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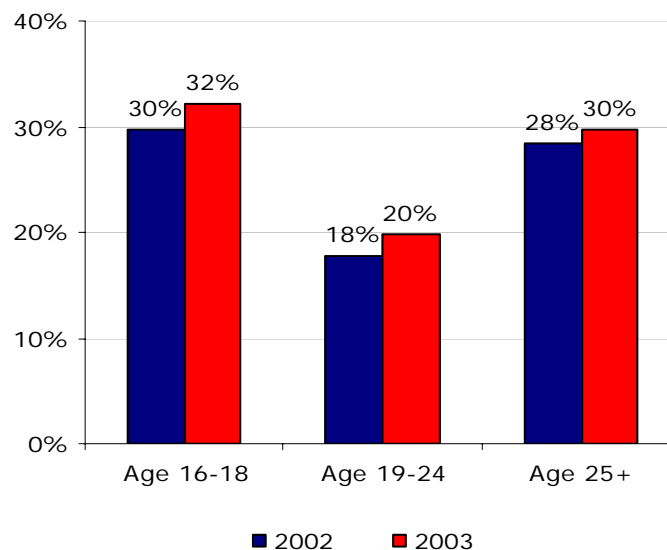
The Center for Information & Research on
Civic Learning & Engagement

Youth Volunteering in the States: 2002 and 2003

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Volunteer rates vary tremendously across states and age groups. In recent years, young people have exhibited rising volunteering rates, particularly high school students and college freshmen.² When comparing the volunteer rates for different age groups in 2002 and 2003, 16-18 year olds volunteer at consistently higher rates than their college-age peers, as found in previous literature.³ Nationwide, the volunteer rate for 16-18 year olds was 30% in 2002 and 32% in 2003; in contrast, the rates for 19-24 year olds were 18% and 20%, respectively. Volunteer rates for the population aged 25 years and older showed a slight increase, rising from 28% to 30% from 2002 to 2003.⁴ The results found using the Current Population Survey (CPS) Volunteer Supplements are generally lower than other estimates of the volunteer rate for the population (both overall and among different age groups).⁵ This fact sheet presents volunteer rates by state and age groups calculated using the CPS. The large size of the CPS allows a state-by-state comparison for different age groups, a feature rarely found in data sets on volunteering.

Graph 1: National Volunteer Rate by Age



Source: Current Population Survey
September Volunteer Supplements, 2002 and 2003

State by State Volunteer Activity for 2002 and 2003

The volunteer rate for 16-18 year olds varies by state and year, from a high of 54% to a low of 18% in 2003, as shown in Table 1, and from a high of 52% to a low of 16% in 2002, as shown in Table 2. This age group volunteered at the highest rates in 2003 in Utah (54%), Wyoming (53%), Nebraska (52%), and North Dakota and Iowa (45% each). The top five states in 2002 were Montana (52%), Iowa (48%), Maryland (47%), Wisconsin (44%) and Alaska (43%). States displaying the lowest youth volunteer rates in 2003 were Delaware (18%), Rhode Island (19%), the District of Columbia⁶ (20%), Massachusetts (21%) and Georgia (22%). In 2002, the bottom six states were Mississippi and the District of Columbia (16% each), Tennessee (17%), and Georgia, Nevada and Louisiana (19% each). The national volunteer rate for 16-18 year olds trended upward from 2002 to 2003, rising from 30% to 32%.

States' volunteer rates for college-age adults (19-24 year olds) were generally lower. For this group, the states displaying the highest volunteer rates in 2003 were Utah (50%), Oregon and Washington (31% each), and Mississippi, Minnesota and Idaho (29% each). In 2002, the top five were Utah (36%), Missouri (34%), the District of Columbia (31%), and Iowa and Nebraska (29% each). In 2003, the states with the lowest volunteer rate for this age group were Louisiana (11%), Rhode Island (12%), and Hawaii, Delaware and New York (13% each). The bottom seven in 2002 were Massachusetts (11%), Nevada, Tennessee and Indiana (13% each), and Georgia, Louisiana and North Carolina (14%). The national rate of volunteering for 19-24 year olds in 2003 was 20%, up from 18% the previous year.

For those aged 25 years and older, 2003 volunteer rates ranged from 49% in Utah to 21% in Nevada. In 2002, the range remained the same with Utah leading volunteering at 49%, and New York, Florida and Nevada exhibiting the lowest rates at 22%. While the range of the spectrum remained constant, the overall rate of volunteer activity in the population evidenced a slight increase from 2002 to 2003, rising from 28% to 30%.

