Passions, People and Appreciation:

Making volunteering work for young people

NATIONAL YOUTH AFFAIRS RESEARCH SCHEME

PASSIONS, PEOPLE AND APPRECIATION:

MAKING VOLUNTEERING WORK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A report for NYARS

Fran Ferrier, Ian Roos and Michael Long

April 2004

THE NATIONAL YOUTH AFFAIRS RESEARCH SCHEME (NYARS) was established in 1985 as a cooperative funding arrangement between the Australian, State and Territory Governments to facilitate nationally-based research into current social, political and economic factors affecting young people. The Scheme operates under the auspices of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

Reports from NYARS studies released since the early 1990s are available free-of-charge on the web site of the Australian Government Department responsible for youth affairs. At the time this report was published, the web site address was: http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/aboutfacs/programs/youth-nyars.htm

ISBN 0 9752498 1 9

Published by Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services on behalf of NYARS

Printed by National Capital Printing, Canberra

Contents

Especially among young people there's a lot of misconceptions held about volunteer work … and I think people need to address that and target the young people more and say hey it's not really what you think it is it can be a lot more fun, more challenging … it's not boring like you think it is …

(Year 11 student)

Acknowledgments

This project has been undertaken by Fran Ferrier and Michael Long from the Monash University-ACER Centre for the Economics of Education and Training (CEET) and Ian Roos from the Centre for Human Resource Development and Training, University of Melbourne.

The researchers would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of Anita Saleeba and Louisa Cooke to this work and warmly thank the many young people and representatives of community and volunteer organisations who freely and enthusiastically participated in the project.

Executive summary

About the project

This project has explored volunteering by young people aged 16–24 years in Australia. Through examination of survey material, discussions with groups of young people and interviews with community leaders and volunteer organisations it has investigated:

- the kinds of volunteering in which young people participate;
- the reasons young people do/do not volunteer;
- any costs associated with volunteering by young people, for volunteer organisations and for the young people themselves; and
- the benefits and outcomes of volunteering by young people, for themselves and community and volunteer organisations.

Main findings

The study found that young people have understandings of "volunteering" that are much broader and more complex than the definition of the term laid down by *Volunteering Australia*[1]. Instead, their understandings of "volunteering" encompass activities that a previous study by Soupourmas and Ironmonger (2002) refer to as "informal volunteering". This includes community service activities outside specific organisations and activities of mutual aid that occur within communities that are crucial to community life and the building of "social capital".

The young people who took part in discussions for this project varied in ages from 16–24. They were from diverse language, cultural and social backgrounds. They lived in metropolitan cities, regional centres, rural areas and different Australian States. Some were still in school, TAFE or

[1] *Volunteering Australia* is the national peak body for volunteering organisations in Australia. It seeks to represent the diverse views concerning volunteering and to promote the activity of volunteering as having social, cultural and economic benefit. http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org .

university, some were in work, some were looking for work or study opportunities. They represented many different attitudes, ideas, aspirations and lifestyles.

The vast majority demonstrated positive or strongly positive attitudes toward "community" and to "getting involved" in some kind of "community activity". In addition, almost all were able to identify at least one voluntary activity that they were involved in, whether formally or informally, "compulsorily" or by choice, primarily for their own benefit or for someone else's.

They also identified five main factors that have a positive influence on their participation in volunteer activities:

- compulsory community service;
- role models;
- previous volunteering experience;
- religious belief or activity; and
- advertising.

However they also indicated the existence of barriers that hinder young people from volunteering. These can be of two main kinds: internal (personal) barriers connected to their individual characteristics, capabilities and commitments; and external barriers such as social attitudes, the formal structure and arrangement of volunteering and inadequate information about volunteering opportunities.

Their comments indicate that when young people consider participating in a volunteer activity most of them look for three aspects in particular:

- activities that engage their passions and interests and give them opportunities to put their values and convictions into action;
- activities that involve other young volunteers and/or young people as the object of the volunteer activity, e.g. youth programs, camps, care for young people with disabilities; and
- activities where they can see that their help is needed and their efforts have an impact.

Within the broad framework of these three major considerations the specific volunteer activity that each person undertakes (and some participate in more than one) reflect their individual characteristics and circumstances including:

- where they live;
- their age and skills;
- their language/cultural background;
- the church or religious community they belong to;
- their personal development needs and goals;
- their career goals;
- the time they have available to devote to voluntary activities;
- their gender;
- previous community service or involvement; and
- the information they have about volunteering opportunities.

The young people also indicate that they obtain considerable benefits from their participation in community/volunteer activities. More specifically they identify five main types of individual benefits:

- satisfaction and affirmation;
- social engagement;
- personal growth and development;
- acknowledgement and appreciation; and
- career benefits.

They also indicate that most benefits are gained when the volunteering experience is a positive one. Positive experiences are those that include:

- working with or for other people, especially other young people;
- being able to work in teams rather than alone;
- having a variety of interesting tasks;
- having some control over what tasks are done and how they are done;
- having input into goals and objectives and being able to work toward them;
- having opportunities to use skills and creativity;
- having opportunities to gain new skills;
- being given appropriate levels of responsibility – not too much to be stressful but not so little that they are under constant direction;
- being given opportunities to move upwards through an organisation to new responsibilities;
- being welcomed into an organisation by other workers or volunteers;
- being able to see the results of their efforts; and
- being appreciated and rewarded.

Though the community and volunteer organisations interviewed for this project were diverse in many respects, all demonstrate a concern for the wellbeing and development of young people. They also all see involvement in community activities such as volunteering as a way for young people to learn about themselves, to develop their skills, confidence and capabilities while also contributing to their communities. The organisations value young volunteers because:

- they provide energy and enthusiasm;
- they have useful skills and ideas;
- they help to build relationships with the community, particularly with young people;
- they help to renew and re-invigorate the organisation; and
- they are future community leaders.

These benefits outweigh the costs of having young volunteers, which are little different from the costs of having volunteers in general.

On the whole, volunteer organisations are aware of the difficulties that hinder some young people from becoming involved in volunteering, they are also mostly aware that they need to make changes to enable more young people to become involved.

Organisations that are the most successful in attracting and retaining young people appear to be those that:

- recognise the lifestyle issues that young people face, particularly the demands on their time;
- keep training short and provide opportunities for young people to move quickly from training to active involvement;
- offer young people opportunities to participate in activities that suit their skills and enthusiasm;
- talk to young people in language that is familiar to them and that they can understand; and
- have charismatic leaders with a high media profile or offer opportunities for young people to meet and work with high profile groups or individuals.

Key messages

The project has seven key messages.

1. Young people are community-minded.

2. Some young people face barriers to volunteering.
3. Young people value some types of community/volunteer activities above others.
4. Young people benefit from volunteering, especially when the volunteering experience is a positive one.
5. Young volunteers are valued by volunteer organisations.
6. Some volunteer organisations are more attractive to young people than others.
7. Action to encourage young people to participate in volunteering, and to increase the benefits they gain from it would be particularly effective if it was concentrated on:
   - addressing the barriers to volunteering; and
   - ensuring that participation in community/volunteer activities is a positive experience.

Further research

While this research has helped to answer some questions it has also raised others. Thus it points to a few areas where further research might be useful in providing a more comprehensive picture of young people and volunteering in Australia.

1. The formation of attitudes to volunteering during late primary schooling and early years of high school – what factors influence attitudes and what steps could be taken to ensure more positive attitudes? To what extent do the views of young people aged 18+ reflect these early attitudes? What factors change views? What factors confirm views?
2. The extent and nature of differences in views of, and participation in, volunteering among young people according to social and cultural background. What are they? Why do they occur? What can be learned from them?
3. Whether and how volunteering by young people differs in Australia from overseas and whether Australia might learn from overseas experience. Comparative work could explore the nature of effective programs and whether aspects of them could be transplanted to the Australian context.
4. Further case study work could be undertaken to provide further information about the reasons for the success of some volunteer organisations in recruiting and retaining young people.
5. The gender aspects of volunteering by young people. How strong is the gender effect? How does it work? What factors strengthen it? Ameliorate it?

1 Introduction

According to several surveys, young people in Australia participate in volunteering at a much lower rate than other people. For instance, a survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS 1996) found that only 11 per cent of people aged 15–24 were volunteers, compared with 27 per cent of people aged 35–44 and 17 per cent of people more than 65 years old.

Assuming that the survey results are accurate, what are the reasons for this difference? Do young people have other commitments, such as education and work, which prevent them from participating? Do they lack information about opportunities? Have they been put off volunteering by a poor previous experience? Do they believe that the costs of participation (whatever they might be) outweigh the benefits?

Do the survey results perhaps under-report volunteering by young people? A project involving students in TAFE Institutes (Selby Smith and Hopkins 2001; Hopkins 2000) found that sometimes they did not identify activities they undertook as "volunteering" – even though these activities fit most recognised definitions of voluntary activity.

Whatever the reason, lower participation by young people in volunteering is a cause for concern. For the community it means a loss of the valuable skills, ideas and enthusiasm that these young people would bring to voluntary activities. For the young people themselves it means many are missing out on opportunities to develop as individuals and members of the community and to acquire skills and experience that would be useful to them – and their employers – in paid work.

Looking at lower participation from another perspective, what makes the difference? What factors influence some young people to participate, and not others? What potential benefits or outcomes do they see in it that others overlook?

This project

In the context of lower participation by young people in volunteering, this project set out to explore and identify how:

- more young people (and a more diverse group of young people) might be encouraged to consider participating in volunteering;
- young people who are already volunteers might be encouraged to continue participating;
- the benefits that young people gain from volunteering, and positive outcomes, might be increased; and
- the benefits that organisations and communities gain when young people participate, and positive outcomes, might also increase.

Towards these aims the project focused on three major aspects of volunteering:

Participation in volunteering

Which young people do, and do not volunteer? What factors influence them and do some factors influence some groups of young people more than others? What kinds of volunteering young people prefer/dislike and the reasons why.

The costs of volunteering

Do young people incur any costs in choosing to volunteer? If so, do these influence their willingness to continue participating? Do the costs outweigh the benefits for young people? If costs are an issue, how might they be reduced to encourage volunteering?

Do organisations and communities incur any costs in employing young volunteers? How do these measure up against the benefits that young people's participation bring?

The benefits and other outcomes of volunteering

What kinds of benefits do young people gain through volunteering (e.g. personal, social, community, career benefits)? What are the outcomes of volunteering for young people? What factors increase benefits and lead to positive outcomes?

What kinds of benefits do organisations and communities gain through young people's participation in volunteering (e.g. personal, social, community, career)? What outcomes of volunteering for young people?

Methodology

To gain a range of perspectives on these issues, four different activities were undertaken:

- a review of the relevant literature;
- analysis of data on participation in voluntary work by young people
- discussion (focus) groups of young people; and
- interviews with representatives of community and volunteer organisations.

Literature review

Published material examining volunteering by young people was explored to identify the major findings of previous studies. These were used to guide preparations for the focus groups and interviews conducted later in the project.

Although much of the work on the literature review occurred early in the project, further material came to light as the project progressed. The findings have been incorporated in preparing this report on the findings of this project.

Data analysis

CEET had access to two sources of data

on volunteering by young people that had not previously been fully analysed: the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) and a survey of students in two Victorian TAFE institutions.

The Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) are conducted by the Australian Council for Education Research in conjunction with the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). The program consists of two samples, each of about 10 000 young people. The first panel was selected in 1995 when panel members were in Year 9 in school. After initial tests and questionnaires administered at school, members of this panel have participated in annual telephone interviews. A second panel was selected in 1998.

Although the focus of the interviews is on participation in education and in the labour market, panel members are asked many other questions about their beliefs and actions, including their participation in volunteer work. In 1998 and again in 2000 they were asked if they undertook any voluntary work, to identify the organisations they did this work for and the amount of time they devoted to it. The analysis examined participation in voluntary work by gender and the location and education and cultural backgrounds of the young people. Some findings of the analysis of this data are included in the body of this report. The detailed findings are attached as Appendix 1.

The survey of TAFE students was undertaken by CEET in 2000 in two Victorian TAFE institutes, one in Melbourne and the other in a regional area. It had four main objectives:

- to investigate TAFE's contribution to the training of volunteers;
- to investigate whether there were differences in volunteering between students in the metropolitan and the regional institute;
- to investigate whether there were also differences between students in different fields of study; and
- to investigate other factors which might be related to volunteering such as gender, mode of attendance or English as a first language.

The survey asked the students about their participation in voluntary work and their aspirations to engage in voluntary work in the future. It also asked whether they saw working as a volunteer as something that would assist them to gain paid employment. Four open-ended questions gave opportunities for the students to provide more detail to explain their answers.

Analysis of this data explored differences between younger and older students and the responses to open-ended questions. Some findings are included in this report and the detailed findings are attached in Appendix 2.

Discussion groups

Following completion of the data analysis and literature review information was sought from young people themselves in focus group discussions.

These focus groups were organised with the aim of achieving a diverse mix of young participants within the age range 16–24 years. An initial list was drawn up of organisations that might be able to assist in contacting young people and arranging the discussions. This included community and volunteer organisations, youth organisations, local government and educational institutions. Taking into account the time and budget limitations of the project, the age, gender and likely social/cultural background of the young people, the location of the organisation/institution (city/country) and

the type of activity it was engaged in, a smaller number was then selected. Once approval had been received from the *Monash Standing Committee on Ethics in Research involving Humans* (SCERH) and the appropriate State department of education, these organisations were contacted by letter and/or telephone. Those that responded positively were then contacted again to make appropriate arrangements for publicising and conducting the discussion.

Disappointingly it was not possible to include a specific group comprising only young Indigenous people. Within the time frame of the project we were unable to identify an appropriate Indigenous researcher to arrange and conduct the discussions and to obtain the additional necessary ethics clearances. The researchers suggest that further work should be directed toward filling this gap. However it should be pointed out that Indigenous young people were able to participate in the general focus groups.

It was disappointing also that few schools responded positively to requests for assistance with the organisation of focus groups. Several explained that their students had already participated in a number of other research studies and the time that could be devoted to these activities was limited, but others did not respond, or merely stated that they did not wish to be involved, without giving a reason. None suggested that the subject of the research was not worthwhile.

Positive responses to initial approaches were not able to be followed up in only two cases. One required additional ethical clearances that could not be completed within the time limitations of the project. In the second case the group could also not be organised within the project's timeframe. Another group which approached the researchers asking to participate was excluded because the young people in it were below the 16–24-year age range.

Despite these limitations, the enthusiastic cooperation of many organisations and individuals enabled the organisation of seven focus groups in three States, involving over 70 young people. Although privacy considerations meant that no personal information was collected from participants, and thus it is not possible to construct a detailed table of their characteristics, the diversity sought did appear to be achieved. Among the young people who participated were some still at school, some undertaking tertiary studies, some in employment, some seeking employment and a small number in neither work nor study. There were also young people from a variety of cultural and social backgrounds and with varying interests, attitudes and lifestyles. There was also a reasonable balance of young men and women.

Groups varied in size from five to 18 participants. The small size of the groups was chosen to allow participants to feel comfortable in participating, to encourage them to engage actively with the researchers and to allow the researchers to identify any young people needing special encouragement to contribute. In general this worked well, less so in the largest group.

Focus group discussions were underpinned by eight research questions:

What are the primary reasons that young people choose to take up voluntary work?

What are the primary reasons that young people choose not to take up voluntary work?

What voluntary work options are young people aware of?

What other voluntary work options would young people prefer?

What benefits do young people associate with voluntary work (personal, social, community, career)?

Is there a downside to voluntary work?

In what ways could the experience of voluntary work be improved for young people?

What changes would increase participation in voluntary work by young people?

The specific issues that the groups were asked to discuss are attached in Appendix 3. A small number of additional issues and questions were pursued as they arose where the researchers judged that they would be relevant to the objectives of the project and would not cause embarrassment or invade privacy.

In writing this report the researchers have aimed to use the actual words of the young people who participated in the focus groups as far as possible. It was felt that paraphrasing would reduce the immediacy of their comments and would entail a risk of creating misunderstanding about their meaning. The actual comments are also valuable in revealing hidden complexities in many of the issues that were discussed.

Interviews

Following the literature review and data analysis, formal interviews were sought with representatives of community and volunteer organisations primarily to gain a fuller understanding of the costs, benefits and other outcomes of volunteering by young people from their perspective. In addition, the interviews sought information about the organisations' methods of recruiting young volunteers, the success of these methods, the factors that they believe attract/deter young volunteers, and activities or strategies they adopt to try to retain young volunteers. (The interview schedule is attached as Appendix 3.)

Within the project's budget and time limitations, the organisations approached for interviews were selected to ensure diversity in location, activity, organisational style and involvement by young people. A list was compiled and submitted for ethics approval to SCERH at Monash University. When approved, these organisations were approached by letter and telephone.

Following positive responses eight formal interviews were organised. In addition a number of other informal conversations were conducted about the project and it's aims and objectives. Only one organisation which agreed to a formal interview was not able to be included within the project timeframe. However, information about this organisation was collected and some informal conversation was conducted with a representative.

The organisations that participated are located in rural or metropolitan areas, a few in both. Their focus is dispersed or local, regional/national or restricted to a smaller geographical area. They vary in the formality/informality of their organisational style. Some are more traditional or innovative in their outlook than others. Some focus their objectives and activities on young people. Some employ young people as volunteers. They include:

- an emergency service organisation;
- a local government youth program;
- an organisation serving urban homeless people;
- an organisation serving young people with disabilities;
- two youth welfare organisations;
- an outer-metropolitan welfare group;
- a science education group; and

- an organisation of international volunteers.

Unfortunately, positive responses were not received from the sports organisations approached. However, the researchers did have informal contact with some individuals from this type of organisation and many of the focus group participants were engaged in volunteer activities related to sports.

The individuals we interviewed from these organisations were as diverse as the organisations themselves. They were of different ages, gender and background. They had different roles in the organisation, from senior management to responsibility for managing volunteers or projects using volunteers.

Boundaries of the research

Defining "volunteering"

Definitions of "volunteering" differ, and as the literature review found, are the subject of debate. Consistent with studies previously conducted by CEET on young people and volunteering in Australia (Selby Smith and Hopkins 2001; Hopkins 2000), for this project we used the definition adopted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The ABS has conducted two major surveys of voluntary work – in 1995 and 2000 (ABS 1996 and 2001). For these surveys they defined a volunteer as someone who willingly gives unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills through an organisation or group. This definition is broader than that of *Volunteering Australia* which specifies that volunteering must take place in not-for-profit organisations or projects and must:

- be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;
- be undertaken of the volunteers' free will and without coercion;
- involve no financial payment; and
- take place in designated volunteer positions only.

However, our discussions with young people found that they have views of volunteering that are even broader than the ABS definition. We have tried to reflect this within the report as much as possible.

Young people

Where "youth" begins and ends is also a shifting concept. In this study we elected to examine only 16–24-year-olds, in order to set some boundaries around the research and reflecting the availability of data. However, a case could be argued that younger people in particular should also have been included. Several of the young people we spoke to during the project suggested that attitudes to volunteering are formed in primary school and the early years of high school. Further work looking at these younger age groups in particular could thus be useful.

Naming the report

In a project of this size and complexity it is usually difficult to find a title that efficiently conveys the major findings of the work. In this case, however, there were clearly three recurring themes and thus our title: "passions, people and appreciation".

Passions, because the young people spoke consistently about volunteering in areas they are "passionate about" or looking in volunteering for "an outlet for their passions".

People because meeting new people, working with other people and learning about other people were all highly desirable aspects of community involvement for

young people. Building relationships between people was also important to community and volunteer organisations.

Appreciation, because the young people hoped, and wanted to know, that their efforts would "make a difference" and that someone would say thankyou, or give them more formal recognition. They were also appreciative of the opportunities that were available to them for participation in community and volunteer activities. Organisations also expressed appreciation for the work of young people and especially for their interest and enthusiasm.

2 What is "volunteering"? The views of young people

...the thing is people don't perceive certain things to be volunteering until you sit down and you think, well what is voluntary. Something ... for helping someone else. Oh well, then, that, that, that and that would also be volunteering but they don't seem like volunteering.

When I think about volunteering... unless you really think hard ... you always think immediately about those official organisations like surf-lifesaving and the RSPCA ... and I volunteered to play the organ at church ... and you don't think about it ... until you think about it ...

Ask young people what they think the term "volunteering" means and it quickly becomes clear that there are many different understandings – and there is lots of confusion. While most of the young people participating in this project agree that it is choosing to do an activity or task that is unpaid:

Just doing something you don't get paid for.

they also indicate that volunteering can sometimes include activities that you will get paid for – as long as the pay is very low and doesn't compare with the salary of someone paid to do a similar job. For instance:

It's still voluntary if you get an honorarium ...

While some believe that volunteering must have a "community" dimension:

Obviously it's unpaid work but it's also community involvement. It's charity work to some extent ...

Anything that has community benefit that you do without being paid for it.

Not everyone agrees that this is essential. Some young people regard volunteering as also including some activities that have personal objectives:

I don't think it necessarily specifies community involvement, like it doesn't have to be – it can be personal ...

or that benefit another individual:

... volunteering is helping someone ...

Volunteering also includes some activities that you do for your own benefit, such as to get a job or gain skills or confidence:

There's probably a different kind of volunteering which is really for yourself volunteering. Like there's the volunteering which is like the charity volunteering, like as we said, they're helping to serve the homeless or whatever it is but then there's volunteering which is really getting into the industry, you know ...

A lot of volunteering you do is to get a job at the end of it – and a lot of areas you have to ... like environmental stuff that's the only way you'll get a job ...

Even the idea that volunteering is something that you choose to do rather than something that you're made to do is disputed. While many young people agree that:

It's not voluntary if it's compulsory ...

many also indicate that volunteering can include activities that appear to be compulsory in some way:

... if you're in like a school band, say ... and we play at engagements ... and that's not ... it's ... well the school volunteers usually that we go to these functions but we don't get a choice in that ...

... at school we "get volunteered" to, like, clean up classrooms or go hand out this stack of notes to everyone ...

Volunteering can also include activities you do to "get out" of doing something else that you don't like:

I've volunteered to do things for my teachers at school that I didn't agree with. Like they go "Anyone volunteer?" and you put up your hand to get out of something ...

Most young people understand volunteering to mean a formal arrangement to do some unpaid work through an organisation that provides a community service, such as the CFA, the SES, the RSPCA, St John's Ambulance or the Surf-Lifesaving Association:

... selling ... Daffodil Day or Red Nose Day and things like that ...

However, many also express a broader view of volunteering that includes activities that are more informal, that you might even arrange yourself:

... people (can) take their own initiative and organise their own thing.

I don't think that young people have to join an organisation to volunteer. If they want to go out and help the community, get together a bunch of mates and say you know, we're going to do whatever ...

For most young people, the lines between "volunteering", community service, work experience and recreational or extra-curricula activities are indistinct. "Helping out" an enterprise by working without pay so that you can learn the skills required in a job and make contacts that will help you to reach your career goals is "volunteering", but doing it as part of a school program is "work experience". Being a player in a sporting club is not volunteering because:

... it's a hobby and you have to pay anyway ...

but committee members and others who organise and manage the club without pay are volunteers. Volunteering is "serving the community" where help is needed and in whatever way you can, such as singing Christmas Carols at an aged care facility, or fundraising for a local school, but helping someone to move house, or by looking after their children is only volunteering "when you think about it".

In an attempt to reconcile some of these conflicting and confusing ideas, one participant suggested that there may be degrees of "voluntariness":

> *... you can either do an actual Work for the Dole program or you can independently volunteer with an organisation and then you have to do much more hours ... you can divide it between a "more voluntary" and "less voluntary" type of volunteering ...*

while another noted:

> *There's just so many different levels of volunteering ...*

However, in spite of the confusion about the meaning of the term "volunteering" young people find it difficult to offer alternatives when asked whether they would prefer to see a different term used. "Volunteering" it seems is the word that is at least familiar!

> *I think "volunteer" is good. I mean, it's a known sort of a word ...*

For young people, volunteering is thus a term that has unfixed and multiple meanings, and that can be used to describe a very broad range of activities with differing objectives. Most often it means:

- activities that are unpaid or very low paid;
- activities that you choose to do, but also some activities that are compulsory; and
- activities that are aimed at benefiting your community, or another person, but also some activities that are aimed towards some personal benefit.

Young people thus have understandings of "volunteering" that are much broader and more complex than the definition of the term laid down by *Volunteering Australia*. This specifies that it must take place in not-for-profit organisations or projects and must:

- be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;
- be undertaken of the volunteers' free will and without coercion;
- involve no financial payment; and
- take place in designated volunteer positions only.

Their understandings of "volunteering" appear to encompass activities that a previous study by Soupourmas and Ironmonger (2002) refer to as "informal volunteering". This includes community service activities outside specific organisations, and activities of mutual aid that occur within communities that are crucial to community life, and the building of "social capital", such as child care and care of the elderly.

Young people understand "volunteering" in ways that more closely resemble the broader Canadian notion of:

> The most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. It is offering time, energy and skills of one's own free will. It is an extension of being a good neighbour (Volunteer Canada).

or similar ideas put forward in the United Kingdom:

> Any activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something which aims to benefit someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to, close relatives or to benefit the environment (Institute for Volunteering Research 1997).

3 Do young people volunteer?

The results of a number of surveys conducted in recent years suggest that fewer young people participate in volunteering than older people, and that some particular groups participate more than others.

For instance in Australia:

- surveys of volunteering and time use for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Wilkinson and Bittman 2002) found that volunteering increases with age;
- a study of volunteering in Victoria by Soupormas and Ironmonger (2002) found that almost half the population in regional Victoria gave time to volunteering compared with 29 per cent of people living in Melbourne; and
- several studies indicate that people from non-English speaking backgrounds are under-represented among volunteers (Premiers Department NSW 2002, Selby Smith and Hopkins 2001 and 2002).

Our survey of volunteering among people studying at two Victorian TAFE institutes – one in a regional area and one in a metropolitan area – also found differences in participation in volunteering between people in different age groups and from different backgrounds. More students at the regional than the metropolitan institute and more females than males were current volunteers or would like to volunteer in the future. Only 10 per cent of those aged under 20 were volunteers compared with 27 per cent of those aged 40–59 and while 27 per cent of people aged under 20 had positive attitudes to volunteering 35 per cent of those aged 20–39 and 48 per cent of 40–59-year-olds had similar attitudes (see Appendix 2).

Similarly, our analysis of responses in the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), to questions about participation in "community volunteer work" also found variations between people with different

characteristics. However, the extent of these variations was often modest, leading to the conclusion that people from all backgrounds participate in community volunteer work (see Box 1 and Appendix 1).

An understanding of why some people are more likely to be volunteers than others – even if the differences between them are small – will be useful in identifying ways to promote and encourage participation.

Box 1:

Which young people participate in community volunteer work?

Among young people participating in the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY):

Participation in community volunteer work is widespread across all categories of young people.

Overall levels of participation and participation for particular types of volunteer work vary among young people from different personal and cultural backgrounds. Those more likely to participate at least monthly in community volunteer work were (in descending order):

- from the highest fifth of socioeconomic status backgrounds;
- from the more positive categories of self-concept;
- from families in which both parents had been born in Australia;
- women;
- in part-time work, part-time study, or both;
- Indigenous;
- better-performed at school;
- from rural areas; or
- young people with a disability.

By age 20, 52 per cent of the panel had participated in community volunteer work. At age 20, 20 per cent took part in community volunteer work at least once a month while 35 per cent had participated in the preceding year. At age 21, 23 per cent took part in community volunteer work at least once a month (see Appendix 1 for full tables and discussion).

In a later section we thus discuss some of the barriers to volunteering that emerged during the course of our study. However, an important conclusion that can be drawn from the diverse understandings of "volunteering" among the young people participating in this project is that the results of surveys asking them if they are volunteers, or do any voluntary or community work/activity, probably tell only a part, potentially a very small part, of the story. Our discussions with young people confirmed that many of them take part in activities that they do not think of as "volunteering", although these activities would meet formal and narrow definitions of the term, and many more take part in activities that fall within a broader understanding of "volunteering". Thus:

- survey results probably underestimate the number of young people involved in voluntary activities;
- survey results probably underestimate the range of voluntary activities that young people are involved in; or
- survey results probably underestimate the amount of time that young people spend on volunteering.

The young people who took part in discussions for this project varied in ages from 16–24. They were from diverse language, cultural and social backgrounds. They lived in metropolitan cities, regional centres, rural areas and different Australian States. Some were still in school, TAFE or university, some were in work, some were looking for work or study opportunities. A few were neither in work nor study. They represented different youth sub-cultures such as "goths", "ravers", "geeks" and "homies". On the face of it they appeared to have little in common besides their youth. However the vast majority demonstrated positive or strongly positive attitudes toward "community" and to "getting involved" in some kind of "community activity". Moreover, almost all of them were able to identify at least one voluntary activity that they were involved in, whether formally or informally, "compulsorily" or by choice, primarily for their own benefit or for someone else's. Nevertheless, when they were asked to describe the type of person who typically volunteers many of them tended to look outside their own group and identify this person as someone with different characteristics. They downplayed their own involvement. For instance, some participants suggested that volunteering was something done primarily by older people:

> *... it seems to be an old person's thing ...*

that volunteers are typically people who have more spare time than they do:

> *... (It's) for people who don't have anything to do whereas, you know, we've got sport and we've got all this ...*

or people with more skills and experience than themselves:

> *... older, smarter people ...*

A common view of a volunteer was someone who is giving and not concerned with personal gain:

> *People that do volunteer see other things (than money) more important ...*
>
> *One of those generous type people.*

and outgoing in nature:

> *Because they're doing work in the community they need to be able to communicate with people at all levels so they need to be a very outgoing person ...*

But the participants did not seem to recognise these qualities readily in themselves, even when they were already engaged in formal volunteering:

> *... I'm not doing it because I'm this wonderful person who wants to help people.*
>
> *... I got involved because I'm shy and I wanted to get over it ...*

In fact, overall they seemed to be very hard on themselves and each other. As well as tending to discount their own participation in volunteering they tended to downplay any reasons they had for volunteering that might suggest they were selfless or altruist and to give undue emphasis to more personal motivations:

> *You do it (a school development program) because you think it's one less class, it's going to be a bludge also you get the training and it looks good on your CV ...*
>
> *... there's very much a vested interest in me doing it ... I'm not doing it because I'm this wonderful person who wants to help people ... I mean that's definitely part of it but there are heaps of benefits that I get out of it too ...*

A group of participants who were still at school suggested that tertiary students only a little older than themselves were more likely to be volunteers than they were, because tertiary students would have more skills, would have a broader view of the world and would be more sought after by volunteer organisations:

> *It's too hard at 16, 17 ...*
>
> *When you're below that age you can't do much ... can't drive ... very limited time ...*
>
> *In uni you're exposed to the world, you start to look more at the wide world than the small community you're in ...*

Yet the vast majority of students in this group were already engaged in one or more voluntary activities – including some they had organised themselves, as well as some organised through schools or voluntary organisations.

In an interesting contrast, a group of participants who were mostly university students suggested that younger (school age) students would be more likely to spend time on voluntary activities than they did. Younger students, they considered, were likely to have fewer demands on their time (except during the last year of school) and so more time to devote to voluntary activities. In addition, they would have opportunities to undertake voluntary activity as part of the school curriculum. Yet these university students were also all involved (sometimes substantially) in one or more voluntary activities. Further discounting their own involvement they also suggested that older, retired people would volunteer more than they did.

Similarly, participants from rural or regional areas acknowledged participation and interest in volunteering there:

> *People tend to do their own thing in the city whereas in the country people live more close together and probably know each other better so are more willing to help each other ...*

But they were loathe to take much credit for this and simultaneously suggested that voluntary activities were much more likely to be hidden from view in the cities:

> *Maybe we see country people volunteer more because we see everyone in the city just walking past and there may be just as many people in the city helping out but because it's such a larger (place) ... it's so much more diluted ...*

The question of which young people volunteer – and which groups or individuals are more likely to volunteer than others – is thus difficult to answer.

There are differences, as the surveys suggest, but the extent of these differences seems to be small – and because many people have different understandings of "volunteering" may be even smaller than survey responses suggest.

No clear patterns emerged from our discussions with young people. As we said earlier, regardless of age, background, or personal characteristics almost all of them appeared to be involved in a voluntary activity of some kind – sometimes formal, sometimes informal. Rather than differences in overall levels of participation we noted only some differences in the types of activities that individuals from different groups undertook.

Most obvious was a difference between the younger and older project participants. For instance, in the case of the youngest (16–17-year-olds) voluntary activity was often a part of the school curriculum, or school organised extra-curricula programs. However, many participants also appeared to take part in additional voluntary activities, particularly if parents, other family members, friends or an extended community such as a language/cultural community, were involved. Many of these activities, but not all, would be described as "informal" volunteering:

- a group of young participants of mixed cultural but common religious background had organised, with assistance and encouragement from parents, to present Christmas music for residents in retirement centres;
- many young participants were engaged in voluntary activities with school bands or teams (sporting etc.);
- some young participants offered sports coaching to younger players in sporting clubs;
- some were undertaking voluntary activities to qualify for a Duke of Edinburgh's award;
- some assisted family members with activities in social or business groups (e.g. Rotary, Cultural associations); and
- some (particularly young people from regional or rural areas) were engaged in youth development programs run by large volunteer organisations (e.g. emergency services, surf-lifesaving).

Older participants (18–24-year-olds) appeared much more likely to be involved in formal volunteering through organisations – some of them having completed youth development programs, or similar, in the same organisation when they were younger. They also often chose voluntary activities that would give them skills they thought would be useful for the future – both personal skills (e.g. communication, teamwork) and more overtly vocational (skills to perform specific tasks).

However, the line between the two groups was not clearly drawn and there were some activities in which both the younger and older participants took part. For instance, a group of young people who were organising events for other young people through the local government were of mixed ages, as well as backgrounds. Moreover, some of the younger participants complained that they were not able to volunteer within a formal organisation, even though they wanted to do so, due to age restrictions.

While it was difficult for us to detect clear differences in participation in voluntary activities by people from different backgrounds and with diverse characteristics, some of the project participants seemed to have a clearer perception of the type of person they thought would be unlikely to volunteer:

You wouldn't expect someone with a Mohawk and nose rings and 50 tattoos to do it … I'm not saying that they don't do it – but that's not what comes to mind when you think "volunteer".

… they can't be like one of those popular snobby brainy kind of people … because they only care about themselves …

In today's society a lot of young kids … computers, television, hitting a button, forced to go to school, I don't see those type of people as being those likely to (volunteer) …

Things today seem to be a lot easier to come by, you're really in a fast food culture, like it's a lot easier to have things handed for you and you don't have to …and so people I suppose may not be used to making an effort to achieve things because some things are so easily achievable … where a lot of activities you volunteer for may require effort – a lot of people are so lazy …

However, on the whole participants tended to agree that:

…There is a wide spread of volunteers.

Summary

Young people have diverse understandings of "volunteering". Thus the results of surveys asking them if they are volunteers, or do any voluntary or community work/activity, probably tell only a part of the story. Many participate in activities that they do not think of as "volunteering", although these activities would meet formal and narrow definitions of the term, and many more take part in activities that fall within a broader understanding of "volunteering".

Young people discount their own involvement in volunteer activities and tend to view a "typical volunteer" as someone with characteristics very different from their own.

It is difficult to identify definitively the characteristics of young people who volunteer – and to determine which groups or individuals are more likely to volunteer than others. Although there are differences between groups, the extent of these differences is often small – and because many people have different understandings of "volunteering" may be even smaller than survey responses suggest.

Regardless of age, background, or personal characteristics almost all of the young people participating in this project appeared to be involved in a voluntary activity of some kind – sometimes formal, sometimes informal. Rather than differences in overall levels of participation there were only some differences in the types of activities that individuals from different groups undertook. Most obvious was a difference between the younger and older project participants with the latter more likely to engage in formal activities through volunteer organisations and the former more likely to take part in school-based community work or "informal" volunteering.

4 What factors influence young people to volunteer?

> *Yeah, and your personal values. You think it's more important to spend time helping other people than it is to be watching cartoons on Saturday morning.*

Previous studies have found that the reasons people decide to volunteer are many and complex. The study of volunteering in Victoria conducted by Soupormas and Ironmonger (2002) found that "the reasons people volunteer are as diverse as the volunteers themselves":

> ... today's volunteers are developing their own skills as well as improving the lives of others. People volunteer to make contacts, learn new skills, gain work experience and build their self-esteem. Volunteering allows volunteers to maintain and gain new job skills, return something to the community, explore new career paths and basically help someone else (Soupormas and Ironmonger 2002 p. 3).

An often cited study conducted in the United States by Clary, Snyder and Stukas (1996), classifies the motivations of volunteers into six categories:

- **a value function** – people volunteer to express or act on values they think are important;
- **an enhancement function** – to enhance their self-esteem and psychological development;
- **a social function** – to interact with others;
- **an understanding function** – to increase their knowledge of the world and develop and practice skills;
- **a career function** – to gain experiences that will benefit their careers; and
- **a protective function** – to cope with inner anxieties and conflicts.

All six of these functions are visible in the views expressed by the young people who participated in the discussion groups for this project.

