

BRITISH COLUMBIANS LOVE TO LEND A HAND

BC Boasts Two Million Volunteers

BC's Volunteer Commitment Runs Deep - Average of 22.8 Hours Per Month

Helping Others (38%) and Personal Satisfaction of Doing Good (25%) Most Rewarding Aspects of Volunteering



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Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos-Reid poll released today shows that 65% of British Columbians have volunteered in the past year, and 84% have volunteered at least some point in their lives. This translates into more than two million volunteers across the province. Not only does British Columbia boast a large base of volunteers, but there is also a strong commitment to volunteering; on average, those who volunteered in the past year devoted 22.8 hours per month to volunteering. So what motivates so many British Columbians to devote so much time to volunteering? According to nearly four-in-ten (38%), the opportunity to help others is one of the most rewarding aspects of volunteering. Another quarter (25%) are motivated by the personal satisfaction they feel from doing something good.

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted on behalf of Volunteer Vancouver between March 23rd and April 2nd, 2004. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 800 British Columbians aged 16 or older. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire British Columbian population aged 16 or older been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual British Columbian population according to the 2001 Census.

BC Boasts Two Million Volunteers

Volunteering runs strong in British Columbia, with 65% of British Columbians saying they have volunteered in the past year. In other words, the past twelve months saw approximately two million BC residents devote their time to volunteer activities. The incidence of volunteering rises even higher when asked to consider all volunteer activities *ever* undertaken in the past; in this instance, 84% of British Columbians report having volunteered at least some point in their lives.

- Volunteers (defined as those who have ever volunteered) are more likely to be female (88%) than male (81%).
- British Columbians who have some post-secondary education or are university graduates are more likely to volunteer (both 87%) than those with a high school education or less (78%).
- British Columbians with an annual household income of at least \$80,000 are more likely to volunteer (89%) than those earning \$30,000 or less (79%).

BC's Volunteer Commitment Runs Deep - Average of 22.8 Hours Per Month

British Columbia's volunteers are committed to the organizations where they volunteer. According to BC residents who volunteered last year, the average amount of time devoted to volunteering was 22.8 hours per month. Put another way, the average volunteer devotes approximately 5 hours per week or 274 hours a year volunteering – the equivalent of 34 working days.

- Lower Mainland volunteers spent the least amount of time volunteering per month last year (average of 19.8 hours/month), while volunteers in the Northern Interior devoted the most amount of time to volunteering last year (average of 29.2 hours/month).



Helping Others (38%) and Personal Satisfaction of Doing Good (25%) Most Rewarding Aspects of Volunteering

When BC volunteers think about the most positive or rewarding aspects of volunteering, the opportunity to help others tops the list, mentioned by nearly four-in-ten (38%) volunteers. This includes 24% who say they enjoy helping others in general and 14% who specifically say they enjoy working with children. Meanwhile, another quarter (25%) of BC's volunteers are motivated by the personal satisfaction they receive from doing something good.

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