



April 29, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Chris Warkentin, Chair
Standing Committee on Access to Information,
Privacy and Ethics
House of Commons
131 Queen Street, Room 6-37
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Warkentin:

RE: WE Charity

I write to provide information and documents requested during my appearance, along with my brother Craig Kielburger, before the Standing Committee on March 15, 2021. We attended on behalf of WE Charity to answer questions about the Canada Student Service Grant (“CSSG”).

The chart below provides WE Charity’s responses to each of the requests identified in the list compiled by the Clerk of the Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics provided on April 6, 2021.

No.	Request	Response
1.	The communications the Kielburgers had with Katie Telford in their official capacity as the founders of the WE organization.	WE Charity has confirmed that the only communication between Craig or Marc Kielburger, and Katie Telford, in 2020 was an email dated April 13, 2020 and attached at Tab A .
2.	The fees associated with outsourcing translation or having bilingual staff or resources for the CSSG in French in Quebec, and any documents or contractual obligations between WE Charity and the federal government with regard to	<p>The budget template provided by the Federal Government to WE Charity as part of the CSSG did not include budgeting for translation costs, bilingual staff or bilingual resources.</p> <p>However, the vendors list provided by WE Charity to the Federal Government on June 8,</p>



	providing this service in French in Quebec	<p>2020, included budgeting the following amounts:</p> <p>1. ITC Translations Canada – translation service for program resources. - \$70,000-\$95,000</p> <p>2. VersaCom – support for specialized program translation requirements - \$25,000-\$30,000</p>
3.	The approximate amount spent on the Canada 150 volunteering campaign video featuring Prime Minister Trudeau produced by Door Knocker Media.	WE Charity's Canada 150 program included the production of ten videos, each featuring a Canadian encouraging volunteerism and/or highlighting a social cause (environment, blood donation, LGBTQ+ etc.). Based on WE's Charity's best available records, the total cost was \$127,000 plus HST for production of the ten videos and other relevant support for the Canada 150 activities, including various PSA formats and the editing of the videos for the Canada 150 event held in Ottawa.
4.	Written authorization, which may be forwarded to the RCMP, that WE Charity authorizes the RCMP to disclose if they have contacted the Kielburgers or anyone in your organization with respect to the Canada Student Service Grant.	Craig Kielburger and Marc Kielburger did not provide an undertaking to provide a written authorization and are not in a position to answer such a request.
5.	The number of communications that WE Charity had with the federal government in April 2020.	As Craig Kielburger stated in his testimony responding to this request, on September 25, 2020, WE Charity provided the Finance Committee with all communications between Craig Kielburger, Marc Kielburger, Dalal Al-Waheidi, Scott Baker and Sofia Marquez, and Cabinet Ministers and their ministerial staff, related to the CSSG. These documents can be downloaded at the link enclosed in the email attaching this letter.
6.	Examples of high-ranking non-Liberal [politicians] who appeared at WE events.	WE Charity's practice was to extend an invitation to WE Day events to the office of the Governor General, office of the Prime Minister (to be clear both PM Harper and PM Trudeau), offices of various Premiers, and offices of



		<p>various Mayors, based on geographic relevancy to the province or city where the WE Day was hosted and regardless of their political affiliation.</p> <p>Examples of non-Liberal politicians who appeared at WE events include Brian Bowman, Brian Pallister, Michael Lake, Heather Stefanson, Russ Marchuk, David Eggen, Gregor Robertson, Rachel Notley, and Wab Kinew, among others.</p>						
7.	A copy of the reports that Mission Measurement LLC provided to WE Charity on the project, the Free the Children alumni study	A copy of the Free the Children Alumni Study conducted by Mission Measurement LLC in March of 2012 is attached as Tab B .						
8.	The name of the assistant who wrote Mr. Craig Kielburger’s e-mail, through LinkedIn, to Mr. Ben Chin.	Victoria Morton was the assistant who drafted Craig Kielburger’s note to Mr. Ben Chin.						
9.	The itemized total amount that WE organizations and its affiliates paid in transportation fees, accommodations and any other expenses related to Ms. Sophie Grégoire's attendance at the WE event in March of 2020 in London	<p>The itemized expenses paid by WE related to Ms. Sophie Grégoire's attendance at a WE event in March of 2020 in London, UK is below:</p> <table><tr><td>Flights:</td><td>\$18,134.54 CAD</td></tr><tr><td>Hotel:</td><td>£924 GBP (\$1,617 CAD)</td></tr><tr><td>Total:</td><td>\$19,751.54 CAD</td></tr></table> <p>The flight amount quoted above included flights for both Ms. Grégoire and Ella-Grace Trudeau.</p>	Flights:	\$18,134.54 CAD	Hotel:	£924 GBP (\$1,617 CAD)	Total:	\$19,751.54 CAD
Flights:	\$18,134.54 CAD							
Hotel:	£924 GBP (\$1,617 CAD)							
Total:	\$19,751.54 CAD							

I trust this is satisfactory.

Yours very truly,

Marc Kielburger

From: Marc Kielburger </O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=067370ACFA8F4777B20D0C95F2EC6CD7-MARC.KIELBU>
To: katie.telford@pmo-cpm.gc.ca
Sent: 4/13/2020 8:15:43 PM
Subject: Thank you for your leadership

Dear Katie,

I know that this is a challenging time, but I hope you and your family are well.

There's certainly no need to respond, but I wanted to send a note of gratitude for your leadership and incredible work during this new reality we find ourselves in.

We have always been so impressed with the level of passion and care you bring to supporting Canadian families, but over the past few weeks we could not be more grateful for your work and that of Prime Minister Trudeau. From the daily briefings to the new initiatives launched, we have been closely following your work and we truly appreciate everything you have been able to do and continue to do to support the people of Canada. It is such a proud moment, as a Canadian, to know we have such a strong individual leading and taking care of our country. Thank you for all that you and the Prime Minister do.

We are working hard to do our part to support Canadian families and young people during this challenging time. As our organization continues to navigate through so many of the challenges brought on by this pandemic, we cannot begin to express how much we appreciate the work you continue to advocate for to support the mental health of young people in our province. We ourselves are retooling our own work to be able to support young people to help minimize the trauma of pandemics as they grapple with fear and stress due to school being suspended, social distancing, and loved ones falling ill.

Again, certainly no need to respond but simply wanted to be in touch. Of course, we're so grateful for your leadership and wish you the best in this fight. Keep healthy and well.

Very best wishes,

Marc Kielburger



Co-Founder
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For additional assistance please contact:

| Executive Assistant to Marc Kielburger
t: 1.416.389.7739 | lauren.martin@we.org

WE makes doing good, doable.

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Free The Children Alumni Study

Mission Measurement, LLC
March 2012

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Executive Summary

Free The Children seeks to empower young people around the world to fulfill their potential to be agents of change. They believe that young people, as the next generation of voters, consumers, teachers and economic drivers, are the key to shaping a culture of caring, active citizens. And they believe in order to create positive change around the world we must first shift the attitudes and priorities here in North America.

In the summer of 2011, Mission Measurement conducted a survey of Free The Children (FTC) alumni: Youth who participated in Free The Children programs over the last decade and have since moved in to their adult lives. The goal of the survey was to assess the degree to which involvement with Free The Children has lasting impact. More specifically, to answer the question: Do Free The Children alumni become global citizens?

Free The Children defines global citizens as individuals who possess a life-long commitment to pro-social behavior, incorporate a broad worldview into their daily decisions and are dedicated to giving back locally and globally. Across the three outcome areas which Free The Children believes form the path to global citizenship—Character and Sense of Self, Academic Achievement and Community Engagement—the majority of alumni consistently report experiencing changes in their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. For example, through participating in Free The Children's youth programs:

- 90% of alumni developed/strengthened the belief that they are **responsible for addressing social justice issues**
- 61% of alumni reported that their involvement with Free The Children **influenced their educational path**
- 80% of alumni reported that they had **volunteered in the prior year** and for an average of 13 hours per month

In addition, we also found that young people who were involved more deeply than others were more likely to agree or strongly agree with the impact statements in this study. Ultimately, Free The Children believes that it creates an experience that transforms the lives of the youth who participate. **When asked, "Would you describe your experience with Free The Children as transformational?" 73% agreed that it was.**

Alumni also described the impact of their involvement in their own words. Many were effusive in their praise of the impact Free The Children had on their lives. One alumnus, who attributes her desire to become an international human rights lawyer to her involvement, explained,

*"Free the Children has **broadened my perspective** on life. Along with **completely changing my career path**, I have **gained friends, memories, life skills** and most significantly, the **confidence** that I can achieve whatever I set my mind to. I now consider the little things while in pursuit of the big ones. Free the Children has made me a **stronger, kinder and overall better person.**"*

As another said: **"All I can say is thank you. Thank you for changing my life."**

Introduction

Theory of Change

Note, the following description of the Free The Children Theory of Change was written by Free The Children for the purposes of this report. It reflects the organization's belief of how their youth-serving programs based in North America advance their mission.

Born out of 17 years' experience working with young people to empower them to be agents of change, Free The Children's youth programs create a generation of active global citizens who care and contribute to communities home and abroad. We provide youth the information, tools and support network to make pro-social choices and become part of a movement aimed at systemic world-change.

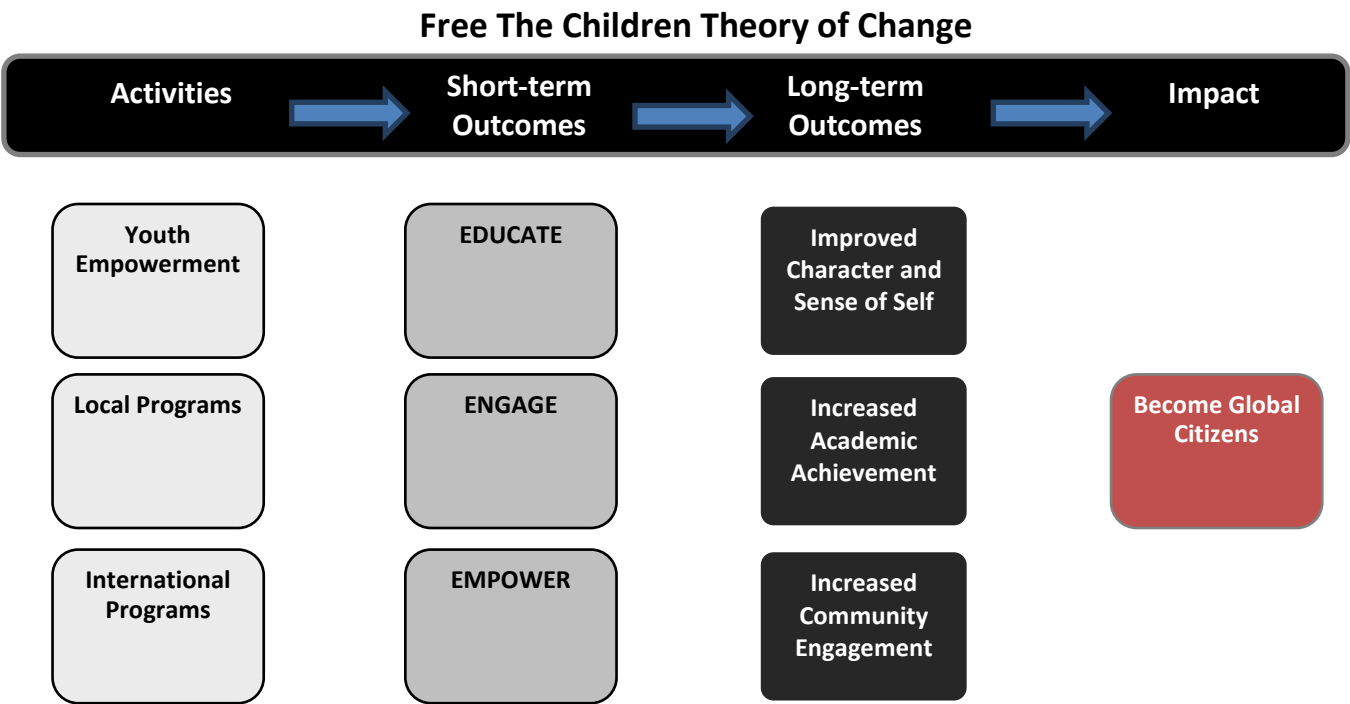
To meet these goals, Free The Children's programming is built on three guiding principles—*Educate, Engage, Empower*—meant to improve character and sense of self, increase academic achievement and community engagement. This model expands and deepens youth knowledge about social justice issues (Educate), provides opportunities for youth participation in tangible social justice actions through a variety of activities and programs (Engage), and ultimately builds youth skills and informs attitudes and beliefs about the role they can play in making a difference in their communities and our world (Empower).

During their involvement with Free the Children, youth learn about social issues and gain the skills critically evaluate world issues information. We directly educate students about social justice through providing free youth-centred resources such as issue guides, curricular materials, video, motivational presentations and classroom activities. Free The Children facilitates among youth the development of an intellectual connection to the issues, breaking down large global concepts and shedding light on the implications for the world if major issues are not prioritized by their generation. We seek to arm young people with a depth of knowledge so they may become effective advocates for causes they care about.

