

## PART 1

### BIVARIATE COMPARISONS OF YOUNG SCHOOL LEAVERS AND YOUNG STAYERS

The term "school leaver" is used here in preference to the more common, but pejorative term, "dropout." "School leavers" are defined as persons who have left school before receiving a high school diploma and who have not obtained a GED. "Stayers" are persons who have received a high school diploma or GED at a minimum. The focus here is on school leavers and stayers who are young adults (ages 18 to 34), and this age selection is understood as qualifying the terms 'school leaver' and 'stayer' throughout.

Figures 1 and 2 show the percentages of school leavers by region and statewide overall and by sex. School leaving is much more common in non-metropolitan regions with highest rates in Southwest, South Central, and Southeast Tennessee. Lowest school leaving rates are in the four metropolitan regions of Tennessee. School leaving is somewhat higher among males in Tennessee, but females show slightly excess rates in East Tennessee and Knox County, Mid-Cumberland and Southwest Tennessee and Shelby County.

Thirteen percent of survey respondents aged 18-34 years had left school before graduating or receiving a high school diploma or GED. They represent 6% of all adults surveyed.

Please note that, in the text, bold face type is used to emphasize more important text and findings. All data for the results and discussion sections of this report are contained at the end of the report. In the tables, italicized entries are not statistically significant but are included for background information. P-values less than or equal to .05 are used to indicate statistical significance, although the reader may choose to emphasize only differences significant at the .01 or .001 level or below. A p-value of .05 means that there is only a 5% probability that the differences were chance occurrences rather than representing real differences between the groups being compared in the population. P-values of .01 and .001 correspond to a 1% and one-tenth of 1% probability respectively, of chance as opposed to real differences.

Parentheses in tables indicate that entries are a subset of the variable without parentheses placed immediately above the entry. Subset variables are also indented.