



Pennsylvania's Rural Youth Education, Career and Residential Aspirations



STACKPOLE-HALL FOUNDATION
August 9, 2013

The Rural Youth Project



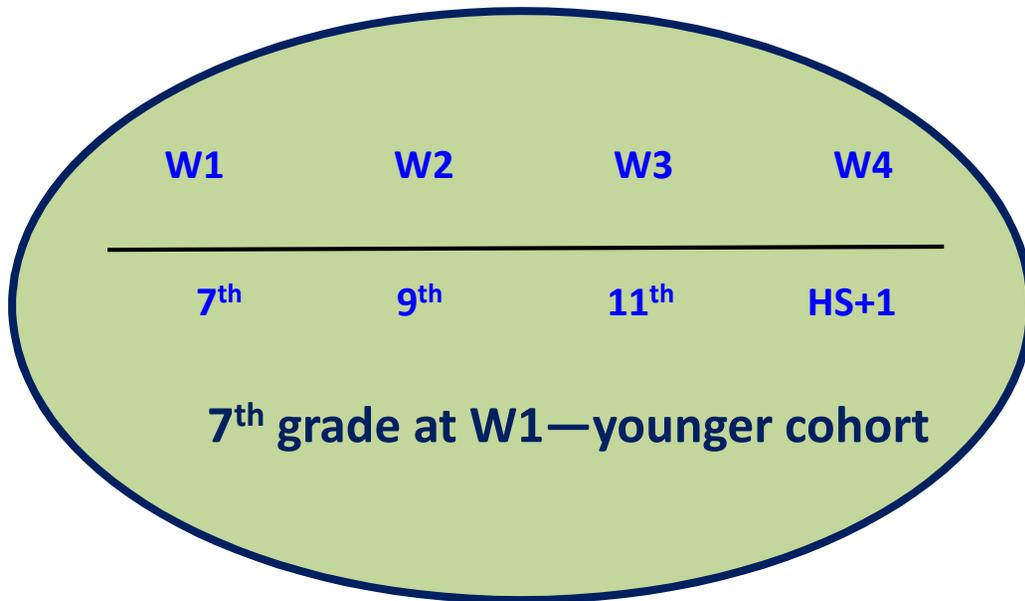
Research Goal:

Understand the educational, career and residential aspirations of Pennsylvania's rural youth, how they change over time, and the factors associated with their aspirations and change in aspirations.



Why Study Rural Youth Residential Aspirations?

- Outmigration of youth and young adults from rural areas.
 - **Historical and continuing problem for some rural communities and some regions of the US/PA**
 - **Threatens the long-run viability of rural communities and regions**
 - Human capital of residents
 - Aging of rural populations/workforce
 - Who will be the next social, civic and business entrepreneurs?



Data Collection Time Points:

W1=Spring 2005

W2=Winter-Spring 2007

W3=Winter-Spring-2009

W4=Winter-Spring-2011

GOAL: Follow the same youth over time



What are the Youth Educational & Occupational Aspirations?

	7 th Grade	11 th Grade
Educational Aspirations		
4 Years College	67.8	68.4
Vo-tech or 2 Year College	13.3	20.9
High School or Less	18.9	10.7
Occupational Aspirations		
Prof. & Managerial	66.7	58.5
Service or Technical	14.2	14.0
Labor & Production	9.9	11.3
Other <i>(farming, military, don't know, etc.)</i>	10.1	16.2



Where do you want to live when you are 30 years old?

Live Outside PA:

7th Grade = 25.0%

11th Grade = 30.4%

Live in Rural PA

7th Grade = 37.8%

11th Grade = 32.2%

Don't Know

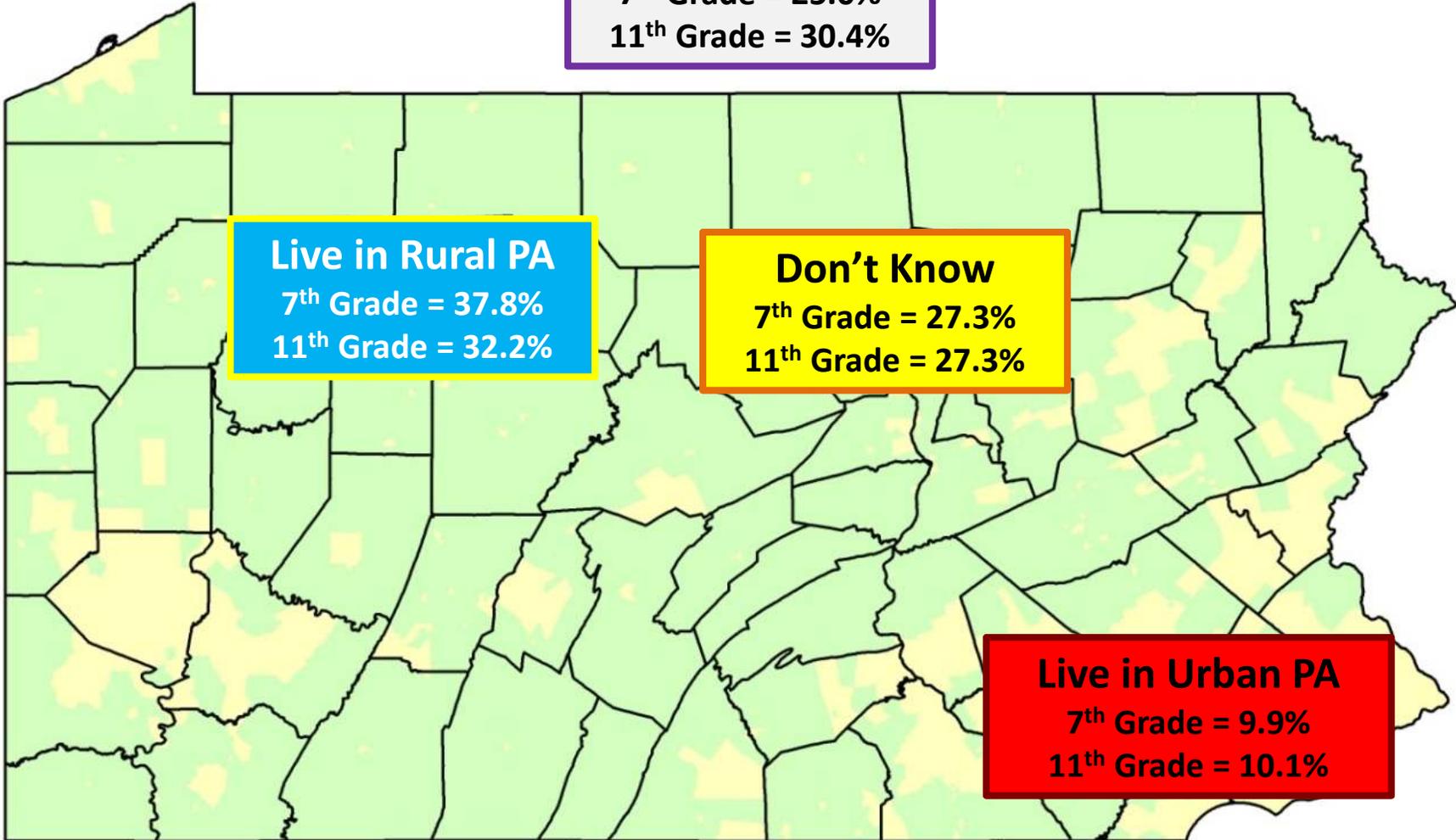
7th Grade = 27.3%