It can be overwhelming and even disempowering to learn about complex topics without a clear avenue to get involved. Once equipped with a deepened knowledge of the issues, Free The Children provides youth tangible and meaningful ways for youth to make a difference and share their passions with others. We provide youth-friendly campaigns comprised of educational, fun, simple and tangible activities and follow-up impact reporting that shows youth how they are making a difference. Young people feel a sense of personal success and growth when they are able to connect their intellectual passions with evidence that they are making a difference.

Given a broader worldview and clear outlets for action, youth are empowered by the learning and action they are engaged in, and begin to shift behaviors over the long-term. Free The Children connects youth with like-minded peers, with whom they develop friends and a support network. Youth start making different decisions while still in school, such as a recalibration of plans for future education, often in anticipation of a career that includes giving back to the community. As youth move into future stages of their life, they remain active in the local community, are more politically aware and act as socially responsible consumers.

Throughout the stages of *Educate, Engage and Empower*, many youth assume leadership roles and act as influencers, amplifying their own involvement by engaging others with their cause. This creates a positive feedback loop whereby youth develop new skills and benefit from a stronger sense of self, while adopting a broader worldview. This ongoing transformation encourages youth to continue being agents of change and places them on the path of lifelong global citizenship.



Study Design

In the course of implementing and managing their various programs, Free The Children regularly measures the outputs produced and short-term outcomes experienced by participating youth. The resulting reports¹ show that Free The Children's programs do successfully educate, engage and empower participating youth. Ultimately, Free The Children would like to show that its alumni become global citizens, individuals who take a broad worldview in their decision-making, who hold social and community values in high regard, and who are actively engaged in their community.

The purpose of this study is to examine the degree to which Free The Children's theory of change is borne out in the experiences of the youth they have served. Because global citizenship is a life-long endeavor and because Free The Children alumni are still young adults, we chose to focus the study on the long-term outcomes articulated in the Theory of Change, allowing us to examine the links between involvement with Free The Children and the lasting impact it seeks to have on its alumni.

We considered three core research questions to guide the development of our approach:

1. *Does Free the Children create a lasting impact on youth participants?*
2. *What is the nature of the lasting impact?*
3. *How does the lasting impact vary based on the person's level of involvement with FTC?*

To address these questions, Mission Measurement conducted an online survey of Free The Children "alumni": individuals who had been engaged with Free The Children while in elementary and/or high school, but who have since moved on to future stages of their lives beyond high school. The survey was sent to all alumni for whom Free The Children had an email address, 4,121 youth in total.

While Free The Children has been engaged with youth for over a decade, its programming has evolved over that time. Early grassroots experiences were solidified in the Educate, Engage, Empower model, which now serves as the basis for all youth campaigns and programs. Partnerships with schools and school boards have informed more sophisticated classroom materials. Frequent use of social networks allows youth greater opportunity to connect with each other directly. Notably, We Day, an educational and inspirational event held in areas across Canada was introduced in the 2007-08 school year. It was at that time that Free The Children began to regularly collect email address from program participants. As such, the majority of the target population with available contact information was first involved with Free The Children in 2007-08 or later.

The online survey contained questions that primarily took one of two forms:

- A statement about the possible impact of having participated with Free The Children with which the respondent could disagree, somewhat agree, agree or strongly agree
- A yes/no question of whether the respondent had a given experience or taken a certain action

We also provided a number of opportunities for the respondent to elaborate on his/her response to certain questions to gain deeper insight into their experience in the form of a free response field.

¹Disclosure: Mission Measurement has supported Free The Children in its ongoing measurement efforts since Summer 2010

Respondent Demographics

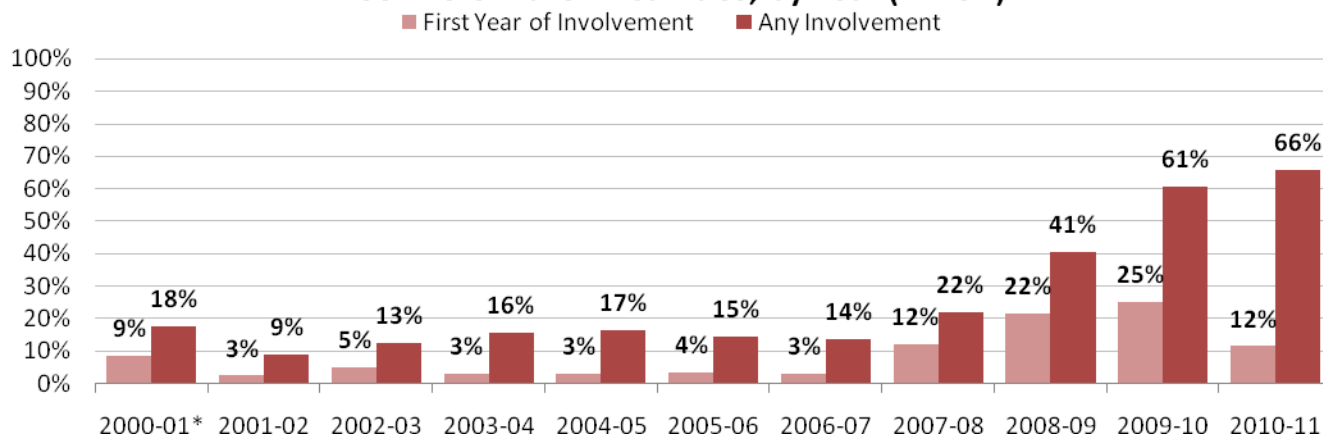
A total of 197 Free The Children Alumni completed the survey and are broadly representative of the population of alumni who were invited to participate in the study.

Of the 197 respondents who fully completed the survey:

- 91% currently live in Canada, 7% in the United States, 2% other
- 100% have graduated high school, 74% in 2010 or 2011; the remaining 26% graduated between 2001 and 2009
- 54% of respondents have at least some experience at university
- 24% have attained a Bachelor's Degree or higher
- 11% have completed or are currently pursuing an advanced degree

The majority of respondents have been involved with Free The Children in recent years, including 70% who had their first year of involvement in the 2007-08 school year or later.

Frequency of Respondent Participation in Free The Children Activities, by Year (n=197)



Analytical Approach

All alumni surveyed were engaged with Free The Children in some capacity. The responses of the full group of respondents will therefore give us a baseline understanding of the impact of participation.

However, there is significant variation in the ways and degree to which alumni were involved with Free The Children. Research of programs designed to positively impact youth consistently shows that increased involvement in both duration and intensity tends to lead to greater impact. To assess the degree to which this dynamic occurs among Free The Children alumni, we included questions that allowed us to categorize alumni along these dimensions.

We assessed duration by categorizing respondents by the number of years in which they were involved. While various types of involvement do require different amounts of time, the evolving nature of the programs makes it impossible to assign any specific values to specific activities. However, we can fairly say that participation over multiple years clearly indicates a longer-term involvement.

- **“Duration” Categories (Length of Involvement):** The number of years in which a respondent was involved
 - 1 year (18% of respondents)
 - 2 years (30%)
 - 3 years (28%)
 - 4+ years (24%)

Intensity, or the depth of involvement, can be more difficult to define. Programs differ significantly in terms of what they entail and youth experience them in different ways. Ultimately, a more intense level of involvement is one in which the youth spends more time and energy participating.

While a count of ways of involvement might approximate this, there is significant variation in the commitment each type of involvement requires. For example, an alumnus who attended We Day or who participated in a fundraising or awareness-raising activity at school may have given just a few hours of his or her time. Accordingly, campaign participation and We Day attendance were the most commonly cited ways of involvement (see chart, below).

Therefore, to assess intensity, we’ve focused on types of involvement that, by their nature indicate a greater commitment. Alumni who took a leadership role in a campaign or event, or who volunteered overseas with Adopt a Village(AAV)², committed a significant amount of time, energy and sometimes money to do so. And there were comparatively fewer alumni that participated in these ways.

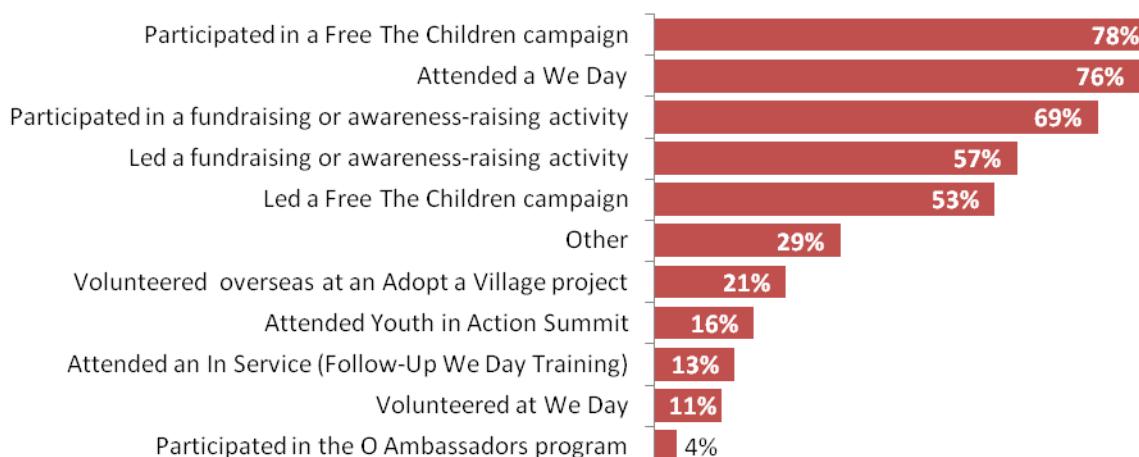
² Adopt a Village is Free The Children’s international development program. The model takes a holistic approach to break the cycle of poverty in rural and marginalized areas in seven countries across the globe. Volunteers with Adopt a Village participate in activities such as infrastructure construction, leadership development and community engagement.

- **“Intensity” Categories (Depth of Involvement)**
 - Leadership: Served in a leadership position in a campaign or other Free The Children activity (68% of respondents)
 - Adopt a Village Volunteer: Volunteered overseas at an Adopt a Village project (21%)

Of the 41 respondents (21%) that volunteered on an Adopt A Village overseas trip, 32 had played a direct leadership role as an activity organizer in their Free The Children chapter as well. Because of this and due to the comparatively intensive nature of the Adopt A Village trip experience, this group can be considered the most highly engaged.

We should note that these dimensions are not independent. The longer an alumnus was involved with Free The Children, the more likely it is that he or she was a leader and/or traveled overseas as an Adopt A Village volunteer to visit the projects he or she had fundraised for at home. Therefore, where we see similar trends across both duration and intensity or between the two aspects of intensity, we cannot easily identify one of these as the primary driver of shifts in attitudes or behaviors. Rather, each should be treated primarily as indicators of overall engagement.

Free The Children Activities Frequency of Respondent Participation, by Activity (n=197)



In the sections that follow, we examine the impact of involvement with Free The Children in each of the three long-term outcomes: Character & Sense of Self, Academic Achievement and Community Engagement. We will address the first two research questions, “Does Free The Children create a lasting impact on youth participants,” and “What is the nature of the lasting impact” in the introduction to each section. We will also highlight the overall findings and areas of particular strength and weakness. We will then provide a more detailed assessment of the findings by subject to address the third question, “How does the lasting impact vary based on the person’s level of involvement?”

Character & Sense of Self

Introduction & Key Findings

Free The Children's programs reach students of all types: elementary and high school, urban and rural, and from many ethnic heritages. But all students share a common situation—they find themselves in the process of forming a personal identity and developing an understanding of their place in the world. Meanwhile they deal with social pressures that can make doing “the right thing” hard to do, or worse, “un-cool.” Free The Children recognizes this challenge and understands that helping youth develop character and a strong sense of self lays a foundation for lasting empowerment.

Free The Children's programs are social by nature, bringing together youth from different backgrounds or from across social groupings. By forming new relationships with both adults and other students they may not have otherwise associated with, participants develop networks of like-minded people who can provide support and positive reinforcement. Some youth who do not gravitate toward “typical” after school activities such as sports and drama clubs, elect to join their local Free The Children chapter and find common ground through supporting Free The Children's mission.

With acceptance from their peers, and with support from Free The Children, youth can become increasingly comfortable with their forming identities and more confident in their skills and abilities. And given this confidence youth can develop a sense of personal responsibility for creating change and making the healthy life decisions that will allow them to do so.

