

## 6. Social and Community Involvement of Young Adults With Disabilities

Clearly, participating in postsecondary education and competitive employment are critical outcomes for young adults, whether or not they have identified disabilities. However, the broader notion of “social inclusion” is increasingly being used to characterize transition success. Social inclusion “rests on the principle that democratic societies are enriched by the full inclusion of their citizens in the ebb and flow of community affairs” (Osgood et al. 2005, p. 12). Consistent with this notion, the domains encompassed in an understanding of a successful transition to young adulthood for individuals with disabilities have long included living successfully in one’s community (Halpern 1985; National Center on Educational Outcomes 1993). An important aspect of whether a young adult is living successfully in the community is the “adequacy of his or her social and interpersonal network [which] is possibly the most important of all” aspects of adjustment for young adults with disabilities (Halpern 1985, p. 480). This chapter adds to an understanding of the social inclusion of young adults with disabilities who had been out of high school for up to 8 years by addressing three dimensions of their community integration:

- friendship interactions;
- participation in community/civic activities; and
- negative community involvement (i.e., involvement in violence-related activities and with the criminal justice system).

Findings for each of these dimensions of involvement are presented first for young adults with disabilities as a whole, followed by discussions of significant differences in these factors for those who differed in their primary disability category, in years since leaving high school, in highest level of educational attainment, and in selected demographic characteristics.

### Friendship Interactions

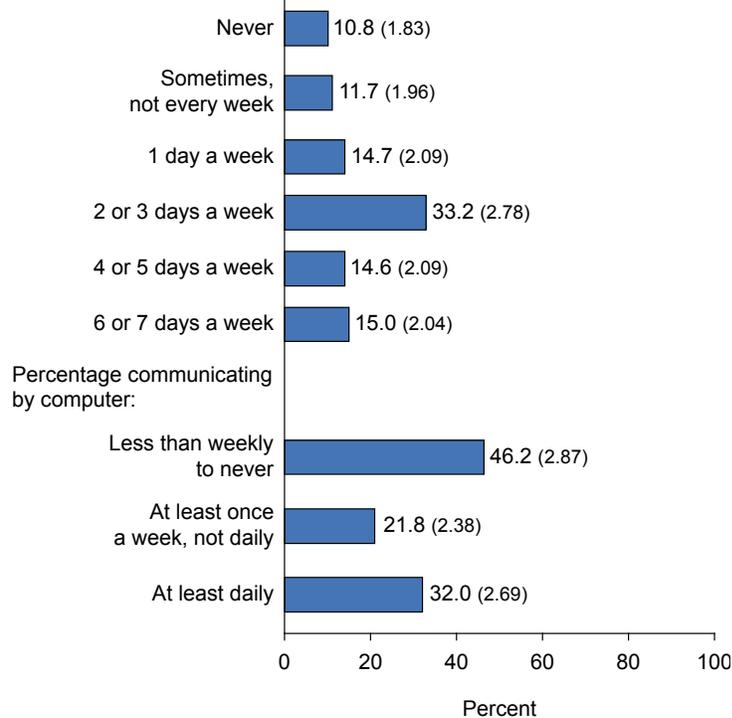
Unlike adolescence, which is a time for discovering who one is and what one’s role in the world is, the primary developmental task for young adults is forming intimate relationships (Erikson 1974). Considerable research has documented the importance of personal relationships as “protective factors”<sup>98</sup> against a variety of risk behaviors. For example, results regarding factors associated with emotional health, youth violence, substance use, and sexuality from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health (Add Health), the largest, most comprehensive survey of adolescents to date, provide “consistent evidence that perceived caring and connectedness to others is important in understanding the health of young people today” (Resnick et al. 1997, p. 830). Connectedness with friends has been found to be associated with a variety of behaviors in either a prosocial or antisocial direction, depending on the nature of the friendships (e.g., Bearman and Moody 2004; Crosnoe and Needham 2004; Fraser 1997; Rodgers and Rose 2002; Smith et al. 1995).

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<sup>98</sup> Protective factors have been defined as “those aspects of the individual and his or her environment that buffer or moderate the effect of risk”(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2001, chapter 4, para. 1).

**Figure 41. Friendship interactions of young adults with disabilities**

In the past year, percentage who saw friends outside of school or work:



NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding friendships are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; findings regarding electronic communication are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 4,000 young adults with disabilities for friendships and 4,120 for electronic communication.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

A majority of young adults with disabilities who had been out of high school from 1 to 8 years were reported to have active friendships<sup>99</sup> (figure 41); 78 percent saw friends outside of school or organized activities at least weekly, although 11 percent never saw friends informally ( $p < .001$ ). The majority of young adults with disabilities were reported to use electronic means of communication<sup>100</sup> (i.e., e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging) to some degree. Almost one-third (32 percent) reported using electronic communication at least daily, whereas 46 percent did so less than once a week.

### ***Disability Differences in Friendship Interactions***

Eighty percent or more of young adults with learning disabilities, speech/language impairments, or other health impairments who had been out of high school from 1 to 8 years were reported to see friends at least weekly (83 percent, 84 percent, and 80 percent, respectively; table 75). From 75 percent to 77 percent of

young adults in the categories of emotional disturbance, hearing and visual impairment, and traumatic brain injury and 66 percent of those with orthopedic impairments also saw friends outside of school or work this often. The rates of seeing friends at least weekly were significantly higher for young adults in all eight of these disability categories than the rates for young adults with autism (48 percent;

<sup>99</sup> Respondents were asked, “During the past 12 months, about how many days a week [did you/did name of youth] get together with friends (outside of school if youth was in school) and outside of organized activities or groups?” Because the friendship interaction item refers to activities in the preceding 12 months findings are reported only for the 98 percent of young adults who had been out of secondary school at least a year so as to avoid including secondary school experiences.

<sup>100</sup> Respondents were asked, “How frequently do you [does youth] use e-mail, instant messaging, or take part in chat rooms? Would you say several times a day, once a day, several times a week, once a week, or less often than that?”

Table 75. Friendship interactions of young adults, by disability category

	Learning disability	Speech/language impairment	Mental retardation	Emotional disturbance	Hearing impairment	Visual impairment	Orthopedic impairment	Other health impairment	Autism	Traumatic brain injury	Multiple disabilities	Deaf-blindness
	Percent											
In the past year, percentage who saw friends outside of school or work at least weekly	82.5 (3.51)	84.4 (3.03)	58.1 (4.28)	75.2 (4.42)	76.3 (4.79)	77.2 (4.96)	66.0 (4.68)	80.0 (3.75)	48.2 (4.94)	77.3 (6.69)	52.8 (5.97)	62.3 (7.31)
Percentage communicating by computer at least daily	33.8 (4.29)	43.0 (4.07)	17.0 (3.25)	31.5 (4.67)	51.4 (5.50)	49.0 (5.78)	41.5 (4.82)	34.2 (4.40)	24.5 (5.50)	32.3 (7.37)	20.9 (4.78)	41.2 (7.37)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding friendships are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; findings regarding electronic communication are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 4,000 young adults with disabilities for friendships and 4,120 for electronic communication.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

$p < .01$  compared with young adults with orthopedic impairments;  $p < .001$  for all other comparisons). With the exception of young adults with orthopedic impairments, these groups also were more likely to see friends at least weekly than young adults with multiple disabilities (53 percent;  $p < .01$  compared with young adults with emotional disturbances, hearing or visual impairments, or traumatic brain injuries;  $p < .001$  for all other comparisons). Young adults in six of these disability categories (excluding young adults with orthopedic impairments or traumatic brain injuries), also were more likely to see friends at least weekly than those with mental retardation (58 percent;  $p < .01$  compared with young adults with emotional disturbances or hearing or visual impairments;  $p < .001$  for all other comparisons), and young adults with multiple disabilities ( $p < .01$  compared with young adults with emotional disturbances, hearing or visual impairments;  $p < .001$  for other comparisons). Young adults with speech/language impairments also were more likely than those in the categories of orthopedic impairment and deaf/blindness to see friends at least weekly (66 percent and 62 percent, respectively;  $p < .01$  for both comparisons), and young adults with learning disabilities were more likely to do so than young adults with orthopedic impairments ( $p < .01$ ).