11th Grade = 27.3%

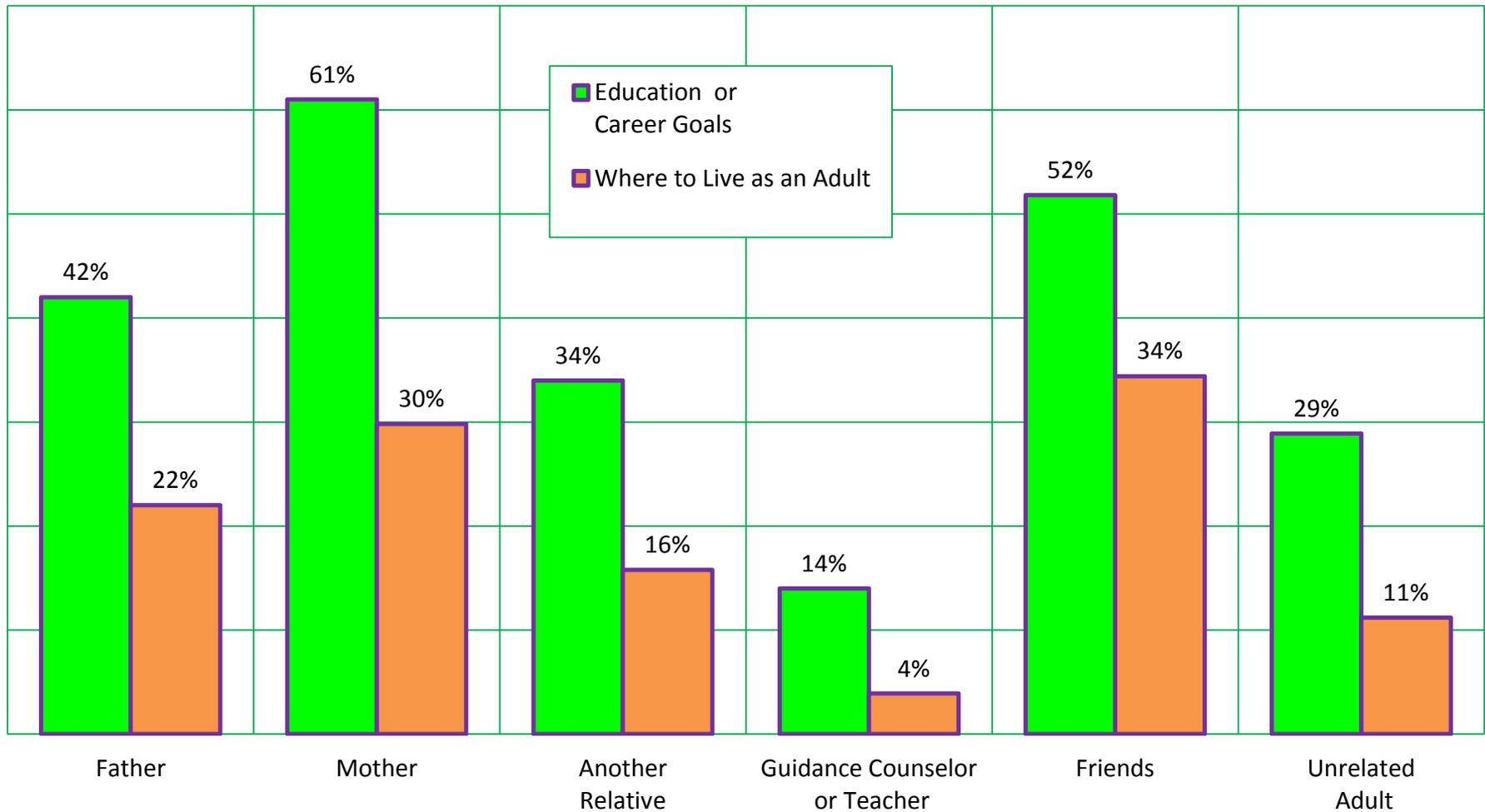
Live in Urban PA

7th Grade = 9.9%

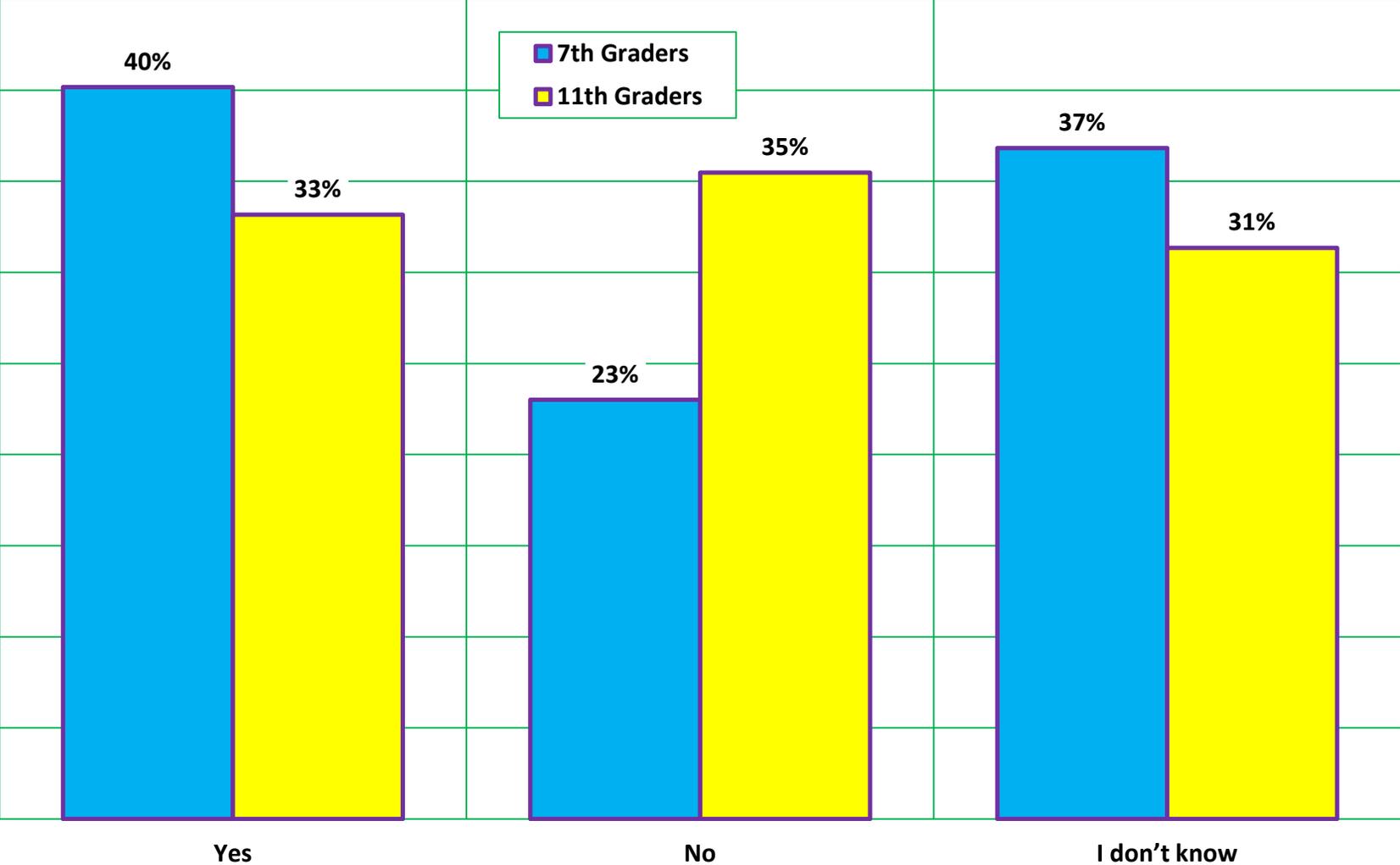
11th Grade = 10.1%



