

More education, less unemployment

You probably know lots of reasons why it's smart to stay in school. Well, here's one more: You're less likely to be unemployed. According to data released in January 2014 from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the higher your level of education, the lower your rate of unemployment.

In the last decade, as the chart shows, people with higher levels of education consistently had lower unemployment rates than people with lower levels of education. For example, in February 2010 unemployment rates peaked at 15.8 percent for people who had less than a high school diploma. At that time, the unemployment rate for people who had a bachelor's degree or higher also reached a high point, but at 5.0 percent—about one-third the rate for people who had less than a high school diploma.

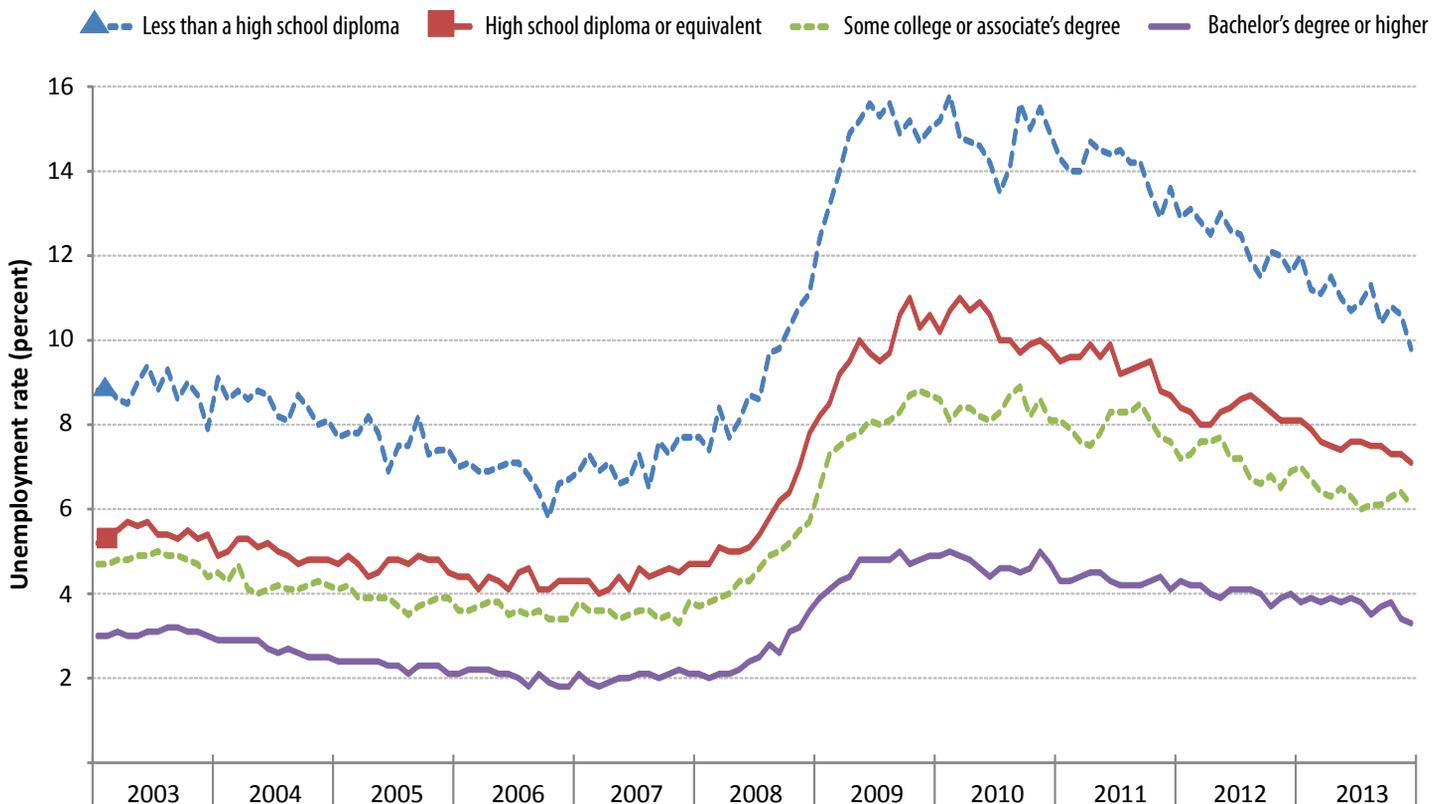
Even in times of low unemployment, rates have

differed markedly by education. For people with less than a high school diploma, the lowest unemployment rate in the last 10 years was 5.8 percent in October 2006. That was more than triple the lowest rate, 1.8 percent, for people with a bachelor's degree or higher.

The unemployment rate is the percentage of the labor force that is jobless, has actively looked for a job in the prior 4 weeks, and is currently available for work. (It does not take into account people who would like a job but are not looking for one.)

These data come from the Current Population Survey. For more information, write to the BLS Division of Labor Force Statistics, 2 Massachusetts Avenue NE., Suite 4675, Washington, D.C. 20212; call (202) 691-6378; or visit online, www.bls.gov/CPS.

Monthly unemployment rates by educational attainment, 2003–13



Note: Seasonally adjusted, unemployment rates of people in the labor force ages 25 years and over.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey