

**Religious commitment and volunteering parents:  
who volunteers and how are their lives affected?**

***By Frank Jones***<sup>1</sup>

This study presents the first Canadian data on volunteering parents. It illustrates how they differ from other parents in several respects. It also looks at possibly important results of volunteering: with respect to time spent with children, whether or not they worry over not enough time spent with family and friends, and their perceptions of not having time for fun. For this study a *parent* is defined as either a mother or father with at least one child under 18 at home.

Parents are heavily into volunteering. They comprised 37% of all volunteers in 1997, though only 31% of the population<sup>2</sup>. The volunteer rates (per cent volunteering) of both mothers and fathers were higher than were those of other adult women and men. There are many reasons why the volunteering behaviour of parents is expected to differ from that of non-parents. Responding to the needs of their children, especially their older children who may have special needs for volunteer services, is thought to be a major reason for the difference that encourages volunteering. Demands placed on their time by their younger children, are expected to discourage volunteering.

**Age is a factor for both parents and other adults**

The attraction of volunteering varies by age for both parents and others, but in different ways. For both mothers and fathers the volunteer rates increase with age, attaining a maximum at age 45 to 54, 46% of mothers, and 51% of fathers – Table 1. For other women and men the rate is highest for young adults aged 15 to 24, 37% of women and 31% of men. The rate falls with age for other women from age 35 to 44, and for other men from age 55-64.

In most age groups women are more inclined than men to volunteer, whether or not they are parents. The difference is widest for the 35 to 44 year olds: 6 percentage points for parents, and 14 for others. The volunteer rate of fathers aged 45 to 54 is slightly higher than that of

---

<sup>1</sup> Adjunct Professor of Economics, University of Ottawa, Director of Research, Christian Commitment Research Institute (CCRI), and former Senior Analyst with Statistics Canada. Thanks for helpful reviews are due to Claudette Harrison, Environment Canada and CCRI; George Mori, Statistics Canada; Borgne Pearson, CCRI and former editor of the Canada Year Book, and Professor James Sauer, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas. Remaining errors and weaknesses are the responsibility of the author. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of Statistics Canada.

<sup>2</sup> Most data for this study, Tables 1 to 4 and Charts 1 and 2, were derived from the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 1997. The reference period was November 1, 1996 to October 31, 1997. The target population was Canadian residents in the provinces aged 15 or older, except persons living on Indian reserves, inmates of institutions, and members of the Armed forces.

mothers in the same age bracket. Older men are slightly more likely to volunteer than their female peers.

The difference between parents and others volunteering varies by age. Young mothers aged 15 to 24 actually volunteer less than other women of the same age. The difference may be due largely to the demands on time and energy by young children. Mothers aged 25 to 34 are also less inclined to volunteer than other women of the same age, though the difference is small. Both mothers and fathers aged 35 to 44, and 45 to 55, however, are much more likely than their peers of the same age groups to volunteer. For example 51% of fathers aged 45 to 54 volunteered, compared with 26% of other men of the same age.

## **Factors influencing the inclination of parents to volunteer**

The simultaneous influence of several factors on the inclination of parents to volunteer may be studied by multiple regression analysis. The results of this analysis reveals that the inclination is higher, when other factors are held constant, for both mothers and fathers with the following characteristics:

- Having more children aged 6 to 12; and for fathers only, more children aged 13 to 17.
- Being a weekly church attendee; and for fathers, a monthly attendee, rather than an infrequent or non-attendee.
- Having been involved in either student government, sports, or volunteering when the parent was in grade or high school.
- Having had a parent who volunteered.
- Having higher education.
- Feeling very satisfied with life in general.
- Having been a resident in the community for over two years.
- Being a resident of any of the three Prairie Provinces or, for mothers, Nova Scotia, Ontario, or British Columbia.
- Being a rural resident.

In addition, for mothers only, the rate of volunteering increases with age, and was higher for those who had been active in a religious organisation when in grade or high school. Also, fathers were more inclined to volunteer if they lived in an urban area of under 100,000, rather than a larger urban area. The specific estimates for both mothers and fathers are presented in Appendix Table 1, together with measures of statistical significance of the relationships and estimates.