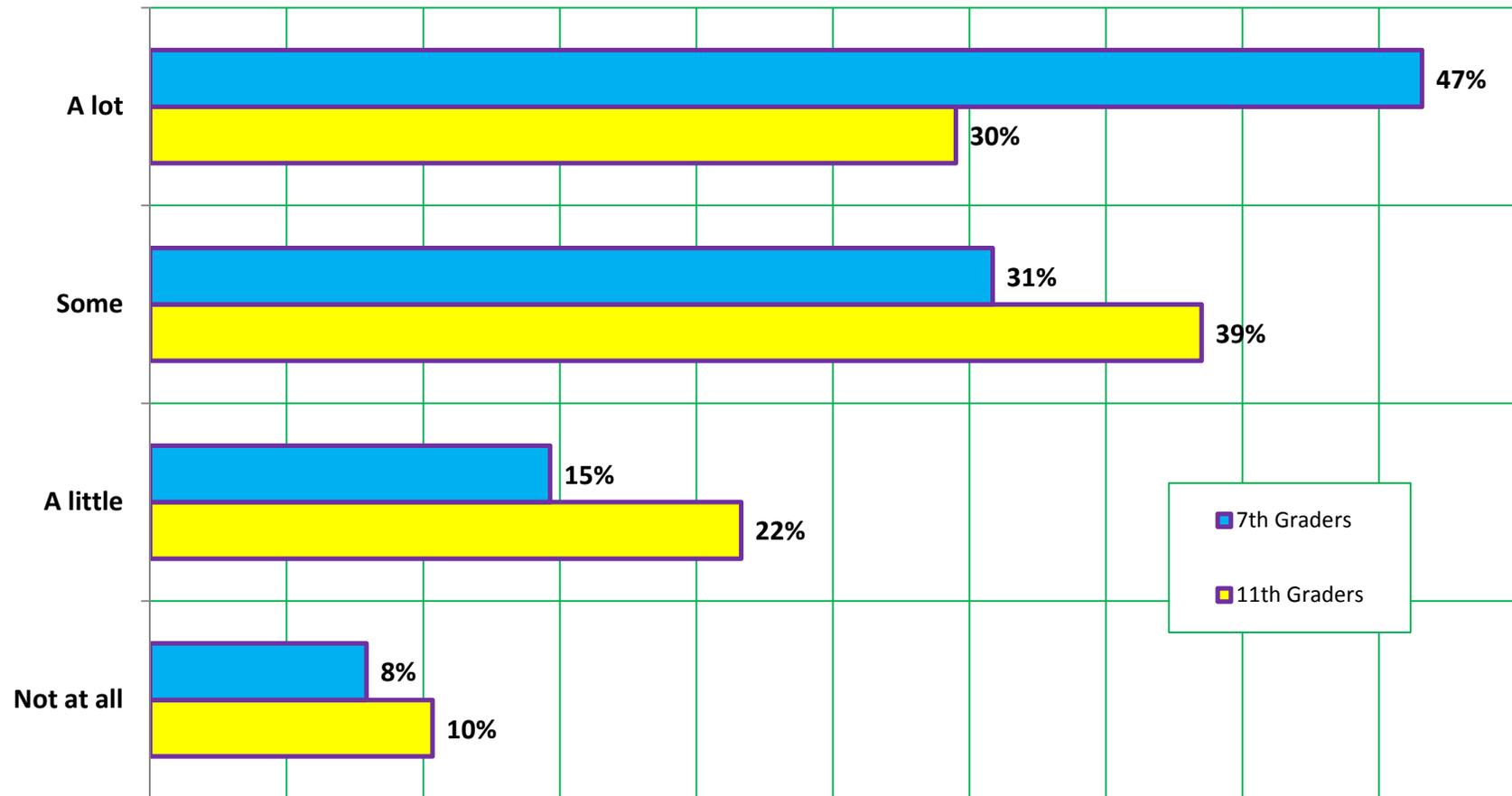
% of Younger Cohort in 11th Grade who Talked Often or All the Time to Adult or Friend about: Educational/Career Goals and Where They Want to Live as an Adult