Importantly, most of the young people expressed more than one – and sometimes almost all – of these six types of motivations. However, sometimes one function appears to be more important than another for a particular type of voluntary activity. For instance, career motivations appear to be more important for a young person seeking to learn skills through volunteering for a major sporting event, while gaining affirmation and building self-confidence (the protective and enhancement functions) were more important for the same person in their voluntary work for a support group.

Following are a few of their comments used as examples of each type of function.

Function	Example
Value	*Volunteering is primarily to help others in need.* *When you see it (a problem) everyday you're thinking "how can I help?" . . .* *You think it's more important to spend time helping other people than it is to be watching cartoons on Saturday morning.* *If I don't do it then X won't happen and that would be a real shame.*
Enhancement	*. . . it's nice when someone comes up and says look you're really good at that bit, do you want to come back and do some more or something like that. I mean, that makes you feel so much better that . . . that . . . you count . . .* *Working with younger children would be good because you're older you'd feel like you'd have the authority to do and say stuff . . .* *I had a really great time . . . they were so friendly and they made me feel like . . . they thought of me as a person . . .*
Social	*. . . I like working with people one-to-one . . .* *Even packing envelopes could be fun if it's a whole lot of people together . . .* *Especially for teenagers also meeting younger people or people your own age . . .* *(You) get the reward of hanging out with a pretty good group of people . . .*
Understanding	*I'm volunteering at the moment . . . to learn new skills and . . . to open my life to this kind of event and to decrease my fear of it for the future.*
Career	*I got involved in that surf-lifesaving through school with the youth development program and part of doing that was that it looks good on the CV.* *. . . like if you're doing volunteering perhaps at a radio station and you want to get into radio then you've got a foot in the door . . .* *. . . I can get references from them and put them into (my resume).*
Protective	*When we're little we always want to help out – the problem comes when we grow up, that's when we forget we can help . . . (volunteering) . . . reminds you . . .*

Clary et al. (1996) suggest that the values function is the most important and career and protective functions are least important, with the other functions (enhancement, social and understanding) falling between them. However, the views of our young participants suggest a slightly different hierarchy. While the value function appears to be very important, with most young people looking for "meaningful" activities, the career and social functions appear to be just as important – and occasionally more so. A small number of the young people appear to engage in some activities because their friends do, or because they want to make career connections or learn career skills, without necessarily being committed to the values of the volunteer organisation, or the specific objectives of the voluntary activity. This difference suggests that young people may be motivated to volunteer by a slightly different combination of factors from older people. This may be important in considering how to encourage volunteering among young people. However, in addition, an important issue is that motivation by itself may not be enough to ensure participation. Young people still might not participate in a volunteer activity if they are not encouraged or assisted. They might lack information about how to put their values into practice, for instance, or be unable to find an attractive activity. (These issues are discussed further in the section on Barriers to volunteering.)

A number of previous studies highlight factors that influence involvement in volunteering by young people. For instance, a study in the US by Sundeen and Raskoff (2000) of 12–17-year-olds found that pathways into volunteering were:

- being asked by someone;
- schools encouraging or requiring community service;
- family or close friend involved in volunteer activities; or
- participation in an organisation such as a religious organisation or workplace.

A study by Kidd and Kidd (1997) highlights adult role modelling; adults providing social approval; and peers involved in similar activities. Leadership, particularly charismatic leadership has been found to be important by a number of studies (e.g. Larsson and Ronnmark 1996, Catano, Pond et al. 2001) and is evident in Australia in the story of the Inspire Foundation (www.inspire.org.au/about_history.html) and with Urban Seed (www.urbanseed.org).

The young people participating in discussion groups for this study identified many similar and some additional factors that have a positive influence on their participation in community/volunteer activities:

1. Compulsory community service
2. Role models
3. Previous volunteering experience
4. Religious belief or activity
5. Advertising

1. "Compulsory" community service as part of work or study

A majority of participants had undertaken some volunteer activity that was usually a compulsory part of a study or work program and while many had mixed views about the specific arrangements that had been made, or the tasks they had been asked to do:

> *you only do it for a short time so it's very different to a real voluntary experience . . . you get stuck in the same thing . . .*

On the whole they were strongly supportive of the concept and indicated that it had had a positive influence on the development of their values, their understanding of the

world and of the need for volunteering. In particular, for young people at school, it had enabled them to take part in an activity that their peers regarded as "uncool" without suffering a social stigma:

> *... other people in the class are in the same boat ...*
>
> *... (when it's) part of the school curriculum they get over the uncoolness and get a taste for what it's really like.*
>
> *... it's not the coolest thing to do but it's accepted and you know, there's no ridicule if you're in that.*
>
> *It's something that happens as part of the school scene. Same as you go to Maths and English ...*

Participants indicated that community service had introduced them to volunteering and given them some idea of what would be involved:

> *...it also gives you an insight you wouldn't normally get because it gives you that introduction to it ...*
>
> *...if I hadn't done it I wouldn't have got involved with (volunteering) partly because you don't know what to expect ...*
>
> *Sometimes it opens people's eyes to the benefits of volunteering ...*

However, participants also suggested that compulsory community service could be improved and extended by making the tasks more interesting and meaningful and by giving them opportunities to use and improve their skills. For instance, participants commented that when community service is part of a school program students are sometimes given tasks that seem to have no real purpose and are dull and repetitious. In addition, too few hours are devoted to the program so that little to nothing can be achieved and students do not get a real idea of what volunteering entails and can contribute:

> *You only do it for a short time so it's very different to a real voluntary experience ...you get stuck in the same thing ...*
>
> *...they didn't need our help in the first place ...*
>
> *We only had like an hour or an hour and a half a week and I think like if we had more time ... it was so short a time we never got to do anything.*

For instance, one group of participants told us that the tasks they were asked to do when they undertook school-based community service in a library or aged-care facility seemed to have been thought up to merely give them something to do. They required no skill, provided no obvious opportunities for learning and often seemed to be pointless, e.g. dusting shelves. These students not only found these tasks dull but also dispiriting – they believed they had skills to offer that were being overlooked and that could be better used. But at the same time they noted that one of their classmates had a more positive experience. Having undertaken community service in deaf care she had changed her mind about her future career:

> *Rebecca went to that centre for the deaf and then she wanted to become ... it changed what she wanted to become in the future ...*

Overall, positive attitudes to the concept of compulsory community service were thus tempered by a view that greater attention is needed to the quality of the experience to ensure that both participants and the organisations involved gain more benefit from it. For instance:

> *If they really want to make it worthwhile ...they need to make it longer and try to expand it a bit ...*

2. Role models

Our discussions with young people indicated that role models had very strongly influenced many of the project participants' attitudes to volunteering and their involvement in volunteer activities:

> *It's the whole image thing. Like if you see someone you admire doing . . . oh it's obvious, you know, that's not too bad, we'll do that.*

Role models appeared to come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Parents, siblings and other family members were particularly common influences on many of the participants. Young people from regional and rural areas in particular talked about their family members' involvement in volunteer activities and the effect of this on their own decision to volunteer:

> *– every child models themselves on their parents – or some other adult – . . .*
>
> *(It's) what your parents teach you when you're younger . . . What's good and bad. Is helping people good, or helping people bad? Things like that.*
>
> *My Mum still does the books for the local kinder . . .*
>
> *It may be the way you've been brought up if your parents have been involved in community stuff.*

Teachers were also influential:

> *I went away for a month and I missed a lot of school and I had teachers working with me behind until sort of 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and that's a huge amount of their free time just for one of their students, and you know, that really makes you feel like you want to give something back to the school as well as you know, something back to the teaching staff and that sort of thing.*
>
> *One of my replacement teachers at school (who was working as a volunteer) . . . he handed me a volunteer thing and said "sign up" . . .*

A range of other adults had also been important. For instance, one participant described how, as a guide, she had been mentored and encouraged to become a leader, and some of the youngest participants mentioned how images of celebrity involvement in volunteering had affected them:

> *Like I've been wanting to do the Red Cross Door Knock for a while . . . simply because, like, I see the ads on the TV and see Red Symons or something like that, and it's something that looks like fun. So if it's got that image, it's likely . . .*

People who offered leadership were also important:

> *In the group (of volunteers) certain groups of people were attracted to certain leaders.*

The views and behaviour of other young people were also influential. Participants suggested that they were more likely to volunteer if there were "other people that you know going for it", or if they saw images of other young people involved in the particular activity:

> *A lot of people will go, I don't want to do that because it's going to be old people, but if . . . instead of having all old people in their ads, they had all young people there, then a bunch of young people might go hey, there's going to be other young people doing this and they'll turn up . . .*

3. Previous volunteering experience

If a previous volunteering experience by the young person, or a friend or family member,

had been enjoyable, meaningful and beneficial then the views of the project participants suggested that it would strongly influence further volunteering. The experience did not necessarily have to be without a downside – for instance it did not necessarily need to be "fun" all the time – but the positives needed to outweigh the negatives:

> *A lot of the time it's pretty stressful and it's hard . . . (but) I've learnt a lot of stuff (and) that's good for me. I do it because I think (the organisation) is a good place.*

What makes for a positive volunteering experience is discussed further in the later sections of this report.

4. Religious belief/activity

Though several previous studies point to connections between religious activity and volunteering, only a small number of the young people participating in the discussions for this project openly mentioned church connections or religious beliefs when talking about volunteering. This was surprising given that several discussion groups were arranged through church schools or colleges.

However, while religious connections were rarely openly mentioned, religious background did appear to have played a role in forming the attitudes to volunteering, and volunteering behaviour, of a larger number of participants. For instance a group of young participants who had arranged their own volunteering activity all shared the same religious background and expressed similar ideas about "helping others". In addition:

- Buddhist beliefs were cited by one participant as the primary influence on a close friend's volunteering activity;
- one volunteer from a rural background talked about church-based volunteer activities such as playing the organ and welcoming the congregation;
- a group of participants from rural and regional areas and in a church-based university college displayed a very strong sense of community that may have some foundation in shared religious beliefs;
- a young participant talked about her brother's participation in church-based volunteer activity;
- one volunteer organisation interviewed for the project that has a church connection recruits it's young volunteers mainly through local parishes; and
- another volunteer organisation with many young volunteers told us that "putting their faith into action" was an important factor behind their participation.

Thus the connection between volunteering and religious activity may be stronger than appears at first sight.

5. Advertising

Several participants suggested that advertising campaigns by volunteer organisations had a positive influence:

> *Especially with the Salvation Army, like the amount of ads that they put on and how they've been with Australia for so many years and they've helped us out throughout . . .*

Extended advertising was also mentioned as a way of encouraging further participation, particularly if it was targeted to young people through schools, teachers, career advisers; included images of young people's involvement; and adopted the language used by young people.

However, as we note in our later discussion of the factors that discourage young people from volunteering, advertising can also be a "turn off" for some young people, especially if it tries to create feelings of guilt, or it uses language that is unfamiliar to young people.

Summary and observations

The factors that encourage young people to volunteer seem to be as varied as the young people themselves. Young people seek many different returns from volunteering and sometimes an individual will take on a number of different volunteer activities, each for a different reason or combination of reasons.

Young people may be motivated to volunteer by a slightly different combination of factors from older people. Clary et al. (1996) suggest that the values function is the most important and career and protective functions are least important in motivating volunteers, but our discussion groups indicate that while the value function is very important, with most young people looking for "meaningful" activities, the career and social functions appear to be just as important – and sometimes more so. This means that volunteer organisations hoping to attract and retain young people will need to consider specific strategies to appeal to them and will also need to ensure that the tasks and activities they are given meet their career and social needs.

Our discussion groups of young people also identified five factors that have a positive influence on their participation in community/volunteer activities: compulsory community service; role models; previous volunteering experience; religious belief or activity; and advertising. However their comments indicated that there is room to improve compulsory community service, which is not always as enjoyable, effective or positive as it could be.

This is important particularly in the light of welfare reform in Australia that has centred on notions of "mutual obligation" – that those who benefit from the social safety net should give something in return. Those unable to obtain paid work, including many young people, for instance, "could choose social participation as a substitute for economic participation or as a pathway towards economic participation (e.g. voluntary work)" (Wilson 2000).

Since 1997 "Work for the Dole" schemes have been extended so that participation is now required by young people aged 18 or 19 receiving the Youth Allowance for three months or more, or young people aged 18–39 who have received the full rate Newstart or Youth Allowance for six months or more. Activities are managed by Community Work Coordinators and delivered through community or government organisations or agencies such as local government and community groups. They include providing community services and restoring and maintaining community services and facilities. Other schemes requiring similar community participation include *Community Development Employment Projects* in Indigenous communities.

More recently, under the Voluntary Work Initiative young people receiving Newstart or a Youth allowance have been able to meet their "mutual obligations" by undertaking a set number of hours per fortnight of volunteer work instead of looking for paid work. They must do this in a volunteer organisation that is community-based and not-for-profit and they must not replace a paid worker, or undertake work that does not have a community focus.

The benefits of community participation are expected to include:

- opportunities to maintain existing skills and learn new ones;
- Increased confidence;
- on-the-job training;
- developing a network of contacts;

- obtaining a voluntary work reference from the organisation; and
- demonstrates motivation to employers[2].

However, ACOSS (1999, cited in Warburton and MacDonald 2002) suggests that there is no evidence that policies requiring community participation lead to increased employability. Training may not necessarily be included and there is no mechanism to ensure that activities are appropriate or improve job-readiness. Recent research also suggests that when volunteering is compulsory participants "may be even more unlikely to be volunteers in the future" (Warburton and MacDonald 2002, p. 16). If the objective is to increase "active citizenship" in the medium to longer-term "compulsory volunteering" may be counter-productive.

Clearly, if participation by young people in community work is to be increased then their experience of any "compulsory volunteering", whether part of a work or study program, or to meet "social obligations" should be as positive and affirming and should allow the young people opportunities to grow and learn as individuals and as active community members. The comments of this project's young participants indicate that as yet this does not always happen.

The way in which volunteer opportunities are advertised is another area that they identify for improvement, as it can currently sometimes discourage, rather than encourage volunteering by young people. This is discussed further in the following section.

[2] Information about Work for the Dole and the Voluntary Work Initiative have been obtained from the Centrelink web site.

5 What factors discourage young people from volunteering?

The study by Sundeen and Raskoff (2000) that investigated pathways into volunteering also looked at obstacles they met along the way. The researchers found three main reasons that young people were not involved in volunteering:

- lack of time;
- lack of interest; and
- not being asked.

For the young people participating in this project "lack of time" was certainly a major difficulty that many faced. It not only affected their ability to volunteer, but also many other aspects of their lives. However "lack of interest" was rarely apparent and "not being asked" did not arise at all. Instead participants indicated that they were prevented or discouraged from volunteering by two main kinds of factors: those in the external world such as social attitudes and the formal structure and arrangement of volunteering; and factors connected to their individual characteristics, capabilities, views and commitments:

External factors	**Personal factors**
• Peer pressure • Restrictions on volunteers • Lack of information	• Lack of skills • Lack of confidence • Time constraints • Disaffection with volunteering

External factors

Peer pressure

A phrase we heard many times in discussions with young people during this project was that "volunteering is uncool". For young people at the older end of the 16–24-year age span the "uncoolness" of volunteering was not an issue. They pointed to this view among younger people while indicating that it no longer affected their thinking or behaviour (if it had ever done). For the youngest people we spoke to however, this view of volunteering was a common source of angst and some frustration. They simultaneously defended volunteering but appeared to fear the "stigma" that was associated with it.

Many of the older participants protested that they did not think of volunteering as "uncool", or if they had done in the past, no longer did so. One participant suggested that she never had – and intimated that she had not realised that others did:

> *I still don't think it's uncool. Sometimes you only realise it later . . .*

However, most of the younger participants claimed they knew people who did and suggested that this was the majority of their peers:

> *It's also the age 'cos teenagers are typically rebellious, they don't want to help anyone, they want to do their own thing.*
>
> *It's because we're in a very image conscious world and it's uncool . . .*
>
> *They think it's not a fashionable thing to do to give your time to someone else.*

Interestingly, not all volunteer activities were similarly "uncool". Volunteer activities that involved high numbers of older people – either as the majority of other volunteers or as beneficiaries of the volunteering – were considered to be the worst:

> *Generally the idea of volunteering is it isn't so much doing things you enjoy it's the knocking on the doors and visiting old people and stuff and that you associate with the old people. I'm sorry but . . . horrors . . .*

Activities that suffered less were those in which a large number of young people were involved – either as volunteers or the beneficiaries of volunteering – and activities in which the young people had some control and responsibility, rather than being controlled or directed. In fact some activities were particularly "cool" and conferred status on the volunteers among their peers. These were activities such as sports coaching (particularly among young men) and organising music events for other young people. Career-related volunteering (e.g. to get experience in a field, to learn skills or make useful contacts) was also looked on more sympathetically. Overall, the difference between "cool" and "uncool" activities seemed to be expressed in the view that:

> *(the) volunteer role is only as attractive as the people you're working with . . .*

While most of the discussion participants did not want to admit openly that peer pressure affected their views of, or participation in, volunteering, it did appear to have had an influence. Only a few said "I used to think like that, but . . ." and no-one expressly said "I wouldn't do that because it's uncool". However, some young people were uncomfortable talking about their participation in "uncool" volunteer activities in front of their peers and the body language of those listening was sometimes very expressive. Occasionally also an admission provoked laughter among listeners, particularly when it seemed out of character for the particular young person concerned.

Some young people appeared to be frustrated about a negative view of volunteering when they themselves were enjoying (or had enjoyed) a volunteering experience and wanted others to have the same enjoyment. For instance, one participant said:

> *I do wonder if some of those people if they actually tried some volunteer activities would actually change (their view).*

Restrictions on volunteering

Discussion participants expressed concern about two practices of volunteer organisations that discouraged them from volunteering. One mentioned often by younger participants was that some organisations are not able to accept volunteers under 18 years of age:

> *... because of my age they weren't really keen ... because of all this liability – that's a real barrier ...*

Most of the young people referring to this practice indicated that they believed restrictions had been imposed because of legislative requirements or for security or safety reasons. However some also thought that they reflected the organisation's concern about the capabilities of young people:

> *There's issues with young people doing it, like working with the elderly, 'cos they don't know if you can do it, or how well ...*

Nevertheless they found it disheartening and discouraging. For instance, several young participants talked about a leader from a volunteer organisation who had spoken to them about its work organising soup kitchens. Fired with enthusiasm they had later approached this person, only to be told that they were "too young" to help:

> *We were all more than happy to sign up but then there were restrictions like you have to be over 18 ...*

Another participant similarly spoke about the discouragement she had felt after she had approached another organisation and was rejected because she was too young. It had discouraged her from approaching any other organisations for some time.

The young people affected by these restrictions argued for changes that would allow them to participate at least in some way:

> *Some voluntary organisations have to notice that some of the people that are willing to do volunteer work are not necessarily over 18 and they've got to use them instead of telling them to go over there until we need you.*

More specifically, some participants suggested that more organisations could offer "youth development programs", similar to those already offered by several organisations. Participants who had experienced these programs seemed, on the whole, to have enjoyed and benefited from them:

> *I got involved in that surf-lifesaving through school with the youth development program ... I think for a start you do it because you think it's one less class, it's going to be a bludge also you get the training and it looks good on your CV, but it also gives you an insight you wouldn't normally get because it gives you that introduction to it ...*

A second practice of volunteer organisations that was identified by participants as a barrier to volunteering was that some require a minimum time commitment from their volunteers and/or regular hours.

Many participants identified themselves as in a "transient" stage of life when they are uncertain where they will be in a year's time and what they will be doing. This means,

they indicated, that they are unable to take on any long-term commitments. They may only be able to commit to volunteering for a short period, perhaps a few months at most. In addition, many participants indicated that work and study commitments mean that they often have only a few hours a week to devote to volunteering and that the length of time, and the particular hours they are available, may change, if for instance, they have an extra study requirement to meet, or a work shift is altered.

Generally, participants were sympathetic with organisations that imposed minimum time commitments on their volunteers in return for providing them with substantial training. Nevertheless, they indicated that this made no difference to the limitations on their capacity to meet these commitments.

Lack of information

Lack of information about opportunities appeared to be a major impediment to volunteering by a large number of the young people participating in this project. Even among participants already involved in formal volunteering it was agreed that improved information dissemination was essential.

Some participants partly blamed themselves for not finding out about opportunities:

> *We tend to be a bit sort of lazy about it . . . you have it in the back of your mind one day I'm going to do this but without some sort of trigger . . . it takes a lot of effort really to say I'm going to do this and find out where you want to work . . . and how to go about joining up . . .*

However a more common complaint was:

> *I think a lot of people would volunteer if they were just told about it . . . but we don't know . . .*

The pressure of other commitments meant that many participants were unable to follow up initial information they received. For instance a group of senior school students indicated that hearing about an opportunity once was not enough:

> *You can hear about it but you hear about it once and that's the last you hear about it and you didn't quite catch all of the information . . .*
>
> *You're interested at first and then you can't remember . . .*

But they admitted that with many other pressures on their time:

> *You're not going to go out of your way to find out . . .*

Lack of information about opportunities seemed to be much more of an issue in metropolitan rather than regional or rural areas. Participants from outside major cities appeared to be strongly connected to their communities and aware of "where help is needed" and how they could become involved. However, in the cities it was often a different story with more young people indicating that they were unaware of where and how volunteering opportunities were available and how to go about becoming involved. This, coupled with age barriers and parental encouragement had been partly responsible for a group of young participants arranging their own informal volunteering activity.

In both metropolitan and regional/rural areas, participants already involved in formal volunteer activities had gathered or received information through a number of routes. A minority had approached organisations because of an interest in their work. These tended to be older participants based in the city. Some had heard through "word of mouth" from a friend or family

member who was perhaps, but not always, already involved. Several had responded to advertisements in local newspapers, or on television, a few had found information through the Internet. For the youngest participants school was a very important source of information. Guest speakers, teachers and career advisers had all played a role. A small number had slipped into the volunteer activity as a result of their previous participation in another activity through the same organisation. Thus they already had some inside knowledge about what was possible and the specific tasks required. These included young people who had progressed to sports coaching from playing in the sport at a more junior level, a few who had participated in youth development programs (e.g. surf-lifesaving) and a former guide who was now a guide leader.

However, even where participants had managed to obtain information, they often complained that it was incomplete and inadequate. They argued a need for more specific information about tasks and outcomes:

> *... if they said this is who we need, basically this is the work you gonna have to do, this is what you're going to get out of it ... if they keep it to the point ...*

They also wanted more stories, "personal experiences" of people who were already involved – particularly other young people. Most importantly they wanted to know:

> *... that what you're signing up for is going to help other people ...*

Personal factors

Lack of skills

The youngest participants in this project in particular were concerned that they lacked the skills necessary to perform some volunteering activities:

> *Being at that young age where you can't really do a lot ...*

and suggested that even when they did, older people might not think so:

> *There's issues with young people doing it, like working with the elderly, 'cos they don't know if you can do it, or how well ...*

Many others also wondered if they had the skills necessary to be a volunteer and indicated that perhaps other people were better qualified:

> *It's quite difficult because there are so many other people who could do that job. Sometimes you feel there are people who are better qualified than you are ...*

Several also suggested that lacking skills and much time to devote to volunteering they – and their peers – did not think they could "make a difference" – and so volunteering seemed "a waste of time":

> *I think a lot of teenagers wouldn't do it because they'd think there was like no point. They think that working on their life is worth more at the time than working for volunteer things because sometimes you don't believe that you can actually make a difference.*

Lack of confidence

Several participants indicated that they found the idea of approaching a volunteer organisation "intimidating". This was particularly the case for participants who had moved from the city to the country and were not sure where they fitted:

> *In a country town you're pretty sure who's good at what but in the city ... there's so many other people with the same kind of skills ...*

A number of participants indicated that their confidence had been dented by a rejection from a volunteer organisation. This

was not so bad if the organisation had "too many" volunteers but worse when they were put off because of their age, or lack of skills.

Time constraints

Time constraints were a major obstacle to volunteering by many participants. Some younger participants suggested that they currently had only "limited time" – trying to fit in school work, including extra-curricula activities, and part-time work. But they thought they might have even less time in the future:

> *...when you're older ... you start to concentrate on your career and you don't have so much time to bother about volunteering ...*

Participants who had moved to the city from the country noted that there were many other ways to fill their time. While volunteering activities were part of their leisure in the country the city offered many more entertainment possibilities:

> *In the city compared to the country – there's so much more that you have to do that's taking up your time ... The things that you use for entertainment in the country you don't have the time or resources for those roles when you come to the city.*

Some young participants in a regional centre also saw a developing conflict between volunteering and a changing world:

> *Volunteer work usually takes up a lot of time and nowadays everyone's pushed for time and time is money and all those sorts of ...*
>
> *It also depends, as the world changes, like we get busier and busier and we have less time, and volunteering is sort of a concept where's it's sort of ... it's fading. We don't do it as much as what we used to.*

They debated whether volunteering was a "leisure" activity:

> *It detracts from leisure time for a lot of people. Or that's how they see it.*
>
> *Well for genuine volunteers it is, because it's what they want to be doing, but for others.*

and concluded that it really depended on the nature of the volunteering activity:

> *Depends on the work. Hiking down the river is leisure kind of, and it's also volunteering, supervising all the little kids, whereas walking around picking up rubbish isn't exactly leisure but it is good volunteering.*

Despite this, in their view volunteering is an activity that can be performed primarily by "people who don't have anything to do", like:

> *Those who have free time, housewives or those who are retired and so and so, or they just want to fill in the hours ...*

Many participants spoke of the pressures they were under due to the need to combine their study with part-time work:

> *You're under pressure to do well at uni and to do a job as well.*

One participant from a regional centre but studying in the city, who indicated that volunteering was essential for obtaining a job in her particular field, also noted conflict between volunteering/career demands and her desire to spend some time at home with her family:

> *If you want to volunteer during the holidays – that's the only time I get to go home – I would like to have volunteered for a week but I only got to do two days and even that was sacrificing time with my Mum and my sisters ...*

In spite of the general agreement that time

constraints affected the ability to volunteer participants in one discussion group indicated that if the specific volunteering activity was "important enough" most people, including themselves, could "make time" to fit it in. Nevertheless this group, along with most others, suggested that effort encouraging students in their final year of schooling to take up a volunteer effort would be wasted. The demands of this year on students' time are too overwhelming.

Disaffection due to poor previous experiences of volunteering

In the previous section we noted that a positive experience of volunteering could be an "encouraging factor" for further volunteer activity. The corollary to this is that a negative experience can cause a young person to become disaffected with volunteering. Some of the negative experiences mentioned by the young people participating in this project were:

- Being isolated or lonely – having no-one to share the work with or to talk to (especially no other young people).
- Feeling exploited – being placed under too much pressure or given too much responsibility:

  As a volunteer I felt like I haven't been shown enough respect or been taken as seriously as a paid worker and yeah, I think that needs to change. I think a volunteer probably should be taken more seriously than somebody you're paying because they're donating their time and effort and . . . too many ignorant people out there, who like organise these things. Yeah.

- Having no opportunity to contribute to the development of objectives or activities:

  Young people would be more interested in (volunteering if) it's not as restrictive . . . like if somebody volunteers and they want to go out and you know they should sit down and maybe brain storm if it's a group. Say what can we do to help the community or . . . just have like more . . . more input with . . . what the actual people who are volunteering, who are doing the work, what they see as . . . big parts of helping the community or big parts of the whole volunteering sort of life.

- Conflicts with other people including other volunteers, staff or clients:

  I would not get involved in any type of voluntary work because once I (did) and the blame for (an)other's mistake came on me.

Participants indicated that negative experiences can be very powerful. In particular, bad news tends to travel faster than good:

> *. . . you'd certainly have to make sure it's a positive experience. If you have one person with a bad experience they're going to talk about it – they'll tell everyone they meet don't go to this place . . . but if someone has a good experience they'll only tell someone close to them, they won't want to brag about it . . .*

and tends to feed or reinforce pre-held views:

> *I get the feeling that it's a lot easier for people not involved (in volunteering) to take negative comments on board – as in "don't do it" than positive comments (like) "I had a really good time you should come along". Maybe they see it as an excuse.*

Nevertheless, a negative experience may not be completely off-putting. Its influence depends on how bad the experience is and whether other things compensate, such as the motivations of the individual:

> *If you have a negative experience well . . . maybe you'll be jaded for a small period of time, maybe for a long period of time. Depending on the person I think. I want to go and do more but . . . I volunteered as a stage manager at an (Music Festival) and I got pushed around all day by the guy who was getting paid and I wasn't getting paid for it and I ended up just feeling like shit.*

Disaffection due to inappropriate advertising

Young people believe that advertising can encourage volunteering, particularly if it is properly targeted and structured. However, project participants were concerned that some current advertising seemed to be designed to make people feel guilty and indicated that this causes people to "switch off":

> *You get these ads that, like the tear-jerkers that you just like want to turn the TV off or just leave the room because you don't want to have that in your face telling you that you're bad because you've got it better than somebody else.*

In addition, they argued that some advertisements make problems look so large and overwhelming that they persuade viewers that they can do nothing to make a difference. Thus they can put off potential volunteers:

> *I think the whole 40 000 children die every second or whatever, it's like well you can save one of them but I can't save 39 999 children so what's the point of even trying, I'm still going to feel bad because they're dying and I think there's just too much of a negative effect of advertising of charities.*

For some participants, being influenced to volunteer by feelings of guilt leads to "a bad taste in the mouth" and contributes to a poor, or negative, volunteering experience:

> *You feel disgusted. You've got that bad taste in your mouth.*

They argued that volunteering was something you should do:

> *. . . because you want to, not because you think you should.*

Summary and observations

Our discussion group participants identified two main kinds of factors that discourage them from volunteering. In the first group are factors in the external world. Strong among these is peer pressure and particularly the view that "volunteering is uncool". This is most influential on young people at the lower end of the 16–24-year age range. Older young people recognise that this peer pressure exists but it seems to have little to no influence on their behaviour.

Restrictions on the volunteering opportunities open to them are a concern for young people under 18 years of age. They understand that some restrictions are imposed for safety or security, but are more concerned about restrictions imposed for no obvious reason, or because of mistaken views about the capabilities and skills of young people.

Lack of information about volunteering opportunities is also a concern. Some young people recognise that information is available but that they have made insufficient effort to obtain it, or follow-up the information they do have. Others indicate that existing information is inadequate and does not give young people enough detail to be able to make a decision about volunteering, or particular volunteer activities.

The second group of discouraging factors are connected with the characteristics, capabilities and views of the young people themselves. A belief that they lack

essential skills prevents some young people from putting themselves forward, while others lack the confidence to approach volunteer organisations. Lack of time to devote to volunteer activities is a problem for many young people, particularly those trying to combine work, study and leisure activities. Some young people have poor views of volunteering that flow from a previous negative experience or inappropriate advertising.

The young people themselves recognise that there are ways of overcoming many of these factors. For instance they believe that participation in compulsory volunteer activity allows young people to "get over" the "uncoolness" of it and escape the stigma that can accompany voluntary participation. More effort could be made by volunteer organisations to contact and encourage young people and to ensure that their experience of volunteering or compulsory community service is a positive one. These organisations could, for instance, give greater recognition to young people's skills and assign them more interesting and worthwhile tasks. Information about volunteering could be more widely distributed and more detail could be included, with examples of specific activities and outcomes.

However, the lack of time is a problem that seems insurmountable for many young people, especially those who already face substantial study and work pressures.

6 What kind of volunteer activities do young people undertake?

Previous studies examining volunteering have looked at different kinds of volunteer activities in a range of categories. Often researchers have separated *formal volunteering* – activities undertaken through volunteer organisations – from *informal volunteering* – other less structured activities. However more recently, researchers have begun to classify activities into two other groups:

- *member service*: activities that aim to serve the members of a club or other organisation, such as a sporting club; and
- *public service*: activities that aim to serve members of the community.

Lyons (in Stukas and Foddy 2002) claims that most volunteer activity in Australia is in member service, whilst Hopkins (2002) found that only about 30 per cent of volunteer activity was of this kind and Soupormas and Ironmonger (2002) noted that in 2000 46 million hours of voluntary work were contributed to the community and welfare sector (i.e. public service) compared with only 41 million hours contributed to sports and recreation clubs. However, most definitions of volunteering are focused on public or community service activities and research on volunteering by young people has also tended to concentrate on public service activity. There is no clear line between the two types of activities and much volunteer activity in social service organisations is involved in member service type activities such as management, administration and fundraising (Premiers Department NSW 2002). Similarly many member service organisations such as sporting clubs also have some very important social service functions, particularly in regional and rural Australia.

Data from the Longitudinal Studies of Australian Youth (LSAY) indicate that more than half the panel (52%) had participated in some form of volunteer work at age 20 and

that *coaching or some other sports-related voluntary activity* was the most frequently reported activity (23% of respondents). In addition, the next most frequently reported activity, church or youth group work (15% of respondents), is one that would include both member and public service aspects. Thus member service activities do appear to be favoured by this age group. Asked a slightly different question the following year fewer panel members reported coaching or other sports-related activity (16%) but the most frequently reported activity "collecting money for charities" also has both public and member service aspects (see Appendix 1 for full tables and discussion).

Though we did not directly collect detailed data from the young people participating in this project about the types of volunteer activities they were involved in, it was clear from the comments they made in discussions that there is a great diversity in these activities.

Table 1: Participation in volunteer work from the Longitudinal Studies of Australian Youth

Activity	*% reporting at age 20*	*% reporting at age 21*
Coaching or other sports-related activity	23.4	15.7
Church or youth group work	15.1	8.3
Child care	15.1	11.3
Home help for elderly or incapacitated	7.3	4.7
Meals on Wheels	6.3	0.1
Environmental activities	0.8	7.9
Fundraising for charities	6.5	21.5

(Source: adapted from tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 1.

As indicated earlier, many were engaged in informal volunteering and others in more formal work. Similarly, some appeared to take part in activities that could be classed as member service and others in activities that are more clearly public service – with a few people participating in both kinds of volunteering. A list of the organisations and the activities they mentioned clearly demonstrates this diversity:

Aged care
Big brother/sister
Child care
Community associations
Community events
Church/faith-related activities
Disability care
Drug rehabilitation
Education groups
Emergency services
Environmental organisations
Fundraising (e.g. for schools, charities, emergency services)
Guides
Homeless young people
Language/cultural associations
Local government youth advisory groups
Music event organisation
Music and drama programs
Overseas aid
Political groups

Reach Out

Red Cross

Rotary

RSPCA

School-based community service

Self-organised activities

Sports coaching and other sports-related activities

St John Ambulance

Student associations

St Vincent de Paul Society

Surf-Lifesaving

Teaching programs

Tourist railway

Welfare organisations

"Work experience" volunteering (restaurant, radio station, aged care, disability care)

Youth programs (e.g. camps, education)

Though we did not ask them directly about the particular volunteer activities they performed, we did ask participants to tell us about the types of volunteer activities that are most attractive to them and the reasons why. Their responses are useful in identifying the types of activities that are most favoured among young people. In particular, their comments indicate that when young people consider participating in a volunteer or community service activity, most of them look for three aspects in particular:

1. Activities that engage their passions and interests and give them opportunities to put their values and convictions into action.
2. Activities that involve other young volunteers and/or young people as the object of the volunteer activity, e.g. youth programs, camps, care for young people with disabilities.
3. Activities where they can see that their help is needed and their efforts have an impact.

Whether an activity is formal or informal, member service or public service appeared to matter little to young people. A voluntary activity is potentially attractive to them only if it meets these three basic criteria.

These are, of course, not the only factors that shape young people's choices of volunteer activity and cause them to prefer one type of activity over another. Many other factors also play a part. However, these three are the most common and they also appear to be the most important. They set the framework within which other factors come into play.

1. Activities that engage their passions and interests

"Passion" and "interest" are words used very frequently by young people when they talk about the volunteer activities that are most appealing to them:

> *Stuff that you're passionate about.*
>
> *She's doing it because she's so passionate about it . . .*
>
> *Oh it's worth it as well. Community spirit. A good outlet for your passions and stuff like that.*

Most participants indicate that they have little desire to be involved in something that they have little interest in:

> *If you're with an organisation that is really passionate about a particular subject that you have a different opinion to it's like . . . It's hard to commit. It's hard to put your time and effort into it.*
>
> *If you're not passionate about it and you don't have friends involved you*

lack the incentive to give up your time when you could be doing other things ...

Conversely, being passionate about, or deeply interested in a particular topic, outcome or activity makes it less like "work" and more enjoyable. Young people indicate they are also more likely to do a better job:

...If you're interested in it, then you don't mind doing it. Therefore you don't see it as volunteering task.

If you're interested in what you're doing, then you do it properly.

Having an interest in the task also increases the rewards you receive from it:

If it's something that you're passionate about ... and you generally don't do volunteer work about something that you don't care about ... then that sort of increases the sense of reward that you get ...

Participants acknowledge that people can be passionate about different things:

You (are) more passionate about some things than other things ...

There's a few people ... who don't do anything at all – then there's people who are so passionate about (the same thing) ...

and that the things an individual is passionate about, or interested in, can change over time as the person develops new ideas and external circumstances change. When this happens motivation for the volunteer activity can be lost:

It's all great to volunteer and you know, you're really passionate about it, but then once you know, after a certain amount of time like, it's hard to stay committed to things. Just because of your change of lifestyle or your change of preference or change of opinion or the change of the world current situation.