State by State Differences in Volunteer Activity across Age Groups

Some states display large differences in volunteer activity across age groups, while other states have similar rates across age groups. An interesting pattern emerged from the 2003 supplement data. Teenagers (aged 16-18) volunteer more, on average, than their 19-24 year old counterparts and the 25+ age group. However, only three states had 16-24 year olds that volunteered at higher rates than the group aged 25 and older (West Virginia, Nevada and Utah). In 2003, fifteen states had 16-18 year olds that volunteered less than those aged 25 and older. In Wyoming, which had a volunteer rate of 53% for 16-18 year olds, this group was 14 percentage points more likely to volunteer than Wyoming residents aged 25 and older. Moreover, 16-18 year olds in Wyoming were 28 percentage points more likely to volunteer than 19-24 year olds in Wyoming, second only to Maine's corresponding difference of 29 percentage points. On the other hand, 16-18 year olds in the District of Columbia were 10 percentage points less likely to volunteer than 25+ year olds in the District (20% compared to 30%). Those same 16-18 year olds were eight percentage points less likely to volunteer than 19-24 year olds in the District of Columbia. In both comparisons, the District of Columbia had the largest negative difference between volunteering among 16-18 year olds and other age groups' volunteering. Only three other states had lower volunteer rates for their 16-18 year olds than their 19-24 year olds (Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi).

The same pattern holds for the previous year. As in 2003, in 2002 only three states had a higher volunteer rate for 16-24 year olds than those aged 25 and older (Montana, West Virginia and Missouri). In 2002, 27 states had 16-18 year olds that volunteered at lower rates than

those aged 25 and older. The states with the greatest difference in volunteer rates between 16-18 year olds and those aged 25 and over were Maryland at the top, which had a positive 15 percentage point difference, and South Dakota at the bottom with a negative 16 percentage point difference. Similar to 2003, only four states had 16-18 year olds that volunteered less than their state's 19-24 year olds (the District of Columbia, Mississippi, South Dakota and Missouri). In Maryland, 16-18 year olds were 31 percentage points more likely to volunteer than 19-24 year olds, whereas in the District of Columbia, 16-18 year olds were 15 percentage points less likely to volunteer than 19-24 year olds.

Changes in Volunteer Activity within State Age Groups across Years

From 2002 to 2003, a majority of states exhibited an increase in volunteering rates among the population aged 16 years and older⁷. North Dakota had the largest increase, just over five percentage points. When looking only to the older portion of the population, those aged 25 years and older, a similar picture emerges. Again, the largest increase was 5 percentage points, found in Alaska and North Dakota.

The results are much different for teenagers aged 16-18 years. In this group, nineteen states had declines in volunteer activity, with the highest at 13 percentage points (Michigan). The remaining states had gains ranging from 26 percentage points in Wyoming to just over one percentage point in New Hampshire. The 19-24 year olds mimic the 16 to 18 group; nineteen states had declines in volunteer activity, with the highest at 11 percentage points (Iowa). Gains for this age group range from less than one percentage point in Florida to 14 percentage points in Utah.

Nationally, the gains for the 16 and older and 25 and older populations were both one percentage point, and for the 16-18 and 19-24 groups were two percentage points. Thus, while states and within-state age groups exhibit varying patterns in volunteering, the overall national trend for volunteer activity is upward.

Some researchers credit the higher levels of volunteering for 16-18 year olds to school community service requirements. In 1999, 19 percent of students in high school reported that their schools required community service participation. An additional 67 percent reported that their schools arranged but did not require community service participation⁸. Maryland and the District of Columbia are the only states with a state-wide community service requirement for public school students. In the District of Columbia, students are required to complete 100 hours of community service as part of public high school diploma requirements. In Maryland, students are required to perform 75 hours of community service before graduating from public high school, or to meet state-approved county-level standards. Currently, all Maryland counties have their own state-approved requirements in place⁹. Although most states do not have requirements, a growing number of districts have implemented them. The variation by school district makes it difficult to assess the impact of community service requirements on student volunteer activity. The CPS is not conducive to a study of district-level requirements due to sample size limitations.