## **Religious commitment is strongly associated with volunteering**

Empirically, religious commitment is an important factor in the decision to volunteer. Parents attending religious services with regularity were much more inclined to volunteer than other parents. For mothers, 58% of the weekly attendees volunteered their services, compared with 44% of monthly attendees, and 31% of the less frequent attendees. The differences in rates for fathers were slightly wider: 60%, 44% and 31%, respectively.

The religious factor was thought to be a major one underlying the decision of parents to volunteer, for theoretical reasons as well. The argument has a long history that goes back at least as far as Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* written in 1759. Smith sees excessive self-love as a major cause of wrongdoing<sup>3</sup>. He comments that the first duty of religion is "to fulfil all the obligations of morality"<sup>4</sup>. Countering excessive selfishness would be one of the obligations. Smith believed that moral and religious beliefs can improve our behaviour just as unhealthy or false beliefs can corrupt<sup>5</sup>. According to Smith religion enforces one's natural sense of duty and motivates the practice of virtue, and "guards us by such powerful restraints from the temptations of vice, that many have been led to suppose, that religious principles were the sole laudable motive to action."<sup>6</sup> He believed that shared moral norms provide incentives for virtuous behaviour<sup>7</sup>. Volunteering is just one expression of virtue.

The importance of the religious factor is shown in Tables 2 to 4, which show the rates of volunteering for parents, mothers and fathers. The rates are shown for weekly and monthly attendance at religious services, less frequent or no attendance in the preceding year, and several other variables believed to be important in the decision by parents to volunteer. The following discussion relates to Table 2 only, and some of the more interesting factors associated with volunteering.

With very few exceptions parents attending were more likely to volunteer than their infrequently attending peers. For example, the volunteer rates of weekly attendees in each of the Maritime Provinces, and Saskatchewan and Alberta, were over 30 points higher than those of their infrequently attending counterparts. The religious factor is strong for both mothers and fathers. Some 58% of mothers attending weekly volunteered, compared with 32% of mothers attending frequently. Similar rates are to be observed for fathers. The rates of parents increase with the stage of the family cycle: it is 24% for parents with no children over five years old, 42% for those with both pre-schoolers and older children, and 46% for parents with older children only. The weekly attendees among these three groups of parents volunteered at much higher rates though: 48%, 60% and 65%, respectively.

Early experiences have very important influences on the decision by parents to volunteer, especially when the experiences were in combination with regular religious observance. For example, 49% volunteered if a parent had volunteered, compared with 29% if a parent had not volunteered. Among those from volunteering families, however, 67% volunteered if they attended religious services weekly, while only 41% volunteered if they attended infrequently. Of those with no volunteering parent, some 48% volunteered if they attended weekly, and 25% if they attended infrequently. The number of types of childhood involvements (in sport, student government or volunteering) was also found to be highly correlated with the tendency of parents to volunteer later in life. Some 22% of parents with no involvements volunteered, and the rate rose to 50% for parents who had had three youth involvements. For weekly attendees, though, the corresponding rates were 59% and 79%.

---

<sup>3</sup> Charles L. Griswold, Jr. *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999, p. 269.

<sup>4</sup> Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. A. L. Macfie and D. D. Raphael, Liberty Press: Indianapolis, 1982, III.5.13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, III.5.4, III.5.12-13, III.6.1.

<sup>6</sup> A. Smith, *op. cit.*, III.6.1.

<sup>7</sup> Griswold, *op. cit.*, pp.269-270.

Together with the religious factors, formal education is another of the strongest factors influencing the inclination to volunteer, by both mothers and fathers. Some 52% of parents with a university degree volunteered, compared with 39% with post high school education, 35% with high school graduation, and 23% with less than high school graduation. At each level of education, however, those attending religious services weekly were over ten percentage points more likely to volunteer than their peers who attended services at least monthly. They were over 20 percentage points more likely to volunteer than their peers in each level of education who attended services less frequently than monthly or not at all. These results indicate that both education and religious factors play a major role in the decision of parents to volunteer or not, showing that the two forms of human capital, formal education and religious observance, complement each other in this decision. The relationship between the two variables is displayed in Chart 1 for both parents and non-parents. The relationship appears to be especially strong for parents.

