

Education

Overall

The survey's questions about education elicited notable perceptions of changes resulting from the move into a Habitat home.

Children's education

Parents provided an opinion on their children's grades prior to moving into their Habitat home and an opinion on whether their children's grades had changed since the move.

Among the homeowners with children currently in grades K-12 and/or with children who had graduated from high school, 56 percent feel their children's grades in school improved after the family moved into their Habitat home.

Sixty-four percent feel their children's study habits improved after moving into their Habitat home.

One-third feel their children's school attendance improved after moving into their Habitat home, and two-thirds feel no change occurred.

For [my child], there's better stability in being in one place and a better study schedule has happened.

We really like the school district. My children have a wide range of AP credits for college, take college credits, and the school system is ranked really high out of the whole entire nation, not just the state.

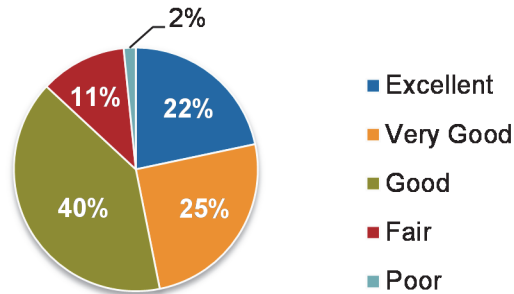
To improve our understanding of changes in children's grades, study habits, and school attendance, we looked separately at those children who did well and children who did not do well prior to moving into Habitat homes (Figures 5, 6, and 7).

Among homeowners who said their children's grades were "poor" before moving into their Habitat home, 100 percent said their children's grades and their study habits were "much better" since moving into their Habitat homes. Additionally, of the homeowners who said their children's grades were "fair" before moving into their home (12%), 81 percent said their children's grades improved, and 70 percent said their study habits improved.

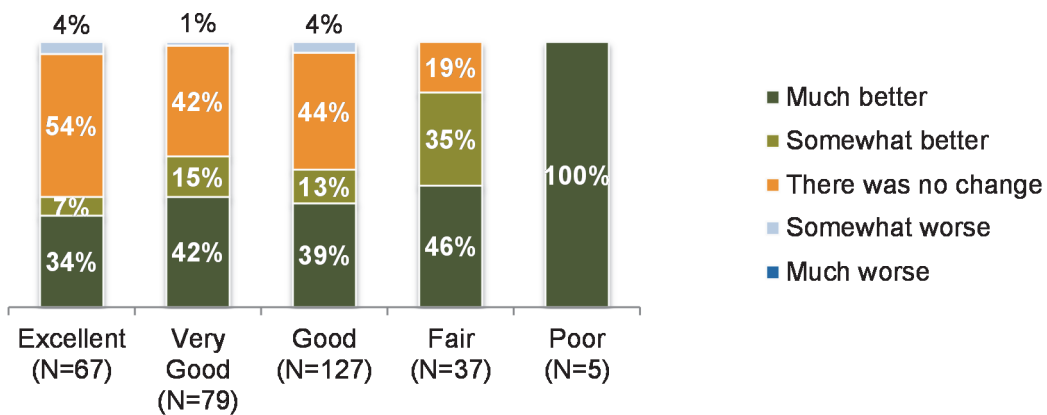
Forty percent of homeowners said their children's grades were "good" before they moved in. A little over half of those respondents said their grades improved (52%), while 44 percent said grades did not change. For study habits, 56 percent said they improved, and 43 percent stayed the same.

Forty-seven percent of homeowners said their children’s grades in school, before the move, were already “excellent” or “very good.” Even among this group, half said their children’s grades improved and 47 percent said grades didn’t change. Sixty-nine percent said their study habits improved.

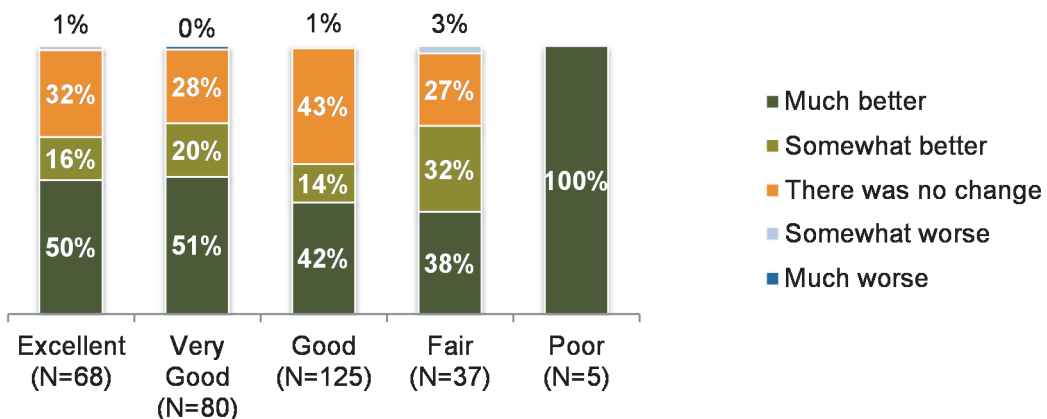
5. Children’s grades in school before Habitat (N=322)



6. Children’s grades before Habitat and improvement levels (N=315)



7. Children’s grades before Habitat and study habit improvement levels (N=315)



From these data, it appears that Habitat homeownership may be associated with improvements in both children's grades and study habits.

