

2000

## Statistics Related to Youth Service

Points of Light Foundation

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**POINTS  
OF LIGHT  
FOUNDATION**

## Statistics Related to Youth Service

Compiled into this resource packet you will find information to guide the reader towards statistical and narrative research published about young people and volunteer service. Some examples of each report's information are listed, along with a description, when possible, of the methodology involved and contact information for the publisher or research group. Studies are listed in chronological order, with the most recent first, and are not grouped by topic since many studies look at multiple issues related to young people.

### THE COMMUNITY CONSENSUS

Conducted for Blueprint Magazine, a quarterly publication of the Democratic Leadership Council, by Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates, Inc., Reported Spring 1999

This poll surveyed 509 adults, about the importance of civic life, on the responsibility of citizens to contribute to the community, on the need for government action to take new forums, and on the demand that opportunities must come with obligations. Overall, the results of this poll showed that Americans seek a heightened sense of community and citizenship.

- Four in five (79%) feel there should be "more emphasis on community, even if it puts more demands on individuals."
- 55% of respondents found that "volunteering some time to community service" as "very important."
- A total of 84% overall support placing college students who receive government funded work-study jobs out doing community service rather than on-campus jobs.
- About half (48%) of the respondents were currently familiar with AmeriCorps.
- Three-fourths (75%) support AmeriCorps when it is explained as, "a National Service program where young people perform service in the community in exchange for help in paying for college"
- According to the survey, 82% overall support expanding AmeriCorps so that every young person who wants to can participate. Of the 82%, 55% "strongly support" expanding AmeriCorps.

For more information or to inquire about the full report, contact:

Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates, Inc.

tel: (202) 289-0916

NSLC  
c/o ETR Associates  
4 Carbonero Way  
Scotts Valley, CA 95066

805 15th St NW  
www.dlc.org/blueprint/spring99/publicopinion.html  
Washington DC, 20005

#### **NEW MILLENIUM PROJECT – PART ONE**

**Conducted by The Terrance Group and Lake, Snell, Perry & Associates for the National Association of Secretaries of State, Reported January 1999**

This study attempted to gain a better understanding of the problem of declining youth engagement in the political process and to gain insights into potential solutions to this growing problem. The research included both a telephone survey and six focus groups. The 1,005 youth that were contacted during the national phone survey ranged in ages from 15 to 24. The focus groups consisted of 18 to 24 year olds, and took place in three cities: Baltimore, MD; Salt Lake City, UT; and Des Moines, IA.

- The young people surveyed considered crime (18%) as our country's biggest problem, while economy and jobs ranked second with 11%.
- In the 1996 elections, only 32% of 18 to 24 year olds turned out at the polls, as compared to the 42% of 18 to 24 year olds who turned at the polls in 1992.
- Although young people today are less politically active, 40% of the respondents indicated that "being involved and helping your community be a better place" is an important priority.
- Youth volunteerism is on the rise; this involvement is most likely to take the form of social service in a one-on-one setting such as a soup kitchens, hospitals, and schools.
- Nine in ten (89%) have donated to a community church.
- 87% have helped an elderly or disabled neighbor.
- Six in ten (59%) have volunteered at a religious organization.
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents have joined a non-political organization.
- The majority (53%) have volunteered in the community.
- 94% of all respondents agreed that "the most important thing I can do as a citizen is to help others."

For more information or to inquire about the full report, contact:

The Terrance Group, Inc.  
201 N. Union Street, Suite 410  
Alexandria, VA 22302

tel: (703) 684-6688  
www.tarrance.com/nass

**KIDS THESE DAYS '99: WHAT AMERICANS REALLY THINK ABOUT THE NEXT GENERATION**  
Conducted by Public Agenda; sponsored by The Advertising Council and Ronald McDonald House Charities, Conducted December 1998

This is the second part of a multi-year survey being conducted to document the American public attitudes regarding the nation's youth. In order to gain this understanding two national