Key Findings

As a result of involvement with Free The Children:

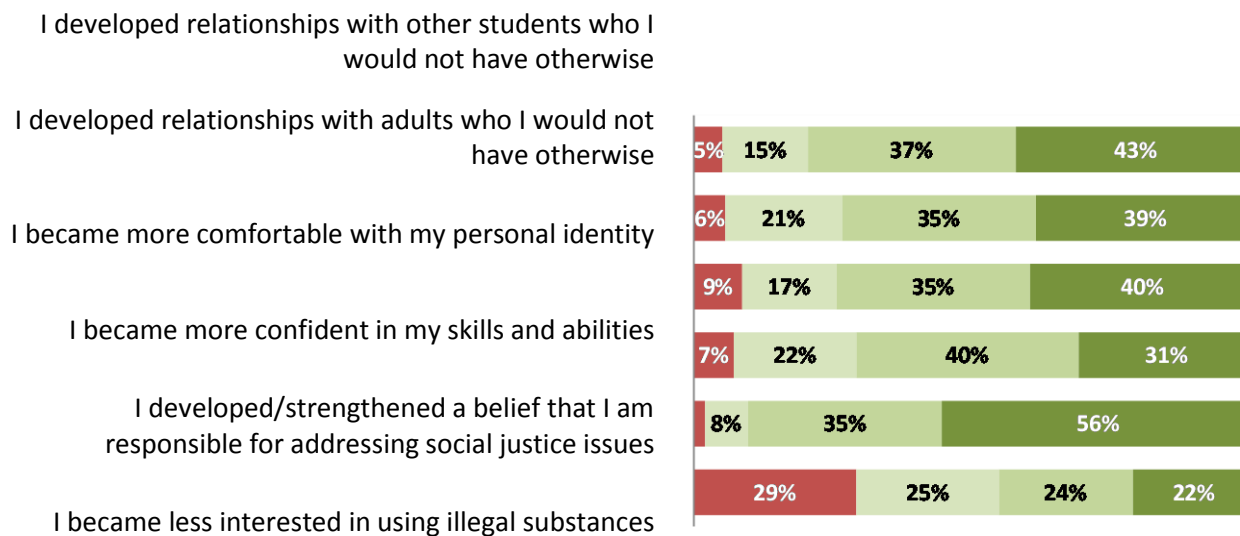
- 90% of alumni developed/strengthened the belief that they are **responsible for addressing social justice issues**
- 80% of alumni **developed relationships with other students** and 74% with adults with whom they would not have otherwise
- 75% of alumni **became more comfortable with their personal identity**

In nearly every area, Alumni that were more deeply involved were more likely to agree that their participation had a positive impact.

“Free the Children changed the trajectory of my life. Like many of my peers as a teenager, I thought very little about others and focused on very materialistic goals. Becoming involved with FTC made me aware of the impact my decisions have on the world. I hope to leave the world a better place for future generations, and I'm confident that my actions will result in positive change.”

Character & Sense of Self Statements

Percent of Respondents by Level of Agreement



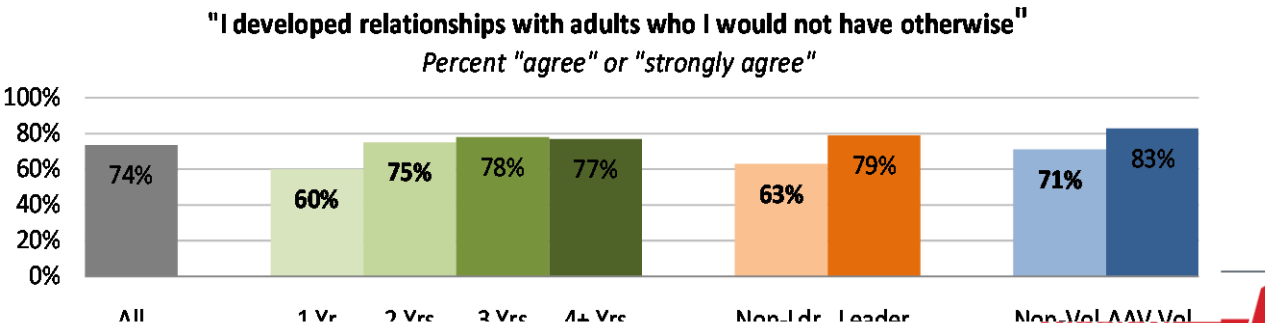
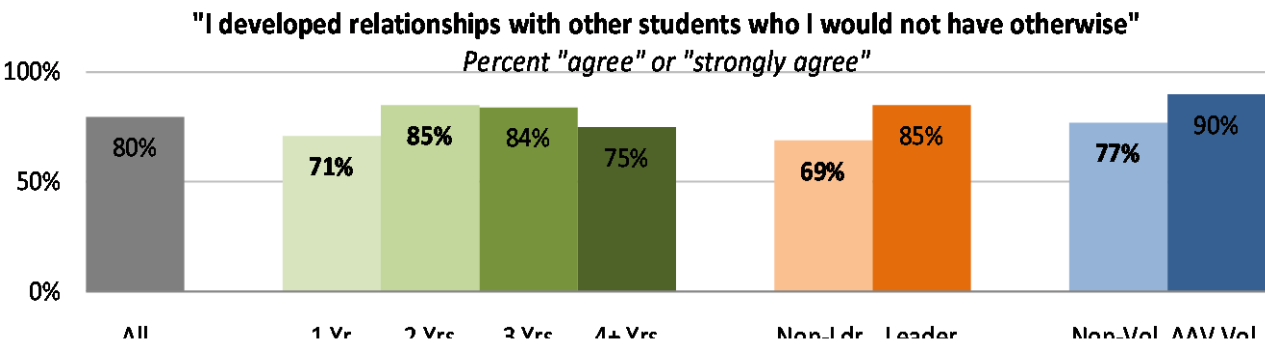
Personal Relationships

- I developed relationships with other students who I would not have otherwise
- I developed relationships with adults who I would not have otherwise

80% of Free The Children alumni respondents report having developed relationships with other students that they would not have otherwise, as a result of their involvement; 74% developed relationships with adults. As Free The Children’s programs generally provide students the opportunity to learn and engage in a group setting, this is not an unexpected finding. These relationships serve as an avenue for youth to gain new insights in to how others view the world.

We would expect that as youth participate for a longer period of time and in deeper ways that they would be more likely to develop new relationships. This trend is borne out by the data, as we observe increases in the percentage who agree and strongly agree corresponding with increases in the number of years of involvement and among youth leaders and Adopt A Village volunteers compared to their non-leader and non-volunteer peers.

There is one notable outlier among these data, as a lower percentage of alumni who were involved for 4+ years reported having developed relationships with other students than their peers who were involved for 2 and 3 years. We suspect this is due to the comparatively low rate of participation in a We Day event among the alumni with 4+ years of involvement. Due to its introduction in 2007-08, only 52% of ‘4+ Years’ alumni attended a We Day, compared to 85% of their peers. As a field-trip experience, the We Day event is particularly social in nature and may be an especially strong driver of the formation of peer relationships.



Self-Confidence

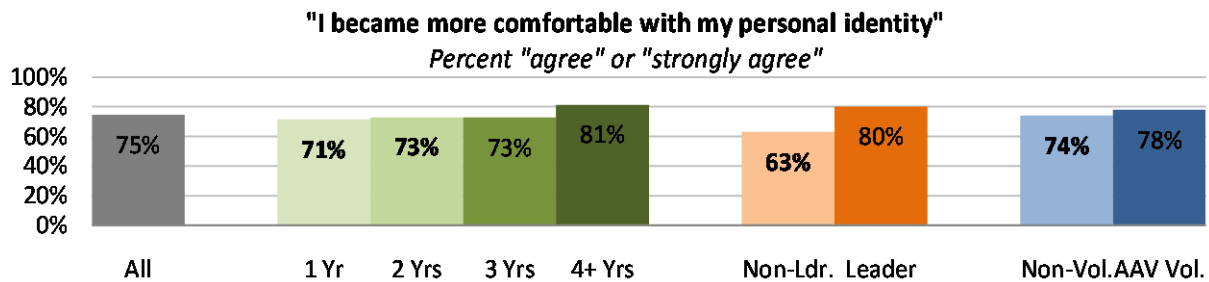
- I became more comfortable with my personal identity
- I became more confident in my skills and abilities

A majority of alumni also report increased comfort with their personal identity (75%) and greater confidence in their skills and abilities (71%) as a result of their involvement with Free The Children.

We also again see a positive relationship between dosage and likelihood of agreement. This relationship is most pronounced between those youth who were leaders of events, activities or campaigns and those who were not. Leaders were 17% more likely than non-leaders to report having become more comfortable with their identity and 18% more likely to report having become more confident in their skills and abilities. This suggests that while participation itself is a way for youth to strengthen their sense of self and awareness of personal capability, taking a leadership role in a Free The Children chapter increases the impact.

An alumnus who led both a campaign and other activities at her school over the course of two years of involvement described the impact of Free The Children on her and suggested that these skills will serve her well throughout her life.

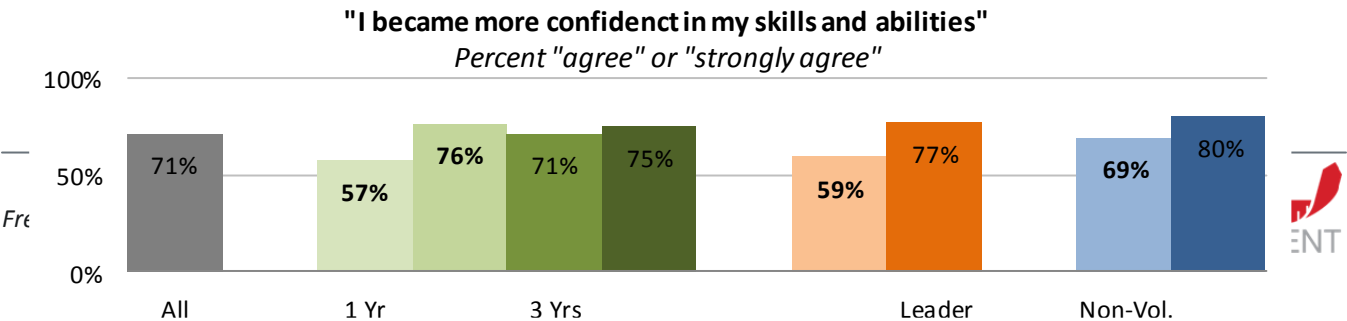
"My involvement with FTC has given me so many leadership skills and confidence skills. I am so proud of the accomplishments the club at my school has made, and it will be these skills that I have developed that will always stick with me..."



Responsibility for Others

- I developed/strengthened a belief that I am responsible for addressing social justice issues

Free The Children believes that as youth become more educated, engaged, and empowered and

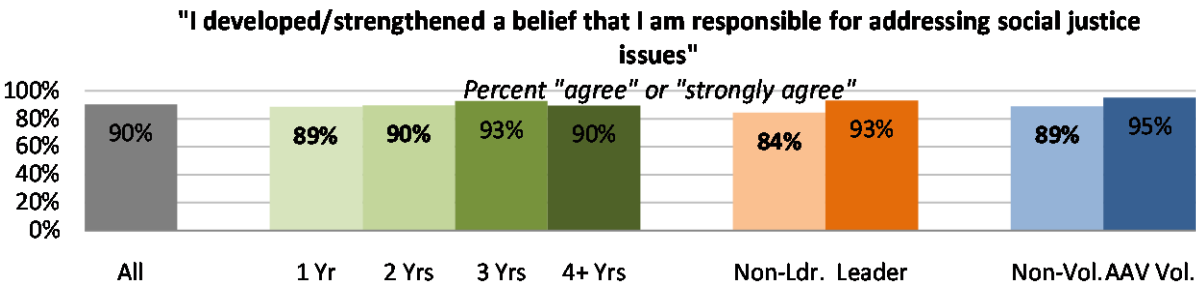


develop new relationships and become more self-confident, they will begin to take on a sense of personal responsibility for addressing social justice issues. The data bears out this belief, as more respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this sentiment than any other in this outcome area, totaling 90% of all respondents.

We again observe a positive effect of greater dosage of programming, with the greatest increase (9%) coming for those who were leaders. This reinforces our earlier observation regarding the importance of leadership in driving Character & Sense of Self outcomes. However, agreement among the non-leader group is still quite high.

An alumnus who attended two leadership conferences and went on a service trip to India described the impact of Free The Children on her worldview,

“Free The Children changed the trajectory of my life. Like many of my peers as a teenager, I thought very little about others and focused on very materialistic goals. Becoming involved with FTC made me aware of the impact my decisions have on the world. I hope to leave the world a better place for future generations, and I'm confident that my actions will result in positive change.”



Illicit Behavior

- I became less interested in using illegal substances

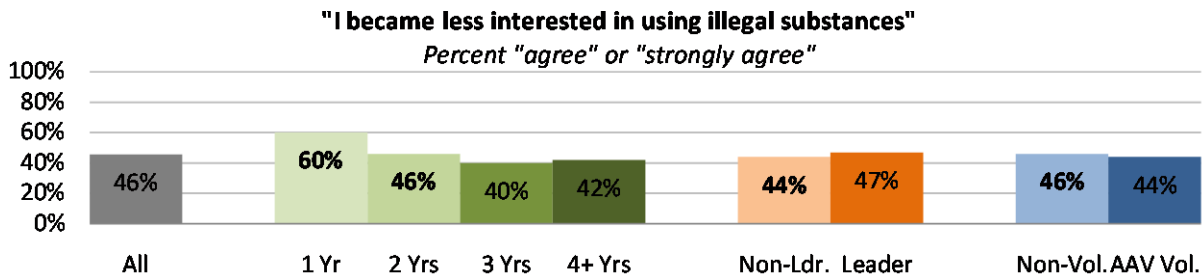
The use of illegal drugs serves to increase the likelihood for an ambitious youth to fail to reach his or her goals. Thus Free The Children hopes to see the youth with whom it works lose interest in partaking in illegal drug use so that they may focus their efforts and energy in a positive way. While anti-drug use messages are not explicitly part of Free The Children programming, nearly half of all respondents (46%) report that their involvement did lead them to become less interested in using illegal substances.

This effect was especially pronounced among those alumni involved for just one year. It is unclear why these alumni were so much more likely to report having become less interested in using illegal substances. However, given that so many of the alumni involved for just one year were involved in the more recent years, it is possible that this reflects a shift in Free The Children’s programming, such as an increased emphasis on active community engagement and campaign participation that limits opportunity for drug use.