The reported rate of communicating by computer at least daily was highest for young adults with hearing impairments (51 percent) and lowest for those with mental retardation (17 percent,  $p < .001$ ). Young adults with learning disabilities; speech/language, visual, orthopedic, or other health impairments; or deaf-blindness also were more likely to have at least daily electronic communication (34 percent to 51 percent) than those with mental retardation (17 percent;  $p < .001$  compared with young adults with speech/language, hearing, visual, or orthopedic impairments;  $p < .01$  for other comparisons). Young adults with hearing impairments also were reported to be more likely than those with emotional disturbances, autism, or multiple disabilities to communicate by computer at least daily (51 percent vs. 32 percent, 25 percent, and 21 percent, respectively;  $p < .01$  compared with young adults with emotional disturbances,  $p < .001$  for other comparisons). Young adults with speech/language or visual impairments also were more likely to communicate by computer at least daily than those young adults with autism or multiple

Table 76. Friendship interactions of young adults with disabilities, by years since leaving high school

	Less than 3 years	3 up to 5 years	5 up to 8 years
	Percent		
In the past year, percentage who saw friends outside of school or work at least weekly	67.4 (6.69)	74.7 (4.48)	81.7 (3.16)
Percentage communicating by computer at least daily	19.4 (5.15)	28.0 (4.55)	37.9 (3.92)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding friendships are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; findings regarding electronic communication are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 4,000 young adults with disabilities for friendships and 4,120 for electronic communication.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview, and youth interview/survey, 2009.

disabilities (43 percent and 49 percent vs. 25 percent and 21 percent,  $p < .001$  for all comparisons), as were young adults with orthopedic impairments (42 percent vs. 24 percent and 21 percent,  $p < .01$  for both comparisons).

### ***Differences in Friendship Interactions by Years Since Leaving High School***

The percentages of out-of-high school young adults with disabilities who were reported to see friends at least weekly ranged from 67 percent for those out of high school from 1 up to 3 years to 82 percent for those out of high school from 5 up to 8 years (table 76). Young adults with

disabilities out of high school the longest time were more likely to report communicating by computer at least daily than those out of high school the shortest time (38 percent vs. 19 percent,  $p < .01$ ).

### ***Differences in Friendship Interactions by Highest Level of Educational Attainment***

The rate in which young adults with disabilities saw friends outside of organized activities at least weekly was higher among those who had completed postsecondary education than those whose highest level of education was completing high school (90 percent vs. 70 percent,  $p < .001$ , table 77). Young adults with disabilities who had completed postsecondary education also were more likely to communicate by computer at least daily (55 percent) than those in each of the other categories of educational attainment (19 percent to 33 percent,  $p < .01$  compared with those with some postsecondary education;  $p < .001$  for other comparisons).

Table 77. Friendship interactions of young adults with disabilities, by highest level of educational attainment

	High school non-completer	High school completer	Some post-secondary school	Post-secondary school completion
	Percent			
In the past year, percentage who saw friends outside of school or work at least weekly	73.9 (7.65)	69.5 (4.11)	78.4 (4.61)	90.1 (4.01)
Percentage communicating by computer at least daily	19.4 (6.83)	20.7 (3.52)	32.9 (5.15)	54.8 (6.52)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding friendships are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; findings regarding electronic communication are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 4,000 young adults with disabilities for friendships and 4,120 for electronic communication.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

### **Demographic Differences in Friendship Interactions**

The percentage of out-of-high school young adults with disabilities who were reported to see friends at least weekly did not differ by parents' household income, or young adults' racial/ethnic background or gender (table 78). One difference was apparent, however, regarding the rate in which they communicated by computer. Young adults with disabilities from parent households with incomes of \$50,000 or more were more likely to be reported to have electronic communication at least daily than those from households with incomes of \$25,000 or less (37 percent vs. 20 percent,  $p < .01$ ).

Table 78. Friendship interactions of young adults with disabilities, by parents' household income and young adults' race/ethnicity and gender

	\$25,000 or less	\$25,001 to \$50,000	More than \$50,000	White	African American	Hispanic	Male	Female
	Percent							
In the past year, percentage who saw friends outside of school or work at least weekly	74.5 (4.41)	75.8 (5.15)	81.7 (3.51)	79.2 (2.91)	77.9 (5.40)	69.2 (8.54)	78.2 (3.07)	76.4 (4.14)
Percentage communicating by computer at least daily	20.0 (3.93)	36.8 (5.76)	36.5 (4.21)	33.1 (3.31)	30.5 (5.93)	28.4 (7.77)	31.6 (3.36)	32.7 (4.48)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding friendships are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; findings regarding electronic communication are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 4,000 young adults with disabilities for friendships and 4,120 for electronic communication.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

## Community Participation

Engaging in activities in the community can provide opportunities for young adults to meet people with like interests, develop new skills, and experience the satisfaction of shared accomplishments and of making a contribution to the community. NLTS2 investigated three forms of community participation in the year preceding the Wave 5 interview/survey by young adults with disabilities:

- taking lessons or classes outside of formal school enrollment;<sup>101</sup>
- participating in a volunteer or community service activity;<sup>102</sup> and
- belonging to an organized community or extracurricular group.<sup>103</sup>

Because these items refer to activities in the preceding 12 months and because the focus of this report is activities of young adults with disabilities after high school, findings for these aspects of community participation are reported only for young adults who had been out of secondary school at least a year so as to avoid including secondary school experiences.<sup>104</sup> The full sample of young adults with disabilities is included in findings regarding whether they had driving privileges<sup>105</sup> and were registered to vote.<sup>106</sup>

Overall, 52 percent of young adults with disabilities who had been out of secondary school from 1 to 8 years were said to have engaged in some kind of extracurricular activity in the preceding year (figure 42), with the rates of participation in extracurricular lessons or classes, volunteer or community service activities, and community groups ranging from 20 percent to 39 percent. A driver's license or learner's permit had been earned by 78 percent of young adults with disabilities, and 71 percent were reported to be registered to vote. This voter registration of 72 percent rate is higher than the rate of 59 percent ( $p < .001$ ) for young adults in the general population ages 18 through 24 (File and Crissey 2010).

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<sup>101</sup> Respondents were asked, "During the past 12 months [have you/has *name of youth*] taken lessons or classes (outside of school *for those in school*) in things like art, music, dance, a foreign language, religion, or computer skills?"

<sup>102</sup> Respondents were asked, "During the past 12 months [have you/has *name of youth*] done any volunteer or community service activities? This could include community service that is part of a school class or other group activity."

<sup>103</sup> Respondents were asked, if a youth was not enrolled in school, "During the past 12 months [have you/has *name of youth*] participated in any school activities outside of class, such as a sports team, band or chorus, a school club, or student government?" All respondents were asked, "During the past 12 months [have you/has *name of youth*] participated in any [out-of-high school, *for those in school*] group activity, such as scouting, church or temple youth group, or nonschool team sports like soccer or softball?"