- Students are most concerned about the national issues which have the greatest potential to have a personal impact on themselves, their families and friends; 87% are "very/somewhat concerned" about child abuse, 84% AIDS/HIV, 81% the kidnapping of children and teenagers, 74% pollution, and 73% on homelessness.
- According to the students, 19% would be most willing to volunteer free time to child abuse, 14% animal abuse/animal testing, 12% teen suicide, 12% homelessness, and 11% pollution.
- The majority (56%) of students say "selfishness, people not thinking of other's rights" is the top cause of problems in society. Half (52%) the students point to "people who don't respect the law and the authorities", "wrongdoing by politicians" (48%), and "lack of parental discipline of children and teens" (47%).
- While 57% of those surveyed cited scientist/inventors as the group that will cause most changes to create a better future. A majority (55%) also stated that young people will be the group that causes the most change for the better in the future.
- In dealing with school problems, more than one in ten would be most willing to volunteer to help deal with teenage pregnancy (14%) and low academic standards (12%).
- 10% would be most willing to volunteer their free time to help deal with the tension between different racial and ethnic groups at school.
- The top three causes of problems in schools today is "students who don't respect the school, teachers, and authorities" (64%), "selfish people not thinking of the rights of others" (58%), and "too much emphasis on subjects students don't care about" (45%).
- According to the students, the groups that will cause change for the better in school are teachers (54%), parents of students (48%), and students (44%).
- One in three (33%) identified "working for the good of my community and country" as a "very important" future goal.
- Similarly, 32% identified "helping others (volunteerism)" as a "very important" future goal.

For more information or to inquire about the full report, contact:

Joanne Lasky

tel: (212) 745-0132

PRIMEDIA Inc.

fax: (212) 745-0122

745 Fifth Avenue

New York, NY 10151

## NEW LEADERSHIP FOR A NEW CENTURY: STUDY ON YOUTH, LEADERSHIP, & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Conducted for Public Allies by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, July 1998

This study of 728 people aged 18-30 revealed a "new approach to leadership and social action". Respondents expressed the belief that individuals, not institutions, can solve community problems; that a bottom-up or local model of leadership is preferable to a top-down approach; and that reaching out to people of different backgrounds is important for leaders. Some of the study's findings:

- A near majority (50%) of young people say that the value of "community and looking out for each other" is more important to them than the value of "individual responsibility and self-reliance".
- "Making a difference in the life of someone close to you" is important to young people, with 87% rating this value as an eight on a ten-point scale.
- Eight of ten (80%) young adults of all races rate "appreciating and respecting the racial and ethnic differences in our country" as an eight or higher on a ten-point scale.
- Nearly three out of four respondents (74%) gave the same rating to "developing meaningful relationships with people different from yourself".
- Young people rated schools, universities and colleges as the organizations most important or effective in solving future problems (46%), followed by groups of people working together locally (27%) and government, business and nonprofit partnerships (20%). Religious groups were cited by 15% of respondents, followed by government or political leaders (13%), the media (12%), and nonprofits and charities (11%).
- Eight in ten (79%) agreed that "average people have the resources and practical know-how to solve most of their problems in their community".
- Young people cited "practicing your ideals in everyday life" (68%), "friendship with people of different race or ethnicity" (58%), and "volunteering to help people in a direct way" (54%) most frequently as very effective ways to bring about change.

For more information about the study, contact Public Allies:

1015 18th Street, NW  
 Suite 200  
 Washington, DC 20036

tel: (202) 822-1180  
 fax: (202) 822-1199

## GLOBAL STUDY ON COMMUNITY SERVICE

Market Probe International (Opinion Research Corporation) for Lions Clubs

International

Conducted March-April 1998

This study polled more than 3,000 individuals in seven countries: Brazil, China (Hong Kong), France, Germany, India, Japan and the United States.

### SOME COUNTRY COMPARISONS

Question	Brazil	China <sup>1</sup>	France	Germany	India	Japan	USA
Report doing volunteer work	26	12	19	17	32	11	50
Donate as much time to charitable activities now as five years ago	82	52	85	77	78	85	79
Do charity work because they enjoy it/because they feel good	49		46		43		54

about helping others<sup>2</sup>

Do so from a sense of obligation to help the less fortunate	38		36		
Donate 10 hours or more per month	36	41	34	34	33

<sup>1</sup> Hong Kong

<sup>2</sup> Only highest-frequency respondents reported

Brazil:

- About one-third (32%) of adults surveyed in Brazil rely on their churches to learn about the activities of service organizations in their community.
- More than one-fifth (22%) of those who volunteer donate more than 20 hours of their time in a typical month.
- Rates of volunteerism were found to be higher among residents in the Gioania area than in São Paulo, Recife, or Porto Alegre.

China (Hong Kong):

- Forty-nine percent reported that they do not donate their time to charitable causes because of professional obligations.
- The majority (83%) of volunteers found charity work through organizations.
- Three out of 10 (31%) volunteers donate five or more hours per month; 50% spend less than five hours.
- Individuals surveyed with a college degree were more likely to claim they volunteer.

