



The Associated Press-NORC
Center for Public Affairs Research

AMERICANS' PLANS FOR SUMMER VACATION

The stereotypical image of a summer vacation is mom, dad, and the kids piled into the car heading off for a change of scenery. The latest poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research suggests this is close to reality. Most married people vacation with their spouses, nearly all parents include their children in the travel plans, the automobile is the preferred mode of transportation, and staying home for vacation has little appeal.

About half of Americans plan to take a break from their everyday world during the summer months. While most people say they are looking for rest and relaxation on their summer break, a third of vacationing adults remain plugged in to social media, and 40 percent of full- or part-time workers either work during their vacation or at least check in with the office.

The nationwide poll was conducted May 10-14, 2017, using the AmeriSpeak® Panel, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. Online and telephone interviews using landlines and cell phones were conducted with 1,022 adults.

Key findings from the poll include:

- Why don't 43 percent of Americans take a summer vacation? Most say they cannot afford it, while others vacation at a different time of year or do not feel they can take the time from work.
- Half of the public expect to spend less than \$1,000 for their summer holiday, and half anticipate laying out more.
- Time is the luxury most people desire. Nearly two-thirds of Americans would prefer a less extravagant but longer vacation, if they had to choose. However, many people do not take advantage of all the vacation time they have. Three-quarters of full-time employees surveyed in the poll are given paid time off, but about half do not use all or even most of their available time.



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Three Things You Should Know

About the AP-NORC Poll on Summer Vacation

Among all American adults:

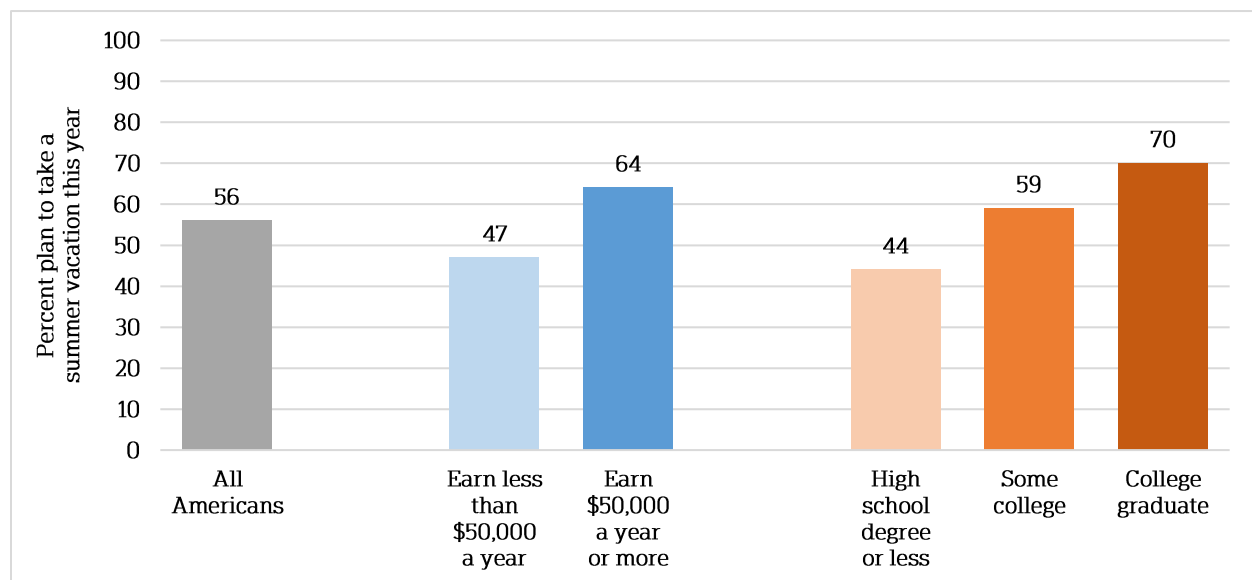
1. Fifty-one percent intend to go away for vacation this summer, 4 percent expect to spend their vacation at home, and 43 percent are not planning a vacation at all.
2. If they had to choose, 63 percent would prefer a longer vacation with fewer frills, while 37 percent would trade time for luxury.
3. For most, summer vacation is family vacation. Eighty-seven percent of married couples who vacation will go away together, and the same number of parents will bring their children.