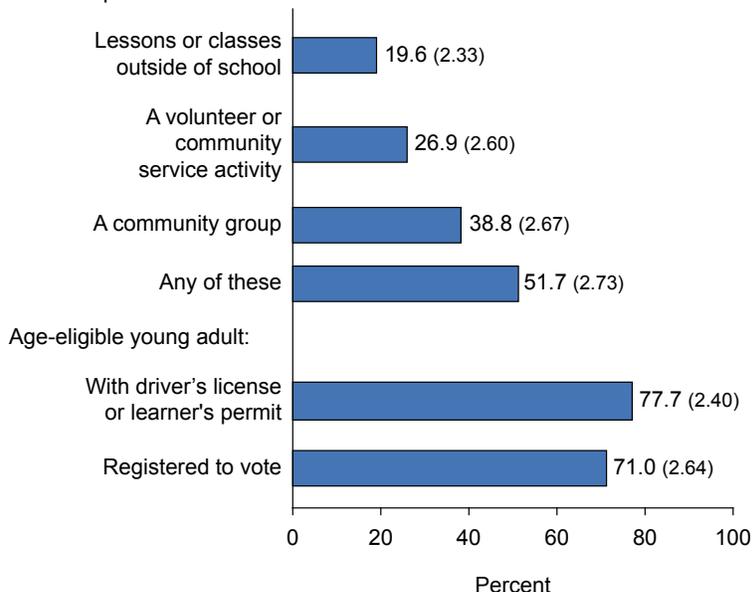
<sup>104</sup> Ninety-three percent of young adults included in this report have been out of high school 1 or more years.

<sup>105</sup> Respondents were asked for youth at least 15 years old, "[Do you/does *name of youth*] have a driver's license or learner's permit?"

<sup>106</sup> Respondents were asked for youth at least 18 years old, "[Are you/is *name of youth*] registered to vote?"

Figure 42. Community participation of young adults with disabilities

In the past year, percentage who took part in:



NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that range from approximately 4,000 to 4,790 young adults with disabilities across variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

### **Disability Differences in Community Participation**

The proportions of young adults with disabilities who were reported to have taken part in at least one of the social activities investigated in NLTS2 ranged from 46 percent of those with mental retardation to 67 percent of those in the categories of visual impairment and deaf-blindness (table 79,  $p < .001$  compared with young adults with visual impairments and  $p < .01$  compared with those with deaf-blindness). Young adults with visual or orthopedic impairments, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities were more likely than those with mental retardation to have taken lessons, volunteered in community service activities, and/or participated in community groups (67 percent, 62 percent, 67 percent, and 63 percent, respectively, vs. 46 percent,  $p < .01$  for all comparisons). Young adults with visual

impairments also were more likely to have participated in these types of activities than were young adults with emotional disturbances (47 percent,  $p < .01$ ).

Table 79. Community participation of young adults, by disability category

	Learning disability	Speech/language impairment	Mental retardation	Emotional disturbance	Hearing impairment	Visual impairment	Orthopedic impairment	Other health impairment	Autism	Traumatic brain injury	Multiple disabilities	Deaf-blindness
	Percent											
In the past year, percentage who took part in:												
Lessons or classes outside of school	19.7 (3.64)	24.2 (3.51)	13.2 (2.91)	20.6 (4.10)	25.3 (4.84)	37.9 (5.70)	29.3 (4.44)	20.5 (3.74)	32.2 (4.52)	12.0 (5.15)	24.2 (5.08)	38.1 (7.32)
A volunteer or community service activity	27.4 (4.08)	26.3 (3.64)	18.9 (3.38)	28.8 (4.57)	34.4 (5.29)	44.0 (5.87)	30.6 (4.52)	28.4 (4.21)	34.0 (4.61)	32.2 (7.39)	32.3 (5.57)	36.6 (7.26)
A community group (e.g., sports team, hobby club, religious group)	40.1 (4.12)	38.4 (3.82)	36.6 (3.88)	31.6 (4.31)	45.9 (4.95)	50.9 (5.64)	45.8 (4.58)	39.0 (4.19)	46.1 (4.77)	30.4 (7.08)	40.4 (5.46)	51.0 (7.20)
Any of these	52.7 (4.20)	53.4 (3.92)	46.7 (4.00)	45.9 (4.60)	59.3 (4.86)	66.9 (5.28)	62.2 (4.46)	53.1 (4.28)	61.1 (4.66)	49.0 (7.65)	63.0 (5.35)	66.9 (6.78)
Percentage who had a driver's license or learner's permit	88.2 (2.92)	81.4 (3.17)	39.2 (4.17)	73.9 (4.36)	83.5 (4.07)	23.3 (4.88)	52.8 (4.83)	83.3 (3.43)	33.4 (4.47)	74.1 (6.85)	31.2 (5.34)	26.9 (6.64)
Percentage registered to vote	70.9 (4.15)	79.3 (3.32)	62.1 (4.23)	77.0 (4.27)	71.0 (5.04)	81.2 (4.60)	77.6 (4.09)	78.2 (3.85)	55.4 (4.76)	72.5 (7.07)	55.0 (5.78)	56.9 (7.42)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that range from approximately 4,000 to 4,790 young adults with disabilities across variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

Young adults with visual impairments or deaf-blindness were more likely to take lessons or classes outside of formal school (38 percent for both groups) than those in several other disability categories. Young adults with visual impairments were significantly more likely than those with learning disabilities, mental retardation, other health impairments, or traumatic brain injuries to participate in lessons or classes outside school (38 percent vs. 20 percent, 13 percent, 21 percent, and 12 percent, respectively;  $p < .001$  compared with young adults with mental retardation or traumatic brain injuries;  $p < .01$  for other comparisons), and young adults in the deaf-blindness and autism categories were more likely than those with traumatic brain injuries to do so (38 percent and 32 percent vs. 12 percent,  $p < .01$ ). Rates of participation in lessons or classes also were higher for young adults in the categories of orthopedic impairments and autism (29 percent and 32 percent) than for those with mental retardation (13 percent,  $p < .01$  and  $p < .001$ , respectively).

The rate of participation in volunteer or community service activities was highest for young adults with visual impairments and lowest for those with mental retardation (44 percent and 19 percent, respectively;  $p < .001$ ); young adults with visual impairments also exceeded those with speech/language impairments in the extent to which they volunteered or took part in community service activities (44 percent vs. 26 percent,  $p < .01$ ). Rates of participation in community groups

was highest for young adults with visual impairments (51 percent) and lowest for those with emotional disturbances (32 percent), a statistically significant difference ( $p < .01$ ).

Approximately 80 percent or more of young adults with learning disabilities (88 percent) or speech/language, hearing, or other health impairments (81 percent, 84 percent, and 83 percent) were reported to have driving privileges, as were 74 percent of young adults with emotional disturbances or traumatic brain injuries. In contrast, between 23 percent and 53 percent of young adults with mental retardation, visual or orthopedic impairments, autism, multiple disabilities, or deaf-blindness had a driver's license or learner's permit ( $p < .001$  for all comparisons except  $p < .01$  comparing those with emotional disturbances and those with orthopedic impairments, and the difference in rates between those with traumatic brain injuries and with orthopedic impairments was not statistically significant). Although the rate of having a driver's license or learner's permit among young adults with orthopedic impairments was much lower than that among young adults in several other categories, those with orthopedic impairments were more likely than young adults with multiple disabilities or deaf-blindness to have driving privileges (53 percent vs. 31 percent and 27 percent,  $p < .001$ ).

Voter registration rates for young adults with disabilities ranged from 77 percent or more for young adults with speech/language, visual, orthopedic, or other health impairments or emotional disturbances to 55 percent to 62 percent for young adults with mental retardation, autism, multiple disabilities or deaf-blindness. Young adults with speech/language, visual, or orthopedic impairments were more likely to be registered to vote than were those with autism or multiple disabilities ( $p < .001$  for all comparisons) or mental retardation ( $p < .01$  for all comparisons). Those with other health impairments also were more likely to be registered to vote than were young adults with mental retardation ( $p < .01$ ). In addition, young adults with emotional disturbances or orthopedic impairments had higher voter registration rates than those with multiple disabilities ( $p < .01$ ) and those with visual impairments have higher rates than those with deaf-blindness ( $p < .01$ ).

### ***Differences in Community Participation by Years Since Leaving High School***

The rates of reported participation in extracurricular lessons or classes in the past year by young adults with disabilities who had been out of high school 1 to 8 years ranged from 18 percent to 24 percent (table 80). Rates of participation in volunteer or community service activities ranged from 24 percent for those out of high school less than 3 years to 30 percent for those who had left high school between 5 and 8 years earlier. Rates of participation in organized community groups ranged from 30 percent to 42 percent. From 62 percent of those who were out of school between 1 and 3 years to 74 percent of young adults with disabilities out between 5 and 8 years were reported to be registered to vote. Only rates of having a driver's license differed significantly by the number of years young adults with disabilities had been out of high school; 83 percent of those who had been out of high school between 5 and 8 years were reported to have driving privileges, compared with 60 percent who had been out of high school from 1 up to 3 years ( $p < .001$ ).