France:

- The majority (65%) of volunteers found charity work on their own versus through an organization.
- Fifty-eight percent of volunteers surveyed spend more than five hours during a typical month volunteering.
- Female volunteers were more likely than their male counterparts to find charity work on their own versus through an organization.

Germany:

- Forty-three percent of volunteers donate time to charity because it gives them an opportunity to socialize.
- Nearly one-half (46%) spend less than five hours during a typical month volunteering.
- Married adults (24%) are more likely to volunteer than single adults (12%)

India:

- Three out of five volunteers (62%) find charity work on their own versus through an organization.
- Adults with lower incomes were more likely to volunteer than those in higher income brackets.

Japan:

- Two-thirds (66%) of volunteers found activities through organizations.

- Married non-volunteers and those aged 30–39 were more likely to say they have no time to volunteer due to family obligations.

United States:

- The majority (53%) found charity work through organizations.
- Volunteers said they donated on average 8 1/2 hours during a typical month.
- Women, those aged 35–54, and those with some college education or a college degree, were more likely to volunteer for charitable causes.

For more information contact:

Ketchum Public Relations

tel.: 312–228–6846

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS' USE OF YOUNG PEOPLE AS VOLUNTEERS

Princeton Survey Research Associates, Inc., for Do Something

Conducted February–March 1998

This national survey of volunteer coordinators at 250 community-based organizations was conducted to gain an understanding about their experiences and practices related to young volunteers and staff. Researchers took a random sample of 250 community organization leaders and interviewed them by telephone. Some of the findings include:

- 86% of community organizations have volunteers in their teens and twenties.
- One-third (33%) have young people serving in leadership positions, such as supervisors, coordinators, or other decision-makers.
- About a third (34%) of the organizations with a governing board have young people who serve on the board.
- While nearly half (49%) of organizations integrate young people to a moderate extent. Only 15% can be classified as involving young people extensively in carrying out their mission.
- 45% have young volunteers involved in four or more meaningful tasks, such as attending meeting where they take part in decision making, coordinate activities or events with other organizations, training other volunteers or paid staff, and giving presentations/speeches.
- A large majority of leaders think that volunteers under the age of 30 bring new ideas and energy into organizations (89%), are comfortable and skilled with computers and new technologies (88%), and are idealistic and willing to work for change (82%).
- Most say that they think their organization would be very willing to make a special effort to match young volunteers' interest and abilities to the tasks they are asked to do (71%).
- 59% would be willing to offer new leadership opportunities to young volunteers.

For more information or to inquire about the full report, contact:

Do Something  
423 West 55th Street  
8th Floor

tel.: (212) 523–1175  
fax: (212) 582–1307  
mail@dosomething.org

## SURVEY OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN

Conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles; sponsored by the American Council on Education. Reported in 1997

This survey represents responses from 348,465 freshmen at 665 colleges and universities from across the nation. It is designed to provide community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities a cost-effective method of collecting comparative data on their entering students for use in institutional decision-making, research, and assessment activities. Some of the findings include:

- 37.6% of respondents had a "desire to influence social values", compared to a high of 43.3% in 1992.
- Only 31.8% of freshman report a commitment to "helping promote racial understanding," a ten percent decline from 1992.
- Some 26.7% of students believed that "keeping up to date with political affairs" was an important goal, compared to 57.8% in 1966.
- The 1997 findings also report that fewer students find it important to "participate in a community action" than in the past.
- In contrast, 73% of students reported performing volunteer work during their last year of high school, which is up from 62% in 1989, possibly due to the fact that more high schools are promoting student volunteerism and or making it a graduation requirement.
- Almost one-fifth (19%) of freshmen say there is a "very good chance " they'll perform volunteer or community service during college.

For more information or to inquire about the full report, contact:

Higher Education Research Institute  
University of California, Los Angeles  
3005 Moore Hall, Box 951521  
Los Angeles, California 90095-1521  
[www.gse.ucla.edu/HERI/heri.html](http://www.gse.ucla.edu/HERI/heri.html)

tel: (310) 825-1925  
fax: (310) 206-2228  
[HERI@ucla.edu](mailto:HERI@ucla.edu)

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SURVEY

Princeton Survey Research Associates, Inc., for Do Something  
Conducted September-October 1997

Researchers surveyed 1,002 young people age 15 to 29 with a range of community involvement questions:

- Three-quarters (73%) of young people said they had worked on behalf of a community organization or had participated in grassroots activities designed to improve the life of their communities at some point in their lives.

