hispanics ages 16 to 25; 291 native-born Hispanics ages 26 and older; and 479 foreign-born Hispanics ages 26 and older. The margin of error for native-born youths (ages 16 to 25) is plus or minus 6.2 percentage points; for foreign-born youths, it is plus or minus 6.5 percentage points. For second-generation youths, the margin of error is plus or minus 7.6 percentage points, and for thirdgeneration youths, the margin of error is plus or minus 11.1 percentage points. For native-born respondents ages 26 and older, the margin of error is plus or minus 8.1 percentage points, and for foreign-born respondents ages 26 and older, it is plus or minus 5.9 percentage points.

For this survey, SSRS maintained a staff of Spanish-speaking interviewers who, when contacting a household, were able to offer respondents the option of completing the survey in Spanish or English. A total of 1,128 respondents were surveyed in English, 842 respondents were interviewed in Spanish and 42 were interviewed equally in both languages. Any male or female of Latino origin or descent was eligible to complete the survey.

According to government statistics from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) during the last six months of 2008, 25% of Hispanic adults lived in households reachable only by cell phone. Adults who are cell-only are very different

³ Respondents younger than 18 were interviewed only with the permission of their parent or legal guardian.

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demographically from those reachable on a landline. In particular, they tend to be younger, and less likely to be married or have children, or to own a home. To address the growing number of Hispanic households in the U.S. that are reachable only by cell phone, the study included interviews from both landline (n=1,360) and cell phone (n=652) sample frames.

Both sample frames were stratified via a disproportionate stratified design. All telephone exchanges in the contiguous 48 states were divided into groups, or strata, based on their concentration of Latino households. For the landline frame, the sample was also run against InfoUSA and other listed databases, and then scrubbed against known Latino surnames. Any "hits" were subdivided into a surname stratum, with all other sample being put into other RDD strata.

The landline sample was divided into 10 mutually exclusive strata: five strata denoted by the likely incidence of Hispanic residence, each divided into listed and unlisted samples. Listed samples refer to phone numbers that could be matched with available lists, indicating the presence of persons between the age of 16 and 25 in the household. This design was intended to allow oversampling in high-incidence Hispanic areas and targeting of households that were likely to include persons 16 to 25 years of age, while assuring that all Latino households in the U.S. had a known probability of selection.

Because incidence in the low stratum was anticipated to be extremely low, an alternative sampling method was employed, randomly selecting from a pool of thousands of households previously interviewed in SSRS's omnibus Excel survey that were known to be Latino households in general (for the general component), or Latino households with 16- to 25-year-olds present (for the listed component).

Strata (General	Lar		
Incidence of Reaching a Hispanic Household)	General	Listed 16-25	Cell Phone
Surname	Х	Х	
Very High	Х	Х	
High	Х	Х	Х
Medium	Х	Х	Х
Low	Х	Х	Х

Overall, then, the study employed 13 strata:

SSRS applied quotas within each stratum to ensure the overrepresentation of Latinos between the ages of 16 and 25. Furthermore, to accumulate a sufficient number of responses from Latinos ages 16 and 17; this age group was disproportionately selected over all other age groups.

It is important to note that the existence of a surname stratum does not mean this was a surname sample design. The sample is RDD, with the randomly selected telephone numbers divided by whether they were found to be associated with or without a Latino surname. This was done simply to increase the number of strata and thereby increase the ability to meet ethnic targets and ease administration by allowing for more effective assignment of interviewers and labor hours.

A five-stage weighting design was used to ensure an accurate representation of the national Hispanic population:

- An adjustment was made for all persons found to possess both a landline and a cell phone, as they were twice as likely to be sampled as were respondents who possessed only one phone type.
- The sample was corrected for the disproportionality of the stratification scheme described earlier.
- The sample was corrected for the likelihood of within-household selection, which depended upon the likelihood that the respondent's age group would be selected, and that within that age group, the particular respondent would be selected.
- The sample was corrected to reflect the percentage that is cell-only (25%), landline-only (21%), or reachable by either a landline or a cell phone (53%), based upon estimates for Hispanics from the 2008 National Health Interview Survey.
- Finally, the data were put through a post-stratification sample balancing routine. The post-stratification weighting utilized national 2007 estimates from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, March Supplement, on gender, education, age, region, foreign/native-born status, year of entry into the U.S. and Hispanic heritage. Post-stratification was conducted separately for the 16- to 25-year-old group and the 26 and older age group, to increase the accuracy of the population distributions within these age categories. The post-stratified age groups were then merged in proportion to their population distribution.