- Eighty-seven percent of married couples expect to vacation travel together. Among non-married vacationers, 57 percent will travel with friends or family, and 24 percent are planning a solo vacation. Few parents are looking for a break from their children. More than 6 in 10 people with children under age 18 plan a summer vacation, and nearly all of them expect to travel with their kids.
- Many Americans would like to see increased regulations on airlines. In the wake of several high-profile interactions between airline personnel and passengers, 6 in 10 want the government to regulate airline policies for bumping passengers and handling overbooked flights, and nearly half would like to see more regulation regarding flight delays and cancellations.

ABOUT HALF OF AMERICANS PLAN TO TAKE A SUMMER VACATION THIS YEAR.

A majority (56 percent) of Americans say they plan to take a summer vacation of some type this year. Those with higher incomes and more education are more likely to say they will take a vacation. Parents and non-parents alike are similarly likely to plan on taking a vacation.

Affluent and educated people are more likely to plan a summer vacation this year.



Question: Are you planning to take a summer vacation this year—that is, now through Labor Day?
Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted May 10-14, 2017, with 1,022 adults nationwide.

Of those who plan to take a summer vacation, 92 percent expect to go away somewhere, while just 8 percent say they will stay home. About half say their primary vacation will cost less than \$1,000, while the other half say it will cost more.

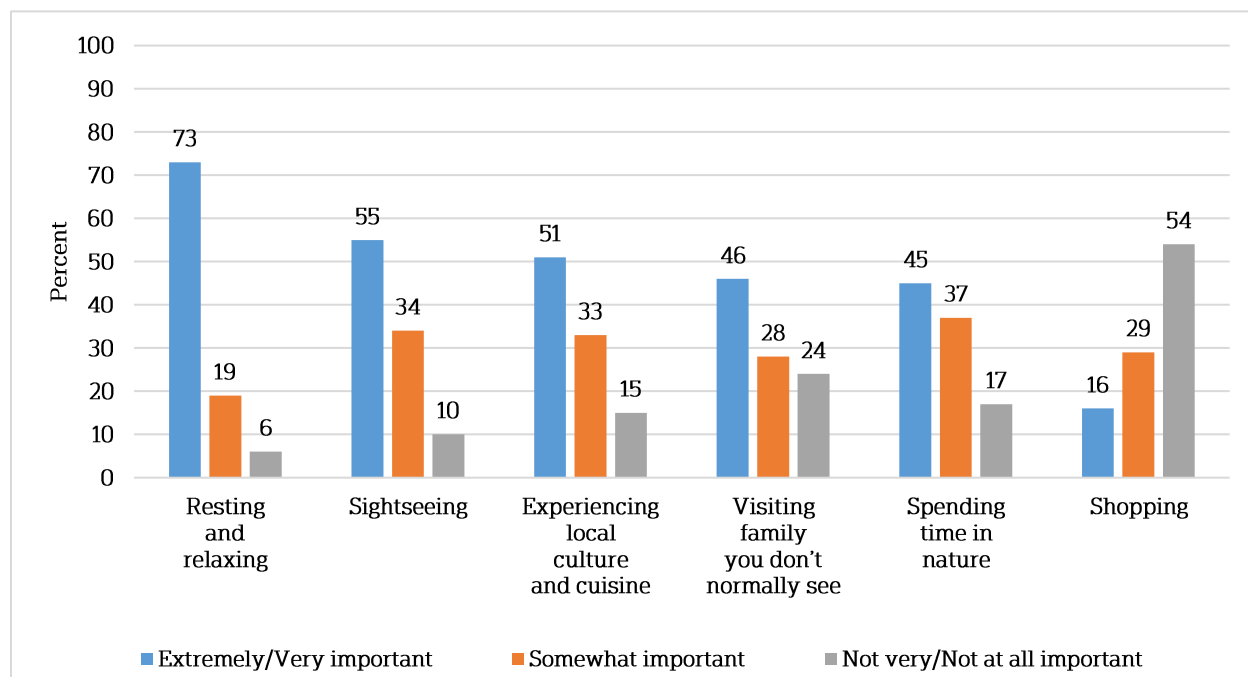
But 43 percent of Americans say they do not plan to take a summer vacation at all. Many of these folks cite cost (49 percent) as the main reason they will not take one, though some (12 percent) plan to take a vacation at another time of year. About 1 in 10 say they can't take the time off of work. Those with incomes below \$50,000 a year are most likely to cite cost as a concern (59 percent) compared to those earning \$100,000 or more (21 percent). Interestingly, people who do not get paid time off for vacation are no more inclined to cite economic reasons for not taking a vacation.