There are some clear examples of the role Free The Children can play in helping keep youth away from use of illegal substances. One alumnus described how she grew up under very tough personal circumstances and described the profound impact Free The Children had on her life. While in school, she started a Free The Children chapter and traveled overseas with Adopt A Village multiple times. Since then, she has obtained a Bachelor’s Degree and is a regular volunteer in her local community. As she explained,

“There is no doubt that I would not be nearly as academically accomplished if it wasn't for the leaders at Free The Children being there for me. I had no mentors other than them, and they are the people who kept me off drugs and in school even when, at times, I was homeless and very much alone.

The staff gave me confidence, taught me to believe in myself, and showed me other things to care about... Free The Children had given me a safe space to be nurtured and escape from the painful context of my childhood.”



Academic Achievement

Introduction & Key Findings

A lack of awareness and knowledge of social justice issues serves as a barrier between youth and the challenges facing the world around them. Thus, Free The Children uses education about these issues as the basis for their programming. Free The Children works closely with teachers, schools and school boards as they implement their programs. While its curricular materials have direct connections to stated learning outcomes and desirable skills, as well as help students meet credit requirements, their content is not explicitly academic in a more conventional sense of contributing toward academic achievement in areas such as literacy and numeracy.

Through activities, media and curricular supplements, Free The Children helps youth build an “intellectual connection” with the issues: helping them to gain a better understanding about what’s going on, why it’s happening and what can be done about it. In turn, Free The Children observes that youth are excited to learn about subjects that are global in nature and require immediate action. Teachers are able to use Free The Children’s learning materials to help meet educational requirements.

By pairing inspirational messages and interactive mediums such as video to increase knowledge, Free The Children hopes to help youth to become more engaged with their educational experience. With a more fully developed understanding of the world around them, youth can begin to connect the dots and see how what they’re learning in the classroom will help them create change in the world.

With the dots connected, Free The Children believes youth are more likely to identify a career that allows them to marry their skills and abilities with their passions. And with a greater sense of where they are headed, youth are better prepared to pursue the educational path that will get them there.

Key Findings

Because of their involvement with Free The Children:

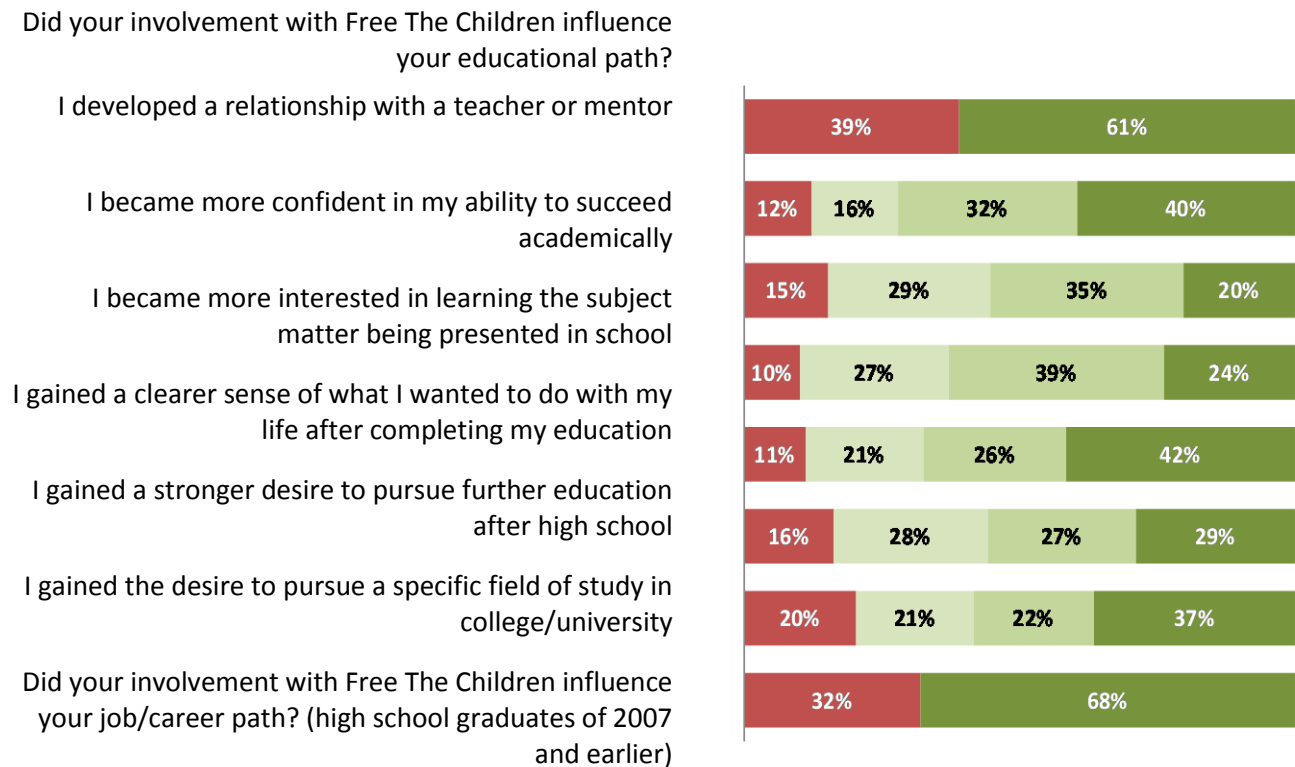
- 72% of alumni **developed a relationship with a teacher or mentor**
- 68% of alumni gained a **clearer sense of what they wanted to do with their life**
- 61% of alumni had their **educational path influenced**

In nearly every area, Alumni that were more deeply engaged were more likely to agree that their participation had a positive impact.

*“[FTC] broadened my knowledge of the world around me and made me more aware of what is happening to kids in third world countries that are my age. **This makes me want to strive and achieve at university** and be able to succeed in my goals in order to help my own family and those less fortunate as an adult. **It has shown me that I must take the opportunities I have now and strive for success** and not abuse what I have because in other parts of the world, others don't have the same opportunities”*

Academic Achievement Statements

Percent of Respondents by Level of Agreement



Educational Path

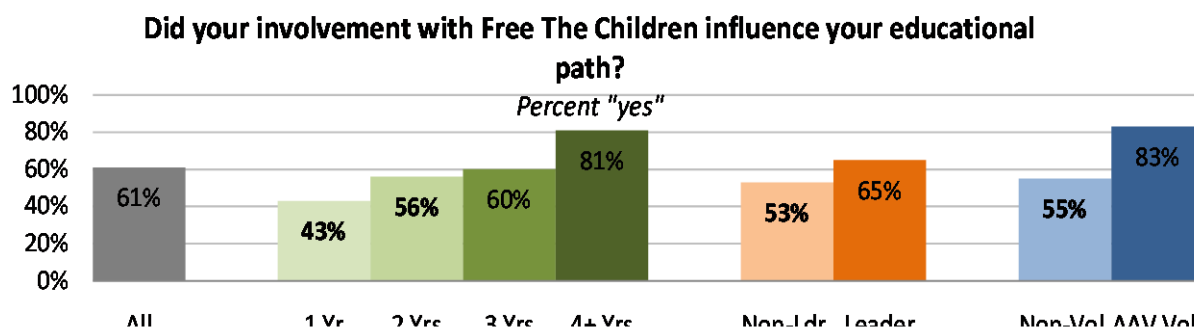
- **Did your involvement with Free The Children influence your educational path?**

Free The Children's impact on alumni in the area of academic achievement can be seen in many different places. We will examine a few of them. However, because Free The Children programs are more beneficial to education and the pursuit of education generally, rather than specifically designed to further advance academic achievement, we wanted to provide a more general opportunity for the alumni to reflect on the impact of their involvement with Free The Children on their educational experience. Presented with the overarching question, "Did your involvement with Free The Children influence your educational path?" 61% of respondents said "yes."

On each of the dimensions of dosage, years of involvement, leadership and Adopt A Village volunteerism, there was a pronounced positive relationship between dosage and likelihood of agreement that Free The Children influenced their educational path. This was especially evident with years of involvement, where alumni involved for 4+ years were nearly twice as likely than those involved for 1 year to agree (81% vs. 43%) and on volunteer status, where Adopt A Village volunteers were 28% more likely to agree (83% to 55%).

Interestingly, this relationship with dosage was more varied for the specific level of agreement statements. But we are able to get a clearer picture of the impact of involvement by looking at the explanations youth provided along with their "yes" or "no" response. The comments show that while the most common way in which alumni were impacted was in gaining greater clarity over where they were headed.

"Getting involved with Free The Children opened me up to new experiences, interests and passions I had previously not considered or properly explored. I would say Free The Children very much shaped my educational experience and changed my outlook on what kind of role I'd like to play in the world after graduation. I credit many of my best qualities to my involvement in Free The Children during my high school years."



Relationship with a Caring Adult

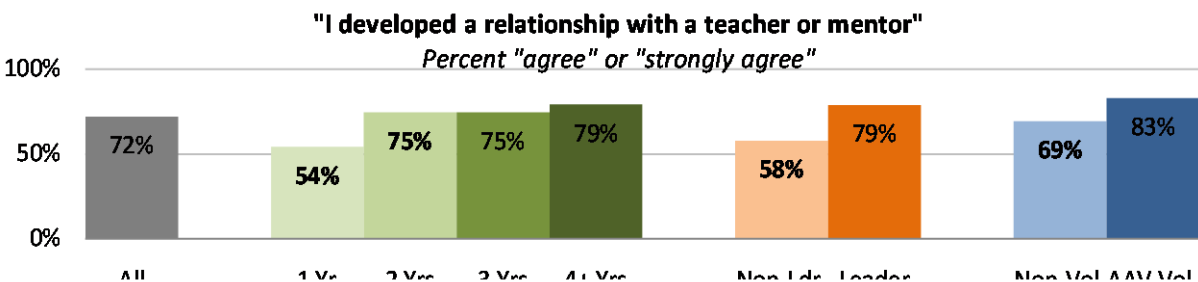
I developed a relationship with a teacher or mentor

A relationship with a teacher or mentor can provide a student with a role model and be a source of stability and guidance as he or she looks ahead to his/her academic and professional future. 72% of alumni report having developed such a relationship through their involvement with Free The Children.

This is particularly evident with alumni who were involved for multiple years or who were more deeply engaged. The greatest differences can be seen with those students involved for a second year and those who were leaders compared to their peers. Considering that relationships take time to develop, these differences are not surprising. However, given the time dynamic and that teenagers are occasionally known to be somewhat stand-offish towards adults generally, it is notable that more than half of alumni with just one year of involvement reported having developed such a relationship.

One alumnus describes the importance of her extensive time with Free The Children and the relationships she developed,

I was involved in Free The Children from when I was 9 until I was around 20... I definitely would not be the person I am today without Free The Children. I grew up knowing people like Joe Opatowski³, which was in itself a huge privilege. I feel I am better equipped to support myself as an adult because of the training and mentorship that I received when I was little.



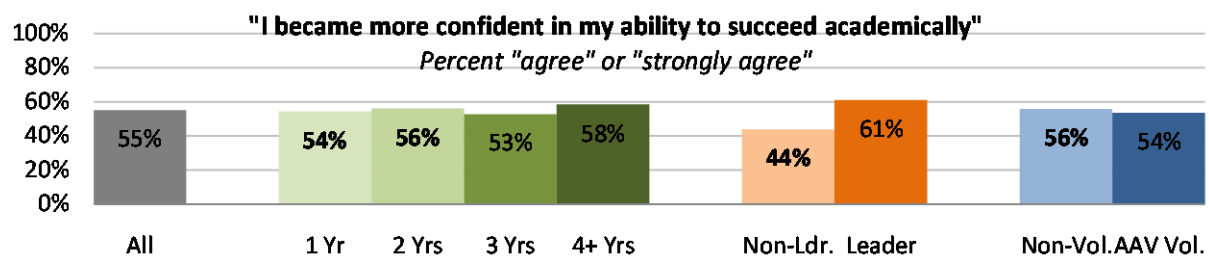
³ Joe Opatowski worked for Free The Children in the early 2000s as an inspirational speaker and was killed in a car accident in October, 2004.

Academic Confidence

- **I became more confident in my ability to succeed academically**

Just over half of alumni (55%) report that their involvement with Free The Children led them to become more confident in their ability to succeed academically. There was a pronounced difference between those who were leaders and those who were not. Leaders were 17% more likely to agree or strongly agree. The rate of agreement was consistent across the length of involvement and Adopt A Village volunteerism.

This mirrors findings in the Character & Sense of Self outcome area, where leaders also were notably more likely to report increased confidence. It seems likely that the confidence-boosting effect of being a leader positively impacts the youth in many areas of his/her life, including confidence related to the ability to succeed academically. This supports the design of Free The Children programs to educate, engage and empower, suggesting that the greatest benefits are realized through empowerment.