Table 80. Community participation of young adults with disabilities, by years since leaving high school

	Less than 3 years	3 up to 5 years	5 up to 8 years
	Percent		
In the past year, percentage who took part in:			
Lessons or classes outside of school	23.6 (6.06)	20.7 (4.13)	18.1 (3.13)
A volunteer or community service activity	24.2 (6.15)	23.5 (4.30)	29.8 (3.72)
A community group (e.g., sports team, hobby club, religious group)	30.2 (6.30)	36.4 (4.58)	42.2 (3.70)
Any of these	47.8 (6.85)	50.6 (4.75)	53.3 (3.73)
Percentage who had a driver's license or learner's permit	60.1 (6.32)	76.4 (4.30)	82.9 (3.07)
Percentage registered to vote	62.1 (6.31)	69.7 (4.74)	74.2 (3.56)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that range from approximately 4,000 to 4,790 young adults with disabilities across variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

### ***Differences in Community Participation by Highest Level of Educational Attainment***

Young adults with disabilities who had some postsecondary education and those who had earned a postsecondary degree or license/certificate were significantly more likely to have taken part in extracurricular lessons or classes (26 percent and 34 percent, respectively; table 81) than the two groups of young adults with disabilities who had completed high school and those who had not (8 percent for each group;  $p < .01$  comparing those with some postsecondary education and high school noncompleters;  $p < .001$  for other comparisons). Those who had completed a postsecondary education program also were more likely than high school completers to have participated in a volunteer or community service activity (39 percent vs. 18 percent,  $p < .01$ ) and were more likely than high school noncompleters to have been a member of a community

group (48 percent vs. 25 percent,  $p < .01$ ). Both young adults with disabilities who had some postsecondary education and those who had completed a postsecondary program were more likely to have taken part in at least one of the modes of community participation investigated in NLTS2 than those who had not completed high school (54 percent and 66 percent vs. 29 percent,  $p < .01$  and  $p < .001$ , respectively).

Having driving privileges was more common among young adults with disabilities who had completed a postsecondary education program than among either high school noncompleters or completers (95 percent vs. 62 percent and 66 percent, respectively;  $p < .001$  for both comparisons). Young adults with disabilities who had some postsecondary education also were more likely than high school completers to have a driver's license or learner's permit (84 percent vs. 66 percent,  $p < .01$ ). Being registered to vote also was more likely among postsecondary education attenders and completers (78 percent and 89 percent, respectively) than among high school completers and noncompleters (48 percent and 60 percent;  $p < .01$  compared with postsecondary education attenders,  $p < .001$  compared with postsecondary education completers).

Table 81. Community participation of young adults with disabilities, by highest level of educational attainment

	High school non-completer	High school completer	Some post-secondary school	Post-secondary school completion
	Percent			
In the past year, percentage who took part in:				
Lessons or classes outside of school	7.5 (4.45)	8.2 (2.43)	26.1 (4.90)	33.6 (6.34)
A volunteer or community service activity	18.9 (6.69)	17.9 (3.39)	30.3 (5.11)	39.1 (6.51)
A community group (e.g., sports team, hobby club, religious group)	24.0 (6.61)	35.7 (4.06)	39.4 (5.03)	48.4 (6.23)
Any of these	29.2 (6.90)	46.2 (4.21)	54.3 (5.13)	66.3 (5.89)
Percentage who had a driver's license or learner's permit	62.2 (8.16)	66.1 (4.12)	84.4 (3.96)	95.1 (2.86)
Percentage registered to vote	47.9 (8.59)	60.0 (4.33)	78.2 (4.54)	88.5 (4.24)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that range from approximately 4,000 to 4,790 young adults with disabilities across variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

### ***Demographic Differences in Community Participation***

Only with regard to having driving privileges was there a significant difference associated with parents' household income or the racial/ethnic background of young adults with disabilities (table 82). Young adults with disabilities from families in the upper income group (more than \$50,000) were significantly more likely to have driving privileges than those from households with incomes of \$25,000 or less (87 percent vs. 67 percent,  $p < .001$ ). Additionally, White young adults with disabilities were more likely than African American peers to have a driver's license or learner's permit (84 percent vs. 63 percent,  $p < .01$ ).

There were no statistically significant differences in any form of community participation between male and female young adults with disabilities who had been out of high school from 1 to 8 years. Approximately one-fifth of both groups were reported to have taken lessons or classes outside of school; 29 percent of males and 24 percent of females had taken part in a volunteer or community service activity; 39 percent and 38 percent of young men and women with disabilities, respectively, were reported to have belonged to an organized community group; and 54 percent of males and 48 percent of females were reported to have taken part in at least one of these forms of community involvement. A driver's license or learner's permit reportedly had been earned by 80 percent of young adult males with disabilities and 74 percent of their female counterparts. Rates of voter registration were reported to be 72 percent and 70 percent for the two groups.

Table 82. Community participation of young adults with disabilities, by parents' household income and young adults' race/ethnicity and gender

	\$25,000 or less	\$25,001 to \$50,000	More than \$50,000	Percent			Male	Female
				White	African American	Hispanic		
In the past year, percentage who took part in:								
Lessons or classes outside of school	13.5 (3.45)	15.2 (4.29)	26.7 (3.99)	19.5 (2.82)	19.2 (5.07)	20.0 (7.39)	20.8 (3.00)	17.8 (3.70)
A volunteer or community service activity	19.6 (3.96)	29.5 (5.45)	32.6 (4.23)	27.9 (3.19)	26.3 (5.68)	24.4 (7.89)	28.6 (3.33)	24.0 (4.14)
A community group (e.g., sports team, hobby club, religious group)	39.5 (4.64)	36.5 (5.40)	38.6 (4.05)	37.1 (3.14)	48.9 (6.17)	34.5 (8.15)	39.2 (3.31)	38.1 (4.50)
Any of these	48.5 (4.73)	49.8 (5.60)	54.3 (4.13)	51.8 (3.24)	58.5 (6.07)	43.0 (8.49)	53.9 (3.37)	47.9 (4.62)
Percentage who had a driver's license or learner's permit	67.4 (4.63)	77.3 (4.94)	86.5 (3.03)	83.9 (2.58)	62.6 (6.11)	67.3 (8.39)	79.8 (2.91)	74.1 (4.19)
Percentage registered to vote	66.7 (4.70)	61.0 (5.81)	80.9 (3.48)	69.5 (3.29)	83.9 (4.67)	61.9 (8.43)	71.5 (3.28)	70.2 (4.42)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that range from approximately 4,000 to 4,790 young adults with disabilities across variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

## Negative Community Involvement

The preceding section described generally positive modes of community participation by young adults with disabilities. However, the community participation of some of them had negative repercussions, both for them and for their communities. NLTS2 has investigated two forms of negative community involvement: participation in violence-related activities and involvement with the criminal justice system.

