

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

By Frank Jones¹

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 population². 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

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² 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 wrongdoing³. He comments that the first duty of religion is "to fulfil all the obligations of morality"⁴. 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 corrupt⁵. 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."⁶ He believed that shared moral norms provide incentives for virtuous behaviour⁷. 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%.

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

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

⁵ *Ibid.*, III.5.4, III.5.12-13, III.6.1.

⁶ A. Smith, *op. cit.*, III.6.1.

⁷ 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-Christians⁸, 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

⁸ 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.⁹ 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

⁹ 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.

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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 |

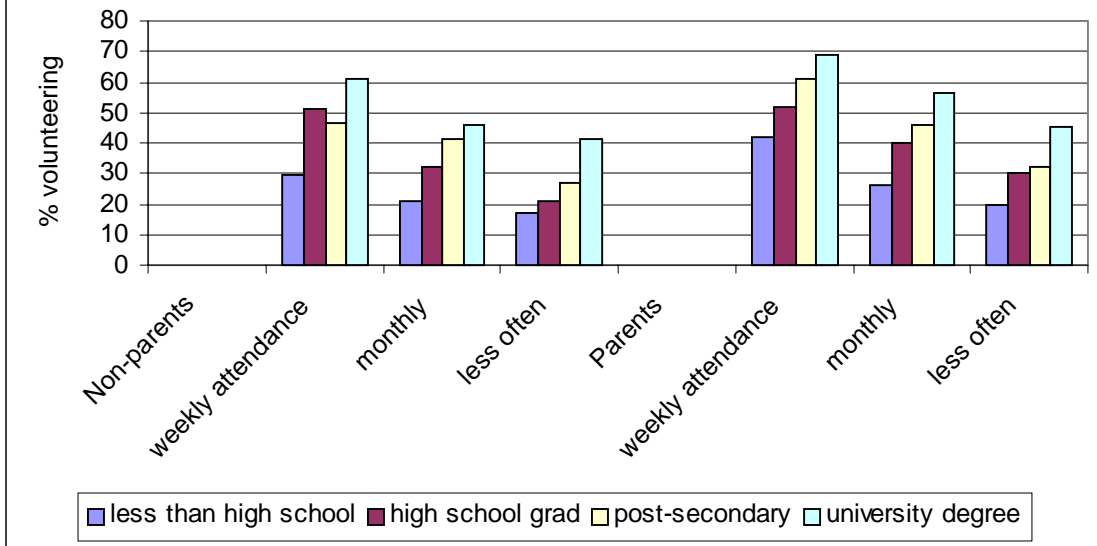
Table 3. Volunteer rate of sub-populations of mothers with children under 18, 1997

| | 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

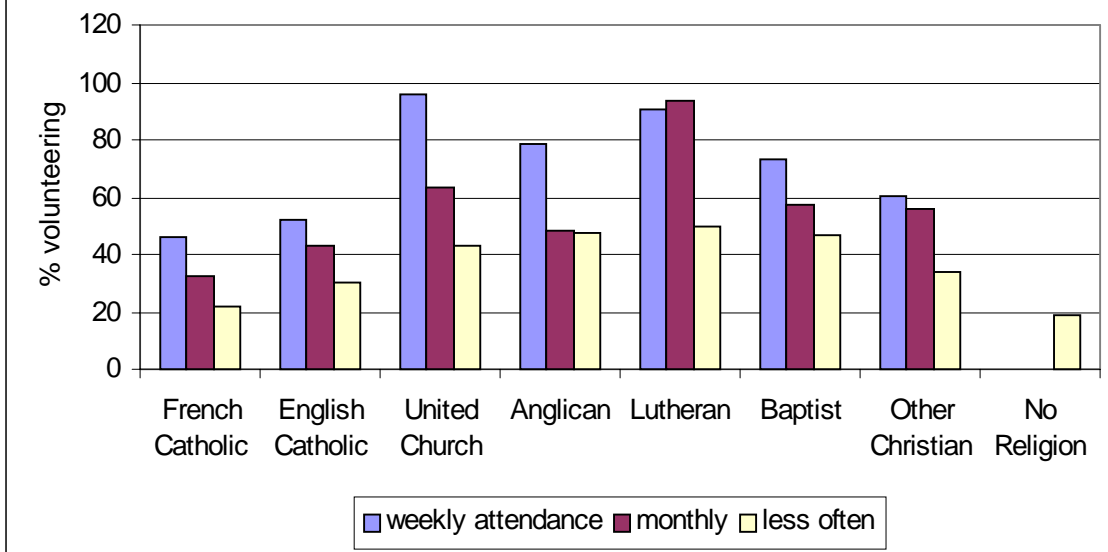
| | Frequency of attendance at religious services | | | total | Percentage point difference | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---------|---------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----|
| | weekly | monthly | less often or never | | weekly-monthly | weekly-less 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.