- Almost all young people said they believe they can contribute to making their community a better place: 30% said they can have a big impact and 43 % said they can have a moderate impact, while only 6% said they could not have any impact at all.
- Forty-two percent of young people who hear about community organizations through people they know volunteered in the past year, compared to only 14% of those who hear about community organizations without the benefit of a personal contact.
- Forty-eight percent of young people who attend church on a weekly or monthly basis, compared with 30% who attend less often, volunteered in the previous year.
- Half of the young people who held a leadership position in some high school extracurricular activity, but only a third of those who did not, volunteered in the previous year.
- Some 45% of all volunteer hours spent by young people in the previous year were devoted to youth-serving groups.
- Many young people, including 29% of those who have been involved with a community organization, said these organizations did not take advantage of all they had to offer.
- The most important factors for young people when they evaluate their experiences were being given important responsibilities; being inspired by the organization's leadership; knowing what is expected of them; having the chance to participate in key decisions; and seeing the effects of their work.
- Half of young people (50%) who felt they were given important responsibilities in the organization, but only a fifth (20%) of those who did not, rated their experience working with the community organization as excellent.
- Almost half of young people (46%) who say they were able to see the effects of their work, but only 15% of those who were not, rates their experience as excellent.

For more information or to inquire about the full report, contact:

Do Something  
423 West 55th Street  
8th Floor  
New York, NY 10019

tel.: (212) 523-1175  
fax: (212) 582-1307  
mail@dosomething.org  
www.dosomething.org

## STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITY

Conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, Statistical Analysis Report  
April 1997

- Eighty-six percent (86%) percent of all students were in schools that encouraged community service.
- Out of 25,726 students that participated in the survey 11,535 6-8 graders regularly participate in community service, 7,429 9-10 graders regularly participate in community service, and 6,760 11-12 graders regularly participate in community service.

- About half 56% of the students who participated regularly in community service said that their service was incorporated into the school curriculum in some way (service-learning).
- If any adult in the household participates in community service the young person is 6% more likely to volunteer their time.

For more information or to inquire about the full report, contact:

National Center for Education Statistics                      tel: 202-219-1767  
 Office of Education Research and Improvement            nhes@ed.gov  
 U.S. Department of Education  
 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW  
 Washington, DC 20208-5574

### AMERICA'S VOLUNTEERS (2 SURVEYS)

Conducted by Independent Sector, 1996, Reported Spring 1997

These surveys focus on America's volunteers, attempting to answer three questions: Who volunteers? How do they volunteer? and Why do they volunteer? The surveys analyze the volunteer population with regard to gender, race, and hours spent volunteering, and explore both teen and adult volunteering trends and motivation. Highlights from the survey include:

- In 1996, 13.3 million teenagers aged 12 to 17, or 59% of teenagers (a higher rate of volunteering than that of adults), volunteered. Teens who volunteered said that they volunteered an average of 3.5 hours per week.
- The amount of teen volunteer time in 1996 totaled 2.4 billion hours, with a \$7.7 billion value.
- The distribution of teens' volunteer activities was as follows:

Religion	16.3%
Youth Development	13.4%
Informal	13.0%
Education	12.6%
Environment	8.4%
Human Services	7.1%
Health	6.5%
Recreation-adult	6.4%
Arts, Culture, and Humanities	5.6%
Public/Social Benefit	3.7%
Work-related	2.5%
Other	4.6%

- The primary organizations through which teens first got involved in voluntary activities were religious institutions (53%) and schools (50%).

- Teens who had positive adult role models as children were nearly twice as likely to volunteer as those who did not.
- Teens who reported that they did some volunteer work, were active in religious organizations, or were active in student government as children volunteered at a rate of 60% or higher.
- Teens were nearly four times as likely to volunteer if they were asked than if they were not asked. Among the 51% of teens who reported being asked to volunteer, 93% actually did, compared to the 49% who were not asked, 24% of whom volunteered.
- People of color were far less likely to be asked to volunteer than were whites.

Major reasons cited by teens for volunteering were:

- They felt compassion for people in need.
- They could do something for a cause that was important to them.
- They believed that if they helped others, others would help them.

Top benefits teens received from volunteering were\*:

- Learning to respect others.
- Learning to be helpful and kind.
- Learning to understand people who are different from them.
- Developing leadership skills, becoming more patient, and better understanding good citizenship.

\*The 7.5% of teen volunteers who reported that they took a required community service course at their school were far more likely to report these and other benefits.