Most people travel with a romantic partner: 68 percent of all vacationers will travel with a significant other, and married people (87 percent) are even more likely to do so. Among non-married vacationers, 57 percent will travel with friends or family, and 24 percent are planning a solo vacation.

AMERICANS LOOK TO RELAX ON VACATION AND WOULD OPT FOR MORE DAYS AWAY OVER A NICER TRIP.

What people value most in their vacation is relaxation. More than 7 in 10 say resting and relaxing is very or extremely important to them when they go on vacation. Fewer, but more than half, also like sightseeing and experiencing local culture and cuisine. Nearly half consider visiting family or spending time in nature an important aspect of vacation. Very few are interested in shopping.

People most value time resting and relaxing while on vacation.

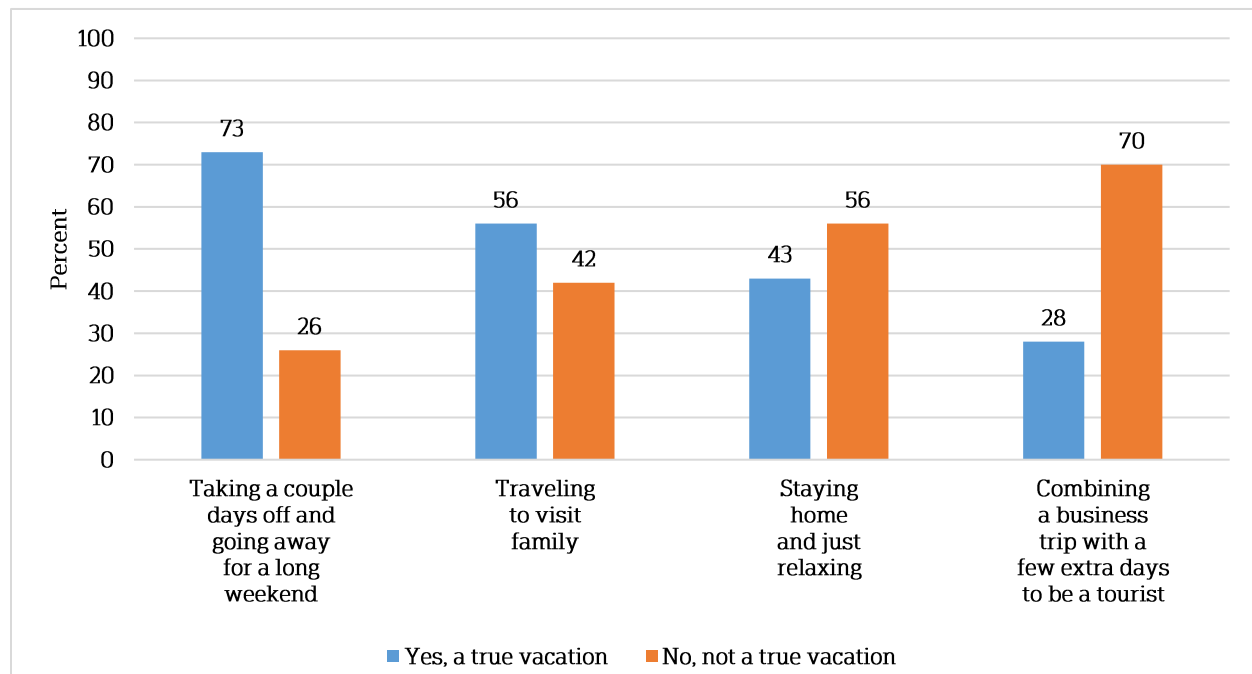


Question: When on a vacation, how important to you are each of the following?

Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted May 10-14, 2017, with 1,022 adults nationwide.

Men and women may be looking for different things in a vacation. Women are particularly likely to value time sightseeing (60 percent vs. 49 percent), visiting family (52 percent vs. 40 percent), and shopping (22 percent vs. 9 percent) compared to men.