Table 1 – Volunteering in 2003, by State

<i>State</i>	<i>Volunteer Rate Among 16-18 year olds</i>	<i>Volunteer Rate Among 19-24 year olds</i>	<i>Volunteer Rate Among Population Age 25+</i>	<i>Difference in Volunteer Rates between ages 16-18 and 19-24</i>	<i>Difference in Volunteer Rates between ages 16-24 and 25+</i>
Alabama	23%	24%	28%	-1% point	-4% points
Alaska	36%	25%	42%	11% points	-12% points
Arizona	26%	14%	25%	12% points	-8% points
Arkansas	32%	17%	29%	16% points	-7% points
California	29%	17%	26%	12% points	-5% points
Colorado	40%	24%	34%	16% points	-5% points
Connecticut	42%	19%	31%	23% points	-2% points
Delaware	18%	13%	27%	5% points	-12% points
District of Columbia	20%	28%	30%	-8% points	-4% points
Florida	31%	19%	25%	12% points	-2% points
Georgia	22%	23%	27%	-1% point	-5% points
Hawaii	29%	13%	26%	16% points	-7% points
Idaho	38%	29%	37%	9% points	-5% points
Illinois	31%	21%	32%	10% points	-7% points
Indiana	37%	19%	32%	18% points	-6% points
Iowa	45%	18%	42%	27% points	-14% points
Kansas	44%	23%	38%	21% points	-7% points
Kentucky	31%	17%	30%	14% points	-8% points
Louisiana	25%	11%	25%	14% points	-9% points
Maine	44%	15%	35%	29% points	-9% points
Maryland	38%	18%	31%	20% points	-6% points
Massachusetts	21%	19%	27%	2% points	-7% points
Michigan	28%	23%	32%	5% points	-8% points
Minnesota	34%	29%	42%	4% points	-12% points
Mississippi	29%	29%	29%	-1% point	0% points
Missouri	29%	24%	31%	5% points	-5% points
Montana	41%	26%	40%	16% points	-9% points
Nebraska	52%	24%	44%	28% points	-12% points
Nevada	23%	22%	21%	1% points	2% points
New Hampshire	37%	22%	32%	15% points	-3% points
New Jersey	36%	19%	28%	17% points	-3% points
New Mexico	38%	17%	27%	21% points	-3% points
New York	29%	13%	23%	16% points	-4% points
North Carolina	23%	17%	27%	6% points	-8% points
North Dakota	45%	19%	42%	26% points	-13 points %
Ohio	40%	20%	32%	20% points	-5% points
Oklahoma	25%	22%	29%	4% points	-6% points
Oregon	33%	31%	33%	1% point	-2% points
Pennsylvania	39%	19%	32%	19% points	-5% points
Rhode Island	19%	12%	24%	7% points	-9% points
South Carolina	32%	17%	28%	15% points	-5% points
South Dakota	41%	28%	41%	13% points	-10% points
Tennessee	28%	16%	28%	13% points	-8% points
Texas	33%	18%	29%	15% points	-6% points
Utah	54%	50%	49%	3% points	2% points
Vermont	36%	25%	40%	12% points	-10% points
Virginia	32%	17%	32%	15% points	-8% points
Washington	39%	31%	38%	9% points	-4% points
West Virginia	35%	18%	24%	17% points	1% point
Wisconsin	39%	21%	38%	17% points	-11% points
Wyoming	53%	25%	39%	28% points	-1% point
<i>National</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>12% points</i>	<i>- 6% points</i>

Source: Current Population Survey, September 2003 Volunteer Supplement¹⁰.

Differences found by subtracting the volunteer rate for the older group from that of the younger group, and rounding to the nearest whole number.