Ways to measurably increase volunteering among teens:

- Ask young people to volunteer, particularly people of color.
- Encourage children to get involved in volunteering at an early age.
- Encourage participation by children in youth groups, voluntary organizations, religious organizations, student government, and schools.
- Assure that young people have positive adult role models.
- Help young people develop positive self images so that they are able to help others and contribute to their communities.
- Provide young people with opportunities to take courses on community service.

For more information, contact:

Independent Sector  
1828 L Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

tel.: 202-223-8100  
fax: 202-416-0580

COMMUNITY SERVICE & SERVICE LEARNING INITIATIVES IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS  
National Association of Independent Schools, Conducted 1996-97

NAIS conducted a survey of its 963 member schools in the United States, followed by site visits to eight of the respondents:

- Some 87.5% of independent schools reported having a community service program and 9.9% are planning to start one.
- Academically-based service learning was reported in 26.2% of respondents and co-curricular service learning in 61.9%; just 12% reported simple community service programs without academic ties.
- Roughly half (56%) of responding schools indicated that their service programs were required versus voluntary (44%).
- Student voice in selecting service projects was reported among 79.9% of respondents, but no more than 51% involved students in leadership roles.
- Collaboration with agencies in supervision of service was reported by 66.6% of respondents, but just 51% involved agencies in the design of projects. Deeper partnership involving agencies in reflection or teaching was limited to a maximum of 31.5%.

The study author also identified several keys to the successful development of high-quality service learning initiatives in independent schools:

- Designating a community service coordinator
- Providing administrative support
- Possessing awareness of successful models
- Starting small
- Finding time for planning and implementation of the initiative
- Training for the coordinator
- Helping faculty understand how service learning can increase students' learning
- Exploring middle school service learning
- Hiring teachers who are knowledgeable about service learning
- Creating developmental initiatives that occur over more than one year
- Developing student leadership
- Acquiring grants, useful tools for helping service learning initiatives develop

Finally, the study presented recommendations for regional and national associations, as well as recommendations, listed here, for individual schools:

- The quality of independent school students' community service experiences can be enhanced by providing students with opportunities for reflection, collaboration and voice in the planning.
- Schools would benefit from taking a fresh look at their educational goals for community service and service learning initiatives.
- Schools are encouraged to allocate the needed resources to the development of quality programs, through the appropriate allocation of time for faculty, students and coordinators, and access to transportation.

- It would be beneficial for schools to fund community service coordinators, administrators and interested faculty to participate in professional development opportunities related to community service and service learning.

For more information or to inquire about the full report, contact:

National Association of Independent Schools      tel.: 202-973-9717  
 1620 L Street, NW  
 Washington, DC 20036-5605

## YOUTH VOICES

Conducted by Lake Research, Buffalo Qualitative Research, and Research Strategy Management for Who Cares magazine and the Center for Policy Alternatives  
 Reported Summer 1996

This poll attempted to answer three questions: Why don't young people vote? Do twenty-somethings care about social change? What does it take to get them involved? The project began with a series of focus groups in three cities – Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Raleigh, NC –with young people aged 18 to 24. Using the language and ideas that emerged from the focus groups, the pollsters then created a national poll to test a sample of 1,200 youth representing geographic, gender and ethnic diversity.

95% of respondents agreed that "when people get involved, they can really make a difference." In addition, respondents indicated that at least once they had

- helped with neighborhood or environmental clean-up (56%);
- sent a contribution to a charity (60%);
- volunteered to work for a cause they cared about (61%);
- volunteered to help children – for example, by tutoring or coaching (59%);
- gotten involved in activities through church or a religious organization (61%).

To contact Who Cares:

1511 K Street, NW, Suite 412      tel.: 202-628-1691  
 Washington, DC 20005      www.whocares.org

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF LEARN & SERVE AMERICA HIGHER EDUCATION  
 RAND and the University of California, Los Angeles for the Corporation for National Service, Reported June 1996

RAND and UCLA administered Annual Accomplishments Surveys to program directors for Learn and Serve America Higher Education (LSAHE) programs and received 341 responses. They also administered Community Impact Surveys through randomly sampled community organizations involved with LSAHE, 443 of which responded, as well as a follow-up Survey of more than 3,400

undergraduate students enrolled in 42 schools with LSAHE grants. A series of site visits to grantees extended and confirmed the survey data.