### *Involvement in Violence-Related Activities*

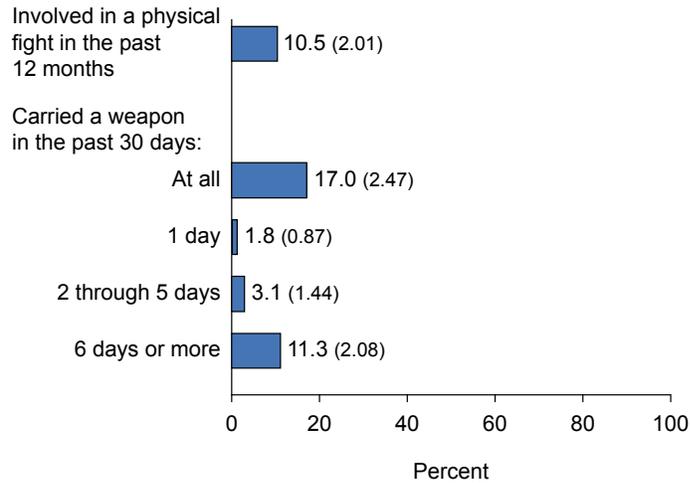
NLTS2 has investigated the reported involvement of young adults with disabilities in three forms of violence-related activities: physical fights,<sup>107</sup> carrying a weapon,<sup>108</sup> and belonging to a gang.<sup>109</sup> Less than one-half of 1 percent of young adults with disabilities reported belonging to a gang, so no further analysis of that form of violence-related activity is presented.

<sup>107</sup> Youth were asked, "In the past 12 months, have you gotten in a physical fight?"

<sup>108</sup> Youth age 18 or older were asked, "During the past 30 days, on how many days did you carry a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club?"

<sup>109</sup> Youth age 18 or older were asked, "Do you belong to a gang?"

Figure 43. Involvement in violence-related activities of young adults with disabilities



NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that range from approximately 3,010 and 3,090 young adults with disabilities across variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 youth interview/survey, 2009.

Because the question about fighting referred to involvement in the past 12 months and because the focus of this report is on experiences of young adults with disabilities after high school, those findings are reported only for those who had been out of high school at least 1 year so as to avoid including secondary school experiences. Findings for weapons carrying address activities in the preceding 30 days; thus, they include the full sample of young adults with disabilities who had been out of high school up to 8 years.

Eleven percent of young adults with disabilities who had been out of high school 1 to 8 years reported being in a physical fight in the 12 months preceding the Wave 5 interview/survey (figure 43); 17 percent reported carrying a weapon in the past 30 days, and 11 percent had carried a weapon for 6 or more days in

that time period.

### Disability Differences in Involvement in Violence Related Activities

Fourteen percent of young adults with emotional disturbances who had been out of high school 1 to 8 years reported being involved in a physical fight in the preceding year compared with 2 percent of young adults with orthopedic impairments ( $p < .01$ , table 83). Rates at which young adults with disabilities reported carrying a weapon in the preceding 30 days were 24 percent for those with emotional disturbances and 4 percent for those with orthopedic impairments ( $p < .001$ ). Young adults with learning disabilities also were more likely to carry a weapon than those with orthopedic impairments (18 percent vs. 4 percent,  $p < .001$ ). Young adults with emotional disturbances also had a significantly higher rate of carrying weapons than did those with speech/language impairments or multiple disabilities (9 percent and 6 percent, respectively;  $p < .01$ ).

Table 83. Involvement in violence-related activities by young adults, by disability category

	Learning disability	Speech/language impairment	Mental retardation	Emotional disturbance	Hearing impairment	Visual impairment	Orthopedic impairment	Other health impairment	Autism	Traumatic brain injury	Multiple disabilities	Deaf-blindness
	Percent											
Reported involvement in a physical fight in the past 12 months	11.1 (3.12)	6.8 (2.28)	6.2 (2.57)	14.0 (3.86)	7.8 (3.51)	3.4 (2.31)	2.3 (1.58)	8.9 (2.91)	5.1 (3.09)	11.6 (5.59)	6.3 (4.50)	12.2 (6.22)
Reported carrying a weapon in the past 30 days	18.2 (3.81)	9.2 (2.58)	12.2 (3.44)	23.7 (4.69)	11.0 (4.07)	12.6 (4.16)	3.8 (1.99)	11.9 (3.30)	13.5 (4.69)	15.1 (6.20)	6.3 (4.32)	7.3 (4.95)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 3,010 and 3,090 young adults with disabilities for the two variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 youth interview/survey, 2009.

### Differences in Involvement in Violence-Related Activities by Years Since Leaving High School

There were no significant differences in involvement in either of the two forms of violence-related activities reported here between young adults with disabilities who differed in the years since they had left high school (table 84). From 7 percent to 12 percent across groups reported having been in a physical fight in the preceding year, and from 14 percent to 21 percent reported carrying a weapon in the preceding 30 days.

	Less than 3 years	3 up to 5 years	5 up to 8 years
	Percent		
Reported involvement in a physical fight in the past 12 months	7.0 (4.04)	9.7 (3.43)	11.5 (2.91)
Reported carrying a weapon in the past 30 days	13.5 (5.22)	21.2 (4.73)	14.9 (3.24)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 3,010 and 3,090 young adults with disabilities for the two variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

### Differences in Violence Related Activities by Highest Level of Educational Attainment

There were no significant differences in involvement in either of the two forms of violence-related activities reported here between young adults with disabilities who differed in the years since they had left high school (table 85). From 8 percent to 17 percent across groups reported having been in a physical fight in the preceding year, and from 8 percent to 21 percent reported carrying a weapon in the preceding 30 days.

Table 85. Investment in violence-related activities of young adults with disabilities, by highest level of educational attainment

	High school non-completer	High school completer	Some post-secondary school	Post-secondary school completion
	Percent			
Percentage reporting involvement in a physical fight in the past 12 months	17.0 (8.21)	12.0 (3.38)	8.4 (3.29)	9.3 (4.11)
Percentage reporting carrying a weapon in the past 30 days	7.9 (5.90)	21.1 (4.24)	16.0 (4.35)	15.0 (5.05)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 3,010 and 3,090 young adults with disabilities for the two variables.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 parent interview and youth interview/survey, 2009.

### Demographic Differences in Involvement in Violence-Related Activities

There were no significant differences in reported involvement in violence-related activities between young adults of different racial/ethnic backgrounds or those who came from parent households with different income levels (table 86). Young men and women with disabilities also did not differ significantly in their reported participation in physical fights. However, they did differ in the proportion who reported carrying a weapon. Among young adults with disabilities who had been out of high school up to 8 years, 24 percent of males reported carrying a weapon in the past 30 days, compared with 7 percent of females ( $p < .001$ ).

Table 86. Involvement in violence-related activities by young adults with disabilities, by parents' household income and young adults' race/ethnicity and gender

	\$25,000 or less	\$25,001 to \$50,000	More than \$50,000	White	African American	Hispanic	Male	Female
	Percent							
Percentage reporting involvement in a physical fight in the past 12 months	13.6 (3.83)	4.0 (2.66)	12.6 (3.32)	9.3 (2.31)	10.8 (4.58)	18.8 (8.01)	13.9 (2.92)	5.4 (2.37)
Percentage reporting carrying a weapon in the past 30 days	19.5 (4.43)	17.7 (5.19)	15.4 (3.61)	21.1 (3.24)	9.9 (4.41)	6.1 (4.98)	23.9 (3.61)	6.7 (2.60)

NOTE. Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding participation in the past year are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 1 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples of approximately 3,010 and 3,090 young adults with disabilities for the two variables.