### **Parental volunteer rates vary by religious denomination**

Different faith communities offer different ways of encouraging faith commitment, community involvement, and strengthened and more informed families and individuals. Viewed in this way it is not surprising to see that volunteer rates of parents vary substantially by faith community and denomination. Some faith traditions emphasise volunteer work more than others, and tend to have more role models who inspire others around them. Overall, the rates were highest among Lutherans, 67%, followed by Baptists, 61%, United Church affiliates, 54%, and Anglicans and smaller Christian communities, 52% each. The rates were lowest among non-Christians<sup>8</sup>, 23%, and French Catholics, 25%. English (non-French) Catholics and Presbyterians had similar volunteer rates, 39%. Parents with no religious affiliation were less inclined to volunteer than all faith communities except French Catholic and non-Christian – 33% did so. The fairly wide difference between French and English Catholics may reflect the difference in religious markets served, the English being located in relatively competitive and religiously pluralistic regions.

Within each of the main faith communities except Lutheran, volunteer rates were highest for the weekly attendees, followed by the monthly, and less frequent attendees – Chart 2. Rates for weekly attendees were highest for United Church affiliates, 96%, followed by Lutheran, 91%, and Anglicans, 79%, and Baptists, 73%, and lowest for French and English Catholics, 46% and 52% respectively. Rates for infrequent attendees were highest for Lutherans, 50%, Anglicans, 48%, and Baptists, 47%, and lowest again for English and French Catholics, 22% and 30% respectively. The difference in rates between weekly and infrequent attendees was widest for United Church affiliates, 53 percentage points, followed by Lutherans, 41 points, and Anglicans, 31 points. The rates for parents with no religious affiliation were much below those of religious parents, no matter how often they attended religious services, except for the monthly and infrequently attending French Catholics, and infrequently attending English Catholics.

### **How does volunteering affect children and parents?**

Volunteering consumes time out of the lives of busy parents. What activities are sacrificed: child care time by parents or time with family and friends? Do volunteering parents

---

<sup>8</sup> The sample was too small to allow subdivision of the non-Christian parents.

see themselves as not having time for fun anymore? The data to answer these questions come from Statistics Canada's Time Use Survey of 1998.

Concerning the time spent with children, volunteering parents averaged slightly fewer hours of child care per day than non-volunteering parents, 1.3 compared with 1.4 hours. Mothers in two parent families averaged much more childcare than fathers. Mothers with children under six (and perhaps older children) averaged 3.2 hours, (volunteers, three hours; others, 3.2 hours). Fathers with children under six averaged 1.6 hours, whether volunteers or not. Mothers with older children averaged an hour a day (1.1 hours if they volunteered, 0.9 otherwise) while fathers with older children averaged 0.6 hours (0.8 if they volunteered, and 0.5 otherwise). Lone parents as a group averaged 1.4 hours (one if they volunteered, and 1.6 hours otherwise).

The weekly attendees tended to spend more time caring for their children than those attending religious services infrequently, whether volunteers or not, or having young or older children. This is a surprising result given that attending religious services is itself a time consuming activity, and therefore would leave less time available for childcare. The time spent taking the children to church and being with the children during and after the service would not be considered part of child care time.<sup>9</sup> The difference was 12 minutes a day for volunteering parents, and 15 for other parents. The weekly attendees also tended to spend more time with their children than their counterparts who attended services monthly, though the excess time was small in some cases and slightly negative in the case of fathers, and mothers with older children. In conclusion, except for lone parents, volunteering had little impact on the time spent caring for children, and was actually somewhat higher for the volunteering mothers and fathers with older children than their non-volunteering peers.

Turning to a possible time crunch effect of volunteering, a slight majority of parents said they worry because they do not spend enough time with family or friends: 54% of volunteering parents and 52% of other parents. The monthly attendees at religious services were most inclined to have such worries – 58% of volunteers, and 51% of other parents. The weekly attendees were least likely to have such worries – 52% of volunteers and 48% of other weekly attendees. Some 54% of infrequent attendees, both volunteers and others, had such worries. On the whole, volunteering seems to be a rather weak factor behind worry over insufficient time spent with family and friends.

About half of the parents said they had no time for fun anymore, though fewer volunteering parents, 49%, than other parents, 55%. Weekly attendees who volunteered were the least likely to say they had no time for fun, 45%, though 55% of their peers who did not volunteer said that they had no time for fun. Among monthly attendees volunteers were more likely to say they had no fun, 55%, than non-volunteers, 50%. For infrequent attendees the volunteers were less likely to say they had no fun, 50%, than the non-volunteers, 55%. On the whole, though, volunteering does not seem to be strongly related, either positively or negatively, to the perception of having no time for fun.