They also suggest that without passion or interest, young people are unlikely to be persuaded to volunteer for a particular activity by advertising or other inducements:

If you're not passionate about it (it won't make any difference).

Participants see passions and interests as very individual and closely related to – and reflecting – an individual's values and convictions. Thus volunteer activities that offer opportunities to put these into action are particularly attractive. Each individual has to:

Find something that works for you ...

2. Activities offering opportunities to work with other young people

Not surprisingly, young people feel most comfortable with each other. Partly for this reason, participants indicate they prefer volunteer activities that enable them to work with other young people who are either volunteers or served by the voluntary activity, e.g. sports coaching, organising youth events etc.:

What I think makes it attractive to you is probably like youth-orientated volunteering, so like you would be more inclined to volunteer for something which has to do with them.

Being with people around their own age or younger is especially important to the younger participants:

Especially for teenagers also meeting younger people or people your own age ...

They have a view that older people do not have confidence in them or treat them seriously:

Older people see younger people and think er . . .

To some extent, this view appeared to be based on previous volunteering experience. For instance, talking about community service activities they had undertaken at an aged care centre one group of participants explained:

I think in their own minds (the residents) do appreciate (us) but they can't . . . Well, they yell at you . . .

But if you were an aged person and here are students coming along going hi, g'day, you're just going to think . . . no.

In contrast to this, working with other young people was affirming and built their confidence:

Well a couple of guys . . . well most of the guys I coached last year are now going into the next grade so I obviously know that they enjoyed the game when I was their coach. I think they've improved in skills and just stuff like that, makes me feel good about myself because I might be a good teacher or a good coach or whatever and they've improved and they're progressing. And it's that kind of stuff.

Another reason participants prefer volunteer activities involving other young people is that working with a group helps to make even the dullest and most repetitive tasks more enjoyable:

Even packing envelopes could be fun if it's a whole lot of people together . . .

For this reason also, young people prefer to work in teams with other people, particularly other young people:

But yeah, you're with a group of friends so you can make it fun, but if you're the only one there then quite often you won't enjoy it.

And an opportunity to work as a group of people, you know, with your friends.

With your own age group.

In addition, the opportunity to work with a group of friends would make the volunteer activity more attractive:

If you were in it by yourself then . . . well I mean, you wouldn't be likely to volunteer in the first place . . .

If you get one to volunteer then the rest will slowly follow.

Bring a friend.

That's how Duke of Ed started at our school. It started as a small group and it's just grown.

3. Activities where their efforts are needed and they have an obvious impact

When young people volunteer they want to be sure that their efforts are really needed and useful and have an impact. Thus they prefer the kind of volunteer activities that allow them to see the immediate effects of their action – that they have made a difference in some way:

. . . just that feeling that you know, you've done something to help someone else and it's made a difference, hopefully.

"Being needed" is very important:

The really big aspect is to feel needed because you don't want to do something where you're just eh . . . you don't want to feel like you're wasting your time.

Several participants talked about school-based community service activities where they did not feel that they were wanted or that the tasks they were given were important. In future voluntary work they wanted to be

sure that their work was necessary and had some effect:

> *It has to have meaning . . . if you don't see any of the benefits to it (you don't want to do it).*
>
> *You don't want to feel like you're wasting your time.*

Similarly, another group talked about the lack of satisfaction they gained from donating money to charities because, while they believed that this money would be used wisely, they did not get to see the direct results of their actions:

> *I understand that the money that I'm donating . . . shouldn't be spent on updating me of the current situation and that, but I don't know where my money's going and it's hard . . .*

They preferred activities where the outcomes of their efforts were more immediate and apparent:

> *. . . if you are building (a community) skate park you can see the result . . .*
>
> *Yeah, that's more immediate.*

and indicated that being able to see results would encourage them into new volunteer activities:

> *And like that can motivate you to start on a new project.*

Individual choices

Within the broad framework of these three major considerations the specific volunteer activity that each person undertakes (and some participate in more than one) also reflect their individual characteristics and circumstances including:

1. Where they live
2. Their age and skills
3. Their language/cultural background
4. The church or religious community they belong to
5. Their personal development needs and goals
6. Their career goals
7. The time they have available to devote to voluntary activities
8. Their gender
9. Previous community service or involvement
10. The information they have about volunteering opportunities

1. Where they live

For young people from regional/rural areas, participating in a voluntary activity is a normal part of living in small communities. Volunteering is both a social/leisure activity (e.g. sports clubs) and a recognition that members of the community are mutually dependent:

> *People are more closely bonded together because it's a small community.*
>
> *. . . you know who you're helping – . . .*
>
> *you might get it back from them one day . . .*
>
> *. . . and you want to help out your friends and your family.*
>
> *it will probably benefit your community in the end . . .*
>
> *. . . and you're more likely to see the results.*

Choosing a volunteer activity may not be a conscious decision, but a natural progression from involvement in some other activity (e.g. from playing to coaching a sport) or being part of a family or school community where there is a tradition of participation in particular activities. However, if a decision is made more consciously a number of factors

may come into play. Where is help most needed? Where could your efforts make a difference? What activities are family and friends involved in? In addition, a local crisis such as a bushfire, destructive storm or even a bad car crash can encourage young people to veer towards particular volunteer activities such as emergency services or the local fire brigade.

For young people living in larger metropolitan communities the task of choosing a volunteer activity can be a different story. To begin with it is often harder for them than their regional/rural peers to identify where help is needed and their efforts could make a difference:

> *I know that when I was younger I just looked and thought . . . homeless people . . . there's no homeless people round here . . .*
>
> *If you come from part of town where you've always had everything for you . . . you've probably got no idea especially if you're young that anything bad ever happens.*

Unless they are part of a community group such as a church, club or language/cultural association, the young people may also have had very limited opportunities to develop the awareness of community that can play a significant role in the decision-making of their regional/rural peers. Some may become involved in a particular volunteer activity as a normal progression from earlier participation in community activity, such as the youth development program of a volunteer organisation or a school community service program. However, for those without this background, more conscious decisions are necessary and are influenced by such things as personal development needs, career goals and the decisions of their friends.

2. Age and skills

Age is an important factor in determining which volunteer activities young people will undertake for the simple reason that some activities are not open to those under 18 years of age. As we noted earlier, some of the youngest participants in this project expressed disappointment and regret that a number of volunteer associations could not find a way to utilise their efforts and enthusiasm – such as through a special program for their age group. These young people told us that when they approached these organisations they were told to "go over there until we need you" – an action that sometimes dampened their enthusiasm for volunteering, particularly if when it appears to be based on mistaken views of young people's skills and capabilities.

Skills are influential in three ways. Firstly, some young people look for volunteer activities where they can use the skills that they have:

> *It's where do you fit appropriately with the skills that you've got . . . The abilities that you have to give in that situation.*
>
> *I picked the one that was most appropriate for the skills that I have . . .*

Secondly, young people look to volunteering as a way of developing and extending their existing skills and learning new skills. They thus base their choice of volunteer activity on whatever will best contribute to this and might choose something that is challenging, pushing them beyond their comfort barriers, or where training is provided for volunteers:

> *I wanted to get skills.*
>
> *Something that challenges your intelligence.*

However young people are not always aware that training is available through a voluntary activity:

You don't really hear of voluntary work having training . . .

We don't have much information about that . . . we only hear about the stuff that we have to do . . .

Thirdly, some young people rule themselves out of volunteer activities where they do not think they have the necessary level of skills to make an effective contribution. They may do this not knowing that training is available or without a clear perception of the type of skills the activity actually requires. Thus it is often a decision made on surmise and misconceptions rather than on reality.

3. Language/cultural background

Though we did not ask participants to identify their language/cultural background, or to comment on differences they believed this made to their participation in volunteering, the issue arose several times in discussions.

In one group participants suggested that some people sharing an ethnic background tend to cluster into communities. They argued that because of this they are likely to be aware of each other's needs and as a result will be more likely to engage in community activities. Their comments thus were similar to those made about (and by) people living in small regional or rural communities in Australia.

In another group a participant talked about growing up in a country where community service was a much more formal part of the school curriculum. He indicated this had made him more aware of the problems of others and the contribution that he could make to the community.

Both these examples support a view that language/cultural background can have a positive effect on overall participation in volunteering.

In a third group a participant mentioned another overseas experience that more specifically points to a particular type of volunteer activity:

In a lot of European countries – my experience (is) with France because all my family come from there – they've got the National Service which is like forced volunteering pretty much. But there's lots . . . there's like a fairly positive side to it. A lot of people, and I see this because I'm still in high school, they don't have a clue what they want to do and I guess in a lot of those European countries you get thrown into the deep end. They really have to make up their mind what they want to do for the six or nine months of National Service which they have to do. And it really encourages people to have a positive work ethic because well they're put into government departments or whatever it may be and you know, they're pretty much just another person in the office or another person . . .

This participant thought that a similar scheme would be worth considering in Australia:

I'm not saying perhaps that we should introduce it in Australia but I do think there's very positive sides to it. A lot of people who come out of high school and don't have a clue what they want to do and might just ponder on that for another 10 years. Well it's really a good way to say hey, make up your mind because you're going to have to do it. And that's what life's about, you have to do something sometimes . . . perhaps that's a lot of things which in Australia a lot of people neglect.

This participant also was among others who indicated that membership of a language or cultural association can offer some volunteering opportunities and give access to information and volunteer activities not available to others outside the group:

> *And then various associations like the French Australian Association, just helping out among your friends and people you know.*

In this way, it appeared to have a similar effect as membership of a church or religious group.

4. Church affiliations and religious beliefs

As well as having an influence on the decision to volunteer/not volunteer, being a member of a church or religious group can play a part in determining the choice of volunteer activity in a number of ways.

Firstly, membership of the group can provide young people with access to opportunities to volunteer that may not be available to those outside the group. These are most likely to be activities that serve the needs of the group (such as providing the music for a church service).

Secondly, through the group young people may become aware of particular places or problems where their volunteer efforts would be useful and valued. For instance, they may learn from other members about specific needs or activities that they would otherwise be unaware of.

Thirdly, as members of the group they might be exposed to activities that the group undertakes and be given opportunities to participate. These activities may also be open to people outside the group but as members they may be more likely to hear about them and to know how to go about becoming involved.

5. Personal development needs

In choosing where to volunteer their time and energy some young people look for activities that they think might help them to become better people in some way.

Several of the young people participating in our discussions indicated that they look for or prefer volunteering opportunities that might enable them to overcome some perceived weaknesses in their personality, or fill emotional gaps in their lives. Some chose particular volunteering activities in part to bring them into contact with the public and give them opportunities to overcome their shyness. Others looked for activities that might provide the affirmation and affection that they did not receive from elsewhere. Still others volunteered for a particular activity because they hoped to ease their fears about being in a particular situation:

> *(I'm) hoping that (this volunteer activity) will open my life to this (situation) . . . and decrease my fear of it for the future.*

A number of young people also sought volunteer activities that would teach them good habits useful later in paid work:

> *. . . good behaviour in the office, how to get along with people, work out things. Turning up on time (etc.) . . .*

6. Career goals

Many of the young people participating in this project indicated that they see some types of volunteering as a way to increase their chances of securing paid work in a particular field. Thus they will choose the volunteer activities that they believe are most likely to assist them to achieve career goals.

Firstly, as we noted above, they will choose a volunteer activity that they believe will help them to develop the skills they need to work in a particular organisation

or industry. For instance, our discussion group participants included several who had volunteered to assist a local government organisation to organise music events for young people because doing this gave them access to training in required skills. Similarly, among those responding to our survey of TAFE students were several who wrote about the importance of training in a volunteer activity:

> *Training is essential to get the right job. Hands-on experience that you receive doing voluntary work would increase your chance of getting that right job.*

Secondly, young people look for volunteer activities that will bring them to the attention of people already working in a field they would like to enter. For instance, this might be an activity in which they can demonstrate their skills and abilities:

> *I was actually helping them a hell of a lot because I was doing better than any of the other people there because I have more experience and more skills in that area than people that were paid to do it.*

> *It's a way of getting yourself known and your abilities shown to those who may be in a position to employ you.*

They talk about this as "getting a foot in the door":

> *Promo work for radio, TV, anything to get my foot in the door of entertainment industry as I want to get into acting.*

> *...like if you're doing volunteering perhaps at a radio station and you want to get into radio – then you've got a foot in the door.*

Ideally the activity will allow them to build a network of contacts in the industry they hope to enter:

> *I meet people who work in the industry and make contacts into the industry.*

> *I'm only doing this to meet people in the industry.*

Thirdly young people look for volunteer activities that "will look good on their resume". These are activities that lead to some kind of formal recognition, such as a certificate, or activities that will enable them to gain a reference from a person with influence in the field:

> *Voluntary work shows initiative and the will to work. (it) will look good on the resume.*

> *...like I can get references from them and put them into (my CV).*

Finally there are some fields where young people can gain entry to paid work only if they first undertake some volunteer activities in the same field. Thus they will look for activities that will give them relevant experience:

> *A lot of volunteering you do is to get a job at the end of it – and a lot of areas you have to – like environmental stuff. That's the only way you'll get a job.*

In these cases, volunteering is a way of demonstrating that you are serious and committed to the field, as well as having the skills necessary to work in it.

7. Time constraints

In a previous section we noted that lack of time is a significant barrier to volunteering by young people.

Time commitments also affect the type of volunteer activities that young people choose. Young people tend to avoid activities that require a minimum time commitment greater than the time they have available. Instead they consider only the kinds of volunteer activities that fit in with their other commitments. Similarly, when work or study commitments are heavier some weeks than

others, or irregular (e.g. casual work), they have no choice but to pass up a volunteering opportunity that requires a regular weekly commitment. This is the case even if a particular activity is attractive to them in every other respect.

For instance, comments by discussion group participants suggest that it is impossible when they are already trying to combine work and study to consider taking up a volunteer activity that requires a minimum commitment of say, five hours a week when they have only two.

8. Gender

None of the young people in our discussion groups explicitly raised gender issues in talking about volunteering in general, or particular kinds of volunteer activities. Nevertheless, especially among the youngest participants, views about what are appropriate and "uncool"activities for males did appear to have had an affect on the types of volunteering they were involved in and preferred.

Young males seemed to consider some activities to be "cooler" and therefore more acceptable than others. These were activities that were less overtly concerned with "helping others", that were less "soft and fuzzy", including any activities that involved sport, heavy or dangerous work, engines or other equipment, or that gave them status among their peers – such as organising entertainment for other young people. This was rarely articulated but was more often expressed through body language and an unwillingness to talk about certain aspects of volunteering.

Peer pressure appeared to be a significant factor in shaping young males' views about appropriate volunteer activities. In one discussion group a male participant's admission that he "used to be a scout" was the cause of considerable laughter – and his own discomfort, while another participant was at pains to make it clear that he was involved in a volunteer activity only because it would help his career. But for this reason he would not have been involved.

Gendered views, and the influence of peer pressure, were much less obvious in groups of older participants. Males seemed much less reluctant to talk about "making a difference", "helping people" and "community" and many young men and women were involved in volunteering in the same organisations. However, males still appeared to have a preference for volunteer activities that might be seen as more traditionally masculine. There were indications that they recognised and sympathised with the concerns of their younger counterparts. For instance, one group talked about the "testosterone problem" that made it difficult to involve boys in volunteering while at school:

> *From Year 7 to Year 10 ... girls get more into it than guys because guys are trying to be tough (and) volunteering doesn't necessarily seem tough ...*

Concern about the need to "*involve guys more*" led onto discussions about the kind of activities that these boys might enjoy. When opportunities for involvement in motor sports were raised these acclaimed as the type of activity that:

> *Guys especially would jump at.*

That is, the types of activities that would interest and reward them and would also be acceptable to their peers as "cool" volunteering.

9. Previous community service and volunteering

Many of the discussion group participants were involved in volunteer activities that reflected their earlier involvement in community service, volunteering, a club

or association. For instance, participants included surf-lifesavers and emergency service volunteers and members of St John's Ambulance who had participated in youth programs, sports coaches who had moved to coaching from playing and a guide leader who was previously a guide. These participants had chosen to become a volunteer with the same organisation in which they previously had a different role – as the beneficiaries of volunteering by others. This experience and their knowledge of the organisation appeared to have been important in influencing them to commit to it in a new role as a volunteer:

> *(A) thing that can really keep people in an organisation is just a real sense of achievement that the organisation is going somewhere, that things are not stagnating and that what you're doing is worth the effort you're putting in and that there are opportunities for you to do new things. The bottom line is you have to feel that the organisation is going somewhere and that you are a real part of making that happen. If you feel that you're just out on the edges of something then you won't possibly stay as long as if you make a deep commitment and really get to know the ins and outs . . .*

Less formally, other participants were also involved in activities that previous experience had shown to be worthwhile and rewarding. This involvement might have been part of a compulsory community service activity (e.g. with a school or other educational institution program) but could also have been organised by the young people themselves, friends, family or other community members.

Conversely, several participants suggested that they would avoid some types of volunteer activities because their previous experience of them had been difficult or unsatisfactory.

10. Information about volunteering opportunities

Earlier we noted that lack of information about opportunities is a barrier to volunteering by young people. Participants also indicated that the availability of information shapes the kind of volunteer activities that young people are involved in because unless they know about possibilities and opportunities they will be unable to take them up.

Participants indicated that word-of-mouth information provided by friends or family, is a major source of knowledge about volunteer activities. Teachers and career advisers, local councils and newspaper advertisements were also useful information sources. However, only a very small minority had used the Internet to identify volunteer opportunities and few were enthusiastic:

> *There's a place called Go Volunteer or something. You can go on there and look at that.*
>
> *Yeah, well you see, I haven't heard about it so obviously they're not marketing well enough.*
>
> *I wouldn't look for voluntary work on the net. Sometimes sites don't update and if they don't they have all this invalid information.*
>
> *If you wanted to find something quickly it would take you a while to find something on the Internet. (A) Local newspaper would be better.*

Overall, many participants indicated that more and better information is needed, including much more detail about the specific tasks required, their objectives and impact, using some examples of people already involved:

If (volunteer organisations) said this is who we need, basically this is the work you gonna have to do, this is what you're going to get out of it … if they keep it to the point …

…(you) need examples … personal experiences … What you'll be doing and how you'll affect other people …

Summary and observations

The kinds of volunteer activities that young people prefer are those that engage their passions and interests, that give them opportunities to meet and work with other young people and that have an obvious impact. When young people make decisions about whether or not to become involved in volunteering, and then choose a particular activity, these three considerations are of primary importance.

In addition, when they choose a specific volunteer activity, young people are influenced by a number of further factors. Their personal characteristics, such as their age, gender, skills, beliefs and social/cultural background are important but their choices will also reflect the information they have about volunteer options, their career aspirations and goals, the time commitment an activity requires, their previous volunteering experience, the involvement of friends and family and how the volunteer activity fits in with other aspects of their lives.

Gender appears to play an important role among young people up to around 16 years of age. For young males the "uncoolness" of volunteering can be outweighed – and peer status earned – through involvement in activities that are seen as traditionally masculine, such as those that involve sport or working with emergency services. By contrast they appear generally much more reluctant to take on activities that they believe their peers might see as feminine, such as those involving "caring" for others. However, these gender-based effects tend to be tempered by membership of a cultural or religious community, or career aspirations and goals. For instance, a young male aiming toward a career in medicine may be more likely to consider "caring" roles than his peers, if he sees it as providing him with opportunities to learn useful skills and gain appropriate experience. Similarly, notions of "acceptable" behaviour for young males appear to differ within different cultural and/or religious communities so that while participation in some activities is deemed "uncool" in one context, it is desirable in another.

For young females there may also be gender-based factors. They also may come under pressure from communities, families and friends to engage in, or avoid, some particular kinds of activities. However, there was little to no evidence of this among the young women who participated in the discussion groups, nor in the comments of the TAFE students responding to the survey.

For volunteer organisations hoping to attract and retain young people the findings offer a number of pointers. For instance:

- organisations might re-examine the structure of their volunteer programs to ensure that they offer young people opportunities to meet and work with others in their age group; to pursue their interests; and to see how their efforts are having an effect;
- young people's choices of volunteer activity can be constrained by their age. As previously noted, there are a number of activities that are not open to young people under 18 years of age and this can be frustrating for those who would like to participate in them. Organisations

hoping to recruit young people might thus consider ways to involve 16–18-year-olds, perhaps through some special programs;

- volunteer organisations need to recognise that young people face many demands on their time and may not be able to devote a lengthy or regular period of time to a volunteer activity. Thus they might incorporate more flexibility into their volunteer programs, so that young people are able to fit volunteer activities better into their busy lives;
- young people indicate that they need more information about volunteer options. Organisations might thus consider how they could improve existing information by adding more detail and disseminate information more widely; and
- volunteer organisations need to recognise the difficulties that some young people face in undertaking a volunteer activity that is seen as "uncool" by their peers and work to ensure that young volunteers have the support they need to continue and that their efforts are well-rewarded.

7 In what ways do young people benefit from volunteering?

Of course you're putting a lot in but you really do want to get something out of it.

I'm not doing it because I'm this wonderful person who wants to help people … I mean that's definitely part of it but there are heaps of benefits that I get out of it too.

Several previous studies have examined the outcomes of volunteering by young people and have identified two main types of benefits:

- outcomes of primary benefit to the community; and
- outcomes of primary benefit to the individual volunteers.

The majority of studies point to a mixture of community and individual benefits flowing from volunteering by young people. For instance, Roker, Player and Coleman (1999) concluded from interviews of 103 young people involved in volunteer campaigning activities that there had been improvements in:

- their awareness of the needs of different groups in society;
- personal and political efficacy – by taking action they were able to influence political and social events;
- their political awareness;
- their socio-political thinking and awareness; and
- their personal skills, e.g. research and presentation skills.

In this project we asked young people to tell us about the benefits of volunteering. Their responses indicated five main types of individual benefits:

1. Satisfaction and affirmation
2. Social engagement
3. Personal growth and development
4. Acknowledgement and appreciation
5. Career benefits

Although there are some common elements (e.g. personal development and social, psychological and cognitive development) on the whole the outcomes the young people identify appear to be different from those that previous studies suggest are of primary benefit to individuals[3]:

- development of a moral identity or ethic of social responsibility (Hart, Atkins et al. 1998; Younnis, McLellan et al. 1999b; Scales, Blyth et al. 2000);
- prevention of negative behaviours such as substance abuse and juvenile crime (Allen, Philiber et al. 1990; Moore and Allen 1996; Younnis, Yates et al. 1997; Uggen and Janikula 1999; Kupermic, Holditch et al. 2001);
- improved academic outcomes and engagement with schools (Allen, Kupermic et al. 1994; Moore and Allen 1996; Scales, Blyth et al. 2000; Gordon, Young et al. 2001; Kuperminc, Holditch et al. 2001); and
- improved social, psychological and cognitive development (Allen, Kupermic et al. 1994; Starr 1994, Kuperminc Holditch et al. 2001).

This difference most likely reflects the fact that previous studies indicate the benefits as the researchers see them while we asked young people to nominate the benefits/rewards themselves. The two lists are more likely to be complementary than contradictory, each providing a different perspective on the one picture.

Not surprisingly, many of the benefits that young people identify are closely connected to their motivations for volunteering and their choice of volunteer activity. For instance, young people motivated to volunteer by a desire to learn skills for a paid job tend to choose volunteer activities that will give them opportunities to learn these skills and thus they also tend to indicate "a paid job" or "skills for a paid job" as the benefits.

1. Satisfaction and affirmation

Satisfaction is among the major benefits that young people identify from volunteering. The young people participating in our discussions talked about the satisfaction of doing a specific task well and the rewards of seeing that their efforts have "made a difference":

> *... self satisfaction when you're making a difference and you're actually helping people ... That's better than being paid sometimes.*

For a number of participants, particularly those from regional or rural areas, satisfaction is connected with contributing to the survival of an organisation or service such as a local kindergarten, emergency service or association. This is especially so when they are motivated by a concern that "if I don't do this who will?" and a fear that without their contribution the organisation or service will not continue:

> *... just the fact that no one else is going to do it and if I don't do it then X won't happen and that would be a real shame ...*

Satisfaction is linked to affirmation. It leads to a rise in self-esteem as the young volunteers become aware that their efforts have "made a difference". It creates and strengthens positive attitudes to volunteering:

> *Knowing that you've helped someone and that you can go back and do it again ...*

It also marks young people as active and contributing members of their community.

For some young people volunteering is satisfying because it is also "fun":

[3]An important issue raised in previous studies is that the outcomes the researchers identify might reflect the characteristics of the individuals involved in the particular volunteer activity, rather than the impact of the volunteering experience. For instance, young people participating in volunteer political activities may have had a stronger political awareness than their peers before they began the activity. Similarly, young people may already have had a low propensity to engage in risk-taking behaviour before they began volunteering. This means that the results of studies indicating particular outcomes must be treated with some caution.

When we did our carols that was helping people – that was a big difference because we really felt like we were absolutely helping them but we were having fun.

It has to be casual, fun and interesting.

I enjoy doing St Johns because it is actually fun.

But for others, "having fun" is not necessary to gain satisfaction. This can be experienced even if tasks are difficult and stressful if the volunteers are motivated primarily by other factors such as wanting to advance the aims of the volunteer organisation, or to challenge and learn about themselves:

(This volunteer activity) isn't much fun ... I don't do it for fun, I do it because it needs to be done.

In a way if you look at an ad for like a volunteer ... if you're looking at it and saying OK it may not be something I'm really interested in but if I go there and challenge myself I'll have a good time ...

Interestingly, some young people suggest that openly admitting they obtain satisfaction from volunteering can be difficult. A group of the youngest participants in this project indicated that it is not entirely socially acceptable to enjoy volunteering – or rather, to be seen to enjoy it. This is connected to views of volunteering as "uncool":

You're seen as soft if you go all warm and fuzzy.

Because it makes me feel good your mates wouldn't be very happy about that.

This can be a problem for girls, as well as boys:

Same for girls now too.

Yeah, you've got to come up with reasons, like oh my Mum said I have to do it.

However, many more look for – and talk about – satisfaction and its flow-on effect of affirmation as among the most important benefits of their volunteering.

2. Social engagement

Earlier we noted how important it is to young people that they are able to undertake volunteer activity as part of a team and especially with others of their own age.

Opportunities for engagement with other people, particularly other people of their own age, are among the most common benefits that young people seek and obtain from volunteering. In particular, many of the discussion participants in this project identify "meeting new people" as a major benefit of involvement in volunteer activities:

Opportunities to meet new people ... like where you work in groups ...

... to meet new people and work with new people ...

Making new friends outside their existing social circle seems to be particularly important:

I've got a lot of friends in the younger years and I wouldn't know them if I wasn't involved in the Duke of Ed scheme. Yeah, they run up to me, they're really excited ... they look up to you but also you know, yeah, they're your friends.

For many participants, social engagement is seen as a benefit of volunteering primarily because of the new friends and further opportunities for social interaction and enjoyment that it can bring. For some though there are additional, broader benefits. Some discussion participants identified that social engagement through volunteering enabled them to gain new and deeper knowledge about other people and their cultures, ideas and values. In turn, this

knowledge – and the new understandings that accompany it – caused them to reconsider their own attitudes, behaviour and beliefs. The outcome appeared to be greater self-knowledge and some changes in values and behaviour.

For instance, one discussion participant spoke of greater understanding of Indigenous people as a benefit of meeting these people through volunteer teaching in remote Australia, while:

> *Enjoying different lifestyles and being with people who have different cultures* ...

Another talked about revising strongly held prejudices as a benefit of contact with people from other nations through a volunteering activity overseas:

> *I found that going over there I had a lot of prejudices against ... especially against Americans and ... I became the best friend of an American there and it really showed me that we're all just human ... Those sorts of things. It really made me reconsider all my values because they're just ... this little part of the world's values that you know, society has given me and I've grown up with and it made me reconsider that.*

3. Personal growth and development

As well as the growth in understanding and the development of values noted above, young people identify "feeling good about themselves" as a major benefit of volunteering. Knowing that they have made an effort – particularly one that has "made a difference" – builds their self-esteem and confidence in their abilities:

> *... it just makes you feel good about yourself knowing you're making a difference.*

> *When we do it we get something out of it because you see the faces of the elderly and they appreciate it and you feel good because you make other people feel good.*

Several participants described volunteering as "empowering". For instance, one who volunteers with St John's Ambulance said:

> *It's empowering for me to know that ... I can go out and do something useful and also that I can be working with my friends and we can do some really good things together* ...

While others did not often use the same word, they described similar feelings and experiences, particularly when, as volunteers, they were given responsibility for an activity or outcome that they considered to be important and meaningful. The ability of volunteering to empower seemed to be particularly important because participants indicated that in so many other situations young people tend to feel disempowered, as they are constantly under the supervision or direction of others:

> *It's hard to stay motivated when other people are calling the shots.*

Related to the feeling of empowerment, a further benefit of volunteering is the confidence that young people gain by becoming familiar with a particular environment or situation. Through volunteering they learn to cope with and manage difficult or unpleasant situations. They lose a sense of powerlessness and become more aware of their own ability to contribute to change. They also lose their fear of the unknown. This benefit was raised particularly by young people when talking about emergency situations (e.g. bushfire, car accidents) and dealing with drugs and violence (e.g. at "raves").

> *A lot of the time it's pretty stressful and*

it's hard … I've learned a lot of stuff – that's good for me.

4. Acknowledgment and appreciation

Most young people receive some kind of acknowledgment and appreciation of their volunteering efforts and see these as important benefits. However, others miss out. One participant complained that volunteer organisations incorrectly assume that volunteers do not need to be rewarded:

There's an assumption especially in organisations that are not purely voluntary – that have paid staff and volunteers – that volunteer staff are so self-motivated, are so driven, that they don't need recognition … whereas … we do appreciate certificates or whatever …

For some, acknowledgment and appreciation compensate for not being paid:

Appreciation is a big thing in volunteer work. Like especially when you're not being paid for it. Like if you work somewhere and you get paid for it, that's like what you get for doing your job. But when you're volunteering, if no one even shows any appreciation it leaves a big gap.

They are also affirming, helping the volunteers to feel good about what they have contributed:

It's nice when someone comes up and says look you're really good at that bit, do you want to come back and do some more or something like that. I mean, that makes you feel so much better that … that … You count.

For some participants, appreciation need only be as informal as a "pat on the back":

Like you know, just a pat on the back, good on you mate sort of thing.

But others prefer more formal recognition such as a certificate or a reference that they can add to their resume. This is particularly important if their volunteering has included some training, or if their motivation for volunteering centres on gaining skills and contacts to help them to obtain paid work:

I just want the certificate.

(A certificate) "Would be a plus".

I can put it on my resume and get a reference.

A few participants are concerned that formal recognition encourages people to volunteer who "only want the certificate". In their view, volunteering:

Shouldn't be about just doing it to get a certificate.

However, many indicate that they would not volunteer "just for the certificate" or even for more informal recognition. Though recognition, whether formal or informal, is extremely welcome.

5. Career benefits

Through volunteering, many young people gain career benefits. Firstly, volunteering can help them to identify a career:

Deaf centre – changed career goals.

Secondly, through volunteering they may gain skills, including through training:

If it gives you experience and opportunities that you can use later then that's really good …

With some volunteer work you can like add that into your resume and it can also help you if you want to make a career move … it can really give you an indication of the expectations of future employers …

Thirdly, through volunteering they meet people who may be able to help them to gain paid employment:

> *I meet people who work in the industry and make contacts into the industry.*

Finally, sometimes a volunteer position leads directly to a paid one. Among the TAFE students responding to our survey on volunteering and the young people participating in our discussion groups were several who indicated that they had moved from a voluntary to a paid position in the same organisation:

> *By doing volunteer work ... I have been put on their books for relieving work with a view to permanent work.*
>
> *I started there because I wanted to get skills ... and afterwards they gave me a job and then they gave me a different job.*

Summary and observations

Young people do seek – and often gain – benefits from their participation in volunteering. Five main types of individual benefits were indicated by our discussion groups: satisfaction and affirmation; social engagement; personal growth and development; acknowledgment and appreciation; and career benefits. Many benefits reflect the motivations of the young people for volunteering and their choice of volunteer activity, e.g. career benefits are associated with a volunteer activity undertaken to gain skills or connections useful for a career.

Noting the range of benefits that young people receive from volunteering leads to two important questions: What circumstances are required to produce these benefits? When do young people benefit the most?

An interesting finding of the discussion groups is that some young people indicate that they benefit from volunteering even when their experiences are negative ones. For instance, they learn that there are some activities or circumstances they should avoid in the future, or to recognise inappropriate or unsuccessful ways of dealing with difficulties. In one discussion, for example, a participant talked about wanting to become a librarian but changing her mind after volunteering in a library and finding the work to be dull and unchallenging. In another, participants talked about poor management skills they had experienced or noticed while volunteering.

However, more importantly, young people seem to gain the most benefits when they enjoy volunteering. This is significant because it indicates that attempts to increase the benefits of volunteering of young people should concentrate on improving the experience.

Fortunately, there are clear indications of how this task might be tackled. In discussions, young people identified the many different factors that help to make a volunteer experience a positive or negative one.

Positive

- Working with or for other people, especially young people.
- Being able to work in teams rather than alone.
- Having a variety of interesting tasks.
- having some control over what tasks are done and how they are done.
- Having input into goals and objectives and being able to work toward them.
- Having opportunities to use skills and creativity.
- Having opportunities to gain new skills.

- Being given appropriate levels of responsibility – not too much to be stressful but not so little that they are under constant direction.
- Being given opportunities to move upwards through an organisation to new responsibilities.
- Being welcomed into an organisation by other workers or volunteers.
- Being able to see the results of their efforts.
- Being appreciated and rewarded.

Negative

- Being given repetitive, mundane or boring tasks with no obvious rationale.
- Having no opportunities to use skills and creativity.
- Having no input into goals, objectives or activities.
- Being over-directed.
- Being given too much responsibility leading to stress.
- Working in isolation or alone.
- Having few opportunities for interaction with other people.
- Not being trusted.
- Being given dangerous or demeaning tasks.
- Being asked to conform to rigid regulations or traditions that have no apparent meaning or purpose.
- Not being acknowledged or appreciated.
- Being rejected by a community or volunteer organisation.
- Being unable to see any impact of their efforts.

8 Young people and volunteering: views from another perspective

I say to people "you don't join an organisation, you join a mob."

Young people are not interested in pushing tin cans around a floor, that's something adults think they want to do.

More social – it's team – it's ownership.

So far in this report we have presented the views of young people themselves about volunteering. In this section we look at volunteering and young people from another perspective – that of volunteer organisations and communities.

The discussion draws on interviews we conducted with representatives of community and volunteer organisations. These organisations are diverse in a number of respects. They are located in rural or metropolitan areas, but sometimes both. Their focus is dispersed or local, regional/national or restricted to a smaller geographical area. They vary in the formality/informality of their organisational style. Some are more traditional or innovative in their outlook than others. Some focus their objectives and activities on young people. Some employ young people as volunteers.

Similarly, the individuals we interviewed from these organisations are also diverse. They were of different ages, gender and background. They had different roles in the organisation, from senior management to responsibility for managing volunteers or projects using volunteers. They also expressed their understanding of the organisations and their volunteers in a variety of ways. Some wanted to give us many facts and figures, others philosophised or told stories.

However, within this diversity was much similarity. Firstly, all demonstrated a concern for the wellbeing and development of young people. Secondly, all of them saw

involvement in community activities such as volunteering as a way for young people to learn about themselves, to develop their skills, confidence and capabilities while also contributing to their communities.

Issues

In considering volunteering and young people, interviewees raised two main areas of concern and a number of more specific issues under each heading:

- The costs and benefits of having young volunteers:
  - costs relating to legislative compliance
  - costs of managing and training volunteers
  - succession planning and renewal of the organisation
  - impact on capacity to meet objectives
- Recruiting and retaining young people:
  - what makes an organisation/activity attractive to young people
  - gender issues
  - meaning and lifestyle issues.

1. The costs and benefits of having young volunteers

There is a distinct cost to using volunteers for any organisation. Interviewees noted:

- the cost of providing additional equipment or accommodation for new volunteers;
- the cost of staff time spent on managing the volunteers and their work;
- the costs of training to ensure that volunteers have skills required by legislation to perform certain tasks (e.g. occupational health and safety);
- other training costs, e.g. in skills required for certain activities, in the organisation's systems etc;
- incidental costs, such as reimbursement of expenses, travel costs;
- the cost of advertising etc. to recruit volunteers; and
- costs incurred in providing some rewards to volunteers (e.g. the costs of holding a formal dinner to present volunteers with an award).

Together, the costs appeared to be considerable, particularly the costs of managing and training volunteers. For instance, one interviewee noted that the cost of staff time spent on managing volunteers was so great that sometimes there was a temptation to turn away people approaching the organisation. Another suggested that the costs of managing volunteers might be higher than for paid staff because a lot more time and effort is needed:

> *Costs are high to have volunteers, there is a lot of professional time and a lot more messiness. There is always the question whose needs are we meeting? – Volunteers have a high need to be needed.*

An organisation that has attracted substantial corporate support finds that these corporations want their people involved and that the money they provide often goes on managing this:

> *It costs a lot of money to manage relationships.*

Training costs were raised by a number of interviewees who noted that they have risen in recent years as legislation has been brought in to ensure minimum training standards for certain activities. In particular, several mentioned the cost of training in occupational health and safety, but there were many other similar calls on the purse. In some cases training is expensive because it is substantial, formal, takes several months and requires external expertise to be brought into

the organisation. In other cases the training is less expensive because it is much shorter, informal and conducted in-house by existing staff or volunteers.