Americans are stingy about what they are willing to call a “true” vacation. Most take issue with counting their time at home as a vacation—just 43 percent say staying home and relaxing counts as a true vacation, while 56 percent say it does not. Nearly three-quarters say taking a couple days off and going away for a long weekend counts, though more than a quarter say it doesn't. Just over half say traveling to visit family is a true vacation. Only about a quarter say combining a business trip with an extra few days to be a tourist counts.

Americans have mixed opinions about what counts as a true vacation.

Question: Do you consider each of the following a true vacation or not a true vacation?

Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted May 10-14, 2017, with 1,022 adults nationwide.

Overall, Americans value days away over luxury in their vacations. About two-thirds say they would rather take a longer but less extravagant vacation over a shorter but more lavish vacation. Regardless of income, time beats luxury. But we do see differences by race. Whites and Hispanics are particularly likely to say they prefer a longer vacation compared to blacks (67 percent and 64 percent vs. 42 percent). A majority of blacks would prefer a shorter but more luxurious vacation (57 percent).

MOST EMPLOYEES DON'T USE ALL THEIR VACATION DAYS BUT AVOID WORK WHEN THEY DO GO AWAY.

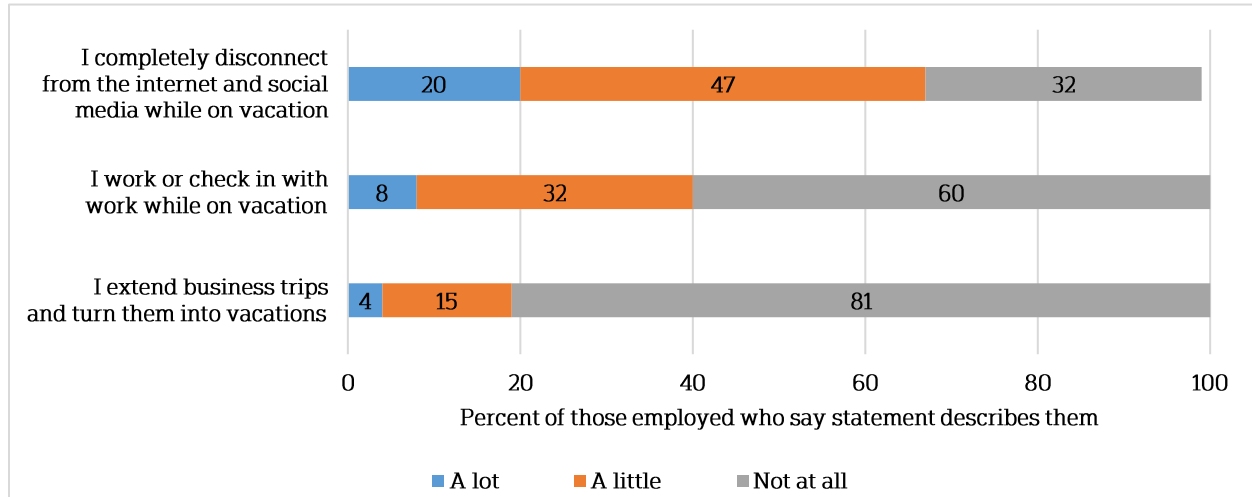
Nearly three-quarters of full-time employees enjoy paid time off from their employer, but many don't take advantage of this perk. Just 34 percent used all their available days in the past year, while 17 percent used most and 37 percent used only some. Twelve percent used none of their available paid time off. But even if they do not use all the time they have coming to them, 6 in 10 full-time workers will be going away for at least some vacation this summer.

Only 18 percent of part-time workers have paid time off. But those who are given vacation days don't always use them up either.

When workers do take time off, most avoid checking in with the office. Nearly 8 in 10 full- or part-time workers say resting and relaxing is the most important aspect of a vacation, and 6 in 10 say working or checking in with work while on vacation doesn't describe them at all. But a number of Americans do stay connected with the office: 3 in 10 say checking in with work does describe them a little, and 1 in 10 say it describes them a lot.

However, few extend business trips into vacations. Most employed people (69 percent) don't consider extending a business trip to be a real vacation.

Most vacationing workers try to disconnect from the internet and social media, but many check in with work while away.



