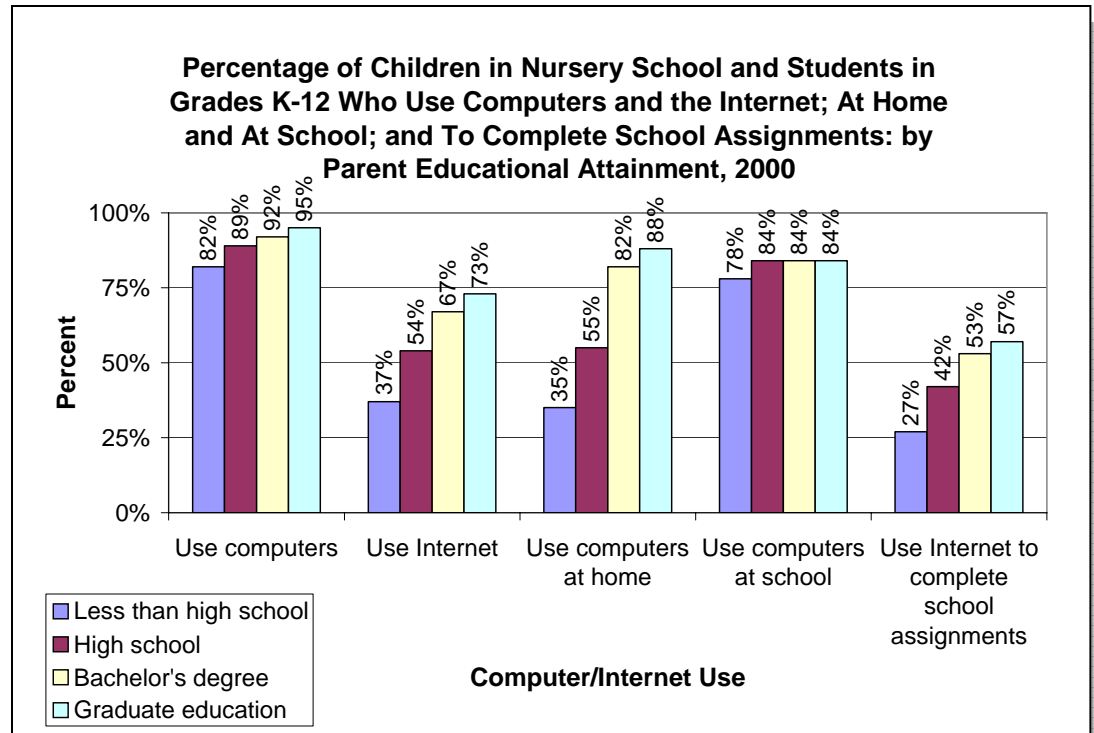# Computer & Internet Use by Students Increases With Parent Educational Attainment

In September 2006, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) published a Statistical Analysis Report entitled *Computer and Internet Use by Students in 2003*.

This report describes the prevalence of computer and Internet use by a variety of different types of students based on several family and household characteristics, including parent educational attainment.

Percentage of Children in Nursery School and Students in Grades K-12 Who Use Computers and the Internet; At Home and At School; and To Complete School Assignments: by Parent Educational Attainment, 2000

Legend:
- Less than high school
- High school
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate education

Computer/Internet Use	Less than high school	High school	Bachelor's degree	Graduate education
Use computers	82%	89%	92%	95%
Use Internet	37%	54%	67%	73%
Use computers at home	35%	55%	82%	88%
Use computers at school	78%	84%	84%	84%
Use Internet to complete school assignments	27%	42%	53%	57%

As the above chart illustrates, the likelihood of students using computers and the Internet, both at home and at school, and particularly for the purpose of completing school assignments increases steadily with parent educational attainment. Thus, if a student's parent did not graduate from high school, he or she is least likely to use computers and the Internet.

The most dramatic differences for students whose parents did not graduate from high school are for:

- using the Internet (37% vs. 73% for students whose parents have some graduate education),

- using computers at home (35% vs. 88%), and

- using the Internet to complete school assignments (27% vs. 5 7%).

Computer & Internet Use by Students Increases

With Parent Educational Attainment

It is not surprising that use of computers at school (along with use of computers generally) is least affected by parent educational attainment. Notably, however, students whose parents did not graduate from high school (78%) were less likely to use computers at school than all other students (84% for all three higher levels of parent educational attainment).

In today's schools, computers play a key role. They are used in teaching reading, writing, math, and science; and they are critical to students learning to be "information literate"—that is, to be critical thinkers about information. Today's students must learn how to find information they need to complete assignments, how to retrieve it, how to evaluate it, and how to use it. In each of these activities, computers and the Internet play critical roles. So, one of the many reasons that students with better-educated parents tend to do better in school is because they are more likely to have access to, and to be familiar with, technology.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Computer and Internet Use by Students in 2003*, **Statistical Analysis Report**, September 2006. Available online at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006065.