

## ABSTRACT

*Independent Sector's Giving & Volunteering in the United States 2001 is the seventh in a series of biennial national surveys that reported trends in charitable behavior. For the 1.23 million charities, social welfare organizations, and religious congregations in the United States, giving and volunteering is at the heart of citizen action and central to their ability to serve their communities. This comprehensive study demonstrates once again the everyday generosity of Americans.*

# Giving & Volunteering in the United States: 2001 Key Findings

## VOLUNTEERING IN THE UNITED STATES

- Forty-four percent of adults over the age of 21 volunteered with a formal organization in 2000. Of these formal volunteers, 69 percent reported they volunteered on a regular basis, monthly or more often.
- Volunteers to formal organizations averaged just over 24 hours per month of volunteering time.
- An estimated 83.9 million adults formally volunteered approximately 15.5 billion hours in 2000.
- The formal volunteer workforce represented the equivalent of over 9 million full-time employees at a value of \$239 billion.
- People who regularly attended religious services volunteered at a much higher rate. Fifty-four percent of regular attendees volunteered, as compared to 32 percent of those who did not attend religious services on a regular basis.
- Women were more likely to have volunteered than were men (46 percent and 42 percent, respectively).
- No differences were found in the number of monthly hours volunteered based on youth experiences, religious attendance, household giving patterns, age category, gender, race, or ethnicity. The amount of time people volunteered is independent of many of the differentiators examined in the giving and volunteering surveys.
- Fifty percent of all people were asked to

- volunteer. Individuals who were asked to volunteer were much more likely to volunteer (63 percent) than were those volunteers who had not been asked (25 percent).
- Ten percent of those with Internet access, 60 percent of respondents, used the Internet to search for volunteer opportunities, learn about volunteer organizations, or engage in other similar activities. Three percent of those with Internet access reported volunteering over the Internet, doing such things as mentoring, tutoring, or website development.

## THE POWER OF THE ASK

### Percentage Who Volunteered

Volunteered when asked	63%
Volunteered even though not asked	25%

## VOLUNTEERING IN THE UNITED STATES, 2000

Percentage of adults who volunteered	44%
Total number of adult volunteers	83.9 million
Average weekly hours per volunteer	3.6 hours
Annual hours volunteered	15.5 billion hours
Estimated hourly value of volunteer time*	\$15.40 per hour
Total dollar value of volunteer time	\$239.2 billion
Percentage of adults asked to volunteer	50%
Percentage of adults who volunteered when asked	63%

Note: All volunteering numbers are for individual adults over the age of 21 who report service for an organization (excluding informal volunteering).

\* The hourly value of volunteer time is updated yearly by Independent Sector, and is based on the average hourly wage for nonagricultural workers, as published in The Economic Report of the President (2001 Edition), increased by 12% to estimate fringe benefits.

*Independent Sector* is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of more than 700 national organizations, foundations, and corporate philanthropy programs, collectively representing tens of thousands of charitable groups in every state across the nation. Its mission is to promote, strengthen, and advance the nonprofit and philanthropic community to foster private initiative for the public good.

## GIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

- Eighty-nine percent of households gave charitable contributions in 2000.
- The average contributing household gave \$1,620, or 3.2 percent of household income. Household giving included gifts of money, property, stocks, and other items of value.
- About 42 percent of respondents reported they both gave and volunteered, with another 46 percent of all households reporting they contributed only. This compares with about 10 percent who neither gave nor volunteered and 2 percent who volunteered only.
- Households in which the respondent also volunteered gave substantially more than households in which the respondent did not volunteer. For giving households, the average contributions were \$2,295 from volunteers and \$1,009 from non-volunteers.
- Fifty-six percent of households were asked to contribute in 2000. Of these households, 95 percent actually contributed, compared to 79 percent of the households that were not asked.
- The average donation from contributing households asked to contribute was \$1,945, significantly more than the \$1,109 average contribution from non-asked households.
- Adults who became involved with giving and volunteering in their youth (before the age of 18) maintained that involvement into adulthood. Higher percentages are givers as adults, 92 percent compared to 82 percent of those who did not give and volunteer in their youth, and the average household contribution is much higher, \$1,869 compared to \$1,219.
- Households with people who attend religious services on a regular basis, at least once or twice a month (53 percent of the respondents) gave more than twice as much annually as those who were not regular attendees (\$2,151 and \$964, respectively).

## ECONOMIC OUTLOOK: ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD CONTRIBUTION

Are you worried about not having enough money in the future?

No	\$2,205
Yes	\$1,201

## GIVING IN THE UNITED STATES, 2000

Percentage of households contributing to charity	89%
Average annual household contribution*	\$1,620
Percentage of household income given*	3.2%
Average contribution among volunteering households*	\$2,295
Percentage of households asked to give	56%
Percentage of households that gave when asked	95%

Note: All giving numbers are for households.

\* Based on contributing households only.

## YOUTH INVOLVEMENT INFLUENCES GIVING

Annual Household Contribution by Youth Involvement

Yes	\$1,869
No	\$1,219

## ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD CONTRIBUTION BY RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE

Attend Religious Services Regularly

Yes	\$2,151
No	\$964

- Relating to the general state of the U.S. economy, households in which the respondent reported being worried about having enough money in the future gave significantly less than those that do not worry. The average household contribution from "worried" households was \$1,201, while the average for "unworried" households was \$2,205. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents reported being worried about the economy.
- Among the 60 percent of respondents with Internet access, 13 percent used the Internet to find out about charitable organizations. Of this subgroup, 12 percent actually made a donation via the web. While online giving is likely to grow in the future, these online donors still repre-

sent a small portion of the online community (less than 2 percent).

## METHODOLOGY

The *Giving and Volunteering in the United States 2001* survey was a telephone survey of 4,216 adult Americans 21 years of age or older conducted in the months of May through July of 2001 by Westat, Inc., for Independent Sector. The interviews asked about individual volunteering habits in the 12 months prior to the survey and about household giving during the year 2000. For the purposes of this report, volunteering is dated 2000.

The data collection and sampling methodology for this survey represent a significant change from those used in prior *Giving and Volunteering* surveys. Some of the major changes include:

- The 2001 survey used a different survey company than past surveys (Westat instead of Gallup), and used a different survey methodology (a random national digitized dialing telephone survey rather than a block clustering method and in-home interviews).
- A change in the weighting procedures was implemented with the 2001 survey. In this survey Independent Sector used two different weighting schemas, one for households and one for individuals. Respondents were asked two very different sets of questions, one set related to household giving and the other to personal volunteering. For this reason, all giving data were weighted to represent the number of households, 105 million, and all volunteering data were weighted to represent the non-institutionalized adult population, 195 million.
- Another major change is that this survey was of adults age 21 and over, while previous surveys included people age 18 and over. This change has the effect of removing from the analysis people at the lower end of the giving scale, but also reduced

the volunteering figures by excluding 18-to-20-year-olds.

- Finally, this year Independent Sector refined the survey instrument, including clarifying the wording of some of the questions. The new wording was intended to help respondents better understand the survey questions and assist recall, therefore allowing the capture of more accurate data.

The above changes, taken in total, mean comparisons to prior *Giving and Volunteering* studies cannot easily be made. While Independent Sector understands the importance of maintaining trend data, the cost of conducting in-home interviews became prohibitive. Thus originated the decision to make a number of other improvements in the survey and methodology as new trend-line data is established beginning with this survey.