Of special concern to some interviewees was the cost of training new volunteers who go on to stay with the organisation for only a very short time and occasionally not at all. A few noted that other organisations had introduced or were considering contracts specifying a minimum period of commitment to the organisation in return for training. However, as yet this is not common and generally interviewees did not support it. Even an organisation that makes substantial investments in training and which admits to being disappointed when the young person has to "move on" did not advocate these measures. Loss of the young person was a disappointment but interviewees suggested that there was a need to understand that the lives of young people can change and that circumstances may prevent them from continuing with volunteer activity.

Importantly, interviewees identified that the types of costs they noted were not unique to young volunteers, but common to all age groups. Costs might be slightly higher if young volunteers required more training or supervision, but overall there was little difference. In addition, several interviewees indicated that costs are not considered to be an important issue where the organisation has a focus on young people. For instance, one organisation that faces substantial costs in providing its young volunteers with support from paid staff and in flying them from different parts of Australia to a central point to attend meetings and discussions saw these costs as necessary to its work in providing support and encouragement to young people. Similarly, a local government organisation viewed the costs of its youth advisory group through a similar lens – that is, essential for it to meet its obligations to the local community.

Balancing the question of costs, some interviewees noted the substantial value of the time that volunteers give:

> *There's a real cost in time – if you were to cost it out it is $$'s.*

They also identified some benefits of employing volunteers in general:

- enabling the organisation to meet its objectives;
- building relationships with society;

and of employing young volunteers in particular:

- ensuring the future survival and on-going renewal of the organisation (e.g. succession planning);
- building relationships with young people and with future leaders.

A common view was that volunteers are essential:

> *Without volunteers the organisation would not exist.*

For some organisations, employing young volunteers is a philosophical matter reflecting the objectives of the organisation:

> *Transcending of divisions, breaking down of caricatures and stereotypes. We tend to see welfare as a professional thing but everybody is part of the problem and part of the solution. Volunteering makes it more direct for the community.*

It provides an opportunity to bring benefit to the volunteers themselves:

> *... life directing – living, working, seeing issues of social justice – experiences profound and meaningful – personal development.*

and to society more generally:

> *It's investment in relationship building – you're dealing with future leaders.*

Finally, many found that:

Working with volunteers is a most rewarding experience.

On the whole, the responses of the interviewees indicated that while there are some costs in employing young volunteers, these are outweighed by the benefits, both to society and to the volunteer organisations.

Perhaps significantly, there was no suggestion in any of the responses that a major community benefit of young people's involvement in volunteering is that they are less likely to engage in crime or in risk-taking behaviour, as is suggested by previous studies from overseas. On the one hand interviewees dismissed this notion, preferring to focus on the positives of volunteering rather than "negative things". On the other, some suggested that young people who engaged in these behaviours were unlikely to be volunteers anyway.

Recruiting and retaining young people

While some communities and organisations appear to be very successful in attracting young people to participate in their activities, others experience almost the direct opposite. Few young people come forward seeking to become involved, and few of those that do initially are retained in the longer term. The characteristics of these organisations are in the following table. The organisations in the left-hand column not only have no difficulty in recruiting young people, they often have more young people wanting to volunteer than they can cope with. In contrast, the organisations in the right-hand column experience difficulties in recruiting young people.

Organisation A (church affiliation)	Organisation B (church affiliation)
Located in inner city	Located in outer suburbs
Local focus on care of homeless and drug affected young people	Local focus on care of needy, children, young people and families
Informal organisation	Formal organisation
High profile charismatic leader	Rigorous selection process for volunteers including police checks
Difficult and dangerous work	Long training period with formal accreditation
No-one turned away	One-to-one with clients
Teamwork	Rewarding but confronting
Many young people among clients and volunteers	Few young volunteers
Some unaccredited training	Volunteers rarely meet
Opportunities for both regular and irregular volunteering	Long time commitment
Career payoffs (i.e. path to paid work)	Regular commitment required
No recruitment strategy – more volunteers than needed	Career pay-offs
	Recruitment through church, word of mouth and local paper

Organisation C (local government)	Organisation D (non-aligned overseas aid)
Located in outer suburban area Local focus Formal organisation Selection process Competition for selection Accredited training Teamwork Short but intense period of commitment Career payoffs Recruit through word of mouth and local paper Youth focus ("cool" activity) Status and recognition among peers	Located in inner suburbs International focus Formal organisation Selection process Teamwork Shorter or longer-term commitments possible Fundraising period Training and debriefing Recruit through Internet and word of mouth

Organisation E (nationwide Internet-based)	Organisation F (statewide emergency services)
Located in capital city National operation, some local focus Diverse range of projects, primarily aim to assist young people to volunteer High use of Internet both to serve and recruit young people	Predominantly rural focus Statewide focus Formal bureaucratic organisation Uses large number of volunteers across all ages Young people encouraged to volunteer Accredited training Regular time commitment Seeking long-term commitment Hampered by exodus of young people to city

Organisation G (drama group)	
Located in capital city Local focus Small informal organisation Teamwork Variety of roles Recruit through word of mouth High number of males involved Supportive environment Different	

All of the organisations we spoke to for this project seek to involve young people in their activities. However, while some have more young volunteers than they can cope with, others struggle to involve even a handful. What makes the difference? Responses from interviewees suggest a number of things.

Firstly, the organisations that are the most successful in recruiting and retaining young people are those that are more highly attuned to the lifestyle issues that these young people face, such as the many demands on their time. They identify that in many cases young people want to be involved in their communities but that is not always possible. One commented:

> *What young people are looking for is a simple process to get involved, a short-term commitment, not too much training, they want to feel part of the (community).*

Secondly, less successful organisations put too many hurdles in the way of young people who want to become volunteers and this discourages them:

> *Here I am struggling to make ends meet and I want to do volunteering and you tell me I have to go through all these training classes before I can help out – that's not going to happen . . .*

More successful organisations keep training short and provide opportunities for young people to move quickly from training to active involvement.

Thirdly, successful organisations identify that young people are living in a post-modern, information-driven society, in which the traditional loyalties that characterised older adults' lives have disappeared, but that young people are still interested in contributing to social capital:

> *They (young volunteers) felt that volunteering was sexy because it used your heart because you believed in what you were doing, it used your mind because you were mentally involved and it would use all of your physical body so that it was something exhilarating and exciting – so that translates as sexy.*

So they are enthusiastic about offering opportunities for involvement to young people and demonstrate this in finding activities to suit their skills and enthusiasm. These are activities that will also enable them to use their creativity and that do not ask them to conform to meaningless restrictions:

> *They don't want uniformity . . .*

Several interviewees talked about the need for young people to be able to do things "their way" and argued that it was important to give young people control:

> *They don't want to be told what to do all the time . . .*
>
> *– bring in your own portable CD player or whatever and listen to your own music – here's a 1000 of these, folded by the end of the day would be great. Leave them on their own, if you can afford it chuck in a Pizza for lunch.*
>
> *The generation gap thing – you need to let young people make their own decisions.*

Fourthly, more successful organisations talk to young people through advertisements, brochures, speakers etc. in language that is familiar to them and that they can understand. Echoing the views of many of the young people participating in this project, some interviewees noted that in many cases the language that organisations use to advertise opportunities for volunteering is unfamiliar to young people. It does not reflect the ways that young people

speak and does not focus on the things that are of most interest to them.

Interviewees saw this as one of a number of ways in which tradition still plays a large part in constraining the ways in which things are done within organisations:

> *But other organisations looking at things might go, oh you know what – we've been doing that for years and we're only doing that for years because that's the way we've been doing it for years* . . .

In addition, a particular mistake some organisations make is that appeals are made often to those who are already committed. Advertising is:

> *Targeted to the already switched on*

rather than to the wider group who might be interested but do not currently get to hear about opportunities.

Finally, the organisations that are the most successful in attracting young people have charismatic leaders with a high media profile or offer opportunities for young people to meet and work with other high profile groups or individuals. Young people gain social status among their peers for this and so will seek out opportunities to become involved.

On the whole, volunteer organisations are aware of the difficulties that prevent young people from becoming involved in volunteering:

> *Most are working and studying as well as volunteering* . . .

even to the extent of considering that young people are being disadvantaged:

> *Young Australians in their twenties are not getting opportunities to volunteer.*

Importantly, they are also mostly aware that they need to make changes to enable more young people to become involved:

> *We need to develop a new model of volunteering – teams, short-term, small scale projects.*

At least one of the organisations we interviewed is actively addressing these issues through a range of strategies to recruit more young people, including the restructuring of activities to reduce time commitment requirements, increasing team work and developing new advertising strategies that see a shift from print-based to web-published material.

The organisations are also aware of the power of informal recruitment mechanisms, particularly "word of mouth" among young people and thus the importance of ensuring that young people already involved enjoy the experience as much as possible and get something out of it. An interviewee in local government talked about the rewards for young people involved in organising music events for their peers – including a substantial increase in their "social status". He noted how these have contributed to increasing the attractiveness of the volunteer activity to the point where there is considerable competition for selection despite limited advertising.

This interviewee contrasted this experience with the plight of another organisation that he said offered young people only activities that had little meaning or relevance to them and that most young people consequently regard as "uncool". His success story in recruiting young people also emphasised the importance of handing control to the young people to direct their own activities, contrasting this also with other organisations that more overtly direct and manage young participants.

Gender issues

In general, interviewees indicated that it is more difficult to recruit and retain young

men than young women. Some interviewees saw this as a "feminine issue", linked to gendered views of caring. For instance, one noted that:

> *Relationship building attracts females.*

Others saw it as a developmental issue:

> *It's a maturity thing – young women are more outward-looking at that age and less focused on career and material gain.*

The leader of one organisation offered a different view – that it is a societal phenomenon, relating to the fact that:

> *Young men get the message from government, business and media that they have to focus on career and professional success.*

Similarly another interviewee suggested that young men are pressured to focus on their careers, so that it becomes difficult for them to take time out to become involved in volunteer activities.

However, among the organisations we interviewed, the participation of young males appeared to be linked to the type of activities and opportunities that they offered. In deciding whether or not they would volunteer, the objectives of the organisation appeared to be less important to the young men than the ways in which the organisation went about achieving them and the opportunities and rewards that the organisation was able to offer them. Two organisations indicated that they attracted young males because they used science or technology to achieve their objectives:

> *The work involves a lot of technology and hands-on stuff – hands-on stuff attracts the males.*

Another noted that it attracted young men because it offered opportunities for them to gain skills that would help them to enter the competitive music industry and opportunities to meet some high profile individuals in this industry.

Meaning and lifestyle issues

A number of the interviewees commented on the complex meaning and lifestyle issues that young people face and emphasised the role that community involvement such as volunteering can play in working through some of these issues. Their views implied that organisations which recognise this role and give young people appropriate opportunities and support will be more successful in recruiting and retaining young volunteers and providing young people with a more satisfying experience that will contribute to the personal and social development.

The charismatic leader and founder of a church-based organisation which looks after young "drug addicts" and homeless in the inner city argued that young people become involved in volunteer activities as a way of:

> *Working out their values.*

He considered that for young people, volunteering is a way to express their faith in an alternative way distinct from the traditional church, which they did not find particularly engaging.

> *Helps process thoughts and faith philosophy – to be engaged in macro issues – process is the most important part.*

A similar view was expressed by a secular organisation that initially dealt with youth suicide and is committed to involving young people with the community:

> *It's very clear young people at that stage of life are reflecting what's kind of happened to other people.*

They see young people who volunteer in some of these demanding areas as seeking to get a broader picture, reflecting

on society but with different values to an older generation. Others have referred to this as a process of "de-traditionalisation" and "individualisation" with young people questioning the legitimacy of traditional authority figures and "ethic of reciprocity" the belief that respect must be earned. For young people, role models become questionable, and traditional "moral authority" becomes the focus of close examination (Thompson and Holland 2002). This was noted by one of the people interviewed, that young people are critically examining role models:

> *18 – 25 is a critical age for heroes.*

A number of organisations commented in other ways on the maturity levels of the young people:

> *Young people are quite sophisticated in their thinking, they are not looking for the old charity model . . .*

and the importance of relationships and macro issues:

> *They are not concerned about what they do but the relationships and the advocacy.*

9 The key messages of this study

The material gathered for this study provides some new insights into volunteering by young people in Australia.

These insights are important in themselves in that they add further detail to the picture of volunteering that previous studies have constructed. In particular, by adding the views of young people themselves they uncover a part of the picture that was previously obscured.

In addition these insights are significant because they provide indicators of where action to encourage participation in volunteering by young people and to improve the volunteering experience for young people would be effective.

These insights are the "key messages" of this report.

1. Young people are community-minded

As indicated by the participants in this study, the majority of young people see themselves as members of a broader community. They care about their communities and they have a positive view of organisations and activities that they believe will "make a difference" where problems and difficulties occur.

2. Some young people face barriers to volunteering

Although they may have a desire to contribute to their communities, some young people are unable to participate in community/volunteer activities because they face external and internal (personal) barriers.

External barriers

- Lack of information: they don't know about volunteering opportunities.
- Peer pressure: volunteering has an image as "uncool" among some young people.

- Restrictions on volunteers: some organisations reject volunteers below a certain age, or require a minimum or regular time commitment from their volunteers.

Internal (personal) barriers

- Lack of skills: some young people believe they do not have the skills necessary to be a volunteer.
- Lack of confidence: it can be intimidating for young people to approach volunteer organisations.
- Time constraints: study and work commitments leave young people with limited time for other activities.
- Disaffection with community/volunteer activities: caused by a poor previous experience or by inappropriate advertising.

Other than in time and energy, young people do not see costs as a barrier to participation in community/volunteer activities. Generally, where costs are highest, they are refunded by volunteer organisations. In other cases, any costs appeared to be balanced by rewards and benefits.

3. Young people value some types of community/volunteer activities above others

Young people are selective about the community/volunteer activities in which they participate. In particular they look for:

- activities that will engage their passions and interests and give them opportunities to put their values and convictions into action;
- activities that will involve other young people – either other young volunteers or young people who are the objects of the activity; and
- activities where they can see that their help is needed and their efforts have an impact.

Once these three basic requirements are met, their choice of activity will also reflect where the young people live, their gender, language and cultural background, religious affiliations, membership of clubs and associations, role models, previous experience and the time they have available.

4. Young people benefit from volunteering, especially when the volunteering experience is a positive one

Young people gain five main types of individual benefits from volunteering:

- satisfaction and affirmation: having fun, feeling needed and making a difference;
- social engagement: interaction with other people, particularly other young people;
- personal growth/development: growth in understanding of the world and themselves, more self-confidence;
- appreciation and formal recognition: from a “pat on the back” to more formal certificates and references; and
- skills, contacts and experience that will help them to secure paid work.

Some young people benefit from volunteering even when their experiences are negative ones. However, more importantly, young people seem to gain the most benefits when they enjoy volunteering. This is significant because it indicates that attempts to increase the benefits of volunteering for young people should concentrate on improving the experience.

5. Young volunteers are valued by volunteer organisations

Young people are sought after by volunteer organisations because:

- they provide energy and enthusiasm;
- they have useful skills and ideas;
- they help to build relationships with the community, particularly with young people;
- they help to renew and re-invigorate the organisation; and
- they are future community leaders.

These benefits outweigh the costs of having young volunteers, which are little different from the costs of having volunteers in general.

6. Some volunteer organisations are more attractive to young people than others

While some communities and organisations are very successful in attracting young people to participate in their activities, there are others that experience almost the direct opposite.

Organisations that are the most successful in attracting and retaining young people are those that:

- recognise the lifestyle issues that young people face, particularly the demands on their time;
- keep training short and provide opportunities for young people to move quickly from training to active involvement;
- offer young people opportunities to participate in activities that suit their skills and enthusiasm;
- talk to young people in language that is familiar to them and that they can understand; and
- have charismatic leaders with a high media profile or offer opportunities for young people to meet and work with high profile groups or individuals.

7. Action to encourage young people to participate in volunteering, and to increase the benefits they gain from it, would be particularly effective if it was concentrated on addressing the barriers to volunteering and ensuring that the participation is a positive experience

Young people gain some substantial benefits from community/volunteer activities. Community and volunteer organisations also benefit considerably from the participation of young people. There is thus a sound foundation and rationale for action to be taken to encourage more young people to participate in these types of activities – and further participation by those already involved.

The young people participating in this project made a number of specific suggestions:

- they suggested that participation in community/volunteer activity be made compulsory during school education to give young people the opportunity "get over the uncoolness" of it. They also indicated that it was vital that compulsory activity is enjoyable and meaningful or it would discourage rather than encourage;
- they asked for more information about volunteer opportunities. They suggested that information should be available through career teachers in schools and that all material should use simple language familiar to, and easily understood by, young people.

The types of tasks and their purposes should be clearly explained. Examples of "real people" already participating should be used and should emphasise what they are doing and how they are benefiting;

- they asked for a greater variety of volunteer opportunities, especially for young people who are currently below the minimum age for some activities;
- they asked for easier access to volunteer organisations, because approaching organisations can be stressful; and
- they asked for a "charter of rights" for volunteers to prevent exploitation and a process for resolving disputes between volunteers and paid staff or volunteers and organisations.

The findings of this project also suggest some actions that could be taken by volunteer organisations to improve their recruitment and retention of young volunteers:

- young people could be given a greater input into defining goals and objectives;
- activities could be altered to include a greater emphasis on teamwork, to enable young people to have greater control over how they are done and more responsibility for meeting objectives;
- information about volunteering opportunities could be disseminated more widely and in a greater variety of forms. Organisations could go out and talk to young people more. Advertising material could be re-framed in more appropriate language for young people and include more examples of real volunteers;
- young people could be asked what they are looking for in volunteering and activities could be better matched to their interests and needs;
- programs for young people under the age of 18 could be established where they do not already exist;
- formal recognition, such as certificates, awards and references could be given to all young people; and
- milestones and small victories could be celebrated.

Further research

While this research has helped to answer some questions it has also raised others. Thus it points to a few areas where further research might be useful in providing a more comprehensive picture of young people and volunteering in Australia.

Firstly, discussion group participants suggest that attitudes to volunteering form during late primary schooling and early years of high school – that is while young people are below 16 years of age – the cut-off point for this study. Is this true? If so, what factors influence attitudes and what steps could be taken to ensure more positive attitudes? To what extent do the views of young people aged 18+ reflect these early attitudes? What factors change views? What factors confirm views?

Secondly, throughout the project the responses of young people seemed to show some differences according to social and cultural background. The LSAY data also highlighted some variations. However, there was insufficient time to pursue the extent and nature of these differences in detail. What are they? Why do they occur? What can be learned from them? Further research could examine volunteering and young people within particular social groups, such as young Indigenous people, or young people born overseas.

Thirdly, the research did not consider

whether and how volunteering by young people differs in Australia from overseas and whether Australia might learn from overseas experience. Some of the literature pointed to extensive compulsory programs overseas and also to some different forms of volunteer programs involving young people. Some comparative work could explore the nature of effective programs and whether aspects of them could be transplanted to the Australian context.

Fourthly, the research identified some volunteer organisations that have been highly successful in recruiting and retaining young people. Further case study work could be undertaken to provide further information about the reasons for this success.

Fifthly, further research could consider in more detail the gender aspects of volunteering by young people. How strong is the gender effect? How does it work? What factors strengthen it? Ameliorate it?

Bibliography

Allen, J., Kuperminc, G. P., et al. (1994). "Programmatic prevention of adolescent problem behaviours: the role of autonomy, relatedness, and volunteer service in the teen outreach program." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 22(5): 617–639.

Allen, J., Philiber, S. P., et al. (1990). "School-based Prevention of Teen-age Pregnancy and School Dropout: process evaluation of the national replication of the teen outreach program." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 18(4): 505–525.

Avrahami, A. & Dar, Y. (1993). "Collectivist and individualist motives among Kibbutz youth volunteering for community service." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 22(6): 697–715.

Bachmnan, G. G., Johnston, L. D., et al. (1993). *Monitoring the Future: a continuing study of lifestyles and values of American youth*. Ann Arbor, MI, Survey Research Centre.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations*. New York, The Free Press.

Beigbeder, Y. (1991). "The Role and Status of International Humanitarian Volunteers and Organisations: The Right and Duty to Humanitarian Assistance." *Legal Aspects of International Organisations* 12: 100–120.

Blanchard, M. (2002). "Volunteering with the Inspire Foundation." *Australian Journal on Volunteering* 7(1): 47–50.

Catano, V. M., Pond, M., et al. (2001). "Exploring commitment and leadership in voluntary organisations." *Leadership and Organization Development Journal* 22(6): 256–263.

Centre for Applied Educational Research (2001). Middle Years Research and Development (MYRAD) Project http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/mys/docs/MYRAD%20 Executive%20Summary.doc, 26 March 2003.

Chou, K.-L. (1998). "Effects of Age, Gender, and Participation in Volunteer Activities on the Altruistic Behavior of Chinese Adolescents." *The Journal of Genetic Psychology* 159(2): 195–201.

Cnaan, R. A., Handy, F., et al. (1996). "Defining who is a volunteer: conceptual and empirical considerations." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 25(3): 364–383.

Coleman, J. S. (1961). *The Adolescent Society*. New York, The Free Press.

Cowling, M. J. (2001). *Maximising Motivation: Tools for Transformation*. Volunteering Western Australia Vision Conference 2001, Fremantle.

Dolan, K. (2003). Rewards Flow in From Unpaid Work. *The Age*. Melbourne: 16.

Eccles, J. S. & Barber, B. L. (1999). "Student Council, Volunteering, Basketball, or Marching Band: What kind of Extra-curricular Involvement Matters." *Journal of Adolescent Research* 14(1): 10–43.

Fitzgerald, J. (2001). "Can minimally trained college student volunteers help young at-risk children to read better." *Reading Research Quarterly* 36(1): 28–46.

Flanagan, C. A., Bowes, J. M., et al. (1998). "Ties that Bind: correlates of adolescent's civic commitments in seven countries." *Journal of Social Issues* 54(3): 457–471.

Freedman, M. (1993). *The Kindness of Strangers: Adult mentors, urban youth and the new volunteerism*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Frow, Linda (2001). "Mutual Obligation and Volunteering" in NCOSS news and published on www.ncoss.org.au.

Gordon, T. W., Young, J. C., et al. (2001). "Connecting the Freshman Year Experience through Learning Communities: Practical Implications for academic and student affairs units." *College Student Affairs Journal* 20(2): 37–47.

Green, J. & Blacket, D. (2002). It's a Personal Thing: Volunteer Motivation Across Two Generations in a Sydney Area Health Service – Implications For Management, Centre for Australian Community Organisations and Management, Working Paper Series no 58.

Grossman, J. B. & Rhodes, J. F. (2002). "The Test of Time: Predictors and effects of duration in youth mentoring relationships." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 30(2): 199–219.

Hart, D., Atkins, R., et al. (1998). "Urban America as a Context for the Development of Moral Identity in Adolescence." *Journal of Social Issues* 54(3): 513–523.

Hawkes, M. (2002). "Good Future for Volunteerism – through youth." *Australian Journal on Volunteering* 7(2): 11–13.

Hofstede, G. H. (1984). *Culture's Consequences: international differences in work-related values*. Beverly Hills, Sage Publications.

Hofstede, G. H. (1991). *Cultures and Organizations: software of the mind*. New York, McGraw-Hill.

Hopkins, S. (2000). "VET and the Voluntary Sector: dealing with ambiguities." *Monash-ACER Centre for the Economics of Education and Training Working Paper* 26.

Hughes, P. & Black, A. (2002). "The Impact of Various Personal and Social Characteristics on Volunteering." *Australian Journal on Volunteering* 7(2): 59–69.

Inspire Foundation Our Story http://www.

inspire.org.au/about_history.html, 26 March 2003.

Inspire Foundation (2002). Act Now Pilot North Sydney Evaluation Report.

Institute for Volunteering Research (1997). National Survey of Volunteering in the UK http://www.ivr.org.uk/nationalsurvey.htm, 13 March 2003.

Jones-Brown, D. D. & Henriques, Z. W. (1997). "Promises and Pitfalls of Mentoring as a Juvenile Justice Strategy." *Social Justice* 24(4): 212–234.

Kassab, C. & Vance, L. (1999). "An assessment of the effectiveness of an intergenerational program for youth." *Psychological Reports* 84(1): 198–201.

Kidd, A. H. & Kidd, R. M. (1997). "Characteristics and motives of adolescent volunteers in wildlife education." *Psychological Reports* 80(3): 747–753.

Kuperminc, G. P., Holditch, P. T., et al. (2001). "Volunteering and Community Service in Adolescence." *Adolescent Medicine* 12(3): 445–457.

Larsen, R. W. (2000). "Towards a Psychology of Positive Youth Development." *American Psychologist* 55: 170–183.

Larsson, S. & Rönnmark, L. (1996). "The Concept of Charismatic Leadership: Its application to an analysis of social movements and a voluntary organisation in Sweden." *International Journal of Public Sector Management* 9(7): 32–44.

Lukka, P. & Locke, M. (2000). "Faith, voluntary action and social policy: a review of research." *The Journal of the Institute for Volunteering Research* 3(1).

Lyons, M., Wijkstrom, P., et al. (1998). "Comparative studies of volunteering: What is being studied?" *Voluntary Action* 1(1): 49–54.

McLellan, J. A. & Miranda, Y. (1999). "Religion, community service, and identity in American youth." *Journal of Adolescence*.

Moore, C. W. & Allen, J. P. (1996). "The Effects of Volunteering on the Young Volunteer." *Journal of Primary Prevention* 17: 231–258.

Moskos, C. (2001). "What Ails the All-Volunteer Force: An Institutional Perspective." *Parameters* Summer: 29–47.

Munro, G. (1998). Playing with Traditional Cultures: Alcohol in Sporting Clubs http://www.adf.org.au/cyds/papers/pwtc.htm, 26 March 2003.

Peet, K. (2002). "Leadership and the big picture – inspiring involvement." *Australian Journal on Volunteering* 7(2): 75–83.

Premiers Department NSW (2002). "Rural and Regional Volunteering Support." *Australian Journal on Volunteering* 7(1): 11–14.

Regional Women's Advisory Council (2002). "The Success factors – managing change in regional and rural Australia." *Australian Journal on Volunteering* 7(1): 7–10.

Roker, D., Player, K., et al. (1999). "Young People's Voluntary and Campaigning Activities as Sources of Political Education." *Oxford Review of Education* 25(1 & 2): 185–198.

Scales, P. C., Blyth, D. A., et al. (2000). "The Effects of Service Learning on Middle Schools Students' Social Responsibility and Academic Success." *Journal of Early Adolescence* 20(3): 332–358.

Schlegel, A. & Barry, H. (1991). *Adolescence: an anthropological enquiry*. New York, The Free Press.

Schondel, C., Boehm, K., et al. (1995). "Adolescent Volunteers: An untapped resource in the delivery of adolescent preventative health care." *Youth and Society* 27(2): 123–135.

Schondel, C. K. & Boehm, K. E. (2000). "Motivational Needs of Adolescent Volunteers." *Adolescence* 35(138): 335–344.

Selby Smith, C. & Hopkins, S. (2001). "Learning Through TAFE for Voluntary and Paid Work: A survey of TAFE students." *Monash-ACER Centre for the Economics of Education and Training Working Paper* 38.

Selby Smith, C. & Hopkins, S. (2002). "Do TAFE Student Volunteer While Studying?" *Australian Journal on Volunteering* 7(1): 37–42.

Shah, S., Peat, J. K., et al. (2001). "Effect of Peer led program for asthma education in children: cluster randomised clinical trial." *British Medical Journal* 322(10 March): 583–585.

Snow, P. & Maher, S. (1999). Alcohol in Sport – a culture? www.adf.org.au/cyds/papers/sport.htm, 26 March 2003.

Snow, P. & Maher, S. (2000). Alcohol Use in Metropolitan Sporting Clubs: Summary report and findings. http://www.adf.org.au/cyds/Alcsport.pdf, 26 March 2003.

Snow, P. & Munro, G. (2001). "Alcohol consumption in amateur Australian football clubs: evidence from a rural region." *Health Promotion Journal of Australia* 10(3): 237–243.

Solomon, L. C. & Schiff, T. W. (1993). "National Service: is it worth government support?" *Change* 25(5): 37–42.

Sourpourmas, F. and Ironmonger, D. (2002). Giving Time: The economic and social value of volunteering in Victoria, Department of Human Services, Victoria.

Starr, J. M. (1994). "Peace Corps service as a turning point." *International Journal of Ageing and Human Development* 39(2): 137–162.

Stukas, A. & Foddy, M. (2002). Working for the Common Good. *Academy of Social Science in Australia, Academy Workshop*. La Trobe University, Dialogue– Academy of Social Sciences in Australia. 21: 9–13.

Sundeen, R. A. & Raskoff Sally, A. (2000). "Ports of Entry and Obstacles: teenager's access to volunteer activities." *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* 11(2): 179–196.

Trewin, D. (1996). *Voluntary work: Australian Bureau of Statistics catalogue 4441.0*. Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service.

Uggen, C. & Janikula, J. (1999). "Volunteerism and Arrest in the Transition to Adulthood." *Social Forces* 78(1): 331–362.

Van Willigen, M. (2000). "Differential Benefits of Volunteering Across the Life Course." *Journal of Gerontology* 55B(5): S308 –S318.

Volunteer Canada The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement http://www.volunteer.ca/volunteer/pdf/CodeEng.pdf, 13 March 2003.

Volunteering Australia http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/, 17, May 2002.

Warburton Jeni & McDonald, Catherine (2002). "Compulsory volunteering" under mutual obligation policies, implications

for the future, in Just Policy, No 26, May 2002, pp. 11–17.

Wilkinson, J. & Bittman, M. (2002). "Neighbourly Acts – volunteering, social capital and democracy." *Australian Journal on Volunteering* 7(2): 32–44.

Wilson, Serena (2000), "Welfare to work policies in Australia and the welfare reform process." Paper for conference of the international social security association Helsinki, 2000.

Youniss, J., McLellan, J. A., et al. (2001). "Voluntary Service, Peer Group Orientation, and Civic Engagement." *Journal of Adolescent Research* 16(5): 456–468.

Youniss, J., McLellan, J. A., et al. (1999a). "Religion, community service, and identity in American youth." *Journal of Adolescence* 22(2): 243–253.

Youniss, J., Yates, M., et al. (1997). "Social Integration: Community service and marijuana use in high school seniors." *Journal of Adolescent Research* 12: 245–262.

Younnis, J., McLellan, J. A., et al. (1999b). "The Role of Community Service in Identity Development: Normative, unconventional, and deviant orientation." *Journal of Adolescent Research* 14(2): 248–261.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Analysis of data from the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth

Contents

List of Tables

Executive summary

This paper presents results on the incidence and frequency of participation in community volunteer work by young Australians. It draws on data from the first panel of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth for the year 2000 and 2001 when respondents were 20 and 21 years old, respectively.

By age 20, 52% of the panel had participated in community volunteer work. Sports-related volunteer work (23%) was the most frequently reported type of volunteer work followed by church or youth group work (15%) and child care (15%). Volunteer work for charities was less frequently reported, but was still substantial – 7% had participated in home help for the elderly or incapacitated people, 6% in Meals on Wheels, 6% in fundraising for charities, and smaller percentages in a range of other activities. The proportion of young people who regularly undertook volunteer work at age 20 was smaller, but still substantial – 20% took part in community volunteer work at least once a month while 35% had participated in the preceding year.

In age 21, 46% of the panel had participated in community volunteer work in the preceding year and 23% took part in community volunteer work at least once a month. Collecting money for charities was reported by about a fifth (22%) of the panel members followed by sports-related activities (16%) and child care (11%). The change in the reports of participation in community volunteer work between ages 20 and 21 may partly reflect changes in the wording of the questions.

Participation in community volunteer work is widespread across all categories of young people. Overall levels of participation and participation for particular types of volunteer work, however, do vary among young people from different personal and cultural backgrounds. Those more likely to participate at least monthly in community volunteer work were (in descending order of influence):

- from the highest fifth of socioeconomic status backgrounds;
- from the more positive categories of self-concept;
- from families in which both parents had been born in Australia;
- women;
- in part-time work, part-time study, or both;
- Indigenous;
- better-performed at school;
- from rural areas; and
- young people with a disability.

The extent of variation across these characteristics, however, was often modest – persons from all backgrounds participate in community volunteer work. This report documents the detail of that participation across the different types of community volunteer work and across the different characteristics of young people in Australia.

1. Introduction

This report examines the incidence and frequency of participation in community volunteer work by young Australians. It shows:

- the overall level of participation in volunteer work;
- the incidence of participation in various types of volunteer work; and
- the differences in the incidence and frequency of volunteer work among young Australians from different backgrounds.

The results on volunteer work presented

in this report are from interviews conducted in 2000 and 2001 with the first panel of the *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth* (LSAY) – a nationally representative sample of young Australians – when panel members were aged about 20 and 21 years, respectively.

The paper begins with a brief discussion of the LSAY. It then presents estimates of the overall level of participation in volunteer work. There is a brief discussion of the approach that underlies the analyses together with a description of the characteristics of young people used in the analyses. The remainder of the report presents the analyses.

2. Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth

This study reports answers to questions about participation in community volunteer work by members of the 1995 panel of the *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth* (LSAY) in the years 2000 and 2001. Table 1 shows the structure of the panel.

The panel was first contacted in 1995. Initially a sample of schools was drawn with probability a proportional to the size of the school. That sample was disproportionately stratified by State and Territory and school sector. Within each school, two Year 9 classes were randomly selected (in smaller schools all Year 9 students were selected). The result was a nationally representative sample of young Australians. The different age-enrolment policies of the States and Territories meant the age of the students ranged between 14 and 16 years, with a mode of 15 years. In total, 13 613 students completed multiple-choice literacy and numeracy tests and a questionnaire. A mail questionnaire was sent to the homes of these students in 1996 and from 1997 they were interviewed at home by telephone.

The interviews focus on educational and labour force participation. Table 1 shows that by 2000 58.0% of the original sample remained and 50.5% by 2001. Responses are weighted by State and Territory, school sector and school size to compensate for the original sample design as well as by initial literacy and numeracy levels to compensate for differential sample attrition across categories of family and educational background. Further information on the sample and the weighting procedures is presented in Long (1996) and Marks and Long (2000).

3. Participation in volunteer work

Tables 2 and 3 show the wording of the questions asked about participation

Table 1: Structure of the *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth* 1995 panel

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Modal age	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
School year	9	10	11	12	+1	+2	+3
Data collection	In-school q're & tests	Mail q're	Phone interview	Phone interview	Phone interview	Phone interview	Phone interview
Number	13 613	9 837	10 307	9 738	8 783	7 889	6 876
%		72.3	75.7	71.5	64.5	58.0	50.5

in volunteer work in the 2000 and 2001 LSAY interviews. The key results from these tables are:

- by 2000, 52.4% of 20-year-olds had participated in volunteer work;
- in 2000, 20.2% of 20-year-olds did volunteer work at least monthly;
- in 2001, 46.1% of 21-year-olds did some voluntary work; and
- in 2001, 22.7% of 21-year-olds did some voluntary work at least monthly.

Two major changes were made in the wording of the questions asked in the 2000 and 2001 interviews. In 2000, panel members were asked if they had *ever* participated in community volunteer work while in 2001 they were asked about participation *in the previous year*. Second, the types of community volunteer work about which respondents were asked differed between 2000 and 2001.

Table 2 shows that of the 52.4% of people who had participated in some form of volunteer work, people were most likely to report having participated in *coaching or some other sports-related voluntary activity* (23.4%) followed by *church or youth work* (15.1%) and *child care* (15.1%). Responses to *Anything else I haven't mentioned* (referred to as *Other* in subsequent tables) were 13.3%. Nearly half (6.5%) of these responses were *voluntary fundraising for charities*. Table 2 also shows the frequency of volunteer work — 20.2% of the panel did volunteer work at least once a month.

The percentage of Australians aged about 21 years participating in volunteer work shown in Table 3 (46.1%) is substantially higher than the corresponding value in Table 2, which suggest that about 35.1% engaged in volunteer work at least once a year. The increase partly reflects a change in the alternative responses provided in the interview. The 2001 questions explicitly included *Fundraising for charities* and *Environmental work* and omitted questions about specific programs such as *Meals on Wheels, St John's Ambulance* and *Lifeline*. *Fundraising* was reported by only 6.5% of young people in 2000 when it was included under *Anything else*, but by 21.5% in 2001 when panel members were asked about it explicitly. The percentage of panel members responding to the *Anything else* category was correspondingly smaller in 2001 (5.9%) than in 2000 (13.3%).

In 2001 *Fundraising for charity* (21.5%) was the most frequently reported volunteer work followed by *Sports-related activities* (15.7%) and *Child care* (11.3%). The level of *Environmental activities* (7.9%) was only marginally lower than *Church and youth group activities* (8.3%).

Table 2. Questions asked in late 2000 of 7889 respondents to the *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth* (LSAY) when the modal age of respondents was 20 years

Have you ever done any of the following kinds of community volunteer work?