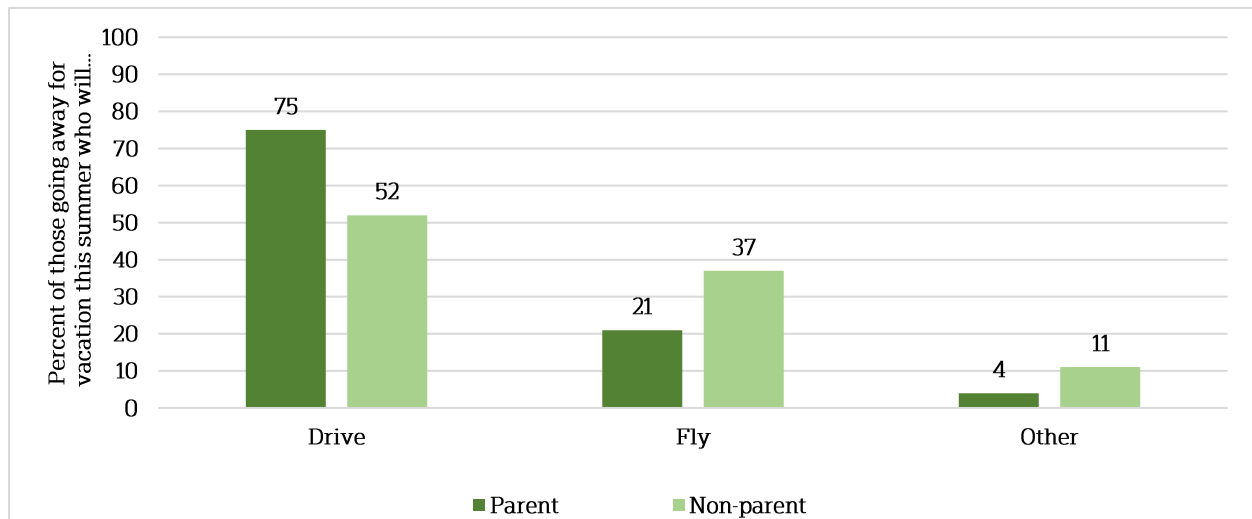
Question: For each of the following statements, please indicate if that statement describes you a lot, a little, or not at all. Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted May 10-14, 2017, with 1,022 adults nationwide.

VACATIONING PARENTS TAKE THEIR KIDS ALONG FOR THE RIDE.

More than 6 in 10 parents with children under age 18 plan to take a vacation this summer, and nearly 90 percent will bring the kids along. Less than 10 percent of parents expect to take a solo vacation compared with nearly 20 percent of people without children.

Three-quarters of parents will drive to their destination, and about 2 in 10 will fly. Non-parents, on the other hand, are more likely to fly. Most parents—about 7 in 10—expect to stay in a hotel or rent a house or apartment during their trip. Fifteen percent will stay with friends or relatives. Twelve percent will camp out in a tent, cabin, or RV.

The old-fashioned family road trip is still in style: Most parents plan to drive to their destination this summer.



Question: For your primary vacation this summer, how do you plan to travel to your destination? Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted May 10-14, 2017, with 1,022 adults nationwide.

Parents are split on whether a visit to see grandma is actually a true break or not. Fifty-three percent of people with children age 18 and younger do not consider a trip to see relatives a true vacation, while 47 percent say it counts. Less than half (48 percent) say visiting relatives is an important aspect of their summer vacation.