## Conclusion

---

<sup>9</sup> Child care time comprises child and baby care; helping, teaching or reprimanding, play with children, medical care, travel with the child for the above activities, and other unspecified child care.

Volunteer leaders should take note of this study because many may not have been aware of the extent of the contribution of parents, especially with the new evidence that child care time and enjoyment of life of volunteering parents does not seem to suffer much as a result. Church leaders should be encouraged by the results that show that those who are highly committed to faith communities are also the ones most inclined to volunteer. They might also like to respond to the fact that volunteering is much more important in some faith communities than others. Community leaders and governments should take note of the over-representation of parents in volunteering, and the apparent positive role of faith communities, and provide incentives for such contributions, and beware of unintended disincentives directed at either parents or faith communities. Researchers and policy analysts should be encouraged to delve more deeply into volunteering by parents, a research area that has been almost completely neglected thus far in Canada, despite the availability of excellent databases of national scope. Detailed studies of time commitments, services provided, perceived personal benefits, and motivations for volunteering, and not volunteering, are examples of research opportunities. And perhaps most importantly, parents should be informed of, and perhaps rewarded for their major contribution to both volunteering and setting a good example for the future citizens and leaders of Canada, their children, while not neglecting their own care giving responsibilities.

## **Summary**

This study presents the first Canadian data on volunteering parents. It illustrates how parents who volunteer differ from other parents. It also looks at possibly important results of volunteering: how volunteering and other parents differ with respect to time spent with children, worry over not enough time spent with family and friends, and perceptions of not having time for fun.

Volunteering parents constituted 37% of all volunteers in 1997, though only 31% of the population. The volunteer rates (per cent volunteering) of both mothers and fathers were higher than those of other adult women and men.

This study reveals that the inclination of parents to volunteer is higher, when other factors are held constant, for both mothers and fathers with a number of important characteristics, such as:

- Being a weekly church attendee rather than an infrequent attendee.
- Being involved in either student government, sports or volunteering during grade or high school.
- Having had a parent who volunteered.
- Having higher education.
- Feeling very satisfied with life in general.
- Having been a resident in the community for over two years.
- Being a resident of one of the three Prairie Provinces, or for mothers, Nova Scotia, Ontario, or British Columbia.
- Being a rural resident.

In addition, for some factors specific to only mothers, or fathers, were identified.

Parents attending religious services regularly were much more inclined to volunteer than other parents, no matter what other characteristics they had, for example: gender, province of residence, level of education, having been religiously active when young, and having had a parent who volunteered. Overall, among mothers, 58% of the weekly attendees volunteered their services, compared with 44% of monthly attendees, and 31% of the less frequent attendees. The differences in rates for fathers were slightly wider: 60%, 44% and 31%, respectively.

Volunteer rates of parents varied substantially by faith community and denomination. Some faith traditions emphasise volunteer work more than others, and tend to have more role models who inspire others around them. Overall, the rates were highest among Lutherans followed by Baptists, United Church affiliates, and Anglicans and smaller Christian communities. The rates were lowest among non-Christians and French and English Catholics, and Presbyterians. Parents with no religious affiliation were less inclined to volunteer – 33% did so. Within each of the main faith communities except Lutheran, volunteer rates were highest for the weekly attendees, followed by the monthly, and less frequent attendees.

Three important impacts of volunteering on parents were next investigated. Concerning the time spent with children, volunteering parents averaged about the same amount of time as non-volunteers. Volunteering mothers with children under six averaged three hours a day of child care, only 12 minutes less than other mothers. Fathers with children under six averaged 1.6 hours, whether volunteers or not. Mothers with older children averaged 1.1 hours if they volunteered, 12 minutes more than other mothers, while fathers with older children averaged 48 minutes a day if they volunteered, and 30 otherwise. Lone parents as a group averaged one hour if they volunteered, and 36 minutes more otherwise. In conclusion, except for lone parents, volunteering had little impact on the time spent with children, and was actually somewhat higher for the volunteering mothers and fathers with older children than their non-volunteering peers. The weekly attendees tended to spend more time caring for their children than those attending religious services infrequently, whether volunteers or not, or having young or older children. The weekly attendees also tended to spend more time with their children than those parents who attended services monthly. In sum, volunteering had little negative, or positive, impact on the time spent caring for children, except in the case of lone parents.