	Yes %	*No %*
Meals on Wheels	6.3	93.7
St John's Ambulance	4.6	95.4
Lifeline or Youthline	1.8	98.2
Reading for the blind	1.0	99.0
Voluntary Church or Youth Group work	15.1	84.9
Home help for the elderly or incapacitated people	7.3	92.7
Coaching or other volunteer work in sporting activities	23.4	76.6
Volunteer child care after school or on weekends	15.1	84.9
Anything else I haven't mentioned	13.3	86.7
Red Cross/other fundraising	6.5	na
Local community volunteer activities	1.8	na
CFA/emergency services	0.9	na
Environment work	0.8	na
Animal care/Seeing eye dogs	0.5	na
Voluntary tutoring/teaching	0.5	na
Army cadets	0.1	na
Other	2.2	na
[Any community volunteer work]	52.4	na

How often would you take part in any kind of community volunteer work?

	%
Once a week or more often	11.5
At least once a month but less than once a week	8.7
At least once every three months but less often than once a month	5.9
At least once a year but less often than once every three months	9.0
Less often than once a year	3.3
No longer do community volunteer work	14.0
[Never done community volunteer work]	47.6
[Total]	100.0

See *Notes to Tables*

Table 3. Questions asked in late 2001 of 6876 respondents to the *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth* (LSAY) when the modal age of respondents was 21 years

In the last year have you done any of the following kinds of volunteer work?

	Yes %	*No %*
Fundraising or collecting money for charities or other community organisations	21.5	78.5
Environmental activities – e.g. Clean-up Australia, tree planting, environmental groups	7.9	92.1
Coaching or other volunteer work in sporting activities – not just playing sport	15.7	84.3
Volunteer child care after school or on weekends – not counting children you live with	11.3	88.7
Home help for elderly or incapacitated people	4.7	95.3
Voluntary Church or Youth Group work, not counting anything you've already told me	8.3	91.7
Anything else I haven't mentioned	5.9	94.1
Volunteer tutoring/teaching	0.7	na
CFA/Emergency services/SES/Fire Brigade	0.8	na
Community-based activities	1.0	na
Lifeline or Youthline	0.2	na
Animal care/walking dogs	0.2	na
Meals on Wheels	0.1	na
Other	2.9	na
[Any volunteer work]	46.1	na

How often do you take part in any of these kinds of community volunteer work?

	%
Once a week or more often	11.7
At least once a month but less than once a week	11.0
At least once every three months but less often than once a month	6.6
At least once a year but less often than once every three months	11.3
Less often than once a year	2.4
No longer do community volunteer work	3.1
[No community volunteer work in the last year]	53.9
[Total]	100.0

See *Notes to Tables*

4. The analyses

There are six main tables in the analyses:

2000

Table 5 Shows the percentages of panel members who ever participated in the forms of community volunteer work by the various characteristics of respondents. Tables A1 and A2 (in the Appendix) show the corresponding results separately for young men and women. Table A3 shows the types of community volunteer activity listed mentioned under "other".

Table 6 Shows the percentages of panel members who participated in community volunteer work at least once a month by their various personal characteristics. Tables A4 and A5 show the corresponding results separately for men and women.

Table 7 Provides multivariate analyses of the influences on regular participation in community volunteer work, that is, on the likelihood that panel members participate in community volunteer work at least once a month. The various analyses identify the unique effects of particular respondent characteristics on regular participation controlling for other respondent characteristics.

2001

Table 8 Shows the percentages of panel members who participated in the forms of community volunteer work in the last year by the various characteristics of respondents. Tables A6 and A7 (in Appendix 1) show the corresponding results for men and women, respectively. Table A8 shows the types of community volunteer activity listed mentioned under "other".

Table 9 Shows the percentages of panel members who participated in community volunteer work at least once a month by their various personal characteristics. The corresponding results for men and women are shown in Tables A9 and A10, respectively.

Table 10 Provides multivariate analyses of the influences on regular participation in community volunteer work, that is, on the likelihood that panel members participate in community volunteer work at least once a month. The various analyses identify the unique effects of particular respondent characteristics on regular participation controlling for other respondent characteristics.

More detailed discussion of the analyses and the structure of each table is provided in the section *Notes to Tables*. The Supplementary Tables to this report provide more detailed analyses. Tables A1 and A2 present the results of Table 5 separately for young men and women. Similarly Tables A4 and A5, Tables A6 and A7 and Tables A9 and A10 provide gender breakdowns of the results in Tables 6, 8 and 9, respectively. Tables A3 and A8 provide a detailed breakdown of responses to the *Other* category contained in Tables 5 and 7, respectively.

Tables 2 and 3 focus on the question *How much?* – what is the incidence and frequency of participation in volunteer work by young

people, as well as the types of volunteer work in which they are participating. Tables 5 and 6 and Tables 8 and 9 address the question of *Who?* – which categories of young people are more likely to participate in volunteer work and how frequently. Tables 7 and 10 present results for the models that underlie the analyses.

5. The model

The analyses are informed by a commonsense understanding of the ordering of the characteristics of young people. Table 4 presents an outline of this understanding. It does little more than note that a number of characteristics are given. People are born male or female and into families with given socioeconomic and cultural characteristics. While these characteristics may be related, they certainly precede such characteristics as the type of school attended or literacy and numeracy skills.

Although there is some natural ordering of say literary and numeracy achievement and socioeconomic background of the family (socioeconomic background of the family might effect literacy and numeracy, but not vice versa), the ordering of variables in the blocks labelled "School" and "Self-Concept" in Table 4 is more contentious. For simplicity, the model assumes that school sector attended and literacy and numeracy are not ordered, but that self-concept is a consequence of school sector attended and school achievement. This ordering is based on the year in which measurement occurred – the school variables were measured in 1995 and self-concept in 1997, so in this sense at least self-concept is subsequent to school characteristics.

The ordering of the latter variables is more obvious – completion of Year 12 is a consequence of family background, school variables and self-concept. Participation in work and study in 2000 or 2001 is, in turn, the consequence of all the other characteristics. And finally participation in volunteer work is affected by all the preceding variables.

While the analyses in this report focus on *how much?* and *who?*, the model informs the question of *why?*. Answers to the latter question do not address the subjective reasons people may give for participating in volunteer work, but rather questions such as: *If young people who attended private schools are more likely to participate in volunteer work than are young people who attended government schools, is this because of their higher socioeconomic background, some other characteristic, or something to do with the school itself?*

Tables 7 and 10, which present the multivariate analyses, provide results that address such questions. The section *Notes to Tables* discusses the nature of these analyses in more detail.

6. Characteristics of young people

This section describes the way in which the characteristics of young people are measured in this report. Variation in young people's participation in volunteer work is described in terms of these characteristics in Tables 5 to 10.

Sex Respondents were asked *Sex? Male/Female.*

Family socioeconomic status is the principal component of several measures of the economic and educational background of a panel member's family of origin:

- father's and mother's (or step-parent's) current or last occupation measured by ASCO version 1 major occupational group. The principal measure was a question asked in the 1997 telephone survey.

Table 4: Schema of the model underlying the analyses

BACK-GROUND		SCHOOL		SELF CONCEPT		YEARS OF SCHOOL		CURRENT ACTIVITY		OUTCOME
Sex Family socio-economic status Ethnic status Indigenous status Disability Location	⇨	Type of school Literacy & numeracy	⇨	Self concept	⇨	Years of school completed	⇨	Participation in study and the labour force	⇨	Frequency of participation in community volunteer work

Where this was missing, responses from the 1995 questionnaire were used;

- father's and mother's highest educational attainment;
- father's and mother's (or step-parent's) current main activity in 1997: employed, self-employed, unemployed, not in the labour force;
- score from the ABS's Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) economic resource index and education and occupation index linked to the postcode of the home address of the panel member in 1995;
- a wealth index based on the presence or absence of certain possessions in the home in 1996; and
- the number of books the panel member reported in their home.

The resulting principal component scores were categorised into quintiles, from the 20% of respondents with the highest socioeconomic scores to the 20% of respondents with the lowest scores.

Respondent's country of birth categorised as born in Australia, born in another mainly English-speaking country, or born in a mainly non-English-speaking country.

Parents' countries of birth where mother's and father's country of birth were first categorised as Australia, other

mainly English-speaking, or mainly non-English-speaking, and then combined as both mother and father from mainly non-English-speaking countries, both from a mainly English-speaking country other than Australia, at least one parent from a country other than Australia, and both born in Australia.

Frequency with which English is spoken in the home Panel members were asked *How often do you speak English at home?* with the available responses *Always or almost always, Sometimes* or *Rarely or never*.

Indigenous status is based on responses to the question *Are you an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander person?* Responses were checked against the reported country of birth of the respondent and their parents.

Disabled is based on responses to the question *Do you have a disability which entitles you to receive special funding or access to special education support services?* (asked in 1995), *Do you have any disability for which you receive special funding or access to special services?* or *Do you have any disability or health problem which limits the amount or type of work you can do?* (asked in 1997). If a respondent answered *Yes* to any of these questions, he or she was categorised as disabled.

Location is based on the postcode of the panel members' home address when they were in Year 9 and the corresponding value for the ABS SEIFA for the Urban and Rural Indices of Disadvantage. Where a postcode had corresponding value for the Urban Index of Disadvantage but not for the Rural Index of Disadvantage, it was classified as *Urban*, where a postcode had corresponding values for both the Urban and Rural Indices it was classified as *Partly rural* and where there was a corresponding value for the Rural Index of Disadvantage but not the Urban Index, the postcode was classified as *Rural*. This measure is based on the respondent's location in Year 9 which may well differ from their location at age 20 or 21.

Type of school is based on the school the respondent attended in Year 9.

Literacy and numeracy is based on responses to the multiple choice reading and mathematics test administered in school when panel members were in Year 9. The two tests were scored separately with corrections for guessing, normed to a common mean and standard deviation, and then summed. Respondents were then categorised into quintiles on the basis of their score.

Self-concept is a measure of the view panel members have of themselves. It is the first principle component underlying responses to the questions:

- How *agreeable* would you say you are?
- How *open to new experiences* would you say you are?
- How *popular* would you say you are?
- How *intellectual* would you say you are?
- How *calm* would you say you are?
- How *hardworking* would you say you are?
- How *outgoing* would you say you are?
- How *confident* would you say you are?

with the responses *Very, Fairly, Not really, Not at all* and *Unsure/can't say*. The *Unsure* response was treated as missing. Factor scores on the first component were then divided into five quintiles ranging from the 20% of the population with the most positive self-concept to the 20% of the population with the least positive self-concept.

Years of schooling completed is based on responses to questions over the course of the survey about attendance at school. A

student who left school in June or earlier was deemed not to have completed that year of schooling. A student who left in July or later was deemed to have completed that year of schooling.

Current activity is based on the respondent's employment and study at the time of interview. Full-time work is 35 hours or more per week. Information on the educational enrolment of respondents in 2001 was unavailable at the time of writing the report.

7. Participation in volunteer work by age 20

The results in Table 5 show whether or not people have done various forms of volunteer work by the time they are about 20 years old. The wording of the interview questions is provided in Table 2. The percentage of people who have done each of the listed forms of volunteer work is shown for categories of their various personal, family and educational characteristics. Tables A1 and A2 (see Supplementary Tables) show the corresponding results separately for young men and women. The detailed types of volunteer work provided unprompted by respondents and included under *Other* in Table 5 are shown in Table A3.

- Young women (57.7%) are more likely than young men (46.9%) to have engaged in volunteer work – a difference that is relatively large in the context of this report. The difference between young men and women is repeated across most of the categories of volunteer work, with two major exceptions. Young men are more likely to have engaged in volunteer work in sport and with the Country Fire Authority (CFA) or other emergency services.
- Young Australians from higher socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to have participated in volunteer work than young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds – 59.7% of the highest socioeconomic category compared with 47.2% from the lowest socioeconomic category. The difference is due to engagement in specific areas of voluntary activity – with church and youth work, home help, sport, fundraising and other unspecified activity. Participation in formal community activities such as Meals on Wheels, St John's Ambulance, Lifeline or Youthline and reading for the blind is unrelated to socioeconomic background. Voluntary child care, however, is more likely to be provided by young (presumably female) persons from lower socioeconomic status.

Table 5: Ever done various kinds of community volunteer work by selected personal characteristics: At age 20, 2000

	Meals on Wheels %	*St John's Ambul.* %	*Life/ Youth-line* %	*Reading for the blind* %	*Church/ youth work* %	*Home help* %	*Coach. or other sport* %	*Child care* %	*Other* %	*Any* %
Total	6.3	4.6	1.8	1.0	15.1	7.3	23.4	15.1	13.3	52.4
Sex	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.33*	*0.78*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Male	5.1	3.9	1.6	1.0	13.2	5.4	25.8	6.4	11.6	46.9
Female	7.4	5.4	1.9	1.0	17.0	9.1	21.2	23.5	14.9	57.7
Socioeconomic status	*0.64*	*0.12*	*0.96*	*0.75*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top quintile	5.9	5.4	1.7	1.0	21.5	9.4	27.2	12.7	17.4	59.7
60% to 80%	7.1	4.2	1.9	1.3	17.3	7.7	25.1	14.9	14.5	54.7
Middle quintile	6.0	5.4	1.7	1.1	13.8	7.2	23.5	14.6	13.8	52.2
20% to 40%	6.1	4.0	1.6	0.8	11.3	6.0	21.3	17.2	10.8	47.9
Bottom quintile	6.1	4.1	1.9	0.8	11.6	6.1	19.8	16.2	9.9	47.2
Country of birth of resp.	*0.00*	*0.06*	*0.36*	*0.68*	*0.00*	*0.54*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.18*	*0.01*
Australia	6.6	4.6	1.8	1.0	14.6	7.2	24.4	15.4	13.0	52.9
Other English-speaking	3.3	7.2	1.7	0.6	19.6	8.4	20.8	16.6	16.4	52.9
Non-English-speaking	3.5	3.3	1.1	1.2	19.6	8.2	12.5	11.2	15.0	46.2
Country of birth of parents	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.80*	*0.09*	*0.78*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.78*	*0.00*
Both non-English-speaking	3.5	3.1	1.1	1.2	17.1	6.8	13.6	12.0	12.6	45.5
Both overseas Eng-speaking	4.1	5.2	1.8	0.9	12.2	7.3	20.8	15.2	14.2	48.5
Other	4.9	5.9	1.2	1.1	14.7	6.9	22.8	14.3	13.8	51.5
Both born in Australia	7.6	4.5	2.1	0.9	15.0	7.5	26.4	16.2	13.2	54.8
English spoken at home	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.74*	*0.59*	*0.35*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.53*	*0.00*
Always or almost always	6.5	4.8	1.9	1.0	15.0	7.2	24.5	15.6	13.4	53.3
Sometimes	3.2	2.9	0.5	1.3	16.7	7.9	13.6	11.8	11.8	43.5
Rarely or never	3.5	0.5	0.0	1.3	15.5	10.8	6.1	4.7	14.0	39.3
Indigenous person	*0.07*	*0.05*	*0.40*	*0.85*	*0.56*	*0.11*	*0.16*	*0.04*	*0.99*	*0.00*
Yes	10.2	8.6	2.7	1.1	16.7	11.0	28.0	21.4	13.3	65.5
No	6.2	4.5	1.7	1.0	15.1	7.2	23.3	15.0	13.3	52.1
Disability	*0.04*	*0.76*	*0.34*	*0.04*	*0.06*	*0.01*	*0.27*	*0.02*	*0.01*	*0.00*
Yes	8.4	4.4	1.3	2.2	17.9	10.6	25.3	18.6	16.9	60.6
No	6.1	4.6	1.8	0.9	14.9	7.0	23.3	14.9	13.0	51.7
Location	*0.00*	*0.72*	*0.07*	*0.05*	*0.19*	*0.35*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.13*	*0.01*
Urban	5.2	4.4	1.7	1.2	15.8	7.3	21.9	12.6	13.4	51.0
Partly rural	7.3	4.8	2.0	0.7	14.7	7.5	24.9	17.3	12.8	53.3
Rural	7.5	4.5	0.9	1.3	13.2	5.9	25.3	19.4	16.1	57.4

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	Meals on Wheels %	*St John's Ambul.* %	*Life/ Youth-line* %	*Reading for the blind* %	*Church/ youth work* %	*Home help* %	*Coach. or other sport* %	*Child care* %	*Other* %	*Any* %
Type of school	*0.00*	*0.03*	*0.00*	*0.55*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.12*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Government	5.1	4.3	1.3	0.9	12.6	5.7	22.2	14.6	12.2	48.8
Catholic	9.1	6.0	3.1	1.0	18.7	11.0	26.2	15.6	15.6	59.4
Independent	8.2	4.1	1.9	1.3	23.4	10.2	25.9	17.2	15.6	61.3
Literacy & numeracy	*0.59*	*0.17*	*0.37*	*0.03*	*0.00*	*0.31*	*0.00*	*0.04*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top 20%	6.5	4.0	1.4	0.8	19.4	6.5	26.5	13.2	15.9	56.0
60% to 80%	6.6	5.0	1.9	0.5	16.1	7.7	25.5	15.8	15.0	55.3
Middle quintile	6.4	5.6	1.7	1.0	15.0	6.6	24.1	15.9	12.6	54.4
20% to 40%	6.3	4.5	1.5	1.7	13.9	7.9	21.7	14.2	12.4	50.1
Lowest 20%	5.4	4.0	2.3	0.9	11.3	7.8	19.3	16.6	10.6	46.2
Self-concept	*0.91*	*0.00*	*0.24*	*0.57*	*0.01*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.05*	*0.00*
Most positive 20%	6.1	6.6	2.3	1.3	17.4	9.4	27.6	18.2	15.0	56.7
60% to 80%	6.2	3.9	1.9	1.1	16.2	7.0	27.9	16.0	13.8	55.8
Middle quintile	5.9	5.2	1.8	0.8	14.8	6.3	25.1	14.5	13.4	51.8
20% to 40%	6.4	3.8	1.4	0.8	13.8	6.9	19.6	14.3	11.4	49.6
Least positive 20%	6.7	3.6	1.4	1.0	13.5	7.0	17.2	12.8	12.9	48.5
Year left school	*0.18*	*0.00*	*0.35*	*0.50*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Year 12	6.5	4.9	1.8	0.9	16.3	7.7	24.9	15.7	14.1	54.7
Year 11	5.2	4.3	1.2	1.4	11.7	5.4	20.1	12.8	10.2	44.1
Year 9 or 10	5.5	2.2	1.9	0.9	8.8	6.3	13.9	12.9	10.2	41.8
Current activity in 2000	*0.35*	*0.13*	*0.00*	*0.79*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Full-time work, no study	5.7	4.6	1.2	0.9	11.9	5.4	23.2	14.6	10.0	46.5
Full-time work & study	6.4	5.1	1.7	0.9	13.5	5.2	24.7	12.6	10.1	50.1
Full-time study, no work	7.0	3.1	1.0	1.3	16.4	8.2	20.1	14.6	15.7	52.5
Full-time study & pt work	6.3	4.7	1.6	0.8	18.5	8.5	27.9	15.8	17.5	59.3
Part-time work & pt study	4.2	5.0	2.5	0.9	16.6	10.3	22.6	18.7	12.6	53.9
Part-time work only	5.3	6.2	4.8	1.7	15.8	10.4	19.8	19.5	14.9	56.6
Part-time study only	5.8	4.9	0.9	1.6	14.6	9.4	16.2	27.9	19.3	58.4
No work, no study	8.0	4.0	2.8	0.9	14.3	8.1	16.8	13.9	10.4	47.1
Number of respondents	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889

See *Notes to Tables*

- Young people from non-English-speaking backgrounds are less likely than are other young people to have participated in volunteer work. The country of birth of the young person is not as important as the country of birth of their parents. If both their parents had been born in a mainly non-English-speaking country, a young person is less likely to have participated in volunteer work (45.5%) than if both had been born in Australia (54.8%). Young people from families in which English is rarely spoken at home are among those least likely (39.3%) to have participated in volunteer work.

  Engagement in volunteer work associated with non-English-speaking background is lowest for the more formal programs of community work such as Meals on Wheels, St John's Ambulance, Lifeline and the CFA and particularly low for sports-related activities. Participation in church-based voluntary activities, however, is marginally higher for young people whose parents were both born in non-English-speaking countries (17.1%) than for young people whose parents were both born in Australia (15.0%).
- Young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders are more likely to have participated in volunteer work (65.5%) than are other young people (52.1%). The higher level of participation in volunteer work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth is consistent across almost all the categories of volunteer labour identified in Table 5, even though few of the differences are statistically significant ($p<0.05$) because of the relatively small number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the survey. The differences are somewhat greater for men than for women (Tables A1 and A2).
- Young people with a disability are more likely to have participated in volunteer work (60.6%) than are young people without a disability (51.7%). The difference is due to often only slightly higher levels of participation in each of the types of volunteer work identified in Table 5.
- Young people who lived in rural areas when they were in Year 9 are more likely to have participated in volunteer work than are young people in urban areas. The differences, however, are not large – 51.0% for urban areas, 53.3% for partly rural areas, and 57.4% for rural areas. Engagement across the various forms of community work partly reflects differences in opportunities in rural and urban areas. The higher levels of participation in rural areas overall are largely due to higher levels of volunteer work in sport, child care and emergency services such as the CFA.
- Attendance at a non-government school is associated with a higher likelihood of ever-having participated in community volunteer work (61.3% for Independent schools and 59.4% for Catholic schools) than attendance at a government school (48.8%). Young people who attended Catholic schools were more likely to have participated in formal programs such as Meals on Wheels, St John's Ambulance or Lifeline while students at Independent schools were more likely to have participated in church-related activities.
- Higher levels of literacy and numeracy are associated with a higher likelihood of participation in volunteer work – 56.0% of young people in the top one fifth of literacy and numeracy achievement had participated in volunteer work by age 20 compared with 46.2% of those in

the bottom one-fifth. The pattern was strongest for church-related activities, sport and fund-raising. For voluntary childcare, the pattern was reversed–young people with lower levels of literacy and numeracy were more likely to have provided child care.

- Young people with a more positive self-concept were more likely to have done various kinds of community volunteer work (56.7%) than young people with a less positive self-concept (48.5%). Although there was no clear pattern for several of the types of voluntary activity listed in Table 5, different levels of involvement in church and sports-based activities and in child care contribute to the overall relationship.

  The relationship is more marked for young men than for young women (Tables A1 and A2). Although for men, church-related activities varied little across categories of self-concept, there were large differences for sport and child care and more modest differences for home help and unclassified activities. For women, however, the positive relationship between self-concept and volunteer work was largely restricted to church and sports-based activities and child care.
- Australians who completed Year 12 were more likely to have participated in volunteer work by age 20 (54.7%) than were those who completed Year 11 (44.1%) or Year 9 or 10 (41.8%). This relationship largely reflects corresponding patterns for church and sports-based volunteer work as well as voluntary child care and raising funds for charity.
- Young people in full-time study and part-time work in 2000 (59.3%) and in part-time study only (58.4%) were more likely to have ever participated in voluntary activity than young people either in full-time work only (46.5%) or who were neither working or studying (47.1%).

8. Frequency of volunteer work at age 20

Table 6 shows the frequency with which people do volunteer work when they are 20-years-old and how this varies across various categories of young Australians. Several levels of frequency are recorded. For simplicity, the discussion focuses on whether or not a person does volunteer work at least once a month (the sum of the categories *at least once a month* and *at least once a week* in Table A6). Tables A4 and A5 in The Supplementary Tables present the corresponding results separately for young men and women. *Notes to Tables* provides some technical information about these and other tables.

- Young women (22.7%) are more likely than young men (17.5%) to have undertaken some form of volunteer work at least monthly in the previous year.
- Younger people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (24.2%) are more likely to engage in volunteer work at least once a month than are young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (18.3%). The pattern is not as clear when the results for men and women are viewed separately (Tables A4 and A5). For young women, in particular, the highest category of socioeconomic background has the lowest frequency of at least monthly participation (17.7%).
- Young people from a non-English-speaking background are less likely than are others to participate in volunteer activities at least once a month. The differences, however, are not large. There is significant difference associated with the country of the

birth of the respondent and there is no difference between those with both parents born in a non-English-speaking country (17.6%) and young people with both parents born in an English-speaking country other than Australia (17.0%). Again, however, young people from households in which English is rarely or never spoken have a relatively low frequency of at least monthly volunteer work (14.2%).

This pattern is clearer for young men than for young women. For young women, the relationships of frequency of volunteer activity with both the country of birth of the respondent and the extent to which English is spoken at home are not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). Although the relationship with country of birth of parents is significant, the frequency of at least monthly volunteer work is high when both parents are from a non-English-speaking country (21.5%) than when both were born in an English-speaking country (20.6%) or when only one parent was born overseas (19%).

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth have a high frequency of at least monthly volunteer work (27.0%) compared with the rest of the community (20.0%). This relationship is stronger for young men (29.5% compared with 17.3%) than for young women (24.9% compared with 22.7%).
- The difference between the frequency of at least monthly participation in volunteer labour for young disabled people and others is not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). For young men, however, there is a statistically significant relationship ($p<0.05$) – disabled youth are more likely to undertake volunteer labour at least monthly.
- The differences among young people from urban, partly rural and rural areas in the frequency of at least monthly participation in volunteer labour are not statistically significant ($p>0.05$).
- There are no statistically significant differences in the frequency of at least monthly participation in volunteer work among young people who attended the different types of schools.
- Young people with higher levels of literacy and numeracy are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least monthly than are young people with lower levels of literacy and numeracy – but the differences are quite modest overall, non-existent for young women and only slightly stronger for young men.
- Year 12 graduates (21.0%) are more likely than others (17.3%) to participate in volunteer labour at least monthly.
- Overall, young people in a combination of part-time study and part-time work (24.1%) or part-time work (23.0%) or study only (23.3%) are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least monthly. Those in full-time work only (16.6%) or no work or study (19.0%) are least likely to participate in volunteer work at least once a month. The pattern is a little different, however, for men and women considered separately. Young men in part-time study only have among the lowest levels of engagement with volunteer work (10.9%) while for young women this category has the highest engagement with volunteer work (33.8%).

Table 6: Frequency of community volunteer work by selected personal characteristics: At age 20, 2000

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*Volunteer work at least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Total	47.6	14.0	3.3	9.0	5.9	8.7	11.5	100.0	7 889
Sex %	*0.00*								
Male	53.1	12.8	3.0	8.4	5.3	6.9	10.6	100.0	3 718
Female	42.3	15.2	3.7	9.6	6.4	10.4	12.3	100.0	4 171
Socioeconomic status %	*0.00*								
Top quintile	40.3	14.8	4.2	10.5	6.0	10.5	13.7	100.0	1823
60% to 80%	45.3	14.8	3.7	9.4	7.5	8.1	11.3	100.0	1753
Middle quintile	47.8	13.9	3.0	9.7	5.4	7.6	12.6	100.0	1573
20% to 40%	52.1	13.2	3.5	7.2	5.4	8.3	10.3	100.0	1432
Bottom quintile	52.8	13.3	2.3	8.1	5.1	9.0	9.3	100.0	1308
Country of birth of resp. %	*0.17*								
Australia	47.1	14.3	3.2	9.0	6.0	8.9	11.5	100.0	7 096
Other English-speaking	47.1	12.9	2.6	9.1	7.1	8.4	12.8	100.0	267
Non-English-speaking	53.8	11.2	5.0	8.7	3.9	6.8	10.5	100.0	526
Country of birth of parents %	*0.00*								
Both non-English-speaking	54.5	13.1	3.6	7.7	3.5	8.8	8.8	100.0	1022
Both overseas Eng-speaking	51.5	12.1	2.5	9.8	7.2	7.5	9.5	100.0	370
Other	48.5	14.0	3.6	9.5	5.8	7.9	10.7	100.0	1721
Both born in Australia	45.2	14.4	3.2	9.1	6.4	9.0	12.6	100.0	4776
English spoken at home %	*0.04*								
Always or almost always	46.7	14.3	3.4	9.1	6.1	8.7	11.7	100.0	7 345
Sometimes	56.5	11.0	2.8	8.4	3.7	9.6	7.9	100.0	441
Rarely or never	60.7	13.4	2.5	6.9	2.3	2.9	11.3	100.0	103
Indigenous person %	*0.04*								
Yes	34.5	20.7	3.0	8.7	6.1	11.9	15.1	100.0	160
No	47.9	13.9	3.4	9.0	5.9	8.6	11.4	100.0	7 729
Disability %	*0.18*								
Yes	39.4	15.5	4.9	11.0	6.8	8.5	13.9	100.0	604
No	48.3	13.9	3.2	8.8	5.8	8.7	11.3	100.0	7 285
Location %	*0.15*								
Urban	49.0	15.0	3.6	8.2	4.8	8.6	10.8	100.0	3 907
Partly rural	46.7	13.0	3.1	9.8	6.8	8.5	12.1	100.0	3 370
Rural	42.6	13.6	3.0	10.3	7.8	10.8	11.9	100.0	612

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*Volunteer work at least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Type of school %	*0.50*								
Government	51.2	12.8	2.9	7.8	5.2	8.3	11.8	100.0	5 090
Catholic	40.6	17.2	4.4	11.0	7.3	9.9	9.5	100.0	1542
Independent	38.7	15.6	4.1	12.8	7.3	8.8	12.6	100.0	1257
Literacy & numeracy %	*0.02*								
Top 20%	44.0	13.9	3.1	10.3	7.1	8.6	12.9	100.0	1951
60% to 80%	44.7	13.4	3.4	10.4	5.6	10.4	12.0	100.0	1774
Middle quintile	45.6	15.1	3.5	9.6	7.0	8.7	10.5	100.0	1657
20% to 40%	49.9	14.0	4.3	7.1	5.3	6.9	12.5	100.0	1411
Lowest 20%	53.8	13.6	2.4	7.5	4.5	8.9	9.4	100.0	1096
Self-concept %	*0.00*								
Most positive 20%	43.3	13.0	2.7	9.9	7.2	11.1	12.7	100.0	1498
60% to 80%	44.2	15.1	3.7	8.7	6.3	9.2	12.9	100.0	1547
Middle quintile	48.2	13.9	3.2	8.6	6.7	7.5	11.8	100.0	1669
20% to 40%	50.4	14.4	3.7	9.4	4.3	7.6	10.3	100.0	1561
Least positive 20%	51.5	13.7	3.4	8.5	4.9	8.2	9.7	100.0	1614
Year left school %	*0.00*								
Year 12	45.3	14.2	3.5	9.8	6.3	9.2	11.8	100.0	6499
Year 11	55.9	12.4	3.2	6.4	5.8	6.8	9.5	100.0	856
Year 9 or 10	58.2	14.8	2.5	4.9	2.2	6.8	10.6	100.0	534
Current activity in 2000 %	*0.00*								
Full-time work, no study	53.5	14.1	3.7	7.1	5.0	7.7	8.9	100.0	1616
Full-time work & study	49.9	14.8	2.8	8.5	4.7	9.1	10.2	100.0	1518
Full-time study, no work	47.5	12.1	3.8	10.4	5.6	7.8	12.8	100.0	1153
Full-time study & pt work	40.7	13.9	3.2	11.6	7.9	10.1	12.5	100.0	2 211
Part-time work & pt study	46.1	12.8	3.9	6.7	6.3	7.3	16.8	100.0	268
Part-time work only	43.4	13.2	3.4	10.5	6.5	9.6	13.4	100.0	486
Part-time study only	41.6	17.5	2.5	9.6	5.5	10.0	13.3	100.0	130
No work, no study	52.9	16.1	3.2	4.2	4.6	7.1	11.9	100.0	507

See *Notes to Tables*

9. Frequency of volunteer work at age 20 — all else equal

Table 7 applies multivariate statistical techniques to the results presented in Table 6. It focuses on whether or not 20-year-olds do volunteer work at least once a month – but the results are *all else equal*. That is, if there is a difference between the level of volunteer work for rural and urban young people, it is not because of differences in socioeconomic background, ethnicity or schooling – it is because of urban-rural differences. The table presents values for logits and the corresponding p values as is customary. The following discussion, however, focuses on the values in the two columns headed "%" because this provides the most direct interpretation of the results.

Results are provided for Model 1 and Model 2. The difference between them lies in what is included in the *all else equal*. In Model 2 all other characteristics listed in the table are held constant. In Model 1, only certain of those characteristics are held constant for any estimate. Further details are provided in *Notes to Tables*.

- Young women are more likely than are young men to participate in volunteer work at least once per month.
- Young people from the highest fifth of the socioeconomic background profile are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least once per month than are other young people.
- Young people both of whose parents were born in Australia are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least once a month than are other young people. There is no relationship with the frequency with which English is spoken in the home.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth are more likely to do volunteer work at least once a month than are other young people.
- There is no effect of literacy and numeracy on frequency of engagement in volunteer work.
- More outgoing young people are more likely to engage in volunteer work than less outgoing young people.
- Young people who graduate from Year 12 are more likely to do volunteer work at least once a month than are other young people.
- Young people who in 2002 were in full-time study only, part-time work and part-time study, or in part-time study only were more likely to participate in volunteer work at least once a month, while those in full-time work only were least likely to engage in volunteer work at least once a month.

Table 7: Logistic regression of participation in volunteer work at least once per month during last year by selected personal characteristics: At age 20, 2000

		Model 1				Model 2		
		logit	*p*	*%*		*logit*	*p*	*%*
Sex *(0.00)*	*Male*	-----	-----	17.4	*(0.00)*			17.7
	Female	0.338	0.000	22.8		0.304	0.000	22.5
Socioeconomic *(0.00)*	*Top quintile*	0.461	0.000	25.3	*(0.00)*	0.382	0.000	24.6
status	*60% to 80%*	0.134	0.151	19.6		0.077	0.419	19.3
	Middle quintile	0.158	0.088	20.0		0.133	0.155	20.2
	20% to 40%	0.041	0.659	18.2		0.015	0.876	18.4
	Bottom quintile	-----	-----	17.6		-----	-----	18.2
Parents'	*Both non-Eng.-speaking*	-0.178	0.094	18.6	*(0.01)*	-0.207	0.058	18.3
country	*Both o'seas Eng-speaking*	-0.267	0.073	17.3		-0.275	0.067	17.3
of birth	*Other*	-0.203	0.007	18.2		-0.217	0.004	18.1
(0.01)	*Both born in Australia*	-----	-----	21.4		-----	-----	21.5
English *(0.57)*	*Always/almost always*	-----	-----	20.2	*(0.66)*	-----	-----	20.2
spoken	*Sometimes*	-0.005	0.972	20.1		-0.019	0.890	19.9
at home	*Rarely/never*	-0.279	0.307	16.1		-0.246	0.371	16.5
Indigenous *(0.03)*	*Yes*	0.371	0.032	26.6	*(0.01)*	0.438	0.012	27.9
person	*No*	-----	-----	20.0		-----	-----	20.0
Disability *(0.17)*	*Yes*	0.143	0.169	22.4	*(0.13)*	0.161	0.126	22.6
	No	-----	-----	20.0		-----	-----	20.0
Location *(0.13)*	*Urban*	-----	-----	19.3	*(0.10)*	-----	-----	19.2
	Partly rural	0.089	0.159	20.7		0.101	0.114	20.8
	Rural	0.212	0.065	22.8		0.220	0.059	22.8
School *(0.46)*	*Government*	-----	-----	20.5	*(0.28)*	-----	-----	20.7
sector	*Catholic*	-0.088	0.237	19.1		-0.115	0.128	18.8
	Independent	-0.057	0.532	19.6		-0.076	0.412	19.4
Literacy & *(0.24)*	*Top 20%*	0.089	0.351	20.7	*(0.46)*	0.022	0.824	20.2
numeracy	*60% to 80%*	0.166	0.074	22.0		0.117	0.224	21.8
	Middle quintile	-0.017	0.854	19.1		-0.046	0.631	19.1
	20% to 40%	0.021	0.818	19.6		-0.001	0.992	19.8
	Lowest 20%	-----	-----	19.3		-----	-----	19.8
Self- *(0.00)*	*Most outgoing 20%*	0.378	0.000	24.0	*(0.00)*	0.391	0.000	24.2
concept	*60% to 80%*	0.263	0.004	22.0		0.264	0.004	21.9
	Middle quintile	0.105	0.245	19.4		0.109	0.231	19.4
	20% to 40%	0.006	0.952	17.9		0.005	0.954	17.8
	Least outgoing 20%	-----	-----	17.8		-----	-----	17.7

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

		Model 1				Model 2		
		logit	*p*	*%*		*logit*	*p*	*%*
Year left school *(0.01)*	*Year 12*	-----	-----	20.9	*(0.04)*	-----	-----	20.8
	Year 11	-0.263	0.009	16.9		-0.232	0.024	17.2
	Year 10/9	-0.212	0.057	17.6		-0.165	0.147	18.2
Current activity in 2000	*Full-time work, no study*	-----	-----	16.6	*(0.02)*	-----	-----	16.6
	Full-time work & study	0.222	0.016	19.9		0.222	0.016	19.9
	Full-time study, no work	0.252	0.015	23.4		0.252	0.015	23.4
	Full-time study & pt work	0.280	0.002	20.8		0.280	0.002	20.8
	Part-time work & pt study	0.416	0.010	23.2		0.416	0.010	23.2
	Part-time work only	0.349	0.006	22.0		0.349	0.006	22.0
	Part-time study only	0.430	0.043	23.4		0.430	0.043	23.4
	No work, no study	0.183	0.151	19.3		0.183	0.151	19.3

See *Notes to Tables*

10. Participation in volunteer work at age 21

Table 8 shows the percentages of people with certain characteristics who did various forms of volunteer work in 2001 when they were about 21 years old. The wording of the interview questions is provided in Table 3. Comparison of the results in Tables 5 and 8 require care because different questions were asked in the 2000 and the 2001 interviews. In 2000 the question about volunteer were asked about having ever participated in volunteer work while in 2001 the question was restricted to participation in the last year. Importantly, the prompts provided to panel members in 2001 were not the same as those provided in 2000.

