

Articles on Opportunity Youths in the U.S.

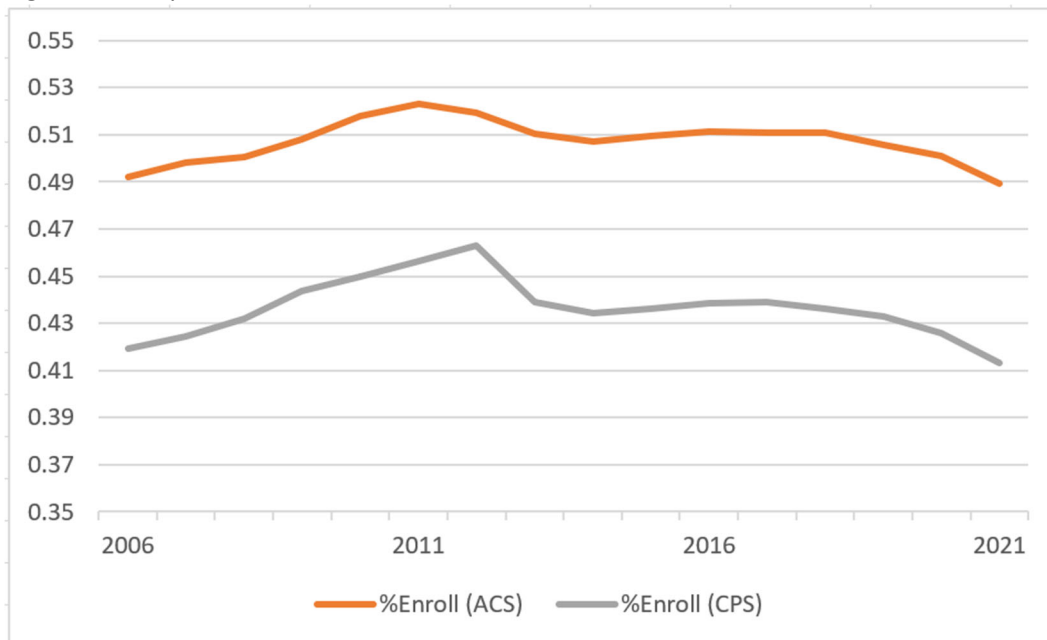
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The article series uses Current Population Survey (CPS) from IPUMS. The data set is often used in the literature to account for the trends and analysis of opportunity youth ([Sum et al. 2003](#); Belfield et al. 2012; Congressional Research Service, 2015).

While the CPS data offers the unparalleled consistency and duration to measure long-term trends of disconnected young adults, which is the goal of our series, it has a few caveats that affect the accuracy of the estimate of disconnection rates. These caveats are carefully outlined and compared to the American Community Survey (ACS) in a recent article by [Lewis \(2016\)](#). These imperfections in the data does not harm the validity of our analysis as we focus on long-term trends. Nevertheless, we discuss them below.

1. Group quarters: The CPS does not capture young adults living in group quarters such as dorms. But the ACS started doing so in 2006.

Figure 1: Comparison of ACS and CPS data



In Figure 1, we compare the statistics on percent of 18–24-year-olds enrolled in school for and found that the two data sets track each other very well over time, regardless of economic recessions or booms. This implies that the lack of data from those living in dormitories, despite causing a level shift in our disconnection rates, does not affect our conclusions on long-term trends in the articles.

This is further verified by comparing our statistics using the CPS with the figures and data trend in (citation [Young and Adrift: Measuring Youth Disconnection in America Today | HuffPost Impact](#)) for years 2008-2020.

2. The CPS also does not capture survey responses from those who are homeless or in the armed forces. While longitudinal trustworthy sources of data on homeless youth is hard to come by, these two factors introduce additional measurement error into our disconnection rates. Data from those experiencing homelessness would potentially bias our estimate downward while data from those in the armed forces would bias it upward.
3. The ACS is capable of capturing the [same employment information](#) on young adults as the CPS. But considering the rapid changes in employment status during the COVID-19 pandemic, the monthly CPS is a timelier survey to capture labor market conditions than the annual ACS. However, one should note a significant decline in survey response rates in CPS in the year 2022.