Academic Engagement

- I became more interested in learning the subject matter being presented in school

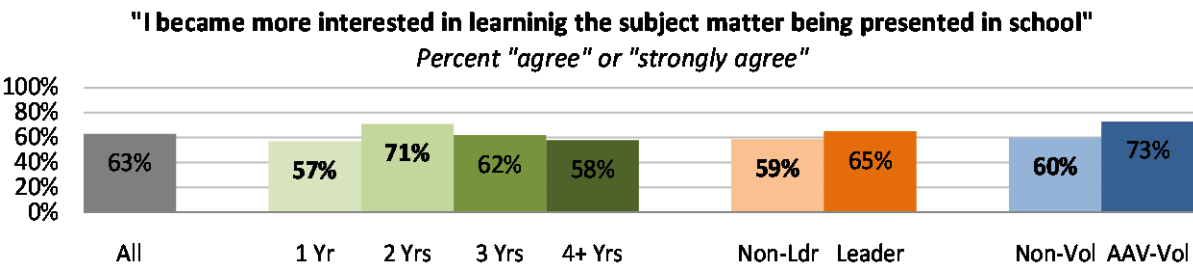
Approximately two-thirds of alumni (63%) report becoming more interested in learning the subject matter being presented in school as a result of their involvement with Free The Children. It appears that increased engagement generally leads to greater levels of agreement, particularly for those alumni who volunteered with Adopt A Village (73% vs. 60%). Interestingly, alumni who were involved for exactly two years were more likely to agree than their peers who were involved for one, three or four or more years. It is unclear why this would be the case.

Alumni did not tend to discuss their interest in school subject matter in their comments. However, many alumni discussed the role Free The Children had in supporting their general curiosity and interest in social justice issues education. It is possible that continued involvement serves to further increase curiosity and help students connect what they have learned and seen through involvement with Free The Children with the subject matter being presented in school.

A possible explanation of the trend in agreement among alumni involved for a longer period of time is that because continued engagement with Free The Children creates greater awareness of social justice issues, participating youth develop interests not directly addressed in their curriculum. Thus, it may not be fair to assume that non-agreement reflects less interest in the subject matter per se, but rather that a broader set of interests against which they compare the specific subject matter they are being taught.

One alumnus who graduated high school in 2011 after having led a Free The Children activity during the year explained how Free The Children helped bring her education to life,

"I regret that I only got involved in Free The Children in my last year of high school. The experience has been unforgettable and since then I have seen what my religious course in school had been teaching me in action. It is different in reading about it on paper than it is in reality."



Career Plans

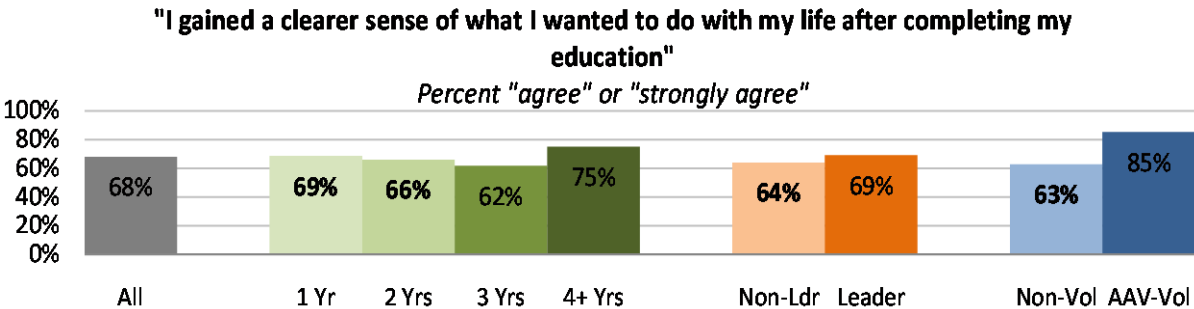
- I gained a clearer sense of what I wanted to do with my life after completing my education

Just as we saw alumni articulate the influence of involvement in Free The Children on their educational paths, we also saw students incorporate social justice issues into their life ambitions. Accordingly, 68% of alumni reported having gained a clearer sense of what they wanted to do with their lives after completing their education as a result of involvement with Free The Children. An alumnus who was very involved with Free The Children during 2009-10 and 2010-11 described the impact of her involvement,

"I'm heading for school for international development. Before being involved with FTC, I had no idea who I wanted to be or what I wanted to do. Now I realize exactly what I want to do. I want to help people. I want to impact the world. I want to build sustainable developments. I want to see the world and I want to be the change in the world."

Adopt A Village volunteers were especially likely to agree, with 22% more volunteers having agreed or strongly agreed (85% vs. 63%). Leaders were also more likely to agree than their peers, but only slightly so (69% vs. 64%). The group of alumni with four or more years of involvement was also more likely to agree than their peers; however, there was a slight decline from one to three years of involvement.

While the scale of the decline by years of involvement is relatively small and could simply reflect natural variation, these responses may be the result of two overlapping trends. As youth gain a broader worldview, they may see an increasingly broad range of possibilities, leading to less clarity. Meanwhile, the increases associated with length of involvement, leadership status and Adopt A Village volunteerism may be indicators of youth having already begun to develop new ideas about their future careers and choosing to pursue opportunities to further develop them. Because those alumni who are AAV volunteers are more likely to have been involved for 4+ years, the observed increase among the 4+ year alumni may actually be the effect of volunteerism showing through that correlation and overwhelming the countervailing trend of slight decline associated with years of involvement.



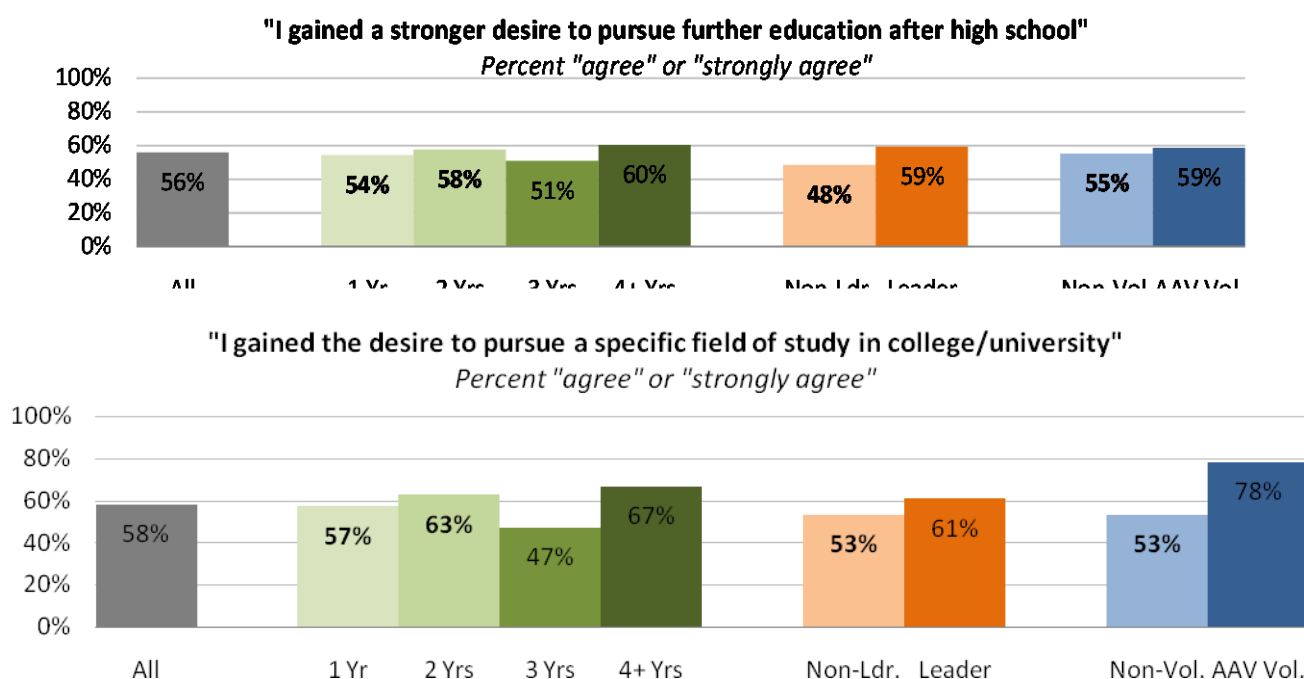
Post-Secondary Education Plans

- I gained a stronger desire to pursue further education after high school
- I gained the desire to pursue a specific field of study in college/university

As students gain increased clarity about the direction of their lives, Free The Children expects that they are more likely to have a strong desire to pursue higher education and to have a specific field of study in mind. Overall, we see similar responses to both statements, with an overall level of agreement 56% and 58% respectively. For both statements, we see a slight increase in agreement with increased dosage and comparably higher rates of agreement among those alumni with higher intensity.

The most notable difference between the two responses was in the percentage of Adopt A Village Volunteers who agreed or strongly agreed. For the statement regarding a stronger desire to pursue further education, there was just a 4% difference. However, for the desire to pursue a specific field of study, 25% more alumni who were volunteers agreed (78%) than those who were not volunteers (53%). This matches the trend observed regarding alumni who traveled overseas having a clear sense of how they want to spend their life.

This suggests that while Free The Children has a positive impact on the desire of students to pursue higher education generally, with over 50% agreement by all alumni, the primary effect of greater dosage is seen with those students who travel overseas as Adopt A Village volunteers. For those students, the experience appears to result in (or correlate with) a shift in what the student wants to do with his/her life and a corresponding shift in the field of study required to pursue that career.



Career Choice

- **Did your involvement with Free The Children influence your career choice?**
 - **Which description best describes your current or most recent job?**

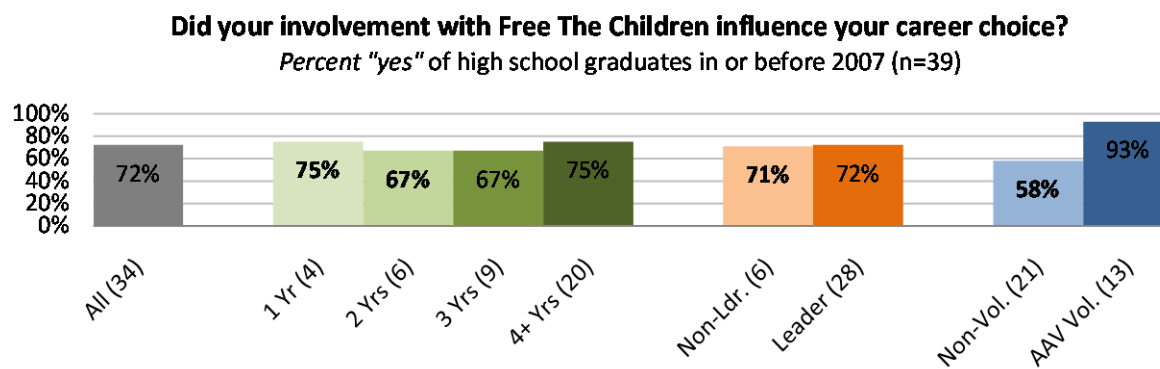
As with the question regarding educational path, we also asked alumni to respond “yes” or “no” regarding influence on career choice. Surprisingly, given the rates of agreement with the other questions, fewer than 50% of all alumni responded “yes”. However, the question phrasing may have been problematic.

While all respondents had the opportunity to make decisions about their educational path since their involvement with Free The Children, the majority of respondents are recent high school graduates. Many are still in the midst of their education and thus had not yet begun a career. Thus, a “no” response to the question may reflect not having yet made a career choice, rather than Free The Children not having any influence on that decision.

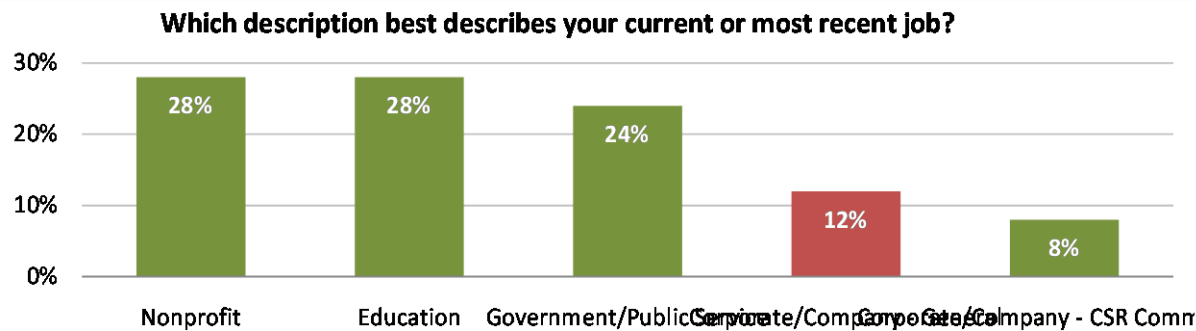
To attempt to account for this, we selected just the 39 alumni who graduated in or before 2007. This allows for the time to obtain a bachelor’s degree and either enter the workforce or pursue an advanced degree, which usually is done in pursuit of a specific career.

The responses of these 39 alumni more closely reflect what the alumni reported elsewhere in this area. Of the 39 older alumni, 28 (72%) report that their involvement with Free The Children influenced their career choice. While there is little observable increased impact of years of involvement or leadership, there is a large (35%) difference between the percentage of Adopt A Village volunteers who responded “yes” (93%) and the percentage of those who were not volunteers who did (58%). While these data are less reliable due to the smaller sample sizes, the stark difference suggests that volunteering with Adopt A Village is a strong indicator that a youth is having or will have his or her career choice influenced.

We would note that we cannot definitively state that the trip itself was the cause of the influence. A logical argument can be made that youth who had been influenced by their prior involvement were those likely to choose to volunteer.