Tables A6 and A7 in Supplementary Tables show the corresponding results separately for young men and women. The detailed types of volunteer work provided unprompted by respondents and included under *Other* in Table 8 are shown in Table A8. *Notes to Tables,* provides additional details about Table 8.

The results show that:

- Young women (50.4%) were more likely to engage in volunteer activities than were young men (41.6%). The pattern of higher female participation was consistent across most of the categories identified in Tables 8 and A8 except for sporting activities and contributions to the CFA and other emergency services.
- Higher socioeconomic background is associated with higher levels of work as a volunteer — participation in the highest socioeconomic background category was 52.5% compared with 41.5% on the lowest category. This pattern was reasonably consistent across all categories of volunteer work except for child care and home help for which there was no relationship with socioeconomic status. Separate analyses of young men and women (Tables A6 and A7) showed similar results, although for young men the relationship between socioeconomic and voluntary sports and environmental activities was less clear.

- Young people from migrant backgrounds are less likely to participate in volunteer work and those from non-English-speaking backgrounds are least likely of all. The variation in participation in volunteer work across categories reflecting ethnic background, however, is relatively small and not always consistent.

  Young people born in non-English-speaking countries (40.8%) are less likely to do volunteer work than either young people born in English-speaking countries (45.9%) or in Australia (46.6%) – although this pattern was almost entirely due to differences in levels of participation among young men.

  Young people whose parents were both born in Australia are more likely to participate in voluntary activities (48.4%) than are other young people. There is little difference among the other categories, although young people with one parent born in Australia (45.4%) are somewhat more likely to participate in voluntary activities than those whose parents were both born outside Australia (38.1% and 40.3%). In this case, however, the pattern was stronger for young women than young men.

Table 8: Participated in volunteer work during the last year by selected personal characteristics: At age 21, 2001

	Fund-raising	*Environ-mental*	*Sports-related*	*Child care*	*Home help*	*Church/ youth group*	*Other*	*Any*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	21.5	7.9	15.7	11.3	4.7	8.3	5.9	46.1
Sex	*0.00*	*0.64*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.10*	*0.00*
Male	17.5	7.8	18.1	6.1	3.4	6.8	5.4	41.6
Female	25.3	8.1	13.5	16.2	6.0	9.7	6.3	50.4
Socioeconomic status	*0.01*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.89*	*0.92*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top quintile	25.0	9.8	17.7	11.3	4.8	13.0	7.8	52.5
60% to 80%	22.0	7.2	18.1	10.7	4.9	8.6	7.5	48.3
Middle quintile	20.1	8.4	14.8	11.6	4.8	7.3	5.0	45.0
20% to 40%	20.1	7.6	15.0	11.1	4.8	5.8	5.0	43.2
Bottom quintile	20.5	6.5	12.9	11.9	4.2	6.7	3.9	41.5
Country of birth of resp.	*0.60*	*0.66*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.28*	*0.04*
Australia	21.6	7.9	16.5	11.8	4.9	7.5	6.0	46.6
Other English-speaking	18.8	9.3	11.0	8.8	3.4	13.1	6.2	45.9
Non-English-speaking	21.7	7.2	8.4	6.2	2.6	15.7	4.4	40.8
Country of birth of parents	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Both non-English-speaking	21.7	4.7	8.8	7.6	3.7	11.8	3.1	40.3
Both overseas Eng-speaking	18.0	8.5	11.0	8.6	2.4	8.0	4.7	38.1
Other	19.0	8.1	13.9	11.7	4.9	7.4	6.5	45.4
Both born in Australia	22.5	8.7	18.4	12.3	5.0	7.7	6.4	48.4
English spoken at home	*0.66*	*0.06*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.03*	*0.01*	*0.01*	*0.00*
Always or almost always	21.4	8.1	16.4	11.7	4.7	8.0	6.1	46.8
Sometimes	23.1	5.7	8.0	7.6	4.9	9.5	3.4	38.3
Rarely or never	20.1	6.0	13.4	7.4	1.5	18.5	4.8	43.5
Indigenous person	*0.65*	*0.24*	*0.10*	*0.05*	*0.93*	*0.05*	*0.39*	*0.08*
Yes	20.1	5.8	21.0	17.2	4.5	13.4	7.6	53.0
No	21.6	8.0	15.6	11.2	4.7	8.2	5.8	46.0
Disability	*0.03*	*0.12*	*0.30*	*0.99*	*0.02*	*0.13*	*0.73*	*0.08*
Yes	25.6	9.9	17.4	11.3	7.2	10.2	5.5	49.8
No	21.2	7.8	15.6	11.3	4.5	8.1	5.9	45.8
Location	*0.10*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.36*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Urban	21.1	6.7	14.1	10.1	4.3	9.4	5.2	43.7
Partly rural	21.4	8.7	17.7	12.1	5.0	7.3	5.8	48.0
Rural	25.6	12.0	14.8	14.9	5.1	6.3	10.6	52.3

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	Fund-raising	*Environ-mental*	*Sports-related*	*Child care*	*Home help*	*Church/ youth group*	*Other*	*Any*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Type of school	*0.02*	*0.11*	*0.00*	*0.23*	*0.49*	*0.00*	*0.24*	*0.00*
Government	20.6	7.6	15.1	11.0	4.5	7.5	5.8	44.3
Catholic	23.6	7.7	18.9	11.3	5.3	7.5	5.3	49.3
Independent	23.4	10.0	14.0	13.2	4.9	14.2	7.1	51.3
Literacy & numeracy	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.89*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top 20%	22.8	8.7	16.8	11.4	4.4	11.6	9.1	52.4
60% to 80%	23.3	9.7	17.7	14.3	5.0	8.8	4.4	49.4
Middle quintile	22.7	9.1	15.3	10.8	4.7	7.2	4.7	45.4
20% to 40%	20.3	6.9	16.4	10.9	5.0	7.7	5.7	43.9
Lowest 20%	18.5	5.2	12.3	9.1	4.4	6.2	5.4	39.5
Self-concept	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.05*	*0.02*	*0.13*	*0.05*	*0.00*
Most positive 20%	27.2	10.0	19.3	13.0	5.1	9.7	7.2	51.8
60% to 80%	23.7	8.1	17.9	11.6	6.2	7.4	6.2	49.1
Middle quintile	20.9	8.6	15.8	11.1	4.6	8.7	5.8	46.8
20% to 40%	18.0	7.0	14.2	11.5	3.5	7.2	5.6	42.2
Least positive 20%	18.3	6.0	11.7	9.5	4.1	8.4	4.5	41.1
Year left school	*0.00*	*0.28*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.48*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.00*
Year 12	22.3	8.2	16.4	11.8	4.7	8.8	6.2	47.8
Year 11	20.9	6.9	13.9	9.4	5.1	4.2	3.9	41.0
Year 9 or 10	14.1	6.8	10.9	8.2	3.8	8.2	5.3	36.1
Current activity in 2001	*0.00*	*0.06*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.14*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Full-time work	22.6	7.1	15.3	9.5	4.1	6.0	3.9	42.9
Part-time work	22.5	8.2	17.9	13.7	5.2	10.0	7.4	50.3
No work	17.3	9.2	12.3	10.5	4.9	9.8	7.2	45.1
Number of respondents	6876	6876	6876	6876	6876	6876	6876	6876

See *Notes to Tables*

There was, however, little difference in overall levels of volunteer labour for young people from homes in which English is rarely spoken and from homes in which it was almost always spoken – the lower level of participation was among young people from homes in which English was sometimes spoken.

The overall higher levels of volunteering among young people whose parents were both born in Australia result from markedly higher levels of engagement in environmental and sports-related activities, child care, home help and other activities. Church-related volunteer work was somewhat higher for young people whose parents were both born in non-English speaking countries.

- The difference in the overall incidence of volunteer work between Indigenous (53.0%) and non-Indigenous youth (46.0%) was not statistically significant ($p>0.05$), but Indigenous youth were more likely than non-Indigenous youth to engage in sports-related activities, voluntary church work and child care.
- The difference in the overall incidence of volunteer work between young people with a disability (49.8%) and without a disability (45.8%) was not statistically significant ($p>0.05$), although young people with a disability were more likely to engage in fundraising and home help.
- Young people from rural areas (52.3%) are more likely to engage in volunteer work than are young people from partly rural areas (48.0%) or urban areas (47.3%). The pattern was fairly consistent across the various types of volunteer work except for sports and (especially) church-related activities. The rural-urban differences were markedly stronger for young men than for young women.
- Students who were in non-government schools (Independent, 51.3% and Catholic, 49.3%) are more likely to have engaged in volunteer work in the last year than students who were in government schools (44.3%). For the independent school category, church-related activities show the strongest differences. The pattern is fairly consistent across types of voluntary activities except for sports and home help for which young people from Catholic schools report higher levels of engagement.
- Higher levels of literacy and numeracy are associated with higher levels of participation in volunteer work by young Australians. At the upper-end of the distribution, the relationship is driven by volunteer work associated with church attendance. Young people with literacy and numeracy levels in the middle and upper-middle of the range have slightly higher levels of participation in voluntary activities. Those in the lowest quintile usually have among the lowest levels of participation for each of the various types of voluntary activity. The pattern is somewhat stronger for young women than for young men.
- Young people with a more positive self-concept are more likely to be volunteers than are young people with a less positive self-concept – 51.8% of the highest category compared with 41.1% of the lowest category. This pattern was fairly consistent for all categories of voluntary activities (except for church-related volunteering) and for young men and women separately.
- Young people who completed Year 12 (47.8%) are more likely to have volunteered in the preceding year than are young people who left school in Year 11 (41.0%) or in Years 9 or 10 (36.1%).

Participation in home help, and church-related activities do not follow this general pattern. The relationship was stronger for young men than for young women.

- Young persons in part-time work (50.3%) are more likely to participate in volunteer work than either people in no work (45.1%) or people in full-time work (42.9%). The pattern was similar for men and women considered separately and for most of the different types of volunteer work identified in Table 8.

11. Frequency of volunteer work at age 21

Table 9 shows the frequency with which 21-year-olds engage in volunteer work of any kind. The following discussion of the results from the table focuses on participation in volunteer work at least once per month by combining the two categories of *at least once per week* (11.7%) and *at least once per month* (11.0%). Together these are referred to as *at least monthly* in the subsequent discussion. For the panel overall, 22.7% participated in volunteer work *at least monthly*. Tables A9 and A10 provide the corresponding values for males and females separately. Table 9 shows that:

- Young women (24.0%) were only slightly more likely than young men (21.3%) to participate at least monthly in community volunteer work.
- Young people from a higher socio-economic background are more likely to participate at least monthly in community volunteer work. The difference, however, is principally between the highest quintile (27.8%), the middle three quintiles (22.0%, 21.0% and 22.4%, respectively), with the lowest quintile very marginally lower at 19.8%.
- The country of birth of the panel member was not statistically significantly related to their frequency of participation in volunteer work. However, young people whose parents were both born overseas in mainly English-speaking countries (17.6%) or mainly non-English-speaking countries (18.5%) are less likely to participate at least monthly in volunteer work than young people whose parents were both born in Australia (24.8%). Respondents from homes in which English was always or almost always spoken at home have a higher level of at least monthly participation in volunteer work than respondents from homes in which English was sometimes (17.8%) or rarely or never (18.0%) spoken.
- Indigenous youth (28.6%) are not statistically significantly more likely to undertake volunteer work at least monthly than other young people (22.5%), but the direction and size of the relationship is indicative.
- Young people with a disability (27.2%) are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least monthly than are young people without a disability (22.3%).
- Young people from rural areas are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least monthly (27.9%) than are young people from partly rural areas (23.7%) or urban areas (20.0%).
- There is no statistically significant relationship between the type of school attended in Year 9 and the likelihood of participating in volunteer work at least monthly.

Table 9: Frequency of participation in volunteer work during last year by selected personal characteristics: At age 21, 2001

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*At least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Total	53.9	3.1	2.4	11.3	6.6	11.0	11.7	100.0	6876
Sex %	*0.01*								
Male	58.4	2.9	2.4	10.1	5.0	10.4	10.9	100.0	3201
Female	49.6	3.4	2.5	12.5	8.0	11.6	12.4	100.0	3675
Socioeconomic status %	*0.00*								
Top quintile	47.5	2.2	2.9	11.8	7.7	13.3	14.5	100.0	1622
60% to 80%	51.7	3.1	3.1	12.7	7.5	10.6	11.4	100.0	1533
Middle quintile	55.0	4.2	2.0	11.4	6.3	9.5	11.5	100.0	1373
20% to 40%	56.8	2.9	1.9	10.5	5.5	11.3	11.1	100.0	1236
Bottom quintile	58.5	3.3	2.3	10.2	6.0	10.1	9.7	100.0	1112
Country of birth of resp. %	*0.08*								
Australia	53.4	3.1	2.3	11.5	6.7	11.3	11.6	100.0	6208
Other English-speaking	54.1	2.9	4.8	10.5	5.5	6.1	16.1	100.0	227
Non-English-speaking	59.2	3.2	3.0	10.0	5.8	8.6	10.3	100.0	441
Country of birth of parents %	*0.00*								
Both non-English-speaking	59.7	3.0	3.2	10.2	5.5	9.4	9.1	100.0	876
Both overseas Eng-speaking	61.9	2.6	5.0	8.2	4.7	6.8	10.8	100.0	300
Other	54.6	3.9	2.9	10.9	7.2	9.1	11.3	100.0	1500
Both born in Australia	51.6	3.0	1.9	12.0	6.8	12.3	12.5	100.0	4200
English spoken at home %	*0.01*								
Always or almost always	53.2	3.2	2.4	11.4	6.7	11.1	12.0	100.0	6408
Sometimes	61.7	2.6	2.1	10.4	5.4	9.6	8.2	100.0	382
Rarely or never	56.5	0.6	5.5	12.2	7.2	9.3	8.7	100.0	86
Indigenous person %	*0.09*								
Yes	47.0	5.6	2.7	8.4	7.6	12.9	15.7	100.0	132
No	54.0	3.1	2.4	11.4	6.6	10.9	11.6	100.0	6744
Disability %	*0.02*								
Yes	50.2	3.7	1.0	11.5	6.4	12.5	14.7	100.0	508
No	54.2	3.1	2.6	11.3	6.6	10.9	11.4	100.0	6368
Location %	*0.00*								
Urban	56.3	3.2	2.5	10.7	6.3	9.9	11.0	100.0	3429
Partly rural	52.0	3.3	2.5	11.8	6.6	11.5	12.2	100.0	2911
Rural	47.7	1.6	1.8	12.7	8.3	15.2	12.7	100.0	536

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*At least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Type of school %	*0.08*								
Government	55.7	3.0	2.3	10.5	6.2	10.7	11.7	100.0	4 420
Catholic	50.7	3.9	3.0	13.3	7.4	11.5	10.1	100.0	1 342
Independent	48.7	2.9	2.4	12.7	7.4	11.6	14.2	100.0	1 114
Literacy & numeracy %	*0.00*								
Top 20%	47.6	2.7	2.5	12.6	9.0	12.8	12.9	100.0	1787
60% to 80%	50.6	3.4	2.5	13.2	6.5	11.9	11.8	100.0	1581
Middle quintile	54.6	2.4	2.8	11.7	6.0	11.0	11.5	100.0	1437
20% to 40%	56.1	3.6	1.7	9.1	6.3	10.3	12.8	100.0	1190
Lowest 20%	60.5	3.6	2.7	10.0	5.2	8.9	9.2	100.0	881
Self-concept %	*0.00*								
Most positive 20%	48.2	3.7	2.6	11.4	8.0	12.8	13.4	100.0	1282
60% to 80%	50.9	3.9	3.5	12.0	6.4	10.7	12.5	100.0	1339
Middle quintile	53.2	2.7	2.2	11.7	5.2	12.9	12.1	100.0	1475
20% to 40%	57.8	2.2	2.4	11.0	6.6	9.9	10.0	100.0	1363
Least positive 20%	58.9	3.1	1.6	10.6	6.8	8.6	10.4	100.0	1417
Year left school %	*0.06*								
Year 12	52.2	3.2	2.4	12.0	7.0	11.4	11.8	100.0	5 765
Year 11	59.0	4.1	2.4	8.7	5.8	9.7	10.2	100.0	690
Year 9 or 10	63.9	1.0	3.0	8.4	3.1	8.6	12.0	100.0	421
Current activity in 2001 %	*0.00*								
Full-time work	57.1	2.8	2.2	11.0	6.5	10.4	9.9	100.0	2 724
Part-time work	49.7	3.3	2.5	12.2	6.9	12.4	13.0	100.0	2 809
No paid work	54.9	3.5	2.9	10.3	6.1	9.5	12.8	100.0	1343

See *Notes to Tables*

- Young people with higher levels of literacy and numeracy are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least monthly. There is relatively little difference among the middle 60% of the population, but the upper and (especially) lower 20% create the overall relationship. The differences appear to be marginally greater for women than men.
- Self-concept is associated with at least monthly participation in volunteer work. Table 9 shows that young people with a more positive self-concept are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least once a month. Some 26% of the fifth of the panel with the most positive self-concept do volunteer work at least monthly, compared with only 18% for the fifth of the panel with the least positive self-concept. Despite the overall trend, the pattern is not always consistent when the results for men and women are considered separately.
- There is no statistically significant relationship ($p>0.05$) between the number of years of schooling completed and the likelihood of participating in volunteer work at least monthly either overall or for young men and women considered separately.
- Young people in part-time paid work (25%) are more likely to do volunteer work than are young people who do no paid work (22%) or young people in full-time work (20%). This pattern is repeated for young men and women considered separately.

12. Frequency of volunteer work at age 21—all else equal

Table 10 displays some multivariate results for at least monthly participation in volunteer work by members of the LSAY panel at age 21 in the year 2001. Details of the analyses are presented in the section *Notes to Tables*. The analyses attempt to isolate the effects of particular variables *all else equal*. The "all else" differs between Models 1 and 2 as described in the notes. The following discussion focuses on the two columns headed by "%" which can be interpreted directly as "the percentage of young people in the corresponding category who participate in volunteer work at least monthly – all else equal".

- Young women are more likely to participate at least monthly in volunteer work than are young men. The difference is statistically significant ($p<0.05$) holding only the background variables (socioeconomic status, etc.) constant, but is smaller and not statistically significant ($p>0.05$) when all variables are held constant, which suggests that part of the reason young women are more likely to participate in volunteer work is associated with differences in schooling, self-concept or their labour market participation in 2001.
- Young people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to do community volunteer work at least monthly than are young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The major difference appears to be for the highest quintile.
- Young people whose parents were both born in Australia are more likely to do at least monthly volunteer work than are other young Australians. The differences are modest – 24.4% for the sons and daughters of the Australian born compared with 20.5% for those whose parents were both born in mainly non-English-speaking countries and 17.9% for those whose parents were both born in other English-speaking countries.

Table 10: Logistic regression of participation in volunteer work at least once per month during last year by selected personal characteristics: At age 21, 2001

		Model 1				Model 2		
		logit	*p*	*%*		*logit*	*p*	*%*
Sex *(0.00)*	*Male*	-----	-----	21.1	*(0.06)*	-----	-----	21.6
	Female	0.167	0.004	24.1		0.116	0.055	23.6
Socioeconomic *(0.00)*	*Top quintile*	0.580	0.000	29.4	*(0.00)*	0.448	0.000	27.8
status	*60% to 80%*	0.204	0.034	22.3		0.144	0.146	22.2
	Middle quintile	0.112	0.246	20.7		0.076	0.441	21.0
	20% to 40%	0.173	0.070	21.7		0.152	0.112	22.3
	Bottom quintile	-----	-----	18.9		-----	-----	19.8
Parents'	*Both non-Eng.-speaking*	-0.226	0.043	20.5	*(0.00)*	-0.206	0.068	20.7
country	*Both o'seas Eng-speaking*	-0.391	0.017	17.9		-0.415	0.012	17.5
of birth	Other	-0.255	0.001	20.0		-0.260	0.001	19.9
(0.00)	*Both born in Australia*	-----	-----	24.4		-----	-----	24.3
English *(0.82)*	*Always/almost always*	-----	-----	22.8	*(0.80)*	-----	-----	22.8
spoken	*Sometimes*	-0.078	0.596	21.4		-0.098	0.510	21.1
at home	*Rarely/never*	-0.122	0.656	20.7		-0.072	0.793	21.5
Indigenous *(0.12)*	*Yes*	0.284	0.117	27.8	*(0.04)*	0.371	0.044	29.6
person	*No*	-----	-----	22.5		-----	-----	22.5
Disability *(0.01)*	*Yes*	0.265	0.012	27.2	*(0.00)*	0.312	0.004	28.0
	No	-----	-----	22.3		-----	-----	22.2
Location *(0.00)*	*Urban*	-----	-----	20.7	*(0.00)*	-----	-----	20.6
	Partly rural	0.188	0.004	24.0		0.204	0.002	24.1
	Rural	0.406	0.000	28.1		0.423	0.000	28.3
School *(0.60)*	*Government*	-----	-----	22.7	*(0.45)*	-----	-----	22.9
sector	*Catholic*	-0.058	0.456	21.6		-0.090	0.247	21.3
	Independent	0.046	0.621	23.6		0.021	0.821	23.3
Literacy & *(0.01)*	*Top 20%*	0.337	0.001	24.6	*(0.03)*	0.287	0.006	24.0
numeracy	*60% to 80%*	0.265	0.008	23.3		0.241	0.018	23.2
	Middle quintile	0.214	0.028	22.4		0.204	0.040	22.6
	20% to 40%	0.290	0.002	23.8		0.284	0.004	24.0
	Lowest 20%	-----	-----	18.9		-----	-----	19.2
Self- *(0.01)*	*Most outgoing 20%*	0.437	0.000	26.5	*(0.00)*	0.448	0.000	26.7
concept	*60% to 80%*	0.248	0.009	23.0		0.250	0.008	23.0
	Middle quintile	0.360	0.000	25.0		0.362	0.000	25.0
	20% to 40%	0.059	0.543	19.8		0.057	0.556	19.7
	Least outgoing 20%	-----	-----	18.9		-----	-----	18.9

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

		Model 1				Model 2		
		logit	*p*	%		*logit*	*p*	%
Year *(0.31)*	*Year 12*	-----	-----	23.0	*(0.55)*	-----	-----	22.9
left	*Year 11*	-0.131	0.203	20.8		-0.099	0.340	21.2
school	*Year 10/9*	-0.118	0.311	21.0		-0.080	0.490	21.5
Current *(0.01)*	*Full-time work*	-----	-----	20.7	*(0.01)*	-----	-----	20.7
activity	*Part-time work*	0.224	0.001	24.6		0.224	0.001	24.6
in 2001	*No paid work*	0.141	0.087	23.1		0.141	0.087	23.1

See *Notes to Tables*

The extent to which English is spoken in the home has no effect on participation in volunteer work, which suggests that the somewhat lower participation of migrant groups has little to do with English language proficiency.

- Although the differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth are relatively large (27.8% and 22.5%, respectively for Model 1 and 29.6% and 22.5% for Model 2) they only border on statistical significance ($p<0.05$) – because of the small numbers of Indigenous people in the sample. Nevertheless, holding all other (measured) variables constant in Model 2, the slightly larger differences are statistically significant. Indigenous youth are more likely than other young people to do volunteer labour because of their Indigenous background.
- Similarly, young people with a disability were more likely to do volunteer work at least once a month, all else equal.
- Controlling for all other variables, young people from rural areas (28.3%) were more likely to do community volunteer work at least once a month than young people from partly rural areas (24.1%) or urban areas (20.6%).
- The type of school a young person attended at age 15 makes no difference to their likelihood of doing volunteer work.
- Higher levels of literacy and numeracy are associated with higher levels of participation in volunteer labour. The effect is modest and there is little difference among the middle 60% of the population.
- Regardless of family background, schooling, or labour force participation, young people with a more positive self-concept are more likely to regularly undertake volunteer work. The pattern across categories is not perfectly consistent, but certainly the difference between the most positive and least positive quintiles (26.5% and 18.9%, respectively for Model 1 and 26.7% and 18.9% for Model 2) is relatively large in the context of these data. These results point to the efficacy of self-concept in and of itself.
- The number of years of schooling completed does not have a statistically significant ($p<0.05$) effect on participation in volunteer work.

- Controlling for other characteristics, young people in part-time paid work are more likely to do volunteer work than are young people who do no paid work or young people in full-time work. The differences, however, are modest.

13. Conclusions

A relatively high percentage of young Australians participate in volunteer work:

- by age 20, more than half (52%) had participated in some kind of volunteer work;
- at age 21, nearly a half (46%) had participated in some kind of volunteer work during the previous year;
- just over a fifth – 20.2% at age 20 and 22.7% at age 21 – participate in volunteer work at least once a month (and nearly half of these at least once a week).

The most frequently reported types of volunteer work were fundraising for charities and other organisations and sports-related work (other than playing sport). Child care (of children other than those they lived with) and volunteer work associated with a church or youth group were also frequently reported. The frequency of participation in the various types of volunteer varied somewhat with the wording of the questions.

Participation in community volunteer work is widespread across all categories of young people. Overall levels of participation and participation for particular types of volunteer work, however, do vary among young people from different personal, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. The following list of the influences on volunteer work summarises, as far as is possible, the sometimes inconsistent results at different ages and for different analyses. In order of influence, the characteristics that were most strongly associated with doing community volunteer work at least once a month were:

1. ***Socioeconomic status.*** The higher the socioeconomic status of the family of origin of the young person, the greater the likelihood of their doing volunteer work at least monthly. The 20% of the cohort from the highest socioeconomic background, in particular, generally had a markedly higher level of participation in volunteer work. Even so, the difference in volunteer work between highest and lowest socioeconomic quintiles was only of the order of eight percentage points. Many young people from the lowest socioeconomic quintile also do volunteer work at least once a month.

   The reasons for the higher level of participation in volunteer work by young people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds are not clear. The analyses show that it is *not* because of any of the other characteristics examined in the study – it is not because of cultural background, the outcomes of schooling, or labour market participation. It may genuinely reflect higher levels of resources to which such young people have access – resources that create greater opportunities for volunteer work. The reasons may, however, be more subtle. For instance, the greater involvement in volunteer may reflect greater integration with community groups such as sporting organisations or churches.

2. ***Self-concept.*** Young people with a more positive self-concept are more likely to do volunteer work. Again, the differences are not large – around six or seven percentage points between the highest and lowest categories of self-concept. It is intuitively plausible that this should be the case,

that people who see themselves as more *outgoing, confident,* and so on should be more likely to be involved in community groups and, through them, in volunteer work.

The direction of causality between self-concept and volunteer work, however, is suggestive, but not absolutely conclusive. The self-concept of panel members was measured several years before their participation in volunteer work, so it is unlikely that their participation in volunteer work in 2000 or 2001 influenced their self-concept in 1997. Nevertheless, self-concept, when it was measured, may have been part of a broader matrix of social involvement, including greater social engagement in 1997 and may reflect, at least partly, prior participation in volunteer work.

3. ***Country of birth of the parent's of respondents.*** Young people whose parents had both been born in Australia were more likely to participate in volunteer work at least once a month than were other young people. One issue that may be involved in a lower level of participation by young people from a migrant background is social exclusion (or at levels of community participation) because of poorer English-language skills. The analyses addressed this possibility and found no evidence to support. Explicit measurements of the frequency with which English was spoken at home found little or no relationship with participation in volunteer work. Analyses in which literacy was held constant did not alter the findings. Perhaps most importantly, panel members whose parents were both born in a mainly English-speaking country (other than Australia) were only as likely (and often marginally less likely) as panel members whose parents had both been born in a mainly non-English speaking country. Instead the results are consistent with lower levels of participation in volunteer work because of the severing of social bonds that may accompany migration.

4. ***Sex.*** Young women were more likely to do volunteer work than were young men. The difference, however, although consistent overall, was only between three and five percentage points. The patterns varied considerably too across types of volunteer work. For instance, young men were more likely to participate in sports-related volunteer work while young women were more likely to undertake child care.

5. ***Current study and work.*** Young people in full-time work were less likely to do volunteer work at least once a month – possibly because of a lack of time, but also possibly because of a different set of priorities. Young people employed full-time and studying part-time (and therefore presumably even busier) were slightly more likely to do volunteer work — and people neither working nor studying also had reasonably low levels of volunteer work. People engaged in part-time work or full-time study or both appeared to participate in volunteer work more frequently.

6. ***Indigenous status.*** Indigenous youth are substantially more likely than non-Indigenous youth to do volunteer work. In the context of the effect of other characteristics, the differences of about six to eight percentage points between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth are relatively large. The reason Indigenous status is sixth in this list rather than first is only because Indigenous youth is a small

category – hence statistically it does not explain a great deal of the variation in participation in volunteer work.

7. ***Literacy and numeracy and Year 12 completion.*** Literacy and numeracy is fairly closely related to completion of Year 12 and together they are measures of learning outcomes. The results for these two characteristics are not consistent at age 20 and at age 21. At 20 years, at least monthly participation in volunteer work is at best only modestly related to the years of schooling completed – the maximum difference is only three or four percentage points. At age 21, there is no relationship at all.

   Literacy and numeracy shows the opposite pattern – it is only barely significant at age 20, but is substantially stronger at age 21, although much of the relationship with participation in volunteer work disappears once other variables are held constant.

   Together, these two variables provide some modest evidence that young people with higher cognitive school outcomes are more likely to participate in volunteer work at least monthly.

8. ***Location.*** There is some evidence that young people who lived in rural areas are more likely than other young people to do volunteer work at least monthly. At age 21, the difference in participation rate between urban and rural areas is about seven or eight percentage points. At age 20, however, there was no relationship at all between urban/rural background and volunteer work.

9. ***Disability.*** Similarly there is no relationship between disability status and frequency of participation in volunteer work at age 20, but the relationship is somewhat stronger – disabled people are more likely to participate frequently in volunteer work. Given the inconsistent evidence of a relationship, and the relatively small proportion of disabled persons, its overall influence on participation in volunteer work is given a low rating.

   The analysis has emphasised the differences in the level of volunteer work among categories of young people. It is important to note that these differences – even for the characteristics most strongly related to frequency of volunteer work – are relatively modest. The main lessons to be drawn from the analysis are the relatively high overall levels of volunteer work and the distribution of volunteer labour across *all* categories of young people.

References

Long, M. 1996, *Samples and Sampling for the Y95 LSAY Cohort*. Technical Paper No. 8. ACER, Melbourne.

Marks, G. & Long, M. 2000, *Weighting the 1995 Year 9 Cohort Sample for Differential Response Rates and Sample Attrition, LSAY Technical Report No 15*. ACER, Melbourne.

Supplementary Tables

Table A1: Ever done various kinds of community volunteer work by selected personal characteristics: Males at age 20, 2000

	Meals on Wheels %	*St John's Ambul.* %	*Life/ Youth-line* %	*Reading for the blind* %	*Church/ youth work* %	*Home help* %	*Coach. or other sport* %	*Child care* %	*Other* %	*Any* %
Males	5.1	3.9	1.6	1.0	13.2	5.4	25.8	6.4	11.6	46.9
Socioeconomic status	*0.78*	*0.03*	*0.26*	*0.09*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.11*	*0.96*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top quintile	5.2	5.3	2.0	1.3	18.6	8.5	28.2	6.5	15.3	55.0
60% to 80%	5.2	3.6	1.8	0.8	15.2	4.7	26.3	6.3	11.5	47.4
Middle quintile	5.6	4.7	1.9	1.3	10.6	5.5	26.9	5.8	13.1	48.4
20% to 40%	5.1	2.6	0.9	0.3	9.5	3.5	23.6	6.5	8.4	40.8
Bottom quintile	4.2	3.0	1.3	0.9	10.8	4.4	23.2	6.7	8.8	41.3
Country of birth of resp.	*0.15*	*0.23*	*0.00*	*0.86*	*0.26*	*0.76*	*0.00*	*0.05*	*0.96*	*0.00*
Australia	5.3	3.8	1.8	1.0	12.9	5.4	27.1	6.4	11.6	47.7
Other English-speaking	3.5	7.8	1.0	1.0	18.4	6.5	22.4	10.3	12.2	46.5
Non-English-speaking	3.3	3.2	0.2	0.7	14.2	4.7	11.5	4.0	11.2	37.9
Country of birth of parents	*0.00*	*0.14*	*0.01*	*0.33*	*0.40*	*0.35*	*0.00*	*0.02*	*0.37*	*0.00*
Both non-English-speaking	3.7	2.9	0.6	0.9	14.6	4.4	14.7	3.9	10.0	38.8
Both overseas Eng-speaking	1.4	3.7	0.4	0.2	10.5	3.8	22.7	7.2	11.3	40.0
Other	4.1	5.3	1.6	1.1	13.8	5.9	26.9	7.1	13.1	48.9
Both born in Australia	6.0	3.6	2.0	1.0	12.8	5.6	28.4	6.6	11.5	48.8
English spoken at home	*0.05*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.50*	*0.05*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.94*	*0.00*
Always or almost always	5.3	4.0	1.8	0.9	13.0	5.5	27.2	6.6	11.6	48.0
Sometimes	2.8	2.7	0.4	1.5	15.3	3.2	13.3	5.1	11.4	37.2
Rarely or never	3.2	0.8	0.0	0.0	11.1	9.6	7.8	0.0	10.5	34.5
Indigenous person	*0.24*	*0.34*	*0.15*	*0.37*	*0.85*	*0.15*	*0.09*	*0.24*	*0.04*	*0.00*
Yes	8.6	6.3	4.9	2.4	13.8	10.0	34.6	10.1	20.4	65.6
No	5.0	3.8	1.5	0.9	13.1	5.3	25.6	6.3	11.4	46.5
Disability	*0.09*	*0.71*	*0.84*	*0.76*	*0.14*	*0.01*	*0.03*	*0.23*	*0.01*	*0.00*
Yes	7.5	4.3	1.5	1.1	16.1	9.8	31.1	8.1	16.8	57.3
No	4.9	3.8	1.6	0.9	12.9	5.0	25.3	6.2	11.1	46.0
Location	*0.73*	*0.31*	*0.24*	*0.00*	*0.03*	*0.03*	*0.01*	*0.42*	*0.04*	*0.08*
Urban	4.9	4.3	1.9	1.1	14.5	5.8	23.7	5.9	11.7	47.1
Partly rural	5.2	3.5	1.4	0.4	11.6	5.3	28.0	6.7	10.6	45.8
Rural	6.0	2.7	0.9	3.0	12.8	2.7	27.8	7.8	16.9	53.4

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	Meals on Wheels %	*St John's Ambul.* %	*Life/ Youth-line* %	*Reading for the blind* %	*Church/ youth work* %	*Home help* %	*Coach. or other sport* %	*Child care* %	*Other* %	*Any* %
Type of school	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.02*	*0.81*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.71*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Government	3.5	3.5	1.2	0.9	9.8	3.9	24.3	6.3	10.3	42.5
Catholic	9.9	6.1	3.2	0.9	20.1	10.3	30.9	5.9	14.4	57.8
Independent	6.9	2.7	1.5	1.3	21.3	6.6	26.4	7.2	14.4	55.3
Literacy & numeracy	*0.43*	*0.05*	*0.15*	*0.45*	*0.00*	*0.06*	*0.03*	*0.06*	*0.06*	*0.00*
Top 20%	5.8	3.1	1.4	1.1	17.4	6.8	26.9	5.0	13.6	51.4
60% to 80%	4.5	4.0	2.2	0.6	15.1	6.3	28.9	8.4	13.4	51.0
Middle quintile	4.0	5.7	0.9	1.0	12.2	4.6	26.6	7.0	9.9	46.6
20% to 40%	5.7	4.1	1.3	1.5	11.7	3.8	24.6	5.4	10.7	45.0
Lowest 20%	5.2	2.7	2.2	0.6	9.2	5.4	22.2	6.3	10.2	40.7
Self-concept	*0.11*	*0.00*	*0.22*	*0.65*	*0.08*	*0.05*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.00*
Most positive 20%	4.7	7.2	2.2	0.7	14.2	7.4	31.2	9.2	14.2	53.5
60% to 80%	5.9	3.2	1.4	1.2	15.7	6.0	29.9	7.7	13.5	52.0
Middle quintile	5.5	3.9	2.2	0.8	11.1	4.1	26.8	4.8	10.6	45.0
20% to 40%	5.8	3.0	1.1	0.8	12.3	4.6	22.2	5.7	9.2	43.4
Least positive 20%	3.5	2.4	1.1	1.3	12.8	5.3	19.3	4.8	10.7	41.5
Year left school	*0.87*	*0.09*	*0.86*	*0.90*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.42*	*0.10*	*0.00*
Year 12	5.2	4.1	1.7	0.9	14.4	5.9	27.1	6.3	12.1	49.0
Year 11	4.7	3.9	1.4	1.1	10.9	4.3	24.3	7.3	9.3	42.2
Year 9 or 10	4.8	2.3	1.5	1.0	7.3	3.2	18.4	5.2	10.6	38.4
Current activity in 2000	*0.38*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.02*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.62*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Full-time work, no study	4.5	4.0	0.9	0.9	11.2	4.3	24.0	6.2	9.1	40.9
Full-time work & study	5.2	4.4	1.3	1.2	11.9	3.8	26.8	5.7	9.4	46.8
Full-time study, no work	5.3	1.6	0.4	0.6	13.7	5.6	22.7	6.5	13.7	45.5
Full-time study & pt work	6.0	4.0	2.2	0.7	17.0	6.8	31.2	6.7	15.8	55.8
Part-time work & pt study	2.6	7.2	6.0	0.0	16.7	8.4	25.0	7.6	11.4	46.6
Part-time work only	3.4	6.3	3.5	2.0	9.5	8.5	24.5	4.2	11.8	48.5
Part-time study only	2.7	3.1	0.0	0.0	12.5	1.5	20.7	6.9	21.4	49.4
No work, no study	6.0	2.7	3.1	1.6	13.1	8.1	20.4	8.8	9.3	41.7
Number of respondents	3 718	3 718	3 718	3 718	3 718	3 718	3 718	3 718	3 718	3 718