Impacts on Service Recipients – responses of community organizations

- 71% of respondents reported that student volunteers enabled them to increase the quality of their services
- 61% said student volunteers increased the intensity of services provided
- 59% said student volunteers increased the variety of services provided
- 52% said student volunteers enabled them to serve more people

Respondents rated student volunteers above 4.0 on a 5–point scale (indicating a "very high" level of effectiveness) for their efforts in

- improving students' school achievement
- promoting children's readiness for school
- improving conditions for low–income or homeless people
- conserving or restoring natural habitats

Additionally, community organizations assessed the student volunteers as especially skilled in working with youth, as substantially more effective than other volunteers, and as equal in effectiveness to paid staff. They perceived the students' greatest weakness to be lack of time for volunteer work due to competing demands of school, employment, and extracurricular activities.

- Almost all respondents (97%) indicated that they would like to work with student volunteers again if given the opportunity;
- Similarly, 92% responded that the benefits of working with student volunteers outweighed the problems and costs

Impacts on Service Providers – student respondents

- Service participants exhibited a greater sense of civic responsibility, higher levels of academic achievement, and more growth in life skills than non–participants.
- Every one of 35 outcome measures was favorably influenced by engagement in some form of service work. Service participation also positively affected students' commitment to serving their communities, helping others in difficulty, and promoting racial understanding.

For information, contact the Corporation for National Service:

Learn & Serve Higher Education  
1201 New York Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20525

tel: 202–606–5000

**AMERICAN ALLIANCE FOR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (AARR) SURVEY**  
Reported February 1996

AARR Community Service Project Director Suzanne Goldsmith surveyed the 130 largest public school districts in the country to find out just how many schools have implemented service-learning programs and how administrators at those schools rate the experience.

- Nearly 15% of school districts make service a graduation requirement at all high schools.
- More than 45% have service requirements for graduation at one or more high schools in the district.
- 78% of schools with required service programs link the service to a required class.
- Of the more than 4 million students covered by the survey, over 1.2 million (25.5%) are subject to a service requirement.
- A total of 75% of districts offer service opportunities as either an elective or a requirement.
- At all of the schools, students choose their own service projects, and in 95.5%, students also help plan their projects.
- Administrators lauded community service for teaching responsibility (89.9%), cooperation (89.9%) and self-esteem (83.3%).
- 83% of respondents listed monitoring and supervision among the most difficult aspects of implementing service learning, followed by evaluation (61%) and transportation between school and service sites (also 61%).

For more information, please contact:

AARR

1146 19th Street, NW

Suite 250

Washington, DC 20036-3703

tel: 202-785-7844

fax: 202-785-4370

#### SCHOOL-BASED LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA REPORT

The Close Up Foundation, the Council of Chief State School Officers, National Association of Partners in Education, and American Youth Policy Forum, Reported 1995

Based on information provided by State Learn and Serve grantees. Information compiled and prepared by the Close Up Foundation, the Council of Chief State School Officers, National Association of Partners in Education, and the American Youth Policy Forum. The report presented participation figures by state, as well as the following computation of cost-per-participant:

Students involved school-based service learning in 1994-95 school year: 629,943

Total cost of program: \$24,835,551

Cost Per Participant: \$39.43

For more information, please contact:

American Youth Policy Forum  
 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 719  
 Washington, DC 20036

## VOLUNTEER CENTER SURVEYS

### The Points of Light Foundation, Conducted 1995 and 1993

The Points of Light Foundation surveyed member Volunteer Centers on several topics in both 1993 (246 responses) and 1995 (266 responses). One section of each survey was devoted to youth-related questions ranging from the services offered by Volunteer Centers, the youth population they witnessed, and the placements they made. A few of the findings are presented here. Volunteer Centers are community-based organizations that mobilize people and resources to deliver creative solutions to community problems.

In 1995, 67% of Volunteer Centers indicated they had a youth volunteer program. This is an increase from the 1993 survey which indicated that 56.9% of Volunteer Centers had youth volunteer programs.

A majority of these Volunteer Centers (71.5%) worked with their local schools to promote student volunteerism through school groups or clubs that engage in service activities (65.4%); class service component (47.2%); mandatory service requirements (38.6%); and community service classes (35.8%). The issue areas to which young volunteers were most frequently referred are reported below:

#### VCS REPORTED THE ISSUE FOCUSES TO WHICH YOUTH WERE MOST FREQUENTLY REFERRED IN

Agency Type / Issues	1993		1995	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Elderly Services	174	70.7	200	75.2
Education / mentoring / tutoring	164	66.7	195	73.3
Environment / recycling	138	56.1	187	70.3
Hunger	138	56.1	166	62.4
Persons with physical disabilities	127	51.6	150	56.4
Arts	125	50.8	148	55.6
Youth (not mentoring and	121	49.2	152	57.1

tutoring)				
Literacy	109	44.3	111	41.7
Persons with mental disabilities	93	37.8	110	41.4
Housing	83	33.7	105	39.5
Crisis hotline	68	27.6	61	22.9

