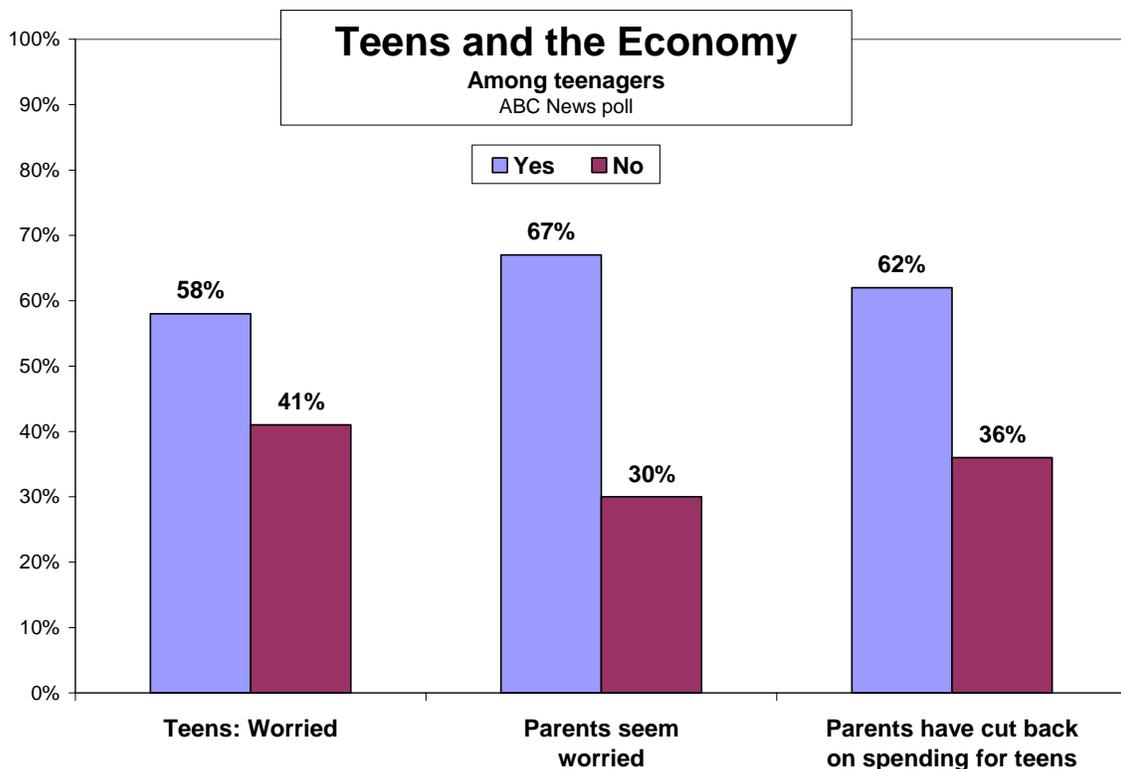


## **Economic Worry Grips Teens, Too; Parental Concern is a Strong Factor**

Economic anxiety is more than just a grown-up thing: Nearly six in 10 teenagers are worried that the country's economic problems may hurt their own families – and as many say their parents already have cut back on things like clothes, gifts or family travel.

Sixty-seven percent of 12- to 17-year-olds in this ABC News poll say their parents seem worried about the economy. Sixty-eight percent have talked with their parents about what it might mean for their families. And 58 percent of teens are themselves worried.

That worry seems contagious. Teens who say their parents are worried about the economy are far more apt to be worried about it themselves – the single biggest predictor of teens' own economic worries, even when controlling for income and other factors.