A slight majority of parents said they worry because they do not spend enough time with family or friends: almost the same percentage of volunteering parents as other parents. The monthly attendees at religious services were most inclined to have such worries and the weekly attendees were least likely. Volunteers responded similarly to and other parents to this measure of time crunch. About half of the parents said they had no time for fun anymore, though fewer volunteering parents than other parents. Weekly attendees who volunteered were the least likely to say they had no time for fun.

## References

Duchesne, Doreen, *Giving Freely, Volunteers in Canada*, Labour Analytic Report No. 4, Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division, Statistics Canada, August, 1989, Catalogue 71-535, No. 4.

Griswold, Charles L. Jr. *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999.

Hall, Michael, Tamara Knighton, Paul Reed, Patrick Bussiere, Don McRae and Paddy Bowen. *Caring Canadians, involved Canadians: Highlights from the 1997 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, Minister of Industry: Ottawa, August 1998. Catalogue no. 71-542.

Harvey, Andrew S., Katherine Marshall, and Judith A. Frederick. *Where Does Time Go?* Minister of Industry, Science and Technology, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, August, 1991.

Knoke, David, and Randall Thompson. "Voluntary association membership trends and the family life cycle", *Social Forces*, v. 56, no. 1, September 1977, pp. 48-65.

Pold, Henry. "The gift of time", *Perspectives on labour and income*, summer, 1990, pp. 41-49.

Schram, Vicki R., and Marilyn M. Dunsing, "Influences on Married women's volunteer work participation", *Journal of Consumer Research*, v. 7, March, 1981, pp. 372-379.

Smith, Adam. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. A. L. Macfie and D. D. Raphael, Liberty Press: Indianapolis, 1982.

Smith, David H., and Burt R. Baldwin. "Parental socialisation, socio-economic status and volunteer organisation participation", *Journal of Volunteer Action Research*, v. 3, no. 3-4, July/October, 1977, pp. 59-66.

Sundeen, Richard A. "Family life course status and volunteer behaviour: Implications for the single parent", *Sociological Perspectives*, v. 33, no. 4, winter, 1990, pp. 483-500.

**Table 1. Volunteer rates of parents with children under 18, and other adults, 1997**

Age range	Total	Parents	Others	Percentage point difference Parent rate - others' rate
Total	31	38	29	9
15 to 24	33	16	34	-18
25 to 34	28	29	28	1
35 to 44	37	41	27	14
45 to 54	35	49	30	19
55 to 64	30	32	30	2
65 to 74	26	--	26	..
75 and over	18	--	18	..
Women				
Total	33	38	31	7
15 to 24	35	17	37	-20
25 to 34	31	31	32	-2
35 to 44	42	44	35	9
45 to 54	37	46	34	12
55 to 64	31	--	31	..
65 to 74	25	--	25	..
75 and over	18	--	18	..
Men				
Total	29	37	26	10
15 to 24	31	--	31	..
25 to 34	26	27	25	2
35 to 44	31	38	21	17
45 to 54	34	51	26	25
55 to 64	28	--	28	..
65 to 74	27	--	27	..
75 and over	19	--	19	..
Rate difference:				
Women - men				
Total	4	1	5	
15 to 24	4	--	6	
25 to 34	6	4	7	
35 to 44	10	6	14	
45 to 54	3	-5	8	
55 to 64	2	--	2	
65 to 74	-2	--	-2	
75 and over	-1	--	-1	

-- = sample too small for reliable estimate; .. = figures unavailable.