Now they have room to study. In the apartment they only had a countertop, and now they have more room to do their homework.

Education to my children- the environment before was so bad and my kids can't go out and were not happy, and now the environment is better so they can go out and be happy and can concentrate on their education.

Additionally, about two-thirds of the homeowners with children feel more confident about their ability to fund their children's college education, since moving into their Habitat home.

Now we pay less money for housing and have a better home. We can use the money saved to save for children's college, buy clothes and food and be more independent.

Overall, 90 percent of homeowners said they feel better about their children's future, 9 percent said no change has occurred, and 1 percent feel worse.

My children are able to complete high school and get their diploma and such. If we didn't own the house, they might not have completed school.

Adult education

Since moving into their Habitat home, one-third of the homeowners started or completed higher education or training programs. Most commonly, this involved enrollment in a community, technical, or four-year college, but participation ranged from GED programs to master's programs and other vocational training. Just under one-third (31%) have plans to continue their education.

[As a] nursing program student, I was very close to giving up and to stop going to school, and take care of my kids first and find a better place for them first, then as time allows me I will go back to school. I was almost going to quit school next semester, but fortunately, [with] Habitat for Humanity, I will not give up on school. They gave me a good chance. That's why I'm still going to school. Since then, I will hopefully be an example of what Habitat is doing to families. I will try to do something good for somebody else that they can't do for themselves -what I learned from Habitat.

I can afford to go back and finish my college degree. I am graduating this year. Because of Habitat for Humanity I am not paying a lot for the house mortgage and so I can go to school.

Half of the homeowners (49%) reported that another adult in their household started or completed higher education or training programs since moving into their Habitat home.

Again, most commonly, this involved enrollment in a community, technical, or four-year college.

Before, I was a college student and I dropped out and my brother was going to drop out of high school so he could work and help pay a mortgage/rent, but now that we have a Habitat house my brother can just concentrate on his education and he's ready to graduate this June 2014!

Combining the information on all adult members of the households of survey respondents indicates that, in 92 percent of the Habitat homes, at least one adult started, completed, or plans to start higher education or training programs after moving in.

Regional

Children's education

The Twin Cities reported the best pre-Habitat grade ratings with 53 percent saying their children's grades were "excellent" or "very good." Among the North and South, about 40 percent say their children's grades were "excellent" or "very good" (Figure 8).

Across regions, the percentage of homeowners who said their children's grades improved varied greatly. The percentage was highest in the Twin Cities at 65 percent, followed by the South with 52 percent, compared to only 39 percent in the North (Figure 9).

In regard to children's study habits, the Twin Cities also had the highest percentage of homeowners who said they improved (75%), compared to the greater Minnesota affiliates (53%).

Forty percent of Twin Cities families reported their children go to school more often since becoming a homeowner, compared to 25 percent of greater Minnesota families, who were more likely to say there was no change to their children's school attendance.

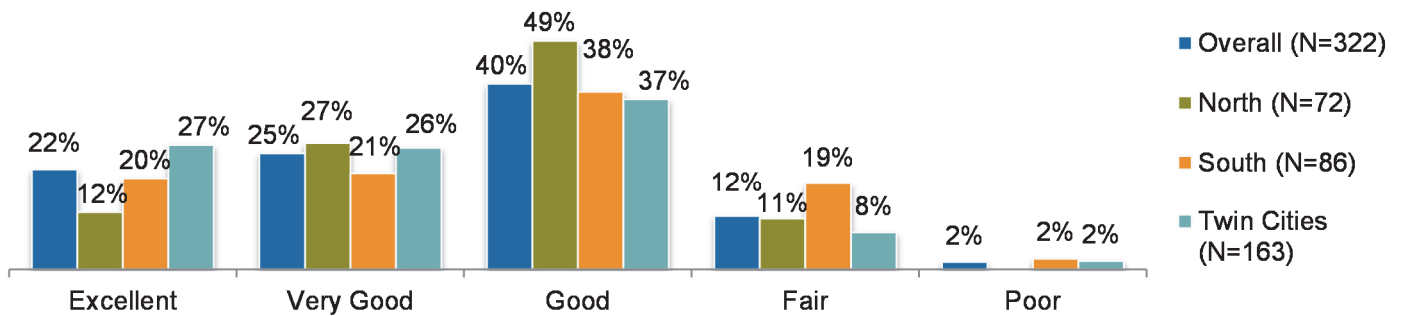
It's helped me raise my kids the way I want to raise them. Before, when I was at my Dad's house, it wasn't my rules and that interfered with how I raised. Now, when I say it's study time its study time!