To gain greater insight into this dynamic, we also asked respondents to provide information about their current or most recent employer in an attempt to better understand the types of careers alumni pursued. Of the 28 alumni who indicated Free The Children influenced their career choice, 25 have found employment. Of these 25, 23 (92%) are in jobs related to social justice. These jobs include working for a nonprofit (7; 28%), in education (8; 28%), in the government/public service (6; 24%), or for a private company/corporation chosen because of the company’s focus on or commitment to social responsibility (2; 8%).



Community Engagement

Introduction & Key Findings

Through involvement with Free The Children, youth practice the types of behaviors that are indicative of global citizenship. Free The Children's hope is that with greater knowledge and passion for social justice and with new skills and the confidence to use them, alumni will continue to stay engaged with social justice in their communities into and throughout adulthood.

Engagement in one's community can take numerous forms. Certainly alumni can remain engaged with the nonprofit sector through organizations like Free The Children, charitable giving and formal volunteerism. And as adults, alumni have the opportunity to become civically engaged through voting. But engagement does not require interaction with a large institution like the government or a nonprofit organization; it can happen on a more personal, everyday level as well.

People are in need of assistance all around us. An alumnus can serve social justice by tutoring a young student or taking an older neighbor to the doctor. But to take it a step further, one does not need to directly engage any other person. Everyday behavior, such as buying a soft drink or taking a shower has an aspect of social justice within it. Making informed consumer choices serves a vote for social responsibility everywhere.

Key Findings

Because of their involvement with Free The Children,

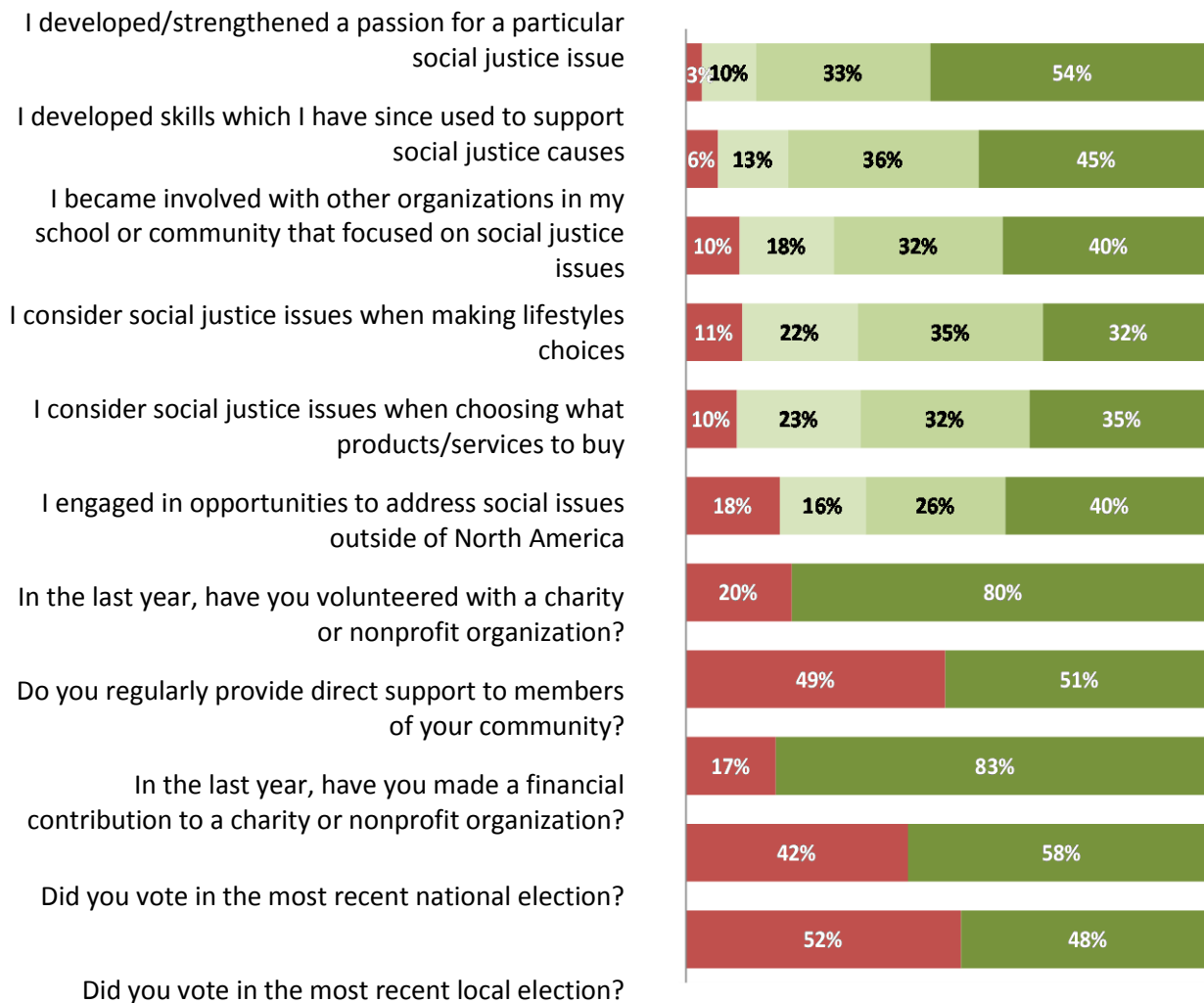
- **80%** of alumni **volunteered** in the last year and did so for **more than 150 hours** over the course of the year on average
- **83%** of alumni made a **financial contribution** to a nonprofit or charity in the last year, roughly 10% more than their peers
- **79%** of voting age alumni report having **voted** in the most recent national election, **double the rate of their peers**
- **68%** of alumni **consider social justice issues when making lifestyle and consumer choices**

In nearly every area, Alumni that were more deeply engaged were more likely to agree that their participation had a positive impact.

"Due to my involvement with Free the Children I have been inspired to 'vote with my dollar', and make socially conscious choices in as many aspects of my life as possible. For example, when I purchase a product, I remind myself to check where/how that product was produced. Were people/the environment harmed in the making of this product? Did it have a negative impact on individuals or the environment?"

Community Engagement Statements

Percent of Respondents by Level of Agreement



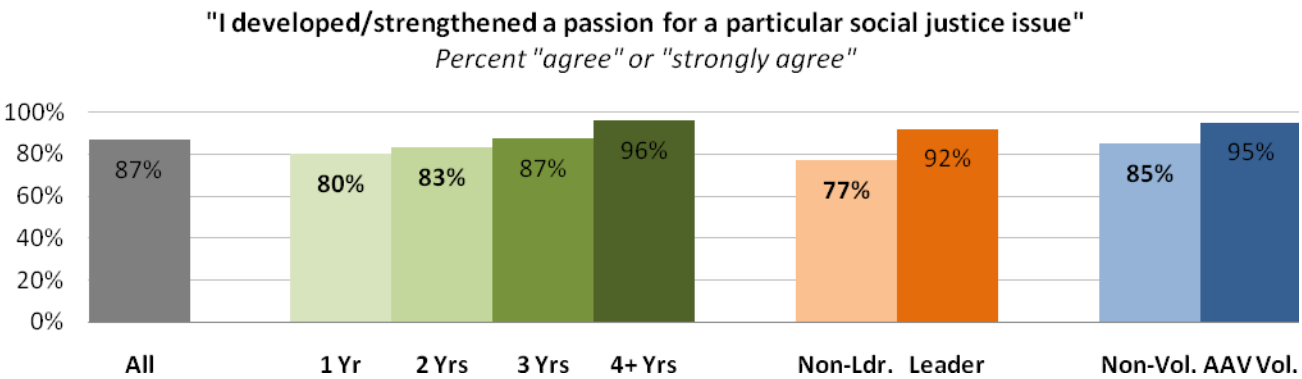
Social Justice Passion

- I developed/strengthened a passion for a particular social justice issue

It stands to reason that particularly as one gains greater freedom in his or her life as an adult, passion serves as the starting point for action. There are many things one can do with his or her time and passion for a particular thing shapes what we choose to do.

While Free The Children was borne out of the issue of child labor, its programs are designed to promote awareness and build knowledge on the wide range of issues facing youth world-wide, from access to clean water in rural Africa to hunger in urban Canada. Youth are encouraged to explore their own interests and to develop a passion for an issue or issues that particularly resonate for them.

The vast majority of alumni, 87%, report that they developed or strengthen a passion for a particular social justice issue through their involvement with Free The Children. As we observed with the other outcomes, the likelihood to agree with this statement clearly correlates with increased levels of involvement, including 96% of alumni that were involved for four or more years, 95% of Adopt A Village Volunteers and 92% of those who served in a leadership role.



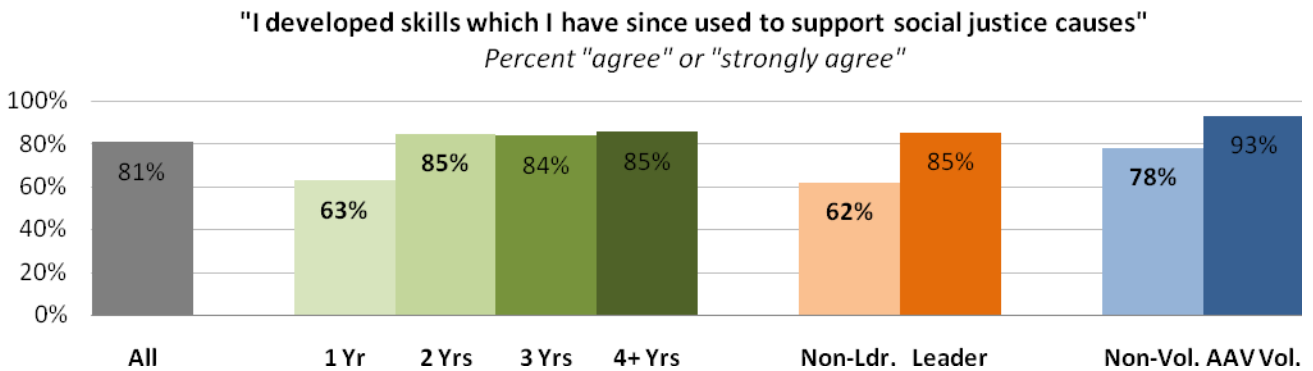
Social Justice Skills

- I developed skills which I have since used to support social justice causes

Developing a passion for a particular social justice issue can be seen as a first step down a path towards taking action to create change. But in addition to helping youth develop a passion, Free The Children also seeks to empower youth with skills that they can use in support they are passionate about. 81% of alumni agree or strongly agree that they have developed skills which they have since used to support social justice causes.

The general trend between engagement and agreement is again present. In dosage, this shows as a large increase between one year of involvement and two or more. Upon closer examination, we see that while the overall agreement percentage was consistently at ~85% for two more years of involvement, the proportion of that ~85% which was comprised of ‘strongly agree’ consistently increased from 39% at 2 years to 47% at 3 years to 69% at 4 or more.

The difference between leaders and non-leaders was also quite large, as leaders were 23% more likely to report having developed skills that they have used to support social causes.



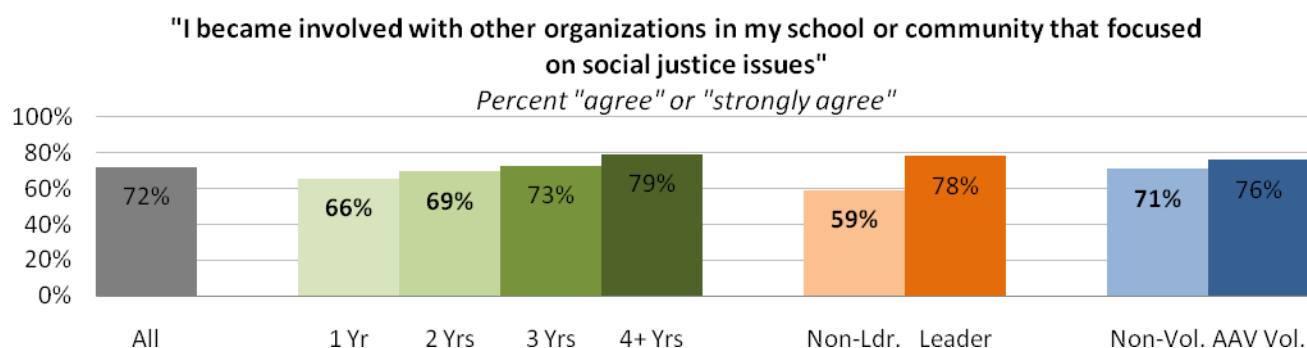
Ongoing Engagement

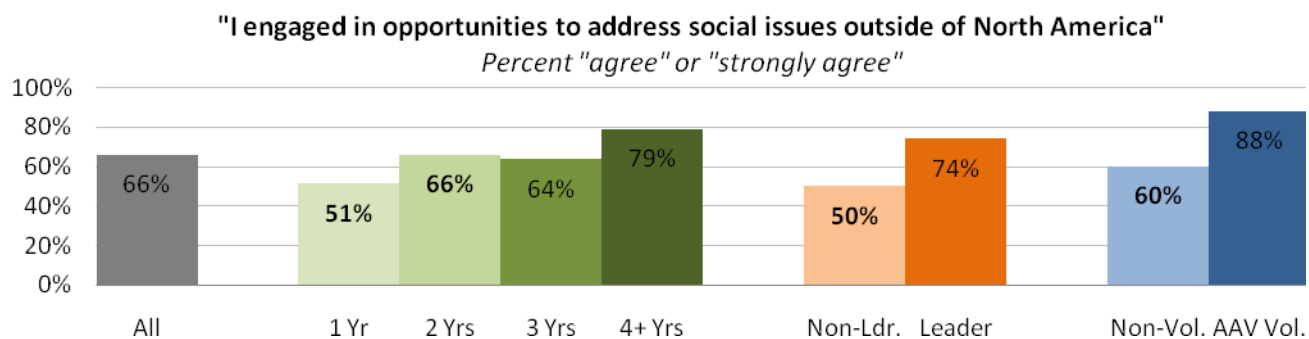
- I became involved with other organizations in my school or community that focused on social justice issues
- I engaged in opportunities to address social issues outside of North America

Free The Children hopes to see its alumni continue to stay engaged with social justice issues through other opportunities, both local and global. To assess both the degree to which alumni were staying involved and in what ways, we asked them to report on their involvement locally, with other organizations in their school or community, as well as globally through international opportunities outside of North America.