**Table 2. Volunteer rate of sub-populations of parents with children under 18, 1997**

	Frequency of attendance at religious services			Percentage point difference		
	weekly	monthly	less often or never	total	weekly-monthly	weekly-less often
Total: parents 15 or older	59	44	31	38	15	28
Mothers	58	44	32	38	14	26
Fathers	60	44	31	37	16	30
Age 25 to 34	53	38	23	29	14	29
35 to 44	59	45	36	41	14	23
45 to 54	68	52	41	49	15	27
Couples, children under 6	48	31	18	24	17	31
- under 6 and 6 to 17	60	43	37	42	16	22
- children 6 to 17 only	65	54	39	46	11	26
Lone parents	46	29	26	29	17	20
With a religious background	63	57	42	52	6	20
-without a religious background	53	36	28	32	17	24
Youth involvements =						
0	43	29	17	22	14	26
1	59	33	30	35	26	29
2	61	55	39	46	6	22
3	79	63	50	58	16	29
A parent volunteered	67	57	41	49	11	27
no parent volunteered	48	32	25	29	17	24
Less than high school grad	42	26	20	23	16	22
High school grad	52	40	30	35	11	22
Post secondary education	61	46	32	39	15	29
University degree	69	56	45	52	12	23
Very satisfied with life	66	51	38	46	15	28
Not "very satisfied" with life	49	38	26	31	11	23
Resident over 2 years	64	45	33	40	19	31
- 2 years or less	34	30	23	26	4	12
Newfoundland resident	51	51	31	40	1	20
Prince Edward Island	69	38	33	46	31	36
Nova Scotia	72	75	34	47	-4	37
New Brunswick	64	37	29	40	27	35
Quebec	50	33	22	26	16	27
Ontario	54	41	31	37	13	22
Manitoba	60	51	45	49	10	16
Saskatchewan	78	69	47	58	9	31
Alberta	73	52	41	49	21	32
British Columbia	62	46	36	40	17	27
Residence >500,000 population	51	35	28	32	16	23
100,000-499,999	61	48	32	40	13	29
30,000-99,999	59	44	32	38	15	27
15,000-29,999	72	78	35	44	-6	36
< 15,000	72	53	38	46	19	34
Rural Area	67	54	36	45	14	31

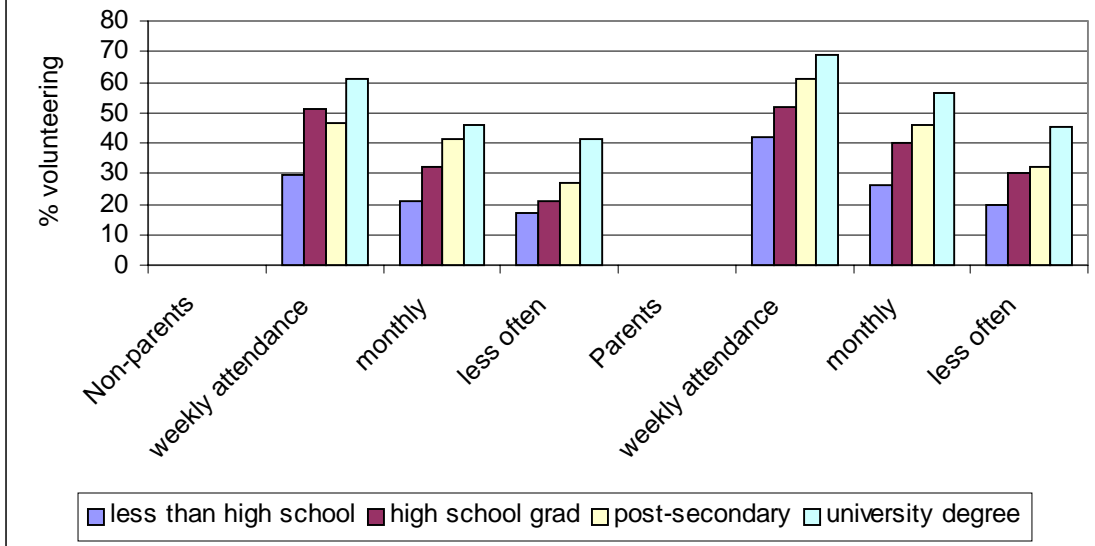
**Table 3. Volunteer rate of sub-populations of mothers with children under 18, 1997**

