

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF CANADA

Alumni Impact Research



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Alumni Impact Research

Toronto, ON – Ipsos-Reid was commissioned by Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada to provide insight into the Clubs' impact through the eyes of their alumni. The study covers a range of information including: Impact of Boys and Girls Clubs on past members; Reasons for involvement; Importance of specific activities; Impact of club staff; and Attitudinal aspects surrounding the image and outcome measures of Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada.

Membership Overview and Alumni Background

Alumni Profile

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada alumni covers a broad scope of demographics. In total, alumni are split fairly equally between males and females, and age.

One third (33%) of alumni represented were members prior to 1980, 39% from 1980-1999 and 28% from the year 2000 or later. Clearly the club is a constant in the lives of many Canadian families. On average, alumni spent 8.7 years involved as a member of the Club. Three in ten spent between one and five years, 41% spent six to ten years and 28% spent over ten years as a member of a Boys and Girls Club in Canada.

Current Involvement with Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada

Many former members continue to maintain a relationship with the organization today. Overall, 28% currently volunteer or are a board or committee member, 16% donate to the club, 9% are parents of current members, and 3% are currently a corporate sponsor. Nearly one quarter (23%) have been scholarship recipients. Prior involvement is also notable with

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two in five (41%) alumni classifying themselves as former volunteers, and 13% as former donors.

Decision to Join Boys and Girls Clubs

Almost two in five (38%) alumni state it was their idea to join Boys and Girls Clubs. Alumni were just as likely to be influenced by their parents to join the Club as being influenced by someone else (29% vs. 26% respectively).

Main Reasons for Joining Boys and Girls Clubs

The main reasons for joining Boys and Girls Clubs are because friends are already members and to socialize. Activities and programs, including specific sports and going just for the fun, are also major drivers.

Role of Specific Factors in Decision to be Involved in Boys and Girls Clubs

Alumni were also asked the importance of seven specific factors in their decision to be involved in Boys and Girls Clubs. The large majority cite 'looked like a fun place', 'friendly and welcoming staff' and 'interesting programs' as playing a major role in their involvement (83%, 82% and 75% respectively). Little associated costs (60%) and meeting new friends (50%) follow in terms of a secondary tier of factors playing a major role in member's decision to be involved in the Club.

Needing a place to go after school was a major influence for 40% of alumni and being new to the community played a major role for 15%.



Frequency of Participation

Clearly Boys and Girls Clubs are a constant in the live of most members. During the time they were members, the majority (71%) of alumni went to the Club three or more times a week. Fully, an impressive 95% of alumni visited the Club at least once a week.

Impact of the Boys and Girls Club Experience

Impact of Boys and Girls Clubs on Your Life

Overall impact of being a member of a Boys and Girls Club is overwhelmingly positive with eight in ten (81%) alumni saying the experience was very positive, and two in ten (19%) saying it was somewhat positive. No one felt the experience was negative.

Favourable Impacts of Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada

When asked on an unaided basis what positive or favourable impacts Boys and Girls Clubs had on their life, top of mind mentions are making friends and meeting new people (23%). Learning to play sports and the opportunity to play sports is also top of mind among many alumni (16%). While new friends are made and opportunities for activities are provided, the Club has had a clear impact on the personal development and wellbeing of members across Canada. In terms of impacts, developing social and interpersonal skills is voluntarily mentioned by 17% of alumni, followed by developing leadership skills (15%), learning values (13%), keeping them off the streets (12%), and the impact of supportive staff and availability of role models (12%).



Unfavourable Impacts of Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada

Alumni were also asked what negative impacts Boys and Girls Clubs had. The large majority of alumni (91%) could not mention a negative impact or merely reiterated the positives. Issues including workplace politics are mentioned by 9% of Alumni.

Likelihood of Recommending Boys and Girls Clubs to a Parent or Child in the Future

Supported by the obvious real impacts the Club has had on the lives of its members, the large majority of alumni are enthusiastic about recommending Boys and Girls Clubs to parents or children in the future. Fully, 84% of alumni would definitely recommend joining the Club with another 15% saying they would probably recommend it.

Particular Staff Credited for Developing, Helping, or Supporting Alumni

Consistent with top of mind favourable impacts, staff plays a critical role in alumni experiences. Slightly more than nine in ten (93%) say they would credit a particular staff member for developing, helping and supporting them.

Importance of Club Leaders/Staff in Development of Specific Aspects

Staff are credited for being important in developing leadership skills (73% very/20% somewhat important), self-confidence (67% very/26% somewhat) and self-esteem (65% very/25% somewhat), teaching values like how to get along with others (65% very/29% somewhat), knowing right from wrong (64% very/23% somewhat) and for being someone to talk to (61% very/25% somewhat). Most importantly staff were essential for allowing members to have fun (89% very/10% somewhat).



Importance of Club Activities

Recreation, exercise and games top the list as the most important club activities for alumni (95% very/somewhat important), followed by outings, trips or social/cultural activities (89% very/somewhat important). The second tier of important club activities include community service or learning to help others (87% saying very/somewhat important), sports (83%), and youth leadership programs (78%). Thirdly, relationships with adults (76%), counselling (70%), arts/crafts (73%), and career development (63%) are considered important.

Continuing Role of the Boys and Girls Club Experience

Two thirds (66%) say the organization continues to have a very positive impact on their life today, with the remaining one-third (34%) say it continues to have a somewhat positive impact.

Agreement with Specific Outcomes and Organizational Attributes

Alumni were finally asked their agreement on various outcome measures and attitudinal attributes. Clearly, the alumni have high opinions of Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada as an organization. Fully, all strongly or somewhat agree that the organization contributes in a meaningful way to the wellbeing of children (91% strongly/19% somewhat), is an organization you can trust (89% strongly/10% somewhat), has a positive impact on communities (88% strongly/12% somewhat), and listens and cares about the needs of children (88% strongly/11% somewhat). In terms of partnerships and support, clearly Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada is an organization worthy of affiliation.

Reflecting on their own experiences, the majority agree the Club provides essential skills to youth (79% strongly/20% somewhat), has made these alumni better off (77% strongly/20%



somewhat), provided valuable life skills (72% strongly/23% somewhat) and helped in building leadership skills (68% strongly/27% somewhat). Nearly three quarters (73%) strongly or somewhat agree (46% strongly/27% somewhat) that the Club helped them avoid trouble with the law and seven in ten (69%) alumni strongly or somewhat agree (29% strongly/40% somewhat) that Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada really saved their life – no small amount!

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada survey conducted from April 27th to May 15th, 2005. For the survey, a sample of 343 Canadians who had been identified as club alumni were interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 5.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada alumni been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional composition reflects that of the actual Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada population.

This report summarizes the findings of the study; the complete computer cross-tabulations are reported under separate cover.

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