More than 70% reported having become involved with other local organizations because of their involvement with Free The Children. The spread between those who were involved for just one year and those involved for four or more years was 13%, with consistent increases from 66% to 79%. Leadership is a particularly strong indicator, as alumni who held leadership positions were 19% more likely to have been involved with other local organizations than their non-leader peers. By contrast, Adopt A Village volunteers showed a relatively small increase of just 5%. This suggests that engagement with local organizations may be driven in part by a personal experience with or interest in a locally-relevant social justice issue, while Adopt A Village volunteers feel most strongly connected to global projects.

This interpretation is reinforced by responses to the statement regarding ongoing global engagement. While the overall agreement rate was similar at 66%, the spreads observed in each of the three engagement areas were larger. Only 51% of alumni with just one year of involvement engaged in global opportunities, while 79% of those involved for four or more years engaged in opportunities outside of North America, a spread of 28%, more than double that seen with local engagement.



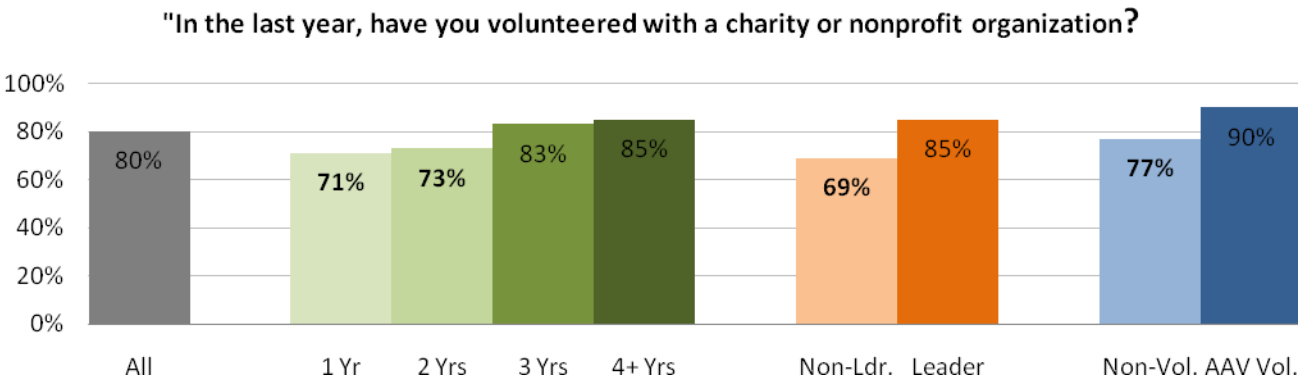


Volunteerism

- In the last year, have you volunteered with a charity or nonprofit organization?
 - For approximately how many hours per month do you volunteer?
- Do you regularly provide direct support to members of your community?

While we asked respondents to directly associate their involvement with Free The Children with their other social justice activities, the Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (CSGVP)⁴ provided us an opportunity to make a more direct comparison with a control group. The statements presented to alumni in this section directly mirror the questions asked in the 2007 CSGVP, the most recent survey for which data is available.

In 2007, 46% of all Canadians and 58% of those aged 15-24 volunteered. By comparison, 80% of Free The Children alumni report having volunteered with a charity or nonprofit organization within the last year. Using the age 15-24 category as a rough comparison group, Free The Children alumni are 22% more likely to have been involved in the social sector. Looking at the levels of engagement within the Free The Children alumni group, we see the same patterns as we’ve observed elsewhere. Alumni involved for a longer period of time and in a deeper way are more likely than their alumni peers to have volunteered. But even those alumni with the least amount of engagement were still more likely than their overall Canadian peers to have volunteered in the last year.



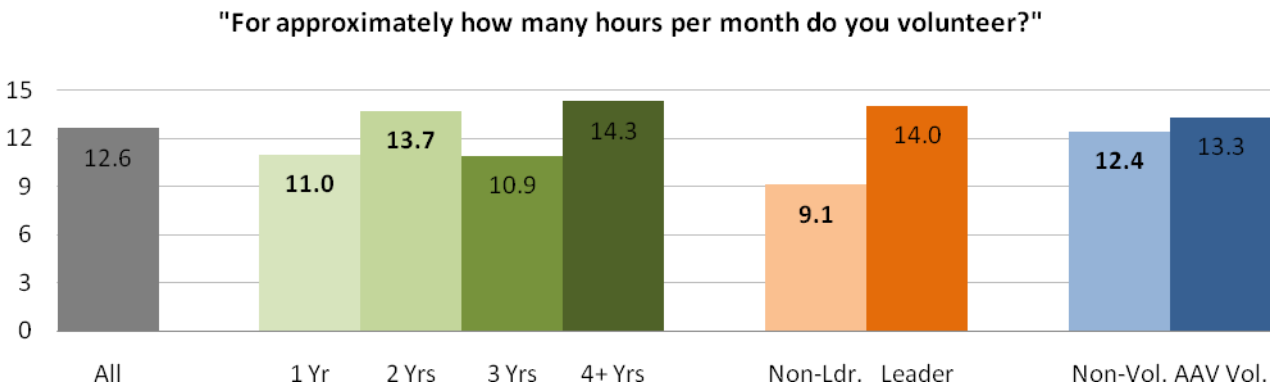
In addition to being more likely to have volunteered than their peers, Free The Children alumni also volunteered for more hours over the course of the year. We asked alumni volunteers to select a range which best described the average number of hours of they volunteered per month: ‘Less than 5’, ‘5 to 14’, ‘15 to 34’ or ‘35 hours or more’. These ranges roughly approximate the ranges used by the CSGVP to describe the distribution of volunteer hours. To allow for comparison against the CSGVP figures, we then calculated an estimated number of hours per year by taking a representative value for each category: 2 hours, 10 hours, 25 hours and 40 hours.

⁴ “The Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (CSGVP), formerly the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering, and Participating (NSGVP), provides the most comprehensive look at the contributions of Canadians to one another and to their communities ever undertaken in Canada. The CSGVP is the result of a partnership of federal government departments and agencies and voluntary sector organizations that includes Imagine Canada, Volunteer Canada, Statistics Canada, Canadian Heritage, Health Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, and the Public Health Agency of Canada.” <http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca/>

In 2007, the average Canadian volunteer spent 166 hours volunteering over the course of the year, or 13.8 hours per month. However, there is a strong correlation between age and hours spent volunteering. Canadians between the ages of 15 and 24 averaged just 11.5 hours per month in 2007. This is the most appropriate comparison group for current Free TheChildren alumni. The alumni averaged 12.6 hours per month, over an hour more per month than their Canadian peers.

There was a clear relationship between level of engagement with Free The Children and the number of volunteer hours, most notably with those who had been leaders. Leaders averaged 14 hours per month, compared to just 9.1 hours per month for non-leaders. That translates to 59 hours more over the course of the year. There was a less clear relationship between the number of years an alumnus was involved with Free The Children and the amount of volunteerism, though alumni with 4+ years of involvement did report the greatest average number of hours per month of any sub-group: 14.3 hours.

Adopt A Village volunteers reported more hours of volunteerism per month than non-volunteers, though the difference was notably smaller than for leaders and non-leaders. Adopt A Village volunteers reported an average of a 1.1 hours per month more than non-volunteers, 13.3 to 12.4. Given our earlier finding that there is a strong relationship between having a passion for a specific issue and overseas volunteering, it is perhaps not surprising to see the lack of a strong effect here. We can reasonably presume that there is generally less opportunity to have a meaningful volunteer role in North America with an organization focused on international development. So while Adopt A Village volunteers may be more generally inclined to volunteer with other nonprofit organizations than those who were non Adopt A Village volunteer, they may have less opportunity than leaders to volunteer with an organization that addresses the issue about which they are most passionate.

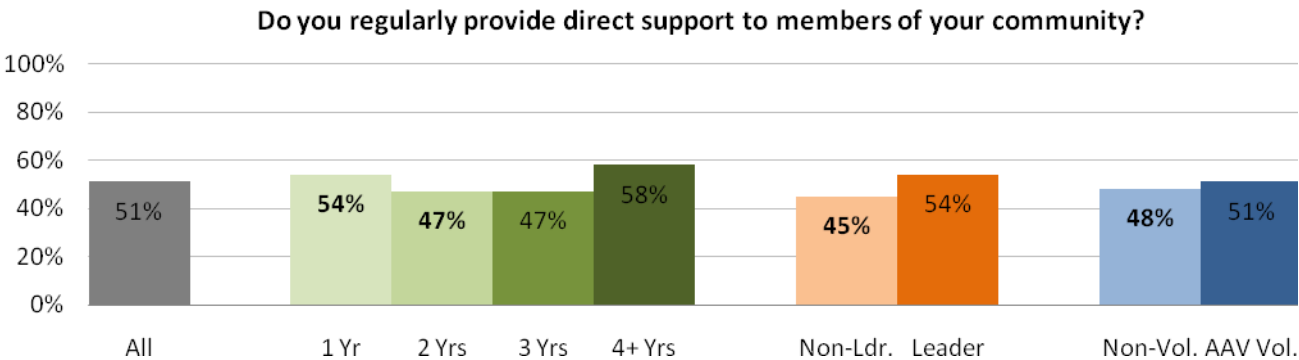


But voluntary social action is not limited to time given in support of a nonprofit or charity organization. People serve their community in more direct, informal ways as well. In addition to asking alumni about their formal volunteering, we also asked alumni to report on direct support provided to members of their community. Direct support can take any number of forms, such as providing tutoring to a younger student or shoveling snow for a neighbor.

Overall, 51% of alumni report “regularly” providing some form of direct support to local community members. By comparison, 49% of all Canadians, and 60% of those aged 15 to 24, report helping others directly at least once per week. We note, however, that these questions were not phrased identically. Therefore, we cannot draw a strict comparison and should treat these figures as roughly equal.

Among the levels of involvement with Free The Children, there is relatively little variation. There is an 11% difference between the highest and lowest rates of direct volunteerism in the dosage groups (47% for 2 & 3 years, 58% for 4+ years), a 9% increase between leaders and non-leaders and a 3% increase between AAV volunteers and non-volunteers.

Given the generally comparable rate of volunteerism among Free The Children alumni and the broader Canadian population and given the relatively small amount of variation by level of involvement, we can surmise that while a majority of Free The Children alumni are directly engaged in supporting their communities, informal volunteerism is likely driven by a broader range of factors.



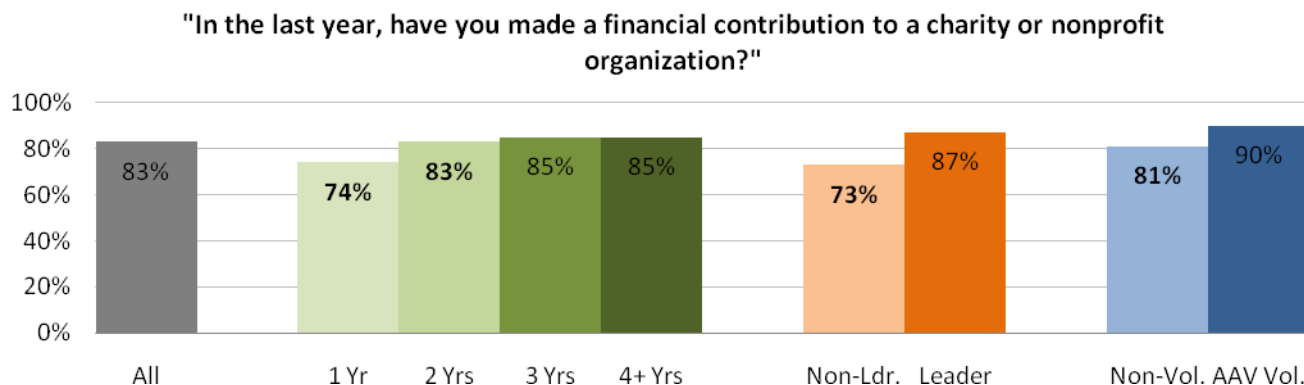
Charitable Giving

- In the last year, have you made a financial contribution to a charity or nonprofit organization?

Volunteerism is a significant way that nonprofits and other socially-minded organizations are able to affect change. However, they also need financial resources to run their programs. In 2007, 84% of Canadians age 15 and older made a charitable gift according to the CSGVP. Older people were more likely to have made a gift than young people, but still 71% of those aged 15 to 24 made a gift.