	Frequency of attendance at religious services				Percentage point difference		
	weekly	monthly	less often or never	total	weekly-monthly	weekly-less often	
Total: parents 15 or older	59	44	31	38	15	28	
Mothers	58	44	32	38	14	26	
Age 25 to 34	54	39	25	31	15	29	
35 to 44	59	48	39	44	10	20	
45 to 54	66	43	37	46	24	30	
Couples, children under 6	43	28	18	23	15	25	
- under 6 and 6 to 17	65	51	42	48	14	24	
- children 6 to 17 only	64	57	41	48	7	24	
Lone parents	45	28	24	28	16	20	
With a religious background	62	58	44	53	4	18	
-without a religious background	51	34	28	31	16	22	
Youth involvements =	0	37	28	20	23	9	18
	1	60	32	32	37	27	28
	2	67	54	39	46	14	29
	3	74	72	55	63	3	19
A parent volunteered	65	57	41	50	8	24	
no parent volunteered	49	29	26	29	19	23	
Less than high school grad	39	23	19	22	16	19	
High school grad	56	34	32	37	22	24	
Post secondary education	58	53	32	40	5	26	
University degree	71	49	47	53	21	23	
Very satisfied with life	67	53	38	46	14	29	
Not "very satisfied" with life	47	37	28	32	10	19	
Resident over 2 years	62	43	34	40	19	29	
- 2 years or less	37	49	23	27	-11	14	
Newfoundland resident	55	50	35	44	4	19	
Prince Edward Island	76	--	--	55	--	--	
Nova Scotia	72	86	31	46	-14	41	
New Brunswick	63	34	30	40	30	33	
Quebec	53	24	21	23	29	32	
Ontario	52	41	33	39	11	19	
Manitoba	58	60	42	49	-3	16	
Saskatchewan	78	78	49	60	0	29	
Alberta	71	56	44	51	14	27	
British Columbia	59	45	39	43	14	20	
Residence >500,000 population	52	33	29	33	19	23	
100,000-499,999	58	49	31	39	9	27	
30,000-99,999	58	--	32	38	--	26	
15,000-29,999	--	--	32	41	--	--	
< 15,000	65	58	37	46	8	28	
Rural Area	65	57	38	46	8	27	

**Table 4. Volunteer rate of sub-populations of fathers with children under 18, 1997**

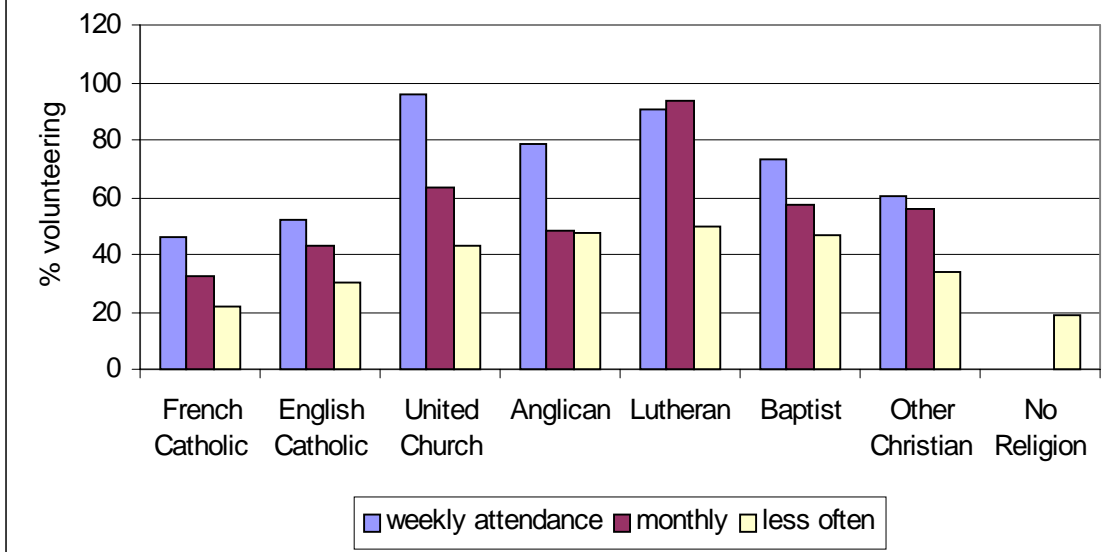
	Frequency of attendance at religious services			total	Percentage point difference	
	weekly	monthly	less often or never		weekly-monthly	weekly-less often
Total: parents 15 or older	59	44	31	38	15	28
Fathers	60	44	31	37	16	30
Age 25 to 34	50	37	21	27	13	29
35 to 44	59	42	32	38	17	27
45 to 54	69	66	44	51	3	25
Couples, children under 6	54	37	17	24	17	36
- under 6 and 6 to 17	53	35	33	37	18	21
- children 6 to 17 only	65	50	38	44	15	28
Lone parents	--	--	39	40	--	--
With a religious background	64	55	40	51	9	24
-without a religious background	56	39	28	32	17	27
Youth involvements =						
0	59	31	13	21	27	46
1	59	35	29	34	24	30
2	54	57	40	45	-3	14
3	87	52	45	53	35	43
A parent volunteered	71	56	40	47	15	31
no parent volunteered	48	34	24	28	14	25
Less than high school grad	46	30	20	24	16	26
High school grad	44	52	27	32	-8	17
Post secondary education	67	38	32	38	29	34
University degree	67	66	43	52	1	24
Very satisfied with life	65	49	39	46	16	26
Not "very satisfied" with life	52	39	25	29	13	28
Resident over 2 years	67	49	32	39	18	35
- 2 years or less	30	--	22	23	--	8
Newfoundland resident	--	--	27	35	--	--
Prince Edward Island	--	--	--	38	--	--
Nova Scotia	71	--	38	47	--	33
New Brunswick	64	--	28	39	--	36
Quebec	46	42	25	29	3	21
Ontario	56	40	29	35	15	27
Manitoba	64	--	47	50	--	17
Saskatchewan	80	--	45	54	--	35
Alberta	77	--	38	46	--	39
British Columbia	68	--	32	37	--	35
Residence >500,000 population	48	37	32	40	11	16
100,000-499,999	65	47	31	38	17	33
30,000-99,999	60	--	39	48	--	21
15,000-29,999	89	--	38	45	--	51
< 15,000	84	46	34	42	38	49
Rural Area	72	50	23	27	22	49