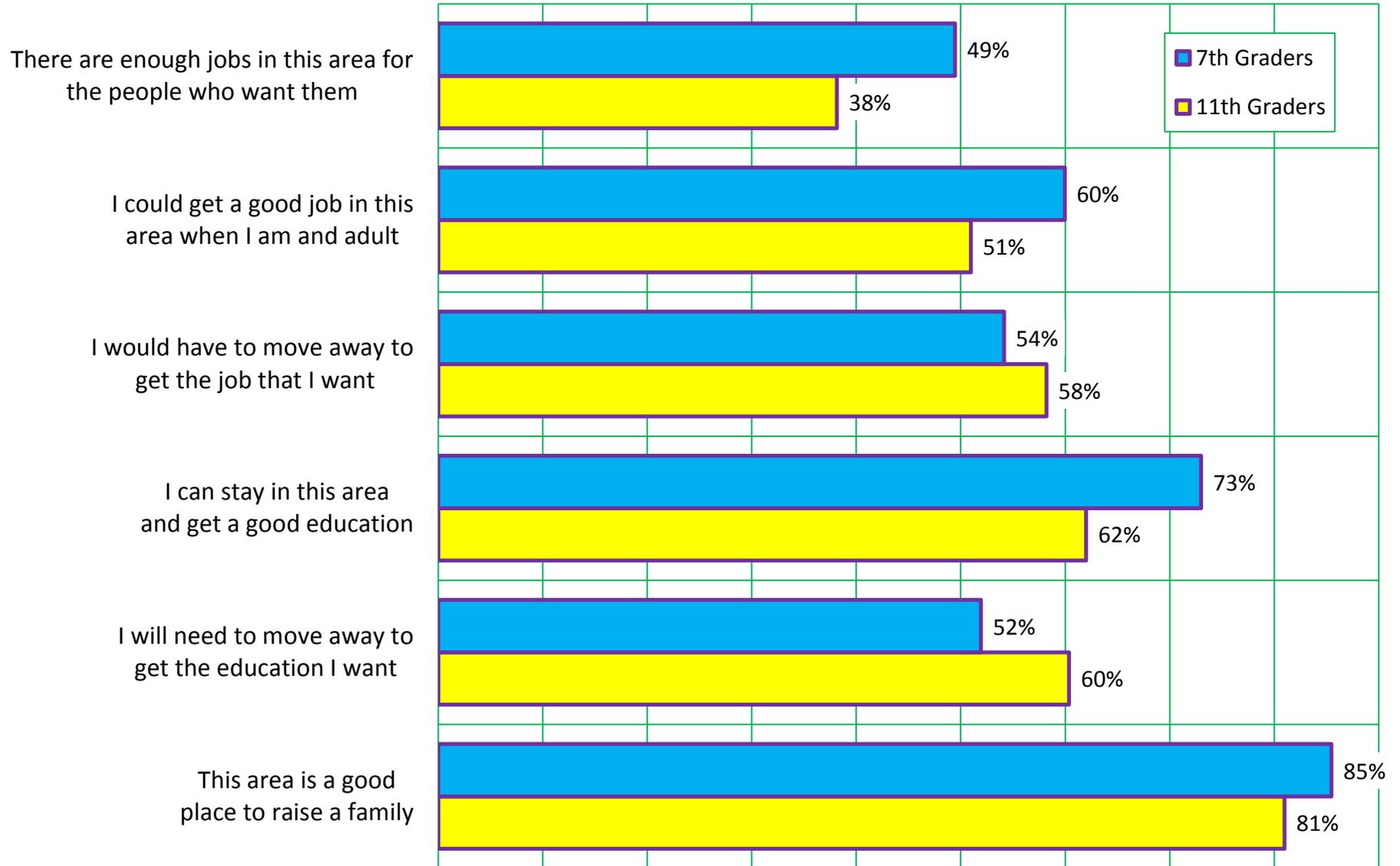
Do you think people in your community are trying to make your community a better place for people your age to live?



How much do you like living in the town/community where you currently live?



% of Students Who Agree or Strongly Agreed



Younger Cohort as 11th Graders and Starting Their Own Business



I would like to open my own Business some day...			
	<i>Where would you like to live when you're 30 years old?</i>		
	In Rural Pennsylvania	Not in Rural Pennsylvania	Don't Know
Disagree	45%	44%	48%
Agree	55%	56%	52%
Total	100%	100%	100%

I would be more inclined to stay in my hometown if starting my own business were an option	43%
My school offers opportunities to learn about entrepreneurship	58%



Do Educational and Occupational Aspirations Differ by Residential Aspirations?



By 11th grade those wanting to stay in rural Pennsylvania were:

- less likely to identify 4 year college as educational aspiration
- less likely to identify professional or managerial occupations

How Does Satisfaction with Current Community Influence Residential Aspirations?



WE ARE A
COMMUNITY

Youth with rural residential aspirations:

- Are more likely to think they can get a good job in the area.
- Are less likely to agree that they have to move to get a job or education they want.
- Said they would “stay in my hometown if starting my own business were an option.”

How Does Satisfaction with Current Community Influence Residential Aspirations?



- 60% of those who said they wanted to move away, said they would want to move back when they have a family.
- Those who wanted to stay in rural Pennsylvania or didn't know would be more inclined to stay if they could get the job they wanted.

What Characteristics of a Community are Important in Selecting a Community as an Adult?



In selecting a place to live as an adult, the following factors were identified as important:

- Good paying jobs
- Cultural opportunities
- Access to high-speed internet at home
- Land used for hiking, hunting and other recreation
- Quality schools and teachers

What Does This Study Tell Us About Youth and Encouraging Them to Stay/Return to Rural Pennsylvania?



- Youth who want to stay in rural Pennsylvania include some of the “best and brightest.”
- One-half of those who want to stay in rural Pennsylvania aspire to 4 year college degree.
- Most youth aspiring to college education do not want to leave.

What does this Study Tell Us about Youth and Encouraging them to Stay/Return to Rural Pennsylvania?



- Rural communities could retain a substantial share of their youth and encourage others to return once they have attained their educational goals and started families.