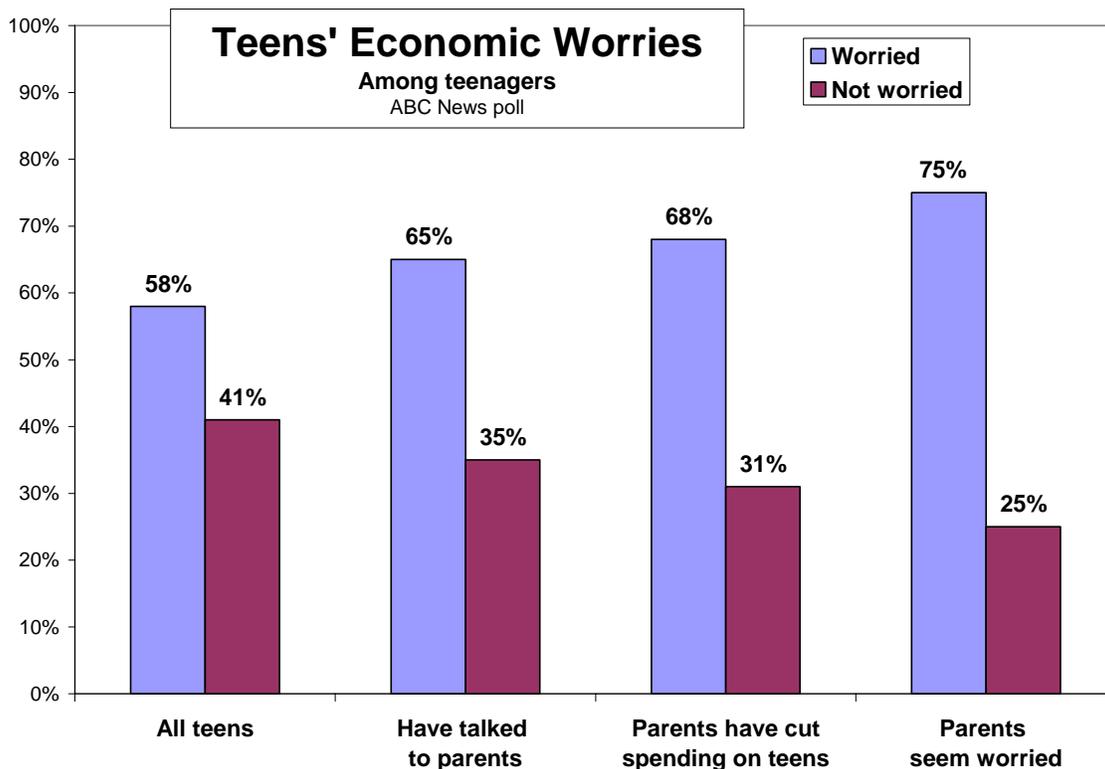


Worry also is higher among teens who've talked with their parents about the economy than it is among those who haven't. It's only slightly higher, though, among less well-off teens – indicating that economic worries are cutting across socioeconomic lines.

Some of this, at the same time, is based in reality, not just the perception of parental concern. Worry rises sharply among teens whose parents have cut back on buying them things because of the economy. And parents who've cut back are more likely to seem worried to their children, and to have discussed the situation with them.

**TEEN CONCERN** – While 58 percent of all teenagers are worried about the economy hurting their families, that spikes to 65 percent of teens who've talked about it with their parents, vs. 44 percent of those who haven't; and 68 percent of those whose parents have trimmed their spending, vs. 41 percent of teens whose parents haven't cut back.

But the biggest apparent effect, as noted, is parental worry. Among teens who say their parents seem worried about the economy, 75 percent are themselves worried. By contrast, among the three in 10 teens who say their parents do not seem especially worried, far fewer, 22 percent, are worried themselves. There's an especially high correlation between children seeing their parents as worried, and being worried themselves.



Perhaps surprisingly, household income is not a strong factor in these views. Teens in middle- to lower-income families (earning less than \$50,000 a year) are modestly more apt than better-off children to be worried about the economy themselves. But they're no more likely to say their parents seem worried or to say their parents have cut back on buying them things.

In a regression equation measuring the strength of these factors in predicting economic worry among teens, all of them – parents' worry, having discussed it, spending cuts and

being in the lower-income group – are independently significant. But parental worry is the most powerful predictor by far.

There’s room, moreover, for these views to worsen. Only about one in six teens say their parents seem “very” worried, are “very” worried themselves, or say their parents have cut back “a great deal” on buying them things. Each of these, again, is correlated.

**GROUPS** – There are relatively few differences among groups. Younger (12-14) and older teens are equally likely to have talked with their parents about the economy’s impact on their families, to say their parents seem worried and to be worried themselves.

Girls are perhaps slightly more apt than boys to say their parents seem worried. And older boys are less likely than other teens to say their parents have cut back on buying them things; that may be because they’re more likely to be earning money of their own.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News poll was conducted by telephone Nov. 19-23, 2008, among a random national sample of 506 12- to 17-year-olds. The results have a 4.5-point error margin. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow:

1. Have you and your parents talked about the country's economic problems and what it might mean for your family, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
11/23/08	68	31	1

2. How worried do your parents seem about the economy? Do they seem very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not worried at all?

	----- Worried -----			----- Not worried -----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	opinion
11/23/08	67	17	51	30	25	5	2

3. How worried are you about the country's economic problems hurting your own family? Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not worried at all?

	----- Worried -----			----- Not worried -----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	opinion
11/23/08	58	16	42	41	32	9	1

4. As far as you know, have your parents cut back on buying you things because of the economy, or not? This could include for instance clothes, gifts or family travel. (IF YES) Have they cut back a lot or just a little?

	--- Have cut back ---		Have not	No	
	NET	A lot	A little	cut back	opinion
11/23/08	62	17	45	36	2

\*\*\*END\*\*\*