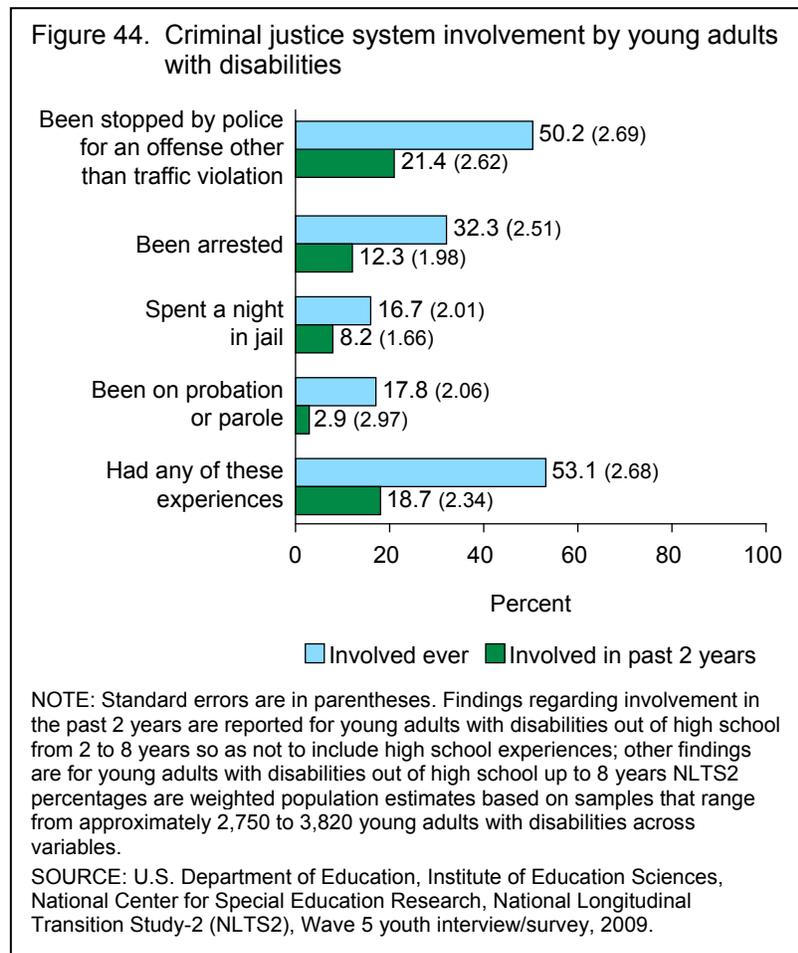
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 youth interview/survey, 2009.

### Criminal Justice System Involvement

The actions of some young adults with disabilities violate the laws or norms of their communities to such a degree that they become involved with the criminal justice system. NLTS2 provides information on the percentages of young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years who were reported ever and in the preceding 2 years to have

- been stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation;<sup>110</sup>
- been arrested;<sup>111</sup>
- spent a night in jail;<sup>112</sup>
- been on probation or parole;<sup>113</sup> or
- been involved with the criminal justice system in any of these ways.

At some time in their lives, 50 percent of young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years were reported to have been stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic



violation (figure 44), and 22 percent were reported to have been stopped by police in the preceding 2 years. Thirty-two percent of young adults with disabilities reportedly had been arrested at some time. The rate of arrest in the preceding 2 years for young adults with disabilities was 12 percent. Overall, 17 percent of young adults with disabilities had spent a night in jail, and 18 percent had been on probation or parole; 8 percent and 6 percent, respectively, had had those experiences in the preceding 2 years. Overall, 53 percent of young adults with disabilities had been involved with the criminal justice system in one or more of these ways; 19 percent had been involved in some way in the preceding 2 years.

<sup>110</sup> Respondents were asked, “In the past 2 years, [have you/has *name of youth*] been stopped and questioned by police except for a traffic violation?”

<sup>111</sup> Respondents were asked, “[Have you/has *name of youth*] been arrested at any time in the past 2 years?”

<sup>112</sup> Respondents were asked, “In the past 2 years, [have you/has *name of youth*] been in jail overnight?”

<sup>113</sup> Respondents were asked, “In the past 2 years, [have you/has *name of youth*] been on probation or parole?”

### Disability Differences in Criminal Justice System Involvement

There were many significant differences across disability categories in the various aspects of involvement with the criminal justice system, particularly involving young adults with emotional disturbances (table 87). Overall, 75 percent of young adults with emotional disturbances had been involved with the criminal justice system at some point in their lives, 33 percent in the preceding 2 years; 72 percent had been stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation, 43 percent in the past 2 years. Rates of ever being involved and being involved in the past 2 years are 61 percent and 27 percent, respectively, for arrests; 37 percent and 19 percent for overnight incarceration; and 44 percent and 15 percent for probation or parole.

Table 87. Criminal justice system involvement of young adults, by disability category

	Learning disability	Speech/language impairment	Mental retardation	Emotional disturbance	Hearing impairment	Visual impairment	Orthopedic impairment	Other health impairment	Autism	Traumatic brain injury	Multiple disabilities	Deaf-blindness
	Percent											
Stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation												
Ever	51.8 (4.15)	39.7 (3.78)	33.4 (3.75)	71.8 (4.09)	36.7 (4.71)	28.6 (4.98)	21.6 (3.76)	52.7 (4.25)	23.0 (3.95)	49.2 (7.62)	25.8 (4.74)	27.2 (6.37)
In past 2 years	20.2 (4.00)	16.3 (3.24)	15.0 (3.36)	43.2 (5.64)	19.0 (4.63)	10.7 (3.85)	7.6 (2.70)	20.5 (4.03)	4.1 (2.15)	21.5 (7.37)	11.7 (4.20)	12.7 (5.32)
Arrested												
Ever	32.3 (3.87)	20.9 (3.13)	19.6 (3.15)	60.5 (4.44)	14.1 (3.40)	7.4 (2.88)	10.1 (2.75)	29.8 (3.89)	10.3 (2.85)	35.0 (7.27)	10.2 (3.27)	10.4 (4.37)
In past 2 years	11.9 (3.03)	7.3 (2.10)	6.6 (2.26)	27.1 (4.64)	3.6 (2.13)	2.1 (1.74)	4.3 (2.04)	12.5 (3.14)	0.6 (0.81)	12.2 (5.34)	3.9 (2.50)	3.7 (2.96)
Spent a night in jail												
Ever	15.6 (3.00)	8.5 (2.15)	11.0 (2.49)	37.3 (4.39)	5.4 (2.21)	5.2 (2.44)	3.8 (1.75)	17.0 (3.20)	2.1 (1.35)	16.5 (5.66)	3.8 (2.06)	3.8 (2.74)
In past 2 years	7.9 (2.53)	4.5 (1.74)	4.3 (1.87)	18.7 (4.15)	2.3 (1.70)	1.6 (1.52)	2.3 (1.50)	7.1 (2.47)	0.2 (0.47)	8.5 (4.60)	2.7 (2.10)	2.5 (2.43)
Been on probation or parole												
Ever	15.9 (3.02)	10.0 (2.32)	9.8 (2.36)	44.2 (4.51)	6.5 (2.41)	3.7 (2.08)	6.3 (2.22)	17.9 (3.26)	3.4 (1.70)	23.3 (6.44)	6.0 (2.56)	2.8 (2.36)
In past 2 years	5.5 (2.13)	3.6 (1.56)	4.2 (1.81)	15.2 (3.74)	1.2 (1.21)	1.7 (1.56)	2.9 (1.68)	7.6 (2.52)	0.3 (0.54)	7.2 (4.22)	1.8 (1.73)	1.2 (1.73)
Had any of these experiences												
Ever	54.7 (4.12)	43.0 (3.81)	37.0 (3.84)	74.7 (3.95)	39.1 (4.77)	29.2 (5.01)	22.8 (3.83)	53.5 (4.24)	26.7 (4.15)	52.4 (7.61)	27.3 (4.81)	27.2 (6.37)
In past 2 years	17.8 (3.57)	15.0 (2.98)	13.9 (3.14)	33.4 (4.80)	17.5 (4.31)	10.3 (3.69)	7.4 (2.62)	18.4 (3.66)	3.9 (2.02)	18.3 (6.32)	11.5 (4.10)	12.0 (5.08)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding involvement in the past 2 years are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 2 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that are approximately 4,800 young adults with disabilities for variables related to involvement "ever" and range from 2,750 to 3,820 young adults with disabilities for involvement in the past 2 years.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 youth interview/survey, 2009.