**Chart 1. Volunteer rate of parents and non-parents, by level of education and frequency of religious attendance, 1997**



Note in Chart 2, below: the volunteer rate for Presbyterians attending at least monthly was 70%; it was 28% for Presbyterians attending less often than monthly or not at all. The rate for non-Christians attending at least monthly was 25%.

**Chart 2. Volunteer rate of parents, by religious affiliation and frequency of church attendance, 1997**



**Appendix table 1. Estimation of the likelihood of parents to volunteer, 1997**

	Mothers 15 and over, n= 3633			Fathers 15 and over, n=2418		
	b	t	Sig.	b	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-0.520	-3.33	0.001	-0.218	-1.07	0.284
age	0.021	2.53	0.011	0.000	0.00	0.998
age squared	0.000	-2.00	0.046	0.000	0.65	0.513
children 5+	-0.010	-0.77	0.439	-0.007	-0.50	0.615
children 6-12	0.087	8.73	0.000	0.068	5.39	0.000
children 13-17	0.029	2.06	0.039	0.058	3.38	0.001
lone parent	-0.028	-1.42	0.156	0.063	1.12	0.264
weekly church attendee	0.135	6.55	0.000	0.203	7.61	0.000
monthly attendee	0.034	1.50	0.134	0.094	3.32	0.001
religious background	0.053	2.97	0.003	0.042	1.88	0.060
youth activities*	0.076	9.16	0.000	0.063	5.70	0.000
a parent volunteered	0.066	4.10	0.000	0.108	5.49	0.000
university degree	0.195	6.83	0.000	0.177	5.54	0.000
post-secondary	0.100	4.50	0.000	0.124	4.81	0.000
high school grad	0.076	3.11	0.002	0.100	3.42	0.001
very satisfied **	0.061	3.99	0.000	0.080	4.35	0.000
resident 2 years or less	-0.100	-5.04	0.000	-0.131	-4.82	0.000
Newfoundland resident	0.107	1.93	0.054	-0.028	-0.42	0.677
Prince Edward Island	0.127	1.10	0.270	-0.009	-0.07	0.944
Nova Scotia	0.128	2.89	0.004	0.116	2.16	0.031
New Brunswick	0.046	0.97	0.334	0.028	0.46	0.645
Ontario	0.077	3.95	0.000	0.041	1.71	0.088
Manitoba	0.155	3.73	0.000	0.136	2.65	0.008
Saskatchewan	0.226	5.35	0.000	0.142	2.70	0.007
Alberta	0.177	6.29	0.000	0.107	3.10	0.002
British Columbia	0.107	4.01	0.000	0.048	1.53	0.127
rural resident	0.061	3.01	0.003	0.070	2.75	0.006
urban, < 100,000	0.044	2.26	0.024	0.081	3.37	0.001

r squared=0.193

r squared=0.185

\*number of youth involvements: sports, student government, volunteering (0 to 3)

\*\*with my life in general =1, 0 otherwise.