#### VCS REPORTED SERVING VARIOUS SCHOOL-AGE POPULATIONS

Enrollment Status	1993		1995	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Elementary School	67	27.2	97	36.5
Middle School	149	60.6	205	77.1
High School	202	82.1	235	88.3
College	146	59.3	187	70.3

#### VCS REPORTED WORKING WITH SCHOOLS TO PROMOTE VOLUNTEERISM THROUGH

School Service Connection	1993		1995	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
School groups or clubs	161	65.4	182	68.4
Class service component	116	47.2	149	56.0
Mandatory service requirements	95	38.6	120	45.1
Community service classes	88	35.8	109	41.0

For more information, contact:

Points of Light Foundation, Volunteer Center Development

1400 Eye Street, NW, Suite 800

Washington, DC 20005

tel.: 202-729-8000

[www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)

#### SEARCH INSTITUTE SURVEY

Conducted 1995, 1993

The survey identified the most common types of service youth engage in as part of their service-learning programs: Environmental activities: 50%

Activities that help other people: 48%

General volunteering (clerical) 40%

Beautification 39%

Education or prevention presentations 33%

Involvement in political activities 26%

The survey also identified the attitudes about service of young people who serve:

- My service activities showed me how good it feels to help other people. (55%)
- My service experience showed how much can be done when people work together as a team. (55%)
- As a result of my service I feel better prepared to plan a project from beginning to end. (46%)
- My service activities made a difference in improving my community. (45%)
- Only 17% of students said they spent "a lot" of time on these types of reflection and 53 % report spending little or no time at all on reflection.

The Search Institute's 1993 survey found evidence of the positive influence of service involvement on young people. Youth who are involved in service just one hour or more a week were found to be about half as likely to be involved in a variety of at-risk behaviors:

#### PERCENT OF 6TH-12TH GRADERS REPORTING BEHAVIOR

Behavior	Non-Servers	Servers
Binge drinking	30	18
Problem drug use	18	9
Daily cigarette use	18	9
Frequent alcohol use	14	7
Vandalism	13	7
Skipping school	13	7

For more information, contact:

Search Institute

700 South Third Street, Suite 210

Minneapolis, MN 55415

tel: 612-376-8955

#### THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY YOUTH SURVEY

The Wirthlin Group, Conducted 1995

This report presents the findings from a national survey of 993 high-school students in ninth through twelfth grade. The survey gauged students' perceptions of their communities and of their responsibilities to the community. Highlights from this survey are included at the end of this compilation.



volunteering, but it does suggest institutions which are credible to young people and which could serve as vehicles for youth-targeted messages.

#### PERCENT OF STUDENTS EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE IN AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS

Institution	Great Deal	Quite a lot	Some	Very Little
Religion	37	29	24	9
Public Schools	36	28	27	9
Military	25	29	32	12
Professional Sports	25	25	33	17
Federal Government	21	27	36	14
Congress	19	23	37	19
Newspapers and newsmagazines	17	23	43	16
Big Business	15	23	46	14
Television	12	16	43	28

For more information, please contact:

Junior Achievement  
One Education Way  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906-4477

#### INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT AND STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY SERVICE Alexander W. Astin, Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles, Reported 1990, 1995

Using a national longitudinal sample of 11,433 students who started college in 1985 and were followed up in 1989-90 and 1994-95, researchers with the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) found that being a volunteer while in college has positive effects on several behavioral outcomes:

- finishing college
- enrolling in post-graduate study
- hours spent as a volunteer after college
- socializing across racial/ethnic lines
- donating money to the undergraduate college

Participating in volunteer/service work was also found to have positive effects on a number of attitudinal outcomes, including the student's perception of how well their undergraduate college prepared them for graduate/professional school or for work, as well as their commitment to five value outcomes:

- participating in community action programs

- helping others in difficulty
- participating in programs to help clean up the environment
- promoting racial understanding
- developing a meaningful philosophy of life

For more information, please contact:

Higher Education Research Institute  
 UCLA Graduate School of Education & Information Studies  
 405 Hilgard Avenue / 3005 Moore Hall  
 Los Angeles, CA 90025-1521

### URBAN TEEN VOLUNTEER BARRIERS

Boys & Girls Clubs of America/Taco Bell, Source: USA Today, November 11, 1997

Why urban teens say more of their peers don't volunteer for community service:

Reason	Percentage Reporting
No time	25
Peer pressure	21
Apathy	17
Not cool/fun	16
No pay	6
Gangs (tie)	
Drugs	3
Unaware of activities	2
Not asked, associate with punishment	1

### Prudential Spirit of Community Youth Survey

Most of today's high-school teens (62%) feel their communities are good or very good places to live. But more say that conditions in their communities are getting worse (30%) than getting better (25%).

