

Male and Female High School Students' Expectations for Working In a Health-Related Field

DATA POINT
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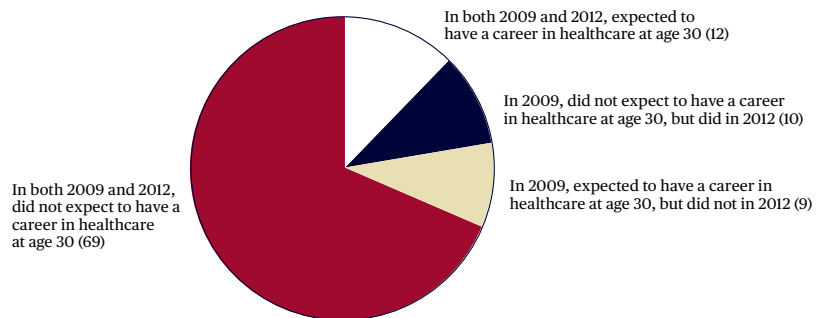
This Data Point uses data from the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs:09), a nationally representative study of more than 23,000 ninth-graders in 2009. Follow-up surveys were administered to the cohort in 2012, 2013, and 2016. This Data Point uses data from the initial survey in 2009 and first follow-up in 2012.

Students who were freshmen in high school in 2009 were asked about their occupational expectations at age 30. They were asked the same question again in the spring of 2012, when most would have been in their junior year. Students wrote in an occupation, which was coded into an occupational category. This Data Point examines expectations for a career in a healthcare field. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects greater job growth in the healthcare sector than in all other employment sectors between 2016 and 2026.¹ Healthcare occupations account for 16 of the 30 projected fastest growing occupations from 2016 to 2026.

How do high school students' expectations for having a job in healthcare change between their freshman year and two-and-a-half years later?

- Nearly a third of students (31 percent) expected to have a job in a healthcare field at age 30 either when they were freshmen in high school in 2009 or in 2012 (**FIGURE 1**).
- Twelve percent of students who were freshmen in high school in 2009 expected to have a career in a healthcare occupation at the age of 30 in both 2009 and 2012.
- Ten percent of students who were freshmen in high school in 2009 did not expect to have a career in a healthcare field at age 30 in 2009, but did in 2012.
- Approximately 69 percent of students who were freshmen in high school in 2009 did not expect to have a career in healthcare at age 30, either in 2009 or 2012.

FIGURE 1. Percentage distribution of 2009 ninth-graders' expectations for a career in a healthcare field at age 30 when asked in 2009 and 2012



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs:09) Second Follow-up Restricted-Use Data File.

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Does the pattern of expectations for a career in healthcare differ by student sex?

Healthcare as a field employs more females than males. It is estimated that 80 percent of all healthcare workers are female.²

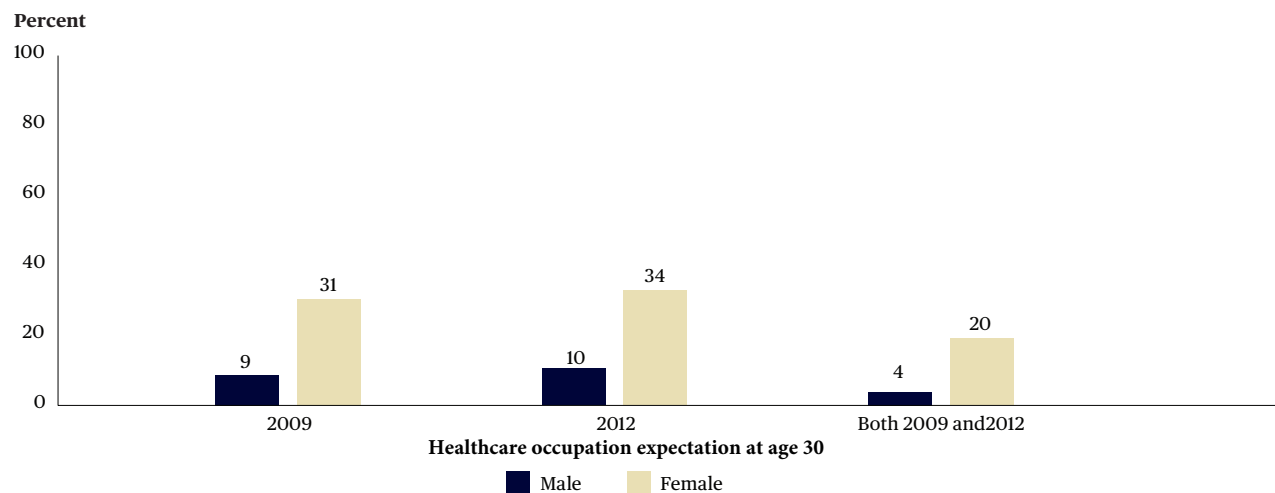
- Among 2009 ninth grade students, three times as many females as males in 2009 expected to have a career in a healthcare field at age 30 (31 percent compared to 9 percent) (**FIGURE 2**).
- In 2012 the pattern was the same, with 34 percent of females expecting a career in a healthcare field at age 30 compared to 10 percent of males.
- Among 2009 ninth-graders, a higher percentage of females than males expected to have a career in a healthcare field at age 30 in both 2009 and 2012 (20 percent compared to 4 percent).

Endnotes

¹ Lacey, T.A., Mitra, T., Dubina, K.S., and Gensler, A.B. (2017). Projections Overview and Highlights, 2016-26. *Monthly Labor Review*. U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved May 14, 2020 from <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2017/article/projections-overview-and-highlights-2016-26.htm>

² Carnevale, A.P., Smith, N., Gulish, A., and Beach, B.H. (2012). *Healthcare*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

FIGURE 2. Percentage of 2009 ninth grade students who expected to have a career in a healthcare field at age 30, when asked in 2009 and 2012, by sex



NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSL:09) Second Follow-up Restricted-Use Data File.