Table 2 – Volunteering in 2002, by State

<i>State</i>	<i>Volunteer Rate Among 16-18 year olds</i>	<i>Volunteer Rate Among 19-24 year olds</i>	<i>Volunteer Rate Among Population Age 25+</i>	<i>Difference in Volunteer Rates between ages 16-18 and 19-24</i>	<i>Difference in Volunteer Rates between ages 16-24 and 25+</i>
Alabama	26%	23%	30%	3% points	-6% points
Alaska	43%	24%	37%	19% points	-4% points
Arizona	24%	17%	24%	6% points	-4% points
Arkansas	27%	18%	30%	9% points	-9% points
California	30%	15%	25%	15% points	-5% points
Colorado	33%	21%	30%	12% points	-5% points
Connecticut	34%	15%	30%	19% points	-6% points
Delaware	28%	17%	29%	11% points	-8% points
District of Columbia	16%	31%	27%	-15% points	0% points
Florida	28%	19%	22%	9% points	0% points
Georgia	19%	14%	23%	5% points	-8% points
Hawaii	34%	15%	28%	19% points	-5% points
Idaho	39%	24%	37%	15% points	-8% points
Illinois	26%	18%	29%	8% points	-9% points
Indiana	25%	13%	31%	12% points	-14% points
Iowa	48%	29%	41%	19% points	-5% points
Kansas	37%	21%	38%	16% points	-11% points
Kentucky	34%	20%	30%	14% points	-6% points
Louisiana	19%	14%	24%	5% points	-8% points
Maine	36%	20%	32%	17% points	-6% points
Maryland	47%	16%	33%	31% points	-5% points
Massachusetts	29%	11%	24%	18% points	-5% points
Michigan	41%	20%	32%	21% points	-4% points
Minnesota	29%	23%	41%	6% points	-16% points
Mississippi	16%	24%	26%	-8% points	-4% points
Missouri	33%	34%	31%	-1% point	3% points
Montana	52%	28%	37%	23% points	1% point
Nebraska	35%	29%	41%	6% points	-10% points
Nevada	19%	13%	22%	6% points	-8% points
New Hampshire	35%	25%	30%	11% points	-2% points
New Jersey	26%	15%	27%	11% points	-8% points
New Mexico	30%	19%	28%	10% points	-6% points
New York	27%	15%	22%	13% points	-2% points
North Carolina	24%	14%	27%	10% points	-9% points
North Dakota	24%	19%	37%	5% points	-16% points
Ohio	26%	20%	31%	6% points	-9% points
Oklahoma	22%	21%	30%	2% points	-9% points
Oregon	41%	19%	33%	22% points	-5% points
Pennsylvania	33%	17%	31%	16% points	-9% points
Rhode Island	29%	15%	23%	13% points	-3% points
South Carolina	26%	15%	30%	10% points	-11% points
South Dakota	24%	26%	40%	-1% point	-15% points
Tennessee	17%	13%	23%	3% points	-9% points
Texas	33%	16%	29%	18% points	-8% points
Utah	39%	36%	49%	3% points	-12% points
Vermont	34%	22%	36%	12% points	-10% points
Virginia	21%	20%	29%	2% points	-9% points
Washington	32%	19%	34%	13% points	-12% points
West Virginia	37%	21%	26%	16% points	1% point
Wisconsin	44%	19%	37%	25% points	-9% points
Wyoming	27%	25%	38%	2% points	-13% points
<i>National</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>28%</i>	<i>12% points</i>	<i>-7% points</i>

Source: Current Population Survey, September 2002 Volunteer Supplement¹¹.

Differences found by subtracting the volunteer rate for the older group from that of the younger group, and rounding to the nearest whole number.

Table 3 – Change in Volunteer Rate by State From 2002 to 2003

<i>State</i>	<i>Change in Volunteer Rate Among 16-18 year olds</i>	<i>Change in Volunteer Rate Among 19-24 year olds</i>	<i>Change in Volunteer Rate Among Population Age 25+</i>
Alabama	-3% points	1% point	-2% points
Alaska	-7% points	1% point	5% points
Arizona	2% points	-3% points	1% point
Arkansas	5% points	-1% point	-1% point
California	-1% point	2% points	1% points
Colorado	7% points	3% points	4% points
Connecticut	8% points	4% points	1% point
Delaware	-10% points	-4% points	-2% points
District of Columbia	4% points	-3% points	3% points
Florida	3% points	0% points	3% points
Georgia	3% points	9% points	4% points
Hawaii	-6% points	-3% points	-2% points
Idaho	-2% points	5% points	0% points
Illinois	6% points	3% points	3% points
Indiana	12% points	6% points	1% point
Iowa	-3% points	-11% points	2% points
Kansas	7% points	2% points	0% points
Kentucky	-3% points	-2% points	0% points
Louisiana	6% points	-3% points	1% point
Maine	7% points	-4% points	3% points
Maryland	-9% points	2% points	-1% point
Massachusetts	-8% points	9% points	3% points
Michigan	-13% points	3% points	1% point
Minnesota	5% points	6% points	1% point
Mississippi	13% points	5% points	3% points
Missouri	-4% points	-9% points	0% points
Montana	-10% points	-3% points	3% points
Nebraska	17% points	-4% points	3% points
Nevada	4% points	10% points	-2% points
New Hampshire	1% point	-2% points	2% points
New Jersey	11% points	4% points	1% point
New Mexico	8% points	-3% points	-1% point
New York	2% points	-1% point	1% point
North Carolina	-1% point	3% points	0% points
North Dakota	21% points	0% points	5% points
Ohio	14% points	0% points	1% point
Oklahoma	3% points	1% point	-1% point
Oregon	-9% points	12% points	1% point
Pennsylvania	5% points	2% points	1% point
Rhode Island	-9% points	-3% points	1% point
South Carolina	6% points	1% point	-3% points
South Dakota	17% points	2% points	1% point
Tennessee	12% points	3% points	4% points
Texas	0% points	3% points	0% points
Utah	14% points	14% points	0% points
Vermont	2% points	2% points	4% points
Virginia	11% points	-3% points	3% points
Washington	7% points	12% points	3% points
West Virginia	-3% points	-3% points	-2% points
Wisconsin	-6% points	2% points	1% point
Wyoming	26% points	0% points	0% points
National	2% points	2% points	1% point

Source: Current Population Survey, September 2002 Volunteer Supplement.¹²

Differences found by subtracting 2002 estimates from the 2003 estimates and rounding to the nearest whole number.