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A2: Ever done various kinds of community volunteer work by selected personal characteristics: Females at age 20, 2000

	Meals on Wheels %	*St John's Ambul.* %	*Life/ Youth-line* %	*Reading for the blind* %	*Church/ youth work* %	*Home help* %	*Coach. or other sport* %	*Child care* %	*Other* %	*Any* %
Females	7.4	5.4	1.9	1.0	17.0	9.1	21.2	23.5	14.9	57.7
Socioeconomic status	*0.28*	*0.80*	*0.37*	*0.23*	*0.00*	*0.11*	*0.00*	*0.03*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top quintile	6.7	5.5	1.3	0.6	24.8	10.4	26.1	19.9	19.7	65.1
60% to 80%	9.1	4.8	1.9	1.7	19.4	10.8	23.9	23.6	17.5	62.0
Middle quintile	6.4	6.1	1.5	0.8	16.6	8.7	20.3	22.5	14.4	55.7
20% to 40%	7.0	5.3	2.2	1.3	12.8	8.2	19.2	26.8	12.9	54.3
Bottom quintile	7.7	5.0	2.5	0.8	12.3	7.5	17.0	24.2	10.7	52.1
Country of birth of resp.	*0.00*	*0.16*	*0.90*	*0.19*	*0.00*	*0.29*	*0.00*	*0.07*	*0.05*	*0.52*
Australia	7.8	5.5	1.9	1.0	16.2	8.8	21.9	24.0	14.4	57.9
Other English-speaking	3.1	6.7	2.3	0.2	20.8	10.3	19.2	23.0	20.7	59.3
Non-English-speaking	3.7	3.4	2.1	1.8	25.1	11.7	13.6	18.5	18.7	54.6
Country of birth of parents	*0.00*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.52*	*0.19*	*0.49*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.83*	*0.00*
Both non-English-speaking	3.4	3.3	1.6	1.4	19.4	9.1	12.5	19.5	15.0	51.7
Both overseas Eng-speaking	7.1	6.9	3.4	1.6	14.1	11.2	18.8	24.3	17.4	58.1
Other	5.7	6.5	0.8	1.1	15.5	7.9	18.8	21.3	14.4	54.0
Both born in Australia	9.0	5.4	2.3	0.8	17.1	9.3	24.4	25.2	14.9	60.4
English spoken at home	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.60*	*0.43*	*0.09*	*0.00*	*0.04*	*0.24*	*0.02*
Always or almost always	7.7	5.6	2.0	1.0	16.8	8.7	21.9	24.0	15.1	58.3
Sometimes	3.6	3.2	0.6	1.1	18.2	13.0	13.9	18.9	12.3	50.1
Rarely or never	4.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	25.0	13.5	2.4	15.0	21.6	49.6
Indigenous person	*0.18*	*0.09*	*0.34*	*0.00*	*0.58*	*0.39*	*0.75*	*0.11*	*0.00*	*0.10*
Yes	11.6	10.6	0.9	0.0	19.1	11.8	22.5	31.0	7.3	65.5
No	7.3	5.2	1.9	1.0	17.0	9.0	21.2	23.3	15.1	57.5
Disability	*0.20*	*0.48*	*0.25*	*0.02*	*0.20*	*0.18*	*0.34*	*0.01*	*0.34*	*0.02*
Yes	9.5	4.5	1.2	3.3	19.9	11.5	19.0	30.0	17.0	64.3
No	7.2	5.4	2.0	0.8	16.8	8.9	21.3	23.0	14.8	57.2
Location	*0.00*	*0.15*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.18*	*0.75*	*0.27*	*0.00*	*0.93*	*0.00*
Urban	5.5	4.6	1.4	1.2	17.0	8.8	20.1	19.5	15.1	54.9
Partly rural	9.2	6.0	2.6	0.9	17.6	9.4	22.0	26.9	14.7	60.1
Rural	8.7	6.0	0.9	0.0	13.5	8.5	23.1	29.1	15.5	60.7

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	Meals on Wheels %	*St John's Ambul.* %	*Life/ Youth-line* %	*Reading for the blind* %	*Church/ youth work* %	*Home help* %	*Coach. or other sport* %	*Child care* %	*Other* %	*Any* %
Type of school	*0.07*	*0.68*	*0.03*	*0.60*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.03*	*0.10*	*0.12*	*0.00*
Government	6.7	5.1	1.5	0.9	15.4	7.5	20.1	22.8	14.1	55.1
Catholic	8.4	5.9	3.0	1.2	17.6	11.6	22.4	23.6	16.5	60.6
Independent	9.5	5.6	2.4	1.4	25.5	13.9	25.3	27.6	16.9	67.4
Literacy & numeracy	*0.15*	*0.91*	*0.62*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top 20%	7.3	5.0	1.5	0.4	21.5	6.1	26.1	22.6	18.6	61.2
60% to 80%	8.5	5.9	1.7	0.4	16.9	9.0	22.5	22.3	16.5	59.1
Middle quintile	8.2	5.5	2.3	1.0	17.2	8.1	22.2	23.1	14.8	60.6
20% to 40%	6.9	4.9	1.6	2.0	15.8	11.4	19.1	21.9	13.8	54.6
Lowest 20%	5.6	5.4	2.4	1.1	13.7	10.6	16.1	28.4	10.9	52.5
Self-concept	*0.10*	*0.27*	*0.46*	*0.21*	*0.01*	*0.27*	*0.00*	*0.08*	*0.57*	*0.20*
Most positive 20%	7.4	6.2	2.5	1.8	20.1	11.1	24.4	25.9	15.7	59.3
60% to 80%	6.5	4.5	2.4	1.1	16.8	8.0	25.9	24.2	14.1	59.6
Middle quintile	6.3	6.5	1.4	0.7	18.6	8.5	23.3	24.4	16.2	58.7
20% to 40%	7.0	4.6	1.7	0.8	15.3	9.1	17.1	22.7	13.6	55.5
Least positive 20%	9.7	4.8	1.6	0.6	14.2	8.6	15.2	20.4	15.0	55.2
Year left school	*0.39*	*0.00*	*0.24*	*0.33*	*0.00*	*0.17*	*0.00*	*0.42*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Year 12	7.6	5.6	1.9	1.0	17.9	9.1	23.1	23.7	15.7	59.6
Year 11	5.9	5.0	1.0	1.9	13.0	7.0	13.6	21.1	11.5	46.9
Year 9 or 10	6.6	2.2	2.6	0.6	11.2	11.2	6.5	25.2	9.7	47.3
Current activity in 2000	*0.34*	*0.79*	*0.00*	*0.14*	*0.00*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Full-time work, no study	6.9	5.2	1.6	0.9	12.6	6.5	22.4	23.1	10.9	52.0
Full-time work & study	8.6	6.4	2.4	0.4	16.2	7.9	20.8	25.3	11.5	56.1
Full-time study, no work	8.6	4.6	1.6	1.9	18.8	10.5	17.6	21.9	17.5	58.9
Full-time study & pt work	6.4	5.3	1.2	0.8	19.5	9.6	25.7	21.8	18.6	61.5
Part-time work & pt study	5.3	3.5	0.0	1.5	16.5	11.6	20.9	26.8	13.5	59.1
Part-time work only	6.5	6.2	5.5	1.6	19.6	11.6	16.9	28.7	16.8	61.5
Part-time study only	8.5	6.5	1.7	3.0	16.4	16.1	12.4	45.8	17.5	66.0
No work, no study	9.9	5.3	2.6	0.3	15.5	8.1	13.4	18.7	11.4	52.3
Number of respondents	4171	4171	4171	4171	4171	4171	4171	4171	4171	4171

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A3: Ever done "other" kinds of community volunteer work by selected personal characteristics: At age 20, 2000

	Fund-raising	*Local comm. activ.*	*CFA/ emerg. services*	*Environ-mental work*	*Animal care/ Seeing eye dog*	*Tutoring teaching*	*Army cadets*	*Other*	*Total "other"*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	6.5	1.8	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	2.2	13.3
Sex	*0.00*	*0.09*	*0.00*	*0.42*	*0.00*	*0.74*	*0.22*	*0.36*	*0.00*
Male	4.9	1.5	1.4	0.9	0.1	0.5	0.2	2.1	11.6
Female	7.9	2.0	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.1	2.4	14.9
Socioeconomic status	*0.00*	*0.04*	*0.23*	*0.11*	*0.04*	*0.28*	*0.85*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top quintile	8.5	2.0	0.5	1.1	0.5	0.7	0.2	3.7	17.4
60% to 80%	8.1	1.4	1.1	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.1	2.5	14.5
Middle quintile	6.4	2.7	1.1	1.0	0.4	0.3	0.1	1.8	13.8
20% to 40%	4.6	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.1	1.6	10.8
Bottom quintile	4.6	1.5	0.9	0.6	0.1	0.5	0.1	1.5	9.9
Country of birth of resp.	*0.01*	*0.91*	*0.00*	*0.76*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.10*	*0.54*	*0.18*
Australia	6.1	1.8	1.0	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	2.2	13.0
Other English-speaking	8.9	1.9	0.8	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.9	16.4
Non-English-speaking	9.4	2.0	0.0	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.7	15.0
Country of birth of parents	*0.88*	*0.68*	*0.00*	*0.21*	*0.61*	*0.37*	*0.06*	*0.07*	*0.78*
Both non-English-speaking	6.6	2.2	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.0	2.2	12.6
Both overseas Eng-speaking	7.2	1.6	0.6	1.0	1.2	0.3	0.3	2.0	14.2
Other	6.1	1.5	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.1	3.2	13.8
Both born in Australia	6.5	1.8	1.2	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.1	1.9	13.2
English spoken at home	*0.69*	*0.43*	*0.00*	*0.86*	*0.00*	*0.07*	*0.12*	*0.41*	*0.53*
Always or almost always	6.4	1.8	1.0	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	2.3	13.4
Sometimes	7.3	1.4	0.2	0.7	0.0	0.6	0.0	1.6	11.8
Rarely or never	5.5	3.7	0.0	0.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	3.4	14.0
Indigenous person	*0.69*	*0.34*	*0.27*	*0.73*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.49*	*0.00*	*0.99*
Yes	7.2	3.0	2.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	13.3
No	6.4	1.8	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	2.3	13.3
Disability	*0.36*	*0.40*	*0.17*	*0.82*	*0.09*	*0.03*	*0.61*	*0.00*	*0.01*
Yes	7.4	1.4	1.6	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.2	5.3	16.9
No	6.4	1.8	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	2.0	13.0
Location	*0.11*	*0.93*	*0.00*	*0.04*	*0.62*	*0.00*	*0.16*	*0.48*	*0.13*
Urban	7.0	1.8	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.0	2.3	13.4
Partly rural	6.0	1.7	1.1	1.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	2.0	12.8
Rural	5.3	1.8	3.9	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.2	2.7	16.1

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	Fund-raising	*Local comm. activ.*	*CFA/ emerg. services*	*Environ-mental work*	*Animal care/ Seeing eye dog*	*Tutoring teaching*	*Army cadets*	*Other*	*Total "other"*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Type of school	*0.00*	*0.76*	*0.05*	*0.98*	*1.00*	*0.30*	*0.02*	*0.08*	*0.00*
Government	5.4	1.8	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.2	2.0	12.2
Catholic	8.5	1.7	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.0	3.0	15.6
Independent	9.0	2.1	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.1	2.3	15.6
Literacy & numeracy	*0.00*	*0.19*	*0.42*	*0.28*	*0.04*	*0.25*	*0.58*	*0.01*	*0.00*
Top 20%	8.1	2.1	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.1	2.8	15.9
60% to 80%	7.1	2.1	0.9	0.9	0.3	0.7	0.1	2.9	15.0
Middle quintile	6.5	1.4	0.8	1.0	0.4	0.3	0.0	2.1	12.6
20% to 40%	5.2	2.1	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.2	2.0	12.4
Lowest 20%	5.3	1.3	1.2	0.9	0.2	0.3	0.0	1.3	10.6
Self-concept	*0.15*	*0.61*	*0.45*	*0.76*	*0.02*	*0.86*	*0.45*	*0.09*	*0.05*
Most positive 20%	6.7	1.9	1.4	0.9	1.0	0.5	0.2	2.4	15.0
60% to 80%	6.4	2.2	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.1	2.6	13.8
Middle quintile	7.0	1.6	0.8	0.9	0.4	0.6	0.2	2.0	13.4
20% to 40%	5.2	1.5	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.0	2.7	11.4
Least positive 20%	7.1	1.8	0.8	0.9	0.2	0.6	0.0	1.5	12.9
Year left school	*0.00*	*0.51*	*0.00*	*0.33*	*0.00*	*0.15*	*0.08*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Year 12	7.1	1.8	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.1	2.5	14.1
Year 11	4.6	2.0	1.3	0.8	0.0	0.2	0.2	1.1	10.2
Year 9 or 10	2.8	1.3	2.6	1.4	0.3	0.4	0.0	1.4	10.2
Current activity in 2000	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.08*	*0.10*	*0.00*	*0.61*	*0.01*	*0.00*
Full-time work, no study	5.2	0.6	1.1	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.1	1.9	10.0
Full-time work & study	4.8	1.4	1.6	0.7	0.4	0.0	0.1	1.3	10.1
Full-time study, no work	6.8	2.2	0.4	1.2	0.5	1.2	0.2	3.2	15.7
Full-time study & pt work	9.4	2.5	0.4	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.9	17.5
Part-time work & pt study	4.9	2.1	1.4	0.1	1.5	0.0	0.0	2.6	12.6
Part-time work only	6.8	2.2	1.5	1.5	0.5	0.0	0.4	2.0	14.9
Part-time study only	8.9	3.9	2.3	1.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.4	19.3
No work, no study	3.9	2.3	0.1	1.3	0.1	0.5	0.0	2.2	10.4
Number of respondents	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889	7 889

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A4: Frequency of community volunteer work by selected personal characteristics: Males at age 20, 2000

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*Volunteer work at least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Males %	53.1	12.8	3.0	8.4	5.3	6.9	10.6	100.0	3 718
Socioeconomic status %	*0.00*								
Top quintile	45.0	16.0	4.3	8.8	4.7	9.1	12.1	100.0	943
60% to 80%	52.6	12.0	3.6	8.7	6.2	6.9	10.0	100.0	835
Middle quintile	51.6	12.1	1.6	10.0	5.5	6.5	12.6	100.0	721
20% to 40%	59.2	11.9	3.4	6.7	5.0	5.5	8.3	100.0	645
Bottom quintile	58.7	11.2	1.6	7.5	5.1	6.2	9.6	100.0	574
Country of birth of resp. %	*0.12*								
Australia	52.3	13.3	2.8	8.5	5.4	7.0	10.8	100.0	3 341
Other English-speaking	53.5	11.4	3.0	7.5	6.7	5.1	12.8	100.0	123
Non-English-speaking	62.1	7.2	5.3	8.1	3.7	6.0	7.6	100.0	254
Country of birth of parents %	*0.00*								
Both non-English-speaking	61.2	10.6	3.9	7.2	3.8	6.3	7.0	100.0	473
Both overseas Eng-speaking	60.0	9.3	3.6	6.7	6.6	4.9	8.9	100.0	183
Other	51.1	12.9	2.9	10.0	5.1	6.4	11.7	100.0	802
Both born in Australia	51.2	13.5	2.7	8.3	5.7	7.4	11.2	100.0	2 260
English spoken at home %	*0.04*								
Always or almost always	52.0	13.3	2.9	8.5	5.4	7.0	10.9	100.0	3 434
Sometimes	62.8	7.2	3.7	8.2	4.1	7.5	6.5	100.0	218
Rarely or never	65.5	11.5	2.0	6.2	3.4	1.2	10.3	100.0	66
Indigenous person %	*0.02*								
Yes	34.4	22.2	2.5	10.4	1.0	13.1	16.4	100.0	77
No	53.5	12.6	3.0	8.4	5.4	6.8	10.5	100.0	3 641
Disability %	*0.01*								
Yes	42.7	12.8	6.7	10.0	3.9	10.5	13.5	100.0	301
No	54.0	12.8	2.6	8.3	5.4	6.6	10.3	100.0	3 417
Location %	*0.10*								
Urban	52.9	14.5	3.4	8.1	4.3	6.7	10.0	100.0	1883
Partly rural	54.2	10.9	2.6	8.5	6.2	6.6	11.0	100.0	1567
Rural	46.6	11.2	1.8	10.7	7.1	10.0	12.7	100.0	268

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*Volunteer work at least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Type of school %	*0.74*								
Government	57.5	11.0	2.5	7.2	4.7	6.5	10.7	100.0	2 417
Catholic	42.2	17.0	4.1	10.3	7.9	8.6	9.8	100.0	659
Independent	44.7	16.5	3.9	12.3	4.8	6.6	11.2	100.0	642
Literacy & numeracy %	*0.00*								
Top 20%	48.6	12.4	3.7	9.1	6.0	8.4	11.8	100.0	1 015
60% to 80%	49.0	12.3	3.2	9.9	5.6	8.9	11.0	100.0	790
Middle quintile	53.4	14.3	2.3	7.5	6.0	5.8	10.6	100.0	709
20% to 40%	55.0	13.3	3.5	6.8	4.3	4.6	12.6	100.0	645
Lowest 20%	59.3	11.7	2.1	8.6	4.6	6.7	7.1	100.0	559
Self-concept %	*0.00*								
Most positive 20%	46.5	12.0	2.3	11.1	6.7	9.7	11.8	100.0	657
60% to 80%	48.0	14.2	4.8	8.3	5.3	6.5	12.8	100.0	736
Middle quintile	55.0	12.7	2.2	6.9	6.2	5.7	11.3	100.0	795
20% to 40%	56.6	13.4	2.6	8.8	3.9	6.1	8.8	100.0	768
Least positive 20%	58.5	11.6	3.0	7.4	4.4	6.7	8.3	100.0	762
Year left school %	*0.16*								
Year 12	51.0	13.2	3.0	9.0	5.6	7.2	10.8	100.0	2 912
Year 11	57.8	11.0	3.4	6.9	6.1	5.2	9.6	100.0	487
Year 9 or 10	61.6	11.7	2.0	5.8	2.2	6.6	10.1	100.0	319
Current activity in 2000 %	*0.00*								
Full-time work, no study	59.1	12.9	2.4	7.3	4.5	5.3	8.5	100.0	784
Full-time work & study	53.2	14.2	2.6	7.0	4.2	8.1	10.7	100.0	960
Full-time study, no work	54.5	10.4	4.5	10.1	5.1	6.0	9.5	100.0	545
Full-time study & pt work	44.2	12.6	2.9	10.5	9.0	8.7	12.1	100.0	847
Part-time work & pt study	53.4	8.1	2.7	7.0	4.6	9.4	14.8	100.0	104
Part-time work only	51.5	13.2	2.9	12.5	2.9	4.1	13.0	100.0	183
Part-time study only	50.6	16.2	1.0	18.8	2.6	3.1	7.8	100.0	60
No work, no study	58.3	12.9	3.9	3.4	4.0	5.9	11.5	100.0	235

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A5: Frequency of community volunteer work by selected personal characteristics: Females at age 20, 2000

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*Volunteer work at least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Females %	42.3	15.2	3.7	9.6	6.4	10.4	12.3	100.0	4 171
Socioeconomic status %	*0.01*								
Top quintile	34.9	13.4	4.0	12.5	7.5	12.2	15.5	100.0	880
60% to 80%	38.0	17.5	3.8	10.1	8.7	9.3	12.6	100.0	918
Middle quintile	44.3	15.4	4.3	9.4	5.3	8.6	12.7	100.0	852
20% to 40%	45.7	14.4	3.6	7.7	5.7	10.9	12.0	100.0	787
Bottom quintile	47.9	15.1	2.9	8.6	5.1	11.3	9.1	100.0	734
Country of birth of resp. %	*0.75*								
Australia	42.1	15.2	3.7	9.6	6.6	10.6	12.2	100.0	3 755
Other English-speaking	40.7	14.3	2.3	10.8	7.4	11.7	12.8	100.0	144
Non-English-speaking	45.4	15.2	4.8	9.3	4.1	7.7	13.5	100.0	272
Country of birth of parents %	*0.01*								
Both non-English-speaking	48.3	15.5	3.3	8.2	3.2	11.1	10.4	100.0	549
Both overseas Eng-speaking	41.9	15.1	1.3	13.2	7.8	10.4	10.2	100.0	187
Other	46.0	15.2	4.3	9.1	6.5	9.3	9.7	100.0	919
Both born in Australia	39.6	15.2	3.8	9.9	7.2	10.6	13.8	100.0	2 516
English spoken at home %	*0.76*								
Always or almost always	41.7	15.2	3.8	9.7	6.7	10.4	12.5	100.0	3 911
Sometimes	49.9	15.0	1.9	8.7	3.2	11.8	9.5	100.0	223
Rarely or never	50.4	17.6	3.6	8.3	0.0	6.5	13.6	100.0	37
Indigenous person %	*0.61*								
Yes	34.5	19.5	3.5	7.2	10.4	10.9	14.0	100.0	83
No	42.5	15.1	3.7	9.7	6.3	10.4	12.3	100.0	4 088
Disability %	*0.37*								
Yes	35.7	18.4	3.0	12.2	10.0	6.3	14.3	100.0	303
No	42.8	15.0	3.8	9.4	6.2	10.7	12.1	100.0	3 868
Location %	*0.72*								
Urban	45.1	15.4	3.8	8.3	5.3	10.4	11.7	100.0	2 024
Partly rural	39.9	14.9	3.6	10.9	7.3	10.2	13.1	100.0	1 803
Rural	39.3	15.6	3.9	10.0	8.4	11.4	11.3	100.0	344

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*Volunteer work at least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Type of school %	*0.09*								
Government	44.9	14.6	3.3	8.3	5.7	10.1	12.9	100.0	2673
Catholic	39.4	17.3	4.7	11.5	6.8	11.0	9.3	100.0	883
Independent	32.6	14.8	4.2	13.4	9.9	11.0	14.1	100.0	615
Literacy & numeracy %	*0.38*								
Top 20%	38.8	15.6	2.5	11.7	8.4	8.9	14.1	100.0	936
60% to 80%	40.9	14.4	3.5	10.9	5.6	11.8	12.9	100.0	984
Middle quintile	39.4	15.8	4.4	11.4	7.7	11.0	10.4	100.0	948
20% to 40%	45.4	14.7	5.0	7.4	6.1	8.9	12.4	100.0	766
Lowest 20%	47.5	15.7	2.8	6.2	4.3	11.5	12.0	100.0	537
Self-concept %	*0.04*								
Most positive 20%	40.7	13.9	3.0	9.0	7.6	12.3	13.5	100.0	841
60% to 80%	40.4	16.0	2.7	9.0	7.3	11.7	12.9	100.0	811
Middle quintile	41.3	15.1	4.3	10.4	7.2	9.4	12.3	100.0	874
20% to 40%	44.5	15.4	4.7	10.0	4.6	9.1	11.7	100.0	793
Least positive 20%	44.8	15.7	3.8	9.6	5.5	9.6	11.1	100.0	852
Year left school %	*0.02*								
Year 12	40.4	15.0	3.8	10.5	6.9	10.8	12.7	100.0	3587
Year 11	53.1	14.4	3.0	5.6	5.5	9.0	9.3	100.0	369
Year 9 or 10	52.7	19.7	3.3	3.3	2.3	7.2	11.5	100.0	215
Current activity in 2000 %	*0.01*								
Full-time work, no study	48.0	15.3	5.0	6.9	5.5	10.1	9.2	100.0	832
Full-time work & study	43.9	16.0	3.3	11.2	5.5	10.9	9.2	100.0	558
Full-time study, no work	41.1	13.6	3.1	10.7	6.1	9.6	15.9	100.0	608
Full-time study & pt work	38.5	14.8	3.5	12.3	7.3	10.9	12.8	100.0	1364
Part-time work & pt study	40.9	16.2	4.8	6.6	7.6	5.8	18.2	100.0	164
Part-time work only	38.5	13.2	3.7	9.3	8.7	12.9	13.7	100.0	303
Part-time study only	34.0	18.7	3.7	1.7	8.1	15.9	17.9	100.0	70
No work, no study	47.7	19.3	2.5	4.9	5.1	8.3	12.2	100.0	272

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A6: Participated in volunteer work during the last year by selected personal characteristics: Males at age 21, 2001

	Fund-raising	*Environ-mental*	*Sports-related*	*Child care*	*Home help*	*Church/ youth group*	*Other*	*Any*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Males	17.5	7.8	18.1	6.1	3.4	6.8	5.4	41.6
Socioeconomic status	*0.01*	*0.07*	*0.11*	*0.95*	*0.26*	*0.00*	*0.03*	*0.00*
Top quintile	21.2	9.7	19.8	6.5	4.0	11.5	6.1	48.3
60% to 80%	18.9	6.3	18.9	5.9	3.6	7.5	7.6	44.7
Middle quintile	16.5	8.8	19.0	6.4	3.5	6.0	4.0	40.5
20% to 40%	15.9	7.6	17.4	5.6	3.4	3.4	4.4	38.3
Bottom quintile	14.3	6.3	14.7	6.0	2.1	4.9	4.4	34.4
Country of birth of resp.	*0.10*	*0.09*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.52*	*0.00*	*0.40*	*0.01*
Australia	17.9	7.9	19.0	6.5	3.4	6.1	5.5	42.3
Other English-speaking	11.2	10.2	16.0	4.5	4.9	12.5	5.6	42.1
Non-English-speaking	16.4	5.0	8.5	2.6	2.5	13.5	3.8	33.3
Country of birth of parents	*0.50*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.10*	*0.97*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.01*
Both non-English-speaking	17.4	3.0	12.1	4.3	3.1	10.2	2.9	37.0
Both overseas Eng-speaking	14.7	8.7	13.1	4.7	3.0	8.9	2.8	32.9
Other	16.3	7.9	17.0	7.4	3.4	7.0	5.2	41.7
Both born in Australia	18.2	8.9	20.4	6.3	3.4	5.7	6.3	43.4
English spoken at home	*0.41*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.62*	*0.25*	*0.06*	*0.42*	*0.15*
Always or almost always	17.6	8.3	18.7	6.2	3.3	6.5	5.5	42.1
Sometimes	18.5	2.3	10.0	4.9	4.4	8.8	3.9	36.4
Rarely or never	12.4	5.0	20.2	5.4	1.3	15.4	5.8	38.1
Indigenous person	*0.03*	*0.19*	*0.21*	*0.73*	*0.82*	*0.23*	*0.83*	*0.70*
Yes	9.9	4.4	24.5	7.1	2.8	11.2	4.8	43.8
No	17.7	7.8	17.9	6.1	3.4	6.7	5.4	41.6
Disability	*0.22*	*0.99*	*0.03*	*0.92*	*0.18*	*0.32*	*0.16*	*0.06*
Yes	20.5	7.7	23.5	6.3	5.1	8.5	3.8	47.2
No	17.3	7.8	17.6	6.1	3.2	6.7	5.5	41.1
Location	*0.05*	*0.00*	*0.09*	*0.34*	*0.42*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.01*
Urban	17.8	6.5	16.7	5.5	3.0	8.0	4.2	39.9
Partly rural	16.3	8.4	19.6	6.7	3.7	5.9	5.7	42.3
Rural	23.7	14.2	19.1	6.8	4.1	3.7	12.9	51.4

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	Fund-raising	*Environ-mental*	*Sports-related*	*Child care*	*Home help*	*Church/ youth group*	*Other*	*Any*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Type of school	*0.05*	*0.88*	*0.00*	*0.63*	*0.29*	*0.00*	*0.18*	*0.02*
Government	16.5	7.7	17.0	6.0	3.1	5.7	5.6	40.0
Catholic	20.5	7.7	23.4	6.9	4.5	6.5	4.0	45.8
Independent	19.2	8.4	16.0	5.5	3.0	13.9	6.0	44.4
Literacy & numeracy	*0.61*	*0.00*	*0.03*	*0.00*	*0.46*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top 20%	18.5	8.1	18.7	6.2	3.7	11.0	8.5	48.0
60% to 80%	19.2	10.2	21.5	9.7	4.3	7.0	3.1	45.8
Middle quintile	16.9	9.9	16.9	6.0	3.4	5.6	4.0	40.1
20% to 40%	16.3	7.2	18.5	4.9	2.6	5.2	5.9	38.0
Lowest 20%	16.8	4.0	14.9	4.1	2.9	5.2	5.0	36.1
Self-concept	*0.00*	*0.02*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.08*	*0.53*	*0.02*	*0.00*
Most positive 20%	23.7	10.0	21.8	8.3	3.9	6.9	7.0	48.2
60% to 80%	19.5	7.6	21.3	7.4	4.7	7.2	5.6	44.9
Middle quintile	16.3	9.2	17.1	4.4	2.5	6.2	5.8	40.9
20% to 40%	14.0	6.4	16.6	6.4	3.6	5.8	5.3	38.7
Least positive 20%	15.1	5.8	14.1	4.6	2.3	8.1	3.3	36.1
Year left school	*0.40*	*0.84*	*0.00*	*0.46*	*0.26*	*0.00*	*0.93*	*0.01*
Year 12	17.7	7.9	19.1	6.4	3.4	7.5	5.5	42.9
Year 11	18.5	7.4	17.1	5.5	3.9	3.2	5.0	38.9
Year 9 or 10	15.2	7.2	11.9	5.0	2.2	6.6	5.3	35.5
Current activity in 2001	*0.63*	*0.46*	*0.01*	*0.02*	*0.13*	*0.00*	*0.04*	*0.00*
Full-time work	17.9	7.2	17.2	5.9	2.7	4.4	4.4	39.1
Part-time work	17.7	8.4	21.1	7.5	4.0	9.7	6.0	45.5
No work	16.3	8.2	15.4	4.3	4.0	8.6	6.9	41.9
Number of respondents	3201	3201	3201	3201	3201	3201	3201	3201

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A7: Participated in volunteer work during the last year by selected personal characteristics: Females at age 21, 2001

	Fund-raising	*Environ-mental*	*Sports-related*	*Child care*	*Home help*	*Church/ youth group*	*Other*	*Any*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Females	25.3	8.1	13.5	16.2	6.0	9.7	6.3	50.4
Socioeconomic status	*0.11*	*0.31*	*0.00*	*0.96*	*1.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top quintile	29.4	10.1	15.2	16.8	5.7	14.8	9.8	57.4
60% to 80%	25.0	8.1	17.3	15.5	6.2	9.6	7.3	51.9
Middle quintile	23.4	8.1	10.9	16.4	6.0	8.5	6.0	49.0
20% to 40%	23.8	7.6	13.0	15.9	6.0	7.9	5.4	47.5
Bottom quintile	25.6	6.8	11.3	16.7	6.0	8.2	3.5	47.4
Country of birth of resp.	*0.74*	*0.70*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.66*	*0.83*
Australia	25.1	8.0	14.1	16.8	6.3	8.9	6.4	50.6
Other English-speaking	27.0	8.4	5.6	13.4	1.8	13.8	6.9	50.0
Non-English-speaking	27.1	9.6	8.4	9.9	2.8	17.9	5.1	48.6
Country of birth of parents	*0.04*	*0.37*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Both non-English-speaking	25.9	6.3	5.6	10.7	4.4	13.4	3.3	43.5
Both overseas Eng-speaking	21.9	8.2	8.5	13.3	1.6	7.0	7.0	44.2
Other	21.6	8.3	10.9	15.9	6.4	7.8	7.8	48.9
Both born in Australia	26.6	8.4	16.6	18.0	6.5	9.5	6.6	53.1
English spoken at home	*0.27*	*0.71*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.23*	*0.11*	*0.01*	*0.01*
Always or almost always	25.0	8.0	14.2	16.7	6.1	9.5	6.6	51.1
Sometimes	28.2	9.6	5.6	10.8	5.4	10.3	3.0	40.4
Rarely or never	35.3	8.1	0.0	11.5	1.8	24.8	2.7	54.1
Indigenous person	*0.54*	*0.65*	*0.23*	*0.05*	*0.99*	*0.14*	*0.24*	*0.06*
Yes	28.2	6.8	18.3	25.3	5.9	15.2	9.9	60.3
No	25.3	8.1	13.3	16.0	6.0	9.5	6.2	50.2
Disability	*0.04*	*0.04*	*0.17*	*0.84*	*0.06*	*0.22*	*0.49*	*0.47*
Yes	31.2	12.3	10.8	16.7	9.4	12.1	7.4	52.7
No	24.9	7.8	13.7	16.2	5.7	9.5	6.2	50.3
Location	*0.48*	*0.03*	*0.00*	*0.02*	*0.84*	*0.06*	*0.30*	*0.01*
Urban	24.5	6.8	11.5	14.7	5.7	10.9	6.3	47.6
Partly rural	26.0	9.0	15.9	17.0	6.2	8.6	5.9	53.1
Rural	27.2	10.3	11.3	21.6	6.0	8.5	8.8	53.0

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	Fund-raising	*Environ-mental*	*Sports-related*	*Child care*	*Home help*	*Church/ youth group*	*Other*	*Any*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Type of school	*0.34*	*0.06*	*0.24*	*0.03*	*0.72*	*0.01*	*0.26*	*0.00*
Government	24.6	7.6	13.2	15.9	5.8	9.3	5.9	48.6
Catholic	26.2	7.7	15.2	14.9	5.9	8.2	6.4	52.1
Independent	27.8	11.6	11.9	21.1	6.9	14.5	8.3	58.5
Literacy & numeracy	*0.01*	*0.11*	*0.01*	*0.26*	*0.63*	*0.04*	*0.02*	*0.00*
Top 20%	27.8	9.4	14.7	17.4	5.1	12.2	9.7	57.5
60% to 80%	27.0	9.2	14.4	18.2	5.7	10.3	5.6	52.5
Middle quintile	27.2	8.5	14.0	14.6	5.7	8.5	5.3	49.5
20% to 40%	23.8	6.7	14.4	16.3	7.1	10.0	5.5	49.2
Lowest 20%	20.4	6.5	9.4	14.8	6.1	7.4	5.8	43.5
Self-concept	*0.00*	*0.09*	*0.00*	*0.28*	*0.01*	*0.02*	*0.66*	*0.00*
Most positive 20%	30.1	10.1	17.2	17.1	6.2	12.1	7.3	55.0
60% to 80%	27.8	8.6	14.5	15.7	7.6	7.7	6.9	53.2
Middle quintile	25.7	8.0	14.4	18.1	6.8	11.3	5.8	52.9
20% to 40%	21.8	7.7	11.8	16.4	3.5	8.5	5.9	45.6
Least positive 20%	21.4	6.2	9.5	14.0	5.8	8.7	5.7	45.8
Year left school	*0.00*	*0.21*	*0.00*	*0.49*	*0.69*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Year 12	26.3	8.4	14.2	16.5	5.8	10.0	6.8	52.0
Year 11	24.6	6.3	9.1	15.2	7.0	5.7	2.3	44.1
Year 9 or 10	12.3	6.2	9.2	13.7	6.6	11.1	5.2	37.1
Current activity in 2001	*0.00*	*0.07*	*0.00*	*0.04*	*0.92*	*0.11*	*0.00*	*0.01*
Full-time work	29.0	7.0	12.7	14.4	6.0	8.3	3.1	48.1
Part-time work	25.7	8.0	15.8	17.9	6.1	10.2	8.3	53.5
No work	18.3	10.1	9.7	15.8	5.6	10.8	7.5	47.9
Number of respondents	3675	3675	3675	3675	3675	3675	3675	3675

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A8: Participated in "other" volunteer work during the last year by selected personal characteristics: At age 21, 2001