For all these forms of involvement, young adults with emotional disturbances were significantly more likely than those in most other categories to have been involved with the criminal justice system. The rate of ever having been involved in the criminal justice system at all and in each form of involvement all were significantly higher for young adults with emotional disturbances than the rates for those in all other disability categories ( $p < .001$  for all comparisons except  $p < .01$  for all comparisons with young adults with traumatic brain injuries). With the exception of those with traumatic brain injuries, young adults with emotional disturbances also had significantly higher rates of being stopped by police for other than a traffic violation in the past 2 years and arrested in the past 2 years than young adults in all other categories ( $p < .01$  for both comparisons with young adults with other health impairments and for arrests with those with learning disabilities;  $p < .001$  for all other comparisons). Young adults with emotional disturbances also exceeded those in all other categories except learning disability, other health impairment, and traumatic brain injuries in their rates of having been incarcerated over night in the past 2 years and having been on probation or parole in the past 2 years ( $p < .001$  for all comparisons). Finally, with the exceptions of young adults with hearing impairments, other health impairments, or traumatic brain injuries, the rate of ever having been involved at all with the criminal justice system exceeded the rates of those in all other disability categories ( $p < .01$  compared with youth with learning disabilities, speech/language impairments, or deaf-blindness;  $p < .001$  for all other comparisons).

Young adults with learning disabilities, other health impairments, or traumatic brain injuries were significantly more likely than those in several disability categories to ever have been involved with the criminal justice system. Young adults in these three disability categories, learning disability, other health impairment, or traumatic brain injury, were reported to have higher rates of ever being stopped by police for other than a traffic violation (52 percent, 53 percent, and 49 percent respectively) than young adults with orthopedic impairments, autism, or multiple disabilities (22 percent, 23 percent, and 26 percent, respectively,  $p < .01$  for all comparisons with those with traumatic brain injuries,  $p < .001$  for all other comparisons). Young adults with learning disabilities, other health impairments, or traumatic brain injuries also were more likely ever to have been arrested (32 percent, 30 percent, 35 percent) than were those with hearing, visual, or orthopedic impairments; autism; multiple disabilities, or deaf-blindness (14 percent, 7 percent, 10 percent, 10 percent, 10 percent, and 10 percent, respectively,  $p < .001$  for all comparisons with those with learning disabilities;  $p < .001$  for all comparisons for those with other health impairments except  $p < .01$  for their comparison with young adults with hearing impairments;  $p < .01$  for all comparisons with those with traumatic brain injuries except  $p < .001$  for their comparison with young adults with visual impairments).

Young adults with learning disabilities, other health impairments, or traumatic brain injuries also were more likely ever to have been on probation or parole (16 percent, 18 percent, 23 percent) than those in the categories of orthopedic impairment, autism, or multiple disabilities (6 percent, 3 percent, and 6 percent, respectively,  $p < .001$  for all comparisons with those with learning disabilities or other health impairments,  $p < .01$  for all comparisons with those with traumatic brain injuries). Finally, young adults with learning disabilities, other health impairments, and traumatic brain injuries also had higher rates of ever having any criminal justice system involvement (55 percent, 54 percent, and 52 percent, respectively) than those with orthopedic impairments, autism, or multiple disabilities (23 percent, 27 percent, and 27 percent, respectively,  $p < .001$  for all comparisons with young adults with learning disabilities or other

health impairments,  $p < .001$  comparing those with traumatic brain injuries and orthopedic impairments,  $p < .01$  comparing those with traumatic brain injuries and those with both autism and multiple disabilities).

Young adults with learning disabilities or other health impairments (although not those with traumatic brain injuries) were more likely than those with visual impairments or deaf-blindness ever to have been involved with the criminal justice system (29 percent and 27 percent, respectively,  $p < .001$  for all comparisons). Those with other health impairments also were more likely than young adults with mental retardation to have any criminal justice system involvement (37 percent  $p < .01$ ).

In the 2 years preceding the Wave 5 interview, young adults in the categories of learning disability (20 percent) and other health impairment (21 percent) were more likely than those with orthopedic impairments or autism to have been stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation (8 percent and 4 percent, respectively,  $p < .01$  for comparisons with those with orthopedic impairments,  $p < .001$  for comparisons with young adults with autism). Young adults with learning disabilities (12 percent) or other health impairments (13 percent) also were more likely than those with visual impairments or autism to have been arrested in the preceding 2 years (2 percent and 1 percent,  $p < .01$  for comparisons with those with visual impairment,  $p < .001$  for comparisons with young adults with autism). Those with learning disabilities (8 percent) or other health impairments (7 percent) also were more likely than young adults with autism to have been incarcerated over night or involved at all in the criminal justice system in the preceding 2 years (less than <1 percent,  $p < .01$  for comparisons regarding overnight incarceration,  $p < .001$  regarding comparisons of any involvement in the criminal justice system). Young adults with other health impairments (18 percent) were more likely than those with hearing or orthopedic impairments or multiple disabilities ever to have been on probation or parole (4 percent, 6 percent, and 6 percent, respectively,  $p < .01$  for all comparisons). Those with other health impairments (8 percent) also were more likely than young adults with autism to have been on probation or parole in the preceding 2 years (less than <1 percent,  $p < .01$ ).

Disability differences also were apparent for young adults in other disability categories. For example, young adults with learning disabilities were more likely than those with orthopedic impairments to have been stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation in the past 2 years (20 percent vs. 8 percent,  $p < .01$ ). Further, those with speech/language impairments were more likely than young adults with autism to have been stopped by the police for an offense other than a traffic violation in the past 2 years (16 percent vs. 4 percent,  $p < .01$ ) and to have been involved with the criminal justice system ever and in the past 2 years (15 percent vs. 4 percent,  $p < .01$ ). In addition, young adults with speech/language impairments were more likely than those with orthopedic impairments ever to have been stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation (40 percent vs. 22 percent,  $p < .001$ ), and ever to have been arrested (21 percent vs. 10 percent,  $p < .01$ ). Those with speech/language impairments also were more likely ever to have been arrested than were young adults with visual impairments (8 percent  $p < .01$ ).

Young adults with hearing impairments (39 percent) were more likely than those with orthopedic impairments (23 percent) ever to have been involved with the criminal justice system and than those with autism to have had criminal justice system involvement in the past 2 years (18 percent vs. 4 percent,  $p < .01$  for both comparisons). Those with mental retardation were more likely ever to have been incarcerated overnight or have had any criminal justice system

involvement, compared with those with autism (11 percent vs. 2 percent and 37 percent vs. 27 percent  $p < .01$  for both comparisons).

**Differences in Criminal Justice System Involvement by Years Since Leaving High School**

There were no differences in the indicators of criminal justice system involvement by years since leaving high school (table 88). The rates of ever having been involved with the criminal justice system in various ways ranged from 41 percent to 52 percent for police stops for an offense other than a traffic violation, 27 percent to 36 percent for arrest, 14 percent to 19 percent for overnight incarceration, 10 percent to 23 percent for being on probation or parole, and 48 percent to 55 percent for involvement in any one or more of these ways. Rates of involvement in the 2 years preceding the Wave 5 interview/survey ranged from were 18 percent to 22 percent for police stops and from 11 percent to 13 percent for arrest, 3 percent to 10 percent for overnight incarceration, 4 percent to 8 percent for having been on probation or parole, and 17 percent to 19 percent for any form of involvement in the past 2 years.

**Differences in Criminal Justice System Involvement by Highest Level of Educational Attainment**

Young adults with disabilities who had not completed high school were significantly more likely to have had involvement in the criminal justice system than those with higher levels of educational attainment (table 89). Three-fourths of young adults with disabilities who had not completed high school had at some time been stopped by police for an offense other than a

Table 88. Criminal justice system involvement of young adults with disabilities, by years since leaving high school

	Less than 3 years	3 up to 5 years	5 up to 8 years
	Percent		
Stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation			
Ever	41.1 (6.13)	50.7 (4.72)	51.9 (3.74)
In past 2 years	17.5 (6.87)	20.8 (4.34)	22.1 (3.67)
Arrested			
Ever	34.5 (5.91)	26.6 (4.17)	35.9 (3.57)
In past 2 years	10.7 (5.39)	11.4 (3.25)	13.2 (2.76)
Spent a night in jail			
Ever	16.4 (4.61)	14.0 (3.28)	18.7 (2.91)
In past 2 years	2.9 (2.97)	6.9 (2.63)	9.8 (2.44)
Been on probation or parole			
Ever	16.3 (4.60)	10.3 (2.87)	23.3 (3.15)
In past 2 years	3.5 (3.19)	3.9 (1.99)	8.4 (2.25)
Had any of these experiences			
Ever	48.3 (6.22)	51.8 (4.72)	55.0 (3.71)
In past 2 years	16.5 (6.46)	19.0 (4.01)	18.8 (3.17)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding involvement in the past 2 years are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 2 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years. NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that are approximately 4,800 young adults with disabilities for variables related to involvement "ever" and range from 2,750 to 3,820 young adults with disabilities for involvement in the past 2 years.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 youth interview/survey, 2009.

