
YouthNet

Teen Activities Survey

YouthNet Teen Activities Forum
Columbia High School
October 19, 2009

Background

- YouthNet surveyed South Orange / Maplewood School District teens to better understand their attitudes and interests towards
 - After-school activities
 - Social concerns
 - South Orange & Maplewood Middle Schools
 - Every Alpha period surveyed June 2009
 - 1,103 students responded
 - Columbia High School (9th-11th grades)
 - Every Homeroom surveyed June 2009
 - 1,210 students responded
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Survey Objective

- Determine quantitatively, rather than merely qualitatively or subjectively, what interests teens
 - Try to reach every student, not just some
 - Ask anonymously to ensure forthright feedback
 - Survey an exhaustive roster of activities
 - Six categories
 - 102 options
 - Research related topics, including cost and transportation concerns
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Top Line Results

- 2,300 respondents expressed interest in an average of 18 after-school activities – casting almost 40,000 “votes”
 - 1,100 Middle School students expressed interest in average of 19 activities each
 - 1,200 High School students expressed interest in average of 16 activities each
 - Students interests are diverse and vary by grade, ranging from 3% low to 56% high expressing interest in 100+ activities
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Top Line Results (cont'd)

- Across all students, a remarkable 56% expressed interest in getting a job.
- Other top interests included enrichment, discovery, athletics, and outdoor adventure activities.

Activity	% of Total
Job	56%
Cooking	39%
Photography	37%
Video Games	36%
Swimming	34%
Basketball	32%
Filmmaking	31%
Biking	30%
Dance - Hip Hop	28%
Drawing	28%

Activity	% of Total
Soccer	28%
Television	28%
Football	27%
Bowling	26%
Ping Pong	25%
Tennis	25%
Fashion	25%
Music	24%
Driver's Education	24%
Graphic Design	24%

Results by Category

- **Jobs and Internships** are very appealing to teens, with jobs remarkably outdrawing all other activities, and the next highest by 44% (or 17% pts.)

Activity	% of Total
Job	56%
Internship	20%

Results by Category

- **Enrichment & Discovery** activities attracted the greatest interest, representing six of the top 10 activities students selected.
- And, ran the gamut from cooking to photography to hip hop dance to fashion to acting.

Activity	% of Total
Cooking	39%
Photography	37%
Video Games	36%
Filmmaking	31%
Dance - Hip Hop	28%
Drawing	28%

Activity	% of Total
Television	28%
Fashion	25%
Music	24%
Driver's Education	24%
Graphic Design	24%
Acting	23%

Results by Category

- **Sports & Athletics** attracted the second highest level of interest, topped by swimming and basketball
- In addition to popular teams sports, bowling, ping pong, tennis, and rollerblading/skating attracted strong interest

Activity	% of Total
Swimming	34%
Basketball	32%
Soccer	28%
Football	27%
Bowling	26%
Ping Pong	25%
Tennis	25%

Activity	% of Total
Rollerblading & Rollerskating	23%
Lacrosse	20%
Track & Field	19%
Ice Skating	19%
Exercise & Weight Training	17%
Gymnastics	17%
Badminton	17%

Results by Category

- **Outdoor Adventure** activities attracted strong interest, especially Biking, Ropes, and Horseback Riding.

Activity	% of Total
Biking	30%
Ropes	23%
Horseback Riding	23%
First Aid	18%
Hiking	16%

Results by Category

- **College and Career Planning** activities clearly appealed to students, with College Planning and SAT Preparation topping the list.

Activity	% of Total
College Planning	22%
SAT Preparation	21%
College Application & Interview Prep.	18%
Career Discovery & Planning	16%

Results by Category

- **Community Service** activities appeal to teens, with the environment and performing arts drawing slightly more interest.

Activity	% of Total
Community Service - Environment	22%
Community Service - Performing Arts	21%
Community Service - Teaching	18%
Community Service - Healthcare	17%
Community Service - Visual Arts	14%

Results by Category

- **Academic** activities generated strong interest, albeit not as high as others.
- Poetry, math, creative writing, psychology, English, and forensics attracted the most interest.

Activity	% of Total
Poetry	20%
Math	18%
Creative Writing	17%
Psychology	17%
English	16%
Forensics	15%

Activity	% of Total
Computer Programming	14%
History	13%
Chemistry	13%
Journalism	13%
World Languages	13%
Architecture	13%

Results by Category

- 50% of all **Middle School** students also favored getting a job, ahead of all other activities.
 - 8th graders: 60%
 - 7th and 6th graders: 44%
- Other top interests included sports/athletics, enrichment/discovery, and outdoor adventure.

Activity	% of Total
Job	50%
Swimming	46%
Video Games	44%
Cooking	44%
Basketball	37%
Biking	36%

Activity	% of Total
Drawing	34%
Filmmaking	34%
Dance - Hip Hop	33%
Photography	33%
Soccer	32%
Tennis	32%

Results by Grade – High School

- 62% of grade **High School** (9th - 11th grades) students favored getting a job, ahead of all other activities; and, 26% wanted internships.
- Enrichment/discovery, especially media and cooking, basketball, SAT preparation, college planning, hip hop dance, and soccer topped the list.

Activity	% of Total
Job	62%
Photography	41%
Cooking	35%
Filmmaking	29%
Video Games	28%
Basketball	28%

Activity	% of Total
SAT Preparation	27%
Television	27%
Internship	26%
College Planning	25%
Dance - Hip Hop	24%
Soccer	24%

Cost and Transportation Concerns

- Have you not participated in an after-school activity because program cost too much?
 - Middle School students: 21%
 - High School students: 18%
 - Lack of ride home prevents you from participating in after-school activities?
 - Middle School students: 16%
 - High School students: 17%
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Conclusions

- YouthNet Teen Activities Survey provides unprecedented understanding of teens' after-school (and weekend) interests.
- Community's teens expressed surprisingly strong interest in finding a job, but also in diverse activities.
 - Enrichment and discovery
 - Sports, athletics, and outdoor adventure
 - College and career planning
 - Community service
 - Some academic subjects
- Middle School and High School interests more similar than not.
- Cost and transportation an issue for 16% - 21% of teens.

Findings reveal tremendous opportunity for engaging and addressing the interests of teens, while enriching their lives.