Free The Children recognizes the importance of financial support and includes fundraising and charitable giving as one of the activities youth can engage in through campaigns and other programs. As youth become alumni, they generally sustain this giving behavior; 83% of Free The Children alumni report having made a gift in the last year, comparable to the Canadian average, but greater than that of the most appropriate peer group. This rate is on par with the giving rate of Canadians aged 25 to 34, suggesting that Free The Children alumni are ahead of the curve and even more will give in the future as they enter the workforce and become more financially stable.

There does appear to be a positive relationship between level of engagement with Free The Children and giving behavior. We see increases on each of the three dimensions of engagement, closely mirroring the rates observed with formal volunteerism, including Adopt A Village volunteers being the most likely to have made a gift (90%).

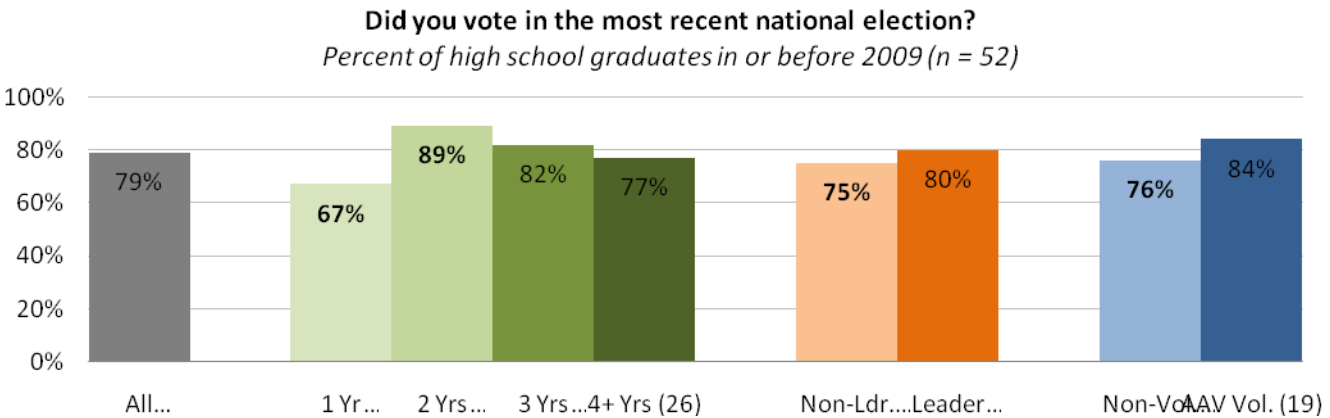


Voting

According to Elections Canada, a non-partisan agency that manages and promotes elections in Canada and reports directly to Parliament, 61% of the Canadian population (of voting age) cast a ballot in the 2011 federal election⁵. We could compare this figure to all Free The Children alumni surveyed and find a very similar voter participation rate, 58%. But this would be misleading. Firstly, not all Free The Children alumni in our survey were of voting age during the 2011 elections; many were recent high school graduates. Secondly, there tends to be a strong relationship between age and voting; young people tend to vote less often than the population at large.

While we did not ask alumni their age, we can proxy for age by narrowing our analysis to those alumni from the high school class of 2009 and earlier to guarantee all alumni analyzed could have voted. Doing this, we see the percentage of Free The Children alumni who report having voted in the most recent national election jumps to 79%, 18% higher than the overall Canadian rate. Free The Children alumni appear more inclined to vote than the average Canadian.

But given the second consideration, the relationship between age and voter turnout, 61% is not the appropriate baseline for the alumni to be compared against either. Elections Canada conducted a study of the 2008 federal general election by demographics⁶ and found that an estimated 38% of Canadian youth aged 18 to 24 voted in 2008. (It should be noted that voter turnout overall was lower in 2008 compared to 2011, but only by a few percentage points). Even accounting for this, Free The Children alumni of voting age appear to have been approximately twice as likely to have voted in the most recent national election as their peers.



We should note, surveys asking people to self-report on voting behavior regularly return reported rates above the actual rate of counted votes. The size of the effect varies, but the self-reported rate can exceed the actual by 20% or more. While we have evidence to suggest that Free The Children alumni

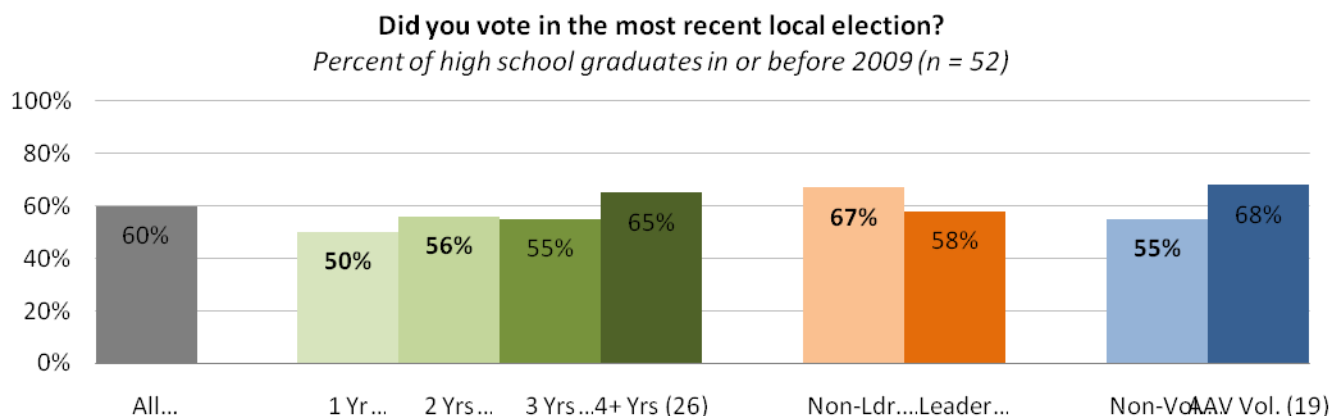
⁵<http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=ele&dir=turn&document=index&lang=e>

⁶http://www.elections.ca/res/rec/part/estim/estimation40_e.pdf

are more likely to have voted than their peers, we cannot be completely confident that the scale of this increased likelihood is as great it would appear to be from this data.

We also asked alumni to report whether or not they voted in their most recent local election. Because Free The Children alumni live in communities across Canada (primarily) and because we did not specify the precise level of election (e.g. municipal vs. provincial or territorial), we cannot set a standard baseline for comparison. However, a brief examination of recent local by-elections (held between general elections to fill vacated seats) analyzed by Elections Canada (2009 and 2010) finds overall voter turnout rates ranged from 22% to 37%. A 2003 study in the United States by Hajnal and Lewis⁷ found that “the existing evidence suggests that turnout in city elections may average half that of national elections.”

Again, we expect that there is some response-bias present in these results and hesitate to draw any strict comparisons. However, it does appear that Free The Children alumni are more likely to vote in local elections than is the general Canadian population.



⁷Hajnal, Zoltan J; Lewis, Paul G (2003).Municipal Institutions and Voter Turnout in Local Elections. Urban Affairs Review, Vol. 38, No. 5, 645-646

Pro-Social Behavior

- I consider social justice issues when making lifestyles choices
- I consider social justice issues when choosing what products/services to buy

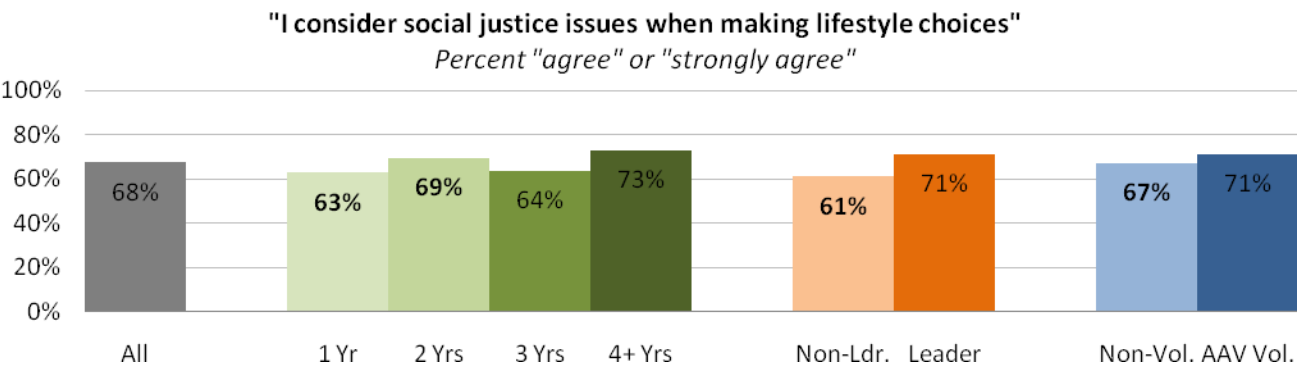
While volunteering, donating and voting are all effective ways to support social justice, they are all just occasional events. However, many social justice issues, if not most, are a product of the way in which people live their lives on a day-to-day basis. Choices such as how long one stays in the shower or what kind of shirt one buys ultimately play in to the broader global picture. As youth participate in Free The Children activities, they are made aware of these connections.

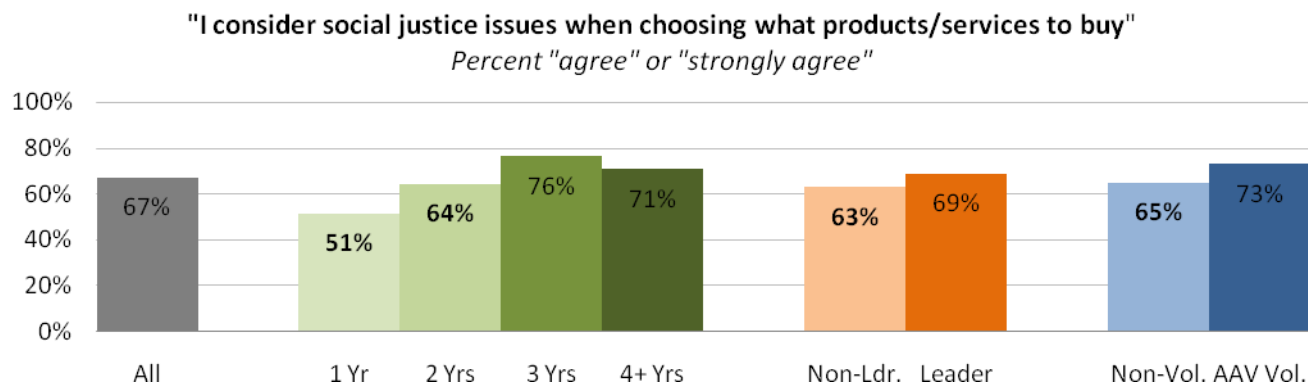
To assess the impact of this increased awareness on their everyday behavior, we asked alumni to report on whether and to what degree they considered social justice when making lifestyle and consumer decisions. The results to both questions were similar, with 68% of alumni agreeing that they considered social justice issues when making lifestyle choices and 67% agreeing for consumer choices.

An alumnus who was a speaker for Free The Children while in school described how she was impacted,

“My involvement with Free The Children helped me become a more socially, environmentally conscious person, from the coffee I drink to wake me up before work, to the social events in which I become involved, to the meals I choose to eat on a daily basis.”

Looking at the levels of engagement, we see a small, but relatively consistent positive relationship. It appears that having deeper engagement does correlate with a greater likelihood of pro-social behavior.





Conclusion

Free The Children sought to better understand whether the youth with whom it has worked over the past decade have become global citizens: adults who are knowledgeable about issues, passionate about social justice and taking action to make a difference. Based on the responses of nearly 200 alumni to the survey we conducted in the summer of 2011, it appears that the answer is yes.

The majority of alumni reported that they were impacted in the ways that Free The Children believes lead to global citizenship. Alumni developed greater self-confidence and a stronger sense of their identity. They gained new perspective on how education could lead them to a career aligned with their passions. And they continue to take action in both formal and informal ways to create the change they wish to see in the world.

Asked to describe the impact of Free The Children in their own words, alumni did not hesitate to credit Free The Children for transformational experiences.

“Words cannot describe the impact Free The Children has had on my life. As I write this I’m wearing a Be The Change shirt. Free The Children let me be the person I wanted to be in high school and gave me opportunities to help others and not have other class mates think it was uncool or stupid. It let me see what was happening in the world and how one person can help make the difference.”

“FTC really did give me direction throughout high school, and enabled me to flourish through social activism and education with peers of like mind and interest. I felt socially connected to a greater movement, and personally met dozens of young people and adults from around the globe who inspired and influenced my current career and life. As an adult, I can now look back at my involvement with FTC and feel that it really was a great stepping stone for me, gave me a focus, and helped shape my own identity as a socially conscious and politically engaged citizen.”

“Free The Children has influenced me to become an active citizen of the world. I stand up for issues I hold true to my heart at school, in my family and with my friends. I believe in fair trade and locally grown and made clothes and food. I volunteer every week at a therapeutic riding stable which is my way of giving back to my local community, nothing is more rewarding to me than working with those kids...”

While not every alumnus may be affected to the degree of those quoted above, the trend is clear. Free The Children’s programs have a substantial, lasting impact on many of the youth who have the opportunity to experience their programs, especially those who participate deeply over multiple years.