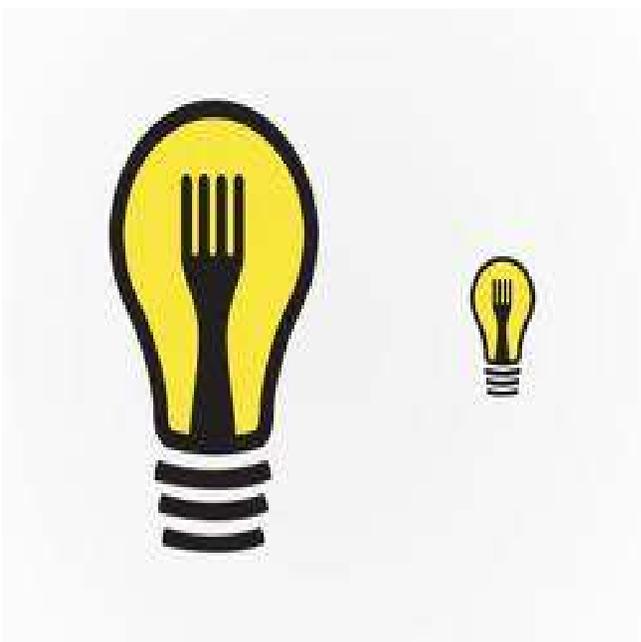
What does this Study Tell Us about Youth and Encouraging them to Stay/Return to Rural Pennsylvania?



- Of the rural youth in this study, roughly 30% in each cohort prefers to stay in rural Pennsylvania and another 25% are unsure.
- 43% said the opportunity to start their own business would make staying more attractive in rural Pennsylvania.

Food for Thought

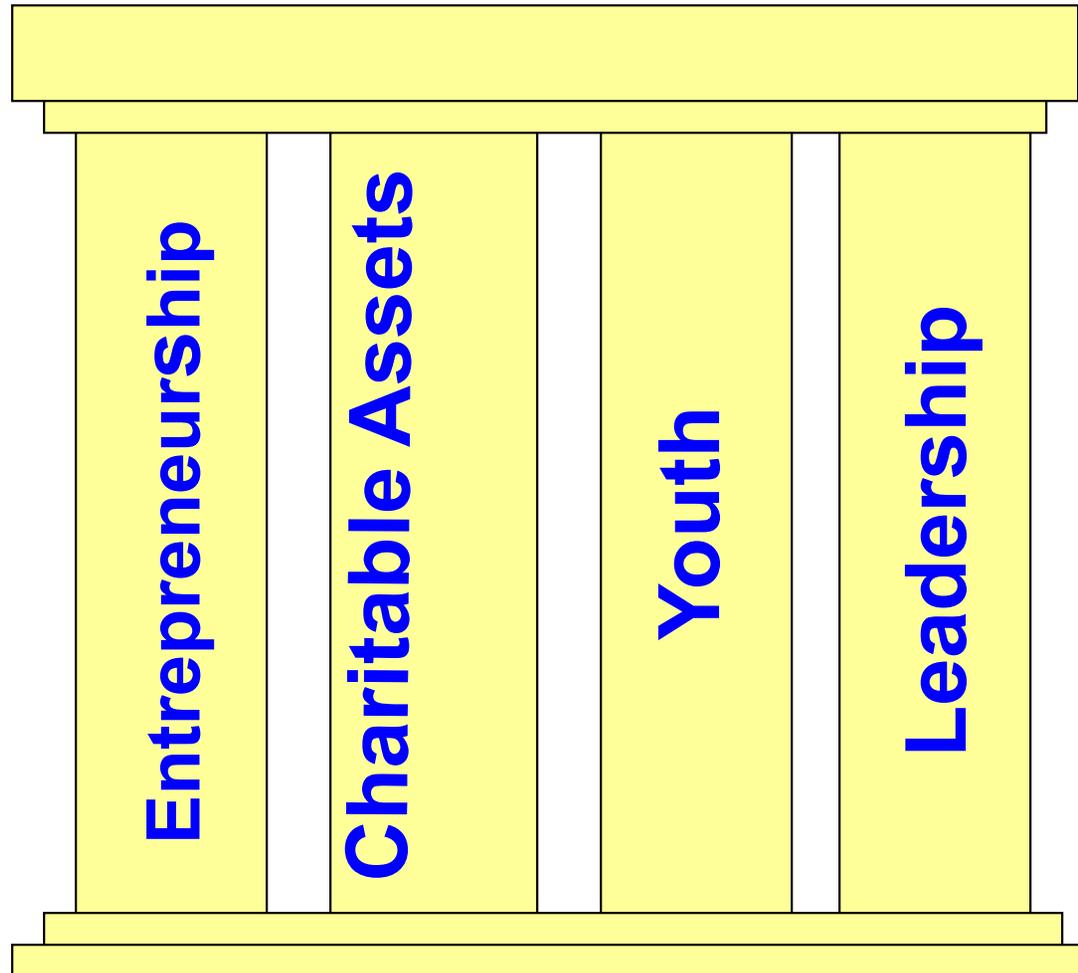
- Transfer of Wealth Opportunity
- Nebraska Community Foundation. Here's an update: In the last 5 years, the NCF and its affiliated funds have reinvested more than \$97M in their hometowns, their environment, and MOST importantly, in their people and their children.
- Outmigration of Rural Youth and Others: Are they really the **Best and Brightest** or the **Risk Takers**? Losing risk takers erodes a community's fundamental capacity for innovating and embracing **necessary** change. Attracting and keeping entrepreneurs – **risk takers** - introduces “change agents” to rural areas.