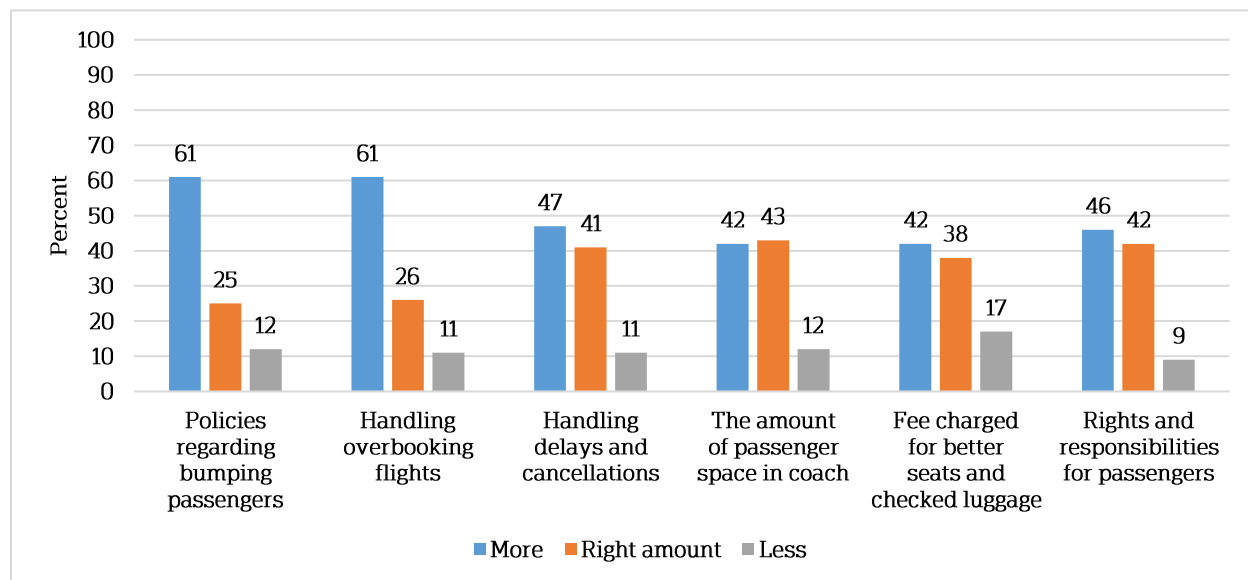
Like all workers, employed parents try to avoid checking in with the office while on vacation, with 6 in 10 saying they don't check in at all. Few employed parents say they turn business trips into vacations (18 percent), and most try to stay off the internet and social media (72 percent).

While more than three-quarters of parents say the relaxing aspect of a vacation is important, 61 percent also consider sightseeing a significant feature of a trip away. And parents are more likely than non-parents to value spending time in nature on their vacation (52 percent vs. 41 percent).

MOST SUPPORT INCREASED GOVERNMENT REGULATION OF AIRLINE POLICIES FOR BUMPING PASSENGERS AND HANDLING OVERBOOKED FLIGHTS.

Though a majority of vacationers drive to their destination, 31 percent plan to fly, and airlines expect a record 245.1 million passengers this summer.¹ While the U.S. Department of Transportation reports that complaints from airline customers are down,² problematic interactions between airline staff and passengers have received a lot of media attention recently. In the wake of these reports, the public would prefer additional government regulation for some practices of airlines, particularly regarding bumping passengers and handling overbooked flights. Frequent flyers are not any more or less inclined to favor increased regulation.

Most favor more government regulation of policies for bumping passengers and overbooked flights.



Question: Do you think there should be more government regulation, is there about the right amount of government regulation, or should there be less government regulation when it comes to each of the following aspects of the airline industry?

Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted May 10-14, 2017, with 1,022 adults nationwide.

¹ <http://airlines.org/news/airlines-for-america-projects-summer-air-travel-to-grow-4-percent/>

² Bureau of Transportation Statistics. 2017. <https://www.bts.gov/newsroom/1st-quarter-2017-airline-bumping-rate-equal-previous-year>

ABOUT THE STUDY

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from The Associated Press and NORC at the University of Chicago. Data were collected using the AmeriSpeak Omnibus®, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC's probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. The survey was part of a larger study that included questions about other topics not included in this report. During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97% of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings.

Interviews for this survey were conducted between May 10 and 14, 2017, with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,022 completed the survey—852 via the web and 170 via telephone. The final stage completion rate is 30.7 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 34 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 93.2 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 9.7 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.3 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Once the sample has been selected and fielded, and all the study data have been collected and made final, a poststratification process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any non-coverage or under- and oversampling resulting from the study specific sample design. Poststratification variables included age, gender, census division, race/ethnicity, and education. Weighting variables were obtained from the 2016 Current Population Survey. The weighted data, which reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over, were used for all analyses.

All differences reported between subgroups of the U.S. population are at the 95 percent level of statistical significance, meaning that there is only a 5 percent (or lower) probability that the observed differences could be attributed to chance variation in sampling.

A comprehensive listing of the questions, complete with tabulations of top-level results for each question, is available on The AP-NORC Center website: www.apnorc.org. For more information, please email info@apnorc.org.

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