More families in the Twin Cities reported being confident in their ability to fund their children's college education, with three-quarters (74%) saying they felt more confident compared to 63 percent in the South and 48 percent in the North.

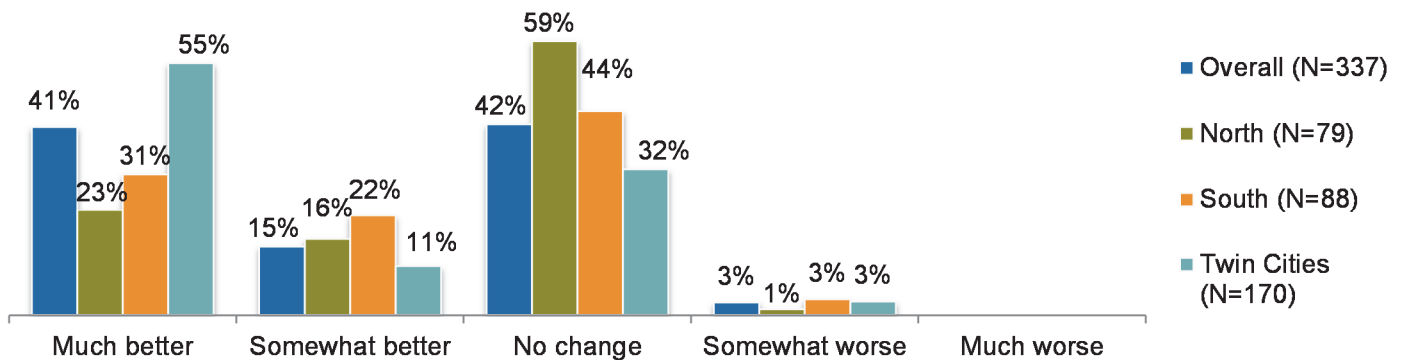
In the future when my kids go to college or university I'm not worried about the mortgage to pay the house.

The percentage of parents who said they feel at least “somewhat better” about their children’s future was relatively similar. However, the percentage of parents who feel “much better” about their children’s future was around 75 percent for the South and the Twin Cities, whereas that number was around 60 percent for the North.

8. Children’s grades before Habitat (N=322)



9. Impact on children’s grades (N=337)



Adult education

The percentage of homeowners who said they have started or completed a higher education or training program since moving into their Habitat home was relatively consistent across regions, although the percentages of homeowners who plan to start a program was higher in the Twin Cities (38%) compared to greater Minnesota affiliates (23%). Most commonly, this involved enrollment in a community, technical, or four-year college. Many people also said they started or completed another form of educational training including things ranging from healthcare or nursing degrees and certifications, to computer or technology skills classes, to English classes.

I am able to go to school and get my bachelor's degree. My kids have their own rooms and they can study in their own rooms.

For other family members starting or completing a higher education program, households in the South had a higher percentage of people who had already started or completed a program (56%) compared to the North (46%) and Twin Cities (51%). In the Twin Cities, 87 percent of homeowners say they have someone in their household either starting or completing a program or planning to start or complete a program. For both of the greater Minnesota regions, this percentage was 79.

In the first place, once I got in the Habitat house, I had a relaxed mind. I could leave my kids and not worry that they'd be harmed. Then I was able to go to college and get my master's. My kids have been able to go to school. We have extra money and live a better life than when we were living in an apartment.

Length of homeownership

When reporting what their children's grades were in school before moving into their Habitat home, percentages were relatively similar across longer- and shorter-term homeowners. However, shorter-term homeowners reported a higher percentage of improvement of children's grades with 63 percent saying their grades were better compared to 51 percent of longer-term homeowners.

Improvement in study habits, school attendance, confidence in funding their children's education, and feelings about their children's future were all relatively similar.

In regard to adult education, over time, more homeowners and family members have started or completed higher education or training programs. For both homeowners and other people in the home, longer-term homeowner families have around double the percentages of shorter-term families who have started or completed a program. For those who plan to start, the relationship is reversed, and shorter-term homeowner families have about double the percentage of longer-term homeowners (Figure 10).

The first thing in the US it is hard for people to find a safe house and an education for your children. I found all that in my Habitat house. They help me with my finances so I can help my husband to go to school.

**10. Adult education for longer- and shorter-term homeowners
(N=399 for personally starting a program and N=371 for others in the home)**