Table 89. Criminal justice system involvement of young adults with disabilities, by highest level of educational attainment

	High school non-completer	High school completer	Some post-secondary school	Post-secondary school completion
	Percent			
Stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation				
Ever	74.7 (6.70)	47.7 (4.16)	53.2 (5.04)	42.4 (6.14)
In past 2 years	33.9 (9.33)	23.5 (4.19)	19.7 (4.81)	16.1 (5.18)
Arrested				
Ever	58.5 (7.59)	32.4 (3.89)	33.8 (4.77)	21.7 (5.10)
In past 2 years	23.8 (7.61)	15.4 (3.33)	9.3 (3.32)	8.0 (3.64)
Spent a night in jail				
Ever	40.0 (7.55)	17.1 (3.13)	15.6 (3.66)	10.2 (3.74)
In past 2 years	14.5 (6.51)	10.9 (2.89)	5.5 (2.62)	5.6 (3.10)
Been on probation or parole				
Ever	38.7 (7.51)	18.6 (3.23)	16.9 (3.78)	10.4 (3.78)
In past 2 years	14.4 (6.22)	8.0 (2.50)	5.4 (2.61)	2.1 (1.92)
Had any of these experiences				
Ever	76.1 (6.57)	51.0 (4.15)	56.4 (5.01)	44.6 (6.15)
In past 2 years	29.3 (8.05)	20.8 (3.74)	16.9 (4.27)	14.7 (4.73)

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding involvement in the past 2 years are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 2 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years NLT2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that are approximately 4,800 young adults with disabilities for variables related to involvement "ever" and range from 2,750 to 3,820 young adults with disabilities for involvement in the past 2 years.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 youth interview/survey, 2009.

traffic violation compared with 48 percent of high school completers and 42 percent of postsecondary school completers ( $p < .001$ ). The rate of ever having been arrested was 59 percent for high school noncompleters compared with 32 percent of high school completers, 34 percent of those who had some postsecondary education, and 22 percent of those who had completed a postsecondary education program ( $p < .001$  compared with postsecondary completers and  $p < .01$  for other comparisons). Overnight incarceration at some time had been experienced by 40 percent of young adults with disabilities who had not completed high school, compared with 17 percent of high school completers, 16 percent of those who had some postsecondary education, and 10 percent of those who had completed a postsecondary education program ( $p < .001$  compared with postsecondary completers and  $p < .01$  for other comparisons). Thirty-nine percent of high school noncompleters with disabilities had at some time been on probation or parole, significantly more than the 17 percent of those with some postsecondary education and 10 percent of

postsecondary completers with disabilities ( $p < .001$  compared with postsecondary completers and  $p < .01$  compared with those with some postsecondary education). Finally, 76 percent of young adults with disabilities who had not completed high school had had one or more of these forms of criminal justice system involvement at some time, compared with 51 percent of high school completers and 45 percent of postsecondary education program completers ( $p < .01$  and  $p < .001$ , respectively).

None of the forms of criminal justice system involvement in the preceding 2 years were significantly different for young adults with disabilities who differed in their levels of educational attainment.

### **Demographic Differences in Criminal Justice System Involvement**

There were no statistically significant differences in reported criminal justice system involvement between young adults with disabilities from parent households with different income levels or those who differed in their racial/ethnic backgrounds (table 90). However, significant gender differences were apparent. Males were more likely than females ever to have been stopped by police for an offense other than a traffic violation (58 percent vs. 37 percent,  $p < .001$ ) and in the preceding 2 years (28 percent vs. 11 percent,  $p < .001$ ). Males also were more likely than females ever to have been arrested (39 percent vs. 21 percent,  $p < .001$ ). Reported rates also were more than twice for males compared with females regarding ever having spent a night in jail (21 percent vs. 9 percent,  $p < .01$ ) and were more than four times higher for doing so in the preceding 2 years (12 percent vs. 3 percent,  $p < .01$ ). With their higher rates of experiencing these various forms of criminal justice system involvement, males also were much more likely ever to have had any criminal justice involvement (62 percent vs. 38 percent,  $p < .001$ ) and to have been involved in the preceding 2 years (24 percent vs. 10 percent,  $p < .001$ ).

Table 90. Criminal justice system involvement of young adults with disabilities, by parents' household income and young adults' race/ethnicity and gender

	\$25,000 or less	\$25,001 to \$50,000	More than \$50,000	Percent			Male	Female
				White	African American	Hispanic		
Stopped by police for other than a traffic violation								
Ever	56.4 (4.63)	43.4 (5.47)	51.2 (4.10)	49.2 (3.21)	53.5 (6.07)	49.0 (8.35)	57.8 (3.30)	36.9 (4.40)
In the past 2 years	26.3 (4.83)	15.2 (4.72)	21.0 (3.98)	19.3 (3.07)	25.6 (6.24)	26.2 (8.93)	28.0 (3.69)	10.8 (3.19)
Arrested								
Ever	39.9 (4.58)	24.4 (4.72)	30.4 (3.76)	30.1 (2.94)	36.4 (5.83)	34.4 (7.94)	38.7 (3.24)	21.1 (3.72)
In the past 2 years	16.3 (3.85)	7.5 (3.24)	12.2 (3.00)	12.1 (2.39)	13.2 (4.52)	11.9 (6.17)	15.2 (2.71)	7.7 (2.67)
Spent a night in jail								
Ever	24.4 (4.02)	10.2 (3.32)	14.9 (2.91)	15.4 (2.31)	21.8 (5.00)	15.0 (5.97)	21.2 (2.72)	8.9 (2.59)
In the past 2 years	12.1 (3.45)	5.7 (2.85)	6.5 (2.26)	8.1 (2.01)	9.3 (3.94)	6.7 (4.77)	11.6 (2.44)	2.6 (1.60)
On probation or parole								
Ever	20.1 (3.74)	17.5 (4.18)	16.5 (3.04)	18.6 (2.50)	20.3 (4.87)	7.3 (4.35)	21.4 (2.73)	11.4 (2.90)
In the past 2 years	10.0 (3.12)	3.6 (2.29)	4.9 (1.97)	6.4 (1.79)	9.4 (3.88)	1.0 (1.87)	8.2 (2.07)	3.1 (1.73)
Had any of these experiences								
Ever	61.2 (4.55)	44.5 (5.46)	51.8 (4.09)	50.5 (3.21)	60.5 (5.92)	53.5 (8.34)	61.5 (3.24)	38.3 (4.43)
In the past 2 years	23.4 (4.40)	13.2 (4.13)	18.7 (3.55)	17.4 (2.76)	21.0 (5.41)	23.5 (8.07)	24.0 (3.21)	10.0 (2.99)

NOTE. Standard errors are in parentheses. Findings regarding involvement in the past 2 years are reported for young adults with disabilities out of high school from 2 to 8 years so as not to include high school experiences; other findings are for young adults with disabilities out of high school up to 8 years NLTS2 percentages are weighted population estimates based on samples that range from approximately 2,750 to 3,820 young adults with disabilities.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), Wave 5 youth interview/survey, 2009.

This chapter has focused on the social and community involvement of young adults with disabilities, and it is the final chapter in this report presenting a national picture of the post-high school experiences and outcomes of young adults with disabilities who had been out of high school for up to 8 years.