Food For Thought

- We need to cultivate an understanding by our youth about what makes a community thrive.
 - Youth, understandably, often see their community solely through the eyes of their school. Don't assume they know all the dynamics of a community.
 - Economic, social, civic, government, etc.
- We need to create an environment where young people are given responsibility to help determine the future of their community.
 - Booker T. Washington "Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon them and to let them know that you trust them.
- We need to generate excitement about what our youth want their community to be in the future.
 - Speak positively about your community and its potential.
 - Work to have students become citizens and not occupants – *OWNERSHIP!*
 - Connect students to local career opportunities.

Four Pillars to Build Community

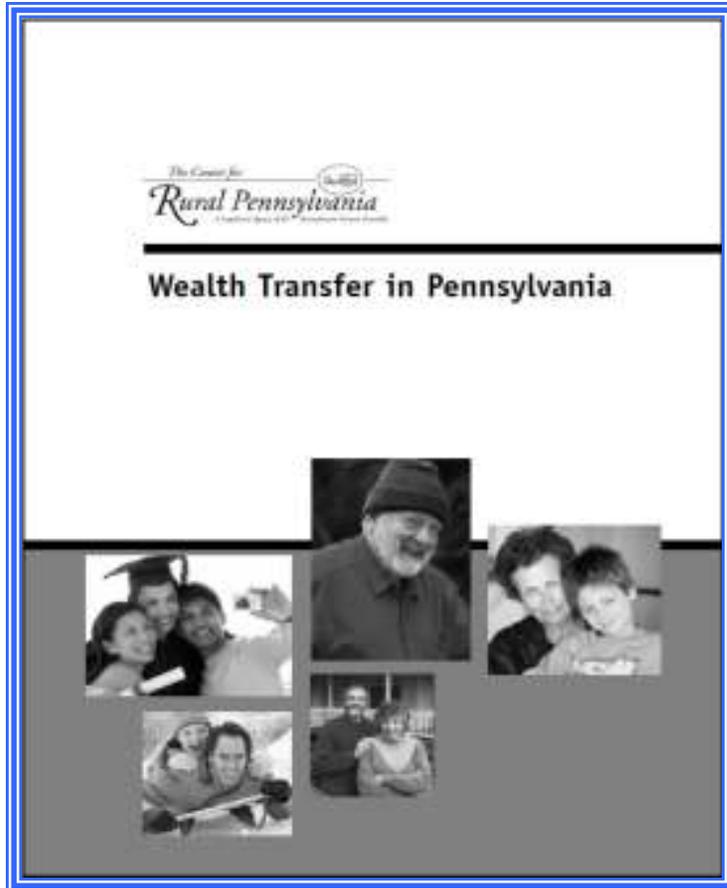


HomeTown Competitiveness

HomeTown Competitiveness (HTC) helps communities to:

- **Start and Grow Small Businesses**
- **Provide Better Employment Opportunities**
- **Build More and More Diverse Leadership**
- **Provide a Better Reason for Young People
to Live and Work in their Hometown**
- **Provide a Better Case to Donors**

Transfer of Wealth in Pennsylvania



- Measure the wealth in Pennsylvania, by county.
- Determine how much of this wealth will be transferred from one generation to the next and when.
- Estimate how much of this wealth transfer can be “captured” for community development.

*Four Principles of Wealth Creation**

- *Focus on place*
- *Incentivize collaboration*
- *Create multiple forms of wealth*
- *Emphasize local ownership*

*www.creatingruralwealth.org

Both retention and return of a substantial share of rural communities' youth would seem to be real possibilities if youth aspirations reflect future decisions.

What might be done to make this a reality for rural communities?



Thank you!

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