	Tutoring/ teaching	*CFA/ Emerg. services*	*Comm-based activities*	*Lifeline/ Youthline*	*Animal care*	*Meals on Wheels*	*Other*	*Any "Other"*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All persons	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	2.9	5.9
Sex	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.04*	*0.09*	*0.04*	*0.06*	*0.45*	*0.10*
Male	0.4	1.3	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.8	5.4
Female	1.0	0.3	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	3.1	6.3
Socioeconomic status	*0.50*	*0.07*	*0.04*	*0.05*	*0.35*	*0.07*	*0.05*	*0.00*
Top quintile	0.9	1.0	1.6	0.2	0.2	0.3	3.6	7.8
60% to 80%	0.9	1.3	1.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	3.8	7.5
Middle quintile	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.2	2.4	5.0
20% to 40%	0.8	0.4	0.9	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.5	5.0
Bottom quintile	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.0	2.3	3.9
Country of birth of resp.	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.32*	*0.06*	*0.66*	*0.10*	*0.20*	*0.28*
Australia	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.1	3.0	6.0
Other English-speaking	0.0	1.1	2.5	0.0	0.7	0.5	1.5	6.2
Non-English-speaking	0.6	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	2.6	4.4
Country of birth of parents	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.72*	*0.03*	*0.02*	*0.04*	*0.02*	*0.00*
Both non-English-speaking	0.5	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	3.1
Both overseas Eng-speaking	0.0	0.3	1.2	0.0	0.6	0.7	1.9	4.7
Other	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	3.1	6.5
Both born in Australia	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.2	3.2	6.4
English spoken at home	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.70*	*0.07*	*0.04*	*0.10*	*0.77*	*0.01*
Always or almost always	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	3.0	6.1
Sometimes	0.4	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	3.4
Rarely or never	0.0	0.2	0.9	0.0	0.6	0.0	3.0	4.8
Indigenous person	*0.25*	*0.67*	*0.73*	*0.41*	*0.33*	*0.52*	*0.68*	*0.39*
Yes	2.0	0.5	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.5	3.5	7.6
No	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	2.9	5.8
Disability	*0.48*	*0.36*	*0.83*	*0.31*	*0.64*	*0.03*	*0.48*	*0.73*
Yes	1.0	0.5	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.0	2.4	5.5
No	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	3.0	5.9
Location	*0.27*	*0.00*	*0.21*	*0.08*	*0.80*	*0.12*	*0.42*	*0.00*
Urban	0.8	0.4	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.1	2.7	5.2
Partly rural	0.6	0.6	1.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	3.0	5.8
Rural	1.3	4.2	0.8	0.0	0.3	0.0	4.0	10.6

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	Tutoring/ teaching	*CFA/ Emerg. services*	*Comm-based activities*	*Lifeline/ Youthline*	*Animal care*	*Meals on Wheels*	*Other*	*Any "Other"*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Type of school	*0.25*	*0.00*	*0.50*	*0.66*	*0.19*	*0.10*	*0.32*	*0.24*
Government	0.6	1.0	0.9	0.1	0.2	0.1	2.9	5.8
Catholic	1.0	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.0	0.3	2.6	5.3
Independent	1.0	0.3	1.4	0.1	0.3	0.3	3.8	7.1
Literacy & numeracy	*0.12*	*0.06*	*0.16*	*0.44*	*0.45*	*0.26*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Top 20%	1.2	0.5	1.5	0.4	0.3	0.1	5.1	9.1
60% to 80%	0.9	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.1	4.4
Middle quintile	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.0	2.8	4.7
20% to 40%	0.7	0.8	1.2	0.1	0.3	0.4	2.3	5.7
Lowest 20%	0.5	1.4	0.7	0.1	0.2	0.1	2.4	5.4
Self-concept	*0.53*	*0.00*	*0.65*	*0.83*	*0.98*	*0.26*	*0.09*	*0.05*
Most positive 20%	0.5	1.6	1.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	3.6	7.2
60% to 80%	0.5	0.6	1.1	0.3	0.2	0.3	3.3	6.2
Middle quintile	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.2	3.3	5.8
20% to 40%	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.0	2.3	5.6
Least positive 20%	0.7	0.3	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	2.2	4.5
Year left school	*0.18*	*0.02*	*0.13*	*0.02*	*0.44*	*0.08*	*0.00*	*0.01*
Year 12	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	3.2	6.2
Year 11	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.1	0.2	1.9	3.9
Year 9 or 10	0.7	2.4	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.0	1.6	5.3
Current activity in 2001	*0.00*	*0.04*	*0.00*	---	*0.05*	*0.09*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Full-time work	0.2	1.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	3.9
Part-time work	1.3	0.6	1.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	3.4	7.4
No work	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.2	0.4	0.3	4.0	7.2
Number of respondents	6876	6876	6876	6876	6876	6876	6876	6876

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A9: Frequency of participation in volunteer work during last year by selected personal characteristics: Males at age 21, 2001

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*At least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Males %	58.4	2.9	2.4	10.1	5.0	10.4	10.9	100.0	3 201
Socioeconomic status %	*0.01*								
Top quintile	51.7	2.3	3.2	11.1	6.4	12.5	12.6	100.0	833
60% to 80%	55.3	3.1	3.2	11.2	6.1	10.7	10.4	100.0	719
Middle quintile	59.5	4.0	1.6	9.4	4.8	9.3	11.4	100.0	624
20% to 40%	61.7	2.4	0.9	10.0	3.5	11.5	10.1	100.0	547
Bottom quintile	65.6	2.3	2.9	8.4	4.0	7.2	9.6	100.0	478
Country of birth of resp. %	*0.18*								
Australia	57.7	2.8	2.4	10.4	5.3	10.6	10.8	100.0	2 884
Other English-speaking	57.9	3.0	3.3	5.7	5.5	7.2	17.3	100.0	107
Non-English-speaking	66.7	4.0	1.6	8.2	2.1	8.7	8.7	100.0	210
Country of birth of parents %	*0.22*								
Both non-English-speaking	63.0	2.7	3.3	8.6	3.3	10.4	8.6	100.0	404
Both overseas Eng-speaking	67.1	2.4	4.0	4.7	3.6	6.9	11.2	100.0	152
Other	58.3	2.7	3.0	9.9	5.9	8.2	12.1	100.0	688
Both born in Australia	56.6	3.0	1.8	10.9	5.3	11.3	11.1	100.0	1957
English spoken at home %	*0.44*								
Always or almost always	57.9	3.0	2.3	10.1	5.3	10.2	11.2	100.0	2956
Sometimes	63.6	2.1	1.8	10.0	2.1	11.5	8.9	100.0	191
Rarely or never	61.9	0.0	8.2	10.0	4.1	12.3	3.6	100.0	54
Indigenous person %	*0.22*								
Yes	56.2	6.3	3.7	10.2	7.6	7.6	8.4	100.0	61
No	58.4	2.8	2.4	10.1	5.0	10.4	10.9	100.0	3140
Disability %	*0.02*								
Yes	52.8	4.4	0.7	10.2	4.5	10.9	16.6	100.0	248
No	58.9	2.7	2.5	10.1	5.1	10.3	10.4	100.0	2953
Location %	*0.01*								
Urban	60.1	3.0	2.5	9.8	4.7	9.6	10.3	100.0	1633
Partly rural	57.7	2.8	2.4	10.0	5.4	10.4	11.2	100.0	1333
Rural	48.6	1.6	1.2	13.0	5.7	16.3	13.6	100.0	235

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*At least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Type of school %	*0.25*								
Government	60.0	2.8	2.4	9.5	4.6	9.7	11.0	100.0	2 080
Catholic	54.2	3.6	2.3	12.7	6.1	11.8	9.4	100.0	557
Independent	55.6	2.2	2.2	9.8	5.7	11.7	12.7	100.0	564
Literacy & numeracy %	*0.03*								
Top 20%	52.0	3.3	2.5	11.1	5.8	12.7	12.6	100.0	921
60% to 80%	54.2	2.9	2.3	12.7	6.5	11.0	10.5	100.0	699
Middle quintile	59.9	2.9	2.4	9.9	5.3	9.7	9.9	100.0	599
20% to 40%	62.0	2.9	1.6	8.0	4.3	8.8	12.3	100.0	536
Lowest 20%	63.9	2.3	3.0	8.9	3.4	9.4	9.1	100.0	446
Self-concept %	*0.02*								
Most positive 20%	51.8	4.2	2.5	11.3	6.0	12.3	11.9	100.0	546
60% to 80%	55.1	3.5	3.1	11.0	3.8	9.8	13.6	100.0	630
Middle quintile	59.1	1.9	2.4	10.3	4.4	12.3	9.6	100.0	697
20% to 40%	61.3	2.7	3.0	9.5	5.9	8.8	8.9	100.0	667
Least positive 20%	63.9	2.3	1.0	8.4	5.2	8.5	10.7	100.0	661
Year left school %	*0.32*								
Year 12	57.1	3.2	1.9	10.6	5.3	10.9	10.9	100.0	2 559
Year 11	61.1	2.5	3.9	8.1	4.7	8.9	10.8	100.0	387
Year 9 or 10	64.5	0.5	3.7	8.5	3.7	7.9	11.1	100.0	255
Current activity in 2001 %	*0.12*								
Full-time work	60.9	2.1	2.1	10.0	5.0	9.5	10.4	100.0	1 524
Part-time work	54.5	2.9	2.5	11.5	5.4	11.6	11.6	100.0	1 081
No paid work	58.1	4.7	3.0	7.9	4.6	10.6	11.1	100.0	596

See *Notes to Tables*

Table A10: Frequency of participation in volunteer work during last year by selected personal characteristics: Females at age 21, 2001

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*At least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Females %	49.6	3.4	2.5	12.5	8.0	11.6	12.4	100.0	3 675
Socioeconomic status %	*0.00*								
Top quintile	42.6	2.0	2.6	12.7	9.2	14.3	16.7	100.0	789
60% to 80%	48.1	3.1	3.0	14.2	8.8	10.5	12.3	100.0	814
Middle quintile	51.0	4.4	2.5	13.2	7.6	9.7	11.6	100.0	749
20% to 40%	52.5	3.3	2.8	11.0	7.2	11.2	12.0	100.0	689
Bottom quintile	52.6	4.1	1.7	11.7	7.6	12.5	9.8	100.0	634
Country of birth of resp. %	*0.19*								
Australia	49.4	3.5	2.2	12.5	8.0	12.0	12.4	100.0	3 324
Other English-speaking	50.0	2.7	6.4	15.8	5.4	4.9	14.8	100.0	120
Non-English-speaking	51.4	2.5	4.4	11.8	9.6	8.5	11.9	100.0	231
Country of birth of parents %	*0.00*								
Both non-English-speaking	56.5	3.2	3.0	11.6	7.7	8.5	9.5	100.0	472
Both overseas Eng-speaking	55.8	2.8	6.2	12.4	5.9	6.6	10.4	100.0	148
Other	51.1	5.1	2.9	11.9	8.5	9.9	10.6	100.0	812
Both born in Australia	46.9	2.9	2.0	13.0	8.1	13.2	13.8	100.0	2 243
English spoken at home %	*0.00*								
Always or almost always	48.9	3.4	2.5	12.6	7.9	11.9	12.7	100.0	3 452
Sometimes	59.6	3.2	2.4	10.8	9.2	7.5	7.4	100.0	191
Rarely or never	45.9	1.8	0.0	16.5	13.5	3.3	19.0	100.0	32
Indigenous person %	*0.00*								
Yes	39.7	5.0	1.9	7.0	7.7	17.2	21.6	100.0	71
No	49.8	3.4	2.5	12.7	8.1	11.4	12.2	100.0	3 604
Disability %	*0.26*								
Yes	47.3	3.0	1.3	12.9	8.5	14.3	12.7	100.0	260
No	49.7	3.4	2.6	12.5	8.0	11.4	12.4	100.0	3 415
Location %	*0.03*								
Urban	52.4	3.4	2.5	11.8	8.0	10.1	11.8	100.0	1 796
Partly rural	46.9	3.7	2.6	13.4	7.7	12.6	13.1	100.0	1 578
Rural	47.0	1.6	2.3	12.4	10.4	14.4	12.0	100.0	301

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

	No volunt. work	*Ceased volunt. work*	*Less than yearly*	*At least once*				*Total %*	*n*
				per year	*every three months*	*per month*	*per week*		
Type of school %	*0.15*								
Government	51.4	3.1	2.1	11.6	7.7	11.7	12.4	100.0	2 340
Catholic	47.9	4.2	3.6	13.8	8.5	11.2	10.7	100.0	785
Independent	41.5	3.7	2.6	15.8	9.3	11.5	15.6	100.0	550
Literacy & numeracy %	*0.00*								
Top 20%	42.5	2.0	2.5	14.4	12.5	13.0	13.2	100.0	866
60% to 80%	47.5	3.9	2.7	13.7	6.5	12.6	13.0	100.0	882
Middle quintile	50.5	2.0	3.1	13.2	6.5	12.0	12.7	100.0	838
20% to 40%	50.8	4.3	1.8	10.1	8.2	11.6	13.3	100.0	654
Lowest 20%	56.5	5.0	2.4	11.3	7.1	8.3	9.3	100.0	435
Self-concept %	*0.00*								
Most positive 20%	45.0	3.4	2.7	11.4	9.7	13.2	14.6	100.0	736
60% to 80%	46.8	4.3	3.9	13.0	9.0	11.6	11.3	100.0	709
Middle quintile	47.1	3.6	1.9	13.0	6.1	13.6	14.6	100.0	778
20% to 40%	54.4	1.8	1.9	12.6	7.2	11.0	11.1	100.0	696
Least positive 20%	54.2	3.9	2.2	12.7	8.2	8.6	10.2	100.0	756
Year left school %	*0.27*								
Year 12	48.0	3.2	2.8	13.1	8.5	11.7	12.6	100.0	3 206
Year 11	55.9	6.5	0.2	9.7	7.3	11.0	9.4	100.0	303
Year 9 or 10	62.9	1.7	1.9	8.3	1.9	9.8	13.5	100.0	166
Current activity in 2001 %	*0.00*								
Full-time work	51.9	3.8	2.4	12.3	8.5	11.7	9.4	100.0	1 200
Part-time work	46.5	3.6	2.5	12.7	8.0	12.9	13.9	100.0	1 728
No paid work	52.1	2.4	2.8	12.4	7.4	8.6	14.3	100.0	747

See *Notes to Tables*

Notes to Tables

1. All tables (except Tables 1 and 4) are based on data from the 1995 panel of the *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth*. Further information on the survey can be obtained at http://www.acer.edu.au/ through the research and then vocational education tabs.
2. Throughout the tables based on LSAY data, missing values in any of the background variables were imputed using a variant of hot-decking.
3. Throughout the tables based on LSAY data, percentages are weighted but any values for the number of cases on which an estimate is based are unweighted. It is the unweighted values that better convey a sense of the evidence on which an estimate is based. Inconsistencies may result if weighted estimates are combined using unweighted numbers.
4. *Statistical significance* corresponds to probability values (presented in italics or parentheses) of 0.05 or less.
5. In Tables 3, 8, A6, A7 and A8 a number of separately identified categories listed under "other community volunteer work" were recoded to the main prompts in the question because they appeared identical to the main prompts.
6. The percentages responding to the various kinds of volunteer work listed in Tables 2 and 3 (and corresponding Tables 5, 8, A1, A2, A6 and A7) may sum to more than the total because respondents can participate in more than one type of volunteer work.
7. Items presented in square brackets in Tables 2 and 3 were not included in the interview questions but are derived directly from responses to those questions.
8. In Tables 2 and 3, *na* indicates *not applicable*. Since individual responses under the heading *Anything else I haven't mentioned* were unprompted, it was not possible to respond *No*.
9. In Table 5 (and corresponding Tables A1, A2 and A3) and Table 8 (and corresponding Tables A6, A7 and A8) the values in italics indicate statistical significance. They indicate the probability of no relationship between the variable and participation in the type of volunteer work. The values are calculated using weighted least squares.
10. In Tables 6 (and corresponding Tables A4 and A5) and Table 9 (and corresponding Tables A9 and A10) the value in italics next to each variable name indicate statistical significance. They indicate the probability of no relationship between the variable and participation in volunteer work at least once a month. They are calculated using weighted least squares.
11. Tables 7 and 10 report results from logistic regression. Logistic regression is an appropriate multivariate statistical technique for analysing dichotomous dependent variables. In this case the dichotomous dependent variable consists of the two categories *participated in volunteer work at least once a month* and *participated in volunteer work less than once a month*.

    Independent variables are fitted to the model using a set of dummy variables – one for each category, except that one category must always be omitted as the *base* or *reference* category. The omitted category for each variable is indicated by four dashes.

The variable *Respondent's country of birth*, which was included in other tables, has been excluded from these multivariate analyses because it is too closely related to *Parent's country of birth*.

The values in italics in parentheses indicate the statistical significance of the entire variable in the model. It is derived from a log-likelihood chi-square which in turn is the difference between the log-likelihood chi-squares of the model containing the variable and not containing the variable. The *p* values also indicate statistical significance of each category of a variable compared to the omitted category. They are Wald chi-squares. The discussion in the text uses the log-likelihood chi-square for the entire variable.

The values in the columns labelled % are the linear estimates derived from the non-linear logistic regression by iteratively estimating the percentages implicit in the corresponding logits and constraining these percentages to be the weighted sum of the overall mean. These values are more easily understood than logits (or the corresponding odds ratios) and hence the discussion focuses on these columns.

Model 2 is a single model that simultaneously fits all the variables listed in Tables 7 and 10. The values listed under Model 1 are derived from a series of separate models that progressively add variables based on the order provided in Table 4. The values for *Sex* to *Location* are derived from a single model that fits these variables (listed under *Background* in Table 4). The values for School sector and Literacy & numeracy are derived from models containing respectively *School sector* plus the background variables and *Literacy & numeracy* plus the background variables. The values for *Self-concept* come from a model containing all the variables listed above it in the table. Similarly the values for *Year left school* and *Current activity* are derived from models containing that variable and all the variables above it in the table.

Results for Models 1 and 2 are presented to provide more information on the structure of the relationships that may affect any relationship between a particular variable and the dependent variable.

Appendix 2: Volunteering and TAFE students

In 2000, CEET undertook a pilot survey of students in two Victorian TAFE institutes, one in Melbourne and one in a regional area. The aims of the survey were:

- to investigate the contribution of TAFE to the training of volunteers;
- to investigate any differences in volunteering between students in the two institutes;
- to investigate differences in volunteering between students enrolled in different fields of study; and
- to investigate other factors that might be related to volunteering, such as gender, mode of attendance, or English as a first language.

Over 800 responses to the survey were analysed, of 1700 questionnaires distributed, giving a response rate of 53%. Analysis of the survey data identified three groups of students: those currently engaged in voluntary activity (*volunteers*), those not currently engaged but who would like to become volunteers (*would-be volunteers*) and students who did not want to work as volunteers (*non-volunteers*). Some differences were noted in the characteristics of students within each group:

- the proportion of volunteers and would-be volunteers was much higher at the regional institute than at the metropolitan institute;
- females were more likely to be volunteers or would-be volunteers than males;
- full-time students were more likely to be volunteers and would-be volunteers than part-time students;
- the overwhelming majority of students who were *volunteers* had English as a first language (89% in the metropolitan instutute and 93% in the regional institute). However, the proportion was much lower for *would-be volunteers* in the metropolitan institute (61%); and
- there were some differences in field of study. At the metropolitan institute the proportion of volunteers was higher in Social and Community Services and Health (16%), VCE (11%) and Art and Design (13%) than in Hospitality and Tourism (5%), Engineering (8%) and Business (9%). But the proportion of would-be volunteers was particularly high in Business (39%) and Arts and Design (25%). In the regional institute, 46% of students in Art and Design, 36% in Social and Community Services and Health, 27% in Business and 26% in Natural Resource Management were volunteers, compared with only 3% in Engineering (Selby Smith and Hopkins 2001).

The data collected in this survey has now been re-examined. Additional responses not included in the original survey were included in the analysis to bring the total number of responses analysed to 1219, of which 652 were from females (53.4%). 172 (14.1%) students indicated that they currently do some volunteering but another 250 (20.5%) indicated that they would "like to", indicating that about 35% of all respondents have positive attitudes to voluntary work.

The re-analysis has focused on two things:

- differences in the responses of students according to age-group; and
- the responses to four open-ended questions about participation in voluntary activity and the links between volunteering and TAFE.

Age-groups

The survey data identifies students aged under 20 as a separate group, allowing the responses of the youngest group of respondents to be examined separately. However the survey also groups students aged 20–39 into the one category, which is unfortunate given that this project also is concerned with young people aged 20–24 years. Nevertheless, some interesting patterns by age group are discernible.

Table 1 indicates *volunteers, would-be volunteers* and *not volunteers* by age group. It shows clearly that volunteering increases with age. While 10% of respondents aged under 20 are volunteers, the proportion rises to 12% for those aged 20–39, 27% of those aged 40–59 and 42% of those aged 60 and over (though care should be taken because there are very few respondents in this last category).

Table 1: Voluntary status all age groups

Age	*Would be volunteers*	*Not volunteers*	*Volunteers*	*No response*	*Total*
under 20	70 (16.8%)	245 (58.8%)	43 (10.3%)	58	416
20–39	133 (23.0%)	266 (46.0%)	69 (11.9%)	110	578
40–59	42 (20.6%)	56 (27.5%)	55 (27.0%)	50	203
60+	1 (8.3%)	4 (33.3%)	5 (41.6%)	2	12
no response	4	4		2	10
Total	250	575	172	222	1219

In Table 2 the results for volunteers and would-be volunteers are added together to indicate the proportion of respondents with a positive attitude toward volunteering. Results for the 60+ group are omitted because of the low number of respondents in this category. Results indicate that positive attitudes to volunteering also increase with age. However, the proportion of young respondents with a positive attitude is considerable. A little more than a quarter of those aged under 20 have positive attitudes, rising to more than a third of those in the 20–39 year age group.

Table 2: Respondents with positive attitudes to volunteering by age group

Age	*Would be volunteers*	*Volunteers*	*Total positive*
under 20	70 (16.8%)	43 (10.3%)	27.1%
20–39	133 (23.0%)	69 (11.9%)	34.9%
40–59	42 (20.6%)	55 (27.0%)	47.6%

Table 3 shows results by gender. In all age-groups a larger proportion of women than men indicate positive attitudes to volunteering. The difference is substantial between men and women aged under 20, with about 17% more women than men indicating a positive attitude, but is even greater in the 20–39 year age category where the proportion of women with positive attitudes is 20% more than the proportion of men. However, the difference is very much smaller between men and women aged 40–59, the proportion of women indicating positive attitudes being less than 6% more than the proportion of men.

Given these results it might be expected that the proportion of women currently engaged in volunteering would be higher than the proportion of men. While this is the case for respondents aged 20–39 and 40–59 it is not true for the group aged under 20, where the proportion of males who are volunteers (10.7%) is very similar to the proportion of females (9.9%).

There could be a number of reasons for this difference between the youngest and older age groups. For instance, a larger proportion of males in the older age groups could be engaged in full-time work and have little time to devote to volunteering. A larger proportion of younger than older males, or of females, could be engaged in sports-related voluntary activities. A further possibility is that young women do not necessarily consider the activities they are engaged in as "volunteering". Further investigation of this issue would be necessary to explain the pattern observed.

While the difference between the proportions of men and women indicating that they are volunteers is quite small in all age groups, the difference between those indicating that they are "would be" volunteers is substantial for the two youngest age groups. While more than a quarter of females aged under 20 are "would be volunteers", fewer than 10% of men indicate a similar attitude. The difference is only very slightly smaller among respondents aged 20–39 but almost disappears among those aged 40–59. This difference is not easily accounted for and also requires further investigation.

Table 3: Voluntary status by age group and gender

Age	*Gender*	*Would be volunteers*	*Volunteers*	*Not volunteers*	*Total positive*	*Number**
under 20	female	26.1%	9.9%	49.7%	36.0%	191
	male	8.9%	10.7%	66.5%	19.6%	224
20–39	female	30.8%	13.7%	36.5%	44.5%	298
	male	14.6%	10.0%	56.2%	24.6%	279
40–59	female	21.0%	28.0%	25.4%	49.0%	157
	male	19.5%	23.9%	34.7%	43.4%	46

* Percentages do not add across rows because "no response" results have been omitted.

The ability to engage in volunteering could be affected by participation in the paid workforce. Table 4 indicates that the proportion of respondents engaged in paid work declines with age, from 71% of those aged under 20 to 59% of those aged 40–59. As volunteering tends to rise with age, increased participation could thus reflect more free time among older age groups.

However, the table also shows that almost a third of those aged 40–59 are seeking paid work. Thus another possibility is that higher levels of volunteering by respondents in this age group reflect a view that voluntary work will lead to paid work.

[4]Louisa Cooke assisted with data input and preliminary analysis.

Table 4: Paid work status by age group

Age	*Total in paid work*	*Not in paid work and do not want*	*Not in work, want*	*No response*	*Total*
under 20	297 (71.3%)	5 (1.2%)	100 (24.0%)	14	416
20–39	399 (69.0%)	22 (3.8%)	129 (22.3%)	28	578
40–59	119 (58.6%)	12 (5.9%)	65 (32.0%)	7	203

Responses to open-ended questions[4]

Survey participants were asked four open-ended questions about voluntary work:

1. What sorts of voluntary work do you do? Please name the organisation you work with and indicate what sort of tasks you do.
2. What sorts of voluntary work would you like to do?
3. If you see TAFE as helping you do voluntary work, please tell us a bit about the way you feel it is helping or will help?
4. If you are working as a volunteer while not in paid employment, but you WANT to get paid employment, do you think that your voluntary work, together with your paid study, will help?

In total, 192 students offered more than single word responses to at least one of these questions.

A large variety of organisations were named in response to question 1 but roles within those organisations seemed fairly similar. Fundraising was a common task for well-known charities, teaching in schools and community groups was also common but management and administration were indicated across all types of organisations.

Among young people aged under 20 "community organisations" were most frequently mentioned, followed by the Fire Brigade, Red Cross, the SES, sports clubs and the Salvation Army. Others mentioned by more than one respondent were the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Church/temple or an Elderly club/centre. There were gender differences with males more likely to indicate the Fire Brigade, the SES and sports clubs.

Responses to question 2 were affected by different interpretations of the question. Some respondents listed all the types of volunteer work of interest to them while others restricted their answer to what they felt able to do at the time of the survey. In line with the importance it is given in the literature on volunteering, altruism, the desire to help others, appeared to be a motivating factor for many respondents. For instance:

> *Enriching, self empowering activities that benefit and help impart skills and confidence to people who've had little opportunities (male 20–39 in full-time paid work).*
>
> *Working in areas to help people more unfortunate than I am (female 20–39, not in paid work and not seeking it).*
>
> *Doesn't really matter (what kind of voluntary work) if the cause is genuine (female 40–59 in full-time paid work).*

Some respondents listed specific charitable organisations that they would like to volunteer for, such as World Vision. Others indicated particular interests:

> *Working with people or people-*

oriented organisations, working with environmental groups or politically active groups whose aims are humanitarian (female, 20–39 in part-time work).

I would like some [voluntary work] in the Royal Botanical Gardens, in any horticulture area (male under 20 seeking paid work).

Working in third-world, countries for aid or development organisations, working for charity or community groups in Australia (male 20–39 in part-time paid work).

I would like to help the elderly people at home or nursing home (female, age and work status not given).

Work involving helping people with disabilities, elderly and supporting students (female 20–39 in part-time work).

However the majority responding to this question (mainly females in the two youngest age groups) focused on voluntary work that would increase their chances of obtaining paid employment:

Help people as a voluntary basis in clothing design to learn and get experience (female 40–59 not in paid work).

If only for a short period of time I wouldn't mind doing some charity work. Or for a longer period of time I would work in the field of design for experience or career reasons (female under 20 in part-time work).

*Work in natural resource management, that is going to **lead** or help get **PAID** work (male 20–39 seeking paid work).*

Something connected to my industry as it will provide me training (female under 20 seeking paid work).

Promo work for radio, TV, anything to get my foot in the door of entertainment industry as I want to get into acting (female 20–39 in part-time paid work).

The most common reason given for answering "none" to this question was that the respondents were too busy, but there was also a small group indicating that they were already actively engaged in volunteer work and could do "no more". These were usually women in the older age groups:

I am too busy to do any more (female 40–59, not in paid work and not seeking it).

There was also a small number, mainly males aged 20–39, who indicated negative attitudes toward volunteering that primarily reflected their preference for paid work:

Nothing, why bother if you don't get paid (male, 20–39 in full-time paid work).

None!! I wouldn't want to ever do voluntary work!! (male, 20–39 in full-time paid work).

I don't want voluntary work but if it has possibilities to lead to full time work, okay (males, 20–39 seeking full-time work).

Many respondents found question 3 confusing. However, among clearer responses, work skills and general skills were mentioned frequently, with students looking to develop skills and attitudes that would make them useful in paid or voluntary work:

TAFE enables me to develop my skills further and enables me to broaden my scope for jobs in my chosen career (female 20–39 in paid work).

It's giving me skills to help on the job, it's extended the learning environment (female under 20 in part-time paid work).

It will help with voluntary work by helping us to be organised and get along with others better and acceptance (female under 20 in part-time paid work).

Many respondents saw TAFE as helping them in both paid and unpaid positions. Some mentioned that they were assisted to do voluntary work by their TAFE tutors:

> *In my block at TAFE my teacher puts up work related jobs, both volunteer and paid. It's really helpful (female 20–39 seeking paid work).*

A common theme in responses to question 4 was that volunteering enabled valuable experience to be gained:

> *... my work with ... tourist railway has taught me a huge amount of things and increased my experiences to someone who is a lot older (male under 20 full-time student).*
>
> *Training is essential to get the right job. Hands-on experience that you receive doing voluntary work would increase your chance of getting that right job (male 20–39 seeking paid work).*
>
> *I have gained experience dealing with people and handling difficult situations (female 20–39 seeking paid work).*

Another common theme concerned the potential for voluntary work to lead to paid work. Respondents indicated that this could occur indirectly, for instance by leading to a reference:

> *Voluntary work will help because I can put it on my resume and get a reference (male 20–39 seeking paid work).*
>
> *Voluntary work shows initiative and the will to work. Voluntary work will look good on resume (female under 20 in part-time paid work).*

Or by helping to build networks of contacts in the industry:

> *I meet people who work in the industry and make contacts into the industry (male under 20 in part-time paid work).*
>
> *It's a way of getting yourself known and your abilities shown to those who may be in a position to employ you (female 20–39 in part-time paid work).*

It could also occur directly. For instance, demonstrating appropriate skills and aptitudes in voluntary work might lead to a paid position with the same organisation:

> *By showing enthusiasm, punctuality etc. as well as course commendations whilst volunteering – may lead to paid work (female 20–39 seeking paid work).*
>
> *It gives the student an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and may thus lead to paid employment (male 20–39 in part-time paid work).*

However, not everyone agreed that voluntary work would be helpful in competing for paid work. One respondent was concerned that employers might substitute volunteers for paid staff:

> *It may help by gaining exposure to industry and having your name circulated around appropriate places. It may not help if it stops employers giving people jobs if they get volunteers during busy periods (male 20–39 seeking paid work).*

Another did not believe that employers took notice of volunteer work:

> *The voluntary work does not count in any way. If you go for an employment, the employer will see your skills but not the voluntary work you have done (male 20–39, full-time student, not seeking paid work).*

This last respondent was one of two who reported previous bad experiences of volunteering. He explained:

> *I would not get involved in any type of voluntary work because once I involved myself in voluntary work and the blame for other's mistake came on me.*

The other respondent, an older woman, reported that she felt exploited:

> *I was a volunteer in early intervention work. This contributed to my interest in how children learn and develop. After 2.5 years as a volunteer I felt exploited (female, 40–59 in part-time paid work).*

More positively, a few respondents detailed personal experiences where voluntary work had already led them to paid employment:

> *By doing volunteer work (as a requirement of this course) at ... I have been put on their books for relieving work with a view to permanent work (female 40–59 seeking paid work).*
>
> *The skills I've learnt in voluntary work have helped get employment at Coles (female under 20 in part-time paid work).*

Another respondent had not been successful in a job application but commented that the interview panel viewed voluntary work favourably:

> *I went for a job this year at ... and although I was unsuccessful the interview panel commented on the fact that I was proving my interest and skills by doing volunteer work (female 40–59 seeking paid work).*

Many of the respondents answering the open-ended questions indicated that some voluntary work placements were a compulsory, or non-compulsory but promoted, part of their TAFE course. Most also indicated a positive attitude towards this work and a view that the experience would lead to positive outcomes including paid employment and skill development:

> *Has helped as I have got part time employment through doing this course and my relief work as well (female under 20 in part-time paid work).*
>
> *Doing work placements will hopefully get my foot in the door (female 20–39 seeking paid work).*
>
> *Provides a network base through doing work experience as part of our assessment (female 20–39 in part-time paid work).*
>
> *We do placements (unpaid) in hospitals and nursing homes, which are our prospective employers. So the TAFE study combined with placement will lead to work (male 40–59 seeking paid work).*
>
> *Work placement eight weeks – wonderful opportunity and chance to consolidate ... skills (female 20–39 in part-time paid work).*

Links between religious commitment and voluntary work, that are noted and discussed in the literature on volunteering, were evident among the respondents, with at least seven indicating that their voluntary activities were connected with a church or other type of religious organisation. However, the vast majority of respondents indicating these religious links were in the older age groups. The tasks they indicated included preparing a parish newsletter, involvement in a parish care group, religious education, administrative work, pastoral assistance and cleaning.

Summary and discussion

The findings of this survey of TAFE students align with those of other studies of volunteering in indicating that participation varies according to geographic location, gender and age, is motivated by a range of factors including altruism, personal development and skill development and leads to benefits and positive outcomes.

In addition though, the survey provides considerable evidence that voluntary work is seen as a pathway to paid work and that this view, alone, or in combination with

other factors such as altruism, influences a positive attitude to volunteering. In turn this attitude results in participation in volunteering in the present, or a desire to participate in the future.

Results also indicate that the voluntary work placements that are a component of some TAFE programs are viewed positively. They too are seen as a way of gaining skills, improving experience, building useful networks and demonstrating capabilities that will lead to paid work.

Though the links to paid work are clear, some questions are left unanswered and these deserve further exploration. Are the links particularly important to young people entering the workforce or setting out on a career? How might the pathways from voluntary to paid work be strengthened to improve outcomes for young people? How might the volunteer experience for young people be improved so that they have greater opportunities to gain the skills and experience that will be useful to them in paid work?

Less positively, the survey results indicate that some experiences of volunteering are poor ones and that this can affect subsequent attitudes to voluntary activity. They also point to the existence of some negative attitudes to volunteering, particularly among young males. These are both issues that require considerable further exploration. Do negative attitudes merely reflect lack of knowledge of the benefits that can be derived from volunteering? Do they show a misunderstanding of the nature of volunteering? To what extent are they the result of a poor volunteering experience? How might poor experiences be prevented and negative attitudes overcome?

Appendix 3: Schedule – discussion groups

Volunteering and young people: schedule for focus groups

Introduction:

Thank you for participating.
Our names and affiliations.
Check participants have received an explanatory statement.
Collect signed consent forms.
Outline project briefly.

Areas to be covered:

1. **What participants understand by "volunteering", "voluntary work".**
2. Whether participants have ever been required to do any "voluntary work" that is "compulsory", e.g. as part of a school/tertiary program, "Work for the Dole" etc.
3. Whether this has had any influence on later participation in volunteering.
4. What other kinds of volunteering have participants done (or are doing).
5. In what ways is voluntary work (whether compulsory or not compulsory) a good idea?
6. In what ways is it not a good idea?
7. What kind of things influence young people to get involved in voluntary work that is not "compulsory"?
8. What kind of things influence young people NOT to participate in voluntary work when it is not "compulsory"?
9. What is it about some organisations that makes them particularly attractive to young volunteers?
10. How could voluntary work (compulsory or non-compulsory) be improved so that young people would enjoy it more and get more out of it?
11. If participants have any other issues about volunteering that they would like to raise.

Appendix 4: Schedule, interviews

Volunteering and young people: interview schedule – organisations employing volunteers

Introduction:

Thank you for participating.
What the project is about – its aims and objectives and how the work is being done.
How the information from the discussion is being recorded and how it will be used.

1. What are the aims and objectives of the organisation?
2. How many volunteers does it currently employ?
3. About what proportion of its workforce comprises volunteers?
4. What kind of activities do these volunteers undertake?
5. Why does the organisation employ volunteers?
6. What kind of costs does the organisation incur in employing volunteers?
7. What benefits does the organisation gain from employing volunteers?
8. How does the organisation recruit volunteers?
9. Describe a "typical" volunteer (e.g. age, gender, interests, background).
10. About what proportion of volunteers are young people aged 16–24?
11. Describe a typical young volunteer (e.g. age, gender, interests, background).
12. Does the organisation use any particular strategies to recruit young volunteers?
13. Are there any particular costs associated with employing young volunteers?
14. Are there any particular benefits?
15. What about the organisation attracts/does not attract young volunteers?
16. What kind of things does the organisation do to ensure that the experience of voluntary work is enjoyable for its volunteers?
17. Which of these are the most important for young people?
18. What does the organisation offer volunteers that will influence them to remain with the organisation?
19. Which of these are most important to young people?