2009 National Survey of Latinos Topline

81. Thinking about all the different ways you socialize or communicate with friends...About how often do you (INSERT) – every day, several times a week, at least once a week, less than once a week, or never? Next, about how often do you (INSERT)

				ER		Never/do		
			Several	At least	Less than	not do		
		Every	times a	once a	once a	this/cannot	Don't	
	NET	day	week	week	week	do this	know	Refused
Total	86	13	22	34	18	13	*	1
Ages 16-25	91	21	28	31	11	8	*	*
Foreign born	87	17	23	36	12	12	*	1
Native born	94	24	31	28	11	6	*	*
2nd gen.	96	26	31	26	13	4	*	*
3rd gen.+	91	19	33	33	7	9	-	*
Ages 26+	85	10	20	35	20	14	*	1
Foreign born	81	10	18	39	15	18	-	1
Native born	91	10	25	28	29	9	*	1

a. Spend time with friends IN PERSON, doing social activities outside of school (or work)

b. Talk to friends on a landline or home telephone

			EVI	ER		Never/do		
			Several	At least	Less than	not do		
		Every	times a	once a	once a	this/cannot	Don't	
	NET	day	week	week	week	do this	know	Refused
Total	76	19	18	23	15	24	*	1
Ages 16-25	68	18	20	17	14	32	*	*
Foreign born	75	18	25	21	11	23	*	1
Native born	63	17	16	14	16	37	-	*
2nd gen.	63	19	17	12	15	37	-	*
3rd gen.+	62	14	14	17	17	38	-	*
Ages 26+	78	19	18	26	16	21	*	1
Foreign born	80	21	18	27	13	20	*	1
Native born	76	17	17	22	20	24	-	*

		EVER						
		Every	Several times a	At least once a	Less than once a	not do this/cannot	Don't	
	NET	day	week	week	week	do this	know	Refused
Total	54	28	12	8	5	45	*	*
Ages 16-25	72	50	12	7	4	27	*	*
Foreign born	56	26	14	12	4	43	*	1
Native born	83	66	10	4	3	17	*	*
2nd gen.	83	64	11	4	5	17	*	*
3rd gen.+	83	69	8	4	1	17	-	*
-								
Ages 26+	47	21	12	9	6	52	*	*
Foreign born	39	12	11	10	6	60	*	*
Native born	63	38	13	6	6	36	*	1

c. Send text messages to each other

d. Talk to friends on your cell phone (Asked of total Latinos who are cell phone respondents or who are landline respondents but they have a working cell phone; n = 1645; Native born = 934; Foreign born = 710; Age 16-25 = 1021; Age 26+ = 624)

			EVI	ER		Never/do		
	NET	Every day	Several times a week	At least once a week	Less than once a week	not do this/cannot do this	Don't know	Refused
Total	93	46	22	17	8	6	*	1
Ages 16-25	97	57	20	14	5	3	*	*
Foreign born	95	42	26	18	9	5	*	-
Native born	98	65	17	12	3	2	-	*
2nd gen.	98	61	20	13	4	2	-	*
3rd gen.+	98	72	13	11	2	2	-	*
	00	4.1		10				
Ages 26+	92	41	23	19	8	7	-	1
Foreign born	89	35	27	21	7	10	-	1
Native born	97	54	17	15	11	4	-	-

f. Send email to each other (Asked of total Lating	os who use the internet or send/receive e-
mail; n = 1516; Native born = 944; For	eign born = 570; Age 16-25 = 998; Age 26+
= 518)	

			EVI	ER		Never/do		
	NET	Every day	Several times a week	At least once a week	Less than once a week	not do this/cannot do this	Don't know	Refused
Total	76	19	18	20	19	24	*	*
Ages 16-25	76	13	19	22	20	24	*	-
Foreign born	74	10	22	24	18	26	-	-
Native born	76	15	18	22	21	24	*	-
2nd gen.	76	15	19	23	20	24	*	-
3rd gen.+	77	14	17	21	24	23	*	-
Ages 26+	76	21	17	19	19	24	-	*
Foreign born	76	13	21	22	20	24	-	-
Native born	76	30	14	15	18	23	-	1

g. Send messages through social networking sites like MySpace or Facebook (Asked of total Latinos who use the internet or send/receive e- mail; n = 1516; Native born = 944; Foreign born = 570; Age 16-25 = 998; Age 26+ = 518)

	<u> </u>	,	0	ER	/	Never/do		
		_	Several	At least	Less than	not do		
		Every	times a	once a	once a	this/cannot	Don't	
	NET	day	week	week	week	do this	know	Refused
Total	52	16	12	12	12	48	*	*
Ages 16-25	73	29	19	14	11	27	*	-
Foreign born	62	18	16	14	14	38	-	-
Native born	78	34	21	14	9	22	¥	-
2nd gen.	78	34	24	13	8	22	-	-
3rd gen.+	77	35	16	15	11	23	*	-
Ages 26+	42	10	8	11	12	58	*	*
Foreign born	39	8	8	13	10	60	*	*
Native born	46	14	9	9	14	54	-	-