Crime and violence are the most pressing problems facing communities today, according to 36% of students. Other areas of concern are drugs and alcohol abuse (cited by 18%), education (7%), economic problems (7%) and lack of youth programs (6%).

More than six teens in ten (62%) say the solutions to such problems lie in individual action rather than government programs. Only one in three (33%) favor government programs.

Almost all teens (95%) believe it is important for people to be involved in the community by volunteering their time to charitable, civic, cultural, environmental or political activities, and nearly two-thirds (62%) feel it is very important. Further, seven in ten (71%) feel their communities would be better places to live if more adults volunteered, and eight in ten (81%) feel they would be better if more students volunteered.

But a majority of students feel that both adults (56%) and students (70%) are doing only an average or poor job of volunteering their time to community activities.

Some 88% of teens believe an important factor in getting students involved in community activity is the encouragement of teachers, parents and other adults. But while 95% of teens believe it is important to learn the value and importance of community service, only four in ten (40%) say schools convey that message well, and only three in ten (32%) feel parents do.

While 67% of teens say their schools do not require community service for graduation, an identical percentage say such a requirement would be a good idea.

Half of all teens can name no one in particular whom they admire for their commitment to community service. Those who can name a role model most frequently cite a parent (14%), a peer or friend (12%), or a teacher (8%).

According to teens, the most important reasons students volunteer are: it makes them feel good about themselves (89%); they want to list some community service activities on their college applications (87%); they want to learn skills they cannot learn elsewhere (81%); they have roots in the community (78%); they feel they have to give something back to the community (75%); and they find it fun or have friends who do it (75%).

Teens believe the key reasons students do not volunteer are: they are too busy with part-time jobs, homework or other school activities (91%); they would rather keep their leisure time for TV, music, vacations and the like (71%); and they do not believe volunteering can make a difference (57%).

Teens also say students do not volunteer because: they do not know how to get involved (74%) or simply are never asked (60%).

Two-thirds (67%) of students interviewed say they volunteer their time to community activities. But only 20% are active in a meaningful way.

What kinds of community service interest students the most? Charitable activities, including non-profit or church organizations involved with the needy, youth, senior citizens, etc. (88%). Education activities such as tutoring, peer counseling, coaching sports and participating in student government (83%). Environmental activities such as cleaning up or otherwise improving parks, recreation facilities, etc. (82%). Cultural activities such as working with theater, music and arts groups (66%).

The importance of schools, parents and role models in motivating student interest in community service is apparent in the responses of teens who do volunteer versus those who do not:

- Among volunteers, 44% say that their schools place a lot of emphasis on the importance of community involvement while only 31% of non-volunteers respond the same way.
- Forty-three percent of the student volunteers say their parents place a lot of emphasis on community involvement. Among non-volunteers, this percentage drops to 12%.
- And among volunteers, 59% can name a specific role model but only 30% of non-volunteers can do so.

### Survey Sample and Confidence

This report presents the findings from a national survey of high school students in ninth through twelfth grades. A total of 993 students were interviewed by telephone. The interviewing was conducted in May 1995. About half the students were male (49%) and half female (51%). A profile of the sample for other demographic characteristics is shown below.

Proportion of students in each subgroup

All students	100%
9th grade	27%
10th grade	25%

11th grade	23	
12th grade	24	
Urban residents #	20%	
Suburban residents	51	
Small town / Rural residents	28	
White	68%	
African-American		15
Hispanic		12
Other	4	

Education of chief wage earner in the household

High school or less	25%	
Some college	19	
College graduate		34
Post-graduate work	13	

#Respondents self-defined the community in which they live as urban, suburban, small town or rural.

To ensure an adequate representation of urban and minority students additional interviews were conducted in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Miami. About 175 interviews of the 993 were focused on these four cities.

The margin of error for any percentage result in the report is about 2% to 3% at the 95% confidence interval.