Notes

¹ Sincere thanks to Mark Hugo Lopez, Carrie Donovan, and Emily Kirby for their helpful comments on earlier drafts. All remaining errors in fact or interpretation are my own.

² See "Volunteering Among Young People" by Mark Hugo Lopez, Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement.

³ For example, see the *Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait*, by Scott Keeter, Cliff Zukin, Molly Andolina, and Krista Jenkins, September 2002, available through the CIRCLE website.

⁴ My volunteer numbers are based on the 2002 and 2003 United States Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS) September Volunteer Supplements. The September supplement of the CPS was completed September 15-21 in 2002, and September 14-20 in 2003, and samples the civilian non-institutionalized population of the U.S. ages 15 and older. For each survey, approximately 56,000 households (about 95,000 individuals) were interviewed. Since employment information is asked only of those respondents age 16 and older, I dropped 15 year olds from my data. All data are publicly available, and all programs used to generate these data are available upon request.

Following the 2000 Census, CPS updated its population controls and weights. The 2003 September Supplement used the updated weights. In order to use the 2002 CPS data I had to incorporate the revised weights into the existing data file. Special thanks to Ken Robertson at the Bureau of Labor Statistics for his helpful assistance regarding the re-weighting of the CPS 2002 file. Weights are adjusted for population totals for various race and geographic groups, and for missing data due to individuals' failure to respond to the survey. For further discussion of the weights, see Technical Paper 63RV, Current Population Survey Design and Methodology, US Census Bureau and US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, March 2002 (<http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/tp63rv.pdf>). For more information on the September Supplements for 2002 and 2003, see the Current Population Survey September Volunteer Supplement File: Technical Documentation, CPS-02 and CPS-03 (2002: <http://www.nber.org/cps/cpssep02.pdf>; 2003: <http://www.nber.org/cps/cpssep03.pdf>).

⁵ See (2) above for a full discussion of factors causing variation in estimates of volunteer activity. A problem considered in this paper is the possibility that the interviews of college-age students in the CPS may be answered by a proxy (e.g., the individual's parent) since the individual has a high likelihood of not being in the house for an interview. In fact, upon examining the data, younger individuals are more likely to be recorded through proxy interviews than older participants in the CPS. Below are the unweighted percent of self-reports (that is, not proxy interviews) by age for the 2002 and 2003 CPS supplements.

Table 4: Percent of individuals in age-year group that were self interviews

Year/ Age	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25+
2002	45%	46%	46%	44%	46%	52%	54%	62%	66%	71%	77%
2003	43%	45%	45%	43%	47%	53%	53%	58%	66%	68%	77%

Source: Current Population Survey September Volunteer Supplement, 2002 and 2003.

The numbers reflect the percent of completed interviews that were self interviews. Weights were not used in these calculations.

It may be that the proxy answering for younger respondents (those 15-23 years old) will inaccurately report volunteering for the absent individual, underestimating true involvement in volunteer activity for that age group.

⁶ In this fact sheet, I treat the District of Columbia as a state.

⁷ Calculations for the population aged 16 and older are not included in this fact sheet, but are available upon request.

⁸ See Niemi, Richard and Chapman, Chris (1999). *The Civic Development of 9th - Through 12th-Grade Students in the United States: 1996 and 1999*, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2000/2000028.pdf>.

⁹ For more information, see <http://www.mssa.sailorsite.net/require.html>.

¹⁰ In order to calculate the volunteer rate, I used all individuals who responded to the September Supplement. Individuals are considered volunteers if they performed unpaid work through or for an organization from September 1 of the previous year through the survey week of the relevant year. I divided the weighted number of individuals classified as volunteers by the weighted number of individuals asked the September Supplement. That is,

Volunteer Rate =
$$\frac{\text{[weighted \# of volunteers]}}{\text{[weighted \# of noninstitutionalized civilians interviewed]}}$$
 See (iv) above.

All calculations are rounded to the nearest whole number.

¹¹ See (10) above.

¹² See (10) above.